

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

### SIXTH SESSION OF THE THIRD PARLIAMENT.

#### OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

*The Sixth Session of the Third Parliament under Responsible Government was convened for the despatch of business on the 15th August, 1900.*

*Parliament was opened by His Excellency the Administrator.*

#### **Legislative Council,**

*Wednesday, 15th August, 1900.*

Opening of Parliament—The Administrator's Speech—Game Act Amendment Bill, first reading—Papers presented—Address in reply to the Administrator's Speech, debate adjourned—Adjournment.

#### OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

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

#### THE ADMINISTRATOR'S SPEECH.

HIS EXCELLENCY, Sir Alexander Campbell Onslow, Kt., entered the Council Chamber, and the members of the Legislative Assembly having also attended in the Chamber, obediently to summons, His Excellency delivered the following speech:—

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

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

I have pleasure in meeting you again for the despatch of public business.

2. Owing to the lamented death of His Royal Highness the Duke of Saxe-

Coburg and Gotha, the second son of Her Majesty the Queen, better known in Australia as Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, you will be asked to adopt addresses to Her Majesty expressing the sympathy of the people of this Colony with Her Majesty, the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, and the Royal Family, in the great sorrow and bereavement which they have sustained.

3. The war in South Africa is gradually but surely being brought to a successful termination, and it is gratifying to know that the troops sent from this Colony have distinguished themselves and upheld the honour and credit of the Colony. It is a matter of great sorrow and regret that several of our troops have lost their lives, and amongst them Major Moor, the brave Commanding Officer of the First Western Australian Contingent, after all the arduous work of the campaign had almost been completed.

4. The question as to whether this Colony should join the Australian Commonwealth was submitted to a referendum of the people on 31st July, and the result has been a decisive verdict in favour of union. Addresses to Her Majesty the Queen, praying that Western Australia may be admitted as an original State of the Commonwealth, will be submitted to you for adoption, and you will also be asked to make provision for the division of the Colony into Electorates,

for the purpose of electing the members of the House of Representatives for the Federal Parliament.

5. The Imperial Government has given the necessary directions, in accordance with the terms of the existing mail contracts, to the Peninsular & Oriental and Orient Steamship Companies to make Fremantle a port of call for their mail steamers in future. This change has been for many years contemplated, and was one of the main objects in undertaking at Fremantle the extensive harbour works which are now nearing completion. It is gratifying that they are so far advanced as to enable these magnificent passenger steamers to call at the principal port of the Colony, and the R.M.S. "Ormuz" was the first steamer of the Orient Company to berth alongside the South Quay at Fremantle, on the 13th inst.

6. The Coolgardie Water Scheme is progressing satisfactorily. The concrete dam across the Helena River will be completed about the end of June next year; already 24,000 pipes, equal to a length of 127 miles, have been made out of the 67,000 required for the whole work, and 15,000 have been distributed along the pipe line. It is estimated that in twelve months' time the whole of the pipes will be made and distributed; about a quarter of the pipes will be laid, the minor reservoirs at the pumping stations will be in hand, and the pumping machinery, which is to cost about £240,000, will be in course of erection. The date of the completion of this great national work is therefore not far distant.

7. The gold production continues to be satisfactory. The export for the last financial year was valued at £6,431,063, and the total value of gold already produced in the Colony is valued at £20,000,000 sterling. The Royal Mint has already coined and issued 1,782,864 sovereigns. The value of this institution is being gradually realised by the gold-mining companies, as it becomes more widely known that bullion can be locally treated more cheaply than by exporting it, and as a consequence the Mint is steadily attracting more gold.

8. The Paris Exhibition, at which this Colony is represented, has given a great opportunity for the display of our auriferous and other mineral products, as well as of our timber, agricultural, and

other resources. The exhibit of gold and gold-bearing ores has probably never before been surpassed. It may confidently be hoped that the result will be of great benefit in making known throughout the world the richness and value of the natural productions of the Colony. The thanks of the country are due to the Commissioners appointed to arrange for the representation of Western Australia at the Exhibition, as the whole responsibility was undertaken by them, and their efforts have resulted in complete success.

9. The Eastern Extension Telegraph Company has decided to land a cable near Fremantle, and a site for the landing of the cable and the erection of suitable buildings has been reserved for the purpose. This cable from England, *via* the Cape of Good Hope, Mauritius, and the Keeling Islands, to Fremantle, will provide an additional means of communication, which must be of advantage to the Colony and the whole of Australia.

10. The Coal industry at the Collie already supports a large community, and supplies almost exclusively the coal used on the Government Railways. The Tin-fields at Greenbushes are being developed, and the erection of smelting works has stimulated the industry. The Timber industry shows signs of improvement, and during the last year the export was valued at £553,198.

11. The Government Railways have had a successful financial year, although during last summer the scarcity of water between Northam and Menzies proved a serious difficulty, and necessitated a large expenditure. To prevent a recurrence of the difficulty to the same extent a large plant, capable of condensing 100,000 gallons a day, has been erected at Coolgardie at a cost of £10,000. The Coolgardie-Kalgoorlie Railway and the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Railway are being duplicated. Many other important works have been carried out, and better facilities for traffic and greater conveniences for the public have been provided all over the Railway system. The increase of traffic has necessitated the ordering of a large number of locomotives and other rolling stock.

