

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

SECOND SESSION OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Second Session of the Sixth Parliament under Responsible Government was convened for the despatch of business on the 21st June, 1906.

Parliament was opened by His Excellency the Governor.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 21st June, 1906.

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OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Legislative Council met at half-past 2 o'clock p.m., pursuant to proclamation, which was read by the Clerk of Parliaments.

COMMISSIONER TO ADMINISTER OATHS.

His Excellency's Commissioner (the Chief Justice, the Hon. S. H. Parker) 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, the Commissioner read the following statement:—

HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

I have it in command from His Excellency the Governor to let you know that he will, in person, in this place, declare the reasons of his calling this session of Parliament so soon as

the members of the Legislative Council have been sworn and have notified to him that they have elected their President.

The members of the Legislative Assembly having retired, the Clerk of Parliaments read the Commission appointing the Chief Justice to administer the oath of allegiance to the newly-elected members.

Representatives lately elected (one-third of the Council) then took and subscribed the oath and signed the members' roll, namely, J. D. Connolly (North-East Province), J. W. Hackett (South-West Province), C. Sommers (Metropolitan Province), C. E. Dempster (East Province), J. M. Drew (Central Province), R. Laurie (West Province), Wesley Maley (South-East Province), J. W. Langsford (Metropolitan-Suburban Province), J. T. Glowrey (South Province), T. F. O. Brimage (North-East Province), F. Connor (North Province).

The Commissioner then left the Chamber.

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT.

The Clerk of Parliaments (Mr. G. F. Hillman) reported that the office of President was vacant.

HON. M. L. MOSS (West): I have much pleasure in proposing that the Hon. Henry Briggs be elected President of the Legislative Council. I hardly think it necessary that I should make a long

speech in order to commend this motion to the good sense of the House. Mr. Briggs's long and distinguished services as a member of this Chamber are too well known to every member sitting on these benches. For ten years Mr. Briggs has been a member of this House; and he has also represented this State at two of the Federal Conventions. For six years he has filled with great credit to himself the very onerous position of Chairman of Committees; and during the frequent absences of our late worthy and highly-respected President, Sir George Shenton, Mr. Briggs filled the position of Acting President. Moreover, Mr. Briggs has ample leisure, which will enable him, if elected, to discharge with farther credit to himself the duties of his high office; and in addition to this, Mr. Briggs, when acting as President in the past, has carried out his duties with very marked ability. I am quite sure that every member sitting in this House will agree with me that no better selection can be made than that which I submit for members' consideration.

HON. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan-Suburban): It affords me great pleasure to second the motion that the Hon. Henry Briggs be elected President of this Chamber.

No other member being proposed,

HON. H. BRIGGS rose in his place and said: I desire to express my deep sense of the honour which it is proposed to confer upon me; and I submit myself to the will of this honourable House.

Having been conducted to the Chair,

THE PRESIDENT-ELECT said: I beg leave to express my humble acknowledgments for the high honour that the Council has been pleased to confer upon me; and I thank the mover and seconder of my nomination, and hon. members generally. Following such an experienced President as Sir George Shenton, and having at heart the honour and dignity of this House, I naturally feel the difficulties and obligations of the position, and wish that I were more worthy of it. I shall, however, endeavour to overcome those difficulties and to fulfil those obligations to the best of my ability. I trust that the kindly feeling which has prompted my election to this honourable office may long

continue to sustain me in the discharge of its important duties. On my own part, no pains will be spared to deserve the confidence so generously bestowed. Again I thank you. (General applause.)

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly): As Leader of this House, it is my privilege to be the first to address you, sir, as Mr. President. I can assure you that this gives me very great pleasure. Since first I entered this House I have had the privilege of sitting under you when you acted as Chairman of Committees. However, as the time for receiving His Excellency the Governor is approaching, I will conclude by formally congratulating you on the high and honourable position to which you have been elected.

THE PRESIDENT-ELECT: I am deeply touched by your expressions of kindness and goodwill. I may consider myself fortunate, also, in the opportune time of taking this office. Of the ten members who retired in May, two did not stand for re-election, but the other eight have returned with the strong approval of their constituents. Of the two new members, the Hon. J. T. Glowrey was a valued member of the Council from 1900 to 1904; and the Hon. Francis Connor was one of the oldest members in another place. Thus the Council begins this session strengthened by the support of the whole State. The proper conduct of our business depends on a close adherence to our Standing Rules and Orders, tempered with good sense and good feeling. That ideal Speaker, the late Sir James G. Lee Steere, always put great stress on the duty which devolved on members themselves of assisting in the preservation of order. Here, in face of the distinguished record of the past, such an appeal for assistance is quite unnecessary. I thank you again most heartily. I shall now leave the Chair, to be presented to His Excellency on arrival.

PRESSENTATION OF PRESIDENT-ELECT.

