

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Monday, 12th March, 1888.

Message (No. 5): Forwarding despatches re Responsible Government—Notice of Motion on the subject—Death of Mr. Alexander McRae—Postal communication with Yilgarn and other alleged auriferous centres—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at seven o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

MESSAGE (No. 5): DESPATCHES re RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

THE SPEAKER notified the receipt of the following Message from His Excellency the Governor:—

"The Governor has the honor to enclose, herewith, an extract from the *Government Gazette* of the 26th of January last, and a copy of the *Government Gazette Extraordinary* of the 6th of February last, containing published Despatches (No. 130, of the 12th December, 1887, and No. 3, of the 3rd of January, 1888) from the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, on the subject of a change of the Constitution of this colony to the form known as Responsible Government.

"2. The Governor requests that the Honorable the Legislative Council will take these Despatches into consideration, and will favor him with their views on the very important subject to which they relate.

"3. The Governor's opinions in this matter are already before Your Honorable House (Council Paper No. 1 of this Session), and he considers it unnecessary, at the present time, to offer any further remarks.

"Government House, 12th March, 1888."

MR. PARKER, in giving notice of his intention to move certain resolutions dealing with Sir Henry Holland's despatches on the subject of Responsible Government, said he might be permitted to state that in doing so he was not acting on behalf of the Reform or any other party; he looked upon this question of Responsible Government as having passed the stage when it should be treated as a party question, and that

all the members of that House should be united in one desire to obtain the best possible constitution for Western Australia. He might also say that he did not bring forward these resolutions as the leader of the elected members. He placed them before the House simply so that hon. members might direct their attention to the subject at the earliest possible opportunity. Not that he was wedded to the wording of these particular resolutions, though, in principle, he was to some extent. He had named Monday next as the day for bringing them under the consideration of the House,—not that he cared whether it was Monday next or Monday fortnight: he was sure they would all wish that every consideration should be given to this most important question, and should it be the desire of the House to postpone the consideration of the question to a future date he should offer no opposition to it himself. He trusted that hon. members would pardon him in making this explanation with reference to so important a subject as these despatches, for the consideration of which the House had adjourned in January last.

DEATH OF MR. A. McRAE.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser), in asking to be allowed, without notice, to move a resolution, said that when he stated what the purport of the resolution was, he was sure every hon. member would be in accord with it. Since they had last met, as they were all aware, they had lost from amongst them one who had been known to them for many years,—a gentleman who had been one of the most energetic of their pioneer settlers, and who, as a member of that House, had earned for himself the respect of all. He was sure it would be the unanimous desire of hon. members that some tribute should be paid to the memory of their late friend, and the resolution which he asked permission to move, without notice, was as follows: "That this Council has heard with much regret of the death of the late member for the North, Mr. Alexander McRae, and desires to express to his family its sincere sympathy with them in their loss."

MR. PARKER said it was with a great deal of regret that he rose to second the

resolution. He felt that in the loss of Mr. McRae they had lost not only a friend, but had lost one whom the colony could scarcely spare, one who, amongst the pioneers of our Northern settlements, had also devoted a considerable portion of his time and of his energies in furthering the interests of the colony as a member of that Council. He had attended its sessions for several years, sometimes at great personal inconvenience to himself; and he was a member by whose counsel they had always profited, and whose voice was always listened to with attention. It was with great regret they had all learnt that, since their adjournment, only a few weeks ago, they had lost Mr. McRae's services—the services of one whom they could ill spare; and he was sure that the resolution expressed the sincere feelings of every member on that side of the House.

Mr. HENSMAN said he desired, before the question was put, to give his own hearty support to the resolution. He happened to be at Geraldton on the day when Mr. McRae died; and at a public meeting that night, when the fact was mentioned before the principal residents of that district, he might say there was a unanimous and earnest feeling of regret at the loss which the colony had suffered. He was not himself able to speak of Mr. McRae as a colonist, but he was in a position to say a few words with regard to him as a legislator; and perhaps it was worthy of remark that the late member for the North was a man whom you could always rely upon to follow up his word with his vote. That might appear an unimportant thing, and a strange remark to make; but it was characteristic of the man, and showed that he had the courage of his opinions. He thought that in Mr. McRae the House had lost a most useful and independent member, and the colony a most worthy citizen.

