

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

Legislative Council—Second Session of 1879.

Opened on Monday, 28th July, 1879.

### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

*Monday, 28th July, 1879.*

Opening of Council—Governor's Speech—Public Officers  
Bill: first reading—Adjournment.

#### OPENING OF COUNCIL.

THE Council was prorogued on the 15th January, 1879, to the 12th February next ensuing; thence to 12th March; thence to 9th April; thence to 7th May; thence to 4th June; thence to 2nd July; thence to Monday, the 28th July, when it met for the despatch of business.

The Council assembled at noon.

Shortly afterwards, HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR entered the Council Chamber, and took the Chair.

#### THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

HIS EXCELLENCY was then pleased to deliver the following Speech:—

"MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF  
"THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,—

"I have much pleasure in announcing  
"to you that the Act for amending the  
"Loan Bill, which formed the subject of  
"your deliberations during the Session  
"of January last, has been approved,  
"and that the contract for the Eastern  
"Railway has been taken and the work  
"commenced. The various Acts passed  
"during the Session of 1878 have also  
"been approved, with one exception,  
"viz., that repealing the Audit of District  
"Road Boards. It has been pointed out  
"that the whole repeal of this Act is  
"undesirable, and that there should be

"some check on the expenditure of the  
"funds of such bodies;—a measure for  
"the partial re-enactment of the original  
"Act will therefore be submitted for  
"your consideration.

"Bills will be laid before you, having  
"principally for their object the intro-  
"duction of amendments into existing  
"laws, the necessity for which has been  
"shown by experience of their working;  
"and in addition, your consideration will  
"be invited to proposals for—

"Abolishing the Game Laws, and  
"substituting, in lieu thereof, a  
"small tax on guns used for  
"sporting purposes;

"Prohibiting the use of explosive  
"substances for the destruction  
"of fish;

"Imposing certain Stamp Duties.

"This last measure is considered  
"necessary to provide (at all events  
"temporarily) for the falling off in the  
"Revenue which has recently occurred  
"through the generally depressed condi-  
"tion of trade in the Colony, and indeed  
"throughout the world.

"In explanation of this necessity, I  
"think it desirable that some information  
"should be given of the financial con-  
"dition of the Colony, which would not  
"otherwise be made known to you until  
"the Financial Statement is presented  
"with the Estimates. It will be within  
"your recollection that soon after my  
"arrival, being apprehensive that the  
"provisions made in the Estimates for  
"1878 would prove insufficient to meet  
"the many liabilities which I was aware  
"existed, I caused a careful investigation  
"to be made of the Estimates by the

"Colonial Secretary and Acting Colonial Treasurer—neither of whom was concerned in their preparation—and with the results (which were laid before you in the first Parliamentary Paper printed at the opening of the Session) that they estimated the actual Revenue would be £165,111, and the probable Expenditure £177,858. Subsequent results have shown the correctness of their calculation—the Revenue having amounted to £163,334, or within £1,767, and the Expenditure to £181,506, or within £3,684, of their estimate. As compared with previous years, this Revenue is not unsatisfactory, but it shows a decided falling off, owing to the causes I have mentioned, and it would have been considerably less than it was but for the accidental receipt of larger sums on account of Royalty for Guano than had been anticipated. For these reasons, I suggest for your consideration the expediency of providing the small increase which is necessary to bring our Revenue up to the requisite amount, by the imposition of a stamp duty on legal and business documents.

"Before I quit this subject, it is my duty to apprise you that although the Revenue and Expenditure of the past year have approximated so nearly to the amount at which they had been estimated, the actual position of the Country is not represented by a comparison of the balance sheet which they present.

"A few years back it was discovered that the excess of Revenue over Expenditure had resulted in the accumulation in the Treasury of, what for the Colony was, a considerable surplus.

"On this becoming known to the Legislature, it was decided to appropriate a large portion of it in the construction of the Eucla Telegraph Line. Other works were also from time to time authorised, in many instances by resolutions of the Legislature, after the Estimates had been framed, and thus necessarily caused an excess upon them.

"I am not able to say with exactness what was originally the amount of this surplus out of which these sums were to be met, but I find it stated by the Governor in his speech to the Legislature on the 30th November, 1875, that the available balance at the beginning of that year was £38,000. On the 7th

"August, 1876, in a speech to the Legislature, the Governor informed them that the surplus on the 31st July was £26,119, and on 18th July, 1877, the Legislature was assured that the excess of Expenditure over Revenue in the year 1876, £17,295, was more than covered by the balance for the previous years, and that on 30th June, 1877, there was a surplus of £17,400 to the credit of the Colony.