The President-elect was then presented to His Excellency the Governor in the entrance Corridor; and having returned to the Chamber,

THE PRESIDENT said: I have the honour to inform the House that I have been presented to His Excellency the

Governor, and have received the following answer:—

It is with much pleasure that I learn that you have been elected by the hon. members of the Legislative Council to the high and honourable position of President of that House. I have every confidence that you will fill the office in a worthy and dignified manner; and I have the honour to confirm the constitutional rights and privileges hitherto enjoyed by the Legislative Council in this State.

THE GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR entered the Chamber at 8:15 o'clock; and the members of the Assembly having arrived in obedience to summons, His Excellency was pleased to deliver the following Speech to the members of both Houses:—

MR. PRESIDENT AND HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,—

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

The First Session of the Sixth Parliament of Western Australia was prorogued on the 23rd day of December, 1905, to the 31st May last; but owing to the resignation of the late Premier during the recess, a new Cabinet had to be formed, and it was consequently found impracticable to summon you to attend to the business of the country until to-day.

It will, nevertheless, be possible for you to enter upon your duties at an earlier date than has been the custom for many previous sessions of Parliament, and my Ministers trust that as a result the Session will not be unduly prolonged.

It is my pleasant duty to again assure you that the prosperity of the State continues apace, and the progress of the Mining, Agricultural, Pastoral, and other Industries is attracting considerable attention, not only throughout the Commonwealth, but in various parts of the world.

There has been a slight decline in our Gold Production, but not such as to cause any feeling of apprehension.

The important developments at great depths in the East Coolgardie Field prove the permanency and value of our gold-bearing lodes, and the vigorous efforts now being prosecuted at many

other centres show renewed confidence. My Advisers recognise the great importance of this Industry, and desire to give every assistance towards the Prospecting and Exploitation of its Resources; while special provision will be made to assist in the Development of our Northern and North-Western Mineral Areas.

The Dividends declared by Gold Mining Companies during the year 1905 amounted to £2,167,639, being the greatest amount paid in any one year since the discovery of gold in Australia, which is particularly gratifying, in view of the decreased value of the ore milled.

With modern machinery, economic management, and high-class labour, our low-grade ore bodies can be profitably worked, ensuring to all other Industries the lasting continuation of a great Gold-fields market.

During the year much activity has been shown in the exploitation of the baser metals, notably Tin and Copper, and it is anticipated that the coming year will show a considerable increase in their production.

With the increase in population, Land Settlement continues to assume large dimensions, and my Advisers intend, by carrying out a policy of Decentralisation, to make it possible for every person desiring to settle upon the land to do so without the objectionable delays which have caused so much inconvenience in the past.

The construction of Developmental Railways, having for their object the opening up of Agricultural and Mining Centres, will be among the principal works to which you will be asked to give your attention. The speedy completion of the Light Railways sanctioned by you last Session is now receiving the earnest attention of my advisers.

A steady and increasing stream of Immigration is flowing into the State, and becoming absorbed mainly in our agricultural population.

Every effort is being made to widely advertise the agronomic conditions of Western Australia, and in view of the assistance given to new arrivals from overseas, from the other States, and to persons already residing in Western Australia, together with the liberalisation of the Agricultural Bank (provision for which my Advisers will place before you

at an early date), it is believed that a considerable increase in Land Settlement will be assured.

Strong representations have from time to time been placed before the Imperial Authorities regarding the urgent necessity for a proper survey of the North-West Coast of the State, and my Ministers are at present giving further attention to this matter, with a view to securing the assistance of the Admiralty at the earliest possible date.

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

You will be asked at an early date to grant Temporary Supplies for the requirements of the Public Service, pending the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the ensuing Financial Year being submitted for your consideration. The Estimates are now in preparation, and will be placed before you as soon as possible.

You will also be asked to consider a Loan Bill authorising the Government to borrow a sum sufficient for the construction of such Public Works as in the opinion of my Advisers are necessary for encouraging the development of the various industries of the State, and for the completion of Works already authorised.

At the recent Conference of the Premiers of the various States a Resolution was adopted in connection with the return of the Commonwealth Surplus Revenue on a population basis, which if carried into effect would mean a loss to this State of, approximately, £433,000 for this year.

Such a course would be a distinct violation of one of the fundamental principles of the Commonwealth Constitution, and would deprive this State of its legitimate revenue after contributing its quota to the cost of the Commonwealth administration. My Government, while jealously guarding the rights of the State in this respect, has every confidence that the Commonwealth Parliament will recognise the rights of Western Australia and deal justly in this matter.

In view of the general condition of the finances it will be necessary for my Ministers to effect all possible economies, whilst they will not hesitate to recommend such expenditure as they believe to

be justified in order to encourage the development of the industries of the State, and to secure its onward march of progress and prosperity.

The large expenditure which has been necessary in the past for the administration of the Public Service has, in view of the state of the finances, given my advisers grave cause for consideration.

The Public Service Commissioner appointed under the Act of 1904 has recently submitted his first proposal in connection with the classification of the Clerical Division of the Civil Service, and my Advisers are now giving this important matter their careful consideration.

