

on this question. If any further information is required, he will be able to give it. When any difficulty occurs, the Hon. J. H. Taylor will also be able to help us. He attended the Convention, and will be able to contribute his share towards the elucidation of this important subject. I have now the honour to submit the motion standing in my name.

THE HON. R. S. HAYNES: Is the motion properly before the House? Under what rule of the House or under what Standing Order does it come? Is this a new Bill sent up from the Legislative Assembly, or is it introduced by the hon. Minister? Are we to discuss it and send it to the other chamber? It seems to me that we are taking time by the forelock. What is the use of discussing the question in this way until it has been sent to us by the Legislative Assembly. I understand that it is proposed to treat it as a Bill introduced into this House, read a first time, and then taken as a second reading. I do not know by what rule it should be so. I refer you to Rule 229 of the Standing Orders.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton): If the hon. member turns to Clause 23 of the Australasian Federation Enabling Act of 1896, he will find the following:—

As soon as convenient after a draft constitution has been prepared by the Convention, and has been received by the Governor, it should be submitted for consideration to each House of Parliament sitting in committee of the whole, and such amendments as may be desired by either House, together with the draft constitution, should be remitted to the Convention through one of the Western Australian representatives.

We are dealing with the matter under our special legislative powers. I may state for the information of hon. members that every hon. member has now a right to speak to the Bill. This is the time to discuss the Bill.

THE HON. R. S. HAYNES: I move the adjournment of the debate to the next sitting of the House.

Motion put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: I move that the House at its rising adjourn to 4-30 to-morrow afternoon.

HON. J. E. RICHARDSON: I would like to suggest 7-30 to-morrow evening.

Motion put and passed.

THE PRESIDENT (Sir G. Shenton): The Governor will be prepared to receive the Address-in-Reply at 4-30 p.m. to-morrow, immediately after prayers.

The Council adjourned at 9-15 p.m. until next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 19th August, 1897.

Question: Expenditure re Coolgardie Waterworks Scheme—Address-in-Reply: third day's debate—Government House Ballroom Expenditure: debate resumed and motion withdrawn—Adjournment.

The **SPEAKER** took the Chair at 7-30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

QUESTION—EXPENDITURE RE COOLGARDIE WATERWORKS SCHEME.

MR. ILLINGWORTH, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier what moneys had been expended (if any), or what contracts or agreements (if any) had been entered into in connection with the Coolgardie water scheme.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied:—The expenditure on the Coolgardie water supply scheme is £6,044, which has been chiefly in connection with surveys. No contracts have been entered into.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

THIRD DAY'S DEBATE.

Debate resumed on the motion (by Mr. Kingsmill) for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's opening Speech.

MR. RASON: Sir, although I moved the adjournment of this debate at the previous sitting, I do not know that I have very much to say on the question of the Address-in-Reply, but I may perhaps, on behalf of the new members, and especially those representing the goldfields constituencies, be permitted to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, upon your re-election to the position of Speaker of this honourable House; a position you have filled with such marked ability, and the duties of which you have carried out to the honour and satisfaction of this House. And the mere fact that you, sir, occupy that position is at once an assurance and a guarantee that, no matter on which side of the House members may sit, fair play and impartiality will be carried out. I may also say, and I trust I shall not be accused of presumption, that we, especially the goldfields members, tender to our leader, Sir John Forrest, our hearty congratulations and a cordial welcome on his return from London to his place in this House. The sooner the Address-in-Reply is disposed of, the sooner we shall get to the business for which we are called together. I do not wish to intrude on the time of the House, and therefore I will confine my few remarks solely to two or three important matters. I wish first to allude to a promise which was made by the leader of this House in his speech at Bunbury, that we should have public batteries established on the goldfields by the Government. The people who sent me to this House were content to take that as a promise, and on that promise they have waited. They are still waiting, and on the fulfilment of that promise they are content to wait; but I am entitled to ask that the Premier will carry out that promise as speedily as possible.

THE PREMIER: We must have a vote of money first.

MR. RASON: The people who sent me here, by no means an unimportant part of this colony, are waiting patiently and confidently for the fulfilment of that promise. I can assure the leader of this House that, as a matter of policy, there is no doubt that if the Government will expend money in the erection of batteries on the fields, where necessary, the investment will be a remunerative one. I do not know that I can say anything that will

have any weight with the leader of this House; but, speaking from this (the Government) side of the House, I can only say that a certain promise having been made, the people who sent me here rely on the Government to fulfil it, and we have confidence in the leader of this House that this promise will be fulfilled.

MR. SOLOMON: It is not my intention to take up the time of the House in this debate. Allow me, Mr. Speaker, to congratulate you on the position you have again obtained with the consent of the House generally, and I feel sure the duties of the position of Speaker will be discharged in that fearless manner which is characteristic of your actions in the past. I would also like to add my congratulation to the paeon of welcome to the Right Hon. Sir John Forrest, on his retaking his seat in this House after a short absence in London. I speak not alone as a member of this House but also on behalf of the constituency I represent, and for the town of Fremantle, being the civic head of that important port; and I can assure the Premier that there is no part of the colony that will greet his appearance again more heartily than the people of Fremantle. I have to congratulate the Government on the addition to the Ministry of the hon. member for Northam, who has showed his ability in many ways, and more especially has he shown that he is fitted to be the head of the Lands Department, to which he has been appointed, and I feel sure from the energy and perseverance he has always shown as a member of this House, that he will do credit to himself and add to the stability of the Ministry. It is pleasing to know from what has fallen to-day from Sir John Forrest, that the finances of the colony are in a satisfactory position. Possibly from what has appeared in the Speech of the Governor referring to finance, some doubt may have been thrown upon that by a sentence to the effect that the colony is not indebted to any local financial institution. That, I fear, has given rise to some doubt as to whether the colony is not indebted outside. That is the impression made upon my mind by what appears in His Excellency's Speech, but I am now satisfied that the Premier would not deceive any one of us by making such a statement as he did to-day, that we have nothing to

fear with regard to the financial position of the colony, and I for one believe he speaks what he believes to be the truth.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: He always does that.

MR. SOLOMON: It is with great pleasure I have listened to the members who have been sent here by the mining constituencies—gentlemen who have been sent here to represent one of the most important industries in the colony, which will, together with other industries which doubtless are yet to be developed, in time to come make Western Australia a colony that will stand second to none in Australasia. The subject itself gives very little opportunity for debate, and as it was suggested by the Attorney General that at this stage the debate should not be lengthy with regard to the Commonwealth Bill, I shall speak only briefly upon that. It may be found, however, that although members have had the Bill before them for some little time, and it is possible they may be well acquainted with the clauses in the Bill, the discussion will be all the greater, and may take a longer time than would otherwise be the case. Consequently I think a mistake was made in not calling the House together at an earlier date. The important question of the Coolgardie water supply has been introduced into the debate, and I am still of the opinion I expressed last session that this important question should be referred to a select committee. If the question is brought forward again I shall myself assuredly move in that direction. As to the mining regulations, members for the various mining constituencies have been most moderate in what they have stated, and I am glad they have taken an opportunity of placing their views before this House, as these may give to the Government some hint as to these members' requirements, which may be useful for the Government to consider during the short recess which is to follow. It is natural that those members should ventilate their opinions, and from what has already taken place it appears that there are many of the mining regulations which will require adjusting, and if the Commission be appointed as is suggested, I feel sure that good will result. One hon. member referred to smelting works being established at Fremantle, and offered some objections, but

I think there is no better place for smelting works than at Fremantle, as they would be close to the shipping, where deep water is available for vessels coming along side the wharf. I feel sure that if smelting works are established there they will do an immense deal of good. The hon. member said they would injure vegetation in the vicinity, but I may say that although we are to some extent a vegetable growing community, yet I can assure the House that smelting works will not in any way interfere with the vegetation. With regard to the matter of federation, I agree with the remarks of of the member for North Coolgardie (Mr. Gregory) that federation must grow with the people. At present I do not think one in a hundred of the people knows what federation is, or to what it may lead us if we go blindfold into the Federal Convention. I know that some time ago an attempt was made in Fremantle to call a public meeting for discussing the question, but the people would not attend, and the meeting was a failure. This shows the great responsibility we should be taking if we were to enter into the matter now, unless there is some strong feeling—as there generally is on a national question like this—coming spontaneously from the public. I believe that eventually we shall have federation, but it must grow with the people of the colony. I rather regret that one matter has been mentioned, though my position in reference to it is somewhat unique. With regard to the whipping case that took place in the Fremantle gaol, I feel sure that, if the hon. member (Mr. Vosper) knew the rights of the case, instead of condemning the magistrate who ordered that punishment, he would say the magistrate did perfectly right. In my position I am in duty bound to vindicate the action of the magistrate in that matter, for I may say he has been in the service since he was a boy, some 36 years, and has grown up in it; and as to this particular case I feel sure, as every man in Fremantle knows, that the magistrate in question is as humane as any man in the colony, and if there has been any fault at all it has been an error on the side of mercy. (General laughter.) I may explain that the sentence was for 36 lashes and 12 months in irons. According to the Criminal Act. I believe the magis-

trate could have given 100 lashes and three years' imprisonment—[MR. VOSPER: It is a Criminal Act]—and that would possibly in the old times have been carried out, but I do not go so far as to say such a sentence would in this case have been a just punishment. I would like to point out that when the lash was used years ago it was such a thing as no doubt the word "cruelty" could be applied to, because it was at that time a barbarous punishment, and the weapon used could not be used without inflicting a large amount of pain, because the weapon was knotted catgut, and the severest punishment a man could bear. At present the weapon for whipping is a mere plaything. (General laughter.) Hon. members may laugh, and say "Oh," but I should like them to see for themselves. (More laughter.) It is not so much the feeling of the whip that is a deterrent in a matter of crime, but it is rather the fact of getting that punishment before their fellow-men.

