

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

THIRD SESSION OF THE SEVENTH PARLIAMENT.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Third Session of the Seventh Parliament under Responsible Government was convened for the despatch of business on the 28th July, 1910.

Parliament was opened by His Excellency the Governor.

Legislative Council, Thursday, 28th July, 1910.

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the Chief Justice (Senior Commissioner) read the following statement:—

Honourable gentlemen of the Legislative Council and gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly:

We have it in command from His Excellency the Governor to deliver to you the following Message:—

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Legislative Council met at 12 noon, pursuant to proclamation, which was read by the Clerk of Parliaments (Mr. G. F. Hillman).

COMMISSIONERS.

His Excellency's Commissioners (His Honour the Chief Justice, Sir S. H. Parker, and His Honour, Mr. Justice McMillan) having entered the Chamber, a Message was sent to the Legislative Assembly requesting the presence of members in the Council Chamber.

Members of the Legislative Assembly having arrived accordingly, His Honour,

The Governor informs the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly that he has officially learned, with the deepest regret, that our late Most Gracious Sovereign, His Majesty King Edward the Seventh, departed this life on the sixth day of May, 1910. The Governor further informs the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly that His Most Gracious Majesty King George the Fifth was duly and lawfully proclaimed King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India, Supreme Lord in and over the State of Western Australia, whereof public proclamation and due notification was fully and lawfully made by the Governor within this State on the ninth day of May, one

thousand nine hundred and ten. The Governor therefore desires that honourable members will, before they proceed to sit and vote in their respective Houses, severally take and subscribe the oath of allegiance to His Most Gracious Majesty King George the Fifth, before a Commissioner duly authorised by the Governor to attend in the Chamber of the Legislative Council and of the Legislative Assembly respectively this day to administer the same.

We have it also in command from His Excellency the Governor to let you know that he will in person in this place declare the reasons for calling the Parliament together so soon as the members of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly have been sworn and the Council has elected its President.

The members of the Legislative Assembly having retired, and the Junior Commissioner having left the Chamber, the Clerk read a Commission from His Excellency appointing the Chief Justice a Commissioner for administering to the members of the Legislative Council the oath of allegiance to His Majesty King George V.

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

Consequent on the demise of King Edward VII. and the accession of King George V., the members of the Legislative Council took the oath of allegiance to His Majesty the King.

New Members.

The following members (one-third of the Council) elected since the prorogation, signed the members' roll and took their seats:—Hon. H. Briggs (West), Hon. W. Kingsmill (Metropolitan), Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom (North), Hon. V. Hamersley (East), Hon. R. D. McKenzie (North-East), Hon. W. Patrick (Central), Hon. E. McLarty (South-West), Hon. D. G. Gawler (Metropolitan-Suburban), Hon. J. E. Dodd (South), Hon. C. McKenzie (South-East).

The Commissioner left the Chamber.

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly): Hon. members, since we last met, the office of President has become vacant owing to the effluxion of time of the seat of the Hon. Henry Briggs. I am certain I am voicing the opinion of the majority of members when I say we all heard with the greatest pleasure that the Hon. Henry Briggs was re-elected to his old seat, and that we were, therefore, given the opportunity of re-electing him to the office of President, a position which he has filled with such dignity and credit both to himself and to the members of the House. I have very much pleasure, therefore, in moving—

That the Hon. Henry Briggs be President of this honourable House.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT (South-West): I have unqualified pleasure in seconding and supporting the proposition of the hon. member opposite. We have made a good trial of our late President, and I speak, I am sure, with the thought of every one in this Chamber when I say he has been successful throughout. The hon. member has entirely justified the selection of the House. I have much pleasure in seconding the proposition.

Hon. H. BRIGGS: Mr. Clerk and hon. members. I thank the mover and seconder of my nomination, and I beg leave to submit myself to the will of the House.

There being no other nomination the Hon. H. Briggs was thus duly elected, and was conducted to the Chair by his proposer and seconder.

The PRESIDENT-ELECT, standing on the upper step, said: I beg leave to express my humble acknowledgment for the honour that you have been pleased to confer on me in again electing me as President. I hope that your kindly feeling which has led to my election to the office may be continued to sustain me in the discharge of its important duties. For I recognise that the Council is what it is, not merely by virtue of the rules of debate which it obeys, nor the impartiality with which these rules are admin-

istered, but by reason of the high spirit of public duty which pervades its proceedings. Its past history has been enriched by the fine character of members who used the Standing Orders in a spirit of fairness, reverence, decorum, and honesty of purpose. In thus interpreting the spirit of the House, I shall always be your obedient servant. I feel sure that in the future, as in the past, I shall have the support of hon. members in every endeavour to uphold the honour and dignity of the Council, and with such support I may hope to deserve your confidence so generously bestowed.