Mr. A. FORREST said that having known Mr. McRae for many years, not only as a legislator but as one of the pioneers of the Northern district when that district was at its worst, he felt that they had lost not only a member who had represented the district for a number of years, but one of those few men whom this colony could ill afford to lose—a pattern settler, an intrepid explorer, and

one who had taken an active interest in the opening up of new territory. As a colonist he had won the respect and esteem of all who knew him, from the highest to the lowest. As a member of that House, representing a Northern constituency, he had not been swayed by the influence of any section of the House, and although always ready to advocate the interests of the North he had always shown himself ready to give way if he was satisfied that those interests were antagonistic to the interests of the colony at large. He did not think they ever had a man in that House who had taken such an independent position, and who gave a more disinterested and straightforward vote, even although his vote might occasionally be to the prejudice of his own constituency. Mr. McRae was a man who had the interests of the whole colony at heart, and, as one who had known him intimately for years, he wished to place on record an expression of his esteem for the late member for the North not only as a legislator but as a colonist.

Mr. RICHARDSON said that in endorsing the kind and sympathetic expressions of esteem and respect which had been uttered in relation to his late colleague, the member for the North, he might say that he had had the pleasure, and he might add the profit, of having known Mr. McRae for many years. They had both gone to school together, in Victoria, for many years,—in fact, he might say they had been educated at the same school; and since then he had had the pleasure of being closely connected with him in various enterprises and undertakings in this colony, during the last 23 years. They had both directed their steps towards the North about the same time, and since then they had shared with each other many of the hardships and vicissitudes incidental to pioneering life; and he had always found Alexander McRae an honest and straightforward friend, and a man worthy of the highest esteem. As a legislator, although he may not have been a loquacious member, he was a thinking member, and what he said was to the point and worth listening to. He was a member, too, who always spoke what he meant. Beyond that, Mr. McRae was possessed of sufficient public spirit, and of sufficient independence as well as public spirit, that if a question

came before the House which in his opinion was in the interests of the colony at large rather than in the interests of the North, he would not think of attempting to sacrifice the general interests of the country to purely local interests. He thought this was a special feature of Mr. McRae's character which they should all endeavor to copy. He thought it was very necessary they should all bear in mind that, although they were sent there as the representatives of certain districts, they should not be always fighting tooth and nail for the interests of their respective districts, but recognise the fact that there were occasions when they should regard themselves not as mere delegates from their own constituencies, but as the representatives of the public at large. He had much pleasure in supporting the resolution.

MR. MARMION thought they must all entertain a feeling of regret that, after years of hard toil in the work of pioneering, and when he had attained the zenith of his career, and had apparently before him prospects of a period of rest and usefulness, their late friend should have succumbed, as he had done. Everyone admitted that Mr. McRae was a man who was a credit to the colony, who was a good friend to everyone, a man whose advice was worth following and whose opinion was worth having. He was sure he was a man who would be largely missed at the North. He believed from what he had heard from many people from the North that there was not a man in the district whose loss would be more felt than would be the loss caused by the death of Alexander McRae. Personally, he had had the pleasure of being a friend of his for years, and he was a man whose opinion he valued. He was sure they must all regard his absence from amongst them as a sad event, and that they all sympathised with those whom he had left behind him.

The resolution was adopted unanimously.

POSTAL COMMUNICATION WITH THE EASTERN DISTRICTS GOLDFIELDS.

MR. MARMION, with leave, without notice, asked the Colonial Secretary if the Government intended to make any

arrangement for establishing postal or police service between the settled parts and the places where the recent gold discoveries had been made to the Eastward, at Yilgarn, Wongan, and other spots. He thought it was very desirable that some steps should be taken to provide a weekly postal service, as soon as possible.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said that, as yet, although the matter had been under consideration, no steps had been taken to establish a mail service between the Eastern Districts and the recently reputed gold country. He only hoped that circumstances might necessitate the establishment of such a service, shortly.

The House adjourned at eight o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Wednesday, 14th March, 1888.

Plans for Extension of Fremantle Jetty—Contract for Construction of a Telegraph Line from Derby to the Goldfields—Suspense Account—Harbor Works, Fremantle: Correspondence with Sir John Coode—Mail Services between Derby and the Goldfields—Re-enactment of 16th Vict., No. 14 (Licenses to kill Kangaroos)—Message (No. 6): Forwarding Correspondence with Sir John Coode—Message (No. 7): Fortification of Albany—Message (No. 8): Coastal Surveys—Leave of Absence to the Member for Geraldton (Mr. Keane)—Revised Estimates, 1888: Financial Statement—Tenders for Construction of Telegraph from the Goldfields to Wyndham—Victoria Public Library Bill: second reading—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at seven o'clock, p.m.

PLANS FOR THE EXTENSION OF FREMANTLE JETTY.

MR. SHENTON, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works when he would be prepared to lay on the table of the House the plans for the extension of the Fremantle Jetty?