12. During the year attention has been given to providing increased shipping facilities at the various ports. The Fremantle Harbour Works have been in

full progress. At Ashburton a new ocean jetty has been completed. At Bunbury the jetty has been widened and strengthened, and an additional length of 400 feet is in hand. At Busselton the jetty has been strengthened and made suitable for the use of a locomotive. The Albany Town Jetty has been lengthened 450 feet. Tramways from the jetty to the township at Carnarvon and Onslow are being made, and extensions of the jetties at Derby and Dongara are in progress. A new light-house has been erected at Bathurst Point, on Rottnest Island. A new leading light on Fish Rock, near Fremantle, has been ordered, and the work of preparing the foundations will be commenced at once. A jetty about 500 feet long has been constructed on the North side of the Fremantle Inner Harbour to accommodate the mail steamers in boisterous weather, and has been connected with the railway system. New lighthouse towers are about to be placed at Breaksea and Bunbury to carry new and more powerful lights. The time-ball apparatus at Fremantle is being erected, the special signalling wire from the Observatory at Perth being already completed.

13. The Water Supply Department on the Coolgardie, Murchison, and Pilbarra Goldfields has maintained the numerous works completed in previous years, and 30 additional wells have been either sunk or deepened. A new Water Service Tank at Norseman has been completed and roofed in. Bulong and Broad Arrow Tanks are being asphalted to prevent leakage. At seven of the existing tanks 225 miles of drains have been cut within catchment areas. 3,041 feet of hand bores have been put down in order to determine the existence of water carrying strata at reasonable depths for well-sinking. 64 miles of roads have been opened for traffic. A contract has been let for an artesian bore at Yardarino, on the Irwin (which is in progress), and tenders have been received for another bore near Wyndham. The Dongara bore for coal and water was continued to a depth of 2,111ft., but without any material results. The Dardanup bore was carried down to a depth of 1,032ft., but no good result obtained. At Moora four bores have been put down to an aggregate depth of 576ft., but salt water was struck

in every instance. The construction of a Reservoir at Newcastle is now in progress.

14. The Public Buildings provided for in the Estimates were considerably more numerous than in the preceding year. Those in progress at the beginning of the last financial year have all been completed. They comprise:—Police Stations at Colliemfields, East Fremantle, Leonora, and Mt. Malcolm; Artillery Gun Shed at Perth; Police Courts at Boulder and Colliemfields; Post Offices at Abbott's, Burbanks, Mandurah, Mt. Malcolm, Mt. Morgans, Tuckanarra, and Yarloop; Warden's Court at Laverton, and extension of Wardens' Offices at Collie, Greenbushes, and Donnybrook; new Schools at Boyup, Burbanks, Clackline, Colliemfields, Dandalup, Greenbushes, Kalgoorlie, Kojonup, Lennonville, Mandurah, Moorambiue, Tammin, Wagin, Wedgecarrup, and West Coolup; additions to the Schools at Boulder, Cannington, Cookernup, Cottesloe, Donnybrook, Fremantle, Guildford, Jarrahdale, Menzies, Newcastle, Norseman, Perth (Central), Perth (East), Picton, Plympton, and Woodville; School Quarters at Baker's Hill, Mt. Barker, and York; Public Offices at Kalgoorlie; new Assaying Offices at the Royal Mint; and the erection of a Plague Hospital and additions to Quarantine Station at Woodman's Point. The principal buildings in progress are:—Post Offices, Drakesbrook and South Perth; Telephone Exchange, Fremantle; Warden's Quarters, Peak Hill; Police Station, Greenbushes; Caretaker's Quarters, Point Walter; Girls' and Infants' School, Fremantle; new Infants' School, North Fremantle; Infants' School, Highgate; School additions, Northam; School Quarters, Narrogin; additional Offices in the Perth Government Buildings; and additions to the Legislative Council and to the General Post Office. Tenders have been called for the new Supreme Court at Perth; the Metropolitan Police Station and Stables; the Training College for Teachers, Claremont; Police Stations, Lake Way and Mt. Morgans; Post Offices, Mt. Morgans and Mt. Sir Samuel; and additions to Beaconsfield School.

15. The telegraph system has been extended during the year from Mt. Margaret to Laverton (31 miles); from Nannine to Star of the East (18 miles);

from Greenough to Walkaway (5 miles) ; and a line is nearly completed from Lawlers to Lake Way, a distance of 108 miles. Nine new telegraph stations have also been opened.

16. Owing to the fact that a dissolution of the existing Legislative Assembly will shortly take place in order that Members may be elected under the extended franchise of the Constitution Act passed last Session, my Ministers do not propose to recommend for your consideration the construction of many new works of magnitude, more especially as there are a considerable number of authorised works already in hand. My Ministers hope, however, that it will be possible to consult you in regard to providing a Permanent Water Supply for the whole of the Metropolitan Districts, including Fremantle and Guildford ; in regard to matters connected with the further construction of Railways in the near future, and also the improvement of the defences of the Colony. It is hoped that the Dock at Fremantle will soon be commenced.

