

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

THIRD SESSION OF THE THIRD PARLIAMENT.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Third Session of the Third Parliament under Responsible Government was convened for the despatch of business on the 16th June, 1898.

Parliament was opened by His Excellency the Governor.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 16th June, 1898.

Opening of Parliament—The Governor's Speech—Election Returns—Summary Jurisdiction Appeal Bill: first reading—Papers presented—Motion: Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech—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 delivered the following Speech:—

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

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

1. I am glad to have been able to summon you for the despatch of business somewhat earlier than on previous occasions.

2. The interruptions to the ordinary Parliamentary work during last year, caused by the celebrations in connection with Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee and the meetings of the Federal Convention, prevented many measures of importance being then dealt with, and will increase your labours during the present Session.

3. The Federation Convention, at which this Colony was represented, and which was entrusted with the work of framing a Constitution for Australasia, completed its labours in March last, and the Commonwealth Bill has been approved of by the required majorities of the people in Victoria, South Australia, and Tasmania, but has not secured the necessary majority in New South Wales. As it is provided by our Enabling Act that this Colony cannot enter the Federation unless New South Wales is one of the Federating Colonies, my Ministers are of opinion that, until the Bill has been accepted by New South Wales, it will not be advisable to ask Parliament to deal with the subject.

4. The Branch of the Royal Mint is nearly completed, and will be opened on 13th July. The delay that has occurred in opening the Mint has been caused by the alterations that have become necessary through the large increase in the production of gold, which required the

coinage power of the Mint to be increased fourfold.

5. The Coolgardie Water Scheme has been commenced, and will now be energetically carried on. The construction of the dam and reservoir in the Helena River has been started, tenders have been called for the pipes, and in a short time the whole of the works will be in hand. A railway has already been made from the Eastern Railway to the site of the reservoir on the Helena River, a distance of four and a-half miles.

6. During the past twelve months the various public works throughout the Colony have been actively pushed forward. The Mullewa-Cue Railway will be taken over by the Government on June 30th. The railway from Kalgoorlie to Menzies, which was let in September, 1897, has been available for traffic since February last. The Kalgoorlie-Kanowna Railway was taken over by the Government yesterday. The railway from Kalgoorlie to the Boulder was completed and opened for traffic in March last, and has proved of immense advantage to the mines and to the people of the district. The contract for the York-Greenhills Railway was let in September, 1897, and the work is nearing completion. The Donnybrook Bridgetown Railway is nearly finished, and will be taken over before the end of this year. The railway from the Brunswick to the Collie Coal Field will be completed and taken over in a few weeks. The railway from Fremantle to Owen's Anchorage is practically completed, and has already proved of much advantage to the Smelting Works Company in the erection of their large works. The duplication of the railway from Fremantle to Midland Junction has been completed, and many improvements have been made on the existing railway lines throughout the Colony. The survey of the railway from Pinjarrah to Marradong has been nearly completed, but my Ministers regret that it is not possible at present to make provision for commencing this work.

7. Public buildings have been completed, or are in course of erection, all over the Colony, among which may be mentioned the New Wing, Perth Hospital; New Quarantine Station at Albany; Hospitals at Geraldton, Bunbury,

Beverley, and Busselton; Additions to the Fremantle Asylum; the Perth Branch of the Royal Mint; the first wing of the Victoria Library and Museum; the Perth Observatory; New wing to the Perth Public Offices, and a third storey to the General Post Office; large Public Offices at Geraldton, and also at Coolgardie, and a contract has been let for similar large Public Offices at Kalgoorlie. Telegraph Stations have been completed at Eucla and Eyre, and contracts are in hand for Telegraph Stations at Balladonia and Carnarvon. New Court Houses have been completed at Albany, Beverley, and Newcastle, and a contract has also been let for a new Court House at Fremantle. Schools have been completed, and others are in course of erection at various places. A commodious Government Store has been completed at North Fremantle. Residences for the Wardens at Kalgoorlie, Cue, and Menzies have been finished. In addition to Public Buildings, attention has been given to the Roads and Bridges throughout the Colony, and a large amount of work has been performed, including 36 new road Bridges, 26 of which have been completed.

