

of the debate until the next sitting of the House.

Agreed to.

Debate adjourned.

The House rose at half-past four o'clock, p.m.

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Friday, 15th March, 1889.

City of Perth Election Petition (Mr. John Horgan's):  
Judges' Report—Address in Reply: adjourned  
debate—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at seven o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

### PERTH ELECTION PETITION (MR. HORGAN'S): JUDGES' REPORT.

THE SPEAKER announced that he had received a certificate from the Judges of the Supreme Court with respect to the recent election of members to represent the city of Perth in the Legislative Council.

THE CLERK read the Judges' report, as follows:

*In the matter of the City of Perth Election Petition.*

WE, ALEXANDER CAMPBELL ONSLOW, Chief Justice, and EDWARD ALBERT STONE, a Judge of the Supreme Court, Judges for the trial of Election Petitions in Western Australia, do hereby, in pursuance of the provisions of an Act of the Legislative Council, passed in the 39th year of the reign of Her present Majesty and numbered 10, certify that on the 5th day of March instant we duly held a Court within the City of Perth for the trial of and did try the Election Petition for that city between John Horgan, Petitioner, and Edward Scott and Edward Keane, Respondents.

And in further pursuance of the said Act, we certify that at the conclusion of the said trial we determined that Edward Scott and

Edward Keane, the Members whose Return and Election were complained of, were duly Elected and Returned.

And whereas charges were made in the said Petition of Corrupt Practices having been committed at the said election to which the Petition refers, we in further pursuance of the said Act report as follows:—

That upon the trial of the said Petition no Corrupt Practices was proved to have been committed by or with the knowledge or consent of either of the candidates at the said election.

And in further pursuance of the said Act, we report that no Corrupt Practices prevailed at the election to which the Petition relates.

And in further pursuance of the said Act, we specially report the following matters which arose in the course of the trial, an account of which, in our judgment, ought to be submitted to the Legislative Council.

The Sheriff, who was the Returning Officer at the said election, was examined at the trial, and admitted that he did not forthwith after the said election make all the Ballot Papers, together with the sealed envelopes containing the counterfoils, into a parcel or bundle and affix his seal thereto, as required by Section 15 of the said Act; and further, that he did not forward to the Governor, as required by the said Act, a certificate showing the names of the persons who appeared to have voted more than once at the said election.

And we further specially report that the certificate to the Governor purporting to be the certificate required by the 15th Section of the Act 41 Victoria, No. 15, to be forwarded by the Returning Officer was duly forwarded on the 23rd January, but was not published in the *Government Gazette*, as required by the said section, until the 21st of February.

We further specially report that from the evidence given at the trials it appeared that the Electoral Roll contained the names of many persons who were not entitled to vote at the said election.

As witness our hands this fifteenth day of March, 1889.

ALEX. C. ONSLOW,

Chief Justice.

E. A. STONE,

Puisne Judge.

MR. PARKER: I rise, sir, for the purpose of moving that a day be fixed for taking the report of the Judges into consideration. It will be observed that the report just read contains matter which this House should take cognisance of, with the view of its taking such steps as it may deem advisable in the matter. I am alluding to the special report, dealing with the state of the electoral roll, and other matters. Every member will admit that the great object we ought to

have in view is the purity of election, and to see that persons who are not entitled to vote are not allowed to do so. This House cannot, of course, take action itself in the revision of the roll, but perhaps, after discussion, we may arrive at some method or means by which greater care may hereafter be taken in placing and admitting names on the electoral roll. We may, by legislation, give additional powers to the Revising Justices as to striking out the names of those who are not entitled to vote; at present it appears the Justices are powerless in this matter. Unless objection is formally taken to a name being allowed to be placed, or allowed to remain, on the roll, the Revising Justices cannot of their own mere motion take any action in expunging names improperly admitted. It would appear from the report of the Judges upon the late petition that, so far as the metropolitan constituency is concerned there are names on the roll that certainly ought not to be there,—minors and others who have no right to a vote, and I believe the names of deceased persons; and it is said that at the late election persons voted who were not entitled to a vote at all. Possibly we may be able to devise some means whereby the Revising Justices may be able to meet this evil. All of us must agree that it is highly desirable that some power should be provided to preserve the purity of these elections. Unless the electoral roll is confined to those who are legally entitled to vote, the result may be that members may be returned to this House by a fictitious majority, in no way representing the views or wishes of the *bonâ fide* electors of the constituency. Therefore I think it is very desirable that the House should at once take into consideration what steps it ought to take to remedy the present state of things, as disclosed at the late election, and mentioned in this report of the Supreme Court judges. There are some other matters mentioned in the report which I think it is also desirable for this House to discuss,—the manner, for instance, in which the Sheriff is said to have performed his functions, or duties, as Returning Officer. I propose therefore that a day be fixed for the consideration of this report.

Agreed to.

## THE ADDRESS IN REPLY.

### ADJOURNED DEBATE.

MR. PARKER: Mr. Speaker, I do not know that, although I moved the adjournment of this debate, I have much to say on the subject; but I may perhaps be permitted to compliment the hon. member for the Swan, who moved the Address in Reply, upon the admirable manner in which he introduced this motion to the House. I have sat in this House, now, for some eleven or twelve years past, and I know of no occasion on which a maiden speech was so well delivered, and so lucidly delivered. I feel that if our recruits to this House are to equal, or to come up anywhere near, the hon. member who made his first speech here on Wednesday last, we shall have no reason to regret the introduction of fresh blood into this assembly, nor any reason to apprehend that under another form of Government, when the number of members are increased, there will be any falling off of oratorical power. I only hope and trust that those who may find seats in the Legislature under another Constitution may emulate the hon. member for the Swan in the admirably lucid way in which he addressed the House on the occasion of moving this address. Coming to the Speech itself, I think it must be gratifying to all of us who have moved in the cause of Responsible Government to find that every elected member of the House returned at the late general election is, I think, pledged in favor of the proposed change. We know that for years past—ever since 1874, when His Honor the present Speaker moved in this matter—we have had members in this House who have advocated this change. We have had sometimes three, sometimes five, sometimes seven members returned pledged to support the introduction of Responsible Government, but this is the first occasion when every elected member returned has been returned pledged in favor of constitutional reform. I think that is a matter for congratulation to us, who have advocated the change for some years past. Sir, we are engaged no longer in debating the advisability of the introduction of this form of Government; we have passed that stage. The country has decided, and pronounced in no uncer-