17. My Ministers feel justified, owing to the increase in the development of the Goldfields at Nannine and its neighbourhood, and also at Peak Hill and other places in its vicinity, in recommending the extension of the Railway from Cue to Nannine, and you will be asked to make provision on the Loan Estimates for this work to the extent of the Loan funds available. The authority of Parliament to construct this Railway was obtained in 1896, but hitherto it has not been considered advisable to carry out the work. A Bill authorising the construction of a Railway from Coolgardie to Norseman, which last session received the assent of the Legislative Assembly, but was rejected by the Legislative Council, will be again submitted for your consideration.

18. The Leonora Railway line has been surveyed, and the survey is being extended to Laverton. The railway will be commenced as soon as rails arrive from London. The Goomalling Railway is in hand. The duplication of the Boulder Railway is in progress, and a considerable section of the Yilgarn Railway has been re-laid with heavier rails at a cost of £55,000. It is intended to continue this work to Coolgardie and

Kalgoorlie as quickly as possible, as the advantages are apparent not only in the haulage of heavier loads, but also in the greater speed and safety attained.

19. It is proposed to submit to you, for consideration, Bills dealing with the following subjects :—Municipalities, Public Service, Conciliation and Arbitration in regard to Industrial Disputes, Drainage of Rural Land, Distillation, Stamps, Health, Carriage of Mails on Private Railways, and other measures of importance, including the Repeal of the Customs Duties on Imported Stock and Frozen Meat.

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

20. The Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure will be submitted to you as soon as possible, and every endeavour will be made to secure economy in the administration. I am glad to inform you that the financial position has much improved during the past year, and the deficit of £247,349, which existed on 30th June, 1899, was converted into a credit balance of £12,371 on the 30th June, 1900. This satisfactory result has been obtained by the increase of the Revenue and by economy in the Expenditure.

21. Land settlement under our liberal land laws continues to progress, and from the largely increased area under cultivation it is certain that our home market will soon be fully supplied by local producers. My Ministers are, however, of opinion that every effort should continue to be made to encourage immigration and to advance permanent settlement. With so much land available, it is only the sparseness of the farming population which prevents us from being exporters rather than importers of agricultural produce. The large area of good land between Bridgetown and Albany, which has an excellent climate and an abundant rainfall, is capable of supporting a large agricultural population, and my Ministers propose to have this district carefully examined in the hope that it may soon be possible to bring it within the reach of the railway system of the colony. The action of the Midland Railway Company in leaving their lands unimproved and unused, except for pastoral purposes, has greatly retarded agricultural production.

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

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

22. The present season is one of the best we have experienced for years, and the prospects of the agriculturists and pastoralists are excellent, good prices being obtainable for stock as well as for all kinds of agricultural produce. The population is gradually but surely increasing, and the manufacturing and producing industries are progressing. The record of the advancement of the Colony during its first ten years of self-government should inspire us with hope and confidence in the future, and it is eminently satisfactory that Western Australia will be able to enter the Australian Commonwealth in a thoroughly solvent and flourishing condition, desiring nothing but that to which she is entitled, or which is necessary for the good of the whole Australian people.

23. I leave you to your important duties, and I pray that the Almighty may guide you in all your deliberations.

24. I now declare this Session open.

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

#### GAME ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Randell): In accordance with custom, and with a view to asserting the privileges of this honourable House to initiate legislation, I move for leave to introduce a Bill entitled "an Act to amend the Game Act 1892."

Bill introduced, and read a first time.

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: 1, Statement of the operations of the London Agency for the year 1899. 2, Reports (annual) of Lands and Surveys; 3, Agricultural Bank; 4, Chief Inspector of Stock; 5, Gaols and Prisons; 6, Fremantle Lunatic Asylum; 7, Superintendent of Public Charities and Inspector of Industrial and Reformatory Schools;

8, Victoria Public Library; 9, Museum and Art Gallery; 10, Land Titles Department.

Ordered to lie on the table.

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY TO THE ADMINISTRATOR'S SPEECH

HON. M. L. MOSS (West Province) said: Mr. President, I rise to propose the following motion:—

To His Excellency Sir Alexander Campbell Onslow, Knight, Chief Justice, Administrator of the Government in and over the Colony of Western Australia and its dependencies, etc., etc., etc.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

We, the Members of the Legislative Council in Parliament assembled, desire to assure you of our loyalty and devotion to our Most Gracious Sovereign. We beg to thank Your Excellency for the Speech which you have addressed to Parliament. It will be our endeavour to carefully consider the matters mentioned in the Speech, and all others that may be submitted to us, and we join with Your Excellency in the hope that the Almighty may so guide our deliberations that permanent good may result.