Expenditure from Loan Funds will be necessary in connection with the construction of Light Railways, the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Scheme, the Development of Mining, Harbour Improvements, Boring for Artesian Water in the North and North-West, the opening up of New Stock Routes, and in other important directions.

MR. PRESIDENT AND HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.—

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

I rejoice to learn that the anxiety which was felt for the welfare of the Pastoralists and their Stock in the North-Western portion of this State has now happily been largely dispelled by the bountiful rains which have fallen. The herds of cattle are increasing greatly in our Pastoral Areas, and the question of establishing Freezing Works in the Far North is receiving special consideration.

Bills will be laid before you during the present Session dealing with a number of subjects requiring attention.

The most important measure which will be placed before you, with a view to increasing the Revenue, is that of a Tax on Unimproved Land Values, which, while not inflicting hardship on the man of small means, or the settler in his pioneering days, should also have the effect of considerably increasing the development of our Agricultural Lands.

Another very necessary measure will be the Land Act Amendment Bill, imposing more stringent improvement conditions, and providing for Special Settlement Areas, in which land may be cleared

or otherwise improved by the Crown before being disposed of.

A number of Consolidating Bills will be introduced, dealing with Municipalities, Public Health, Mines Regulations, the Law of Evidence, and Police Offences.

Bills will also be submitted to you for amending the Constitution, Mining, Fremantle Harbour Trust, Agricultural Bank, Fire Brigades, and several other Acts.

I now declare this Session of Parliament opened, and I confidently trust that, aided by Divine direction, you will materially advance the well-being of the State.

BILL—PRISONS 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 beg to move, without notice, for leave to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the Prisons Act of 1903.

Leave given; the Bill introduced, and read a first time.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY: Reports of proceedings before the Boards of Conciliation and Court of Arbitration; additional regulation *re* Caves Board; King's Park by-laws; Cemetery by-laws for Esperance, Menzies, Cookernup, Narrogin, Karakatta; amendment of regulations of Agricultural Lands Purchase Act 1896; permits to construct timber tramways granted to Westralia Timber and Firewood Company, Limited, of Kalgoorlie and Boulder, and to William Smith, South Australia; by-laws Jarrahdale Common; regulations in connection with Crown Lands, conditional purchase leases and licenses to be issued to a limited depth, controlling the stripping of mallet bark, survey fees; transfer of sublease of land held under Parts V., VI., VII., VIII., IX. of the Land Act 1898; by-laws restricting the cutting of timber in Kamalda, Cuddingwarra, Randells, and Gilgania State Forests; by-laws Wagin Roads Board, Bunbury Water Board, Lower Gascoyne Roads Board, Nelson Roads Board, Sussex Roads Board, Bunbury Roads

Board, Preston Roads Board; amendment of regulation under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1902; Railways classification rates and general regulations operating from 1st March, 1906; Railway new by-law *re* payment to officers for leave granted for military duty; Railway by-law, notice as to penalties; reports and returns in accordance with Sections 54 and 83 of the Government Railways Act 1904; municipal by-laws Coolgardie, Fremantle, Kalgoorlie, Kookynie, North Perth, Perth; Friendly Societies' statistics for the year 1904; amendment of regulations under the Hospitals Act 1894; report of the board of inquiry into the Timber Industry; meteorological observations made at Perth Observatory during 1904; report of Department of Mines for 1905; report of the Fishing Industry for 1905; report of the Inspector General of Insane, 1905; report of the Superintendent of Public Charities and inspector of industrial reformatory schools, 1905; half-yearly report of the Fremantle Harbour Trust Commissioners.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

FIRST DAY OF DEBATE.

HON. F. CONNOR (North): Mr. President, before proceeding to the formal motion which I have to propose, may I be permitted first to express—and I hope I do so on behalf of other members of this Chamber—pleasure at seeing the Governor here to-day lending his presence to make the opening of this session of Parliament a success. As the youngest member of this Chamber, I hope it will not be thought out of place in referring to the fact that we have a new President with us to-day. That brings before most members who have had the pleasure of sitting here for a number of years a cause for regret that the late President was not able to be amongst us. I am sure the country appreciates the generous and whole-souled spirit which the late President put into his work while he graced this Assembly as its leader. I hope, as will be expressed by the motion which I believe the leader of this House will bring forward at a later stage, that the time will come when we shall have the pleasure of the presence of Sir George Shenton again in this Chamber. In regard to the high and honour-