8. On the Coolgardie Goldfields 13 reservoirs of various capacities, ranging from one to ten million gallons, have been completed, and at Niagara a concrete dam has been finished capable of impounding thirty-eight million gallons. A number of wells have also been sunk, and 53 miles of road cleared. The bore near Coolgardie was carried on by means of the diamond drill to a depth of 3,000ft., and as there was no prospect of any good result being obtained, the work was discontinued. On the Murchison Goldfields 200 miles of road have been opened for traffic, and 20 new wells have been completed, and a number of others improved. On the Pilbarra Goldfields 12 new wells have been sunk, and other improvements in connection with the water supply have been made.

9. The stock route to Roebourne has been opened to a distance of 400 miles north of Mullewa, and wells have been constructed and equipped along this portion of the route. From Roebourne to Broome the water supply works have been maintained and improved, and between Nannine and the Oakover River a new

stock route is being opened, and a number of good wells have been constructed along a large portion of the distance. My Ministers believe that upon careful scrutiny it will be recognised that good and beneficial work has been performed during the year in providing water supplies for domestic purposes, as well as for stock, throughout the length and breadth of the settled portions of this vast Colony.

10. Considerable attention has been given to all Ports of the Colony, from Eucla to Wyndham. The most notable of the new works are the jetties, stock-yards, and goods sheds at Broome, Maud's Landing, and Carnarvon. The jetty at Ashburton, when nearly completed, was destroyed by a hurricane; but the renewal of the work will be undertaken immediately. Considerable damage by the hurricane was also done at Cossack and other places. The jetty at Port Hedland is nearly finished, and the road across the marsh is being constructed. When both these works are completed they will prove of much advantage to the Pilbarra Gold-field, as well as to the stock producers of the district. In addition to new works carried out, repairs have been effected to existing jetties at the various ports along our extensive coast line.

11. The Harbor Works at Fremantle are progressing satisfactorily. Already a channel 25 feet deep and 200 feet wide has been dredged, and the intercolonial traders, as well as direct steamers from London, are safely berthed inside the river. The German Lloyd's steamers have made Fremantle a port of call, and it is expected that they will shortly use the harbour inside the river. The berthage space at present available at the South Quay, amounting to 4,500 feet, is already constantly occupied, and wharves have been erected on the North and South Moles, which prove of considerable advantage to shipping. It is anticipated that in about another year the harbour within the river will be sufficiently advanced to accommodate ships of the class of the P. and O. and Orient mail steamers, and in about two and a half years the whole work will be completed.

12. The Breakwater at Bunbury has been successfully extended for over 3,000 feet, and with improved jetty accommoda-

tion this port will be largely availed of for the export of timber, coal, and other products of the district.

13. During the year 350 miles of additional telegraph lines have been erected, besides 937 miles along our railways. A telegraph line is now in course of erection from Nanine to Peak Hill, a distance of 90 miles.

14. The timber industry is receiving much attention, and the export is largely increasing. The export for 1897 was valued at £197,451, being an increase of 65 per cent. on the export of the previous year.

15. The export of gold continues to give magnificent results, and this Colony is at the present time in the proud position of being the largest producer of gold in Australasia. The export for the first five months of this year has been 389,944 ounces, and it is expected that the output for the year will reach a million ounces. This satisfactory yield is having a marked effect on the agricultural development of the country, which is evidenced by great activity in the agricultural districts. The Smelting Works now being erected at Owen's Anchorage by a Company, subsidised by the Government, will obviate the necessity of sending refractory ores out of the Colony for treatment, and will, besides, give continuous employment to a large number of workmen. My Ministers desire to do all in their power to encourage permanent works and industries, and by that means to build up a self-supporting country.

16. The provision of public batteries for the goldfields has received attention. Contracts have been let for the erection of a ten-head battery at Tuckanarra and Lennoxville, on the Murchison goldfield, to be ready for work on the 8th August and 6th October respectively; for the erection of a ten-head battery at Mulline, at Mount Ida, and at Mount Leonora, in the North Coolgardie goldfield, and for a battery near Yalgoo, on the Yalgoo goldfield. At all these places, sites have been chosen for the batteries, and wells are being sunk to provide the necessary water supply. At Norseman a good battery has been purchased, and will soon be ready for work. At Pilbarra a bonus of £500 has been promised for the erection of a battery to crush for the public on favourable terms.

