

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

SECOND SESSION OF THE THIRD PARLIAMENT.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Second Session of the Third Parliament under Responsible Government was convened for the despatch of business on the 13th October, 1897.

Parliament was opened by His Excellency the Governor.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 13th October, 1897.

Opening of Parliament—Governor's Speech—Boiler Inspection and Regulation Bill: first reading—Motion: Address-in-Reply; first day of debate—Adjournment.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Legislative Council met at 3 o'clock p.m., pursuant to proclamation by His Excellency the Governor, which proclamation was read by the Clerk of Parliaments.

THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

HIS EXCELLENCY Sir Gerard Smith, K.C.M.G., entered the Council Chamber, and the members of the Legislative Assembly having attended in the Chamber, obediently to summons, His Excellency then delivered the following Speech:—

MR. PRESIDENT AND HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL:

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

I meet you with pleasure. The prospects of the colony are brighter than at any former period of our history.

2. Various important matters have prevented my summoning you earlier in the year, as I should otherwise have desired, but it is gratifying to know that the delay has not interfered with the material progress of the country.

3. The great national ceremonial to commemorate the completion of the sixtieth year of the reign of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, which took place in London on the 22nd June last, was seized upon by all portions of the British Empire as a fitting opportunity for congratulations to our august and beloved Sovereign on Her long and beneficent Reign, and for expressing loyalty and devotion to Her Throne and Person, and I rejoice that this colony was represented on that memorable occasion by the Prime Minister of my Government. The hospitality and consideration extended by the Imperial Government and by the people of Great Britain to the representatives of the self-governing portions of the Empire have, I feel sure, made a lasting impression upon them, and must have an influence for good in still more closely binding the Empire together.

4. The meetings of the Federation Convention in Adelaide and in Sydney during this year have been attended by delegates from this colony, and much care and consideration have been given to this great question, so fraught with importance to the future of this continent.

5. The goldfields of the colony are progressing, and the export of gold is increasing at a marvellous rate. Up to the end of September this year the export was 451,047 ounces, valued at £1,713,978, and there is every prospect of the output for the whole year 1897 reaching the value of £2,500,000. The total quantity of gold exported from Western Australia from the year 1886, when the first gold was exported, up to the end of September last, has been 1,418,674 ounces, valued at £5,390,960, more than half of this quantity having been obtained and exported during the last two years. These results give wide scope for confidence in the future.

6. The branch of the Royal Mint will soon be completed and in working order, and will, it is believed, prove highly advantageous to the gold producer and to the gold-mining industry. It is proposed to establish an Assay Department in connection with the Mint for the convenience of the mining public, and my Ministers hope also very soon to be able to establish Metallurgical works and a School of Mines, with the object of giving every facility possible to those who are engaged in opening up the auriferous and metalliferous areas of the colony.

7. A great deal of work has been done to improve the water supply on the goldfields and on the railways *en route*. Extensive tanks have been either finished or are in course of construction at Niagara, Parker's Range, Kalgoorlie, Broad Arrow, Bardoc, Goongarrie, Siberia, Menzies, Londonderry, Bulong, Black Flag, Kanowna, Woodgiemooltha, Speakman's, Mulline, 50-Mile Rock, and at various places along the several railway lines. In addition to these, 352 trial bores and 116 wells have been sunk in various parts.

8. The Coolgardie water supply project has been submitted to a committee of eminent engineers in London, who have reported that the first cost and the annual expense of working would, in their opinion, not exceed the Estimates laid before Parliament last session. My Ministers regret that owing to the large works already in progress from loan funds, which it is impossible to interfere with, some little delay must occur before this great work can be undertaken; but while regretting the necessity for so great

an expenditure on this work, they are more than ever convinced that no other means are available for providing a certain, cheap, and good supply of fresh water to the Coolgardie goldfields.

9. During the past year the public works authorised by Parliament have been proceeded with, and a vast amount of work has been either completed or is in course of construction. The Fremantle harbour works have been so successful that already ships drawing 19 feet are berthed at the wharf inside the river in perfect safety. Every effort is being made to expedite the work and bring it to completion. The people of the colony are to be congratulated on the success that has already attended the efforts to make the shipping facilities at Fremantle worthy of the principal port of a progressing country.

10. The construction of the railways authorised by Parliament is being vigorously carried on. The railway from Mullewa to Cue was opened for traffic in April last, and will be taken over by the Government from the contractor at the end of the year. It has already proved of much benefit to the Murchison goldfields. The railways from Kalgoorlie to Menzies, from Kalgoorlie to Kanowna, from Kalgoorlie to the Boulder mines, from York to Greenhills, from Brunswick to the Collie Coalfield, and from Donnybrook to Bridgetown, are all in course of construction, and when available for traffic must encourage and stimulate development and production, and in the meantime provide remunerative work for the large population coming to us from other countries. The duplication of the railway from Fremantle to Midland Junction has also been completed, and extensive improvements have been made to existing railways.