able position to which you, Mr. President, have been elected, I can only say, and I know I am expressing the feelings of every member of this House, that you will do honour to the position; for with your scholarly attainments and the knowledge which you have gained of the working of Parliament in the position of Chairman of Committees, I know that you will not only grace the position but you also possess the particular knowledge to make your occupancy of the Chair the success which we all hope it will be. As to the Speech itself, I do not know that there is much to be gained by criticising it, or even by referring to each and all of the subjects mentioned therein. I may in the course of my remarks travel beyond the scope of this Speech, in order to refer to certain matters of which I have a practical knowledge, and principally to the development of the northern portion of this State. Coming back to the Speech, we find that it is practically a repetition of some portions of the policy speech of the Premier. True, some points mentioned by the Premier are not referred to here; but I hope that those proposals, and some of them particularly, will not be omitted from the Government policy. Throughout the Speech we find a spirit of hopefulness; and justly so, because in this State to-day the development of our great resources is proceeding fairly satisfactorily. There is room for improvement; and I will ask members of this House as well as members of another place to add to the spirit of hope the spirit of faith; and then we need not be afraid that the development of this country will be arrested. The Speech refers to the survey of our North-West coast. This is a work which I think we shall have to ask the Imperial Government to carry out; for the matter does not lie in our hands. But it is one of the most important works that can be fostered by whatever Government may be in power; because we are about to have great mining developments in the North of this country, and we have already proved that there we have one of the finest pastoral countries in Australia. Therefore the proper charting of the coast demands attention, and I am pleased to see it mentioned in the Speech. Another paragraph, which some may consider too trivial for mention to-

day, refers to the delays in surveying lands upon which people from the sister States and from other countries come here to settle. I have no hesitation in saying that in the past the work of the Lands Office has not in this respect been up to the proper standard; and I merely mention this in order to thank the framers of the Speech for not overlooking what is after all an important matter. Our great ideal should be the settlement of the people on the land; and the people will not come here to settle unless they are given ample facilities for so doing. The late Government of which Mr. Rason was Premier were good enough to propose that settlers in distant places, far from existing railways, should be assisted by spur lines. I am glad indeed to be able to congratulate the present Government on the fact that they are, as I understand, constructing those lines with a view to finishing them at the earliest opportunity. The Speech states that the Government intend to advertise to the best of their ability the agronomic conditions of this State, and, as is highly necessary, to liberalise the Agricultural Bank, thus giving greater assistance to intending settlers. A rather important paragraph is that referring to the Federation, by which it appears that if effect were given to a proposal of the recent Conference of State Premiers, Western Australia would lose, approximately, £433,000 for this year. If we consider the fact that on the 8th October next the operation of what is known as the sliding scale will cease, and that the distribution on a *per capita* basis of that portion of our revenue handled by the Federal Government would put us in a position where we do not desire to be and cannot afford to be, we must admit that it is the duty not only of the State Parliament but of every citizen in the State to resent such a proposal, and to resent it if necessary by force. [SIR E. WITTENOOM: By force of words.] By force of words. The Speech mentions that in the North of this country the pastoral industry is in a state of great prosperity. Well, I am sorry to say that is rather a mistake; and I cannot compliment the Government on the appearance in the Speech of that statement.

I am sorry to have to say so; but the fact remains. In the Nor'-West, on the very fringe of the coast we have had a certain quantity of rain; but when we go to the Far North—to the great Kimberley pastoral areas—we there find a very bad state of affairs indeed; not what may be called a drought, but a serious want of water resulting from the lack of provision for water supply after the country was heavily stocked; resulting from lack of sufficient assistance to the pioneers of that country to enable them to prospect for artesian water, or to conserve the water necessary to make their great industry successful. In the two Kimberleys there is no feed where there is water, and no water where there is feed; and I mention this so that the Colonial Secretary (Hon. J. D. Connolly) may bring the facts under the notice of his colleagues, and ask them to consider the case of the great pastoral industry in the North, and to give it more consideration than it has had in the past. Though the amount is not mentioned in the Speech, we know that it is proposed to borrow, for development and for public works purposes, the sum of one million pounds. I have no hesitation in saying that a million is not enough to borrow. I wish, if possible, to impress on members that in this country, where we have so large an estate and such valuable assets, we ought not to be afraid to borrow enough money to carry out any reproductive works which may be necessary. The Parliament of the early nineties, under the leadership of Sir John Forrest, when there was only a handful of people in this country, was not afraid even then to pledge the credit of the country in order to build railways, to carry out the Coolgardie Water Scheme, to construct the Fremantle Harbour—aye, and the Bunbury Harbour if you like. He was not afraid to take in hand these works. Why then should we be afraid now, in view of the enormous development of our mineral industries, the increase of our population, the settlement on our agricultural lands, and the fact that we shall soon be big exporters of fruit and wheat? Though I was not in the past one of the pets of the present Ministers, I notice with pleasure that they intend to encourage immigrants of a suitable character. But another paragraph in the