MR. GEORGE: That is where the punishment comes in.

MR. SOLOMON: I might mention that one of these men had been found guilty of garotting. [MR. VOSPER: Gaol-breaking is not garotting.] But this man was in for fifteen years for the crime of garotting, and who is to know, if he had got away, that some innocent person might not have suffered at his hands? These penalties are inflicted, not so much as a punishment as a deterrent. I can assure hon. members that there are men in that gaol who, if such punishments were not inflicted, would not hesitate to try to get beyond the walls and do further mischief. I thought it necessary, as a brother magistrate, to speak on this matter, because for the nine years I have sat with the gentleman whose conduct has been questioned I have always found him very lenient. I must apologise for having made any remarks on this matter; but I felt that I was called upon, in my position, to vindicate the character of a gentleman who has been in the service so long, and deserves commendation rather than condemnation.

MR. MITCHELL (the Murchison): Mr. Speaker,—In addressing myself to the motion on the Address-in-Reply to the speech we heard a few days ago from the Governor, I feel called upon to offer my congratulations to you on being again

selected to preside over this honourable House. I have also to express my pleasure at seeing the right hon. the Premier back in his place. I may tell you, sir, that I had not the slightest idea of speaking on the question of federation on this occasion. From what fell from the lips of the Attorney General I take it to be his wish that we should only deal with this measure when in committee. But, inasmuch as other members have had their say, I do not see why I should not be allowed to have my say. In any case, what I say will be very little indeed. We were told by an hon. member last night that we did not know anything about federation. Well, I think it is no disadvantage for us not to know anything about it. The less we know about federation for some time to come, the better it will be for Western Australia. It is but a short time since we obtained the privilege of managing our own affairs, and Responsible Government was conceded to us. It will be admitted by all members, and the colony generally, that we have done very well under our new Constitution. We have made great strides in progress, and that progress is attributable to three causes, namely,—first, the change in the Constitution of the colony; secondly, the discovery of gold; and thirdly, and last but by no means least, the administrative ability shown by those gentlemen who have been entrusted with the management of our public affairs. We are told if we get federation we shall have freetrade; and there is no doubt about the truth of that. [MR. ILLINGWORTH: Who said that?] Well, we shall have freetrade so far as the federated States are concerned. Freetrade may seem very nice in the abstract; but, perhaps, in speaking on this subject, "free ports" would be a better term. However federal freetrade may be described, I do not think Western Australia would participate in the advantages which many of the colonies would enjoy. We, here, have nothing whatever to send to the other colonies, whereas the other colonies have plenty to send to us; and therefore, I say, we could not participate in the advantages of free ports. We have done so well under Responsible Government in Western Australia that I would ask hon. members to think before they record their votes for anything that might lead to

giving up the right to manage our own affairs—a right near and dear to all British subjects. A few years ago I suppose none of the other colonies would have asked us to join in federation. They would have told us that we had nothing on which to federate with them; but, since we have been fortunate enough to discover gold and make such vast progress, they are only too glad to get us to go in with them.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Before gold was discovered the other colonies asked us to federate.

MR. MITCHELL: I question that very much.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It is a fact all the same.

MR. MITCHELL: I have more faith in the ability and wisdom of members of this House than to believe for one moment they will vote for the giving up of the right to manage our own affairs; and as soon as we do federate, we should have to give up that right. I hope that both sides of the House—perhaps I ought to say the three sides—will work together, as far as is consistent between a Government and an Opposition, for the well-being of this great and growing country. When I say growing country, I mean growing in importance. This being the first time I have appeared as a speaker in this House, I must ask hon. members to excuse me if I have not said all I ought to have said. At any rate, I have said all I could.

MR. EWING (the Swan): The hon. member for the Gascoyne last night, and also the hon. member for the Murchison to-night, seemed very much surprised indeed that the whole of the members of the Assembly have not taken the suggestion of the Attorney General as law. I have no doubt that the House will be glad to hear any suggestions that may fall from the learned gentleman; but these will only be taken as suggestions and not as directions. When contesting my election I stated it was doubtful which side of the House I should sit on. I pointed out that, so far as I was able to see at the time, my views were not in accordance with those of the Ministry, and that I might probably be found on the Opposition side. I contested that election as an independent candidate, for the reason that I was unable to gather

from the long speech of the Premier at Bunbury what were the political principles of the Government. Had I been able to gather from that long speech of some two hours whether the principles of the Government were progressive or whether they were conservative, then I might have been able to tell the electors of the Swan whether I was prepared to go on the Government side or on the Opposition side. I hoped—and still cling to the hope—that when we came before the House, we should, in accordance with established custom, have such a Governor's Speech as would enable us to see what were the intentions of the Government. I hoped, and was right and reasonable in hoping, that we would be able to gather from that Speech whether the Government intended to carry out much-needed legislation, or whether they did not—whether the Government were conservative or whether they were going with the times and appreciated the existing condition of affairs. But what have hon. members met with? We have assembled here, and have absolutely nothing before us except the fact that we are called together for the purpose of considering federation.

THE PREMIER: This is a special session.

MR. EWING: That may be; but if it is, we required a special sitting months ago. If the Premier realises that two days before his return a special sitting was necessary, how much more was it necessary long ago, in order to enable Parliament to thoroughly discuss the federation question? Now, we are invited to consider this important matter in two days—are practically asked not to debate it. With five or six Ministers in the colony, it is hard to see the reason for the absence of any declaration of policy or any indication of the intentions of the Cabinet. Is it because the only man who was capable or who was willing to formulate a policy was absent? If so, now that the right honourable gentleman has returned, I hope he will tell us what the Government intend to do, and give us an opportunity of supporting or opposing him. I take it that a member, though he may sit in opposition, does not pledge himself to oppose all the proposals of the Government, but merely those which he thinks should not be carried into effect, and that it is

part of his function to urge the Government to take what, in his opinion, is the proper course. The silence of hon. members on the Ministerial side has been mentioned once or twice, and it has even been mentioned as a conspiracy. I do not think the silence is due to conspiracy. I think it is due to the fact that the Government have given those who support them nothing to talk about, and I truly sympathise with any hon. member who gets up on the Ministerial side to support the Address-in-Reply with so little material on which he can address the House. We are compelled by the absence of subjects we looked for in the Speech to debate that which the Speech does not contain, and to point out to Ministers that which we expected to have found there. Now let us consider just shortly the first matter that is embodied in the Speech. This is the most important question of federation, which the Attorney General has asked us not to debate. So far as I have been able to gather, only one direct supporter of the Government has spoken on this question. And that gentleman has delivered himself in such a manner as to show that he does not intend to support federation. From the remarks he let fall, I think the reason he does not intend to support federation is because he knows nothing about it. The hon. member for Greenough got up and actually asked the House—"How could we in Western Australia ever have done the work that has been done had we had federation, and had the centre of government here been removed in the way federation would remove it?" In asking that question the hon. member clearly shows that he knows nothing about federation. There is no suggestion that the administration of the departments which he indicated shall be taken out of the hands of the local Parliament. [MR. PENNEFATHER: That is the proposition.] To hear the hon. member, it might be imagined that the Parliament of Western Australia was about to be annihilated.

MR. PENNEFATHER: The control of the Post Office and Telegraph Service will be taken away.

MR. EWING: Supporters of the Ministry tell us that under federation we should have no power over our own finances, and could not construct our own

works. That appears to me absurd. The hon. member for the Murchison seems to think that federation means political annihilation; but federation, to my mind, means nothing of the kind. Federation simply means, so far as I am able to see, that the colonies shall be bound together only so far as their interests are identical. We are asking the different colonies to come together to consider under what conditions each colony will deem it satisfactory to enter into federation. When an hon. member finds it necessary to make statements of the kind indulged in by the hon. member for Greenough, and wander from Home Rule into a blood-thirsty American War, it is evident that he has very little sound argument to offer in opposition to the principle of federation. Then I see from the Speech that His Excellency is glad to note satisfactory settlement on the land. That must gratify anyone who has the interests of the colony at heart. There is no better indication of progression than true settlement on the land and development of the agricultural industry. To sacrifice the agricultural industry under any but exceptional circumstances, is to do that which no one has a right to do. We must consider every vested interest, and act so that those vested interests may be preserved; but yet we must remember the other people outside those vested interests, and must not sacrifice the vast majority for the sake of the few. In the matter of taxation we have to ask ourselves—Is the industry that you are going to endeavour to support by a high tariff, is the industry which you are going to endeavour to build up by imposing protective duties, such a one as can exist under ordinary, reasonable circumstances? It must be asked whether the industry is one suited to the community, and whether the imposition of taxation will inflict on the great majority of the people serious and unfair consequences. I ask whether there would not be much greater and truer settlement on the land, if the cost of living in this colony were made reasonable? Does any hon. member mean to contend that there is true settlement by bringing the heads of families alone to the colony? Do we not all recognise that if we are to have true settlement—true home-making—we must have the whole of the family, and not part of

it, here? If the Ministry were true to their pledges and true to the interests of the agricultural industry, and if they really meant to advance settlement on the soil, they would give every reasonable facility for enabling the people to live under cheap conditions on the land. [THE PREMIER: So they do.] If the Government do so, it is by putting 100 per cent. on beef. Is that duty for the benefit of agriculture, or is it done for the benefit of squatters in the North, or for the benefit of rings of beef-producers in the colony? [A MEMBER: Nothing of the sort.] It is not necessary for me to mention those rings, for every member of the Assembly knows of them. No wonder the Ministry stick to the beef duties, and I should be very much surprised if they did not. The Ministry are not sticking to the duties in the interests of the people, or because they believe they are doing good to Western Australia. They are sticking to the duties because of private, individual interests in the industry. [A MEMBER: The hon. member is surely out of order.] The question of enabling people to live at a reasonable cost is a great one. There is no market like a home market. It is better for the farmer, where he can, to send his produce direct to market without the intervention of the middleman, or of duties and all attendant consequences and risks.