11. The surveys of the railway routes from Pinjarrah to Maradong, from Northam to Goomalling, and from Cue to Nannine are in progress. The railway to Perth racecourse has been completed. The principal railway stations have been signalled and interlocked. Two new wings have been added to the Perth Railway Station building, and numerous additions and improvements have been made to platforms, station buildings, and goods sheds throughout the colony. The Observatory is nearly finished. The first

wing of the Public Library and Museum is under construction. Public buildings at Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie, Cue, Marble Bar, Nannine, Southern Cross, Mount Magnet, Yalgoo, Norseman, Esperance, Menzies, Kanowna, York, Newcastle, Northam, Beverley, Geraldton, Perth, Albany, Eucla, Bunbury, Busselton, and almost every other town in the colony, including seven hospitals, 36 police buildings, 57 post and telegraph offices, and seven court houses, are completed or in course of erection. The duplicate telegraph line from Perth to Eucla, *via* Coolgardie and Dundas, has been finished, and a large increase to our telegraph mileage has been carried out. Jetties at Geraldton, Fremantle, Bunbury, Busselton, and Esperance Bay have been added to and improved. Thirty new schools have been erected in the various centres, and the Perth School has been completed. There have been 1,100 miles of road surveyed on the goldfields, and nearly 900 miles have been cleared.

12. The Collie coalfield is receiving attention, and as soon as the railway is open for traffic it is believed that this important industry will prove of much advantage. The improvement of the harbour at Bunbury is progressing, and already 1,500 feet of the mole have been finished. There is every reason to believe that the work will be successful, and enable this important outlet to be utilised with advantage for timber, coal, and other exports.

13. The purchase from the West Australian Land Company of all its interests in the colony was duly completed in December last, and the Great Southern Railway was taken over by the Government amidst the rejoicings of the people settled along its route. The large area of land purchased with the railway, and thus opened for application under the land laws of the colony, has been the means of directing special attention to that part of the colony, and already 132,000 acres have been granted for agricultural and 410,000 acres for pastoral settlement. My Ministers have every reason to be satisfied with the result of the purchase of this railway by the Government.

14. A commission has been appointed to consider and report as to the best mode in which assistance can be rendered

to develop the auriferous resources of the colony. It is anticipated that the report will be completed in a few weeks, and it will no doubt prove valuable in assisting Parliament when the amendment of the Gold Mining Act is under consideration.

15. During the recess attention has been given to deep boring for artesian water. The bore near Coolgardie is now down 2,700 feet, but no water has yet been struck, and it would seem almost hopeless to expect that good water will be obtained by deep sinking in that district. Boring plants are now at work at Wyndham, Onslow, Subiaco, Geraldton, Bunbury, Perth, and Guildford, and it is to be hoped that a large measure of success will result.

16. My Ministers have had under consideration the difficult question of the introduction into the colony of undesirable immigrants, and a Bill will be submitted to you for your consideration.

17. You will be also asked to consider a number of important measures, among which I may mention Bills dealing with Railways, Public Works, Land, Timber, Fisheries, Crown Suits, Circuit Courts, Juries, Companies, Workmen's Lien, Mines Regulation, Post Office Savings Bank, Goldfields, and many others.

18. My Ministers propose to make provision for the erection of public quartz crushers in certain isolated localities, and you will be asked to provide the funds necessary for giving the system a fair trial. The object in view is to give encouragement to small producers, and generally to stimulate and encourage the gold mining industry.

19. My Ministers propose to introduce legislation, for your consideration, with the object of providing for Free Education in the State Schools. It is considered that this step is justified, and it will remove many difficulties which must exist where some pupils pay fees and others are relieved, for various reasons, from doing so. You will also be asked to provide more funds in order to place the High School in a better financial condition, and thus enable it to fill the position in the community that its name implies.

20. In order to assist the pastoral producer, jetties are in course of construction at Carnarvon, Maud's Landing, Ashburton, Port Hedland, and Roebuck Bay, and when they are completed will prove

of great advantage for the shipment of fat stock to the Southern markets. A stock route has been opened up by a series of wells from Mullewa to the Ashburton River, and from Nanning towards the Oakover River, and also from Condon to La Grange Bay. It is proposed to give better shipping facilities at the ports of Derby and Wyndham, so as to assist the shipment of stock from the Kimberley district. The connection by railway of the stock jetty at Owen's Anchorage with Fremantle is under consideration. The Perth Markets and Cold Storage have been completed and are now in use. A road is being made from the jetty at Port Hedland, across the Marsh, which will prove most valuable to the people of the Pilbarra goldfields as well as to the pastoralists, as it will give the means of utilising the nearest and best port on that part of the coast.

21. The progress now being made on the goldfields at Pilbarra, Norseman, East Murchison, and other outlying places, will soon render it necessary to consider the best way of providing better means of transit to those localities. My Ministers are not prepared at the present time to ask Parliament for any further power to raise money by loan; and as it will be necessary to make provision on this year's Estimates for many works not hitherto charged to the Consolidated Revenue, they are unable this session to make any proposals with the above object in view. Taking into consideration the numerous public works already in progress, and the immense public expenditure that is going on, my Ministers are of opinion that it would be unwise just now to incur any large new obligations.