Speech tells us of a proposed tax on unimproved land values. With that I do not agree. I think it will be one of the most serious hindrances to immigration from the Eastern States or from any other countries. Inquirers will be informed that as soon as they take up the free land, some sort of tax will be imposed upon them, which they will have to pay. I agree that a tax on unimproved land should be imposed, and that it should be graded; and that the absentee who holds land from which he gets the unearned increment—land of which he makes no use, but which could be and would be used by settlers—should be taxed. I would tax the speculator and the absentee. The Speech mentions a great question which is to come before the House, and which was the subject of much discussion on the hustings during the recent elections to this House and to another place. I refer to the reform of the Legislative Council. I have always been considered a rather advanced Democrat, and am rather pleased to say that so far I have not done anything which should result in my losing that reputation. But I do not perceive the difference between the suggestion of the Government and the existing state of affairs. I cannot quite see the difference between what is known as the £25 franchise and a £15 franchise. I can see this: a man who pays only 10s. a week in house rent, and therefore has a vote for this Council, is not hardly dealt with. That is my opinion, therefore I hold myself open to vote as I like when the question comes before the House. There is another reform which must be taken in hand at once, that is the reform of the Electoral Department. I can assure members that were it not for the manner in which the Electoral Act was administered I would not have had the pleasure of being here to-day, because I would have been a member of another place. That is past, and probably I begin to think it was a good thing. The Act was not administered to my satisfaction. I will give one or two instances, although I do not wish to take up too much time. At the last general election for another place—that was about a year ago—I was a candidate. There are what are known as postal votes, and in each of the centres in the electorate where I was a

candidate persons were appointed to take postal votes. There were four places in the Kimberley electorate where postal votes could be given and should have been given, but I know to my cost, perhaps, that at three of the places there were no postal voting papers. Scores of electors went to give postal votes, but the persons appointed refused to take the votes as there were no voting papers. I was in the district at the time, and I wrote to the authorities asking that the persons appointed to receive postal votes should be allowed to accept written voting papers. They were allowed to be taken, but the papers were too late in reaching the central polling place. That is why I say a great reform is needed in the administration of the Electoral Act. A suggestion has been made—I am still posing as a democrat—that the salaries of members of the Crown should be cut down by £200. I am opposed to that. It is not a matter that affects this House; perhaps we have nothing to do with it. That will require an alteration of the Constitution Act. I say for the work which Ministers do, they do not get paid too much. In the last paragraph of the Speech it is stated that amongst the Bills to be submitted is one for an amendment of the Constitution Act. We cannot discuss that matter because we do not know what alteration is to be made in the Constitution. I think it would have been fairer, before asking us to commit ourselves to the Speech, to have told us what alteration was proposed. I am proposing the adoption of an Address in reply to the Speech, but I am proposing it without knowing what alteration is to be made in the Constitution. I hold myself free after having moved the Address in reply to act as I think proper when the Constitution Bill comes before us. I think when a new Constitution Bill is brought before Parliament more consideration should be given to the northern portion of this country. We have not in this place the representation that the industries and importance of the North-West demands. There are not sufficient votes in either of the Chambers of Parliament to satisfy the people who are connected with the North of this State. In speaking to my constituents when on the hustings for the election which placed me here,

I said I thought the pearling industry should have special and direct representation. On a population basis we cannot ask for more members, but we have in this Chamber three members out of thirty representing one-third of this great State, and representing—although not yet all developed—some of the most if not the most important industries in Western Australia. In the Speech it is said the Government intend to help on the mining industry. A great deal of the success of this country depends on whether the mining industry is a success or a failure, and I say that no Government in charge of the affairs of the country will be doing their duty unless they give full, fair, and generous help to the mining industry of the State. We must help and encourage the prospector. I would suggest, and if I had the power I would carry it out, that where any prospector finds a new goldfield he should have the absolute freehold of a prospecting area if he proves to the satisfaction of the Government that the field is a payable one. The Minister for Mines in another place takes a great deal of credit to himself, and justly so, for the help he has given to the goldfields through the initiation of the public battery system. I may go farther back in history, and I claim to be the man who first suggested that this system should be adopted. I would go farther now and suggest that more assistance should be given in the Far North by free batteries being given to the miners. Assistance should be given to prospectors in the way of furnishing them with camels for prospecting, and horses to help them in the arduous work which they undertake. A reference in the Speech to artesian boring has given me more pleasure than anything else in it, for the reason that until we establish the fact, and I think it can be easily proved, that in the North of this country we have an artesian water supply, that we have a true artesian basin, the great industry which I have been speaking about—the pastoral industry—cannot flourish as it should. I may draw members' attention to the fact that when Mr. Hopkins was Minister for Lands, in the Parliament before the last, he promised to help the North by sending an artesian boring plant to the North. Mr. Daglish, when