MR. A. FORREST: Give us an instance where that is possible.

MR. EWING: The hon. member knows that the most satisfactory market is the home market. If he does not know it he ought to know it, because he is a producer who did not find the foreign market so satisfactory before we had a decent market of our own. We have a good home market and want a better one, and we are going to have a better one by enabling the people to live at a reasonable rate. If we have a good home market with only the heads of families here, how much better would the market be if the whole families were here? We would then find that instead of money going out of the colony to feed farmers in other parts of Australia, it would be kept here to assist and help the farmers of Western Australia. That is the way in which to consider the interests of agriculture. What is the good of putting a few pounds into the pockets of the farmer on the one

hand, and on the other hand depriving him of the best market he could possibly have? The hon. member for East Kimberley has said that the money is not going out of the colony for the purpose of keeping the wives and families of men who are over here and who cannot afford to bring their wives and families over on account of the high cost of living. He says that the money is going away to pay debts contracted in other colonies. Now, as a lawyer, my experience is that people who come to these colonies and who owe money are not at all anxious to pay their debts, and that it takes them a long time to make up their minds to do so. The hon. member might just as well tell us that the money has been sent over to South Australia for the purpose of exterminating the tick, in order to enable the butchers in that colony to compete successfully with another butchers' ring in Perth. One suggestion would be quite as logical and as reasonable as the other. The facts do not support the hon. member's contention; and he knows, and the House knows, that he is talking nonsense.

MR. CONNOR: We don't want people here who won't pay their debts.

MR. EWING: It is the duty of hon. members, whenever they find that the Government are right, to support the Government. Whenever I find the Ministry introducing good, sound legislation, which I take to be absolutely necessary for Western Australia, my vote will be given for them, wherever I may happen to sit in the House. But where we have a Government which comes before the House without any policy or principle, then a new member cannot support such a Government. We want to be able to give reasons for supporting a Government; and I truly pity hon. members who have to address the House from the Ministerial side. They cannot give any reason why they should be supporting the present Ministry, because there is nothing to support. A bald, bare statement has been laid before the House; and yet the Government has the audacity to come here and say, "Although we have given you nothing to debate, you have no right to debate it!" There are many matters which should have been dealt with in the Speech, and amongst the most important are those of social legislation. The Government has no right to overshadow

social legislation in the way they are doing. It is no credit to the Government to have sat there all those years without, for instance, endeavouring to amend the criminal code. The people here are subject to the same criminal laws as they were in the days of penal settlement. The lash and many glorious relics of the old time remain. Why have the Ministry and the Government not realised the necessity for progress in this direction? Why should we not have criminal laws in accordance with the spirit of the times? It is disgraceful that there are so many capital offences in the colony as there are. A man can be hung for no less than seven or eight offences in this colony; and I undertake to say this is the only part of the British dominions in which such a disgraceful state of affairs exists. We have been told in the Speech that the finances of the colony are in a satisfactory condition; and the Premier has stated to-day, I believe, that he was surprised that anyone should doubt the financial soundness of Western Australia. Had the Premier introduced the deputation to the Acting Premier that I had the pleasure of introducing, he would have understood why the people doubt the financial stability of the colony. The Acting Premier on that occasion stated that the Government had exhausted their borrowing powers, and had no credit at the bank.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Did he tell you that?

MR. EWING: He said we had anticipated our revenue. That statement, made by the Acting Premier, can be read in the newspapers; and if members of the Government do not read the newspapers it is not my fault. The Acting Premier said that the Government had exhausted their borrowing capacity, and that they had no money with which to do what we asked. If statements of that kind are not likely to shake confidence in the financial stability of the country, I do not know what kind of statements are. I do not say that the country is financially unsound; but it astounded me to hear a gentleman occupying the position of Acting Premier making statements which must damn the credit of Western Australia. Can the Premier wonder now at the people doubting the credit of the country? [**THE PREMIER:** Why?] I

have told the Premier why. I have told him why the people doubt the credit of the country; and no words or assurance that the hon. gentleman can give will wipe out the words of the Acting Premier. A statement of that kind is not made for nothing. If it is made for nothing, then the hon. gentleman has no right to occupy the position any longer.

THE PREMIER: How much did you ask him for?

MR. EWING: That is not the question. The Acting Premier said he could not give us anything. One demand we made was that the Canning Jarrah Tramway should be taken over by the Government. Let the Premier laugh when I have finished. The next request was for a paltry £50 for a local work; and yet the Acting Premier told us he had no money. Is that not a nice statement for an Acting Premier to make? He may have said that in order to stave off the deputation and to evade the granting of the concessions asked; but if he did it with that purpose and object in view, he is a disgrace to the community. I do not think I have much more to say, but I have said enough to let the hon. gentlemen on the opposite side know my views, and I do not think there is any uncertain sound about what I have said. I came into this House untrammelled by prejudice, and I came in as ready to vote for the Ministry as the Opposition side; but I had made up my mind that I would accept no party where there is no principle, and on the opposite side I now see a party where there is absolutely no principle. ["Oh, oh," from Government supporters.] If hon. members like to take a matter of principle in that way, they seem to me to be men of no political principle. My position is that I will not support a Ministry which comes before Parliament with no scheme of legislation, and asks Parliament to support them simply because they are a Forrest Ministry and for no other reason. They will never find a supporter in me under those conditions; but if they can show they are worthy of support, and that their principles are worthy of support, then they will get my support, and, I am sure, the support of hon. members who sit on this side of the House; but until they do so, and show us a good scheme of

legislation, we will oppose them and will turn them out—["Oh, oh," and laughter from Government supporters]—unless they mend their ways. Make no mistake about it. When the Ministry amend their ways, instead of turning them out, we will be only too glad to support them.

Mr. WOOD (West Perth) : After that beautiful tirade you have just listened to, a few remarks from me will, perhaps, be not out of place. As to the remarks of the hon. member (Mr. Ewing) about this side of the House being devoid of principle, I can only repeat that it was not what he said, but it was the nasty way he said it that caused us to resent it in the way we did. I had no intention of speaking on the Address-in-Reply, because I thought the time of this House was of more importance to the country than any words I could add to the debate. This short session has been convened for voting supply and for dealing with the Commonwealth Bill. Supply can be settled in five minutes—(laughter from some Opposition members)—and the Commonwealth Bill can be discussed when it comes before us. I should like to add my tribute of congratulation to you, Mr. Speaker, on your re-election to that honourable position. Your re-election testifies to the unbounded confidence placed in you by every section of this House. I also congratulate the House on the result of the recent elections, and I think the country should be well satisfied with the accession of new members, for the speeches from them in this debate have fully borne out the reputation those gentlemen had before they came into the House. The remarks of my hon. friend, the member for North Coolgardie (Mr. Gregory) were also very much in accord with my own opinions, when he said federation should come about by evolution rather than that we should have a ready-made constitution. In the last session of this House, when I had the honour to second the Address-in-Reply, I made a statement to the same effect. I may say the hon. member's speech was splendid to listen to; but referring to another new member, Mr. Vosper, who brought up the question of prison discipline, and others who sympathised with that member, their remarks seem to show they would like to make our prisons residential hotels, free from all

restraint and relieved from any reformatory method or discipline. If so, let us do away with prisons altogether, and then we can engage, say, Mr. De Baum's Palace Hotel, or the Shamrock Hotel, and send our prisoners there for treatment. That appears to be the idea of the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) in dealing with prisoners. I do not know why he brought up this question of flogging. It was not in good form to do so, and I believe the circumstances surrounding that case fully warranted the flogging which was inflicted. The magistrate in charge of that prison (Mr. Fairbairn), instead of giving 100 lashes as he might have done, ordered 36, and I am glad to think we have an Attorney General who has a back stiff enough to resist sentimental pressure, and who could not be persuaded by maudlin sentiment to interfere with this sentence. On the question of electoral reform I am rather in sympathy with those members who have spoken on it, for I think the electoral arrangements are totally inadequate for the present interests of the country. I do not think it is a difficult matter to get on the roll, provided people take a little trouble, but there are so many instances of men unenfranchised in this colony that something should be done to put the system on a more satisfactory footing. The Coolgardie water scheme has been touched upon, but I do not intend to traverse that question, for we settled it last session by passing a unanimous vote, and I think it will take something very convincing indeed to make those hon. members who voted for it last session change their opinion now.

Mr. SIMPSON : Was it a unanimous vote?

Mr. WOOD : Well, there was no division, and I think there was only one "No" in this House when the question was put. It will take something to make hon. members go back on their previous conviction in reference to that subject, and I should commend to hon. members the sensible and wise remarks of the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans), a level-headed man, who knows what he is talking about. These are the gentlemen we should listen to on questions of this sort, for we are so far removed from the centres of these goldfields that a great

many of us cannot realise the circumstances of those places. So I take it that, in reference to this scheme and also to the mining laws, we should defer in every possible way to the opinions of the members representing the different goldfields. As far as that scheme is concerned, I am entirely in accord with it at present, and if those goldfields are to be made of service to this country as centres of settlement, we must make them habitable, so that we can settle a large population there. Some members seem to think our goldfields belong to some other country, and that this country should not have the benefit of them, but I say we should make water abundant there at a reasonable rate, and we should settle the people there; for, if we do not, the result will be that the very persons who object now to this water scheme will be among the first to leave us, and we shall have to bear the burden ourselves of a large expenditure which will have to become useless. The member for the Murray (Mr. George) spoke on the timber industry, which is second to none in importance, and I think it should be fostered in every possible way. I hope that in a month or two legislation will be introduced, and proper regulations brought forward, to support and encourage the *bona fide* sawmiller, and to stop the mere speculator. I agree with the hon. member that labour conditions should be made to apply to our timber leases; the same as were applied to leases on our goldfields. We have a wonderful asset, estimated at £124,000,000 sterling, in our timber forests. That will last us when the goldfields are exhausted, and will practically be inexhaustible. I trust the result of our deliberations will be such as to give us a really good Commonwealth Bill, suiting the conditions of settlement in this country, and suiting also the conditions of Australia generally.