"I regret to say that an investigation into the accounts proves these assumptions to have been erroneous, and that whatever may have been the surplus at one time, at the period referred to it had altogether disappeared. Nor will this, I think, cause much surprise when it is known that between 1875 and 1878, there was expended on the Eucla Telegraph Line the sum of £49,565, and that in 1877 and 1878 the Legislature authorised by resolutions the expenditure of upwards of £12,000 on services for which no provision was made in the Estimates.

"The examination of the accounts to which I have referred establishes that the Colony could hardly have had to its credit on 31st July, 1876, as much as £26,119; since, on the 31st December, 1876, instead of having a surplus to carry over to the next year, it was actually in debt £338; and that on the 30th June, 1877, in place of a surplus of £17,400, there must have been some considerable deficit, as on the 31st December of that year the Colony owed no less than £17,885.

"The comparative statement of Revenue and Expenditure for 1878, now laid before you, has been prepared with a minuteness not hitherto attempted, and will enable you to ascertain not only the particulars of every item of Expenditure, but the circumstances under which it was incurred. You will find from this document, that the Expenditure of the year, originally estimated at £167,215, and afterwards calculated to be £177,858, was (omitting an advance of £16,737, since repaid from the loan), actually £181,506. The Revenue was, however, altogether insufficient to meet this, being but £163,344, in place of £170,591, as estimated, and bearing in mind that the year was begun with a

"balance debt of £17,885, it is clear that  
 "a far heavier deficit was inevitable.  
 "This deficiency proved to be about the  
 "same as it was in 1877, thus raising  
 "the total indebtedness of the Colony at  
 "the commencement of the present year  
 "to over £35,000; and, judging from  
 "the appearance of the Revenue up to  
 "the present time, it is not probable  
 "that any reduction in it will be effected  
 "during the year.

"I regret being compelled to submit  
 "to you a statement of the financial con-  
 "dition of the Colony so far from satis-  
 "factory, but the debt, though large in  
 "amount, really represents less than  
 "three months' Revenue, and is not  
 "therefore one that need cause any  
 "serious apprehension; at the same time,  
 "the details which have been furnished  
 "will enable you to understand the  
 "causes which have brought it about,  
 "and will, I hope, assist you in coming  
 "to a conclusion as to the measures to be  
 "adopted for meeting the emergency,  
 "and for preventing a recurrence of it.  
 "I need scarcely say that you may rely  
 "upon my cordial aid and co-operation  
 "in carrying into effect such arrange-  
 "ments as may be devised for re-es-  
 "tablishing the finances of the Colony on a  
 "sound and satisfactory basis.

"Various papers will be laid before  
 "you, and I have to ask your attention  
 "to that relating to the 'Importation of  
 "Foreign Stock,' on which your opinion  
 "is desired. The papers on the 'Sanitary  
 "Condition of Perth' will, I think, ex-  
 "cite your surprise, and no doubt lead to  
 "the adoption of measures for putting  
 "an end to the unsatisfactory and  
 "dangerous state of matters which it re-  
 "veals. In the matter of the extension  
 "of the Survey of our Coasts, I have  
 "acted as I thought, and I trust you will  
 "consider, the interests of the Colony  
 "demanded. You will observe, that for  
 "reasons which I do not doubt you will  
 "deem satisfactory, I have not felt justi-  
 "fied in saying that the Colony would  
 "take any part in the Sydney Exhibition  
 "of the present year. In reply to an  
 "application from the Commission for  
 "the Exhibition to be held at Melbourne,  
 "in the ensuing year, I have stated that  
 "I think the Colony would wish to join  
 "in this undertaking, and that I will  
 "submit to the Legislature that it should

"do so. If the proposal meet your ap-  
 "proval, I would suggest that the Go-  
 "vernment should restrict itself, as is  
 "usual in other countries, to assisting  
 "the efforts of persons who may be  
 "willing to exhibit on their own account,  
 "and shall not make any attempt to  
 "exhibit on behalf of the Colony except  
 "it may be in the case of some special  
 "product for the exhibition of which it  
 "has greater facilities than the public.

