

"12. Papers respecting the late Conference at Sydney on Chinese Immigration, respecting an Imperial scheme of Emigration, including some important proposals made by me on behalf of the Colony, and respecting the Pearl Fishery on our Northern coast, will also be presented to you.

"13. A proposed further contract with the Adelaide Steam Ship Company for the conveyance of our coastal mails will be presented for your approval. Though not framed in exact accordance with your expressed wishes, the contract embodies the best terms it has been found possible to procure, and, on consideration, you may authorise the Government to accept it.

"14. The agricultural and pastoral industries of the Colony are prosperous and extending. The season, so far, has been good, and prices have been maintained. In the towns, and in commerce, there has been a certain amount of depression. It has been met by the self-denial and industry of the workmen, and by the carefulness and confidence of traders and financial institutions, and business is stated to be on a sound basis.

"15. In addition to the Constitution Bill and the usual money laws, various measures of public usefulness will be brought before you, including Bills relating to Roads, Trade Marks, Quarantine, Inspection of Steam Boilers, Inquests on Infants, and several other subjects. A Bill referring to the Federal Council matters connected with our Pearl Fishery, for legislation thereon, will be introduced.

"16. The usual departmental reports and various official papers will be presented to you.

"MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN:—

"17. I now leave you to your labours, merely adding that I think you will join with me in feeling confidence in the future of Western Australia."

HIS EXCELLENCY, having handed a copy of the Speech to the Speaker, withdrew from the Council Chamber.

BOAT LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) moved the first reading of

a Bill to amend the Boat Licensing Act, 1878.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

#### THE ADDRESS IN REPLY.

MR. SHOLL said: I have much pleasure in rising to propose, that an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, in reply to the speech with which he has been pleased to open this Council. I regret, sir, that the task has not fallen to abler hands than mine, and that the various matters dealt with in the speech have not been placed in the hands of a man of more experience and more ability than myself. I think hon. members will agree with me that the speech of the Governor on this occasion is not as satisfactory as we otherwise would wish. We find in the second paragraph of the speech that it is anticipated that the colony at the end of this year will have to be prepared to meet a deficit of £30,000. I don't consider, sir, that we should take it as an established fact that this deficit is going to exist at the end of the year. We do not know what in the mean time may happen. Taking into consideration the present very bright prospects of the colony, in view of the development of our goldfields—the development of Pilbarra, and the development (with a little assistance from the Government, if it is possible to obtain it) of the Eastern goldfields—I say, with a little energy, and with a little liberality on the part of the Government, if it is possible to obtain it—taking this outlook into consideration, I think there never was in the existence of this colony such a bright prospect before it. It is to be regretted that unfortunately we are suffering from the drag which the colony has had attached to it for the last fifty years; and His Excellency the Governor, no doubt, saw the necessity, just at the present time, of raising a loan partly for the development of these goldfields, and partly for repaying to revenue certain sums which were paid out of it but which should really have been charged to loan account. But, unfortunately, the endeavor of His Excellency to obtain permission to raise this loan has been unsuccessful. It has been refused. The gentleman who sits in his office in Down-

ing Street, 15,000 miles away, and who is ignorant of the requirements of this colony, has thought proper to refuse to sanction the raising of this loan. I don't think we can accuse His Excellency of any shortcomings in this matter, but I do think it is simply a mistaken policy on the part of the Secretary of State. If you refer, sir, to His Excellency's speech, you will see that we are told in paragraph 3 of the speech that the revenue for the present year is expected to reach the sum of £366,000, which is nearly £9 per head of our population. Well, sir, if we take into consideration what the small population of this colony, 42,000 people all told, has done in providing means for developing our large territory; if we take into consideration the extensive seaboard of this colony, with subsidised steamers running up and down it; if we take into consideration the railways we have built and the thousands of miles of telegraph lines; if we take into consideration the various mail routes, the various subsidised mail services we have established, and the work we have done in the way of settlement along the coast; and if we also consider the large police force which this 42,000 people have to provide for—if we take all these things into consideration, I think, sir, it is not surprising we should have a deficit. There is also one other thing I might mention: if we take into consideration certain sums of money that we have paid out of revenue which should have been paid out of loan, I don't think it is wonderful that we may have to meet a deficit of a paltry £30,000 at the end of this year. I have taken a few statistics for 1886, for the purpose of comparing our deficit with the deficits of the different colonies. In New South Wales, with a revenue of £7,594,300, the expenditure was £9,078,869, showing a deficit of £1,484,569, or nearly a million and a half. In Victoria, a compact and largely developed country, the richest you may say of all the colonies, we find that during that year they had a revenue of £6,481,021, while their expenditure reached £6,513,540, leaving a deficit of £32,519. In Queensland we find, the same year, a deficit of £391,898, and I think members will recollect that last year that colony had a deficit of something