MR. CONNOLLY (Dundas): As a new member in this House I wish to express my great satisfaction, in common with other new members, with the cordial and generous manner in which the older legislators of Western Australia have met the new members in this House, and through them have extended the same courtesy to those young and growing constituencies which we represent. I would also wish to join in the noble tribute of

praise to you, Mr. Speaker, on your being elected once more to the Chair in this House, and as a new member I can heartily endorse the appreciation already expressed, for I feel confident that I and other new members will appreciate most fully the kindly advice and guidance which you from time to time may give us in assisting us to carry on the duties which devolve upon us as representatives. I also wish to express the hearty congratulations which every member in this House and the people of Australia must feel towards the Premier of this colony on his return to his place in this House. (General applause.) I believe that through the length and breadth of this colony, whatever political opinions may be held, there are probably no persons who do not hold the Premier of Western Australia in the greatest possible veneration as a statesman actuated by the best motives, and I do not think the people of Western Australia as a whole have very much to complain about. Concerning the Address-in-Reply, the Speech of His Excellency gives us very small scope for debate. However important federation may be in the minds of some people in Western Australia and in other colonies, yet I think that in a young and growing colony such as this, we are all well aware there are many important matters affecting our internal affairs which can ill afford to give federation a preference. These matters of internal concern are more important to Western Australia than possibly to any other colony, because this is a young colony having most of its important work still to carry out, whereas other colonies have carried out most of their urgent works, such as still lie before us here. I agree that the idea of federation is very little understood among the people of Western Australia, and, possibly, even among members sitting in this House. It is a great question, and there are a great many, especially among the people, who have not realised the great importance of a federal union of the Australian colonies. The spirit of federation is one that I think might, even in this young colony, be well applied to its internal affairs, for there are many districts which are, as it were, pulling one against the other, and it is not too much to say there are some districts which are almost being

kept back so that others may advance. I would say this is not the true spirit of union and federation, which in a young colony like this should be observed and promoted for the general progress of the colony. It is nothing more nor less than assisting one portion of the colony at the expense of another portion. I have the honour to represent a district of very great resources, and without wishing to go into details I ask the House to consider the general policy which is practised towards that portion of the colony (Dundas goldfields) which comprises an important goldfield and a seaport capable of great development. The population in that district has not hitherto been assisted in a manner which I think its resources undoubtedly deserve, and it is not too much to say that very few of the earliest pioneers in that portion of Western Australia, who first discovered and endeavoured to develop its valuable resources, are to be found now among the people living in that district. The general progress and advancement of that district are being retarded for want of Government assistance, and I can only say with reference to federation that if this colony is ever to take a worthy position among other colonies in Australia, it will be to her advantage to begin at home by pulling unitedly together as a colony for its general advancement, instead of one portion pulling, as it were, against another. Reference has been made in this debate to the mining laws, and there is no doubt those laws control a great staple industry on which the colony depends now, and will probably depend for many a year to come. We have confronting us the demands of many capitalists who have invested money here, but those demands, although they should be taken into consideration, are in many cases somewhat extreme. There are many persons who have in an uncompromising way and without alternative condemned the so-called jumper, but from my experience on the goldfields—and it has been no small one—I say with confidence that jumping has its uses as well as its abuses, and jumping can be turned to such uses as will assist the development of the goldfields and help to carry out the mining laws in a manner which would cost the Government a great deal to perform adequately, and then might not

be performed fully. It has been suggested that a deposit of £25 should be made before any jumping case can be dealt with, and I believe this is now made a regulation; but, if so, the sooner it is amended the better, for there are many miners throughout the goldfields who would willingly go and develop abandoned shows, but are prohibited from doing so because they have not got the necessary £25 to deposit. It has been said that a man who cannot deposit that sum is not capable of developing a mining property, but there is many a good property in Western Australia which has been developed by men who had less than £25 to start with. The same thing applies possibly in other countries as well as in this; therefore, on behalf of the permanent working population of our goldfields, on which we depend most largely for carrying on our staple industry, I would strongly urge that this deposit, if not abolished, should be moderated. There is also a question of erecting batteries, and this is a matter highly important to the working men on our goldfields, for there can be little doubt among those who read the Premier's speech at Bunbury, that it was part of that speech that public batteries should be erected at various portions of the goldfields for assisting prospectors. At that time it was not stated that prospecting batteries should be erected, but it was to be "batteries" in the usual sense of the word. Since then it has been circulated that the Government had no intention of erecting these batteries, but only small batteries which some persons have called coffee-grinders, and for all the good they are from a practical standpoint, they are rightly called so. I believe it is a question with the Government whether these public batteries can be made to pay, and if it could be proved to the Government that such batteries would pay, and would have the effect of establishing and assisting the mining industry and population on the goldfields, I believe the Government would carry out the promise: furthermore, I sincerely hope they will. Young members representing goldfields do not like to hear, in relation to a promise made by the Premier of the colony, that the first opportunity is taken to either modify that promise or withdraw it. In conjunction with public batteries,

I think that a bonus on batteries should be granted to goldfields, so as to encourage the erection of both public and private batteries. Such a bonus has been already offered for encouraging deep sinking on the Northern goldfields, and why it is granted only to the Northern fields and not to the Southern fields is a question that may well be asked. Why should the prospectors on the Northern fields, who have generally better advantages as to water, have a bonus granted, and yet the prospectors on the Southern fields are to be left without it? The bonus to be offered for the erection of batteries should be similar to that which has been offered for deep sinking, and if such bonus were granted on the various goldfields for encouraging the owners of both public and private batteries, it would be an assistance and encouragement for men to erect more machinery in many places. Considering that these are reefing fields, machinery is what we require for development, and thus enable this colony to rise to the position of a great gold-producing colony, which it is in her power to do. It would be an easy matter to erect public batteries through the Government, and on such security as would protect the Government against loss, while enabling miners and prospectors to crush the gold out of their own stone. Crushing gold out of their own stone means a big thing to Western Australia. It would mean that the workers are getting the gold for themselves; that the gold is being retained in the colony, and that this gold will enable the prospectors to get their families over from other colonies and make their homes here. That gold is being got by public companies, and is leaving our colony in the form of dividends to be paid to people in other countries. We appreciate capital and acknowledge that capital invested in this colony is most necessary; but in cases whereby, with a little assistance, we can retain our own wealth for the benefit of our own people, I would warmly support any means to that end for the benefit of both mining and agriculture. What is good for mining people is good for agricultural people. To imagine that any division can occur between these two great sections of industry and that Western Australia can go ahead, as it certainly should and could, is

a great error. Mining and agriculture have gone hand in hand in the construction and building up of all the other colonies where those industries have been carried on. It has been found that the united efforts of these industries, one assisting the other, has been the great safeguard for that prosperity and growth which has enabled the other colonies to reach the state in which we see them to-day. I see no reason why Western Australia should not go in the same footsteps. We have an agricultural industry which is capable of very high development—a development which is needed to supply, not only the present population of West Australia, but a population infinitely larger. By the encouragement of both these industries, West Australia can be made a colony able to hold its own against any other colony in Australia. To that end, unity is necessary, and this is a great point on which young communities very often fail. What we need is a union or federation within ourselves, in order to bring this colony to that position which it can and should attain. I would also like to mention a small matter with reference to the electoral laws. At present the electoral restrictions are specially felt on the goldfields. Most of the men living on the fields, prospectors, miners, and so forth, are obliged, owing to their occupations, to pass from one district to another. They cannot afford to remain in one district for the period necessary to give them a vote, and consequently there are men who have been on the West Australian goldfields for five or six years, and who have given their time, money, and labour to the development of the gold resources, and yet they are disfranchised. Men engaged in the agricultural industry, owing to the stability of their occupation, can remain long enough in one district to entitle them to vote, and, as will readily be seen, these men have a decided advantage over miners and prospectors in the matter of a vote, although the latter are as well capable of exercising the franchise in a reasonable and intelligent manner. It would be a distinct advantage if the electoral law were revised and made more just to the people as a whole. Before concluding I would like to refer to the flogging case in Fremantle gaol. It has been said that the men punished deserved the flogging—that one

had been guilty in former years of the crime of garrotting. But closely following on that statement comes another, that this man had been sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment for garrotting. Now, fifteen years is a big penalty, and I should like to ask how often should a man be punished for garrotting? If garrotting was considered to be a crime for which flogging could be given, surely it would have been better to give the man a flogging at once, instead of waiting until he ran away from prison. In my opinion, and in the opinion of many, not only in this House but throughout the country, the penalty inflicted in that case was altogether out of proportion to the offence. If prisons are made to keep prisoners in, they should be so constructed that prisoners cannot get out. I am told that this prisoner had run away two or three times previously. If that be so, it points to a very imperfect prison system in West Australia. Surely it would be better either to pull down the walls of the prison altogether and tell the prisoners they would be flogged if they ran away, or to build the walls in such a way as to prevent prisoners getting out. [The PREMIER: It is a good big wall.] Then the walls should be much bigger, so that the prisoners cannot get out. As to federation, I am strongly in favour of the movement; but I consider that the present moment is possibly a little premature for West Australia to enter into such bonds. She has not yet sufficiently developed her internal resources and affairs to enable her to enter into federation on an equal footing with the sister colonies; and although federation would conduce to the strength, prestige, and general progress and stability of Australia as a continent, West Australia ought to wait a little longer. There is no necessity for West Australia to stand in the way of federation if the other colonies desire to federate. Most of our great federations in the world have not been the result of a spontaneous step taken by all the States at the same time. In most cases a few States have federated first, and other States have come in later when the time suited them; and it would be for the benefit of West Australia if she took the latter step. For West Australia to enter into federation at the present moment would be much

the same as sending a small boy of nine years of age, who had a lot to learn, to school with a young man of twenty-one. West Australia has not only a lot to learn, but she has a lot of work to do. All things considered, West Australia, as she stands at the present moment, is better able to carry on internal works for the benefit and progress of the colony than she would be under federation.