22. My Ministers do not propose this session to introduce any legislation with a view of amending the Tariff. In regard to the question of remitting or reducing the existing duties on some articles of food, which are capable of being produced in the colony, they are of opinion that the present time is inopportune to do anything that will either reduce the revenue or discourage the rapidly increasing occupation and improvement of the lands of the colony, from which a large increase of production must result. My Ministers have no intention, nor have they any desire, to protect food products for an indefinite period, and they are of opinion

that it will not be necessary to do so, as, aided by a recurrence of the bountiful season we are this year experiencing, and by the good markets existing on our goldfields, this colony must, in a short time, become self-supporting. The encouragement given to production by our liberal land laws, and by means of the Agricultural Bank, is most gratifying, and during the last three months 219 homestead farms, containing a total area of 32,349 acres, and 680 conditional purchases, containing a total area of 113,033 acres, have been granted.

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

23. The Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure will be placed before you as soon as possible. The Revenue for the past financial year was £2,842,751, but the Expenditure was only £3,308 less, so that unless it is desired to delay the many urgent and necessary public works now in progress or about to be undertaken, it will not be possible this year to remit any duties or otherwise reduce the anticipated gross amount of Revenue. Notwithstanding this large Expenditure, I am glad to be able to inform you that at the end of the financial year there was a credit balance of £315,362 on the current account of the colony. During the last financial year there was expended from Consolidated Revenue and Loan Funds the sum of £4,359,448, and even with this immense Expenditure it was difficult to meet the urgent and growing requirements of the country, and it must therefore be borne in mind that any reduction of Revenue means a reduced Expenditure on public works, and a consequent interference with the labour market, which would be very inconvenient to the large population coming to the colony, and consequently prejudicial to our best interests. Of the three and a half millions authorised to be raised by Loan, only one million has as yet been raised by the sale of inscribed stock, but there are about three-quarters of a million of Treasury bills current, which will be redeemed when further instalments are floated. The financial credit of the colony is excellent, and our London bankers continue to give my Ministers every satisfaction.

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

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, —

24. The Imperial Government having at length agreed to the abolition of the Aborigines Protection Board, which has for nearly seven years existed independent of the local Government, a measure will be submitted to you having that object in view. The position occupied by this Board in the past, in a colony having self-Government, has given rise to much controversy, and it is gratifying that all cause of difference has now been removed by the action that has been taken.

25. During the seven years that Western Australia has enjoyed self-Government, the population has more than trebled, the annual revenue has increased sevenfold, while the gold export for 1897 is thirty times greater than it was for 1890. In reviewing, therefore, the present position of the colony, and comparing it with any previous period of its history, there is every reason for gratification.

26. In now leaving you to the performance of your responsible and arduous duties, I do so with full confidence that you will devote your experience and knowledge to upholding the honour and credit of the colony, and promoting its advancement, and I trust that the blessing of Divine Providence may be with you in your deliberations.

27. I now declare this Session of Parliament open.

His Excellency then withdrew; the members of the Legislative Assembly returned to their own Chamber; and the President of the Council having taken the Chair, the business of the session was proceeded with.

BOILER INSPECTION AND REGULATION BILL.

Introduced by the MINISTER OF MINES (Hou. E. H. Wittenoom), upon leave given, and Bill read a first time.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

THE MINISTER OF MINES laid on the table the following papers:—(1) Report of the Commandant of the Local Forces of W.A., for the year ending

June 30, 1897; (2) Statistical Register for 1896, and previous years; (3) Statement of Operations of the London Agency for 1896; (4) Report of the High School, Perth, for the year ending June 30, 1897; (5) Report on Gaols and Prisoners for 1896; (6) Report by the Acting Superintendent of Relief for 1896; (7) Report of Land Titles Department for 1896.

NOTION—ADDRESS-IN-REPLY TO THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

FIRST DAY OF DEBATE.

HON. G. RANDELL: In rising to move the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's opening Speech, I take the opportunity of referring to a few of the items which are expressed in this very exhaustive Speech; and, as far as my memory serves me, it is the very longest Speech we have ever had delivered in this colony, and embraces matters of very great importance and of interest to the community. I think it was anticipated that, when the invitation came to the Premier to visit London for the Jubilee celebrations, some disturbance of the arrangements of the colony would ensue, and I have no doubt that such has been the case, though His Excellency has been pleased to say, in his Speech, that it has not delayed the material progress of the colony. It was, perhaps, a little unfortunate to a Parliament newly elected that these important events should be taking place in other parts of the world—the Jubilee celebrations and the Federal Conventions in Adelaide and Sydney. I have no doubt that some considerable interference has resulted to the public business of the country; and, while I say this, I think there are few people in this colony who would have desired or wished that we should have been unrepresented either in London at the Jubilee celebrations, or at the meetings of the Federal Conventions in the two colonies I have named. I think it would have been an outrage, almost, upon that which is right and proper, if this colony, which is rapidly progressing and is hoping presently to appear well abreast of the more populous sister colonies of the Australian group, had failed to be represented at those meetings. I have no doubt that a very considerable amount of educative influence will have been brought to bear upon the minds of the delegates who went to the