Premier, and his Minister for Works, evidently agreed with Mr. Hopkins that this was necessary, for to my knowledge space was engaged in a steamer to carry an artesian plant capable of going down 4,000 feet to Kimberley. But what resulted? I am sorry to say what happened. An election came on for the Lower House; I was a candidate, but I was not supported by the Government, and an alteration was made in the destination of the boring plant and it was sent to Broome. I want the Colonial Secretary to take a note of what I am saying. I am not blaming the Government; they had nothing to do with it. To-day there is a big artesian water supply in Broome where there is no need for it, and those in Kimberley are wanting the water that is going to waste in Broome. This Government has taken into consideration somewhat the wants of the people connected with the pastoral industry, for it promises to establish better stock routes and open up more stock routes. Members may think I am talking too much about the North, but I wish to impress on members that it is of the utmost importance to this country and this particular part of the country, that the pastoral industry should be developed. We know there are rich minerals there and rich pastoral country there, therefore we should demand better consideration than the industry has received in the past. If the Government were to look at the matter from my standpoint, or from the standpoint of any practical man who knows that country as well as I know it, as well as Sir Edward Wittenoom or Mr. Sholl knows it, if the Government had practical knowledge of that country, they would know that it is worth developing. It would be a good scheme for the Government to start building a railway inland to the Pilbarra mineral belt. A railway should be run into the mineral belt from Cossack to tap the great mineral resources that exist there. And in conjunction with that the Government might build two or three steamers to develop the trade of the North of this country. Bring the steamers right through from Port Darwin. Then there should be chilled meat works established. The scheme would cost a great deal of money to start, but I have no hesitation in saying from my experience that it would be a

great success, and it would take the people out of the hands of what is an incubus, the shipping ring. I notice with regret that no mention is made in the Speech of a dock for Fremantle. That, in my opinion, is one of the most important works that should be placed before the public of Western Australia. We require for the development of our shipping some place established where steamers can be docked and repaired. That would give confidence to the people in the old country who own steamers that come here carrying large freights. They would not stand the chance of losing vessels by having to send them in tow to Adelaide, to Melbourne, or Sydney. I can assure members it would be the means of reducing materially the freights between England and Western Australia. I also regret, and I am sure Dr. Hackett sympathises, that no mention is made in the Speech of a University. We are not such a poor community and we are not in such dire straits that we could not place on record in the Speech our intention of sometime or other building a University. In fact the time has arrived now when the matter should be brought forcibly before whatever Government is in power. This is a necessity for the country, and the Government in power should make a start with such an institution. A long time ago a proposal was made for the throwing open of Rottnest. The project has for a great many years been mentioned from time to time in Parliament; and nothing farther seems to come of it. The Government of the day should be forced to carry out the promises of former Governments to open the island as a pleasure-ground, to induce the people of the goldfields to stay in this country during their holidays instead of spending their money in the Eastern States. I am pleased to be able to compliment Mr. Kingsmill on his giving notice of the introduction of a Bill to amend the Juries Act. I hope that the Bill will result in the abolition of juries in civil cases involving questions of damages. If that proposal is embodied in Mr. Kingsmill's Bill, he will have my whole-souled support on that particular point. While on the subject of law, I would suggest that a Judge of the Supreme Court should be sent on circuit to the North or the North-West.

HON. W. MALEY: He might never return.

HON. F. CONNOR: Perhaps not, if certain members happened to go with him. But I think the importance of that great area demands a circuit court to obviate the bringing of prisoners and witnesses to Perth at enormous expense to the Crown, which expense, in a recent case from Broome, amounted to £1,100. There may be other cases equally expensive. I hope there are not. There is a matter which I cannot pass without a few words. A regulation was made by the Daglish Government, whereby civil servants who have worked for a given time in the North are granted certain leave—I think it is six weeks leave for every three years worked. I am told it is the intention of the present Government to rescind that regulation; but I hope it will not be rescinded, for I can assure the Government that civil servants in the North earn all the money they get; they can save scarcely any; and if they wish to go away when their health breaks down, all that they can save is needed to enable them to live decently. I have just one more matter to mention—an old friend of mine that I cannot well pass; a matter that has been before the Parliaments of this country once and sometimes twice a year for the past few years, and on one occasion a whole session was mainly occupied in dealing with it. I refer to the everlasting tick question, which has arisen again in the same manner as it arose before and will arise in future. But I think it is a horse ridden nearly to death. Why not let the old horse die, and bury it once for all? Now we have a lot of new regulations. I would ask members, many of whom are connected with the pastoral industry, to read in one of this morning's papers the report of an interview with Mr. Morton Craig, showing the folly of all these restrictions. In conclusion, I hold that we have in this country an asset worth developing, and one which we should not be afraid of developing. Look back again to the old 'nineties, when a mere handful of men undertook the task of developing the resources of this country. Take them as an example. Be not afraid. Go on and prosper; and there is nothing to be afraid of in respect of the future of this country. I move

formally the adoption of an Address-in-reply, as follows:—

To His Excellency Admiral Sir Frederick George Denham Bedford, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