Congratulations.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly): Allow me as leader of this House to offer to you, Mr. President, my hearty congratulations on your being unanimously elected as President of this honourable House. I trust you may be long spared to fill the office to which you have for the second time been elected. On my own behalf I have to thank you for the kindness and courtesy you have always shown to me as leader of the House, and I have very much pleasure indeed in congratulating you on your re-election to the high office.

The PRESIDENT: Hon. members, I thank the leader of the House for his kind words of congratulation. I have nothing to add to what I have just said, except that I trust in the support of members of this House. It is very pleasing that, although ten of us had to go to the electors, all those who desired to be returned again to Parliament have been re-elected, so that virtually we have only three new members in the House, the Hon. D. G. Gawler, the Hon. J. E. Dodd, and the Hon. C. McKenzie. The Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom has been elected twice, but I think this is the first occasion he has sat in the House as the result of those two elections. We cannot, however, look upon him as a new member. When I entered the Council in 1896 he was the leader of this House, and he served this House and his country in various ways, not only here but also in the Mother country. That explains why it is that we cannot look upon him as a

new member. We may congratulate ourselves that the House has the benefit of his ripe experience, knowledge, and judgment. The other new members, the Hon. Mr. Dodd, the Hon. Mr. McKenzie, and the Hon. Mr. Gawler, are now appearing in this House for the first time; but they were not new in this State for the tongue of good report has already long been heard in their favour. I feel sure their entrance to this House will be an acquisition to the debating power of the Legislative Council and the sound wisdom of the decisions of the Chamber. I welcome them, and it will be my pleasure, as it is my duty, to afford the new members any information they may desire to obtain from me. Members, I thank you.

DEMISE OF KING EDWARD VII: ACCESSION OF KING GEORGE

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly): On account of the death of our late beloved King I beg to move the following motion—

We, the members of the Legislative Council in the Parliament of the State of Western Australia, take this the earliest opportunity of expressing our deep sympathy in the great sorrow which your Majesty has sustained through the death of your illustrious father and our late beloved Sovereign, King Edward VII.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT (South-West): I second the motion.

Question passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly): I beg to move—

We, the members of the Legislative Council in the Parliament of the State of Western Australia, humbly offer our sincere congratulations on your Majesty's accession to the Throne. We desire to assure your Majesty of our loyalty and devotion, and to express the hope that your Majesty may enjoy a long and prosperous reign.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT (South-West):
I second the motion.

Question passed.

(Sitting suspended from 12.55 to 3 p.m.)

PRESENTATION OF PRESIDENT-ELECT.

The PRESIDENT said: I have been presented to His Excellency the Governor and he has expressed his approval of your choice.

THE GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

His Excellency the Governor entered the Council Chamber at 3.5 p.m.; and the members of the Legislative Assembly having also attended in the Chamber obediently to summons, His Excellency was pleased to deliver the following Speech:—

Mr. President and Honourable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council—

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly—

It is with profound regret that I refer to the loss which the Empire has sustained through the death of His Most Gracious Majesty King Edward VII., of blessed and glorious memory.

His short but beneficent reign was fraught with innumerable blessings to his subjects, not the least of which were his continuous and effective efforts for the maintenance of peace throughout the world.

His sympathy with his people in their joys and sorrows alike secured the continuance in fullest strength of those close ties of affection and loyalty which unite Sovereign and subject throughout the Empire.

The accession of His Most Gracious Majesty King George V., and his intimate personal acquaintance with the dominions beyond the seas, give assurance of the unceasing exercise of that devotion to the welfare of the Empire which characterised the reign of his illustrious father.

During the Parliamentary recess my Ministers deemed it advisable that the

Premier of the State should visit London, with a view to inquiring into the representation of Western Australia in the capital of the Empire, and directing attention to the many inducements which the State has to offer both to those desirous of securing an outlet for the legitimate investment of capital, and to enterprising agriculturists.

My Ministers are satisfied that the visit has proved, and is proving, of great advantage to the State, owing to the opportunity which has been afforded of disseminating reliable information regarding the many and varied resources of Western Australia, and the openings which these offer to the surplus industry and energy of the old world.

My advisers regret that the Financial Agreement, which was the outcome of several inter-State conferences, and ultimately adopted by the Federal Parliament, was rejected when submitted to the electors of Australia at the recent Commonwealth elections, although carried by a large majority in this State. The solution of this most important problem now rests with the Federal Parliament.

Feeling that the delay in beginning the construction of the Trans-Australian railway is fraught, not only with grave injury to the interests of Western Australia, but is also a menace to the safety of the Commonwealth as a whole, my advisers are of opinion that, rather than incur a further indefinite postponement, the project should be undertaken by the two States through whose territory the line will pass.

The success of the recently completed bore on the proposed route of the Trans-Australian railway proves that a vast artesian basin extends into South Australian territory, and adds immense value to the large expanse of pastoral country lying between Kalgoorlie and the South Australian border.

