

## Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 17th July, 1902.

Opening of Session—Message, Governor's Speech—  
Election Returns, Swearing-in—Papers presented—  
Obituary: the late Premier—Administration (Pro-  
bate) Amendment Bill, first reading—Address in  
reply, Mover and Seconder—Adjournment.

## OPENING OF SESSION.

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

## MESSAGE—GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

In obedience to summons, Mr. Speaker and hon. members proceeded to the Legislative Council Chamber; and, having heard His Excellency deliver the opening Speech [*vide* Council report, *ante*], they returned to the Assembly Chamber.

## ELECTION RETURNS—SWEARING-IN.

MR. SPEAKER (Hon. Sir Jas. G. Lee Steere, K.C.M.G.) reported the following election returns having been received in response to writs for new elections issued by him since Parliament last met, namely: East Perth, Walter Hartwell James, K.C., re-elected on acceptance of office as Premier and Attorney General; Albany, Mr. James Gardiner, re-elected on acceptance of office as Colonial Treasurer; West Perth, Mr. Charles John Moran, in room of the Hon. G. Leake (deceased); Claremont, Mr. John Charles Griffiths Foulkes, in room of Mr. W. F. Sayer (resigned). These members, being duly sworn, took the oath and their seats.

## PAPERS PRESENTED.

Papers were presented as follow:—

By MR. SPEAKER: Report of Auditor General on the public accounts for the financial year ended 30th June, 1901; also a Special Report by Auditor General on the Premier's and the Treasurer's Secret Purchase Suspense Account, 29th May to 3rd July, 1902.

By the PREMIER: Report (annual) of Education Department, 1901; Report on Exploration of North-West Kimberley, 1901; Report (preliminary) of Mines Department; Report on Fishing Industry; Report of Agricultural Bank; Report on Gaols and Prisons, for the year 1901.

By the MINISTER FOR MINES; Amendment to Regulations under Goldfields Act.

By the MINISTER FOR WORKS: Return (ordered on motion by Mr. Yelverton) showing the number and cost of Inspections of Railways.

Order: To lie on the table.

## OBITUARY: THE LATE PREMIER.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Walter James, K.C.): Sir, I desire to crave the indulgence of the House whilst discharging a mournful duty that has fallen on me as leader of the House. Under ordinary circumstances, one would look forward to an occasion like this, one's first appearance as leader, with feelings no other than those of pleasure, tempered perhaps by a sense of anxiety that must impress one when he realises the responsibility attaching to the office of Premier, and realises also that however one may attempt to carry out those duties honestly and fearlessly, and do what one feels to be right, there is always the inevitable limitation attaching to one's shortcomings. But these are not the feelings that impress me most on the present occasion, because I cannot help realising that I stand to-day as the successor of one who was for many years a great personal friend, my own professional teacher, afterwards my business partner in the conduct of our profession; who was for many years my political leader and always my close personal friend, that personal loss most impresses me. I believe I shall carry the whole of the House with me when I say we all mourn the loss of a friend: that when Mr. Leake died this House was impoverished by that death; and whatever political differences we may have, we all believe that this State and this Parliament would have been a stronger State and a better Parliament if we had him still with us. It is not for me to express my estimation of the work he did, I am of the same party as he. Mr. Leake occupied the position of Premier for twelve months only, and a great number of the things he did have still to be discussed on the floor of this House. It will be sufficient for me to refer very generally to the position he occupied. He first entered this House as the result

of a close contest: he was returned for Albany by a majority of one vote. Since that time he has had to contest more than one election, in which he had to fight strongly and vigorously to retain the position which latterly he enjoyed. When in course of time he took up the position of leader of the Opposition in this Chamber, there again he had to fight vigorously side by side with a small minority of members then in the House; and though he had warm personal friends on the then Ministerial side of the House, I am justified in saying that he never for one moment allowed that sense of personal friendship to interfere with what he believed to be the discharge of his political duties. Although as leader of the Opposition he always spoke out straight and hit from the shoulder, in criticising severely the Government of the day, yet when the time came for Mr. Leake and his supporters to pass from the Opposition to the Ministerial side of the House, from the left to the right of the Speaker's Chair, and when Mr. Leake ceased to be leader of the Opposition and became leader of the Government, he carried with him the goodwill of those whose political battle he had been fighting, and also the good wishes of those political opponents who had listened to and winced under his criticisms in this House, but who knew that directly he proceeded beyond the walls of this Chamber he remained the same warm and genial friend they had always found him in private life. While he was Premier, he still had to fight; he indeed had to fight harder than ever, and under most trying conditions. He had fought to get into this House, he had fought while he was leader of the Opposition, and he had to fight while he was Premier and leader of the House. He was essentially in politics a man

Who made by force his merit known,  
And lived to clutch the golden keys.

