

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

the third Parliament. [*Vide* p. 1, *ante*.] Mr. Speaker and hon. members having returned to the Assembly Chamber, the business of the session was proceeded with.

SWEARING-IN OF A MEMBER.

Mr. J. J. Holmes, member for East Fremantle (not having attended in the previous short session), took and subscribed the oath according to law.

ELECTION PETITION—JUDICIAL CERTIFICATE.

The election of Mr. W. Oats as member for Yilgarn having been petitioned against, and the petition having been inquired into by two judges of the Supreme Court, the certificate of the said judges was now presented and read, to the effect that the sitting member, Mr. William Oats, had been duly elected.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

THE PREMIER, by leave, laid on the table the following principal papers:—

1. Part II. (Public Finance) of Statistical Register (1896). 2. Statement of Operations of London Agency (1896). 3. Report of Land Titles Department (1896). 4. Report of Governors of Perth High School (1896-7). 5. Report on Gaols and Prisoners (1896). 6. Report of Poor Relief Department (1896). 7. Report of Commandant of Local Forces (1896-7).

JURY BILL.

Introduced by the PREMIER, upon leave given, and Bill read a first time.

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

FIRST DAY OF DEBATE.

MR. SPEAKER having reported that he had, with members of the Assembly, attended His Excellency the Governor in the Chamber of the Legislative Council to hear the Speech of His Excellency on the opening of Parliament, and a copy of the Speech having been now read to hon. members,

MR. LYALL HALL (Perth) said : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise with a considerable amount of diffidence to move the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency the

Governor's Speech, because, as a new member, I feel I shall require, to the greatest extent, your indulgence and the indulgence of hon. members of this House. I shall, however, endeavour to repay that indulgence by being as brief as possible, and not taking up any more of your time than is absolutely necessary. The Speech which His Excellency has read to-day is one which is certainly lengthy, but few will venture to assert that its length is not fully justified by the importance of the utterance, and by the satisfaction which everyone must feel at the marvellous progress we have been making. Personally I would be in complete accord with the Speech were it not for the negative nature of the 22nd paragraph—on that I shall have a little to say at a later stage—but there is no denying the fact that the Speech on the whole is extremely satisfactory. It is a record of great progress; it is a record of a marvellous advance hitherto unparalleled in Australian history, and it is a record of which we may all feel justly proud. The facts that during the last seven years, as indicated in paragraph 25, the population has more than trebled, and the annual revenue has increased sevenfold, while the gold export for 1897 is thirty times greater than it was for 1890, are evidences which speak for themselves, and which are an ample reply to those traducers of the colony who seem to take every opportunity of maligning our prosperity and impairing our credit. Coming to the paragraphs, I do not intend to take them *seriatim*, but I shall content myself by speaking on a few of the principal subjects mentioned. We are all, I take it, extremely well satisfied with the progress of the goldfields during the past two or three years. For a long time the London investor has been waiting for what is known as results, and for a long time the capitalist who has spent his money—invested his money, and has often invested it lavishly in bringing our mines to a proper state of development—has been doomed to disappointment; but the tide has now turned, and the day is not far distant when those who stuck to the goldfields through good and evil report are likely to meet with rich reward. Month by month the export of gold has been increasing, until last month we topped the record with a return of something like 71,000 ounces; but I would like to say here that I hope

the Government will make some provision in the future for providing accurate returns of the output of gold. We are not so much interested in knowing what gold has left the colony, but we are more interested in knowing what gold the colony has produced; and certainly it is admitted on all sides that the figures supplied by the Collector of Customs are well within the facts, and the various Chambers of Mines, which I am pleased to say I think are doing good work for the colony both here and in London, are assured that the gold return for the month of September was 20,000 ounces greater than the return given by the Government. But the London public naturally decline to receive any statements which are not authorised by the Government, and therefore I say it behoves the Government to, in the future, place before them the actual production of gold in this colony, and not the export of gold. According to paragraph 6, the Royal Mint will soon be in working order, and then the returns of gold exported will materially decrease, and such returns will be actually misleading. They will be no good whatever, and therefore I hope the Government will take this into consideration. I hope the Government will take into consideration the necessity of supplying us, and especially the London public, with the actual amount of gold produced in the colony. The arrangement by which the weekly crushings are received by the Mines Department should surely enable the Mines Department to furnish a monthly return of the gold output. I am aware that the weekly crushings are reported in the *Government Gazette*; but the same prominence is not given to the output of gold as is given to the gold exported. Coming to paragraph 8, *re* the Coolgardie goldfields water supply scheme, I am pleased to find that the board of eminent experts in England have agreed with the opinion expressed by the Engineer-in-Chief of this colony, and that the Coolgardie water scheme is a perfectly feasible project. I think we are all pretty well of opinion that, in order to keep the goldfields of this colony going ahead, we must provide them with a certain supply of good and cheap water; and when you consider that part of the Governor's Speech which states that the bore at Coolgardie is down about 2,700 feet