The development of the enormous agricultural resources of the State has been pushed on apace, and gratifying reports continue to be received regarding the successful operations of the many new settlers on the land.

Last season's harvest realised nearly six million bushels of wheat, of which over

two million bushels have already been shipped to the markets of the world.

It is confidently anticipated that the late but abundant rains throughout the State will assure for this season a harvest equal in the yield per acre, but considerably larger in the total production, owing to the wide extent of new country brought under cultivation.

Over 1,400,000 acres have been allotted during the past year to conditional purchase selectors, and nearly 250,000 acres in homestead farms; whilst over 2,600,000 acres have been surveyed—the whole constituting an admirable record in the work of the Lands Department.

Every effort is being made, by the clearing of roads and the provision of water supplies, to meet the wants of the continued influx of desirable settlers.

In company with agriculture, our horticultural pursuits show a marked and pleasing expansion. Western Australian fruits are in great and ever-increasing demand, and have secured the highest prices in the English markets.

In order to make the necessary provision for the export of wheat, which is expanding at a phenomenal rate, it has been decided to erect large grain sheds at North Fremantle, equipped with the most modern and effective appliances for the rapid despatch of vessels; and at the other ports commensurate facilities will also be required.

For the same reason it is necessary to maintain our railways in a position to meet the new demands made from year to year, and the completion of additional rolling-stock within the State will be hastened by my advisers.

My ministers are of opinion that the time has arrived for the State to make provision for the erection of freezing and canning works at Wyndham and elsewhere, in order that the steady increase of our herds may not be checked, but find a profitable outlet in the markets of Eastern Asia and Europe.

The mining industry continues to be a great factor in the prosperity of the country, and the most encouraging reports have lately been received from various portions of the auriferous areas of the State. Continued developments

prove the existence of payable lodes at great depth, while many recent discoveries show there is ample scope for the prospector.

The openings of the railways to Sandstone and Meekatharra will, it is anticipated, expedite the development of those promising centres.

The increased activity in the coal and timber industries has been well maintained.

Under the direction of the Public Works Department many important works have been completed, and others are now in course of construction.

Two hundred and fifty-seven miles of new railways have been handed over to the control of the Railway Department; 224 miles are being constructed, and tenders have been called for a further 89 miles, embracing the second section of the Dowerin-Merredin and the Boyup-Kojonup lines.

Various harbour improvement works, authorised by Parliament, including the extension of the Bunbury, Busselton, and Geraldton jetties, have been carried out as expeditiously as possible, and should be of great value to the respective districts.

The completion of additional lighthouses on the North-West portion of our coast-line is filling a long-felt want in connection with safe navigation in those waters, whilst the important work of surveying our coast will be continued by H.M.S. "Fantome."

Additional water supplies for town and country have been undertaken, and bores are being sunk in various parts of the State.

The metropolitan sewerage works have made satisfactory progress under the new Act, proclaimed in January last, and the reticulation of the more important parts of the city of Perth is drawing near to completion.

The board appointed to consider the report of the experts in London in connection with the corrosion of the Goldfields Water Supply main has sent in its recommendations, and, after due consideration by my advisers, an expenditure of £31,000 has been authorised, which it is anticipated will not only considerably in-

crease the life of the main, but also effect some economy in working.

Recognising that much of the future prosperity of the State depends upon the rapid construction of agricultural railways, an expert board, consisting of the manager of the Agricultural Bank, the Director of Agriculture, the Surveyor General, and the Chief Inspector of Engineering Surveys, was appointed in March last to inspect the country within an assured rainfall, and advise my Ministers as to future extensions. The board has already performed an immense amount of work, and the result of its labours will be placed before Parliament for the guidance of honourable members.

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly—

The Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure will shortly be submitted for your approval.

The finances of the State have continued to receive the greatest care at the hands of my Ministers, and I am pleased to announce that the revenue for the past financial year exceeded that of the previous year by £383,000, and resulted in a surplus of £210,000 on the year's transactions.

Additional expenditure from loan funds is necessary upon railways already authorised, and new railways, for which sanction will be sought during the present Session; on harbour and river improvements; freezing works; shipping facilities; the sewerage and waterworks in the metropolitan area; assisting the establishment of secondary industries; and other important works for which your approval is required.

Mr. President and Honourable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council—

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly—

The marked and continuous improvement in the commercial prosperity of the community is most gratifying. My advisers are convinced that the application, with increased vigour, of the efforts now being pursued, with the object of developing the natural resources of the country, is in the best interests of Western Australia.

A comprehensive scheme of agricultural railway extension will therefore be submitted for your approval, features of which will be the opening up of the areas of cultivable land between the Wongan Hills and the Murehison Goldfields Railway; the extension of existing and the construction of other lines to serve the country adjacent to the Great Southern and Eastern Railways; and the tapping of the South-Western district lying between Bridgetown, Busselton, and Denmark; also the extension of the Northampton and Upper Chapman Railways, to serve large areas of first-class lands recently surveyed in those districts.