tain voice, that the change is advisable, and that the change is necessary; and our present duty is, not to discuss the expediency of constitutional reform, but to discuss the provisions of the bill which is to bring about that reform. We shall have a full opportunity of doing so, when the bill comes before us for its second reading, and I need therefore not enter upon that question now. But I imagine that this is the proper time to make this remark: I think that the Legislature and the colony at large owe a debt of gratitude to His Excellency the Governor for the great interest he has taken in this subject, and for the strong and earnest representations he has made to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and which have induced the Secretary of State to agree to a compromise with regard to the constitution of a second Chamber under the proposed Constitution,—a compromise which I trust will be accepted by this Council. I also think our thanks are due to His Excellency for urging this matter forward in the way he has done, and for the admirable way in which he placed our views before the Home Authorities. I cannot but think that it is owing to the ability displayed by the Governor in placing this matter before the Secretary of State that we have been so very successful in converting the Secretary of State in a great measure to our own views with reference to this matter. There is another subject, sir—I trust your Honor will not consider me out of place in referring to it—there is another subject upon which this House and the colony have reason to congratulate themselves; I feel, sir, that in Your Honor as our representative in the Federal Council (to which allusion is made in the Speech) we have had a representative who has shown himself worthy of the position which Your Honor occupies in that Council. I feel sure, sir, that it is in a great measure to the ability with which you placed the position of affairs with regard to the Fisheries Bill before the Federal Council, at its late session, that the members of that body were induced to pass that bill, with some slight amendments; and, I trust, sir, that however long the Federal Council may last, or however long this colony may be represented at it, we shall always have representatives as worthy as

yourself to represent us in that assembly. There is another matter referred to in the Governor's Speech which I think is a matter for congratulation to this colony: I allude to the virtual completion of that land grant railway between here and Albany. Our great endeavor has been, and our great endeavor ought to be, to settle the lands of this colony. We do not want immigrants merely; we want colonists; we want settlers; and we want capital. We want colonists who will settle on our land, and become producers as well as consumers. We want population, and we want, as I say, capital. Well, sir, of all the works that have yet been carried out in this colony, to my mind there is no work that will be more likely to induce colonisation, combined with the introduction of capital, than this railway. As was pointed out by the hon. member for the Swan, in his speech the other day, we have already had the example of one capitalist, who has taken in hand the purchase, and settlement, and cultivation of a large area of land adjoining this railway; and I trust the example of this gentleman will, as suggested by the mover of the address, be followed by other capitalists; and that, ere long, instead of travelling through a desert country, those who travel by this line, between Beverley and Albany, will travel through flourishing settlements, and smiling farms and homesteads; and that, instead of our importing (as we do now) a great many articles of consumption that we could and ought to produce in the colony, we shall, as the result of this spread of settlement and extended cultivation, be independent of the neighboring colonies for these articles, and not only become producers but also exporters. It is satisfactory to find from His Excellency's Speech that the Government have purchased a boring machine of first-class capacity for the Eastern goldfields; but I must say that to my mind it is a matter of regret that a boring machine was not purchased some months ago, and placed upon these fields. We voted the money, I think, in November last, some £10,000 for water conservation on the goldfields; and yet, after the lapse of five months, all we ascertain is that the Government have purchased a machine. I cannot help thinking that with an energetic and responsible Ministry the question of

placing a boring machine upon these fields would have been dealt with in less time than this. The Governor remarks that "the greatest care and economy are without doubt still required in guiding the finances of the colony." I have no doubt they are. I have no doubt that the Government will exercise this care and economy; whether it will lead to the good results which they hope for, is another question. But, for my part, I think that perhaps a Ministry more in touch with the people, more alive to the interests of the colony, would, with the same care and economy as have been exercised by the present Government, have accomplished better results. I trust, sir, those hon. gentlemen who sit on the benches opposite will not think I am intending to cast any reflection upon them; I believe they have used their utmost endeavors to do what they considered best for the colony. All I say is that a Ministry more in touch with popular feeling, and responsible to the people, would have been able to have done better. I don't know, sir, whether this will be the last occasion we shall have an opportunity, under the present Constitution, of moving an Address in Reply to the Governor's Speech. We may probably have another session before Responsible Government comes actually into operation. But, if not, I trust the Governor and the Government will pardon me in saying this: that, however much I may have agitated, or our party may have agitated, for a change of Constitution, I believe that in the positions they have occupied, the Governor and the Executive of the colony have done what they considered was best in the interests of the country, without either fear or favor; and, so far as independence is concerned, so far as an honest desire to do what is right in the interests of the colony is concerned, I can only trust that all Ministers under Responsible Government may be actuated by a similar independence and a similar desire, and be as worthy of all honor, when leaving office, as the members who have occupied the Executive benches under the present Constitution.

**MR. RICHARDSON:** In dealing with the various paragraphs of the Governor's Speech, I do not intend to deal with the constitutional question; we shall have

ample opportunity for that before the session closes. I can only express a hope that the actual result of our deliberations may be the framing of such a bill as the people of the colony will be satisfied to live under, and such a bill as will not be likely to give rise to any further political agitation of any violent kind for many years afterwards. With reference to the paragraph in the Speech relating to the Fisheries Bill and the Federal Council, in which His Excellency makes allusion to the Council having passed that bill, with some amendments, I regret that His Excellency did not think proper to have given us some little more information as to what those amendments are. From what I gathered from the newspapers, it struck me that the amendments were of a very serious character indeed,—so much so that I understood some of the vital principles of the bill were interfered with, and that this colony will not be able to collect any duties from vessels fishing beyond the three-mile boundary on our coasts. Of course I only gather this impression from what we have seen published in the newspapers as to the proceedings of the Federal Council; these newspaper reports may have been inaccurate; and I regret that further information on this subject was not vouchsafed to us by the Governor. With regard to the laying of the cable to Roebuck Bay, I regret here again that we are not told what the advantages will be which this colony is likely to derive from this undertaking, whether it is in the shape of increased revenue from foreign messages, or from purely colonial messages. If we are not to participate in an increased revenue from foreign messages to and from the other colonies being diverted along our own lines, I am afraid the value of this cable to us will be rather small—nothing in comparison to the value of the other line, if it had been possible for us to have it—I do not say that it was: I refer to the scheme proposed to us by Millar Brothers. I am glad to observe that the telegraph line to Derby is approaching completion; I cannot agree with the hon. member for Williams and Murray that it would have been more advantageous to the colony if this telegraph line had been taken Eastward, instead of to the Kimberley goldfields.