without obtaining any result, I think you will all agree that, if we are to supply the Coolgardie goldfields with water, we must do it by artificial means. Paragraph 9 refers to a subject which is vastly interesting to the whole of the colony, and especially so to those who were the means of initiating the Fremantle harbour works. The fact that recently one of the large ocean-going steamers was safely berthed alongside the wharf in the river proves conclusively that those persons who are responsible for the Fremantle harbour works may now consider they were perfectly justified in initiating them. I consider it is a triumph for the colony that one of the large ocean-going steamers has been able to enter the river safely and berth alongside the wharf, at this stage of an incomplete work; and I have been given to understand that one of the contracting ocean mail companies has been altering its opinion with reference to the safety of the Fremantle harbour, and that, when the work is finished, it will require only a little pressure from the Government to cause that company to make Fremantle one of the ports of call in the route of its mail steamers. I am also informed, on the best authority, that the North German Lloyd's Company, one of the most powerful shipping companies or combinations extant, is perfectly willing to allow its steamers to make Fremantle one of the first ports of call on the outward journey, and that it requires only to be approached by the Government to induce that company to make such an arrangement.

A MEMBER: We don't want the German ships.

MR. LYALL HALL: We want all we can get, and when the Fremantle harbour works are completed, I trust we all shall then realise our hope of being able to call Fremantle the Brindisi of Australia. If these are facts—I do not put them forward as mere hearsay—then I say this colony has a very great future before it. Coming to paragraph 13, I congratulate the Government on the purchase of the Great Southern Railway Company's interest, for I think it is a matter for congratulation to the whole of the colony, and especially so to those settlers who are ranged alongside the route of the Great Southern Railway. I regret, however, that the Government allowed the

fiasco in reference to the issue of Treasury bonds, which were handed over to that Company in payment for the property. It was a serious blunder on the part of some one; but I, for one, do not blame the Government directly—(general laughter)—for I can assure you that in London the whole blame is laid at the door of the Agent General.

THE PREMIER: No, no.

MR. GEORGE: Make a scapegoat of the Agent General.

MR. LYALL HALL: It certainly does not show a great deal of business tact that he allowed the colony to suffer in the way it did, financially, in that transaction. I do not wish to press hardly on the Agent General, but I do urge on the Government the absolute necessity for securing a proper and adequate representation of this colony in London. The true reason, I understand, for keeping Sir Malcolm Fraser in the position of Agent General in London is that a sum of £800 per annum is saved in regard to the payment which would otherwise be due to him for pension. [THE PREMIER: No.] I am glad to hear that is not the reason for continuing this arrangement; for, if it were so, I should be sorry that such a quibble should be raised in reference to the cost of the Agent General's salary, at a time when the colony is so much in need of proper representation in London. I have, however, fair information on the subject, and I believe—in fact I know—that the duties of the Agent General are most onerous, and that the present occupant of the position thinks so is shown by the fact that when he is in London, and is not touring on the Continent of Europe for the benefit of his health, he is at his office for about one hour per day.

THE PREMIER: That is not true. It is not right to say so.

MR. LYALL HALL: I trust the Premier, whose good offices in London have been productive of much benefit to the colony, will take to heart what I have been saying, and see that we have a man to represent us in London who will use every energy and care to ensure that we shall be properly represented there; that our interests are properly represented in London, and that the resources of this colony shall be sufficiently placed before the British public, to show them that

this is a country to which they can come and settle down, making good homes for themselves. In reference to paragraph 18, the Government are to be highly commended for their desire to aid and encourage the working miner by the establishment of public batteries in isolated places on the goldfields. The system is deserving of a fair trial, and I venture to say it will be the cause of various new centres of mining activity springing up on the fields. Coming to paragraph 22 I feel that I must express regret at the action of the Government in arriving at an adverse decision with regard to the food duties; but I know that the reasons which have led them to that decision are most weighty, for it is a very serious thing, when we have such great demands on our revenue, to attempt in any way to curtail our income. [THE PREMIER: Hear, hear.] I am pleased to note that, according to His Excellency's Speech, the prospects of a bountiful season are assured, and I sincerely trust the anticipation that the colony will shortly produce sufficient for the whole of its needs will be amply verified.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Are the Government responsible for that?

MR. LYALL HALL: The progress of our land settlement I regard as one of the most hopeful signs of the times. [THE PREMIER: Hear, hear.] And the great results which have been achieved, as I think every one must admit, are due to the vigorous administration of the new Commissioner of Crown Lands (Hon. G. Throssell), who, I am sure, has the hearty goodwill and support and sympathy of this House. There is only one other matter I would like to touch upon, and that is with reference to paragraph 23. It is not necessary that I should say much on this point at the present stage, beyond that I heartily congratulate the Government on the fact that, notwithstanding the heavy expenditure, the financial year closed with the satisfactory credit balance of £315,362. [MR. GEORGE: How much do they owe?] I know as a fact, besides the assurance contained in the Speech, that the financial credit of the colony, particularly in London, is excellent; and I do not anticipate there will be any difficulty whatever in floating the balance of the authorised loans. In conclusion, I beg to move the

adoption of the following Address-in-Reply to the opening Speech:—

“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 Assembly of Western Australia in Parliament 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.”

