

they had endeavored to instil some vitality into the political system of the country. He was afraid the hon. member, had he found himself in the position in which his hon. colleague the Premier now found himself, would not have been a success; and he thought the colony was to be congratulated, and the members of that House—those hon. gentlemen who were there representing the people of this country from the far North to the distant South—were to be congratulated upon the fact that, instead of the hon. member for York having been called upon by His Excellency to frame a policy and to guide the destinies of the country, they had a man at the head of the Government who possessed comprehensive ideas of the requirements of the country, and who had the courage to carry out those ideas, for the advancement and prosperity of the colony; a man capable of grasping the situation, bold enough to take action, and imbued with only one idea,—to push the colony ahead as quickly as possible towards that goal of prosperity they had all had in view. At the present juncture in the affairs of this colony, it was far better to be too bold than too timid; far better for the country that there should be at the head of affairs a Minister who had a strong faith in the future of the colony, and who had the courage of his convictions, rather than a man who seemed to possess no opinion of his own, and certainly none of those statesmanlike qualities which we required for such a position. He would ask, in closing his remarks—he had no wish to detain the House any longer, at this late stage of the debate, though he should have liked to have said a great deal more; but his hon. friend, the Premier, had himself spoken so well and dealt so exhaustively with every part of the hon. member's speech—he should like to remark, in conclusion, that while all the eyes of the world were upon us, watching what we were going to do with our opportunity,—if the Ministry had come forward with a weak and timid policy, it would have gone forth that the people who had been praying for assistance from all quarters to secure for them their political freedom so that they might have a free hand in the development of the resources of their country—

that these people, now that they had obtained their freedom, had little or no faith after all, in those resources. He thought it would have produced a disastrous effect if the first Ministry under Responsible Government had come forward with a timid and halting policy, and for that reason he thought the country was to be congratulated that the framing of that policy had not been entrusted to the hon. member for York.

MR. SCOTT said he should not detain the House beyond a few minutes at this late hour. He could only say this: having been a member of the House during the last four years, and representing as he did one of the most important constituencies in the colony, and having been a staunch advocate of the change which it delighted his heart to see brought about,—he could only say, occupying the position he did, that he congratulated Her Majesty's Government in this colony upon having brought forward what to his mind was a most liberal policy. It seemed to him that this debate upon the Address-in-Reply had gone beyond the limits of what he should have thought it should have extended. At the same time, with regard to the policy sketched out in the Speech, it could not be said that it was not a liberal and a bold policy, and a policy which he thought would commend itself to the good sense of the people of the colony. They perfectly well knew that a loan for public works had been over and over again advocated in the interests of the colony at large, as an absolute necessity, if the colony was to go ahead at all. They had put their hand to the plough, and they must not now turn back. The country was crying out for a policy of advancement and of public works, and no doubt any Ministry coming into office at this time must be prepared to listen to that demand. The colony had been languishing for the last three or four years, owing to the want of such a policy. He thought the policy now before them, if judiciously carried out, would do much for the colony. As one of the members representing the people of Perth, he could only say that he heartily congratulated the Government upon the policy which His Excellency's Speech foreshadowed.

MR. PEARSE said that in common with other members he desired to con-



gratulate the Ministry on the broad and comprehensive policy they had put before the House. He did not think this was the time to go into the details of the Loan Bill, because they wanted some further information as to the intentions of the Government. When the schedule of the Loan Bill came before them he should then be prepared to give his views on the various works proposed. In the meantime, he would only say that it seemed to him the Ministry had put forward a policy which would meet with general support. So far as he could see at present, it was a Ministry that would have his unqualified support.

Mr. RANDELL said he found it was the wish of the House that the debate should be closed that evening. He could not help thinking, in listening to the speeches that had been made on this Address-in-Reply, that probably they would all have to be made again; and possibly it would have been better if the discussion that had followed upon His Excellency's speech had been deferred until they had the Loan Bill before them, because he was afraid, as he had already said, that members would have to travel over the same ground again. He had no intention himself at this stage to enter into any details as to the public works policy of the Government; but he should like to be permitted, as rather an old member of the Legislature of this colony, to repeat in public what he had often said in private,—he thought the country was to be congratulated upon the Ministry which had been formed for the conduct of its affairs. He had publicly expressed the hope that, when the colony did enter upon a Ministerial form of Government, the country would be blessed with a capable and honest—and he dwelt upon that word honest—Ministry to administer its affairs. He believed, from the knowledge he had of the gentlemen who now occupied that position, that they were honest-minded men; and in his opinion a great deal depended upon their being so, more especially as they had introduced and proposed to carry out a very extensive loan policy. He did not think it would be wise on his part, as he had already said, nor desirable at that late hour of the debate, to go very minutely into the programme placed before them by the Ministry; it