To compress into anything like a short speech the multitude of matters dealt with in the Address that has just been read by His Excellency the Administrator, would indeed be very difficult, and I cannot hope to do more in the short time at my disposal than deal with some of the subjects of which the Speech treats. Those subjects may, I think, be grouped under three heads. There are matters affecting the nation at large, matters affecting the Australian people, and matters dealing with this colony of Western Australia. The Colonial Secretary has read to us the Address which it is proposed to present to Her Majesty on her recent bereavement. The hearts of the people in Western Australia, as those of the people in other parts of the Empire, beat sympathetically for Her Majesty in the misfortune which has befallen the Royal Family. So far as the late Prince is concerned, I think he was the first member of the Royal Family to set foot in Australia, and on that account alone it is fitting that the Parliament of this colony should, in an appropriate way, offer condolence to the Queen in the bereavement which she has sustained. The war in South Africa, fortunately, is coming to a termination. I presume

that throughout the length and breadth of the British Empire, none will for a moment doubt the righteousness of that war. It is a matter of sincere regret that so many valuable lives have been lost, but it must not be forgotten that the war has been waged in the interest of giving liberty to thousands of people, and placing those who are living in South Africa—Boer and Briton alike—on a footing of equality. I have no doubt that on the termination of that struggle wise counsels will prevail there, and that those who are opposed to the British forces in South Africa will have fair-play meted out to them. It will be an object lesson to the world that a Britisher, wherever he may be, must receive fair-play, and I do not doubt for one moment that the treatment meted out to the Boer at the close of those hostilities will bring no discredit upon the British arms or the British nation. One matter dealt with in the Speech is of considerable importance to this colony and the nation at large: I refer to the laying of an all-British cable; and it is gratifying to all of us that the cable will come within such a short distance of the centre of this colony. A cable having its stations entirely on British ground will be beneficial to the nation at large and to this country. The 31st of July witnessed a vote on the great question of Australian federation. If public men in this colony had any doubt whatever as to the right of sending the Commonwealth Bill to the people, that doubt must have been absolutely dispelled by the enormous majority which polled in favour of federation. I hope it will never be said again that the question of federation was a question of the coastal districts against the goldfields, for the result of that poll has demonstrated clearly that a very large majority of the people in the settled portions of this colony voted in favour of the measure; so there can be no doubt that the adoption of the address to the Queen, of which the Colonial Secretary has given notice, is a mere formality, for I think no member of Parliament in either House would, in face of the overwhelming vote that has been taken, dare to regard it as anything more. I hope that all we shall concern ourselves about now is the division of the colony into such districts that the representation in the House of Representatives may be

consistent with the interests of the colony. It is pleasing to me to know that the Government have thought fit to take advantage of the provision in the Commonwealth Act enabling the colony to be divided into electorates for this purpose. The representation for the Senate is obtained by the vote of the whole colony as one constituency. It would have been in the highest degree unwise, there being a uniform franchise, for the House of Representatives and the Senate to have been a duplicate of each other. It is in the best interest of the people that the colony should be divided for the elections to the House of Representatives, and I hope the Government, in introducing the measure, will see that the various interests of the colony are well represented. It is exceedingly gratifying, not only to the House but to the country as a whole, to find that the tremendous deficit with which the financial year ended on the 30th June, 1899, namely £247,349, has been converted into a surplus of £12,000 odd. Practically the operations of the year have resulted in over a quarter of a million surplus. Gratifying however as that is, it does appear to me that the amount of revenue received from the people is far too much. If a colony with 170,000 to 180,000 people can show a profit of over a quarter of a million pounds in twelve months, it seems to me that some of the burdens pressing on the people and the industries of the colony should be repealed. Since the passing of the Dividend Duty Act, I have been strongly of opinion that it was a piece of legislation which works a great injustice on the community: it is a tax on every industry which seeks for its purpose the protection of the Companies Act. Every incorporated mercantile concern in the colony is bound to pay a heavy income tax, whereas the same class of business carried on under a firm's name and unincorporated escapes paying duty. Would it not be wise for the Government to consider whether the Act has not outlived its usefulness? I doubt if much money has been raised by this Act since it came into operation, but I am certain that it has been productive of heart-burnings in the community. The Act was avowedly introduced for the purpose of catching hold of the gold-mining companies, but it has placed trading concerns and mercantile firms

which are incorporated in a very unfair position to other trading concerns not incorporated. I hope the Government will see the necessity of dealing with the early repeal of the Act. It must be very gratifying to the country at large that after ten years of fighting we are to get rid of the stock tax and the duty on frozen meat; but with a due regard to the agricultural industry in the colony, and with a desire to keep the compact practically entered into with the agriculturists in asking them to join the federal bond, it may be well for the Government to consider whether, after the first year of entering the federation, it will not be wise to repeal all further food duties. If the Government decide on doing that, I do not think any great hardship will be done to the farming community. I notice, by perusing some statistics published by the Bureau of Agriculture, that during the past year the country produced over a million bushels of wheat, and we are led to suppose by the Bureau of Agriculture and by reading the Speech that in a short time the colony will be able to produce sufficient foodstuffs for our own requirements; in fact the Speech goes further, and states that in a short time the colony will be exporting these things. In these circumstances no very great gain will be obtained by keeping high protective duties on the necessities of life. When the country can produce enough for our requirements, and bearing in mind that the colony is able by the year's operations to save over a quarter of a million of money, the Government should seriously take into their consideration the repeal of both the measures alluded to. One exceedingly unsatisfactory portion of the Speech is that relating to the Mint. This establishment has been worked to very great disadvantage, and there must certainly be a screw loose somewhere when one refers to that paragraph of the Speech which shows that over six million pounds' worth of gold was extracted from the earth last year, but only a little over a million pounds' worth was minted at the Mint. I am strongly of opinion that the institution should be self-supporting, and I think the Government should take some steps to see if this wrong cannot be remedied. Opposed as I am to any kind of class taxation, I would impose a tax on all gold not minted at the Mint. I