The necessary steps will also be taken to secure railway facilities for the Lawlers district.

The amendment of the Constitution Act, brought forward last Session, and having for its object the liberalising of the qualification of electors of the Legislative Council, will be re-submitted for your approval.

A Bill will also be introduced to provide for a redistribution of seats in the Legislative Assembly, rendered necessary by the increase and movements of population, and with a view to the correction of anomalies which exist at the present time.

The industrial and commercial development now proceeding in Western Australia makes it imperative to provide additional educational facilities, adequate to our fast-expanding possibilities. You will, therefore, be asked to make provision for the establishment of a University on lines which will correspond with the practical needs of a modern community.

Measures are also in contemplation to permit of an extension of the present system of primary education, by means of evening continuation classes for young people whose period of education in the primary schools has terminated.

The importance of encouraging the establishment of secondary industries has received the consideration of my Ministers. With a view to the better achievement of that purpose it has been decided to extend the scope of the Department of Agriculture, so as to include the collec-

tion and dissemination of information which will assist in the expansion of existing industries, the opening up of new avenues of employment, and the remunerative investment of capital.

The Liquor Law Reform and Public Health Bills of last Session will be again submitted, and, among others, you will be asked to consider important measures dealing with road boards, mining trading accounts, management of hospitals, and the licensing and conduct of race-courses.

I now leave you to your deliberations, and trust that, aided by Divine direction, your labours will materially advance the well-being of the State.

The Governor then retired and the President (Hon. H. Briggs) took the Chair.

COMMISSION FOR SWEARING-IN.

The Clerk read a Commission from His Excellency the Governor authorising the President to administer to members of the Legislative Council who may have to be sworn the oath or affirmation.

STATUTES COMPILATION—PHARMACY AND POISONS LAW.

The PRESIDENT laid on the Table a compilation of the Pharmacy and Poisons Act, 1894, and the amendments thereto, made in accordance with a resolution of the previous session.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: 1, Reports and returns in accordance with Sections 54 and 83 of the Government Railways Act, 1904; 2, Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Charities; 3, annual report of the Department of Mines; 4, by-laws of the Local Boards of Health of the Augusta Road District, Black Range, Davyhurst-Mulwarrie, Denmark, Derby, Kelmescott Road District, Meekatharra, Newcastle, Perth, Ravensthorpe, Three Springs, West Guildford; 5, annual report Chief Inspector of Liquors; 6, by-laws of the municipalities of Carnarvon, Claremont, Cottesloe, Geraldton, Guildford, Leederville, Menzies, North

Perth, Perth; 7, annual report on Medical, Health, Factories, Early Closing, Vaccination, and Quarantine; 8, annual report of the Education Department.

BILL—PARKS AND RESERVES ACT AMENDMENT.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly): In order to assert and maintain the undoubted rights and privileges of this House to initiate legislation I move (without notice) for leave to introduce a Bill entitled "An Act to amend the Parks and Reserves Act, 1895."

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

The PRESIDENT: I have to announce that His Excellency the Governor has delivered a Speech declaring the reasons for calling this Parliament together. For the sake of convenience a copy of the Speech will be placed before each member.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER (Metropolitan-Suburban): I beg to move the adoption of the following Address-in-Reply to His Excellency the Governor to the Speech he has just delivered to us:—

May it please your Excellency, we the Legislative Council of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

I would like at the outset to take the opportunity of thanking the Government for the honour they have conferred on me by asking me to move this motion. I am aware it is a privilege usually accorded to new members, but I can assure them that new members none the less appreciate it. I should also like to be allowed to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your re-election to the honourable position you hold. The fact that you were re-elected after your long term of office shows the continued respect and the appreciation of your services which

exist, and which I am sure are well deserved. I would also like to be allowed to congratulate the Premier upon the honour bestowed on him in England. It is more than a personal honour to the Premier, for it is a tribute to this State, and I am sure he will be the first to look upon it in that light. It is a source of great interest to this State, especially considering the fact that the Premier is a Western Australian born. I consider it a great thing to be called to this House—I consider it a great honour for any man to be called to the counsels of his country. I trust I shall do my duty in this House with a due sense of my responsibilities. The Speech we have had read to us is so far-reaching that it is absolutely impossible for me in the space of time at my disposal to touch upon anything like every subject therein contained, and I only propose, therefore, to refer to a few. I would like to say this, that the dominant note of the Speech appears to be buoyancy and the need for development, and there I am sure we are all with His Excellency. We are told in the Speech that the last season's wheat supply came to 6,000,000 bushels; that there has been an immense settlement under the conditional purchase and homestead farm conditions; that last year an enormous mileage of new railways was constructed; that there is an excess of revenue this year of £383,000 and a surplus of £210,000 and we are given promise of a comprehensive scheme of agricultural railways. And lastly but by no means least, we are told that we ought to construct our part of the Transcontinental railway. Every one will agree that that is a very large order. Personally, although I do it with all humility, I would like to ask, while we are pushing on with the development of this State, and while we are endeavouring to increase, as we are so enormously, the production of wheat, ought not we to remember the immense areas under wheat in various other parts of the world, and to consider that possibly the time might come when there will be an over-production of wheat and the price come down accordingly? It would be a very disas-