MR. F. WILSON (the Canning) : You, sir, have been inundated with congratulations on your re-election to the honourable position you occupy, and it is, therefore, unnecessary for me to do more than say you also have from me, as a new member, my heartiest congratulations. I would merely add that I believe you will receive from the new members of the House that loyal support in the chair which you have received from older members in past sessions. I do not wish to go into a long speech in connection with the motion before the House; but I should like briefly to glance at the clauses of His Excellency's address, and make a few comments. In the first place, the Speech is generally characterised by its brevity. The paucity of information may be its chief recommendation to honourable members on the opposite side of the House; but I must say that, as far as I am concerned, the address gives very little ground work on which to enable a new member to make his maiden speech. Reading between the lines, as I think I can do, it seems to me that the Government imply by this speech that they have done very well without Parliament for the past ten months, and that if we grant them supplies for a further period, they are quite prepared to go on without Parliament as long as we permit them to do so. We have the assurance of the Premier that we are all right—that the finances of the country are in order, and that we need have no fear. Still, I think that it is not our duty to our constituents, and to the country, to accept assurances only. I should like to find out as to what the country's engagements are in the immediate future, before I can come to a definite conclusion as to our financial position. It appears to me that we are asked not to discuss the two matters mainly mentioned in the speech in order to allow the delegates, who are neither representative of the people nor

of the Parliament as at present constituted, to attend the Federal Convention in New South Wales. For such a purpose we should not run the slightest risk of letting our own House get into disorder; and if Parliament is to be closed down for another couple of months we certainly run a serious risk. Federation is not of such paramount importance as to justify our running any such risk. I know of no greater conception than federation. I can think of nothing emanating from the brain of man more calculated to fire the blood of a British-born subject. To unite a number of States into one grand nation is a work which all would heartily support. It is a question much too great in importance to be rushed, and I, for one, require some time to fully consider the Commonwealth Bill, before I am prepared to commit myself on its clauses. Federation is a subject on which we ought to educate ourselves, and not only ourselves, but, if possible, the people whom we represent; and the best way of educating the people of this colony on the question would be to let them elect delegates who have to represent them. Surely it is unreasonable, from the standpoint of a new member at any rate, to expect the House to consider this momentous question—to go through the numerous clauses of the Bill, and debate, pass, and amend it if you will, within a few days. In the other colonies the Parliaments have been called together, and have been considering the Commonwealth Bill for six or seven weeks, and are not yet done with the measure. I do not think it is right or fair that we should be called on to consider and pass this Bill in such a hurry. I now wish to refer to the financial clauses in the Speech. As I said before, we have nothing before us on which to enable us to come to a correct conclusion. It is a strange thing—and I have asked many members of the House for information—it is a strange thing that no information is forthcoming from the Government. People outside and the press seem to know more of the financial position of the colony than the members of this House. It is true that the Premier, in the form of a newspaper interview, has offered us some ground-work to go on; and we know from the Speech that the Government is not indebted to any finan-

cial institution within the colony. We also know from the Premier's statement that we are not indebted to any financial institution outside the colony.

MR. CONNOR: Is the hon. member for the Canning in order in reading his speech?

MEMBERS: New member.

MR. WILSON: The hon. member for East Kimberley is quite at liberty to look at my notes if he wishes after I am done. I was saying I was gratified to hear we were not indebted to any financial institution either within or without the colony; but in considering the financial standing of any private commercial institution we always take, with a great amount of care, the statements of a person who flourishes his bank balance in our faces. We are apt to think if a man boasts of the amount to his credit, that there are many liabilities behind, which will have to be provided for, and it may be that although we have £90,000 odd to our credit at the present time, our liabilities are many hundreds of thousands of pounds. I should like to find out if I can how we are financially situated, say for the next six months, and then I would be prepared, with the figures before me, to discuss the question in detail.

THE PREMIER: You will never get that until the Treasurer makes his Financial Statement.

MR. WILSON: The fact that appeals most forcibly to me at the present time is that the Premier says we will not, for some time, be borrowing in London. I should like to know where the Premier does intend to borrow. My experience is that if you cannot borrow in London, you can borrow nowhere else.

THE PREMIER: I do not think I said that.

MR. WILSON: It appears in the morning papers.

THE PREMIER: Well, I did not say it.

MR. WILSON: I am very pleased to hear that also.

THE PREMIER: You are in error: what I said was that we were not likely to raise an inscribed stock loan in London for some time. These were the words I used.

MR. WILSON: Hon. members will agree with me when I say that we have in Perth, and throughout the colony at the present time, a comparative slackening off in trade. Money is tight, and

while there is a slackening off in the building trade, people cannot get houses at a reasonable rental. The cause of the slackening in the building trade cannot be over production. Then what is the cause? It may be there is a loss of confidence in the colony just for the time being; and the question arises, what is the cause of this loss of confidence? To my mind the cause is the huge borrowing policy adopted by the Government last session. There is no doubt in my mind that the financial institutions at Home have for the time being—I should hardly like to say permanently—lost confidence in the administration of the affairs of this colony. My honest opinion is that the cause of the loss of confidence is due to the incubus of the Coolgardie water scheme. That scheme has done more to destroy our credit at Home than anything else the Government could conceive. It seems to me wrong entirely that a small population such as we have here, should be overburdened with taxation for the sake of carrying water to two or three centres, three or four hundred miles from the city. [A MEMBER: They will pay for it.] That is very doubtful indeed. I do not want to go into details, but from a practical point of view I maintain it is utterly impossible to obtain, by one central scheme, the result desired. To talk of supplying a wide extent of country equal to Great Britain in area by one central pumping scheme is absurd. [A MEMBER: What scheme do you propose?] I am quite willing to tell the House what I would propose. If you are going to supply the goldfields with adequate water for domestic and battery purposes, you must have twenty or thirty schemes. Each district must have its own scheme. To pass on, I should like to express my disappointment that the Speech does not allude to matters which I consider of very great importance to the country. First and foremost, some reference should be made to the abolition or reduction of the food duties. Living is too high in this colony, and the duties could be reduced very extensively, and in many cases abolished, without injuring the producer or the agriculturist. According to the Premier in his speech at Bunbury, this was one of the burning questions of the day; and surely it ought to have found some place in the Gover-

nor's Speech. I plead guilty to being a novice in these matters, and perhaps I am mistaken; nevertheless I should have liked to see some indication as to whether the present tariff is to be amended or reduced. The food duties affect us all; and whether we are miners, timber cutters, agriculturists, or fruit growers, a reduction in the tariff would of necessity help us. Such a reform would attract population and increase consumption enormously. There is another matter which I regret is not referred to in the Speech; that is the question of Civil Service reform, which ought to receive immediate attention. After having walked through the different departments here, it appears to me that the sooner we have some board to make the necessary appointments to the Civil Service, after due examination, the better it will be for the Government and all concerned. Another question which I hope will be taken into consideration is that of free education—absolutely free education. I know it is stated that education in this country is practically free at the present time, but I dispute that. A man certainly may obtain free education for his children if he likes to declare himself a pauper; but is any British subject going to submit himself to that indignity? I understand, furthermore, that the fees are so meagre, and realise such a small amount, that they are hardly worth collecting. In fact, I believe the fees scarcely pay for the clerical labour of keeping the accounts. [A MEMBER: The fees realise £1,500 a year.] Let us sweep the fees away, and have absolute free education. I should also like to hear something about the proposed amendment of the law relating to the restriction of the immigration of Asiatics.

THE PREMIER: You do not seem to understand the object of this special meeting of Parliament.

MR. WILSON: As far as I know, as a new member, His Excellency's Speech is all we have before us to work on; and so long as I am in order, I presume I may go on with my remarks. No doubt the question of the restriction of the immigration of Asiatics is a very formidable one; but it is a question which the longer it is put off the worse it will be to handle. If the Government is wise in its generation, it will take the matter into hand

forthwith, and introduce a measure which we can consider and possibly come to a conclusion on. Then I should have liked some expression in the Speech with regard to the drainage question. We have had a scheme for the drainage of Perth delayed and dangled before us so long that the citizens have become tired of the matter, and have lost all hope of ever seeing it carried out. I would like to hear the Government give some assurance that the scheme will be pushed on, and put in hand forthwith. Surely the capital city of this great colony deserves better treatment. A sewerage system is absolutely necessary for the welfare of the people, and it ought not to have been delayed and kept back as it has been.

THE PREMIER: As the scheme in Melbourne was for some time.

MR. WILSON: I do not intend to discuss matters in detail. I have simply outlined what strike me as being the most urgent questions to be dealt with, and have expressed my disappointment that nothing has been said in the Speech which would lead us to suppose those questions will be considered at an early date. I may at some future date have an opportunity of threshing out all these questions, when I hope I shall not be backward in expressing my opinion. In conclusion I should like to say that, although comparatively a new-comer, my interests and the interests of most of those who come from other colonies are now wrapped up in this colony, the home of our adoption. We are equally anxious with the older members of the House, and with gentlemen who were born here, for the well-being of Western Australia. I claim for members who sit on this side of the House credit for the same honest motives which are claimed by hon. members who sit opposite. We intend, as far as our ability goes, to support all measures which will conduce to the welfare of the country in which we live.