would not like to speak with any degree of accuracy of the institution, but I know the amount originally allocated for the construction of the Mint was greatly exceeded; there is a large impost on the people to keep up the institution; and I think the mining industry and those concerned in turning gold into sovereigns should be compelled to support the local institution. I hope the Government are not satisfied with what is stated in paragraph 7 of the Speech as to the work the Mint has done, but will take into consideration the making a drastic change as to management. In looking at the accounts of this colony, I find the revenue for the last financial year approximated something like £3,000,000, and of that amount over £1,000,000 was the result of the operations of the Railway Department. I have always held, and I will make the statement again, that I cannot by any means see why the operations of the Railway Department do not come under the purview of the Auditor General of the colony. There are a large number of public officers in the Railway Department, and these officers should be placed under the Auditor General and work under his supervision. Here is a department, receiving a million of money, whose operations do not come under the purview of the Government Auditor, and the dealings of this department are adversely commented upon throughout the colony. I think it is expedient and advisable to the first and last degree that the operations of this department should be audited by the Auditor General. As far as I am concerned, but without wishing to go into the matter now—I hope to do so before the session closes and to go into details—I think the matter of such supreme importance affecting the policy of that department, that the Government should not delay an instant in effecting this necessary reform.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I rise to point out that the hon. gentleman is making a mistake as to the audit. The Railway Department, like every other department, have their accounts audited by the Auditor General at the present time, and the accounts always have been so audited.

HON. M. L. MOSS: I think I know what I am saying. There are a number

of officers who audit the railway accounts, and the final result goes to the Audit Department. That is not what I want: I want the accounts audited in the same way as the accounts of other departments are audited. Pre-eminent among the public works of the colony, the Fremantle Harbour Works stand out in bold relief, and I think the Fremantle Harbour Works are a great monument to the skill of the Engineer-in-Chief of the colony. Those who have watched that work critically must be perfectly satisfied that it is a successful work, and no doubt it will operate very beneficially for this country at large. The Speech has referred us to the fact of the calling of the Orient steamer "Ormuz" at the port a few days ago. We cannot altogether realise the benefit which the colony will derive by the calling of the mail steamers at this port of the colony. It is a great pleasure to me to notice the reference in the Speech to the dock. I think it would be rather a weak spot in the programme of the Government if that dock were not constructed with all due speed. I wish, however, the reference to the dock had been in a little more emphatic terms. The Government might have told us that they would proceed with the work without delay, and not merely express the hope that the work would be commenced soon. There is no more pressing work demanding the attention of the authorities, and I hope both in this place and in another place this work will be pressed forward with that vigour and energy that its importance demands. The Coolgardie Water Works are progressing rapidly. Until I read the Speech, I little thought that over 100 miles of pipes were in position. I have not all along been one of the most ardent supporters of the scheme; I have felt regret that the Government ever introduced it; but at present it would be idle for anyone to do other than put a shoulder to the wheel and have the work completed. All I have to say in regard to the scheme is that when the work is completed I hope it will carry out all that is expected of it. I have no doubt the construction is in able hands; the work is undoubtedly and unquestionably an expensive one, and I hope it will prove of benefit to the community at large. So far as the metropolitan area is concerned, we are promised a good supply

of water; and I do hope when the Government expend the public funds in this direction the control of the works from the outset will be managed by an elective board. The operations of the Perth Waterworks Board up to the present cannot be said to have been an unqualified success. The importance of placing national concerns of this kind under proper control cannot be over-estimated. I hope the Colonial Secretary will be an advocate for the course I am suggesting being carried out in the Bill which the Speech outlines. When we refer to the Speech further on we find the Government now propose, practically, more borrowing for the construction of further public works. I think it will behove the Parliament of the country to be exceedingly cautious as to the carrying out of further public works. The debt of the colony at the present time approximates nearly twelve million pounds, and before further public works of an extensive nature are undertaken the Government should be satisfied that the works are reproductive and necessary for the proper development of the colony. I think the country may well wait a little while, until the population at any rate increases, before the debt of this colony is very much added to. I am sorry to say we in this colony compare very unfavourably with the other colonies as to the debt per head of the population; and although I am not one of those anxious to see the colony stand still, we must be perfectly satisfied, at all events I must be perfectly satisfied, before I support further loan measures, that the works are necessary and will be reproductive within a very reasonable space of time. Although I urge this caution, it is a matter of regret to me that there has been such great delay about the erection of a Supreme Court building. Why the tenders have been postponed again, until October, I am at a loss to understand. It is a positive disgrace to this country that while the Government can spend tens of thousands of pounds in erecting courthouses in a place like Newcastle and other parts of the colony, the business of the Supreme Court has to be carried on in a barn. Time after time their honours, the Judges of the Supreme Court, have complained of the accommodation. Important law suits are carried on there, and the hum and



buzz going on are a positive disgrace to the country.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: The Judges have to adjourn, sometimes.