Other claims for public batteries from various mining centres are under consideration.

17. The completion of the railway to the Collie coalfield renders it necessary to determine the best means to further encourage the working of the valuable coal deposits existing in that locality. The recent developments have satisfactorily shown that in the Collie coalfield the colony possesses a valuable asset, and every endeavour should be made to turn it to the most profitable account.

18. The Agricultural prospects are very encouraging. A considerable number of new settlers have been attracted to the colony by the inducements offered by our liberal land laws, the assistance rendered by the Agricultural Bank, and by the good markets existing for farm produce; and as a consequence settlement is advancing rapidly. Since the beginning of last year an area of 650,000 acres has been selected under compulsory conditions of improvement, and better methods of cultivation are noticeable throughout agricultural centres. During last year the area under cultivation was increased by 51,000 acres. My Ministers are of opinion that the foregoing facts give the fullest hope that, in the near future, Western Australia will be independent of outside aid in regard to its chief food supplies.

19. A partial examination of the country between Bridgetown and Albany has been made, with a view of accurately ascertaining the character of the soil and the area of the timber land in that part of the Colony. There is a large area of good land suitable for cultivation, and large quantities of both jarrah and karri timber abound in the district. Until better means of transit are provided, however, it will not be possible to turn these splendid assets to good account.

20. The Agricultural Land Purchase Act has been brought into force, and four estates have been purchased under its provisions at moderate prices. These lands have been subdivided and disposed of under the provisions of the Act with good results, and my Ministers feel confident that this measure will prove of much value in promoting settlement and agricultural development.

21. The importation of cattle from the East Kimberley District has, in accordance

with the resolution of the Legislative Assembly, been prohibited, owing to the existence of the tick disease in that locality. An inspector is now visiting that part of the Colony, and it is hoped that some means may be devised by which the prohibition may be removed, and the large quantity of fat cattle now ready for shipment may be brought to the good markets in the southern part of the Colony.

22. The report of the Metropolitan Waterworks Board will be placed before you, and you will be asked to consider the question of increasing the water supply of the city. During the year extensive reticulation has been carried out in Fremantle, with extension to North Fremantle, and important improvements, including powerful new pumping machinery, have been made in connection with the source of the water supply. Water supplies from wells, equipped with pumps and tanks, have been provided at Derby, Broome, Carnarvon, Esperance, and other places.

23. In compliance with the promise made last session, a Bill to amend the Tariff will be submitted for your consideration. My Ministers propose to ask you to consider the question of giving a preference to goods manufactured in the mother country over those manufactured by foreign countries.

24. A large number of useful measures have been prepared, and will be submitted for your consideration. Among them are Bills dealing with Goldfields, Crown Lands, Public Works, the Tariff, Railways, Public Health, Education, Electoral, Roads Boards, Fire Brigades, Mines Regulations, Trade Unions, Industrial and Provident Societies, Patents, and other matters of importance.

25. In order to keep pace with the growing requirements of the Goldfields, my Ministers propose to submit for your approval that the following railways shall be constructed:—A Railway from Menzies via Niagara to Mount Malcolm and Mount Leonora; a Railway from Coolgardie to Norseman; and a Railway from Coolgardie to Bonnie Vale. The Railway extension to Mount Leonora will bring the various mining centres on the Mount Margaret and East Murchison Goldfields into closer range with railway communication; the Railway to Norseman will

unite the Dundas Goldfield with the Railway system of the Colony; while the Railway from Coolgardie to Bonnie Vale will give transit facilities to a rising and populous locality. It is also proposed to construct out of revenue a cheap Railway from Northam towards Goomalling, in order to give assistance to the producers of that rich agricultural district.

26. In order to provide funds to carry out these works, my Ministers propose to reappropriate a sufficient sum for the purpose from certain items of the Loans already authorised, and by this means avoid any additional Loan authorisation at the present time. No injury will be done to the works provided on the Loans Schedules by adopting this course, inasmuch as before the amount reappropriated will be required a new Loan authorisation can be provided.