MR. W. JAMES (East Perth): If I fail to join my voice in the chorus of compliment to you, Mr. Speaker, on your election to that honourable and distinguished office, it is because I think this House should congratulate itself on the fact of your being the occupant of that distinguished office. I recognise there are cases in which the office reflects honour on

the occupant, but there are other cases in which the occupant reflects honour on the office, as it is in the case of one who has for so many years filled the high office of Speaker in this House with so much satisfaction to members and with such complete justice and integrity. I also add my congratulations to the two new members who have spoken on the Address-in-Reply, as mover and seconder, and all of us must feel how much this House is strengthened by their accession to our ranks. I am glad to see also that in some of these new members we have straight and robust advocates of democratic principles. I also want to congratulate the Government—this I know will not elicit a “hear, hear” from the member for Geraldton (Mr. Simpson)—upon the position they have taken up in connection with the federation question, and I want to congratulate them on being honest to the people of Australia in being true to the pledges they made when they introduced the Federation Enabling Act. I want them to be true to this great cause of federation, for I should be sorry to think any man, who has his interests in this great continent, and especially any native born Australian, could be indifferent to the importance and advantages of a federal union in these colonies. I may, perhaps, in this matter be an enthusiast, but I am not ashamed of that, and indeed I am foolish enough to say I am proud of it, because I know of no subject that is more worthy of enthusiasm than this question of federation. It does seem to me that those members who are responsible for the somewhat obstructive tactics that have been carried out—

MR. SIMPSON: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member says obstructive tactics have been carried out. I want to know in what way, and to whom he refers, when he says obstructive tactics have been carried out.

A MEMBER: To you, of course.

THE SPEAKER: I do not think the hon. member is out of order.

MR. JAMES: Obstructive tactics have been carried out by members who want to gag free discussion in this House—men who want to set up their peculiar opinions as being the opinions of the people of this colony. These are the men who come into this House and want

to stifle discussion on this important matter.

AN HON. MEMBER: Who elected you a delegate?

MR. JAMES: I was elected to this House by the people after I had been appointed a delegate to the federal Convention, and I was elected by a constituency in which the hon. member's constituency (Geraldton) would be absolutely lost. If he talks about this as a squatting constituency, how can I talk then about that miserable little constituency which he represents. I congratulate the Government on the position they have taken up, and I congratulate the new chiefs of this Opposition on the tactics—if these be the tactics—they have taken up. I want to point out that in no part of Australia has this great question of federation been made a party question, except by the newly formed Opposition in this House.

MR. LEAKE: This is not a party question.

MR. SIMPSON: Hear, hear.

MR. JAMES: If certain members of the newly formed Opposition tell me the tactics they have taken up are not for the purpose of embarrassing the Government in this matter, I find it difficult to believe that is so. I do not see why we should not deal with this question in the same spirit in which it has been approached in the sister colonies. There has been no attempt made there to burke discussion, or introduce irrelevant matter. We know full well, and the hon. member for Geraldton knows, that this is simply a session called for a special purpose, and for no other matters than those mentioned in the Governor's Speech, and he knows that every matter which is usually dealt with in the address from the throne at the opening of a session will be dealt with in opening the ordinary session that is to follow this one. We see that those matters have been kept out purposely from the opening speech in this session, in order that its special work may not be impeded; and yet we now see an amendment introduced expressing in the plainest way, and showing the mover's intentions for the express purpose of preventing this House from proroguing, and thus prevent delegates from going to the Convention at Sydney. Whatever may be our opinions on this question of federation—and I regret to

say there are narrow-minded men here on this question, as elsewhere, who do not want federation—I should like to ask hon. members what position we shall occupy if, after having been represented at the first meeting of the Convention in Adelaide, we are not to be represented also at the adjourned meeting in Sydney. It would be not only an act of rudeness and discourtesy, but a direct rebuff to this great cause of federation; and so far as it tends to make people believe we are opposed to federation and want to throw obstacles in its way, I will protest against these tactics emphatically. I believe no greater question can come before us for consideration. I have a great respect for civil service reform and am impressed with the need of it, and I do not express this opinion now for the first time; but federation is a question so infinitely more important than civil service reform that it overshadows all other questions, and should certainly overshadow them in the heart and mind of every man who professes to be a native of Australia and a real Australian. I have heard it said we do not want this matter rushed, but am I to understand that there is any one member in this House who comes here and wants us to instruct him upon a question which has been before the people of Australia in a strong and earnest way for the last six or seven years? Are we to suppose members come into this House with their minds absolutely blank on this great question? Are we to instruct them on those details of federation on which they should have some information before they come into Parliament as representatives of the people? This matter has been before us all individually for years past, and if so, surely there is ample time left for us in six or seven days to dispose of the important principles involved in this Bill. I hope this House will be more business-like than other Parliaments of Australia have been in dealing with this question. No member can fail to have been struck with the amount of detail that has been gone into by some members in other Parliaments. I say we do not want to go into various details, that we can trust the leaders of the Convention, say Mr. Barton and other able men, to take care that no injustice shall be done in the details. I yield to no man in my admira-

tion of and attachment to this great cause, and I say we have ample time to deal with this question in the fullest way during the days we have yet at our disposal, that is provided members come here with a certain amount of knowledge, which they should possess, or they have no right to be here as representatives. I do not hide from myself that, although enthusiastic in this cause, one's enthusiasm is somewhat damped when you hear some of the speeches which have been delivered in this House, and also read some of the speeches delivered in other Parliaments by members who, while professing to be imbued with the true federal spirit, have yet done all they could to damp it. It seems to me they have been actuated by a narrow parochialism, more characteristic of the electors of the Greenough district than by the spirit actuating the electors of any other constituency in this colony. If we are to approach a great question like this with suspicion and distrust, and ask whether those who are holding out the olive branch are going to pick our pockets, then I say let us have done with federation, because no federation can exist in which there is mistrust and suspicion. I say that even if federation is possible only under circumstances such as that, it would really retard federation in the most determined manner if we had a federation conceived in such mistrust, saturated by such suspicion, and actuated by those sordid motives and mean aspirations which do intrude themselves frequently in these discussions. Any constitution which has on its face that brand of infamy cannot exist, even for five years. For myself I am prepared to believe that the inhabitants and the public men of the Eastern colonies are just as honest and honourable as the member who represents the Greenough, and I really think their moral ethics are not inferior to those of the hon. member. If such men make me a proposal, which I am competent to judge of, I am not inclined to question the motives of men who, in connection with this great movement, have always shown themselves to be honest and open. However disappointing it is to read the debates that have taken place, more particularly in the colony of New South Wales, which might be expected to extend to us the greatest sympathy

and consideration, and which possesses some public men who are really something greater than mere parochial politicians, I say I regret that although in that colony we see that its Parliament has been dealing with this matter in the most narrow and parochial spirit, yet we have, in the delegates elected by New South Wales, men who are worthy of that great colony, and are worthy examples of its best public men. Those of us who were delegates at the late Convention cannot fail to have been struck by their broad-minded generosity and their invariable tolerance towards principles with which they disagreed; and I take this opportunity of expressing my obligation to those delegates for what was taught to us in their broad-mindedness and their lofty contempt of mere local parochialism. I would especially refer to Mr. Edmund Barton, the appointed leader of the Convention, as a man whom I, as an Australian, am proud to own as a fellow Australian. As to the delegates of Victoria, notwithstanding that they were said to represent the views of one newspaper, they were an honour to that colony, and their contributions to the debate and to the Bill were of infinite importance to this movement. If I have less praise for the delegates of South Australia, it is because I think they are like ourselves, just a little parochial, and they want that discredited system of confederacy which has been advocated in this debate by the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper). The South Australian delegates recognised that we must have some central Government, but they wanted to make it a mere creature dependent on the good will of the States, instead of being self-contained and sufficient in itself. I want to admit that the influence that Western Australia exercised, even if she had had time for her delegates to take part in all the debates, was considerably weakened by the fact that our delegates went to the Convention as men elected, not by the people, but by the Parliament of this colony. Personally I should have preferred to have been sent to the people for election, and it has been my good fortune hitherto never to have needed to regret my confidence in the public to whom I have had to appeal. What can have induced the hon. member for North-East

Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) to suggest that this colony's delegates ought to stop here until they have had their crude ideas somewhat improved by the teachings of other members in this House? Will this House pardon me if I doubt whether the ideas of our delegates would be very much less crude after this education process than before it, and I say that after having listened to the ideas which have fallen from some hon. members in this House who have tried to instruct us. Men like Mr. Edmund Barton, who have made this question a life-long study, have been ready to admit that their ideas have been modified by the debates in the Convention of 1897, and that they have been induced to change the point of view from which they had approached the subject.

MR. GEORGE: Have they not something to learn?