We must remember that if we have goldfields, and they are to be developed, we must have direct means of communication with them. In these days, we know that capital, which is one of the shyest things at all times, will never venture unless those who possess and invest it cannot be in touch with the field of their investment; and we know that a large amount of capital is necessary for the proper development of these Kimberley mines. Sir, I heartily join in the chorus of congratulation upon the completion, or the near approach to completion, of the Beverley-Albany railway. I, myself, although I do not generally pose as an optimist, anticipate great and solid advantages from the opening of that line. I think it is a subject for sincere congratulation that a handful of 40,000 people should have been able to arrange for the construction of so large an undertaking, in addition to the other railway lines which the colony has undertaken. When we come to compare what we have done in this way with our more wealthy neighbors—even with a rich and prosperous colony like Victoria, who was engaged in the work of railway construction for years before we ever thought of venturing to embark in it, and where the population is concentrated in a comparatively small area—when we come to compare what we have done in the way of railway construction with what has been done by a colony like Victoria, I do think there is cause for a little congratulation on our part. From statistics which I have access to I find that Victoria has about 2000 miles of railways, or one mile for every 500 of her population, whereas in Western Australia we have one mile of railway for every 80 of our population. There is another test point which I think we may submit to, and congratulate ourselves upon the result. I allude to the national or the public debt of these two colonies, and the work accomplished in the shape of railways and other public works, with these borrowed funds. The amount of our public debt per head of the population is about the same as in Victoria—some £32 or £33 per head; and I find we have built four times the length of railway that colony has in proportion to our population, and that we have actually equalled her in the length of our tele-

graph lines. Surely all this must be a matter for congratulation, so far as this colony is concerned. With regard to this particular line of railway, between here and Albany, I was glad to hear that already one gentleman of capital has made up his mind to spend a large amount in settling people on some of the land adjoining this line. I hope that his enterprise may prove successful. I see nothing to prevent its being successful, if properly managed. It will depend entirely upon the kind of management. If managed practically and well, it will succeed; on the other hand if they entrust the management of that great enterprise to theorists, or to English agriculturists, I believe the result will be failure; for I believe the kind of management that would result, without having any practical knowledge of the kind of labor and the system of cultivation required here, could not fail to be disappointing to all concerned. I think I may venture to point out, while on the subject of this railway, what has always appeared to me a great mistake in the principle of that contract. I think if it had been possible—and I don't see why it could not have been possible—to have arranged for settlement to have kept pace with the construction of the line, instead of having the whole line completed before a single individual was allowed to settle along the line, we should have been four years ahead of where we are now. I merely throw this suggestion out now, in view of the possibility of some mutual arrangement being made between the Government and the Midland Railway syndicate, so that this mistake shall not occur in connection with the settlement of the country along that line. I regret that no arrangement was made in the contract with the Albany Railway syndicate, under which the Government might have called upon the company to select their lands, as each section of the line was completed, so that the reserved lands of the Crown might be thrown open for selection also. The result of there being no such power reserved in the contract is that we shall now have to wait another four or five years while the land is being cleared and prepared for cultivation, and while the crops are growing, before there is any traffic provided for the line, the result being not

only loss to the company but also to the colony. I am glad to observe that at last an effort is about to be made to procure water for the goldfields. I regret, with others, that this was not done long ago. I think the Government have really not been so energetic as they might have been in developing not only the Yilgarn but also the Pilbarra goldfields. Their policy seems to have been a waiting policy. While private individuals have been spending their money and their labor in trying to develop these auriferous areas, the Government of the colony have remained in a great measure mere lookers-on, and did not seem inclined to take any risk in developing the auriferous wealth of the colony, or in providing the means for others to do so. Had they taken energetic steps months ago for procuring a water supply the result would have been that instead of some hundred ounces of gold we might have had thousands. I congratulate the various public departments on the reduction of our probable deficit, or our actual deficit; I think it is very satisfactory to hear that the deficit is likely to be converted into a surplus, when the £60,000 is paid back into the revenue. I hope the Government will take care that this surplus is not absorbed into the general revenue, and that the mere fact of our having a small surplus will not make us more extravagant or wasteful of this money, but that it may be expended on some useful and necessary public works of a reproductive character. I observe by that section of the Governor's Speech alluding to the prospects of the colony from a pastoral point of view, that His Excellency says that in many parts of the colony the season has been exceptionally good, and that the price of wool gives satisfaction to the stockowner. I hope that is true, for we all know how dependent the colony is upon the prosperity of the pastoral industry. We know that wool has been hitherto what I may call the backbone of the colony, and our staple product; and the price of it means a certain amount of loss or a certain amount of prosperity to every individual in it. Therefore when we find it stated that the season in many parts of the colony has been extraordinarily good, and that the price of wool has an upward tendency, it is a

matter of congratulation to us all, for the prosperity of the wool industry cannot fail to react upon every industry in the community. But, coupled with that remark, I regret that His Excellency has made no allusion whatever to what I think ought to be the most prominent industry in the colony, but which perhaps is, as yet, only second in importance to the pastoral industry. Of course I refer to agriculture. I would have liked to have seen some allusion to the agricultural industry, which would have shown us that not only is there an increased interest taken in its progress, but also that increased attention was being paid to its development. I think if we look into figures, in connection with our agricultural progress, we shall find equal cause for congratulation. There is a general idea abroad that we are vastly behind the other colonies as regards agricultural development, in proportion to our population; but I find, on looking at the official statistics of the most agricultural colony of the group (except New Zealand), namely, Victoria, that we come out well in this respect. In Victoria the gross agricultural area under cultivation amounts to 2,000,000 acres, equal to two acres per head of the population. I find, on looking at our own statistics, that we have 100,000 acres ready for cultivation—which, possibly, might be reduced to 90,000 actually under cultivation—which gives an average of over two acres per head of the population. So that, even compared with the most agricultural colony of the Australian group, we appear at an advantage in this respect, and I cannot help thinking this is another matter upon which we may congratulate ourselves. I think the cause is not far to seek for the comparatively small progress we made in this direction in former years. I think we had no right to expect agriculture to go ahead, until we afforded our farmers improved means of communication for bringing or sending their produce to market. But since we have gone in for railway extension, we have plainly seen the result which this improved means of transit has produced, in extended cultivation and greater energy being thrown into the work of the agriculturist. In time we may hope to see still greater results from this cause, but we must patiently wait for these