I cannot—indeed it would ill become me to do so—refer to the work he did; but I should like to say this, speaking as an old and close personal friend of his, that if during the last twelve months, when he was fighting as leader of the House in a minority, he said any words that caused a bitter feeling and pang of regret to members on the other side of the House, I knew him well enough to aver that the pain which they felt and which

they may now feel was not one whit more keen than the regret he himself felt when he remembered in cooler moments that he had, in the heat of debate, uttered hasty and perhaps ill-considered words. I believe that when George Leake died we each lost a personal friend, and the State lost a worthy son. I humbly hope for myself and those who come after me as Premier, that we, like him, shall endeavour to keep before us the high ideals and traditions of the office, and that when our turn comes to pass away, members will say of us as I may say of him, that he passed to his grave with a reputation unsullied by one dishonourable act. I move:

That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the public services rendered to this State by the late Premier, Mr. George Leake, and to express its deepest sympathy with Mrs. Leake in the irreparable loss which she and her family have sustained by his premature decease. That Mr. Speaker be requested to forward the foregoing resolution to Mrs. Leake.

MR. J. L. NANSON (Murchison): It becomes my melancholy duty to second the motion which the Premier has proposed in such appropriate and feeling language. It is not always the easiest of duties to second a motion of this kind when one of whom a member speaks was a political opponent, and is no more with us; but if it can be easy, it surely is so in regard to the late George Leake; because, although as a political opponent he was a man of strong convictions and a fighter every inch of him, yet I feel sure there is not a member of this House who did not regard him, when once the battle was over, as a personal friend and a kind and true-hearted gentleman. I will not trespass farther on the time of the House, as to do so would only be to re-echo the sentiments which Mr. James has so admirably expressed; but I will say that we on this (Opposition) side of the House would have regretted it very much indeed if an opportunity had not been given us to express our sympathy with Mrs. Leake and the family of the late Premier in the bereavement that has overtaken them. As to the qualities of our late friend, I think that what appealed to the Opposition members of the House more than any other quality was the intense strenuousness of the man in advancing and putting forward the con-

victions he held. We always felt in this House, however strongly we might be opposed to him, that we were dealing with an opponent worthy of our steel, and perhaps more than worthy of our steel. I will not say more, save to add that I second the motion which the hon. the Premier has proposed.

Question put and passed.

#### ADMINISTRATION (PROBATE) AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by the ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. Walter James), by leave without notice, and read a first time.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

MR. SPEAKER reported that, accompanied by hon. members, he had attended in the Legislative Council Chamber to hear the Governor's Speech on opening the session; and, having obtained a copy of the Speech, he read it to the House.

MR. J. EWING (South West Mining District): Mr. Speaker, it affords me great pleasure to move the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency the Governor's Speech; and more especially am I pleased to look round this Assembly to-day, and find on your right what appears to be a Government majority sufficiently large to ensure the doing of some good work during this session. On this the country may well be congratulated, for it seems to me there are now practically no party lines; several members have taken seats different from those they occupied prior to the prorogation of Parliament; and thus the Ministry may be quite satisfied that, provided they do their duty properly, they will receive from this House a fair measure of support. As to the first paragraph of the Speech, in reference to His Majesty the King, we all, as loyal subjects, regretted extremely the severe illness through which our Sovereign has passed; and to-day we rejoice to learn that he is rapidly recovering, and that the coronation which was postponed owing to his illness, will, it is expected, take place early next month. But although His Majesty has not been crowned with all solemnity at Westminster Abbey, I venture to say he has been crowned more than twice over in the affections of his subjects. The termination of the South African war is a matter