would have been better, he thought, if the debate had not taken the turn it had taken. But, having taken the turn which it had, he felt bound to say that under the circumstances he had been somewhat disappointed in the speech of the Premier. He had hoped to have had some information as to the course which the Ministry intended to follow with regard to their public works policy; but no doubt the hon. gentleman thought it would be better to wait until a more opportune time; and, for his own part, he preferred to wait until they had further information before them as to the intentions of the Government; he could appreciate the difficulties under which they had had to labor. All the circumstances connected with their assembling there at this time were rather unique, and had been surrounded with difficulties from the beginning. Indeed, some of the acts committed, or some part of the procedure adopted, had been questioned in that House, as to its legality; and all through, in fact, we had had very little precedent and very little experience to guide us. These were circumstances that ought to be taken into consideration by members, and they would see the difficulties in which the Ministry had been placed with reference to framing their policy. That they had adopted what had been referred to as a bold policy there was no question. With regard to the other word "prudent," there might be a difference of opinion. But he did not wish at the present moment to go into the matter or to express any decided opinion on that point, further than he wished to mention presently. A number of works had been mentioned as forming the public works programme of the Government, and perhaps he might be pardoned if he just referred to some of them, as other members had done, otherwise he should have deferred his remarks until these items were before them. It was expected by the country that our new Government would have adopted a progressive policy, and he did not know that too much credit was due to them on that ground; they were simply following in the course which, even under another Constitution, the colony had adopted before now. A loan policy had been in everyone's mouth. Every section of the press of the colony

had urged that the first Ministry must of necessity adopt a loan policy. The only question that remained now was, was their policy likely to have the effect of developing the country? There were a good number of works contemplated, and he noticed that one of them was one which he had himself drawn attention to twelve years ago, when he had the honor of representing Perth in the Legislative Council, and that was a lighthouse at Cape Leeuwin. He thought we owed it, perhaps to the world at large, at any rate we owed it to commerce and navigation passing our own doors, that we should do all we could to promote the safety of vessels passing our shores; and it appeared to him that this was a work which was necessary for the safety of navigation. There were other works enumerated which were very desirable, but not one of which, in his opinion, they could characterise as reproductive. Even this lighthouse at Cape Leeuwin, although of intercolonial importance, and a great boon to commerce and shipping, could in no sense be regarded as a reproductive work. The Government seemed to have simply considered the requirements of the various districts of the colony, and to the extent of their powers had endeavored to meet those requirements. As all parts of the colony were contributors to the public revenue, it was felt that they were all entitled to some consideration. He noticed they were promised some improvements in the Eastern Railway and other railways. As to that, he thought there was room for improvement; and he should hope that under the administration of the present Commissioner a marked improvement would take place. He had that confidence in the present Minister of Railways. He had the reputation of being a strong man, and undoubtedly they required a strong man over this department of the public service. As he had already said, there was great room for improvement. Our railways had been costing us a very large amount of money. He believed they could be worked on lines that would at any rate cause them to be a less drain upon the revenue. He had that confidence in himself that he had no hesitation in saying that if he had the working of the Perth and Fremantle line, he could make

it payable. He did not think it his duty to indicate in what direction the necessary reforms should go. The hon. gentleman at the head of the Department would no doubt receive good advice from his own officers and from others interested; and he believed the hon. gentleman was a man who would avail himself of the experience and sound advice of others, and who would endeavor to make himself acquainted to the best of his ability with the best way of working our railways. No doubt the Government had put forward their public works scheme with a full sense of the responsibilities attached to them, and no doubt they had done all they could to satisfy themselves as to the utility and expediency of carrying out these works. But he thought the House would require a good deal of information as to some of these works. Such projects as the Busselton railway and the Yilgarn railway would have to submit to a most searching investigation at the hands of the House before they were agreed to. No one denied the desirability of these works, but what the House wanted to be satisfied about was that they were justified, and that they will help to promote the real prosperity of the colony. He must confess that he had been somewhat surprised to find that all the works enumerated in the 8th clause of the Governor's Speech were to be undertaken concurrently. On reading the 9th clause of the Speech he had thought, and others had thought with him, that the Government had provided for themselves a way of escape, a kind of saving clause, without subjecting themselves hereafter to a charge of having not fulfilled their pledges. But he gathered from the speech of the hon. the Premier that evening that it was the *bonâ fide* intention of the Government to carry out each and every one of these works. He joined issue at once with the policy of the Government on that point. There was present to his mind the disastrous effect of such a policy in the past. The hon. member for York was right when he said that the late House had agreed to the first section of what was then called the Bayswater line, in view of the fact that it was necessary to start some public work to provide employment for the number of men who had been relieved from certain works which had