We the Legislative Council of the Parliament of 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.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY (South): Mr. President, I rise to second the Address-in-Reply. My first duty, however, is to congratulate you on the high and honourable position to which you have been elected to-day. Your long association with this House as Chairman of Committees and as Acting President affords ample testimony to your ability to perform satisfactorily the presidential duties; and I feel that you will be able to carry out those duties with perfect satisfaction, and with all the dignity that should pertain to your high office. But while I congratulate you on the honourable position that you have attained to-day, I cannot allow this occasion to pass without referring to an old and familiar face, a face familiar to every member of this Council, that of our late honoured and respected President, Sir George Shenton. That gentleman has had a long and very honourable career; and I feel sure that we all regret his absence to-day. I hope that his health may so improve that he will, at some early date, consider the advisableness of entering again into politics. I should like also to make some slight reference to the grave loss that Australasia has suffered in the person of the Right Hon. Richard Seddon, late Premier of New Zealand. Every English-speaking community has, I think, realised the loss of that great statesman; and I hope that this House will place on record some token of the respect in which he was held by the people of Western Australia. Referring generally to the message conveyed in the Governor's Speech, I should like to say there can be no doubt whatever, in my opinion, that the outlook in Western Australia is brighter than it has been for many years past. The condition of the various

industries fully warrants the Government in proceeding with that progressive policy enunciated by the Premier in his recent policy speech to the people of the State. That this country is in a very sound financial position, there can be no doubt whatever. We have our railways, our water schemes, and other reproductive public assets, the value of which almost equals the total amount of our State indebtedness. These works pay the annual interest, and most of them are also providing a sinking fund for the repayment of the debt. I say, this is indeed a proud position for a young State like Western Australia to occupy; and I think it is a somewhat unique position as compared with that of any other Australian State. In so young a country, with immense resources which are practically undeveloped, it is the duty of Parliament and of the Government to borrow money, so as to open up those resources for the people. We have vast mineral, agricultural, pastoral, and other assets which must be exploited and made accessible to our citizens. We have already had a sufficient experience of a mark-time policy; and had it not been for the wonderful resources of the country, we should have had a period of almost utter stagnation. I do not wish to be classed as an optimist; but it is said, and said truly, that optimists build up a State, while pessimists are merely lookers on. It is not necessary to take a very optimistic view of Western Australia in order to conclude that the Government are justified in borrowing for the construction of railways and other reproductive public works. I think we have every reason to feel satisfied with the progress of the mining industry during the past few years. It is true that during last year a small decline in the gold yield was experienced; but notwithstanding that fact, this State paid away over two millions in dividends. The gold yield of Western Australia for the last few years amounts to over 66 millions of money. Our gold-mining industry to-day is looking better than it has looked for many years past. Very important developments may be observed on the Eastern Goldfields and in various other parts of the State; and so far as the present year is concerned, the gold yield promises to be at least quite equal to,

if not better than, that of last year. Up to date, during the present year we have paid away in dividends in respect of our mining industry something between £800,000 and £900,000. At Ravensthorpe the copper-mining industry is flourishing, and gives every promise of being able, at no very distant date, to employ several thousand men. The discovery of other base metals in the North-West also demands some attention, and I consider, with the proposer of the motion, that it is the duty of the Government to furnish Parliament and the people of the State with some farther particulars of the vast mineral resources of that great country. It is generally believed that there is considerable wealth there, but there is nothing before Parliament or the people of the State, no report whatever, to guide us as to whether the belief is correct or otherwise. With regard to the Coolgardie Water Scheme, I consider this should be treated as a national concern. By that I mean it should be placed on the same basis as our railways and other large State undertakings. I do not think the Coolgardie Water Scheme should be run altogether as a strict commercial concern, as it is termed. The scheme at present is supposed to pay interest and sinking fund. It pays more than the interest at present and it will soon provide for the sinking fund as well. We do not ask that the agricultural railways should be treated in any way but as State works; we do not ask that the rabbit-proof fence should be treated other than as a State work; and I think when Parliament looks into the matter carefully, members will see the wisdom of treating the great Coolgardie Water Scheme on the same basis. I should like to see the price of the water reduced, and I feel certain the consumption will increase accordingly. We have the pumps and machinery lying idle for a large portion of the time and the pipes are idle for a large portion of the time; they are living their life out, and they would be better employed in carrying water than lying idle. I am sure the matter will receive careful consideration from the Minister in charge of the department, and I hope before long he will see his way clear to make a fair reduction. I am sure the Government would reap a good

reward and the State would benefit. With regard to railways, during the last year we obtained over £100,000 profit. This affords ample proof of careful and economic management. At the same time it affords evidence that we should have lower railway freights than exist at present. There are many anomalies in the railway charges; for instance, a farmer can send a ton of chaff to the goldfields for 18s., whereas a ton of mining machinery is charged 24s. or 25s. The development of the State in a large measure depends on the railway system. We have close on 2,000 miles of railways opened up. These are paying the State very handsomely on the amount of money employed in construction and equipment. There are many lines of importance which could be constructed, and I am glad the Government intend to build some spur lines in agricultural districts. I feel sure they have made due inquiries as to these lines and that the construction is warranted. That being so, I hope the Government will push on with the construction of the lines as quickly as possible. I hope the Government will also extend the system of light lines to various parts of the goldfields. There are many places where the people have been clamouring for railways for years. There is the line from the goldfields to Norseman. A light line may well be constructed to that very important goldfield. We also want a railway to Black Range; another from Lawlers to Leonora. The Port Hedland railway was important a short while ago, and if it was required 12 months ago. I do not know why it is not required to-day. A railway is also required from Ravensthorpe to the seaboard. This is an important work and a short line, and I hope the Government in their wisdom will bring forward this proposal during the present session of Parliament. I am pleased to notice by the Governor's Speech that the agricultural industry is in a prosperous condition. I think more attention should be paid to the dairying industry and other industries in connection with it. We are paying hundreds of thousands of pounds for produce to the other States annually, and in my opinion there should be no real reason for it. Last year we paid £300,000 for butter; therefore I think it is the duty of the Government to encourage the dairying