27. The question of the deep sewerage of Perth has had consideration during the recess, and my Ministers have decided to proceed with the work as soon as the Scheme has been approved of by Parliament, and plans and specifications are available. The large increase of population and the growing importance of the City render the commencement of the work justifiable, and it is believed it will be reproductive.

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

28. The Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure will be submitted to you as soon as possible. The financial credit of the Colony is satisfactory. The Revenue for the present financial year, though it will not reach the estimate owing to various causes, will nevertheless be very large. The trade of the Colony for 1897 reached the sum of £10,358,663, and of this our exports amounted to £3,940,098, being an increase over the preceding year of £2,289,872.

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

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

29. In considering the present position of the Colony, there is good cause for satisfaction. Our population is steadily advancing, our gold export is rapidly increasing, the total export being valued at

seven and three-quarter millions sterling, of which over four millions sterling have been exported during the last 17 months. Our coal deposits at the Collie are proving to be of good quality and suitable for Railway and other requirements. Our Agricultural and Pastoral Industries are flourishing, stimulated by the prospect of a good season, and by the certainty of an excellent market. Our Timber Industry is expanding, and already gives employment to a large number of people. Our vine and fruit growers are extending their operations, and will soon be able to supply the demand, and throughout the Colony generally every industry is progressing.

30. I leave you to your important duties, and trust that the Divine blessing may rest upon your labours.

31. 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.

ELECTION RETURNS.

THE PRESIDENT announced that elections to fill vacancies in the representation of the Provinces had taken place during the recess, and the returns were read as follow:—George Randell (Metropolitan), Henry Briggs (West), Edward McLarty (South-West), Richard Goldsmith Burges (East), Samuel Johnson Haynes (South-East), and John Elliott Richardson (North), all re-elected; also Arthur George Jenkins (North-East), and Frederic Whitcombe (Central), elected.

The newly-elected members (except the Hon. F. Whitcombe, who was absent) took and subscribed the oath of allegiance as required by law, and signed the Members' Roll.

SUMMARY JURISDICTION APPEAL BILL.

Introduced by THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Randell), upon leave given, and read a first time.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY: Annual Reports—(1) Customs and Ship-

ping, (2) Explosives and Government Analyst, (3) Lands and Surveys, by the Under Secretary, (4) Lands and Surveys, by the Surveyor-General, (5) Stock Department, (6) Marine Fisheries, (7) Relief and Charitable Institutions, (8) Lunatic Asylum at Fremantle; also Statistical Register for 1896.

Ordered to lie on the table.

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

HON. A. G. JENKINS (North-East Province): Sir,—In rising to move the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech, I desire to say that I consider the selection of myself for the performance of this duty as an honour which reflects as much credit on the constituency I represent as on myself. If you will permit me, as a young and but recently elected member of the Council, I would like to congratulate the leader of the Council (Hon. G. Randell) on his recent promotion to be the holder of a portfolio. In common with other members, I hope he may be long spared to occupy his present office, and that we shall all work with him in amity and friendship. It is with a certain amount of diffidence that I make this my maiden effort, for I believe I am not only the youngest member of the Council, but the youngest member who has ever had the honour of sitting in this Chamber. I hope the veterans will look kindly at my efforts, and endeavour to impart to me some of their wide parliamentary experience. Two qualifications are necessary in order to do justice to whatever matter one has in hand. The first is brevity of speech, and the second is sympathy with the subject. I hope I may claim the first qualification. It would ill become me to inflict myself to any great extent on members of the Council the first time of my appearance. I think I can also lay claim to the second qualification, inasmuch as His Excellency's Speech has my entire sympathy. I am in complete accord with it. I can approve of everything in it. There is nothing in it at which I can cavil; and I think I can also say there is nothing in it to which any reasonable man can offer objection. I am sorry that the Commonwealth Bill is not to be con-