things. You cannot expect that the moment you lay down a line of railway, the desert is going to blossom into a rose. You must have time to clear the forest, you must have time to prepare the land, and you must have time for the land to yield its increase. In conclusion, I think when we review the progress made by this colony with its small population, both in agricultural and pastoral development, and when we bear in mind the extent of our railways and our telegraph lines, and the other public works carried out of late years, we may not unreasonably ask, can a Constitution under which we have accomplished all this—though we have been told it is effete and rotten and played out—can a Constitution under which we have accomplished these things be so bad, after all. Let us hope, I say, that the new Constitution we are about to enter upon may accomplish as much for us, and that we may be able to point to equal progress made during the next few years, as we can point to to-day. If we have been able to accomplish so much with this old-fashioned, antiquated, and effete Constitution (as some people regard it), we may expect, in a few years, when we enter upon this freer Constitution from which so much is expected, to find ourselves positively rolling in wealth.

MR. GRANT: Sir, I wish to say a few words on one or two paragraphs in His Excellency's Speech. It is with some disappointment that I find no reference made in the Speech to the recent discovery of coal at the North. We are told of payable gold in the reefs on the Eastern goldfield, and that there have been substantial finds at Pilbarra. We are told there has been a rich discovery of tin in the Blackwood district, and that it certainly appears the colony has a mineral future before it. I cannot help thinking that the Governor might have gone a little further; I think he might fairly have been expected to have referred to another mineral discovery—a discovery not second in importance to gold—the discovery of coal in the Champion Bay district. Not a single word is said about this most important discovery; and I think there is something wrong there. Depend upon it, there will be great disappointment about this omission. We all know that a

Governor's Speech is read throughout the length and breadth of the colony, and outside the colony, and it cannot but be remarked that no reference whatever is made in it to one of the most important discoveries, in my opinion, ever made in the colony. I don't wish to say much more, but I do think this was a most serious omission in the Speech. Surely it cannot have been done purposely; it must have been an oversight. I am very glad to find the Governor saying that the greatest care and economy is still required in guiding the finances of the colony. I hope the coming Government, under the new order of things, will preach and practise the same doctrine of economy; for really our expenditure has increased to such an extent of late that it will need all the science of economy to check this extravagance. I hope under the new form of Government every department of the public service will be run in the cheapest way possible. [MR. A. FORREST: Cheap and nasty.] I can see a great deal of trouble before us with regard to our finances, unless we take care. I notice that the Governor feels it his duty to give us a word of caution about this; and I hope those who are the leading spirits in this movement will take this caution to heart. If they don't, I can see trouble ahead. As has been pointed out by the last speaker, we have been able to do a great deal under the present Constitution, when we consider how small a number we are. We see that in many matters we compare favorably with the most flourishing of the other colonies, in proportion to our number and to our public debt. It is really wonderful the progress that has been made in agriculture and in pastoral matters, by a small handful of people like we are; and it certainly is a matter for congratulation that, as has been pointed out by the hon. member for Roebourne, we compare favorably even with the great colony of Victoria in these things. His Excellency says he is informed that improvement in trade is perceptible; but the hon. member for the Swan seems to think it is not so. I think, myself, we may fairly conclude that trade is improving, from the fact that we have increased our clip of wool by some two or three thousand bales. This is an increase which cannot fail to have a beneficial

effect upon trade, and every other industry; and I only hope the prospects of the colony may continue to brighten under that new form of Government which it is about to enter upon.

**MR. A. FORREST:** I do not intend to occupy the time of the House but for a very short time. I shall not follow the lines of either the hon. member for Sussex, nor of the hon. member for Roebourne. Both of their speeches were, generally, of a very congratulatory nature; I shall not speak, myself, at all in that way. I shall first deal with the question of our Eastern goldfields. At the last session of this Council we voted a sum of money, £10,000, for the Government to enable them to provide water upon these fields. I should like to ask the Government what they have done since November last in this matter? Nothing,—I say nothing. I can prove it to this House that people in this colony have spent a sum equal to £40,000 in trying to develop these fields. These people are not men belonging to the highest or wealthiest classes, but working men, tradesmen, and others of that class, who have not been afraid to lay out their money in trying to develop these goldfields, not only for their own benefit but for the benefit of the colony generally. Some of these people have sunk pretty well all they have in trying to develop these goldfields. But the Government have done nothing at all, though we gave them £10,000 last session to spend upon these goldfields, to assist in their development. They have had this money voted by this House, and they do nothing with it for months. Perhaps they hadn't got it actually in the chest, but it would have been a very easy matter for them to have arranged for an overdraft, and gone to work to obtain a sufficient supply of water to keep people on the goldfields. But they didn't do so. No; they let other people spend money which some of them could ill afford, in trying to develop these fields, and the Government folded their hands and looked on. I am glad to think that we have recently had a good supply of water; but we haven't got to thank the Government for it, in any way. If it had not been for that fortunate rainfall the other day, these fields would have been abandoned. People

were actually on their way from the fields, for they saw there was nothing to expect from the Government in the shape of any assistance. I cannot help thinking that if the gentlemen who occupy seats on the Treasury bench were Ministers responsible to the people, we should not have found them sitting idle, with all this money placed at their disposal. They would have gone to work with it, and encouraged other people, who were spending thousands of pounds in trying to develop these goldfields. I consider, myself, that the greatest blame attaches to the Government in this matter, and they deserve the greatest censure. I think they have shown the greatest possible want of energy in connection with these goldfields. The Governor in all his speeches during the last few sessions led the country to believe that these goldfields were genuine, and we believed him; but what action has his Government taken to prove that the fields are genuine, and to show the world that they are so? None at all. Other people have been allowed to spend their money, but the Government of the colony did nothing; and I, for one, cannot congratulate the Government on their conduct in this matter. In fact, if we had another Constitution, I should raise my voice strongly against the action of the Government, and move a vote of censure upon them. All they have done is to mulct the people of the colony in heavy fees for the land; they were quite ready to take as much money as they could get in this way from the pockets of prospectors, but they wouldn't do anything themselves to help these people to get water to carry on their operations. It would have been a very easy matter for the Government to have laid out a townsite at these goldfields, and, if they wanted more money, to have sold town lots, and get a water supply, which would have made the thing reproductive at once. If they had done that, instead of, as at present, having some 200 people on the fields, we should have had 2,000. [The COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS: A townsite is laid out.] What is the good of a townsite without water? I am surprised at the Commissioner of Crown Lands saying such a thing. I am certain that if we had a Government that was responsible to the people, instead of