MR. JAMES: I hope the member for the Murray will realise that Western Australia will have to learn much before its delegates could go the Convention to lead and not to learn. I am content to go with other delegates as students, and I think if they do that they will do more good for the colony, and more good for this great cause, than by rushing in and dogmatising in a debate on this great question. Not only was the Convention of 1897 an instruction to all of us who were there, and not only did we gain instruction from the debates which took place in the Convention of 1891, but the most cheering feature of the Convention of 1897 was the fact that all the members seemed to forget for the moment that they were delegates sent from various colonies, and to realise that they represented Australia; for, however trivial were the points under discussion, we invariably found that each speaker realised that he was above all things an Australian first and a representative of his colony in a lesser degree. When you find a body of men such as were there, coming from New South Wales and South Australia and Victoria, men who may not have had that wisdom which years have given to the hon. member for the Greenough (Mr. Pennefather), we are yet guilty of the crime of which I hope I shall always be guilty, even though I earn the contempt of the hon. member, guilty of enthusiasm in the direction of a great and honourable cause, when we find a

movement such as this that has drawn together such an array of men, which can fascinate men of all ages and all opinions and all humours, which can stir their enthusiasm and make them forget those narrow limitations of locality which rest on the member for the Greenough, then surely that movement carries on its face the one fact that is a standing evidence of its greatness and its worthiness. Such a body of men cannot be stirred to enthusiasm with childish objects, but above all things these men realise, as every true Australian will realise, that it is only by federation that those of us who regard this country as our home can attain that destiny to which it is entitled. A movement which attracts, and has attracted, such men as Sir Samuel Griffith (Queensland), Sir Henry Parkes (New South Wales), Sir Thomas Playford (South Australia), and others who were the leaders of the Convention of 1891, men who were not liable to be stirred with enthusiasm by ordinary objects—yes, and as one hon. member suggests, I will also mention Alfred Deakin of Victoria, a man whose enthusiasm in this noble cause I should be proud to imitate, even in a small degree—I say a movement which has drawn to it men of such various dispositions, men who were not children, though not so old as the hon. member (Mr. Pennefather) surely a movement which is able, amid the conflicting interests which arise in the various colonies, to attract and hold men like these, must be a movement which we may be sure is not conceived in that contemptible distrust and suspicion which some hon. members in this House want us to surround it with. I do hope hon. members will avoid that aspect of the question, and will not have those unworthy suspicions and those contemptible suggestions of improper motives. I hope they will believe that the sister colonies are as honest as we are, and not a bit worse than we are, and perhaps in some respects considerably better; and although I say that there is not one member of this House to whom I yield in my admiration and respect for federation, yet if we approach this question on the assumption that the delegates from the other colonies are playing the confidence trick with us, we had better not take any part in this movement for the federation of Australia. We have to

remember that we are endeavouring to build up the foundation of a nation, and we shall prove ourselves unworthy of the occasion if, instead of becoming nation-builders, we are becoming pawnbrokers. We are apt to become so, and I was sorry indeed to hear suggestions made in that direction. It is a mistake to imagine that these federal Conventions are simply for academical discussion. I have to protest most strongly against the idea that this question is only in the air and never coming nearer. If you look at the enormous strides made by the movement since the first Convention of 1891, you must see that this question is a living one, and not a dead question to be discussed in an academic manner. You must see that it has seized hold of the people, and you may be sure it is too great a question to be killed by the apathy even of this House. We have to bear in mind that it is impossible to approach the consideration of this question unless we realise above all things that federation of the colonies is going to make us Australians. I do not want to beat about on this point, for I know there are now men who are strongly attached to Australia, although not native-born Australians; but I say that this question cannot appeal to those who are not native-born Australians the same as it appeals to us, natives of Australia. For Australia is our home, and supplies to us those associations which only home can have; and because we want to have under the Southern Cross a central Government—something that we can all respect, something that will stand above these local differences and divisions, and in which we can realise the symbol of our unity and our greatness, therefore we should do all we can to promote this cause. We should constantly bear in mind that if we look at this question, not from the point of view of an Australian, but from the point of view of those narrow parochial ideas, we shall never attain federation. Hon. members must bear in mind that when we have federation we shall cease to be West Australians, or South Australians, or Victorians, but we shall realise there is something better worth living for; and if federation does not uplift and widen our views and sympathies, it will entirely fail in its object.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: We shall still govern ourselves.

MR. JAMES: I never hear of such an idea as that we shall have done with systems of local government, but I feel

MR. PENNEFATHER: It will be a sort of City Council.

MR. JAMES: Are the State Parliaments in America merely City Councils? I suppose the hon. member is aware that in America they have their various States, and in that country each State has its local government, and in that country, even since the States were federated, they have had dozens of new States added to the federation, and that many important problems have had to be faced, and the people there faced them just as bravely and successfully as we face problems here.

MR. VOSPER: By defying their Constitution.

MR. EWING: I thought the hon. member was not going to discuss this question.

MR. JAMES: The hon. member very often makes mistakes. As I understand it, the hon. member's objection to the American Constitution is that it is a written or human constitution. I suppose the hon. member knows that, with the exception of the British Constitution, every constitution in the world is written, I suppose he also knows that the American Constitution has been approved and held up by eminent authorities as an object of respect to all English-speaking people, and has actually been copied by the Swiss and Germanic federations. It is a little bit startling now, in 1897, to hear the inherent value of that constitution questioned by the member for North-East Coolgardie. I got up to speak just now simply because I could not sit down patiently, and hear a question like this treated by men who seem to approach it from the narrowest of all possible views, and who seem to forget that if the discussion of this great question does not widen our views, then we do not want the discussion at all. I protest emphatically against this narrow way of approaching the question, and also against the idea that we are to have a confederation. A confederation is the most exploded of all systems of government that the world has ever seen. That was the system they had in America; and turn to Bryce to see the result. They had a confederacy

in Switzerland, and the people could not exist under it; and the same thing happened in America and in Germany.

MR. VOSPER: Yes; but they had a confederacy in America before they had a federation.

MR. JAMES: Then I suppose, according to the argument of the hon. member for North-East Coolgardie, the only way to get federation for Australia would be first of all to have a war with England, as America did. I never knew a confederation that existed except for the purpose of defence against external oppression. Such was the confederation of America, of Germany, and of Switzerland. Then the hon. member for North-East Coolgardie, after telling us of the crude opinions of the delegates at the Adelaide Convention, gave us his ideas; and he wants us to adopt the exploded system of confederation, which has never yet been used in the way he suggests. To show the utter stupidity of all the hon. member says, he would have a confederation with a referendum. The two things cannot possibly exist together. Confederation is a partnership of States as States; and the referendum is government by the people as the people. If the hon. member's ideas were carried into effect, the result would be that New South Wales and Victoria might say: "We will have the railways now—the confederation will deal with the railways." And under the hon. member's scheme that proposal would have to be submitted to the people under the referendum. What then becomes of local government and State government? We should have unification then; and why does the hon. member not say so? If there are two things more totally opposed to each other than unification and confederation, I do not know them. All this shows the inconsistent bundle of contradictions which the hon. member suggests to us. As I have said, confederation is an exploded system; and, in any case, a referendum would entirely destroy confederation. But these are the two brilliant suggestions which the hon. member offers us. Then there is the further suggestion of the hon. member for the Murchison, who says that we do not want any federation—that under Responsible Government we have got on very well. But were not the arguments used

against the establishment of Responsible Government exactly the same as are now being used against federation? When are we going to progress? There are some questions—and most important questions—which can be dealt with more efficiently by a central government than by local government. We must all admit that. The question now is: What are those measures which could be more efficiently dealt with by a central government? This, however, is not a question of principle, but one of the details of the Bill, as to the powers to be conferred on the central authority. The nature of the federal authority will be determined by the Bill. But I should be sorry indeed to think that in this House we were going to depart from the principle of the American Constitution, of the Swiss Constitution, and of the Germanic Constitution, and to take up visionary ideas from the hon. member for North-East Coolgardie. I do not intend to discuss this matter of federation at the present stage. It can be thoroughly discussed when the Bill comes before the House; and I regard the present as only a little friendly debate. Federation is the one cardinal question before us at the present time. We can deal with general questions when we meet after the Sydney Convention. If this colony had not been represented at the Adelaide Convention, the position might perhaps have been entirely altered; but, having been represented at that Convention, how would it look if we did not take part in the Convention at Sydney? We are going to frame a Constitution; and members must not think, because we are not going to have federation at present, that the Constitution will not have its weight. Of the Constitution framed in 1891, about nine-tenths appear in the Bill of 1897; and you can be sure that a great number of the provisions which appear in the Bills of 1891 and 1897 will re-appear in future Bills. It is important that we should make our voice felt, although it may be a quiet, still voice. We may not have the eloquence which Providence has given to others; and we shall do very well if we devote our time to studying the question, and not to coming forward with visionary ideas. We can do our best in a humble way to gather ideas from men like Freeman, Dicey, and Bryce; and, if we look to those

authorities with due respect, we shall find them far safer guides than any individual member of this House. I hope members will discuss this question in an earnest spirit, and that Western Australia will be represented at the Sydney Convention. I am sorry to think we shall not have federation as early as I desire; but I do hope we shall be represented at every Convention likely to have a lasting influence on this great and important question.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): I must apologise, sir, for rising at so late an hour; but after the debate we have had it is only right that one member, at any rate, of the Government should say a few words which may be taken as in conclusion. I would like to thank the hon. member for East Perth for the kindly way in which he has referred to the action of the Government on the subject of federation. I am sure the hon. member need have offered no apology for his enthusiasm on the subject, if the result of that enthusiasm has been to produce the speech just delivered to the House. It must not be forgotten that this is not a new matter in the Parliament of Western Australia. In the first place, this colony took its part in the deliberations of the first Federal Convention in 1891, and we have been studying, or should have been studying, this question since that year. Further than that, and this concerns us more nearly at the present moment, so late as last year the Parliament of Western Australia passed a Bill—perhaps some new members may not be aware of the fact—expressing in the preamble that the colony was desirous of being represented at the Convention which was to meet shortly after last session, and which did meet in March of this year at Adelaide. That was the fitting opportunity the Government presented to the people and the Parliament of this colony to say “Yea” or “Nay” whether they would go hand in hand with the rest of Australia in order to thresh out a Bill to regulate the Commonwealth it was hoped would be established. [MR. ILLINGWORTH: They voted “Yea.”] I am astonished to find that hon. members who nominated themselves for seats at the Adelaide Convention, and were unsuccessful, seem on the present

occasion to desire to throw cold water on the federal movement. If those hon. members considered that Parliament made a mistake in passing the Enabling Bill, why did they not vote against that measure? I might mention the hon. member for Central Murchison.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I have not spoken on the subject of federation in this debate.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: And then there was the hon. member for Geraldton.

MR. SIMPSON: I was not in the colony.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: But you endeavoured to get nominated as a delegate; and without success.