of great congratulation to the whole of the world; for the British Empire has in consequence acquired a large territory, and I think we must admit that the terms of peace mentioned in the Speech are honourable to both victors and vanquished; and we must admit, too, that though the British have been successful in this campaign, yet they certainly met foemen worthy of their steel. Now the battle is over, I feel sure that the Boers, our beaten foes, will join hand in hand with other British subjects to raise a Commonwealth in South Africa which will be a credit to the Empire. There is only one result of the South African war which we in this State have reason to regret. We learn from His Excellency's Speech that we are to lose his valuable services. It is unquestionable that throughout the length and breadth of Western Australia, deep and sincere sorrow is felt at the news that His Excellency and Lady Lawley are about to leave our shores. I am satisfied they leave with our kindest wishes; and we must console ourselves by the reflection that our great loss will be a most distinct gain to another part of the Empire. [MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] On the motion of the Premier, the House has already passed a resolution expressing how deeply hon. members regret the death of our late Premier, Mr. George Leake; and I can but endorse all the Premier has said, and add that, though I happened for a time to be a political opponent of the late Premier, yet as time passed by I felt I had made a mistake; and I have no hesitation in stating here to-day that, at the time of the late Premier's death, I was perfectly satisfied with his work and his Administration. This House is poorer by far through the loss of his strong, fearless, and chivalrous presence; and I earnestly trust that Providence will assist those who at this time so greatly need his succour. We now meet under altered conditions. The member for East Perth (Hon. W. H. James) is Premier of the State; the mantle of the late Premier has fallen upon him; and the present Government have been good enough and chivalrous enough to say they are prepared to take upon themselves the burden of the sins, if there be any sins, of the late Government. Be that as it may, I am sure Ministers will receive from the House

and from the country what I am satisfied they deserve—[MR. DOHERTY: Dissolution.]—that is absolution. I have referred to the large number sitting on this (Government) side of the House, and I feel satisfied those members will retain their present positions just as long as I shall continue to sit directly behind the Government; and that will be so long as we consider the Government are doing their utmost to work in the best interests of the State.

MR. F. CONNOR: You will soon be back in Opposition.

MR. EWING: The moment I find they are not doing that, I shall feel it my duty to oppose them; but I am satisfied, from my knowledge of the present Government, that I shall not have to take such a course, and that not only during this but perhaps in future sessions I may have the honour of sitting behind what I consider a really first-class Government, which I am sure will do all that is possible for the advancement of this country.

MR. F. CONNOR: When will you deal with Collie coal?

MR. DOHERTY: You will not get the Collie railway.

MR. EWING: I hope I shall. There is one question which will doubtless have the attention and the criticism of members, not only on this but on the other side of the House.

MR. DOHERTY: Which side?

MR. F. CONNOR: He has tried every side.

MR. EWING: It is the present financial position of the State. We have been told in the Speech that the revenue for last year was £3,688,049, and the expenditure £3,490,025, while the excess of revenue over expenditure was £198,023. From this we must deduct the debit of £74,839 with which the previous financial year closed; and the surplus is therefore £123,184. But we find that for the last month of the financial year—the month of June—while the revenue was £388,119, the expenditure reached the huge sum of £506,627. That opens up a question with which neither I nor perhaps many other members on the Government side are prepared to deal to-day. I certainly cannot explain it away; but that it will require explanation, and immediate explanation, there is no question whatever.

Through the medium of the Press the Treasurer has told us that for some considerable time past there has been a certain laxity in connection with the finances, and that the remedy lies to a great extent in the adjustment of the Stores Account, particularly in respect of transactions with the Railway Department. However, I feel satisfied that the Treasurer is fully seized of the facts, that he is quite capable of carrying out his duties, that within a reasonable time we shall know the exact financial position of this State; and I agree with him in his endeavour to place the finances on a truly businesslike basis. In that I am sure he will have the support of every member of the House. And here I should like to remark that I cannot help being impressed by the honesty with which, as it appears to me, the Government intend to act. It would have been quite possible, and very much easier, to make the surplus appear far greater by refraining from probing into matters which require the immediate attention of the Treasurer, who, we must remember, has been only a few days in office; and it redounds to his credit that in so short a time he has found a weak spot in our system of finance, and has not hesitated to tell the country what it is. He might have shown us to-day a much more rosy view of the situation; and even had events proved him to be in error, he need not have suffered any loss of dignity, considering the short time for which he has had the finances in his hands. But be it said to his credit that he has taken the bolder course, and intends, as far as his ability will allow him, clearly and justly to put before us the financial position of the country. In connection with the surplus which we know is the outcome of the dual tariff at the present time, in some of the metropolitan papers the immediate abolition of the inter-State duties is advocated. I must to-day congratulate the Government on the retention of those duties, for we must feel that the present would be a most inopportune time to touch them in any shape or form, if we only consider for a moment that the tariff is now in the hands of the Federal Senate and has been largely altered through their deliberations. This tariff has to be returned to the House of Representatives, and we

know not yet what will be the outcome of the deliberations of those two assemblies; therefore we have no perfect knowledge of what the tariff will be. Whether we think that the inter-State duties should be wiped out or not, there can, I say, be no doubt whatever in the mind of any right-thinking man that the present would be a most inopportune time to wipe them out. There is another question of vital importance to the State of Western Australia, and that is the financial position in which we stand to-day. Perhaps there may have been a certain amount of disappointment when we found the surplus not so large as we anticipated; but when we consider for a moment the position of our sister States, namely Queensland, Tasmania, and Victoria, are in to-day in consequence of federation, we must congratulate ourselves on the fact that instead of having a deficit, as apparently they will have, we have a very substantial credit balance.