our having one solitary boring machine on the field we should have had a dozen or two, and the returns from the fields would have been going back to the pockets of the people. I pass on from this subject to a more satisfactory one. Being one of the first who had something to do with the railway from Beverley to Albany, I feel great pleasure in being able to stand here to-night to congratulate not only the contractors and the railway company, but also those who assisted in passing this line through the House; I congratulate all connected with it upon the completion of this great work—one of the greatest benefits ever conferred upon this colony. This line will revolutionise the place, by bringing us into closer contact with the other colonies, and I believe the country will derive the greatest benefit from it. I cannot agree with my hon. friend on the left (Mr. Grant), when he talks about the Government having to curtail their expenditure, and to abstain from spending the public funds. I think it's a bad sign when people find it necessary to curtail their expenditure; when we see a commercial house curtailing its expenditure, and doing away with its servants, we begin to fancy there is something wrong. I don't want to see the Government of a young colony like this curtailing its expenditure, so long as the money is not wasted, or frittered away on foolish objects. The prospects of the colony are decidedly improving in some directions, but not in all. Our export of wool has increased by 2,000 bales; and an increase of 200,000 sheep is decidedly a move ahead. But the state of trade, generally, has not improved. In these Southern portions of the colony, the prospects of the people are no better now than they were last year. I believe they are far worse; and the reason is not far to seek. The reason is that all public works throughout the colony have been stopped. The Government sit down and say, "We will do nothing until you get Responsible Government." That is their excuse now. The Governor told us a year or two ago that the present Constitution was "up a tree," and that we couldn't do any more with it; that it couldn't be worked any longer. And I must say that the Governor has carried that out to the very

letter. He has not tried to do anything for the colony during the last twelve months, except trying to balance the revenue and expenditure as well as he possibly could, so that at the end of 1890 he may be able to leave a sum of £18,000 to the good. I am sorry to have to make these remarks, because I was in hopes that the Government at this session would have come down and said, "We intend at once to develop your goldfields, and we intend at once to find a water supply, not only at Yilgarn but also at Pilbarra, and we will do everything we possibly can to shove the colony along." Instead of that they do nothing. The Governor said, eighteen months ago, that the present form of Government was played out, and he has acted up to that, to the very letter, by doing nothing.

MR. SCOTT: I have no intention of saying many words, except that it occurred to me this evening that something should certainly have been said in the Governor's Speech with reference to the discovery of coal. It is very strange that no allusion whatever was made to this fact, and I was glad to hear from the hon. member for Geraldton that he thought it must have been an omission. When we find other mineral discoveries alluded to, it becomes still more strange that no mention whatever is made of the coalfields up at Champion Bay. I think it would have been better to have confined the Speech to one point—the Constitution Bill—and have made no reference at all to our mineral deposits, than to have given prominence to these mineral discoveries, and yet not said a word about one of the most important discoveries of all. We all know that the Speech of the Governor on these occasions is read far and wide, and great importance is attached to it. Therefore I think it is a most unfortunate omission. I also notice that the discovery of tin—another important discovery—is only just casually mentioned in the Speech. I cannot help thinking that this discovery is a very important one for our Southern districts, and that it deserved something more than a mere passing reference in His Excellency's Speech. As we now have a Government Geologist, who was specially appointed to report upon these mineral finds, the colony naturally looks to the Government for some definite infor-

mation on these subjects; and when we find the Governor in his Speech to the Legislature only just casually mentioning these important discoveries, and saying nothing at all about the most important of all, it does seem strange; and no doubt will give rise to a great deal of comment, especially outside the colony. People will naturally say, "Here is the Governor of the colony, in his Speech to the Legislature, making no reference at all to any coal discovery, and only incidentally referring to the alleged discoveries of tin; it looks strange, it looks suspicious." In this way I cannot help thinking the result of His Excellency's Speech will be very disappointing. It seems to me that at this particular juncture in our history, when the mineral resources of the colony present such indications of a very bright future for Western Australia, it would have been a very good thing if the Governor of the colony had given greater prominence to these matters. It may be said that the session is called together to consider the question of the Constitution, and that the Speech is only intended to deal with that subject. But we find other subjects introduced into the Speech, and, among them, the mineral discoveries in the shape of gold and tin; but not a word is mentioned about coal. I cannot help thinking, as I said before, that seeing that the eyes of the outside world are just now particularly directed to this colony, His Excellency's Speech at this juncture will be read outside the colony with the greatest interest; and it is much to be regretted, I think, that no opportunity was taken of giving greater prominence to the bright mineral prospects which seem to be opened out for the colony.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): If no other hon. member intends to address the House I think it would be well that I should give a little information with regard to one or two points which seem to have disturbed the equanimity of some hon. members. First, as regards the question of coal, which seems to trouble the minds of some members very much. Hon. members must be aware that the Government Geologist has twice visited the locality of this discovery, and, on the last occasion, he made a very favorable report as to the existence

of what he designated, I believe, as coal. But the question yet remains to be settled as to whether it is of marketable or commercial value. His report was published; and no doubt he will again visit the field before long. He is now on his way down to the tin country, and is endeavoring to overtake the examination of that mineral district, with all possible speed. Therefore, so far as the Geological Department is concerned, I think it must be allowed that it is actively engaged. With regard to the water supply on the goldfields, to which allusion has been made by several hon. members, we must remember that it is only about three months since this House was last in session, and sanctioned the expenditure of public funds in this direction. The Government took steps without delay to do what was practicable, and what was reasonable, under the circumstances. The other colonies were referred to in the matter, so as to ascertain the most desirable system of going to work in the matter of water boring; and, after considerable trouble and inquiry, it was ascertained by the Public Works Department—I am sorry my hon. colleague the Commissioner is unable to attend in his place; he would have been able to give the House every information—what would be the best system to adopt; and no time was lost in opening negotiations and in concluding the purchase of a boring machine suitable for our purpose, and in engaging an expert to take charge of the machine, which we were told was necessary. This machine is now on its way to the fields, I believe,—I am not quite certain, but I believe it is *in transitu* by steamer. I am informed that even if we had had it here, and on the fields, it could not have been utilised, until the recent downfall of rain, which we were fortunate enough to get, almost in our last extremity—for the Warden wrote to me last week that the men were deserting the field for want of water. Now, however, a water supply has come, and the boring machine will be here directly, and will be set to work without delay. I can assure the House there has been no remissness at all on the part of the Government. If we had the most powerful and the most energetic Ministry that ever existed under Responsible Government, consisting of that galaxy of talent which

I see on the opposite bench, I venture to say they could not have done more, under the circumstances. Therefore I think the strictures of some hon. members are altogether uncalled for. As to coal, the public are already in possession of the Government Geologist's report on the subject; and, as to tin, the Government Geologist is now on his way to report upon that. With regard to the water-boring machine we have done all that could be expected from any prudent Government, and, as I said before, if the machine had been on the fields months ago, it could not have been worked until we had a fall of rain.