Sydney Convention, meeting and conferring, as they have done, with the ablest men in the colonies, and also that an enlarged vision will be afforded to them of views which are passing in the world around us; and this, to a very large extent, I think, will apply to the visit of the Premier to London, in connection with that very interesting and important event which has just been celebrated there. I have no doubt that the sympathies and the mental grasp of those persons more particularly who had the good fortune to be present at those meetings will be expanded, and that not only they, but we also, shall participate in that expansion of view. I think there has been some depression—no one can shut his eyes to the fact that there has been some cessation, at any rate, of the onward march of events in this colony; and when we remember that a considerable portion of the people with us now are from the colony of Victoria, we cannot be surprised that, arriving here as they have done at a time when the colony was booming, any little cessation of that boom would naturally arouse in their minds some want of confidence, and a little mistrust about the future of this colony. In my conversations with many of the people I meet about the city, I have found this to be the case. Constantly the question is asked: What do you think of the future? What do you think is just ahead of us? Are we likely to progress? Are we likely to continue to advance in material progress? and so on. I think there are many things in this Speech to-day which will tend to restore confidence in the minds of persons of this kind; and there is a large number of them, I am quite sure. When we have placed before us an authoritative statement that the yield of gold from the mines of this colony during this year will probably reach the magnificent sum of $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions of money, I think this will show there are real grounds for our entertaining the opinion that there is a grand future before this colony. I am very pleased to see that the Speech, all through, is couched, if not in an optimistic vein, at any rate in a cheerful and stimulating strain, which I am sure will be joyfully accepted by a very large number of the settlers in the colony. If it only accomplishes that much—if we restore con-

fidence in those who are coming to us from time to time, and who are already here, and if we induce them to bring their belongings, of which we have read so much in the newspapers—then I am sure we shall have very much to be thankful for. When I speak of the yield of gold, I would also like to refer to the Commission which has been formed for the purpose of inquiring into matters connected with the prospecting and the gold industry generally. Though I am not one of those who are very sanguine that great results will happen, I think it was a wise step to take on the part of the Government, and that a considerable amount of information will be gathered together which will be useful to members of both Houses; and I hope we shall approach any legislation which may be brought before us with better ideas than we have now as to what will be for the best interests and progress of the gold industry. That it is an important one no one will deny. Perhaps it is not the most important one. We shall consider that from different points of view, according to our occupations and according to our inclinations, to a very large extent. Still, at the same time, it is an industry which is a spur to all other industries, and should be dealt with wisely, liberally, and well, so that all classes engaged in that industry may, so far as is possible by legislation, or by the rules which may be enacted from time to time by the Government, be satisfied that their best interests are being promoted. It is also very pleasing to see that His Excellency, in this Speech, is able to speak so encouragingly of land settlement. A great many, perhaps, will think that this is the foundation industry—the most important industry which we have in existence in the country. I need not repeat the truism, “Everything must come from the land,” and if we are to be a prosperous and happy people, the land must be settled, cultivated, and made to produce all that is necessary, at any rate for the wants of the citizens of this colony. It is pleasing to find that such a large development has taken place, for I find that special occupation licenses and homestead leases to the extent of about 150,000 acres have been granted during the past year; and, in addition to that, as a result of the purchase of one land-grant railway, the

Great Southern line, the Government have a much larger amount of land disposed of, which will be, by-and-by, brought under cultivation. I think the Government may well congratulate themselves and the country that they made that purchase, seeing that the lands were locked up in the hands of the company, and progress was in every way prevented. Perhaps some better arrangements might have been made, from a financial point of view, than were made. If that had been the case, perhaps we should not have had such a falling on the London market when our loan was offered there a short time ago. I think the facts which are set before us in the Speech with reference to the enormously increasing productiveness of our gold mines, the enlarged occupation of the country and the increase in the production, will, as I have said, have a tendency, and a very important tendency, to create a greater feeling of confidence and trust in the future of this country; and, if we accomplish that, I think there can be no doubt about our future. I regret, in connection with land settlement, that the Government have not seen their way to make some reduction in the food duties. A very large number were anticipating that some relief would be given. I quite sympathise with them, to some extent. While I have no desire to see the whole of the duties repealed, yet I think the Government might have faced the position, and have given us some reduction upon certain articles of food which are not produced in the country, and which come into every-day consumption in our families. However, in reference to that, I think I may say that the attempts which are being made in all parts of the country to overtake the demand for food supplies will, if anything will, reconcile us for a short time longer to the continuance of these duties. But I do trust that the producers of the colony, agriculturists and pastoralists, will have no idea in their minds of either combining together for restricting the growth of those commodities or the production of food supplies, for the purpose of keeping up the prices. I do not think any such thing has entered into their minds, although occasionally in the history of this colony I have heard it whispered that it would be very unwise of the agriculturists so to