like £190,000. South Australia, in 1886, found herself with a deficit of £259,126; New Zealand, £622,859; and Tasmania was £16,832 deficient in that year. Now, sir, considering the extent of this colony, with its scattered settlement and sparse population, and the work which has been done, I am only surprised—and I think every member will agree with me it is surprising—that we have not a greater deficit than we have at the present moment. We all know we have passed through a period of great depression, and it is due to the pluck and energy of the people, and the policy, or I may say the indulgence and liberality and foresight of our financial institutions, that, in the face of this drawback our colonists have pulled through as they have done. Paragraph 4 of His Excellency's speech shows that His Excellency, as I stated before, recognised the necessity of doing something at the present time to keep the colony going, and of raising money for developing these goldfields; and he asked the Secretary of State to allow £200,000 to be borrowed. The Secretary of State has refused to sanction a loan of that amount, but recommended that Treasury bills should be issued to the extent of £50,000. Now, sir, for myself, I shall certainly be opposed to the issue of Treasury bills. I think it would be a very poor advertisement for this colony if it went forth that we are in such a bad state that we are not in a position to raise a loan, but must be content with issuing Treasury bills to raise a paltry £50,000. I think if it went forth that this colony was in such a terribly poor condition, such a bankrupt condition, as to require the raising of £50,000 to keep us going it would do us more injury than the £50,000 would do us good. For my part, I should prefer to see the Government bringing forward a bill to increase taxation for twelve months—let it be a temporary measure, and let the public meet things fairly in the face. Let us also exercise retrenchment at the same time, until we get rid of the trammels which oppress us, and we get a more liberal and better form of Government than we have now. There has been already published a Bill for changing the Constitution, and we have just heard read the despatch from the Secretary of State forwarding the amended Bill which the Home Gov-

ernment say they will assent to. This is a matter we shall have plenty of time to go into; but I feel that the interests of this colony will be so affected if we have this question hanging over our head, and things will be in such a critical state that, although I am opposed to many parts of the Secretary of State's bill, I think we might feel inclined to agree to the bill as a whole, with the view hereafter of having certain objections removed. His Excellency in the 6th paragraph of his speech alludes to the gold discoveries at Yilgarn and Pilbarra, also to the fact of his having proclaimed goldfields at these places. There are various views entertained with regard to the policy of the Government in proclaiming the Eastern goldfields at any rate. For my part I am one of those who think that great good will come out of the declaration of these fields. It is true that there are some people who have done their best to develop these fields by expending their money, and who may be deprived of the chance of recovering it, if these new regulations take force; but probably this hardship might be modified if the Government give these people every reasonable consideration, and deal liberally with them. But I think the mere fact of these goldfields being declared will do good in the long run, and tend to the speedy development of the fields. His Excellency in the next paragraph alludes to the Beverley-Albany railway; and I agree with His Excellency that it will be a great benefit to the colony when this line is constructed, and I think great credit is due both to the company and to the contractors for the expeditious manner in which they have carried out the work. I would also endorse what His Excellency says with regard to the Midland Railway; I think it will be a matter of satisfaction to this colony and all concerned that the construction of this railway is likely to be soon proceeded with. With regard to the Telegraph line to Derby, and the line from there to the Kimberley goldfields, and the line to Wyndham, which, we are told, are making good progress—although I always thought it was a mistake to have that Wyndham line built, and said so—and I still think what I stated was right, that if we had not undertaken this work we should have been in a better position to-

day than we are in now—still, good may come out of it; and if the construction of these telegraph lines will prove of assistance in the development of that district, I think perhaps the money will have been well spent. With regard to the proposed further contract with the Adelaide Steamship Co., referred to in paragraph 13 of the Governor's speech, I think it will give satisfaction to all hon. members to know that some arrangement has been come to; but, until the papers are laid before us, it will of course be impossible to form a definite opinion on the subject. For my part I feel a certain amount of satisfaction that the Government have been able to come to some arrangement with the Adelaide Steamship Co. for this service, as the company has always given satisfaction; and, so long as the price paid for the service is not excessive, for my part I think the colony may be congratulated upon having the work carried out by that company. I don't know that I need detain the House any longer, and I will conclude my address by joining with His Excellency in trusting "that our united labours may, during this session, under Divine Providence, promote the welfare and progress of the colony."

THE SPEAKER: Does the hon. member conclude with any motion?

MR. SHOLL: I am not prepared with any motion. I merely move that an address be presented. I haven't got the address.

MR. A. FORREST said: In seconding the address in reply I shall not, as my friend the hon. member for Gascoyne has done, say that I regret the motion has not been placed in abler hands, because, knowing as I do that the Northern portions of this colony are the most important part of it, and that the members who represent the North are supposed to be the best men that can be found, I cannot join with my hon. friend in regretting that this matter has not been left to abler men. Under these circumstances, I shall now proceed to say a few words on the address of His Excellency. In the first portion of his address, His Excellency goes on to say that there will be a deficit at the end of this year of £30,000. Now, I give the Governor every credit, for no doubt he has taken more trouble than I have in making out that at the