**MR. GRANT:** As the discovery of coal had already been reported officially, by the Government Geologist, why not have given it forth to the world in His Excellency's Speech?

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser):** I presume it was an oversight; or His Excellency may not have thought it necessary to refer to every subject under the sun. If it was an omission, as I dare say it was, I am sure it was unintentional; and if I had known that the hon. member particularly wished the subject mentioned, I might perhaps have gone to His Excellency and humbly suggested a glowing reference to the carboniferous wealth of the district which my hon. friend represents, and whose interests he so sedulously guards.

**MR. RANDELL:** I think, sir, no one can read the Speech of His Excellency without being struck with its importance. There are several paragraphs which point this out very clearly, and I think if any hon. member who lays such stress upon the value of the Governor's Speech in the eyes of the outside world will carefully consider it, I think he will come to the conclusion that the Speech is one calculated to promote the best interests of the colony. He will see reference made to several matters of importance, calculated to attract the attention of the outside world to the progress of the colony. For instance, the laying of the new submarine cable to Roebuck Bay, the completion of our Northern telegraph lines to Derby, and the progress made with the further lines to the Kimberley goldfield, and thence to Wyndham; the completion of the Great Southern Railway, and the sale of lands in connection

with that line, the probable resumption of the works on the Midland Railway, and others matters, indicative of the progress and development of the colony. As to the mineral discoveries,—to which some hon. members seem to consider sufficient prominence has not been given—I am inclined to think that a great deal more has been made of this omission than ought to have been. My own opinion is that the first public duty of the Government is to feel perfectly sure of their ground, before uttering any public announcement that could be construed in any way as giving the sanction of their official position to any statement relating to these mineral discoveries. I do not think myself that either the goldfields at Yilgarn and Pilbarra, and in the Kimberley district, or the coal discoveries at the North, have yet reached those stages of development which would warrant the Government of the colony to lay official stress upon their value. I think the Government ought to act with great caution in these matters, and not be led into a large expenditure of public funds until they are satisfied that these discoveries have passed beyond the merely speculative stage. I think the action of the Government in this matter has been characterised by proper prudence, and by such caution as every man who has not a personal interest in these mineral discoveries will approve. It is all very well for those who have been induced to invest their money,—and we are told that some of them have invested their all; if so, all I can say is, they are great fools; I don't blame those who can afford it, for investing their spare cash, but to say that because a man chooses to invest all he possesses in a mining speculation, it is the duty of the Government to assist such people, appears to me an untenable position to take up. [**Mr. A. FORESTER:** They do it for the benefit of the country, as well as to benefit themselves.] Utter nonsense. They do it in the expectation that the investment will turn up trumps, and that their fortune will be made. It is precious little they care for the country. I think, myself, the Government have done everything in this matter they could reasonably be expected to do. I quite agree with the statement just made by the Colonial Secretary that no time has actually been

lost over the introduction of this boring machine. The purchase of expensive machinery like this is not a thing that could be settled in a few days, or in a few weeks, seeing that they have to go out of the colony for it. They want to gather some reliable information, and see that they are going to get value for their money. I think it is the duty of the Government, when spending public money, to see that the expenditure will be of public benefit, and not simply for the benefit of a few people residing about Perth and Fremantle, who may choose to invest their cash in mining enterprises. I have always thought that the development of our goldfields might fairly, to a certain extent, be assisted by the Government; but I think it is the duty of the Government to act with prudence and caution in these matters. These goldfields were started by private enterprise, and may still be regarded as a field for private enterprise; and I believe in no other part of the world would the work be undertaken by the Government, until it had been clearly proved by private enterprise that the fields were worthy of Government support, and that their development was likely to result in the benefit of the community at large. The hon. member for Perth spoke as to what a Ministry under another form of Government would have done in this matter, and he drew a comparison that was not at all favorable to the action of the present Government. I don't know whether the hon. member was in earnest or not; but I would remind the hon. member, "Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off." I cannot help thinking, myself, that the strictures of those who have condemned the action of the Government in this matter were undeserved. I was glad to hear, even from the hon. member for Kimberley—who generally likes to indulge in a little scolding when the Government is concerned—that there are prospects of an improvement in some quarters, and that the outlook, so far as the agricultural and pastoral industries are concerned, is brighter than it has been. I think, myself, there are many reasons why we should be satisfied with the outlook generally. No doubt there is still a con-

siderable amount of depression in trade, in the centres of population; but a great deal of it, I submit, has resulted from the fact that money has been diverted into other channels, into mining speculations chiefly. I have no doubt in my own mind that that is the cause of a great deal of the present depression in the centres of trade—the withdrawal of a considerable amount of floating capital from the ordinary channels of trade, for investment in our goldfields. I take it that those who have gone into these speculations have gone into them with their eyes open, and expect some future advantage; but in the meantime they must be content to make a sacrifice, and to be prepared for self-denial for the present. I do not know if anything good or great can be accomplished without it. I trust those who have ventured their means and given their time and labor to these fields may reap a rich reward by-and-by. With reference to the coal at the North, if it is found on further research and inquiry that it is a really marketable coal, of commercial value, I am sure the colony is to be congratulated upon the discovery of it, much more, in my opinion, than upon the discovery of gold itself. I know there is nothing perhaps like gold for giving just a fillip to the progress of a colony, but, on the other hand, coal is an abiding industry and one that has a great influence upon other industries, especially those that have to be worked by the aid of steam; and I sincerely hope and trust that the reported discovery on the Irwin will turn out to be a discovery of the genuine article, and a complete success. Nothing would tend more to develop that portion of the colony at any rate, and indeed to develop industrial activity generally. I think, sir, in conclusion, that we have arrived at a very important epoch in the history of the colony; at any rate in the constitutional history of the colony. The present Constitution may be said to be in the throes of dissolution; its closing hours are at hand, and I can only express a hope that members will bring to the framing of the Constitution that is to take its place their most careful consideration and, above all, sound common sense. I don't know that we can look for any great inspiration or political genius from any

of our members in this work, nor for anyone with any pretence to any great knowledge of constitutional history; but if we approach the question from a common sense and a patriotic point of view, and a desire to do our best in the interests of the country, and do what we can to hasten—without the sacrifice of principles—the advent of the new Constitution, we shall do our duty in the best possible way we can towards our fellow countrymen. I hope that such may be the result of our labors during this session, possibly the last of the present Council.