increase the consumption as to more than overtake the demand, and bring down the prices of the commodities they produce. I only throw this out as a hint, that the country may take up this question very seriously in the near future, if we have still to import large quantities of produce and to pay through the Custom-house a very considerable tax. Especially does that refer to the duty on dead meat, which, I think, is unjustifiable, and ought to be altered as speedily as possible. The Speech contains a long record—and I think we may well feel that the Ministry may be proud of that which they have placed on the paper—of works accomplished or undertaken or about to be undertaken. I think there is scarcely a parallel to be found anywhere for the rapid progress we have made in these large public undertakings for the general good of the colony. We have had railways made to an extent which could scarcely have been dreamed of, even since this Government has been in office. Even since Responsible Government, no one could have anticipated that the developments which have taken place could possibly have happened in this colony, which was so backward in all the means of inter-communication inland. Among the public works there are not only railways, but harbours; and I refer, with a considerable amount, I may say, of pride, to what is taking place at Fremantle. We find that a port is being created there which will be of the utmost advantage, at any rate to the central districts of this colony, and which we may possibly find large enough not only for mail steamers arriving and discharging their mails, but their passengers as well, from the old, settled portions of the world. I think the Ministry have to be congratulated, and the officers who have been superintending the execution of these works at Fremantle have to be congratulated, on the success which has attended their efforts; and we must look with pardonable pride on the vessels of considerable tonnage lying alongside the wharves in the river in safety and security during any storm that may arise. It must have a very large influence on the advancement of the country. It will stimulate and encourage enterprise of all kinds; and we can scarcely tell the far-reaching results that may follow the

creation, as I may so call it, of a harbour there. It has been a hobby of mine for many years; and I believe I have been as influential as anyone in securing the construction of those works in the position in which they are. I am very pleased to see that so many efforts have been made and a considerable expenditure incurred—because it is in the right direction—in the endeavour to obtain water for the many industries throughout the country. The mere enumeration of them is a lengthy one, as it occurs in the Speech; and if all those efforts are attended with success, they also must bring about a very material difference in the productions of the country, making it more fit for habitation, and providing a means for future prosperity. I am also pleased to see that attention is being directed, not only to shipping facilities along our coast, but to the creation of stock routes in different parts of the colony, all tending to reduce the cost of living and to stimulate and encourage the pastoral industry—an industry which needs all the legitimate encouragement which we can possibly give to it. There are one or two works upon which there has been a considerable amount of, I would say, mild criticism—the Observatory and the Mint. Some people—a good many, I think—have been of opinion that these were in advance of the times; that we could scarcely afford to have them; that they were the hobbies of the Premier or of members of the Government, and that they ought to have waited for some considerable time, and have given place to works that had, on the face of them, greater material advantages. But I think that the colony has arrived at a time when it would be almost a national disgrace to have refused to vote the money for the erection of the Observatory. This adjunct of civilization should deservedly find a place in our midst; and I trust that hon. members share with me in the feeling that it will be to our credit and to our advantage in many ways to have an important institution of this kind established in our midst, with all the modern appliances, which will enable observations to be taken in the very best manner, and which will enable this colony to take its place in the rank of other and larger colonies. With regard to the Mint, though I am not quite so favourable to it, yet a great deal may

be said with regard to that. It will be soon an accomplished fact, and we must make the most out of it that we possibly can. I do not share in the feeling that it will be a white elephant. When it is furnished with all the adjuncts mentioned by His Excellency in his Speech as about to be attached to it—assays, and other conveniences for the advantage of those who are engaged in the production of minerals throughout the country—we shall find it will be a most useful institution. It may cost more than we shall get from it in the course of the first year; but we may hope that it will be self-supporting at an early date, and it will give us prestige in the eyes of other communities. That is a great deal to be said on its behalf. I would like to refer to the free education that has been promised in His Excellency's Speech. I must confess to a little liking for the old system, and to some little dislike of that parental system of government which is continually growing and increasing in these Australian colonies; and I have the opinion that people should, as far as they possibly can, pay for what they receive. And even in this matter of education, not only has that aspect of the case to be met; but we have to remember that a free system of education also comes into competition with private schools. I realise that the time has come when there is a very general demand that education should be free. Steps are being taken by the Minister of Education and by the department to grant, for various reasons, a free education to a great many scholars; and therefore, as it is expressed in His Excellency's Speech, it is desirable that the system should be adopted. I think it has always been held that if we have compulsory education, we must also have free education. One is a natural and logical consequence of the other. I am very pleased to see that the Government propose to take some steps to place the High School in the important position which it should hold in the colony. It cannot be concealed that it is not answering all the expectations of those who are interested in higher education. It is not satisfying parents. I know of many cases in which children have been taken away and sent to schools outside the colony; and I do think that this one institution should be raised to the highest possible point of effi-