sidered at the present time. It is a matter of sincere regret that certain people in New South Wales should have endeavoured to check the advancement of Australia, and to put back the era of progress and prosperity which federation will bring with it. I am in sympathy with the Bill, and with the efforts being made to efface the lines of demarcation which at present separate the colonies. We are one kindred, one people, and we should be one nation. Temporarily we may lose by federating at the present juncture, but in the interests of posterity and in the interests of the commonwealth of the future I should certainly give the Commonwealth Bill my hearty support if it were brought forward. One and undivided we will be a great people, and at some subsequent period we may become a power, but so long as we are separated we shall be comparatively weak, and without a voice as a nation in those matters that affect our existence as a whole. The establishment of a Mint is a matter on which the Government are to be sincerely congratulated. At present we have to send our gold far away to get it coined, but now that we have a factory, if I may use the term, at our own doors, the gold can be sent from the mines, and the minted sovereigns be returned to us. The question of cost is not one which should be considered at this juncture. The people on the fields want the Mint. I consider the Government have shown a wisdom and a beneficence, if I may say so, towards the fields which deserve the thanks of the electors residing in that part of the colony. The Coolgardie Goldfields water scheme is a gigantic and a noble conception, and, as a newspaper on the fields has said, it will remain a monument of 300 miles long to the Minister who advocated it, and whose name will be for ever associated with the history of Western Australia. Of the Government proposals for the construction of public works I can with difficulty find words to express my appreciation. The programme is liberal and efficient, and will, I believe, meet with the approval of all. I note with extreme satisfaction throughout His Excellency's Speech the friendly feeling that exists between the fields and the farming interests. The day

has long gone by when we separated the t'othersider from the native-born article ; and practical proof was given of the good fellowship that exists between the coastal towns and the goldfields when the Municipal Conference was held at Coolgardie a short time ago. We of the goldfields say to our neighbours in the coastal districts, "We will give you gold for your corn. We stretch forth our hands to you in friendship across the desert of scrub which separates us, for we are all West Australians." It is eminently satisfactory to find the fields credited with so much prosperity. We are told that the output of gold from the fields is expected to reach a million ounces for the year. That expectation will, I believe, prove true, and it will constitute such a record as Australia, and perhaps the world, has not yet seen. But it is not gold alone to which we must look for our future prosperity. Gold makes us great, and by gold we may attain temporary possession of wealth ; but we must also look to our farm lands, to our magnificent forests and timber areas, and to the prospects and opportunities of settling a yeomanry on our fertile areas. We must look just as much to these sources of wealth as to the gold, if our progress and prosperity are to be maintained. By their generous enactments, and by their still more generous proposals, the Government have evinced that regard for the general welfare which indicates their earnest zeal in the future prosperity of the commonwealth. I find a most liberal programme provided, which it is proposed to immediately carry out. The tariff is to be recast, and I hope that more than an approach will be made to the abolition of the food duties. I refer more particularly to the abolition of the duty on meat. Education is to be provided for. A Fire Brigade Bill is to be considered, and we are promised a revision of the mining laws. I hope this means that a new Mining Act will be brought into force, for I can assure hon. members that such an Act is very much needed. In the Collie Coalfields the colony has, I believe, an estate of very high value, and the Government will be well advised to assist in every way the development of this splendid national asset. I would here tender the thanks of the electorate which has

done me the honour to send me here as its representative for the magnificent programme of railway extension submitted to Parliament. The extension from Menzies to Leonora is justified by the numerous finds which have been made near the latter place, while the construction of a line from Coolgardie to Norseman will be an attempt in the direction of bringing the South into touch with the goldfields, which will be received with the deepest enthusiasm throughout the whole of the goldfields, in fact from one end of the colony to the other, from the farmsteads in the South to the homes and settlements of the people in the North. I feel certain that the people will show their thorough appreciation of the past and proposed future work of the Government, to whom it is my pleasurable duty to offer a loyal support and allegiance. I have much pleasure in moving the adoption of the following Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's 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, etc., etc., etc.

We, Her Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the Members of the Legislative Council of Western Australia, in Parliament assembled, beg to assure Your Excellency of our continued loyalty and devotion to our Most Gracious Sovereign.