Mr. Speaker and members of this honourable House, I thank you very much for the way in which you have listened to me.

Mr. HOLMES (East Fremantle): The diffidence natural to a young and inexperienced member, in rising to second the Address-in-Reply, is in some degree abated by the knowledge that, from time immemorial, it has been the custom of Parliaments to treat with a peculiar courtesy those who essay the painful privilege of making maiden speeches. Every hon. member has had to pass through this ordeal, incidental to newness, and that idea ought to comfort every newcomer. I do not feel bound to discuss every line, phrase, or word in the Speech from Her Majesty’s representative, for which Ministers alone are responsible, because it is my intention to give only a general and guarded support to the policy indicated in that document. The first duty of every member is to his immediate constituency; the next duty he owes to the community at large; and after these calls are considered, it is proper that he

should support, oppose, or criticise the policy of Ministers, according to the conclusions forced upon him as to the consequences likely to arise for the colony from the measures submitted. Governors’ Speeches, as they are presented to Parliament, do not announce policies to which Her Majesty is committed, but merely the momentary intentions of the Ministry in power; and the exact reverse might be said from the Throne at any moment, when constitutional means had indicated the desire of this House for a change. Hence my seconding the Address-in-Reply signifies no more than that I will give a general support to the present occupants of the Treasury benches, so long as the policy pursued promises to further the best interests of the country. [THE PREMIER: Hear, hear.] I have no reason to suppose that Ministers are likely to be attacked on any issue involved in the Address; but it is well for men, entering upon new and responsible engagements, to indicate from the start what is to be their principle of action. We are not all of us statesmen, but I do hope that we are all men of business, ready to apply, in the new conditions to which many of us are called, the straightforward methods by which we have prospered elsewhere. The conditions of the country demand careful administration of existing laws, as well as many incidental reforms to which it may be my duty to refer on other occasions; but I feel sure that this House, and my constituents, will understand my line of action in thus stating at the outset that I am not a thick-and-thin supporter of the Ministry in office. There can be no good result from challenging the position of present advisers of the Crown, unless there is a responsible body of members on the other hand of the Speaker prepared to face the possibilities of such action; but, in my opinion, every member owes it to his constituents that he should be ready to take his share of such procedure whenever the circumstances of the country demand such action. There have been recent flaws in the administration of the affairs of departments, which demand action in this Chamber—unless the Government can show that due supervision is being insisted on—which make caution and careful thought the imperative duty of members. Ministers have briefly indicated

intentions to introduce measures which may prove important; but when the measures in question are placed before us will be the proper time to discuss their provisions. Nothing should be done to disquiet Her Majesty's Ministers without due cause, but we must not lose sight of the fact that the safety of the country is the supreme law for our guidance. Having thus briefly expressed my views as to my responsibility as a representative, I have much pleasure, Mr. Speaker, in seconding the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply, so ably moved by the hon. member for Perth. There will probably be no adverse action, and the House will probably, without delay, be asked to deal with measures of importance likely to assist in advancing the prosperity of Western Australia.

MR. LEAKE: I move that the debate be adjourned to the next sitting of the House.

Motion put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the next sitting was fixed for the following day at 4.30 p.m.

The House adjourned at 4.35 p.m. until the next day.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 14th October, 1897.

Question: Correspondence re Petitions of Right—Paper Presented—Address-in-Reply: second day of debate, conclusion—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

QUESTION—CORRESPONDENCE RE PETITIONS OF RIGHT.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I beg to ask, without notice, if the Minister of Mines will kindly favour the House with copies

of the correspondence that has taken place between the Government and the Secretary of State, with reference to the presentation of petitions of right.

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. WITTENOOM): I shall have much pleasure in getting them, and placing them on the table.

PAPER PRESENTED.

THE MINISTER OF MINES laid on the table the annual report of the Mines Department (1896).

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

SECOND DAY OF DEBATE—CONCLUSION.

HON. H. BRIGGS: I think I may fairly congratulate the Government on the great amount of work done during the past year. As regards paragraph 4 of the Speech, which refers to the Federal Convention, I shall content myself with one observation. When we consider that the population of the colony at the present time is 160,000, and when we remember that two-thirds of that population come from the larger colonies of Victoria and New South Wales, it shows clearly that the present inhabitants of this colony are made up of much the same sort of people as inhabit the larger colonies; and this ought to do away with all feelings of antagonism and bitterness which I found at the Convention were supposed to exist between the populations of the larger and the smaller States. The report on the goldfields is very reassuring and satisfactory, especially when we consider how this colony was spoken about; how everything was attributed to the "boom," and how, when a depression occurred, it was said that the boom had given way. The increasing gold production shows that the colony is making great strides in a forward direction. The estimate made by the Government that the value of the gold production of the colony will this year amount to 2½ millions is, on all these accounts, most satisfactory. It will create confidence in the markets of the world. It will create confidence amongst capitalists, and we shall thereby gain, not only capital, but a steady stream of population flowing into this colony, which we so much want. As regards the Royal Mint, I anticipate