ciency as soon as it can possibly be done, and it should become what I have always hoped it would become—an introduction to the future university. Education must be given to the people of the colony, if they are to hold their own with the inhabitants of other colonies and of other parts of the world; and in connection with this I am pleased to say that steps are being taken in earnest for the promotion of technical education in our midst, which is almost of as much importance as, if not of more importance than, the higher education to be received in the High School. Attached to the High School there should be something of the kind, and the boys trained there should be trained in some department of technical education. The legislation promised to us in the 17th paragraph is of an interesting character, dealing, as it does, with the railways, public works, and other important matters—mines regulation and the Post Office Savings Bank, which latter, I suppose, is to be put on a more useful basis than at present. One paragraph gives us to understand that a Bill will be introduced to deal with a subject which has caused many letters to be written to the newspapers, some of which have been of such a character that every man who has a spark of Christian manhood in him must have blushed to read. That paragraph refers to the aliens who have come into our midst protected by our laws. I trust that this kind of correspondence in the papers will cease at an early date. It exhibits us in a most awkward light, to say the least of it. I am sorry to say that this feeling permeates, not only this colony, but the other colonies of the group. In addition to these promises, we are also promised that many other Bills will be introduced. I trust that the Hon. A. B. Kidson will introduce a Bill to amend the Bankruptcy Act, if we do not get a new bankruptcy law altogether, and also one dealing with bills of sale. I intend to introduce a Bill for the registration of firms. In addition to these there should be some social legislation, especially with regard to the preservation of the day of rest, and the putting down of some of the social evils which exist in our midst. Even if working men are willing to work on the seven days of the week, it is not well that they should be allowed to do so except in urgent

cases; and I trust that the Government, as a Government, will set their face against this thing, and endeavour to introduce some legislation which will have the effect of discountenancing it and of preventing it. I think also that there should be some alteration and amendment of the Licensed Victuallers Act, to prevent, if possible, the amount of Sunday trading that is carried on. I should be glad to see a measure of the kind introduced by the Government. It is not my intention to weary the House much longer. The Speech is so plain and exhaustive in its statements that very little difficulty is experienced in understanding what is before us. I may, in passing, observe that out of the 27 paragraphs of which it is composed, 15 or 16, at any rate, are devoted to retrospection. There is not much in the way of new matter before us, or much indication of what will be undertaken by the Government. I do not grumble at that. Ministers may well look with satisfaction on what has been accomplished. Many large useful works have been undertaken by them, and carried on to completion. There may, perhaps, be a difference of opinion as to the cost of these works—as to whether they may not have been carried on at an excessive cost. At any rate it is an open question whether the best means have always been employed. Sooner or later the Government will have to reconsider their position as to the construction of public works, and perhaps adopt another system. There are one or two matters on which we require further information, and after having mentioned these I will conclude what I have to say by moving the Address-in-Reply. The first matter I will refer to is that of the Collie coalfield. Very little information is afforded to us on the present position and future prospects of what we anticipate will be a very important industry in this colony. The country will want further information on this point than is afforded in His Excellency's Speech. I am in favour of the Coolgardie water supply scheme. After careful consideration I have satisfied myself, so far as I can judge, that the scheme as proposed by Mr. O'Connor is one that can be carried out. I am of the opinion that no other means than those in the scheme proposed will supply the abso-

lutely necessary demands of the goldfields in the matter of water supply. There is no doubt that two and a half millions of money is an enormous sum for a small community like this, even supposing that the great work can be carried out for that amount. I am not surprised that some people look with hesitation on the borrowing of such a large sum of money, and thus adding to the burdens of every individual in the country. Still, at the same time, it appears that no other means are available for supplying the goldfields with drinkable water; and what I want to say is that we should have a little more information as to the real reason which is preventing the Government from undertaking the great work at the present moment. I take it that the reason assigned is only one reason, and perhaps not the most important. Another matter I would like to refer to is the Financial Statement. I have no reason to doubt what is put before us here, but I might say, as has been said in other places, that sometimes balances are declared which are not real balances; that you are not able to put your finger on the amount put down as a balance which is said to be the result of the year's transactions. In this case, however, I find that within about £3,000 odd, the expenditure has kept pace with the income of the colony. I would like to know from the Minister representing the Government whether he will be able to satisfy us by-and-by—and this is a hint I throw out to him now—on these important matters. I should like to be assured that the £3,000 odd, which is said to be a balance, is really available for the use of the colony. Apologising for having trespassed at such great length, I now proceed to move the adoption of the Address-in-Reply, which reads as follows:—

“To His Excellency Lieut.-Colonel Sir Gerard Smith, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Colony of Western Australia and its Dependencies, &c., &c., &c.

“MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

“We, Her Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the members of the Legislative Council of Western Australia in Parlia-

ment assembled, beg to assure your Excellency of our continued loyalty and affection to our most gracious Sovereign.

“We thank your Excellency for the Speech which you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

“Our most careful attention will be given to the various matters referred to by your Excellency, as well as all other matters that may be submitted for our consideration, and it shall be our earnest endeavour to so deal with them that our labours may result in the advancement and welfare of this portion of Her Majesty's dominions.”