We thank Your Excellency for the speech which you have been good enough to address to Parliament, and we beg to assure Your Excellency that our most careful consideration will be given to the important matters you have referred to, and also to all other matters that may be submitted to us, and it shall be our earnest endeavour to so deal with them that our labours may result in the permanent advancement and prosperity of the colony.

HON. E. McLARTY : I have much pleasure in rising to second the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply. I feel sure that His Excellency's Speech commends itself to hon. members. It

contains a magnificent record of important public works carried out during the past year. A great many public works have been undertaken and expeditiously completed. When we remember that the contract was let for the railway from Kalgoorlie to Manzies, and that within five months the public had railway facilities connecting those two important centres together, it impresses one with the fact that we are living in an age of great progress. Passing on to paragraph 3 of the Speech, I have no doubt that some disappointment will be felt throughout the colony that the great question of federation, which has been exercising the minds of the people of Australia for several months past, will not be dealt with this session. This is a matter more for congratulation than regret. It requires a great deal of consideration, and I hardly think the people of this colony have considered it sufficiently yet to be able to give a decision. I have looked into the Bill as carefully as I could to make myself acquainted with its provisions, and I confess that I have come to the conclusion that it would not be in the interests of Western Australia to federate for some time to come. It is satisfactory to know that the Mint will so soon be opened, and it is also eminently satisfactory to hear that we shall have a very large output of gold to work upon, which, no doubt, will be greatly increased when the public batteries are erected on various parts of the fields. Paragraph 5 deals with a very important matter. It refers to the construction of the Coolgardie Water Scheme. I am pleased to see it is the intention of the Government to carry this on in an energetic manner. I think there is no doubt there is a feeling throughout the colony that the Government are half-hearted in this matter, and that they are not decided whether they will go on with it or not. But if it is to be done, I hope it will be done as quickly as it is possible to do it. Speaking for myself, I have no hesitation in saying that great as the work is, the necessity for it is still greater. I believe that on the successful working of the goldfields will rest the prosperity of Western Australia. The eighth paragraph in His Excellency's Speech deals with water conservation on

the fields. I am pleased to note that so many reservoirs are being built on the fields, and so many roads have been opened. This must prove a great benefit to the people in that part of the colony. It is also very gratifying to find that these reservoirs are filled to overflowing with water, and that this will result in a saving of £1,000 a week to the Government. Paragraph 9 is one of great importance. The fields are to be opened by two stock routes to the northern parts of the colony. I am very glad that the Government are fully alive to the necessity of opening up an overland stock route. It will not only benefit the people in that part of the colony, some of whom have labored for the last quarter of a century with very poor result, but it will materially benefit the people in this part of the colony, where they are paying high prices for their meat. There are thousands of sheep and hundreds of bullocks in the northern part of the country, but, for want of water, the market here has not the necessary supply of stock; and I am, therefore, pleased to see that 400 miles of a line have been opened out north of Mullewa, on the way to Roebourne, and that the route has been well supplied with water for the district. It is also gratifying to see that the Government are taking steps to improve the shipping facilities to the port. From some of the distant parts of the colony stock must be brought here by sea. At present a large amount of money is being sent out to pay for the importation of sheep and cattle, while we have in the northern part of this colony plenty of stock, if we could only get it here. It is also satisfactory to find the great increase in the telegraph mileage. No less than 1,287 miles of telegraph lines have been erected during the past year. Paragraph 14 is also of great importance. It refers to the timber industry. I am pleased to see that during the last year our export of timber has increased 65 per cent. I feel sure that during the coming year this increase will be fully maintained. We are now having in some parts of the colony a large amount of money invested from England and other parts, and the opening of the harbour at Bunbury will greatly increase the export trade. At Bunbury