MR. MARMION: It was not my intention to have addressed the House this evening upon the subject of the Governor's Speech at all, because I look upon it as to a great extent a waste of time as a general rule to discuss these speeches at any length, seeing that in the ordinary course of the session each subject referred to in them will again come on for our special consideration. But after hearing some of the remarks of the hon. member who has just sat down, I feel it my duty to say a few words in response, and to endeavor to show the utter fallacy of some of the arguments which my hon. friend has put forth. The hon. member speaking with reference to the action taken, or rather the want of action, on the part of the Government with reference to the goldfields, spoke in defence of the conduct of the Government, and said he thought they were to be congratulated upon what they had not done. I say they are not to be congratulated. I say they are to be blamed for their inaction. I think if there is one object more than another just now calling for energetic action on the part of the Executive, with a view to develop the best interests of the colony, it is the development of the mineral wealth of the colony. That is a subject that should have had their closest attention. It was the one thing which the people, through their representatives, had boldly declared in favor of, and announced their intention of endorsing any reasonable expenditure on the part of the Government. I am certain that anything which the Government might have done, in good faith, to develop the mineral resources of the country, in assisting private enterprise, would have been endorsed by the people

of the colony through their representatives in this House. The hon. member says the Government had taken great care not to embark upon any speculative policy with regard to the mining industry, and the hon. member commended the Government for their inaction. I submit it is the bounden duty of the Government to assist private enterprise in the development of the mining industry and especially to assist in obtaining a supply of water to enable private enterprise to carry on its work, and to prove whether these mines are what they are represented to be. The Government has not kept back from giving its aid, and practically assisting in the development of other industries, such as the timber industry; and why should they withhold their support in this matter of the development of the country's mineral wealth. The hon. member says that private people are fools for putting their money in these investments. If private people are fools in expending their money in trying to develop these fields, and the Government are wise in refraining from assisting them, I should like to know how they are going to be developed. I fail to see why people are such fools after all. [MR. RANDELL: I didn't say so.] I took the hon. member's words down. [MR. RANDELL: I said they were fools if they embarked their all in such speculation.] Did the hon. member himself put his all in them? Not he. If these goldfields waited for the hon. member to assist in developing them, they would have to wait a long time. They would have to wait until the country was played out. What I want is that those who have the courage and the energy to invest their money (not necessarily all) in the development of the country's resources should be assisted by the Government, as far as possible. I do not wish the Government to do anything that is foolish. All I want them to do is to show their faith in the country's resources and do something to develop those resources. I think that in this matter the Government have displayed a spirit of inaction which is not at all to their credit. I say it in all earnestness. I say it as the mouthpiece of hundreds of people who have invested their money in the Eastern goldfields. I would not mind taking a *plébiscite* of the country to-morrow on this

point; I am certain I should find my opinion endorsed by a majority both outside this House and in it.

MR. BURT: I don't know, sir, that I should have got up at all on this occasion, but I cannot remain silent when I see the contracted ideas with which the hon. member who has just sat down seems to view this question. His ideas are limited to Yilgarn. In his eyes Yilgarn is the only goldfield in the colony, which deserves the attention of the Government. I would remind the hon. member that there is also a goldfield in the district which I represent; and I am not at all sure that at Pilbarra we have not a much better goldfield than at Yilgarn. I must protest against this everlasting demand for Government assistance to develop the Yilgarn goldfield, as if there were no other goldfields in the colony. I should like to know what the Government have done towards finding water at Pilbarra, or what they have done to develop those fields. We hear a great deal of other mineral discoveries, all over the colony. I cannot help thinking with the hon. member, Mr. Randell, that the Government would do well to exercise a great deal of caution and prudence in respect of these discoveries. I think at the present stage of the colony's history we require a good deal of prudence—more prudence than some hon. members seem to be gifted with. I quite agree with that hon. member that it is not the duty of the Government to follow this wave of private speculation, all over the country, wherever these adventurous spirits choose to go, and spend their money. I think it is the duty of the Government, before spending public money, to exercise prudence, and to see that there is some reasonable ground for the expenditure, and some reasonable prospect of success; and not to take it for granted that every alleged discovery is going to turn out an El Dorado. It is the duty of the Government to see how far, in justice to the rest of the colony, the public funds should be expended in this direction. Anyone would think that the development of Yilgarn was the only thing worthy of the consideration of the Government, and that the Government would be justified in ignoring the claims of every other part of the colony, so long as they kept their

eye upon Yilgarn. I dare say a great deal of private capital has been spent at Yilgarn, as hon. members say, and I think we may take it as an ascertained fact that we have a goldfield there. But one cannot say the same thing of the Irwin coalfield. I don't think it is an ascertained fact, as yet at any rate, that at the Irwin the colony has a payable coalfield; and I think the Governor acted very wisely in refraining from putting it forth to the world, in his Speech to this House, that the discovery of a payable coalfield in this colony was an ascertained fact. It does not always follow that because a few enthusiastic gentlemen come to the conclusion that they have discovered a payable goldfield, or a payable coalfield, that the Governor of the colony is to come forward in his Speech to the Legislature, and announce it to the world as a genuine and ascertained fact. I am not an expert myself, and this Irwin coal, for all I know, may be all that some people's fancy paint it. But, at present, I say, it is not an ascertained fact; and, at this stage, I think the Governor acted prudently in hesitating before giving it forth to the world that we had a rich coalfield at the Irwin or anywhere else. Then with regard to tin at the Blackwood; I think when the Governor goes so far as to mention in his Speech that there has been a rich discovery of tin made in that district, he has done all that any prudent man could expect him to do. These announcements of mineral discoveries all over the colony are not of to-day. I am not in this House for the first time, this year; I have held a seat here, on and off, for some 14 or 17 years; and I recollect an occasion, years ago, when the leader of the Government in this House pulled out of his waistcoat pocket a piece of gold, and laid it on the table; and we were told that beyond doubt we had one of the richest and most magnificent goldfields at the Blackwood that were ever discovered in any of Her Majesty's possessions. Where is that goldfield now? Did any hon. member put his money in it? If he did, I am afraid he lost it. [MR. A. FORREST: That was long ago.] Certainly it was long ago; but similar things have happened more than once since then. Therefore I say that in the expenditure of public money in connec-