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Mr. President, after the very able speech which has just been delivered, I feel somewhat diffident in addressing myself to the motion before the House. However, before dealing with the subject matter of His Excellency's Speech, which by the way, as mentioned by the last speaker, is an exceptionally long one, I should like to take the opportunity of thanking the Minister of Mines, and also the Government, for the compliment paid to me and my constituency in asking me to second the adoption of the Address-in-Reply. It is indeed right that mention should be made in a foremost position of His Excellency's Speech, of the great ceremonial which has lately taken place in London. It was a ceremonial unique in the history of the Empire, and one fraught, doubtless, with many possibilities. It was a happy inspiration on the part of the Imperial Government to invite the Premiers and representatives of Responsible Governments of the Empire to participate in that great function. That, I think, had the effect, in a great measure, of drawing the colonies more into touch with the mother country; and I do think, at all events, that there was demonstrated on that occasion the affection and attachment of the mother country to the colonies, and also the loyalty of the colonies to the mother country and the Queen. The next point I wish to touch upon occupies, strange to say, a very small portion of His Excellency's Speech; although, to my mind, it is the greatest question that has ever yet been considered by the Australian Parliaments—that is the question of federation. This occupies but three lines in His Excellency's Speech, and perhaps that is because the considera-

tion of the matter has not yet been finally completed. On the other hand, perhaps, it is because, if federation becomes an accomplished fact, it may be many years before this colony will see its way to join. I, myself, am glad that this colony saw fit to send delegates to the Federal Convention, even at the undoubted great inconvenience it was to the country. It was only right that this colony should take part in the formation of a constitution under which we may one day be called on to live. One gratifying feature in the Speech is that referring to the gold output. The manner in which the gold output has increased in the last few months is simply astounding, and there is every promise of the output continuing in the future. It is the more gratifying, because there is no doubt that on the output of the gold depends the prosperity of this colony to a very large extent. As that output increases, so will the prosperity of the colony increase. Already in London, if my information be correct—and I believe it is—the effect of this increased gold output has been felt. There is no doubt there has been a certain amount of depression in London, and also in this colony. There is nothing alarming in this, but there has been a certain amount of depression already referred to by Mr. Randell, and the effect of the increased output of gold, even up to now, is such as to cause that depression to fade away. I should like to draw the attention of the House to a statement made some considerable time ago, that in Kalgoorlie—one of the principal centres of the goldfields—the water supply was fast giving out. We now find that the water in that particular centre is almost sufficient for the purposes of crushing and general use. That brings me to the consideration of the Government water scheme. I can only say that it is a matter of the utmost satisfaction to me that the Government should have thought fit to have dropped the consideration of the scheme, or the carrying out of the scheme, at all events for the present. I have always thought, and have said since its initiation, that the scheme is too great and too big for the colony to enter on at the present time. I believe that the effect of the Government dropping this scheme, at all events temporarily, in London, will be that they will

now have little or no difficulty in obtaining moneys on loan to carry out urgent public works. There is one other matter I should like to draw attention to, and that is the Mining Commission. I am exceedingly glad that, at last, this Commission has got to work. I do not know whether it has completed its labours, but I think not. There is no doubt that the Goldfields Act and Regulations require amendment in very many particulars, and I do not think a better method could be adopted of arriving at what is necessary in the way of amendment, than that of a Royal Commission. No doubt a very large amount of work has been done by the Government of this colony in the development of the goldfields, and in the future more work will have to be done, and will be done. I should like to take this opportunity, at the beginning of the session, of saying that any reasonable measures brought forward by the representatives of the goldfields, with the object of developing the mining industry, will meet with my heartiest support. I should like to refer to some of the public works which are mentioned in His Excellency's Speech. The first one I desire to refer to is that of the deep drainage. It is a matter of sincere regret to me that the Government—and I believe this is a fact, because it has appeared in the daily press—should have thought fit to even consider for a moment the advisability of postponing the consideration of the deep drainage scheme. In the face of all the reports we hear continually, and all the experience we have had in this colony during past summers, and in the face of what we are likely to experience in the future in this matter, I cannot understand how the Government should have gone out of their way to postpone this scheme. Doctors on all sides are agreed that there is only one way to stop this terrible scourge of typhoid, and that is by the adoption of a deep drainage system. I hope the Government will not for a moment consider the advisability of postponing the deep drainage for Perth, but will take the matter in hand and deal with it vigorously and firmly. What are £2,000 or £3,000 a year to the number of lives lost? A few thousands of pounds are nothing, and the money ought to be spent in the construction of this necessary work. One other important work is that of the

Fremantle harbour. I cannot avoid congratulating the Government on the great progress which this work has made. Even now the most sceptical of persons should be satisfied that the harbour will soon not only be able to but will accommodate the mail steamers. Only the other day one of the biggest steamers that ever came here was accommodated with a berth in the harbour, and that steamer, I am given to understand, and I think correctly, is as large as any of the mail steamers, or as most of the mail steamers, that call at the Southern port. The Government are to be congratulated on the progress the work has made, and I believe that not only will the mail steamers call at Fremantle in a short time, but that the work will be an absolute success. With regard to the Observatory I am glad to learn that this has been constructed; but I should like to know whether the gentleman who is going to occupy that building—I believe he has paid several visits to the colony and departed again and again—when he returns, if ever he does (we are getting doubtful) to take up his position, will remain. I hope he will. I can hardly find words to express my pleasure at learning that the Government intend to introduce a Bill dealing with undesirable immigrants. If there is one question more than another that is agitating the public mind at the present, it is that of the Asiatics in this colony. The feeling of the people in certain centres is worked up almost to fever heat; and unless something is done very shortly I honestly believe that the local tradesmen and workmen will be practically driven out of the running. I am delighted to find the Government have taken the matter up. A Bill drawn somewhat on the lines of an Act lately passed in Natal should be suitable to this colony, with certain modifications and amendments. If a Bill is brought in it will, subject to a perusal of its provisions, receive my heartiest support. I see that a number of Bills are mentioned in His Excellency's Speech as likely to be brought before Parliament. Some of these Bills are most important, but it is a matter of absolute impossibility to discuss any of them, because we do not yet know what their provisions are. There is one Bill I wish the Government had not included, and that is the Bill dealing