the harbour works are already proving of immense advantage to the place. Vessels can now lay alongside the jetty with safety; but, in consequence of the large export of timber, during the next year there is no doubt there will be a great want of berthing accommodation alongside the jetty. A number of English vessels will be here next summer to load timber for England, and I am informed that there will be a great deal of inconvenience from the want of better accommodation to ships in that port. The coalfields will no doubt have to be dealt with by Parliament during the present session. We have there an unlimited quantity of coal, proved to be of good quality, but very little is being done for its benefit, and I think some step will have to be taken to force those who are holding leases in the Collie fields to work them at once. The country has been at the expense of building a railway, and those who are holding the land under lease have certainly not fulfilled their obligations in opening up the mines, and getting the coal ready to be sent away. We have an unlimited market in the colony for some time to come. We need not fear the export trade. I am sure there is a market for all the coal that can be taken from there for a considerable time, without shipping it away. Paragraph 18 refers to the progress being made in the agricultural development of the colony, and I have much pleasure in bearing testimony to this fact. It is most encouraging to see the large amount of land brought into cultivation, not only for the production of cereals, and fodder, but I notice also that thousands of trees are being grown, and I believe that before long the people in the towns will have no reason to complain of the difficulty of getting fruit. The colony will soon be able to supply its own breadstuffs, fodder, and other necessities which are now being imported largely. Paragraph 20 deals with the Agricultural Lands Purchase Act. It is very satisfactory to notice that this Act is proving a success. When the Bill was before the House, some two years ago, I was one who gave it a hearty support, believing thoroughly it would be the means of inducing a great deal of settlement, break up many of the large estates

held from the earliest days of the colony, and do away with the constant cry about absentee landholders. The Government have proceeded very carefully in not purchasing largely. Only four estates have been bought, and I believe there has been no difficulty in disposing of the land as fast as it was offered in small sections. Paragraph 21 refers to the introduction of cattle from East Kimberley. That is a matter which requires very serious consideration. I trust, when the report of the expert sent down to that district is received, it will be of such a nature as to justify the Government in removing the present prohibition. In East Kimberley at the present time, I am assured that one firm alone has 5,000 fat oxen ready for the market. It is very hard indeed for squatters in that part of the colony to be deprived of a market for their stock; and it is equally hard for the large population in another part of the colony to have to pay the high prices caused by the present restriction on the introduction of cattle. I commend the Government for their action in prohibiting the introduction of cattle from the district of East Kimberley. We know how serious a matter the tick plague has proved in Queensland and other colonies. But if it be possible to bring cattle from East Kimberley to Fremantle without the danger of spreading the disease, I hope that may be done.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: There is no chance of that.

HON. E. McLARTY: I know it is the intention of the Government to bring in a Bill dealing with the tariff. To what extent the tariff will be dealt with we are not able to say at the present time. My advice would be to let the tariff remain as it is. There never was a more inopportune time to interfere with the tariff in Western Australia than the present. We are fast becoming producers of all we require. I can assure you, sir, the present small meed of protection is a great stimulus to farmers and new settlers. To abolish that protection altogether would be the greatest blow to agriculture and the prosperity of land settlement that was ever experienced in the colony. We will probably find this year that the revenue is a quarter of a million short of the estimate. Are we

to reduce the revenue by interfering with the tariff, when we know there must be money to carry on the country? We have an enormous extent of territory to provide for, and the expenses are increasing. The calls on the Government from all parts are daily increasing. If the revenue is going to diminish, it can only mean taxation in another direction. Therefore, I say advisedly, it would be wise, for the present, to let the tariff remain as it is. The rates on the railways are being considerably increased. That is taxation in another form, and taxation that is not at all acceptable. Last year we had the satisfaction of hearing that the railway receipts of the colony had provided for interest and sinking fund, and had then left to be handed over to the general revenue a sum of something like £200,000. This year, I am sorry to say, it has been found necessary to increase the rates to a considerable extent. Such a course does not meet with favour in any part of the colony, nor do I think there can be any great necessity for such a course. We are aware, sir, the Government have been at great expense owing to the want of water on the railway lines. But we are now told the dams are overflowing, so that the expense to which I refer is at an end. If the railways are not paying, it would be a far wiser policy for the Government to reduce the expenditure on the railways. Enormous sums of money have been spent on existing lines during the last twelve months, in connection with what, I believe, is called "furnishing" the lines. That expenditure is not on increasing the rolling-stock, but in improving the lines in other ways. Perhaps it is necessary to improve the lines in those directions; but if there be any scarcity of money, the work might well stand over until there is money to spare. I believe that some stations have been enlarged to an extent which, it is supposed, will meet requirements for the next ten years. I do not think it a wise policy to spend such sums of money at the present time, in order to meet requirements for the next ten years. It would be much better to spend smaller sums. What people want are facilities for transit. They do not want extensive stations furnished in an expensive manner.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: We might not be able to get the money in ten years' time.