HON. M. L. MOSS: The tenders have been postponed until October. If the Government do not then accept tenders for the erection of a building, they will be perpetuating a public scandal and disgrace to the colony. I am glad they have thought the matter sufficiently important to include it in the Speech, and I hope they will consider it equally important to have the work carried out within a reasonable time. Whether the Attorney General's Department is responsible for this delay or not, I cannot say; but there is another thing largely affecting the public which I think it my duty to mention in my place here. Why is it that the Circuit Courts Act passed in 1897—something like three years ago—has been allowed to remain a dead letter? From a perusal of the list of cases entered in the Supreme Court, I know that a vast number of these cases come from the goldfields, and the expense entailed upon litigants in having to attend here as witnesses is nothing short of another scandal. I have had personal experience of the delays the public are subjected to, and the expense to which they are put in connection with this matter. I may be told that the alteration I desire necessitates the appointment of a fourth Judge; but that is not so. The Act provides for the appointment of a Commissioner, and the congested state of these lists in Perth would not take place if advantage were taken of that statute. Indeed, to me it is an extraordinary state of affairs that since 1897 the will of Parliament on this important matter has been absolutely set at defiance. It is gratifying, however, to be able to give unstinted praise to Mr. Throssell and the Lands Department for what has been done in connection with the administration of that department. I find from a perusal of statistics, to which I am not going to refer on this occasion, that the amount of land settlement which has taken place in this colony during the last two years is wonderful. With the liberal land laws, the advantage of the Agricultural Bank, and the benefit of the magnificent market on the goldfields that is offered to the producer, we find that

land settlement is proceeding with great rapidity. No one more than myself will regard the mining industry as of supreme importance to this colony; but gold mining will never make a community a permanent and prosperous one. Gold mining will bring population to the colony, but if we have not a live Minister in charge of the Lands Department, making the best of the opportunity afforded to him of putting a permanent population on the land, that opportunity may not come again. It is gratifying in the extreme to me to think that in Mr. Throssell, the gentleman controlling that department, we have a capable Minister of Lands, who has done good work for the country. One thing I did expect to see in the Speech, and that is a reference to what has been engaging considerable public attention in this country for some time. I allude to the recognition of the Railway Associations of this colony. I have never understood why it is that these associations should not be officially recognised by the Government. I have never yet heard it mooted or suggested for one moment that the Government would refuse to recognise a union such as the Fremantle or Perth Chamber of Commerce; and a Railway Association is no more a union to protect its interests than Chambers of Commerce and other associations in the colony are unions to protect the various industries they represent. [A MEMBER: Question?] I have no doubt of it. There is no question about it. Is the absence of official recognition of the Railway Associations the fault of the Minister controlling the Railway Department?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: There is no Minister.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Is it a fact that the gentleman occupying the position of General Manager of Railways in this colony has so dominated the Minister on this important question that the Minister has not been able to act as a free lance in the matter?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: He has resigned.

HON. M. L. MOSS: If that is the cause of Mr. Piesso's resignation, all I can say is I hope his successor in office will be more alive to the justice and importance of giving to this body of men throughout the colony the same recognition and support as other associations

in different matters receive at the hands of the authorities. We are promised, as part of the projected legislation of the session, a Bill dealing with boards of conciliation and arbitration for industrial disputes. The system of arbitration among private individuals has always been recognised as something of importance. In transactions between man and man we generally find incorporated in the document a provision that there shall be power to refer disputes to arbitration. Why? Because arbitration has always been regarded as a speedier, easier, and more amicable way of settling disputes than referring to litigation.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: Not much cheaper.

HON. M. L. MOSS: I do not know what my friend's experience of that is. We are promised that, as far as industrial disputes are concerned, we are to have a Bill so that these matters may be referred to arbitration. I have always regarded the resorting to strikes as a barbarous way of settling a dispute between employer and employed, and I hail with the greatest satisfaction the promise made by the Government to introduce a measure to provide for arbitration. In the colony of New Zealand such a tribunal has been in existence for some years. That tribunal has existed there for the benefit of both sides of the community; and I hope that, so far as this colony is concerned, the Bill proposed will not exclude the five thousand railway employees in this colony from taking the benefit of its provisions. I think the prospects of the future are very bright. We are told that the industries throughout the colony are progressing, that trade is good, and that prices have never been better.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Especially bread.

HON. M. L. MOSS: We will try to make bread cheaper, if we can. I have indicated pretty well my opinion on that question. I think that as soon as practicable the Government should take off those duties, and in my opinion there need be no fear regarding this colony for the future. All these industries showing such promise must be beneficial to the condition of the people. I think our entry into the Australian Commonwealth also augurs well for the future. The Parliament, the Ministry, and the country are to be congratulated upon our financial position, and upon the statement made in

this Address as to the condition both of our industries and our material prosperity in the country. Under all these circumstances, the trust which the people have reposed in their Parliamentary representatives will not be a very difficult one to carry out satisfactorily. I now have much pleasure in moving the motion I have already read.