with workmen's liens; for I myself had taken the trouble to draft a Bill dealing with the subject, and, unfortunately, the Government have got before me. I am very glad indeed, however, that the Government have taken this matter up, and their Bill will receive my heartiest support.

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): Perhaps your Bill may be the better one.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Perhaps so, but I would like to see yours first. I now come to the burning question of the day; that is the question of the food duties. Well, on this question I cannot help saying I regret that the Government have not seen their way to reduce those duties. I do think the feeling of the major portion of the people of this colony is in favour of a reduction. I also think that the protection which is at present afforded to persons engaged in those industries is too great, and that the duties are capable of reduction to a very large extent. I do not mean to say I would sweep away the duties altogether—far from it; but the duties should be reduced in an equitable degree to both the producer and the consumer. I do not suppose there is much chance of it; but it would be most pleasing to me if the Government could have seen their way to re-consider their decision on this point. This is a matter of keen discussion, not only inside Parliament, but out of it, and whatever the result may be, I am confident the major portion of the people of the colony are in favour of a reduction of the food duties. I do not think the colony is in favour of a clean sweep away of the duties; but I am confident it is in favour of a reduction to an equitable extent. I feel sure that if the Government could have seen their way to reduce those duties to a certain extent, they would have been conferring a boon on the whole colony. We want to keep people here, and have the money spent in the colony. Many desirable settlers come here, but cannot, on account of the cost of living, bring their families here. They send their money away in sums approaching one million per annum, which money should be spent here, and assist in the development of the colony. There is one matter, I am sorry to say, has been omitted from His Excellency's Speech,

and which, apparently, is not going to be dealt with by the Government. That is a Civil Service Bill. I have looked forward session after session to seeing some mention made in the Governor's Speech of the introduction of a Civil Service Bill. Such a Bill is badly wanted here, and why such a measure has not been introduced is a mystery to me. I hope the Government will see their way to introduce a Civil Service Bill, because I feel confident it would be a matter of the utmost satisfaction to the whole colony. Another matter I should like to see taken in hand is that of the consolidation of the statutes. Time after time the statutes are amended in Parliament, and even lawyers themselves have difficulty in tracing these different amendments. It would be a matter of great good to the whole community if the consolidation of the statutes were taken in hand. If I may be permitted for one moment, at the risk of wearying hon. members, I should like to refer to one local matter. On such an occasion as this, it may not perhaps be right to refer to local matters, but as I will have no opportunity of speaking again, I may be pardoned. This local matter is in connection with the Fremantle hospital. There is a strong feeling in my constituency that the management of this hospital should be put on a more sound basis than it is at present. The method of the management is of a kind fit for the year one. At any rate the method of the management is not fit for the conditions of the present day. I cannot understand why the management of the Fremantle hospital cannot be on the same basis as that of the Perth hospital. The session before last an Act of Parliament was passed dealing with the various hospitals of the colony, and the only hospital that has been affected by that Act is the Perth hospital. I should desire to see the provisions of that Act applied to the Fremantle hospital, and that institution, as I have said, placed on a similar basis to that of the Perth hospital. Now, sir, I have done. I have only to congratulate the Government of the country on the very sound state of the finances. I also express a hope which I feel sure every hon. member in this House will concur in, that the increasing prosperity of this colony may long continue, and

that before long the colony will take her place, as I believe she will before many years are over, in the front ranks of the Australian colonies.

HON. H. BRIGGS: I move that the debate be adjourned to the next sitting day.

Put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom) moved that the House at its rising do adjourn till 4:30 p.m. on the following day.

Put and passed.

The House adjourned at 4:30 p.m. until the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 13th October, 1897.

Meeting of the Assembly—Message: The Governor's Opening Speech—Swearing-in of a Member—Election Petition: Judicial Certificate—Papers Presented—Jury Bill: first reading—Motion: Address in-Reply to the Governor's Speech; first day of debate—Adjournment.

MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Legislative Assembly met at 3 o'clock p.m., pursuant to Proclamation by His Excellency the Governor, which Proclamation was read by the Clerk; Mr. Speaker, Sir Jas. G. Lee Steere, presiding.

MESSAGE—THE GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

Black Rod having appeared at the Bar and delivered a summons from the Governor,

MR. SPEAKER and hon. members repaired to the Legislative Council Chamber, where His Excellency delivered a Speech on the opening of the second session of