trous thing for Western Australia if the price of wheat suddenly came down, because it would mean an enormous loss to numbers of new settlers, and to the Government in respect to the advances they have made through the Agricultural Bank. I do not wish to suggest that this is going to happen; it is merely a word of caution. Considering we have set apart such an enormous area for wheat, and considering that we are developing it to such an extent, would it not be as well also to devote some little attention to grazing areas. We have extensive areas of land in the South and South-West which, I think, are suitable for grazing, and I hold that a little attention should be bestowed upon these areas as well as upon the wheat areas. There is one question I would like to touch upon, which is not mentioned in His Excellency's Speech but which came prominently forward at the late elections, namely, the abolition of the Upper House. I have been returned as a staunch supporter of this House, and on that subject I am not going to say anything more than that we must remember that no country of any note in the world has ever tried to do without this branch of the Legislature. And while we have, as we have, a large influential party in power in another place—and I say it advisedly, although at this juncture I do not wish to criticise their actions for a moment; while we have such an enormous influence exercised by that party upon the Government, does it not go without saying that there must be some check upon that party, otherwise we would quickly develop, not into a democracy, but into an oligarchy. This House can be useful, not only as a check over hasty legislation, but it can also itself initiate useful legislation. There has been no cry of this House ever having stood in the way of democratic legislation. Here, in this Chamber, I take it, we are absolutely above party, and we can view things in an impartial and broad-minded manner. Every man coming into this House, whatever his political principles or his party outside, he leaves those principles at the door of the House and comes in prepared to view

things from the standpoint of the whole State. Another subject which has created some discussion is that of the liberalisation of the franchise of the Upper House. This, I believe, is mentioned in His Excellency's Speech, and I take it that hopes are entertained that when it comes up next time it will not again meet the defeat which was its lot on its last appearance.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: It was not defeated; but it did not have the absolute constitutional majority of both Houses.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: I am against the reduction of the franchise, and this I made clear during my recent campaign. I added that I was prepared to accept a definite view of the people definitely expressed on the subject, and I do not think any man could do more. I feel that in considering the reduction of the franchise, it is necessary to consider the danger of the possibility of making one House a duplication of the other. I also feel that if the cry for the abolition of the House itself had not been raised outside, the question of the liberalisation of the franchise would have been more favourably received. To a certain extent, the larger cry has alarmed some who otherwise would have been favourable to the liberalisation of the franchise. A question which, I am sorry to see, has not been touched upon in the Speech, is that of so amending the electoral laws as to provide for compulsory preferential voting. The present system of optional preferential voting is of no value. It means that while one man carries out the intention of the Legislature by conscientiously voting preferentially, his vote is nullified by his next-door neighbour who does not exercise the preference. The question of compulsory preference voting is, of course, not the same as that of compulsory voting; the difference is obvious. The question of making voting compulsory is a larger and more dangerous one to handle, and although we often hear strong expressions of opinion outside on the subject, those who hold such opinions have not always carefully considered the question. The right of voting is a trust and a privilege reposed in the citizens. But it is also a

duty. How far it is a duty and how far a privilege, is a thing which it is very difficult to disentangle. However, personally I think that some method should be devised of overcoming the absolute apathy—the criminal apathy, I call it—on the part of some electors of this State. Personally—although as a new member I put it forward with great hesitation—personally I should like to see the registration of a voter made compulsory. If every man were compelled to register, then the time might come when, if he did not exercise his franchise, the question might arise as to whether or not that franchise should be taken away from him as a penalty, and he be debarred from voting. Certainly such a scheme is at least worthy of consideration. During the recent election the proportion of votes cast in my electorate was about 36 per cent., and I think it was very much the same in most of the other electorates. Then there is a further important question referred to in His Excellency's Speech, namely, that of the redistribution of seats. The first redistribution of seats in this State took place in 1889. In 1899 there was a second redistribution of seats after the great settlement occurring on the gold-fields. Then in 1904 there was a further redistribution of seats on account of the great amount of agricultural settlement. Now, I certainly agree, it is high time for a further redistribution. I have no doubt that the redistribution will prove a highly controversial question, but I hope that the difficulties will be surmounted. If principles were laid down on which such redistribution should take place, it should be possible to satisfactorily arrange it. The anomalies at present existing in some of the electorates are obviously absurd. For instance, in the Roebourne electorate there are 780 electors, while in North Perth there are 7,760. Again, take this House: in the North Province there are 707 electors, while in the Metropolitan Province there are 7,120. I am also glad to see His Excellency's reference to the re-introduction of the Public Health Bill. As a member of the Central Board of Health I have had opportunity to note the work-