HON. E. McLARTY (South-West): I have pleasure in rising to second the Address in reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Administrator. In doing so I do not intend to dwell at any length upon the various paragraphs in that Speech. My honourable and learned friend (Mr. Moss) has dealt so exhaustively with it that I feel it is not necessary for me to say very much upon it. It contains a record of the continued, steady, and satisfactory progress of the colony. I observe that it is not intended to introduce much fresh legislation during the present session. I quite anticipated such would be the case. At the same time, I observe that it is intended to introduce a Bill for the extension of the railway from Cue to Nannine, and I believe this extension has already received the assent of Parliament. It is also intended to bring in a Bill to construct a railway from Coolgardie to Norseman. I do not at the present time intend to commit myself to any line of action which I may think fit to pursue later on, when I have more information with regard to this work. If it can be shown that the district of Norseman is of such importance as to justify the construction of a railway, and that the railway is likely to pay directly or indirectly, I am sure the Bill will receive from members of this House the consideration which its importance demands. Still I am inclined to think that, as we are on the eve of a general election, it would perhaps be wiser to allow these railways and new works to stand over till next session. However, as I have already said, I shall not commit myself as to the course I may take when the Bill comes before the House when probably the Government will furnish such information to hon. members as will justify us in passing the Bill. An Address to Her Majesty, conveying the sympathies of the people of Western Australia in her recent bereavement, will I am sure be readily

adopted by honourable members in this House. I heartily concur in the deep expression of sympathy contained in paragraph 3 of the Speech, in which it is stated that "It is a matter of great sorrow and regret that several of our troops should have lost their lives, and amongst them Major Moor, the brave commanding officer of the First Western Australian Contingent, after all the arduous work of the campaign had almost been completed." I am sure a pang of sorrow ran through the whole of this colony when news reached Western Australia of the death of Major Moor, and also of the other brave men whose lives have been sacrificed in the South African war. I say, all honour to our brave troops, who have so nobly done their duty, and upheld not only the name of Western Australia, but the dignity of the Empire generally, and have taken such a prominent part in the Boer war. The verdict given a few days ago, as to whether this colony should join the Commonwealth of Australia, will I am sure be received by those who opposed the immediate adoption of federation, in that spirit in which it should be received—that they will bow to the wish of the majority—and I hope we will now all join hands in one common union, and work together for the best interests of Western Australia and Australia generally. Personally, I felt it my duty on several occasions to oppose the adoption of federation. I thought it was not advisable; and I still think we are before our time. [HON. R. S. HAYNES: Hear, hear.] I have not altered my opinion in that respect. At the same time I gave the matter all the careful and serious consideration I was capable of devoting to it, and I was more and more convinced every day of my life that, being placed in the position in which we in this colony found ourselves, it was inevitable we should join the rest of Australia, and we could not under the present circumstances stand out of the union. I think the federation of Western Australia with the other colonies will remove that feeling which we know has existed during the last couple of years between the people of the goldfields and the people on the coast—a feeling which has done a great deal to retard the progress of the colony. I trust that,

now we have adopted federation, we will all pull together and work with a will. It was a proud day for this part of the colony on Saturday when a mail steamer for the first time entered the Swan River.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: They will come to Perth, in time.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: They will come to Pinjarra, some day.

HON. E. McLARTY: It was a proud moment for the Engineer-in-Chief who designed the great work and has so successfully carried it out, and to the Premier of the colony who has never tired in urging the great importance of the mail steamers calling at Fremantle. This, no doubt, will soon bring about the transcontinental railway. I look upon the Fremantle Harbour Works as the greatest work undertaken in the colony, and I would like to see, as a finish to it, statues of the Engineer-in-Chief and the Premier placed on the most conspicuous part of the work.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: On the mole.

HON. E. McLARTY: Hands joined, congratulating each other on the completion of the great national work; one for having successfully accomplished the work, and the other for having, in the day of small things in this colony, induced the Parliament to vote so large a sum of money for the construction of the harbour. I think this work, as I have said before, will bring about the construction of the transcontinental railway. I may emphasise the wisdom of the Forrest Government and the Parliament in initiating and carrying out the Coolgardie Water Scheme. I look to the future, and not a very far distant future, when it will be proved that it was imperative that the water scheme should be carried out. It will not only serve to bring comfort to the homes of thousands of people, but it is likely to increase the output of gold, in addition to which it will be able to supply the railways, thus saving an enormous expenditure, and in time it will save the transcontinental railway a large expenditure of money. I cannot see how it can be done without. I believe no work in this colony has ever been more criticised than the Coolgardie Water Scheme. I know at the present time many of the leading men in the colony

refer to it as the wildest scheme ever undertaken by the Government, and that it will bring ruin to Western Australia. That is not my opinion. I have always been a very strong supporter of that scheme, and I am quite satisfied it will not be a burden on the people. I rejoice to see by the Speech to-day that the work is progressing so satisfactorily. Like my friend, Mr. Moss, I was surprised to hear that such an extent of pipes had been laid and the work so advanced.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Not laid.

HON. E. McLARTY: In a position ready to be laid. That certainly is an evidence of the great energy displayed in the construction, and in the near future the work will be an accomplished fact. I note it is intended to bring in a Bill to abolish the stock tax. That, I think, will not meet with much opposition. As a stock-owner myself I am sure I have no objection to the tax being removed, even to-morrow. I hope when the tax is removed the consumer will derive the benefit, but I am afraid the consumer will not benefit altogether. At the same time I am not in accord with my friend, Mr. Moss, that the Government would be wise in abolishing the whole of the duties, thus entering the federation with a free list. I cannot think that would be a fair and reasonable thing to do. We have just put it to the people whether they would adopt federation or not under certain conditions, and I am quite sure one of the conditions which induced a great number of people to vote for federation was the fact that a free list would not be forced on us all at once, but that it would come gradually on the country. To at once remove the food duties would not only be a great blow to those who are cultivating the land in the country, but I am sure it would be the ruin of a great number of new settlers who have only just begun, and are not in a position to stand the competition of the other colonies. I do not think Mr. Moss will find the country in accord with his expression of opinion on that question.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Yes, it is.