HON. E. McLARTY: In the respect I have indicated, I think great saving might be effected. Many of the sidings and stations are, no doubt, too elaborate. Too much money has been spent in furnishing them. All that is wanted is sufficient shelter and accommodation in order that goods may be moved as quickly and cheaply as possible. I regret it has been necessary to raise the rates, and I hope the Government will see their way to reduce them without any great delay. I do not know that I need say very much more in seconding the motion. Looking at the works proposed, I am not prepared to commit myself in any way at the present time in regard to them. I know very little about the goldfields railways, but I have no doubt they are very necessary, and that they will meet with the approval of the House. I regret the Government have not seen their way to introduce a Bill this year authorising the construction of a railway from Pinjarrah to Marra-dong. I hope before the present Parliament ends I shall be able to bring forward such proofs as will convince the Government of the expediency of, at all events, constructing twelve miles of that line. At the present time I know one small company which pays the Government £2,000 a year, and the operations of that company are completely stopped throughout the winter months through non-access to the railway. If the line were constructed for twelve miles, that £2,000 would probably be doubled, and instead of one station paying £3,000 or £4,000 a year, there would probably be half-a-dozen such stations. Only during the present week capitalists have been looking round that part of the country, with money to invest: but their one objection was the absence of railway facilities. There are twelve or fourteen miles of very wet country to pass over, and it is impossible to cart there in the winter months.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Randell): Could not the capitalists make the railway themselves?

HON. E. McLARTY: I believe that could be done, but the Government always object to allow private enterprise to step in and carry out such works. I am satis-

fied that if the Government would allow a private company to construct the line, a company would be found ready to do it. Only two days ago, a gentleman connected with a company there told me his company were prepared to lay down a line, providing they had the necessary authority from the Government. I believe it would be far better for the Government themselves to undertake the work. They would get a return from the day the line was opened more than would pay the interest; and twelve miles of line would give access to almost unlimited timber and other lands which have been applied for and would be taken up. I know one settler in that vicinity, who, believing the railway would shortly be made, has taken up land. To show what might be done if facilities were given, I may say that man in a short time has produced an enormous quantity of vegetables, and is going in largely for fruit. On a very small area of land he has recently raised ten tons of cabbages, one single heart of which weighed 40lbs. Where such country is obtainable, a line of twelve miles would be well justified. I hope that such facts will be laid before the Government in the near future as to induce them to commence the work. Before I conclude my remarks, I desire to offer my hearty congratulations to the gentleman who fills the position of leader for the Government in this House. Mr. Randell, by his long and honourable career in this colony, has gained the well-earned respect and confidence of the whole community, and his appointment to a Government portfolio has, I am sure, met with general approval. I confess that when I came here to-day I felt some regret that our old friend, Mr. Wittenoom, was with us no longer. That gentleman's courtesy to hon. members, and the great ability he showed as leader for the Government in the House, will long be remembered by every member who has the honour of his acquaintance. I also feel that hon. members will give to Mr. Randell all the assistance they can in the onerous and responsible duties which he has undertaken, and which he will be found quite capable of fulfilling in the way we all desire. I have much pleasure, sir, in seconding the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I move that the debate be adjourned to the next sitting of the House.

Put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Randell) moved that the House at its rising do adjourn till 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday, 21st March.

Put and passed.

The House adjourned at 4 p.m. until the next Tuesday afternoon.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 16th June, 1898.

Meeting of the Assembly—Message: The Governor's Speech—Papers presented—Shipping Casualties Inquiry Bill: first reading—Orders of the Day and Sudden Alterations: Statement by the Speaker as to future practice—Motion: Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Opening 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.

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 third session of the third Parliament. [*Vide* p. 1, *ante*.] Mr. Speaker and hon. members having re-