ing of the Act; and while thoroughly satisfied that its working is in the interests of the public I am of the opinion that improvements can be made. I think some matters in which those improvements require to be made are, the notification of infectious diseases, food inspection, and the central board's supervision. Personally, I think there is a large amount of laxity existing in the notification of infectious diseases. In matters of this sort one has to look to the members of the medical profession; but you cannot control the individual. I believe numberless cases of infectious diseases are never notified. A burning question agitating the public mind is that of the milk supply. I do not think the supply is as bad as some try to make out. I think that, largely, the agitation has been brought about by the conduct of certain scaremongers; men who advertise themselves, apparently, without any sense of public spirit at all. In respect to the instances which now and again are said to occur, I think that if, instead of their being advertised in the newspapers and a fuss being made over them, the authorities were quietly notified of them, and asked to take steps to remedy them, it could and would be done equally as well in the interests of the public as by their publication and the subsequent agitation. I am also glad to see that the amending Licensing Bill is to be brought forward again. I see no mention of any intention of dealing with gambling, except the reference to the control of racecourses. To my mind the liquor habit and gambling have characteristics in common. I think that, to a large extent, the root of the evil lies very often in the home and the home surroundings. If the home and home surroundings were made what they ought to be we should often find that it would minimise the evils of drink and those in respect to gambling. We cannot make a man moral by Act of Parliament, but we can greatly minimise the opportunities of over-indulgence in drink and in gambling. Personally, every effort I can make will be put forward to assist in that direction. I am glad to see the question of local option coming forward

again, because I am a believer in local option, and also in compensation. I would see no man's living taken away from him without compensation. Some declare that the publican's living is no living at all, that it is merely an evil trade. I disagree with that. I say that the trade has been allowed to grow up with the sanction of the people, and that, in consequence, a man has the right to be compensated if the profits be taken from him by an Act of the Legislature. Another reason assisting greatly towards the over-indulgence of liquor is the existence of the element of private profits arising from the sale of liquor. The remedy is nationalisation of the traffic. I would advocate that with bated breath, for I am aware it does not find favour in the minds of a great many people, so that, beyond referring to it to this small extent, I shall say no more on that point. It appears from the Speech that the financial position of the State is fairly satisfactory. We have a debt of £21,000,000 or thereabouts. Mr. Knibbs, the Commonwealth Statistician, puts our debt down at £80 18s. 8d. per head, whereas the Premier fixes the amount at £73 7s. 6d. gross and £66 12s. 9d. net; there is a very large difference. It seems a great shame that these misstatements should be published in the *Commonwealth Year Book*. This is not the only error that has been made regarding Western Australia, for I find that in dealing with Parliament and the qualification of voters for the Assembly, the old qualification of £10 still exists, according to the *Commonwealth Year Book*, and there is no mention of the present manhood suffrage. That mistake must have arisen from the fact that the sections relating to one man one vote are inserted in a most obscure portion of the Electoral Act, where perhaps Mr. Knibbs could not find them. I see that the average rate of interest for this State is the lowest of all; that is very gratifying. It appears also that we are the only State to have a Sinking Fund. Personally, while admitting that a Sinking Fund is a good business proposition, still I must say that my feelings have been that when we were very hard

pushed for money I would not have objected to see the Sinking Fund dipped into. I do not altogether agree with this generation pinching itself and building up a State for future generations without the latter taking their share of the burden. I am quite aware that the Sinking Fund may have a good effect upon our borrowing, and I suppose that, without the consent of those people who lend us money, we could not do away with the fund. I do not propose to keep the House much longer but I would like before sitting down to refer to the fact that, so far as I can see, there is no reference in the Speech to a matter which has been urged upon me by a large number of my constituents, that is the question of the South Perth railway. I believe it has been admitted in all quarters that such a railway is bound to come sooner or later, but I suppose the reason why no reference is made to it is that it cannot be introduced at present owing to Government exigencies and, to a large extent, to want of money. It must come, however, and I should very much have liked to see reference made to it in the Speech. To my mind the debate on the Address-in-Reply should not take a long time to dispose of for I think the speeches upon it often consist of a repetition and duplication of what might be, and is, said in the second reading debates when the measures referred to in the Speech come before the House. I do not propose to add to the length of the debate. Before sitting down I would like to thank members for the patience with which they have heard me and to say that I will bear in mind in my career in this House that every public man should have a keen sense of the responsibility of his position and that I will also remember the fact that while I represent a constituency I represent the interests of the State as a whole first and foremost. I beg to move the motion I have read.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN (South-East): I beg to second the motion so well moved by my new friend Mr. Gawler. I must add my congratulations on the unanimous re-election of you, Mr. President, to the