HON. E. McLARTY: The hon. member has spoken of the high price of bread, which he hopes to see reduced. I think the people have little reason to complain of the price of bread, and I may tell my

friend that I think he would find that 6s. 8d. would buy enough bread to supply his house for many days. The extension of the telegraph lines is a proof of the further progress of the country. The removal of the deficit with which we commenced the year is also satisfactory, although, for my part, I never regarded it as much: it was not a great amount, and would not have a great effect on the country. I am pleased to see that mention is made in the Speech of the intention of the Government to bring down a Bill to this House to provide for the drainage of rural lands. On this matter I can speak with authority, and on the necessity of the Government coming to the relief of the settlers who have taken up land and spent their all on it. Only yesterday a number of settlers waited on me and asked that I would urge on the Government the necessity of a Bill to enable land to be efficiently drained. I pointed out to these people the difficulties under which the Government had to work, and that until a Bill was passed into law private land could not be drained. I knew of a case in which a drain could have been constructed at small cost, and which would have benefited a large number of settlers; but one settler objected to the drain going through his land, and the whole scheme had to be abandoned. I hope the Government will bring in the Bill, and that it will meet with the approval of hon. members. I quite concur in the remarks that the prospects of the season were never better. I believe throughout the whole of the colony, east to west and north to south, a better season was never known, especially in the Northern parts of the colony: I have not heard of any part in the North that has not had an abundance of rain, and stock is in good condition. The outlook of the squatters was never better. I have nothing more to say in seconding the Address. I trust the same good feeling that has always existed among members in this House will continue, and that we shall work together as we have done in the past, for the good of the country and for all concerned. I have much pleasure in seconding the Address-in-reply.

On motion by HON. R. S. HAYNES, debate adjourned until the next sitting day.

## ADJOURNMENT.

On motion by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, the House adjourned at 26 minutes past 4 o'clock until 4:30 p.m. on the next Tuesday.

## Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 15th August, 1900.

Opening of ordinary Session—Message: Opening Speech—Election Returns (2)—Papers presented—Petition, Dividend Duty Act (Companies)—Public Service Bill, first reading—Address in reply to Opening Speech, debate adjourned—Adjournment.

## OPENING OF ORDINARY SESSION.

The Legislative Assembly met at 3 o'clock, p.m., pursuant to Proclamation by His Excellency the Administrator, which Proclamation was read by the Clerk.

THE SPEAKER (Sir James G. Lee Steere, K.C.M.G.) took the Chair.

## MESSAGE—OPENING SPEECH.

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

Mr. Speaker and hon. members repaired to the Legislative Council Chamber, where His Excellency delivered a Speech on the opening of the sixth session of the Third Parliament. [*Vide* p. 1, *ante*.] Mr. Speaker and hon. members returned to the Assembly Chamber, and the business of the session was then proceeded with. Several notices of motion and of questions to Ministers were given for the next sitting.

## ELECTION RETURNS (2), Etc.

THE SPEAKER announced that during the recess Mr. Robert David Hutchinson had been elected for Geraldton (in room of Mr. Robson, resigned), and that Mr. John Frederick Tasman Hassell had been elected for Albany (in room of Mr. G. Leake, resigned).

Mr. J. F. T. Hassell and Mr. Hutchinson then took the oath and signed the roll.

Mr. Leonard H. Darlôt, elected for the DeGrey in May last (in room of Mr. E. T. Hooley, resigned), also took the oath and signed the roll.

## PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: Reports (annual): 1, Lands and Surveys Department; 2, Agricultural Bank; 3, Gaols and Prisons; 4, Fremantle Lunatic Asylum; 5, London Agency; 6, Superintendent of Public Charities; 7, Land Titles Department; 8, Government Storekeeper; 9, Victoria Public Library; 10, Museum and Art Gallery.

## PETITION—DIVIDEND DUTY ACT (COMPANIES).

MR. WILSON (Canning) presented a petition, signed by 42 representatives of commercial, shipping, and banking companies, praying for repeal of the Dividend Duty Act 1899, as affecting such companies.

Petition received and ordered to be printed.

## PUBLIC SERVICE BILL.

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

## ADDRESS IN REPLY TO OPENING SPEECH.

THE SPEAKER informed the House that he, with hon. members, had attended His Excellency the Administrator in the Legislative Council Chamber to hear the opening Speech of the session. Having obtained a copy of the Speech, he read the same to the House.

MR. MOORHEAD (North Murchison): Mr. Speaker, a perusal of His Excellency's Speech must afford matter for congratulation to hon. members, at least; because it will be within the memory of the House that the session before last there was passed a Redistribution of Seats Bill, and to many hon. members the reflection will naturally arise that this is hardly a fitting occasion to legislate for the colony when we have practically admitted we hardly represent the wishes of the people. If the necessity for a Redistribution of Seats Bill existed at that period so strongly