**MR. DOHERTY:** That is not a reason for keeping on duties. You have too much money.

**MR. EWING:** A farther reason for keeping on duties is this—and I congratulate the Government on it—that during the Federal campaign there was a promise that the inter-State duties should be retained, and the Government are simply keeping faith with the country, which it is their bounden duty to do. In connection with the distribution of the £123,184 of surplus, the Government provide first of all that there shall be a Lunatic Asylum. [Laughter on Opposition benches.] I have not the least doubt that is very necessary in Western Australia, and it seems to go very close home, over there. The Government also provide for the improvement of guals, for abattoirs, for cold storage on the goldfields, and for the extension of the railway system from Mount Malcolm to Laverton.

**MR. F. O'CONNOR:** What about coal-fields.

**MR. EWING:** I will come to that presently. The first four of these items must have the support of every member, and it is unnecessary for me to labour them; but with regard to the last item, I would like to say it is to my mind an evidence of a desire on the part of the Government to do all in their

power for the advancement of our great gold-mining industry. Even if it should be found that this surplus of £123,184 which we are told we possess does not exist—though I do not suppose that will be the case, but we never know what will happen with the stores account—I feel we are going to make provision for all sorts of contingencies, and I am satisfied that in this case the Government will be justified in asking the House to vote, in the Loan Bill when it comes before us, a sum of money sufficient to carry out the railway to which I have alluded. The House has a duty to perform to the goldfields, and while I am a member it will be my pleasure at all times to do all I can to farther that great and magnificent industry. When we consider that ten years ago the gold output was 59,548 ounces, value £226,283, and that for the half of this year up to the 30th June the production was 1,035,735 ounces; with a value of £3,780,000, it will at once be apparent that we have a magnificent industry, and when we also consider that it is estimated that by the end of this year the value of the gold produced will be something like £8,000,000—which is more than the value of the gold produced from all the other Australian States—it will be recognised that our industry is, as has often been said, only in its infancy; and, if this be the infant, I would like to know what the grown-up industry is going to be. In connection with the production of gold there is one very pleasing factor, that being the great success which has attended the administration of the Mines Department with regard to public batteries. I find that £412,550 has been returned to the small leaseholders through the system of public batteries, and I say this not in a manner derogatory to any Minister who preceded the present Minister, but to the credit of this Minister, who has made these batteries pay the working expenses, and they are now costing the State nothing. As far as the Minister for Mines is concerned, ever since I have been in the House, although the Government of which he is a member have been attacked very often, he has always seemed to get off scot-free, and on all sides of the House it seems to be the opinion that he is the right man in the right place. I now come to a

question which, if it has not yet attracted the attention of members, will unquestionably do so in a very short time when I have finished, or perhaps when next Tuesday arrives it will attract their attention and give rise to very serious criticism, and perhaps severe attacks in connection with railway administration in this State. However, be that as it will, I should like to say that, although I am not in sympathy with the action taken by the previous Government in raising the freights, I consider the course taken by the Minister very courageous, and there is no doubt he must have known at the time that the step would be perhaps the most unpopular that could be taken. But he was faced at that particular time with the introduction of the eight-hours system into the railway service, which came into force on the 1st July. It is questionable whether that is going to cost the State very much or not. However, he had to face the situation, and it seemed to him to be a considerable sum of money. He had to raise it, and in his opinion a legitimate way to do it was to revise the freights. It is the duty of the House to consider at the earliest possible moment and decide how we require the railways of this State to be run. This is our bounden duty. Too much responsibility is placed upon the Minister's shoulders, and we must not shirk our responsibility, but say once and for all what the Parliament of Western Australia desires in regard to the working of the railways, and then we shall know in what direction to act.

HON. F. H. PRESSE: You are shirking your responsibility.