MR. SIMPSON: I challenge the statement.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I submit that the action of those hon. members to whom I have referred largely discounts any arguments they may use against the federal movement at the present time.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I rise, sir, to say a word of explanation. At the request of the Attorney General I purposely avoided the question of federation when I spoke on the Address-in-Reply. I never said one word on the subject.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I say that Parliament having passed an Enabling Act, the hon. member was one who set himself up as a candidate for a seat at the Adelaide Convention.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: And the Ministry voted against me.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member knows very well I did not vote against him.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: You did not.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I told the hon. member I had voted for him. I am astonished that hon. members who were unsuccessful in getting a seat at the last Convention should now throw cold water on the movement, all because possibly they are not going to the Convention this time.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: You are not fair.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Some hon. members, in speaking during the debate, have complained that this session has been called too late. I would like to bring back to the recollection of these hon. members the facts to show them that the Government are not deserving of any

rebuke on that point. The circumstances this year have been most exceptional: that will be admitted. It was understood, if the Premier accepted the invitation of the Secretary of State for the Colonies and went to London to attend the jubilee celebrations, the usual annual session of this Parliament must be postponed; and I say without fear of contradiction, that that position was recognised, and members generally at that time accorded the fullest assent to the proposal that the Premier should go to London, and that Parliament should be postponed. And for that purpose they readily granted the necessary two months' supply for July and August, therefore it was not anticipated that Parliament should meet before this time. A very short time after the Premier left for London, it was reasonably considered that pressure could be brought on the Governments of the other colonies to put off the sitting of the Convention from September for a month. That was reasonably expected. No one thought that the other colonies would band together, as they have done, to resist any adjournment of that meeting, and it was only when we found that it was impossible to obtain an adjournment that we began to see the difficulty which presented itself, and that it would be most inconvenient for Parliament to meet here in the short time available. We admit that, but we must appeal to hon. members to make the best of the time we have at our disposal, and not, because of the shortness of the time, put more obstacles in the way than already exist. Therefore, I say, we are not open to the rebuke that we called Parliament together too late to consider this question. We have been driven into the position through circumstances over which we had no control. We thought the sitting of the Convention would have been put off from September until October, in which case we would have had plenty of time. I do not propose to say anything more on the main object for which Parliament has been called together. I would just remind hon. members that this is a special session called together to deal only with a special subject. There will be ample opportunity in a short time of speaking on every conceivable subject under the sun. A programme will then be placed before hon. mem-

bers, in which even the member for the Swan (Mr. Ewing) will find a question of policy. I cannot help noting with great satisfaction one of the first expressions which fell from the hon. member for Central Murchison, whom I may regard as the leader of the goldfields party, and the remark has been repeated by nearly every member who has spoken during the debate. He said the representatives of the goldfield constituencies were glad to see the settlement which was proceeding on the land; it was of great importance to them, as they wished to draw their supplies for the fields from our own lands. To the Ministry the sentiment expressed by the goldfields members in regard to the importance of the agricultural interests of the colony is most cheering, and I wish to acknowledge it. I do not propose to follow anything which hon. members have said in regard to the finances. A good deal will be said on that subject on another occasion by the Treasurer. But it has been said by one hon. member that our loans had failed for two reasons, one of which was the Coolgardie water supply scheme. We have done something for the goldfields in the past, and it is not likely the Government will abandon them now. When the Coolgardie water scheme was before Parliament, it was carried without a division in both Houses; and it is absurd to think the Government have any intention of abandoning the scheme at the present moment. All the difficulties—I do not know of any—suggested by irresponsible newspaper writers are put down by the hon. member to the Coolgardie water scheme. Possibly he has forgotten that he would like to have a Murchison water scheme.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: £30,000 is a very different amount.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: If a water scheme is good for the Murchison for £30,000, it is good for Coolgardie. I do not wish to detain the House, but before I sit down there is one question that has been referred to, and it is only right I should make reference to it before concluding. The hon. member for North-East Coolgardie drew attention to the action of a magistrate at Fremantle on a recent occasion. The House may naturally expect me to say something on the subject: if not, I will ask the House to excuse me for referring to the matter.

I do not complain of the manner in which the hon. member presented the subject to the House, or the language he used in doing so. The hon. member is quite right, feeling as he does, to allude to this matter, and of course for anything I do or any Minister does, we are amenable to public opinion. I ask the House to recollect who the magistrate was whose sentence has been referred to. He is one of the oldest public officers in the colony; he has held the position of resident magistrate for over a quarter of a century, and he is one of the visiting justices of the prison. Does the hon. member think that the order and discipline of a prison is lightly to be interfered with and the officers weakened by the weak-kneed interference of a Minister? I do not conceive that to be the duty of a Minister. The duty I conceived was to obtain the particulars of the case, learn all about it, the state of the prison, how the thing arose, and the likely effect it would have on the discipline of the prison and the prisoners, to interfere with the sentence, and on the other hand, the effect that confirming the sentence would have. After receiving the magistrate's report I was driven to the irresistible conclusion that it was my duty to confirm the sentence and in no way to interfere with it. Knowing what I do of the character of the man, it would have been unjustifiable interference with a magistrate to allow myself to step in in any way. No doubt the sentiments which are held by the hon. member for North-East Coolgardie are worthy of every respect, and I have nothing to say against the feelings which prompted him to make the representations he did. I ask him to give me equal credit for believing I did what I thought to be honestly my duty. Having said so much, I wish to pass from the question. This session being a special one, as I said, called for the one purpose of considering the Commonwealth Bill, I do not, at this moment, wish to lengthen the debate. Of course, with the question of federation there is the other question referred to in the Speech, that of finance, of which the House will hear something from the Treasurer hereafter. Before I conclude, I wish on behalf of myself and the Government, to add our congratulations to those so freely expressed in the House, on the appointment of yourself, sir, to the chair. I think the

House is to be congratulated on the accession of the members who have come here to represent the goldfields. I am sure the tone and temper of the debate is in no way behind the debates of the past. I am sure the debating power of the House has been considerably increased. We welcome the members from the goldfields most heartily, and we do not hide from ourselves the fact that on the matter of this great industry we shall have more light than it has been our privilege to have in the past; and, consequently, we shall have that light reflected on the actions of the Government which will continue in the future, perhaps more effectively, to render assistance to that industry, which at least we have striven to do in the past.

On the motion of MR. LEAKE, the debate was adjourned till the next sitting.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE BALL-ROOM EXPENDITURE.

MR. SIMPSON (resuming the debate on the motion by Mr. George on the subject of the Government House ball-room), said: I would like to explain that I only moved the adjournment of this debate in order that the Director of Public Works might have the opportunity of being present to explain the matter.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. F. H. Piessé): I should think it would satisfy the hon. member for the Murray with regard to the Government House ball-room if I inform him that plans have been prepared for the additions, which would include the ball-room and immediate accessories; but, as the tenders have not been invited in sufficient time to enable me to take advantage of the vote obtained last year, the Government have decided to postpone this matter until the vote is again placed before the House, so that the House will have an opportunity of dealing with the question. Consequently I take it that the object of the hon. member in asking that the matter might be postponed has been gained by the promise which I now make, that no further attempt will be made to push this matter forward until a fresh vote is taken.

MR. W. J. GEORGE: The assurance is quite good enough for me, and I only hope that the papers will be laid on the

table, so that hon. members can consult them.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I move that the House at its rising adjourn till 4.30 p.m. to-morrow. If we are to be again represented at the Convention, it will be necessary for us to use all the expedition that is possible to enable us to get to Sydney in time. I think it may be impossible to get away next week. The week after would not be altogether too late. There are sure to be some preliminaries to settle after the Convention meets again. If this meets with the views of hon. members—of course I would not desire to press it unless it does—I beg to move that the House at its rising adjourn till 4.30 p.m. to-morrow.

MR. LEAKE: Have we to suspend the Standing Orders?

THE SPEAKER: That could be done by a motion.

MR. GEORGE: If the right hon. gentleman wishes to facilitate business, let him adjourn till Monday next; but at the tail-end of the week, men engaged in business have their mail to attend to and other necessary matters in connection with the winding up of their weekly business. It is unreasonable to spring this on us at so short a notice.

Motion put and passed.

The House adjourned accordingly at 10.35 p.m., until the next day.

Legislative Council,

Friday, 20th August, 1897.

Presentation of Address-in-Reply—Question: Goldfields Regulations—Question: Floggings in Fremantle Gaol—Police Act Amendment Bill: first reading—Hainault Gold Mine, Limited, Bill: first reading—Goldfields New Regulations: Commonwealth Bill: second day's debate; in Committee—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton) took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

PRESENTATION OF ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

At twenty-five minutes to 5 o'clock the Council adjourned to present to the Governor the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's Speech, and, members having returned,

THE PRESIDENT reported that the Address adopted by the Council on the 18th inst. had been presented to His Excellency, and that His Excellency had been pleased to make the following reply:—

MR. PRESIDENT AND HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL:

I thank you for your Address-in-Reply to the Speech with which I opened Parliament, and for the assurance that you will give the most careful consideration to all questions that may be submitted to you, so that your labours may tend to beneficial results and the welfare of this colony.

Government House, Perth, 20th August, 1897.

QUESTION—GOLDFIELDS REGULATIONS.

HON. A. H. HENNING, in accordance with notice, asked the Minister of Mines whether it was his intention to lay before the Council the regulations made pursuant to Section 99 of "The Goldfields Act, 1895."

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom) replied that it was.

QUESTION—FLOGGINGS IN FREMANTLE GAOL.

HON. R. S. HAYNES, in accordance with notice, asked the Minister of Mines:—1. What number of floggings have been administered in the Fremantle Gaol during the last 12 months? 2. The name of the Magistrate by whom such floggings were ordered? 3. The offences for which the same were given?

THE MINISTER OF MINES replied as follows:—1. Five. 2. Mr. Fairbairn. 3. (a) Assaulting a warder; (b) Refusing to work; (c) Absconding; (d) Escaping from prison.