highest seat in the House, a seat which you have filled for so many years with dignity and with impartiality. I would also like to add my congratulations to the Premier in that his distinguished services have been recognised by his Sovereign. It is remarkable that in the chorus of congratulations there was not a dissentient note except perhaps that raised by his little daughter, who seems to be a thorough-going democrat, and who intimated that she preferred him as plain "Newton J." It is not necessary to say much concerning that portion of the Speech referring to the loss the Nation has sustained and regarding our loyalty to the new King. I would only just like to emphasise this aspect of the question of loyalty—and it is very important in all new countries—that the only possible halting of loyalty would be from a misconception of government. Every honest man believes in national order: the King of the British Empire voices the will of the people, the will of the people freely expressed through their free Parliaments, and the Throne and Crown are the symbols of the Empire's unity. I wonder whether it would be any use detaining this House at the present time for anything like a speech. The Ministers we want to criticise are not here. The Minister in this House seldom gets into mischief, thanks, I suppose, to our vigilance. I say again that the Ministers we want to criticise are not here, and the morning Press seems to exhaust its parliamentary columns on the long speeches of members of another place. Perhaps it is that our worthy fellow member cloaks the whole House with his own modesty and thinks we may not care to be reported. Modesty is a hampering thing. I speak feelingly, for I suffer very much from that myself, but after all I would like our colleague to remember that this House is one of co-ordinate powers and it has its work to do.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: But it is precious dull sometimes.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: This work can not be properly done if the House is not reported. It would be a pity if we were not encouraged to speak a little bit. The

atmosphere of Perth just now invites thought which ought to be uttered. Why, one can now cross Perth streets and take one's time in looking for a clean place at which to cross without running the risk of having what little brains one might possess bumped out by a lightning tram. I do not say that this is the reason why the trams are now silent, but I have not heard any better one. Coming to the Speech, I may say that it is so big and so great that for once I am in sympathy with the modern craze about having only one Chamber. There is something in that. If the Constitution only permitted His Excellency the Governor to say to one of the Chambers "Go and play," and all Ministers came in here, we could show him how that whole programme could be perfected and placed on the statute book before the Christmas holidays. It is an enormous programme, but if both Houses are bent on working and not on talking the whole programme can be negotiated. I hold this to be a great programme. There is not a single proposal that touches party feeling on the raw; not one. They are great non-party proposals and all parties in both Houses, or rather both parties in another place and this House can face it with the greatest of interest and with the knowledge that in no possible way will their views be unduly trenched upon. Such great questions as Liquor Law, Redistribution of Seats, Liberalisation of the Council's Franchise, the Roads Bill and the Public Health Bill are all first-class measures of a non-party nature. I hold that the most important measure of all is that which proposes to establish a University. That again is a non-party question and is an essential need of the people. I notice the Speech says the University is to be on "modern lines." I am not sure what this means. Does it mean on lines that will teach us only how to make money? If so we will learn later that the art of making money is after all a small thing in human life and happiness. I trust the University will be established on lines which are modern in the right sense of the word, that is to say practical, and that we shall not be fools enough to throw away the grandest study of all—the study

of languages. After all, when a man has made money and has helped to spend it, the real man is within, and he who has not a well-informed and cultured mind has no resources to fall back on. I am glad that the authorities who have had this great question in hand have brought it so far towards fruition. I am sure this House will help to establish a real University in our State for our own children. The proposed railway Bills have more to do with the material prosperity of the State than anything else in the Speech. This is a country for railway building: all honour to the present Government for the great work they have been doing in this direction. Railway building, opening up the land for settlement, introduction of the right people: these are three great services that we ask the Government and Parliament to render to our State. I was very much struck by the remark in the Speech with regard to the Transcontinental railway which, of course, is the biggest of the railway questions. I admired immensely the courage of the Acting Premier some little time ago when the preposterous suggestion was made by a Federal authority that this State should hand over a province out of the middle of its territory to the Federal Parliament. It would have meant an *imperium in imperio* that would have led to untold and unending causes of dispute. I was glad to see the Acting Premier grasp the situation and say "rather than that we will build the line ourselves."

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: He did more harm than good to the railway.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I do not think so. It is very easy for anyone not in earnest about this railway to grasp at any straw, any excuse. But I say the Acting Premier challenged his own State and all the States by showing his confidence in the people of this State. And, looking at it very carefully and deliberately, why should not this State build the part of the Transcontinental railway which is within its own borders? This State has already undertaken to widen the line from Perth to Kalgoorlie, which is about as costly a work as the other part; why, then, should we be afraid of