MR. EWING: We must not shirk our responsibility. It is to my mind a matter not so much of policy as of administration. It is necessary for us to make up our minds, but some people are satisfied that if the railways pay working expenses, interest, and sinking fund, anything over and above that should go to the reduction of freights. Others think there ought to be some sort of fund provided by which we may gradually pay off the debt on our railways. But I am not of that opinion. I think if the railways pay interest, sinking fund, and working expenses, then we may well be satisfied, and give the farmer, the timber merchant, and the agriculturist the benefit of the surplus.

MR. G. TAYLOR: What about coal?

MR. EWING: You will notice I have not mentioned anything about coal.

MR. G. TAYLOR: You said enough on it last session.

MR. EWING: The freight on coal has been raised, but it has not been unduly raised, and I have not thought it my duty to lift my voice against that. It seems to me the whole question hinges upon the manner in which the railways are worked. We know the cost of working is at present very heavy; and, in my opinion, our railways ought to be worked for something like 60 to 65 per cent. of their takings. That is done in other parts of the world much less prosperous than this; and until our railway system is in that position it will not be a success. But the Government have taken a step of which I do not altogether approve. I think it might perhaps have been better had the Ministers waited till the House met before deciding to appoint a nonpolitical Commissioner of Railways. [OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] However, the late Government, in their wisdom—[MR. DOHERTY: Not the late Government]—appointed Mr. W. J. George to that position. I think I remember reading, in a report of the present Premier's speech at the Perth Town Hall, a statement to the effect that he, in similar circumstances, might have done otherwise. However, he has backed up this appointment, and is satisfied to abide the result. But whatever may be said of Mr. George or his appointment, I am sure every member who has had the pleasure of sitting in the House with that gentleman will agree that he is—[MR. TAYLOR: Just as well away]—certainly a good commercial man, a man of undoubted probity—[OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear]—and, I believe, a fearless man, and one who has a thorough knowledge of the various interests of this State. The stand I intend to take up is simply that the action has been taken; Mr. George is in the position; the powers who appointed him have the right and the authority to discharge him.

HON. F. H. PRESSE: No!

MR. EWING: I say there is no power on earth which will keep the man in his position if he does not do his duty to the satisfaction of Parliament. He can be dismissed—

MR. CONNOR: At a price.

MR. EWING: It is a moot question—

MR. CONNOR: You do not know anything about it.

MR. EWING: Perhaps not; but it is a moot question as to what sort of contract or agreement has been made between Mr. George and the Government; and if the Government or the country are dissatisfied with his administration, I think means will be found to get rid of him. But now that this position has been taken up by the Government, I feel it is our bounden duty—at any rate it is the course I shall pursue—to give the man a fair show; and I should not be in the least surprised if all the adverse criticisms were found to be wrong, and Mr. George turned out to be a most excellent Commissioner of Railways, and the right man in the right place.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. W. Kingsmill): He has proved that already.

MR. EWING: As to the appointment of two other Commissioners, it seems to me that will not entail any heavy loss, but will simply mean that the General Manager of Railways and the Chief Locomotive Engineer will in future be Commissioners.

MR. DOHERTY: If the House agree.

MR. EWING: If the House agree. I say I agree with that portion of the Speech; and while so saying, I should like to take this opportunity of showing that I am not here merely to back up the Government; that I reserve to myself what every member should reserve to himself—

MR. CONNOR: The right to cross the Chamber.

MR. EWING: No; the right to criticise any Ministerial action of which I do not approve. I should like to mention to-day a question of vital importance to the industry I happen to represent, and not only to that industry, but to the agriculturists of the State; and that is—

MR. CONNOR: Spontaneous combustion.

MR. EWING: That is the question of spark-arresters.

MR. DOHERTY: Train-arresters.

MR. CONNOR: We do not want spark-arresters, now that George has gone.

MR. EWING: I believe there has been in operation here for the past ten

months a spark-arrester which is said to be an excellent contrivance, and to overcome the difficulties experienced in burning not only coal but every other kind of fuel. One hon. member says the spark-arresters at present in use are train-arresters; but the whole question hinges upon the back pressure, and on the most reliable authority I am informed that with the new spark-arrester the back pressure is practically reduced so as to hold back the locomotive to the extent of five per cent. as against 25 or 30 per cent. with the other arresters in use. The member for Beverley (Mr. Harper) and other members wish to know why the agriculturists are being burnt out with Collie coal. I join issue with them on that point, for I am satisfied that Collie coal is not responsible for burning out agriculturists. However, to please them, it is only right we should ascertain whether there is any contrivance which can prevent such catastrophes as have been suggested here; and I shall ask the Minister and the Commissioner of Railways to investigate this matter promptly, and to lay before the House such information as may be in their possession. I do not intend to attack anybody to-day, but merely to show that I, representing the coal-mining industry of this State, am not satisfied to see that industry in any way jeopardised by actions which seem to me unwarrantable. But I think a very inexpensive board, of perhaps one or two persons, should be appointed to thoroughly test the spark-arrester of which I am speaking, and that the patentee should be permitted to attend the trial to see that justice is done; with a like privilege to the patentee of any similar contrivance. This patentee is quite willing to bear all the expenses of the trial should the invention prove a failure. In the Speech we are told there is to be an amendment of the Constitution. That seems to be something for which the country has for some little time been crying out. We hear everybody talking of the necessity for a general election and a redistribution of seats; and the Government proposal is to reduce the number of seats in this Assembly by four, and the number in the Upper House by nine. I am not in favour of a redistribution of seats on a population basis, for I believe every