industry by way of bonuses or some other means. We ought to try and get the farmers of Western Australia to go in for dairying. With regard to land settlement, I am pleased to notice that this has progressed lately, but I think more stringent measures should be adopted to compel settlers to make more improvements on their conditionally-purchased blocks. Every attempt should be made to stop dummyming and to encourage legitimate settlement, for I understand a good deal of dummyming does exist at the present time. The Government should do all they can to stop it. I think we should congratulate the Premier, who has done a great deal since he first took office as Minister for Lands, to bring about a better state of affairs. I agree with the mover of the Address that we want a complete reorganisation of the electoral system. Anyone who has passed through an electoral campaign can fully realise the necessity for electoral reform, and I trust the Government will make due inquiries in the various States and give the matter careful consideration, and at the earliest possible moment bring forward electoral reform. I hope, amongst the amending Bills the Government intend to consider during the session, they will not neglect the Railway Act, the Early Closing Act, the Workers' Compensation Act, and the Shops and Factories Act. All these require amendment. In conclusion I should like to say that I have the greatest confidence in our various resources. It is the duty of the Government to undertake the public works enumerated and carry them out at the earliest possible moment, and to render every facility in forwarding the agricultural and mining industries. I have great pleasure in seconding the Address-in-Reply.

On motion by HON. C. SOMMERS, debate adjourned.

OBITUARY—RT. HON. R. J. SEDDON.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly) said: Before the House rises, I desire to submit a motion which will commend itself to every hon. member in this Chamber. It is a motion of condolence with the family of the late Rt. Hon. Richard Seddon, and of sym-

pathy with them and the people of New Zealand in the loss incurred by them in the lamented death of Mr. Seddon. It is unnecessary for me to dwell on the reasons which justify my action: they are known to all and are appreciated by all. Death has removed the foremost figure in Australasian political and social life, and has deprived not merely New Zealand and Australia, but the whole Empire, of the services of one of the most brilliant, most talented, and most patriotic of her children. I beg to move the following resolution:—

That this House places on record its profound regret at the death of the Rt. Honourable R. J. Seddon, Prime Minister of New Zealand, and expresses its deep sympathy with his family and the people of New Zealand.

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

HON. M. L. MOSS (West): I hardly like at this late hour to detain the House by making any observations, but as the late Richard John Seddon has been personally known to me since 1882, and for eleven years of that time I lived in the district which he represented in Parliament, and was on terms of great friendliness with himself and family, it is with profound regret I support the motion. Mr. Seddon was for 27 years in public life; for 15 years of that time he was a Minister of the Crown, and for 14 of the 15 years he was Prime Minister of New Zealand. During that period he acquired a reputation wherever the English language is spoken that needs no words of mine to explain to the Chamber, which indicates the very severe loss which the British nation and the English people have suffered by his untimely removal. I regret most profoundly that the necessity has arisen for the motion to be moved in this House. I am sure Mrs. Seddon and her family will appreciate very much the message of sympathy which will go from another place and from this Chamber. It is remarkable that a man whose opportunities were so few should have risen to the wonderful eminence which the Rt. Hon. Richard Seddon rose to in so short a space of time as 27 years. At this late hour it would be unreasonable to say more, therefore I content myself with supporting the motion.

Question put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

On motion by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, the House adjourned at 4.45 o'clock until 4.30 p.m. the next Tuesday.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 21st June, 1906.

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OPENING OF SECOND SESSION.

The Legislative Assembly met at 2.30 o'clock p.m., pursuant to Proclamation, which was read by the Clerk.

In obedience to summons, Mr. Speaker (Hon. T. F. Quinlan) and hon. members proceeded to the Legislative Council Chamber; and having heard his Excellency deliver the opening Speech [*vide* Council report, *ante*], they returned to the Assembly Chamber.

ELECTION PETITIONS (2), AND RESULTS.

COOLGARDIE.

MR. SPEAKER announced the receipt of a copy of the order of the Supreme Court, declaring the election of the member for Coolgardie (Mr. W. T. Eddy) void.

THE PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore) moved: That in consequence of the decision of the Supreme Court declaring the election void, the seat of the hon. member for Coolgardie be declared vacant.

Question passed.

EAST FREMANTLE.

MR. SPEAKER announced the receipt of a copy of the order of the Court, declaring the return of the member for East Fremantle (Mr. J. J. Holmes) void,