tion with alleged mineral discoveries, the Government need be prudent and not be too yielding, before they ascertain that the expenditure is a justifiable expenditure, in the interest of the colony. The hon. member for Kimberley took the Government somewhat to task for not showing more energy in obtaining a water-boring machine for Yilgarn, but it is not long since the House authorised the Government to purchase this machine. I know from my own knowledge that a private company interested in the fields has been longer than the Government in endeavoring to obtain a crushing plant. That company, I take it, acted prudently and judiciously, and with due energy, in their own interests, in carrying out their negotiations; and the fact remains that it has taken them longer to get their plant than it has taken the Government to get their boring machine. Therefore it can hardly be said that the Government have been culpably slow about this matter. At the same time it must be admitted that valuable time has been lost, from some cause or the other, in obtaining a water supply for these gold-fields—either from the House not voting the money in time, or from the employment in the first instance of a machine that proved abortive. That, however, is one thing; for the Government to throw away money in other directions, where the existence of a payable field has not been proved, as an ascertained fact, is another thing. I rose merely to congratulate the hon. member, Mr. Randell, upon the word of caution he dealt round. For myself, I am glad to see that all ideas of prudence have not yet departed from this House, although we are on our last legs, so far as the present Constitution is concerned—though, for my own part, I think we may consider ourselves fortunate if we do not have to meet here again under this same Constitution. The bill for giving us a new Constitution will, of course, come before us, and we may pass it; but, by the time the British Government, with its hands as full as we know them to be, finds an opportunity for passing the Enabling Act, I think hon. members will find that it will be 1890 before they see that Constitution in force which they so much desire.

MR. KEANE: I rise, like my hon. friend who has just sat down, to con-

gratulate the hon. member, Mr. Randell, on the very sensible speech he made. I think whenever that hon. member gets on his legs he generally manages to say something that is sensible; he does not allow his feelings to run away with him. With respect to the remarks of the hon. member for Geraldton, I really do share his surprise that no reference whatever is made in His Excellency's Speech to the coal discovery on the Irwin. It would seem that the Government had some doubt as to the value of the report of their own officer, the Government Geologist. With respect to Yilgarn, I think the Government, in the earliest stages of the discovery, were very remiss indeed; but, I think that since the House voted the money last session for a boring machine, they have done all that was within their power in the matter. If they had gone and expended a large sum without making any inquiries, and wasted a lot of money, who would have been the first to blame them? This House. Instead of doing that, they went cautiously to work, and sought to do the best they could to get a proper machine, and all the information necessary for working it. I fail to see that any censure ought to be cast upon them for that.

Question put—That an humble address be presented.

Agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) moved that a select committee be appointed to consider the Address in Reply; such committee to consist of Mr. Rason, Mr. Paterson, Mr. Parker, Mr. Randell, and the Mover.

Agreed to.

The committee withdrew to prepare the address.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) brought up the address prepared by the committee, and moved that it be read.

Question—put and passed.

The Address was read at the table by the Clerk, as follows:—

*"To His Excellency Sir Frederick Napier Broome, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Territory of Western Australia and its Dependencies, &c., &c., &c."*

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

"We, the Members of the Legislative Council of Western Australia, beg to thank Your Excellency for the Speech with which you have been pleased to open this Council.

"The Bill to confer a Constitution on Western Australia, to consider which we have been specially called together, will have our earnest and thoughtful consideration, and it is our duty and will be our endeavor to apply ourselves conscientiously to its construction.

"We are glad to learn that, in accordance with the desire of the last Council, an Act for the regulation of our Pearl Shell Fisheries was passed by the Federal Council at its recent meeting at Hobart, and we trust that this measure will meet with favorable consideration from the Imperial Government. The question of increasing the number of members of the Federal Council will have our careful attention, when brought before us. We agree with Your Excellency that the cause of Federation is substantially advancing, and that wider results will follow in due course.

"The intelligence that the new Submarine Cable has been laid to Roebuck Bay, and that good progress is making in telegraph construction to Kimberley Goldfield and Wyndham, is very satisfactory.

"The Colony is to be congratulated on the opening of the Great Southern Railway for mails and passengers. We concur with Your Excellency that the completion of this most important work cannot fail to bring about increased settlement in the district which it traverses.

"The continued discovery of auriferous and other mineral deposits points certainly to a great future for the Colony, and although doubtless the greatest care and economy is requisite at this date, we anticipate that with good fortune, as Your Excellency states, the expenses in connection with the introduction of Responsible Government may be provided for.

"In conclusion, we may express a hope, in concert with Your Excellency, that the work we are about to apply ourselves to may be completed successfully."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) moved that the report, as read, be adopted.

Agreed to.

The House adjourned at ten minutes past nine o'clock, p.m.

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## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, *Monday, 18th March, 1889.*

Land Revenue up to 14th March, 1889—Constitution Bill: second reading—Aborigines Bill: second reading—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at seven o'clock, p.m.

### PRAYERS.

### LAND REVENUE UP TO MARCH 14TH, 1889.

MR. A. FORREST, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands to lay on the table a return showing the amount of land revenue received from the 1st January, 1889, to date; also for the same period of 1888. His object in asking for the return was to see whether the land revenue had fallen off, or had improved since last year.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) laid the return asked for on the table, and stated that the amount received from January 1st up to the 14th March, 1888, was £63,380 8s. 1d., and the amount received for the same period this year was £67,277 15s. 7d., showing an increase of £3,897 7s. 6d.

### CONSTITUTION BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said that in rising to address the House to move the second reading of this bill, he felt that he would have to pass over well-trodden ground,