industry in this State should be fairly represented; and I feel sure that when we fully consider the question, there will be practically no reduction in the membership of this House, but that we shall see whether it is necessary to go a step farther than the Premier has suggested in reference to the Upper House. [MR. RESIDE: Abolish it.] Well, I have been seriously thinking over the position; and I feel that in the near future it will be necessary to take some very drastic measures in connection with that House, unless it improves. This is a very much over-governed country; and if the people send their representatives to one House of Parliament I think that should be sufficient. I think we shall find that if any mistake be made through hasty legislation, the people will soon rectify that mistake, and that such mistakes will not be so serious as some people would lead us to suppose. Electoral reform will bring about the desired result of one adult one vote, and will make it easy, instead of difficult as at present, for people to get on the rolls. There will be an opportunity for members to show whether they are in earnest in connection with this matter; whether they really desire to give a full franchise on the basis of one adult one vote, and do away with the property qualification altogether. I feel sure that will be carried in this House. We are told in the last portion of the Speech that the natural consequence of this amendment of the Constitution Act and the electoral reform will be the immediate dissolution of this Chamber; and looking around at members sitting here to-day, I feel sure we are very satisfied with that prospect. The country will then have an opportunity of saying what Premier or what policy would be best for the State. I do not intend to deal with civil service reform. The Government have appointed a very excellent Commission to deal with that matter, and all I hope is that the Commission will diligently pursue its duties and quickly bring in a report to this Assembly. A very satisfactory thing about it is that all salaries to be raised as a result of the appointment of this Commission will be retrospective; therefore everyone who is in the civil service to-day can rely upon it that if he has the ability to merit an increase of salary

the increase will date from the 1st of this month. That is very gratifying, but we all know it will be the better for this State when reclassification takes place. With regard to the Coolgardie Water Scheme, it is pleasing to know that the tests have been satisfactory as far as Cunderdin, that 280 miles of line have been caulked, and we are satisfied that, from an engineering point of view at any rate, this is going to be a success. We have had a Royal Commission, and we shall in due course receive its report. I have no doubt the report will be very interesting, but we want to know whether this water scheme is going to be a success financially. Time alone can show that, but it is gratifying to know that the townships along the route are at the present time receiving water, and that the railways are deriving great benefit from the water supply. I would like to say, in passing, that I think a great deal of credit is due to the Minister for Works for the manner in which he has pushed forward this undertaking. It is also gratifying to know the Government have mentioned Sir John Forrest in the Speech, and I am sure that, when this great scheme is ready, all sections of the community will rejoice at the return of the right hon. gentleman to this State to open the work. In connection with the loan authorisations, provision is made for the reticulation of the Coolgardie Water Scheme, a dock at Fremantle, and water supply to Midland Junction, Fremantle, etc., and in connection with this I would say here I regret the Government have not seen fit at the present juncture to include in the Speech any reference to the Collie-Goldfields railway. Members will recollect that during last session I thought it my duty to place before the House certain facts in connection with the building of that line. Circumstances did not permit of a full discussion in relation to the matter, which I deeply regret, for otherwise that question might have been in a different position. I venture to think members are of my opinion—I hope they are—that the time is not far distant when it will be necessary to consider the question of the supply of fuel to the goldfields. In connection with that line, at the present juncture I would like to draw the attention of the gold-