another £1,300,000 that would build the line and give this State the right to control it? Has no one in the State a sufficient conception of what that railway is going to do? As far as I can see, and I have been watching the question, the only man who has seen it and grasped it properly is the controller of the *Age*; and because he has seen it he has been our desperate enemy all along, crying down the State and trying to block our progress. What does that railway mean? It will be one of the greatest Transcontinental railways of the world, and Perth will be the gateway of Australia. That is what it will mean, and it would be worth while for this State to spend £1,300,000 to secure the right of controlling that railway subject, of course, to the control of the Interstate Commission and the necessary use of the line by the Federal authorities for defence purposes. I do trust that this State will maintain that courageous attitude with regard to that railway. Now, I have said that this programme is a great one, and I am satisfied both Houses will face it with a due recognition of its greatness. Having said that, I would not like, as seconder of the Address-in-Reply, to stoop to any small matters of criticism; there will be time enough for that when the proposals come in concrete form in the Bills to be submitted to the House. And when that time comes, if all is well, I will be ready to take my share. I have had some little controversy with one department and I am reminded of the Scotchman who, when dying, was told he would have to forgive all his enemies. He said he would forgive all but Jock. "And if you do not forgive Jock you will not go to Heaven." "Well," he said, "I am no sure I am going there on that condition." However, he consented to forgive Jock, and he forgave and said to Jock, "But mind, Jock, if I get well it will be just the same between us as before." Now, for the purpose of this Speech I make no minor criticism at all, but when the Bills come down, if I find any mere experimental proposals I am going to criticise them just as severely as if I had not seconded this motion. I hold that what we want

in this State is natural, practical development. We do not want experiments on lines that have been exploded again and again elsewhere. We do not want to force exotics at the cost of the taxpayer; we want at each stage to do what is best at that stage, and develop the part of the country that is most easily developed at that stage. We do not want experiments to make water run uphill, or to make things grow where they have never grown before. We want practical, natural development, with the Government watching over all in a friendly paternal way, but not attempting to force things out of their proper track. Let us get all the good farmers we can from all parts of the world that are peopled by our own race. We want a European population: best of all, farmers from the other States if they will come. Let us get real farmers and help them to do what they want to do, not what some experimentalist may think they ought to want to do. Help them to do what their own experience guides them to. Sometimes an experimenting Minister may fuss a lot and yet have little to show for the money expended. There was once a city man who took up a homestead farm; and he could not see why ducks went chiefly on water and chickens on land. He said, "Why should not ducks go on land?"

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: They do better on the land.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: He said, "I will slit a bit of the web of their feet and they will make good chickens, and I will put a sort of web on the chickens' feet and they will be able to swim. I want them to be all-round chickens and ducks." Now, you may get a Minister of that sort. We want practical development. Do what is best to-day, and that will open up the way to something else to-morrow. But do not try to carry out mere theories at the cost of the taxpayer. At your own cost, all right, but at the cost of the taxpayer follow approved lines. For all that, it is a great programme, and I am satisfied that in this House, at all events, that programme will be faced with energy and industry, and as far as it rests with this House

this will be a fruitful session. I have pleasure in seconding the motion.

On motion by Hon. G. Throssell, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 4.10 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 28th July, 1910.

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MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Legislative Assembly met at noon, pursuant to proclamation by His Excellency the Governor, which proclamation was read by the Clerk (Mr. C. Lee Steere).

MESSAGE: OPENING BY COMMISSIONERS.

A message from the Commissioners appointed by the Governor to do all things necessary for the opening of Parliament requested the attendance of members of the Legislative Assembly in the Legislative Council Chamber; and hon. members having accordingly proceeded to that Chamber and heard the Commission read, they returned to the Assembly Chamber.

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

His Honour Mr. Justice McMillan, having been commissioned by the Governor,

appeared in the Chamber to administer to members the oath of allegiance to His Majesty King George V.

Mr. Speaker and the members present took and subscribed the oath.

The Commissioner then retired. Mr. Speaker took the Chair.

New Members (3).

The Clerk announced the return of writs for the election of members for Fremantle, Gascoyne, and Forrest, showing that Mr. W. A. Murphy, Mr. W. J. Butcher, and Mr. P. L. O'Loughlen, respectively, had been duly elected.

Mr. Murphy, Mr. Butcher, and Mr. O'Loughlen took and subscribed the oath as required by statute, and signed the roll.

ELECTORAL.—BEVERLEY VACANCY.

MR. SPEAKER (Hon. T. F. Quinlan) I have to announce that a vacancy has been created in the electorate of Beverley.

The PREMIER (Sir Newton J. Moore): In accordance with the information received from your Honour, I move that—

It is declared by this House that a vacancy of the seat for the Beverley electoral district has occurred by the disqualification of the late member under Paragraph 6 of Section 31 of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act, 1899.

Question passed.

DEMISE OF KING EDWARD VII.: ACCESSION OF KING GEORGE V.

The PREMIER (Sir Newton J. Moore): In accordance with the information we have received in the Message from the Governor, I move that the following Address be transmitted to His Excellency for presentation to His Majesty the King:—

We, the members of the Legislative Assembly in the Parliament of the State of Western Australia, take this the earliest opportunity of expressing