been completed, and that we had such a depression at the time, consequent upon the cessation of all public works expenditure, as to justify the House in the step it took on that occasion. He thought that would have been a warning to us in the future. He should prefer to see these works extended over a number of years, rather than see any attempt made to carry them all out concurrently, with the result that when the loan money was exhausted there would be an immediate cessation of public works, or we should have to resort to another loan, to avoid a repetition of the distressing state of affairs he had referred to. In his opinion the best policy to pursue would be to undertake one work at a time, and carry it on gradually, so that there might be no sudden cessation of public works, and a large number of men thrown out of employment. It was very certain we could not go into the London money market for some considerable time after we raised this loan; we could not expect such an accretion to the population as would justify us in doing so. We could not take upon ourselves a policy of this kind without increasing taxation, and the cost of living now was very high, partly due to non-production and partly to our Customs duties. He therefore hoped the Government would not in this respect pursue too vigorous or too bold, but a prudent policy. As he had said already, no one denied the desirability of pushing the colony ahead. No one denied the desirability of developing our gold and other mineral resources. He did not see that we can in any way hope to largely increase the population of the colony either by the development of agricultural or the extension of pastoral settlement; nor was there a prospect of our doing so by the establishment of manufacturing industries in our towns. He did not see that we can in any rapid way accelerate the progress of the colony and add to our population unless it be by the development of our mineral resources. At the same time, before we could justify the construction of such a large undertaking as a railway to Yilgarn the House must have a great deal more information than it had before it now. They really—he spoke for himself—were not at present in possession of that information which would enable him to form a judg-

ment on the subject, and it would be unwise for him at this stage either to promise his support or withhold it. He would take this opportunity of saying that although he sat on that side of the House he did not know that there was any desire on the part of any member to act in anything like a spirit of factious opposition to the Government or their policy. He believed it was the desire of members generally, and the wish of the country at large, that the first Ministry under our new Constitution should have every reasonable and proper support in carrying out their programme and policy. He should most cheerfully assist them, so far as he could, and most cheerfully give them his support, so long as he saw that their policy was calculated to promote the best interests of the colony. He thought he might say he was quite free from any prejudices which were likely to affect some members, who had local interests at stake. He looked upon the whole colony as requiring and deserving at his hands a conscientious, a careful, and a liberal consideration of its requirements, without regard to this district or that. He felt sure he might congratulate the country upon having, as its first Ministers under the new Constitution, men who were actuated by the same motives. He thought also he might congratulate the country upon having, as its first Legislative Assembly under the new Constitution—he said it, although one of the members of that Assembly; but, of course, he did not apply the remark to himself—but he did think the colony was to be congratulated upon having secured for its first representatives in the Legislative Assembly, under Responsible Government, a body that would compare favorably with similar bodies in any of the other colonies, and a body which would be found to be equal, if not superior, to any succeeding Assembly in the colony for many, many years to come. He felt sure that, under the guidance of His Honor the present Speaker of the House, who, he was sure, would preside over their deliberations in the future with the same strict impartiality as in the past—he felt sure that their deliberations would be conducted in a spirit of patriotism, with an endeavor to recognise each other's honesty of purpose, and a desire on the

part of each to do that which he considered was best for the country at large.

MR. PIESSE said it gave him great pleasure to offer his congratulations to the Ministry on the policy they had placed before the country. It had been expected by country people that the first Ministry under Responsible Government would be prepared with a bold and vigorous policy; and he thought no one could complain on that score as to the policy of the present Ministry. But there were one or two things which he should have liked to have seen included, and especially the question of roads. Roads, in his opinion, were second only in importance to railways, and what he should like to see introduced into the schedule of the Loan Bill would be some provision made for country roads. He need hardly point out that without roads, in country districts, they could not feed the railways; and if the railways were not provided with freight, they could not expect them to become reproductive. Of course, the various items of the Loan Bill would come on for further discussion on another occasion, and he thought that would be the best time for expressing one's opinion respecting them, and at that late hour he was sure the House would not expect any criticism of them from him. He might say that he was not altogether in accord with the details of the Ministerial policy, but, on the whole, he thought it was a very good one; and if facts were brought forward to support the undertaking of these works, he should have great pleasure in supporting them.

Question put—That the Address-in-Reply be adopted.

Agreed to.

The House adjourned at 11:30 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly,

*Friday, 23rd January, 1891.*

Protection to Parliamentary Printers Bill: first reading  
—Presentation of the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency the Governor—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 2:30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

### PROTECTION TO PARLIAMENTARY PRINTERS BILL.

Read a first time.

### PRESENTATION OF THE ADDRESS IN REPLY.

At 3 o'clock, p.m., Mr. Speaker, accompanied by members, proceeded to Government House to present the Address-in-Reply, and having returned,

MR. SPEAKER reported that he had waited upon His Excellency the Governor, and had presented to him the Address of the Legislative Assembly agreed to upon the 22nd instant, and that His Excellency had been pleased to make the following reply:—

"MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF  
"THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,

"I thank you for your courteous  
"Address in reply to my opening Speech,  
"and am confident that the affairs of  
"the Colony will receive at your hands  
"the most earnest and careful consideration."

"W. C. F. ROBINSON.

"Perth, 23rd January, 1891."

The House adjourned at 3:15 p.m.