fields and also the attention of the Ministry to the fact that the forests at Kalgoorlie and the forests all over the goldfields are being devastated, and wood is being used for the purpose for which coal is necessary; and in that connection I would like to know whether any man in this State is prepared to say where gold exists and where it does not. It is in all probability a fact that this timber is being taken from centres where, in years to come, you will require to take fuel for the working of large mines. That is a very important question, and one which should have the serious attention of members of the House and the Government. I have already requested the Government to send an agricultural expert to inspect the first section of the Collie-Goldfields railway, from Collie to Narrogin. I do not know whether the Government intend to do so or not. I hope they will do so. Perhaps it would be useless for me to stand here and tell you my experience or my knowledge of that particular country, but I feel satisfied that, from an agricultural point of view alone, when you have the full information before you the House will consider the first portion of this line absolutely justifiable. Recognising the financial position of the State, I would not at the present juncture ask the Government or the House to undertake more than the first section; but I hope that when the report is before members for the construction of that portion, namely 70 miles at a cost in round numbers of £150,000, there will be an expression of opinion from them in favour of it, and I trust that due provision will be made for it when the Loan Bill is before the House. The member for the Williams (Hon. F. H. Piesse) represents that portion of Western Australia, and I feel sure that he will back me up in all my remarks; and all agriculturists will say as I say, without any hesitation whatever, that there is not a tract of country for agricultural purposes in this State that is more deserving of the consideration of this House and the Government than this particular country I refer to. I feel certain there will be no party lines in connection with this matter. Those members on the opposite side of the House will give generous support in carrying out what is for the best interests of the State, as I

am always prepared to do as far as they are concerned, if they bring forward anything for the interests of the State. I am not going to labour the question, but simply make this assertion, that the traffic which would be carried over that portion of the line would more than repay working expenses, interest, and sinking fund in connection with that line. If that can be shown, as it will be—and, dealing with that, we find we have some magnificent agricultural land which requires opening up—the country and the House will be justified in supporting what will be for the advancement of the Collie coalfields. I have no axe to grind.

MR. TAYLOR: You have ground it so much that it is all worn away.

MR. EWING: I do not want the support of this House for anything unjust or unfair, and I am satisfied that, if the proposal be fair and just, members will support it and see that it becomes an assured fact. As to the forecast of legislation to be brought before this House, I need hardly say we shall have a better opportunity of discussing the measures when we have them before us in a tangible form. The programme seems to me very good; but we shall, as the session goes on, have an opportunity of reading the Bills, criticising them from our places in the Chamber, and supporting such of them as we may think likely to be beneficial to the State. I trust, in conclusion, that the deliberations of this Assembly may result in good to the country, whose interests members are supposed to conserve; and I have pleasure in moving the adoption of the following Address in reply to the Speech of His Excellency:—  
To His Excellency Sir Arthur Lawley, etc.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

We, the members of the Legislative Assembly 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 that 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.

MR. W. B. GORDON (South Perth): I have pleasure in seconding the motion. Perhaps it is fit that the hon. member

should move and that I should second this motion—

**MR. DOHERTY:** Quite fit and correct.

**MR. GORDON:** As we were both at one time sitting in Opposition. But, like myself,

*He fought his doubts, he gathered strength,  
He would not make his judgment blind.*

I may say at once that I have improved since I came over to this side of the House. [OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Oh, oh!] I have now gained that gentlemanly instinct in debate which I see hon. members opposite have not yet acquired. It is a matter for great rejoicing that His Most Gracious Majesty has recovered health and strength. The resignation of the Governor is very regrettable, and I feel confident he will take with him from this State the good wishes of the whole population. It is fitting that a position should be given him which will afford greater scope for his administrative powers, of which he has abundance; and the change will be his gain and our loss. Among the many events which happened during recess, the passing away of our late Premier overshadows all others. His manly qualities, ever prominent in all his actions, interwoven as they were with his kindness of heart, make his loss almost insupportable. The matter of the surplus is one for congratulation. Last year we were met with a deficit: this year we have a surplus. The Government have, in a determined manner, taken in hand the disposal of the surplus. I heartily approve of the grip they are taking of the surplus, and concur in the writing-off of any false balances from past years that may be found in the Stores Account or elsewhere. The erection of abattoirs will be welcomed by the public, who are labouring under heavy disadvantages by reason of the high price of meat, which disadvantages the establishment of abattoirs and refrigerating chambers will tend to remove. We shall not then be, as we are now, subservient to a ring, not of butchers altogether, but of those who control the meat market—those who happen to have the money or the credit to get stock. Any small butcher will then have an opportunity to buy a few sheep and kill and deliver them to the public, as he cannot do to-day. I say that if to-day any outsider, if almost any one of the retail butchers, bought a

few sheep and killed them, and wanted more next week, he could not get them. He is obliged to buy from the wholesale man. If the wholesale man is in a position to give retailers plenty of mutton, he will let them have it; but mutton may be scarce during one week, and they cannot get beef. The wholesale man will say: "You did not buy mutton from me last week, and you cannot get beef now." That is and has been the position in Western Australia, and it should be altered; and the company now being formed to secure a cheaper meat supply will, in conjunction with the abattoirs, be beneficial to the State.