"It is desirable that the question of  
 "Immigration should engage your at-  
 "tention during the Session. With  
 "regard to Europeans it will be seen  
 "that the Government has fulfilled its  
 "duty in assisting Nominated Immi-  
 "gration whenever application was made  
 "to it. A small number of Chinese has  
 "been introduced, whose services were  
 "at once engaged, and who have in  
 "almost all cases given great satisfaction  
 "to their employers; but in the absence  
 "of any requests for the services of  
 "more of these people, or of Indian  
 "laborers, I have not thought it expe-  
 "dient to continue this Immigration.

"The contract with the owners of the  
 "*Otway* and *Rob Roy*, which terminated  
 "at the close of last year, has been con-  
 "tinued by agreement to the end of the  
 "present year, with some slight modifi-  
 "cation. In reply to an enquiry if they  
 "were willing to continue to run the  
 "latter vessel between Champion Bay  
 "and Albany, once a fortnight, in con-  
 "nection with one of the P. & O. steamers  
 "(probably the outward vessel), I am  
 "given to understand that they would  
 "be disposed to do so for a suitable sub-  
 "sidy. I have not entered into any  
 "negotiations with regard to the *Otway*,  
 "as it has seemed to me that the Colony  
 "would not be justified in continuing the  
 "present arrangement when there will be  
 "fortnightly communication with the  
 "Eastern Colonies by the P. & O. Com-  
 "pany. A suggestion that the *Otway*  
 "should be employed to run between  
 "Albany and Champion Bay, and the  
 "*Rob Roy* between Fremantle and the  
 "North-West, I have, in the absence of  
 "any expression of your views, declined  
 "to entertain, on account of the expense  
 "it will involve.

"An alteration has also been made in  
 "the Mail Service between Perth and  
 "King George's Sound, which it is my

"duty to bring to your notice. Shortly after the close of the Session my attention was called to the very unsatisfactory manner in which the carriage of the European Mails between these places was conducted, especially by the overland route: letters from Europe being rarely delivered in time to be answered by the outgoing steamer. On enquiry, I found that it was possible to effect great improvements in the service by entrusting it to the Police, but that the first cost of the arrangement would be considerable. It became, therefore, my duty to consider whether I ought to leave matters as they were for another year, until I could procure the sanction of the Legislature to the necessary expenditure, or to assume the responsibility of authorising it myself. I decided on this latter course, and I believe that a review of the circumstances under which I did so, and the result it has led to, which are fully explained in a paper laid before you, will be held to justify the step.

"And this seems a suitable occasion to point out to you that the Governor has thrown upon him, at times, a responsibility which, so far as my experience goes, he is not exposed to in any other Colony, from his inability to obtain the opinion of the Legislature upon, or their assent to any measure, no matter how serious may be the interest at stake, except during the short period, once a year, that they are in Session. I think you will agree with me that when such cases arise, the course which the Governor may have felt called upon to follow is entitled to the favorable consideration of the Legislature.

"Such, Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen, are the most important of the subjects to which your attention will be directed during the Session now opened. It may be that others, calculated to exercise a still greater influence over the future of the Colony, may present themselves for your consideration during its progress, but whatever be the character of the measure upon which you are called to decide, my own observations of the manner in which you have hitherto performed this duty, satisfies me that you will deal with them in a spirit of patient, searching, unprejudiced enquiry, having for its sole object

"to discover what the true interests of the country demand—and may God in this direct your judgment aright."

HIS EXCELLENCY having handed a copy of the Speech to Mr. Speaker, withdrew from the Council Chamber.

#### PRIVILEGE BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) moved for leave to introduce a Bill to regulate the appointment of certain public officers.

The Bill was read a first time *pro forma*, and leave given that it be read a second time on Wednesday.

#### THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) moved that the debate on the Governor's Speech be made an Order of the Day for Wednesday next, which was agreed to.

The House then adjourned until Wednesday evening.

---

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Wednesday, 30th July, 1879.

Public Officers Bill: second reading; in committee—Address in Reply to Governor's Speech—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at seven p.m.

PRAYERS.

#### PUBLIC OFFICERS BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) moved the second reading of a Bill empowering the Governor—whenever any public officer shall by reason of temporary incapacity, or by absence from the place where his functions are to be discharged, be unable to discharge the duties of his office—to appoint a *locum tenens*, who during his temporary