**MR. DOHERTY:** Hear, hear. A knock for Holmes Brothers.

**MR. J. J. HOLMES:** We are retailers.

**MR. GORDON:** Another matter which is forced on my attention by the conduct of members opposite is the urgent necessity for a new lunatic asylum. The appointment of Mr. George as Commissioner of Railways is an action for which I admire the Government. [OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Oh, oh!] It was not in the usual order of things, and therefore they have taken a new departure: they were bold enough to do it, and I admire them for it. Only time can prove whether they have made a mistake; but if they have, they are responsible to the country. The appointment of Mr. George was not made to gain public favour; it was made in what the Government thought the best interests of the country, and they went against the feeling of the people, and backed their own opinion.

**MR. TAYLOR:** Against the Constitution, too.

**MR. GORDON:** And I am pleased to see they are willing to stand or fall by Mr. George's administration of the railways. The public look at the new Commissioner's salary of £1,500 per annum; but I maintain that Mr. George was making fully £1,500 per annum before he received this appointment.

**MR. DOHERTY:** It is not a question of "George."

**MR. CONNOR:** It is not the man.

**MR. GORDON:** I might learn something from sensible interjections; but if I may be permitted, I would point out, between the silly interjections with which I am interrupted, that every Rail-

way Commissioner in the other States receives more than, and some of them twice as much as, the salary of Mr. George. I am not now speaking to members of Parliament: I am speaking, through this House, to the country. Members here have sense enough to know that for such a position £1,500 a year is not a big salary. But this is the point at which the people look; and I should like the public to reflect that £1,500 a year is a very meagre salary for a man in the position of Mr. George. I should favour one Commissioner instead of three; however, I do not expect to have all my own way.

MR. TAYLOR: You can rest assured of that.

MR. GORDON: I am quite content to follow the Government, if they do depart from my line of policy.

MR. DOHERTY: You are one of the "blind followers."

MR. GORDON: I wish I were deaf to some of your interjections, anyhow. The question of the Coolgardie Water Scheme is practically settled.

MR. DOHERTY: It has not commenced yet.

MR. GORDON: I was hoping that the bone of contention which was fought over so vigorously last session, and which gave rise to so much bitter feeling, had disappeared; but it seems it has not, for this is something which the Opposition seem to hang on. However, we may congratulate ourselves that to a great extent the question is settled. I do not intend to deal any farther with the Governor's Speech. I regret I am not sitting with members on the Opposition side of the House, to take advantage of the glorious feeling they must have that now there is a majority on the Government side, there will be some good accomplished for the benefit of the country.

On motion by MR. NANSON, debate adjourned until the next sitting.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

On motion by the PREMIER, the House adjourned until the next Tuesday afternoon at 4:30 o'clock.

## Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 22nd July, 1902.

New Member.—Papers presented—Sessional Orders, Committees, etc.—Address-in-reply, second day of debate—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### NEW MEMBER.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY, who had not been present at the previous sitting, took and subscribed the oath of allegiance as required by law, and signed the members' roll.

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER FOR LANDS: 1, Regulations under "The Trade Unions Act, 1902." 2, Regulations under "The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1902." 3, Report of Royal Commission appointed to inquire into and report upon the conduct and completion of the Coolgardie Water Scheme. 4, Report on Dealings with Class B Reserves, as directed by "The Permanent Reserves Act, 1899." 5, Regulations under "The Land Act, 1898," and Amendments. 6, By-laws under "The Cemeteries Act, 1897," and Amendments; "Parks and Reserves Act, 1895"; "Roads Act, 1888," and Amendments.

Order: To lie on the table.

#### SESSIONAL ORDERS.

##### SITTING DAYS AND HOURS.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. A. Jameson) moved:

That, unless otherwise ordered, the House do meet for the despatch of business on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, at 4:30 p.m., and sit until 6:30 p.m. if necessary, and if requisite from 7:30 p.m. onwards.

Put and passed.

#### STANDING COMMITTEES.

On motions by the MINISTER FOR LANDS, Committees for the session were appointed as follow:

LIBRARY COMMITTEE.—The President, with Hon. H. Briggs, and the mover; with leave to sit during any adjournment and during recess, and authority to act