

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

### FIRST SESSION OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT.

#### OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

*The First Session of the Fourth Parliament under Responsible Government was convened for the despatch of business on the 28th June, 1901.*

*Parliament was opened by His Excellency the Governor.*

#### Legislative Council,

*Friday, 28th June, 1901.*

Opening of Parliament by Commissioners—Swearing-in of Members; new Members; Minister for Lands—Governor's opening Speech—Roads Act Amendment Bill, first reading—Papers Presented—Address-in-Reply moved—Adjournment.

#### OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Legislative Council met at 12 noon, pursuant to proclamation, which was read by the Clerk of Parliaments.

#### COMMISSIONERS.

HIS EXCELLENCY'S COMMISSIONERS (His Honour Acting Chief Justice Stone and His Honour Justice Hensman) having entered the Chamber, a Message was sent to the Legislative Assembly requesting the presence of members in the Council Chamber.

Members of the Legislative Assembly having accordingly arrived, the Acting Chief Justice (as senior Commissioner) read the following Speech:—

HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

We have it in command from His Excellency the Governor to notify to you, with profound regret, the demise of Her late Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, of blessed and glorious memory, and we have it also in command to inform you that, at three o'clock this

afternoon, the causes of His Excellency's calling this Parliament will be declared to you; and it being necessary that a Speaker of the Legislative Assembly should be first chosen, it is His Excellency's pleasure that you, Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly, repair to the place where you are to sit, and having been duly sworn by the Commissioner appointed by his Excellency, you do elect your Speaker, and notify the same to His Excellency. Owing to the demise of the Crown as aforesaid, and by virtue of the provisions of Section 22 of the Constitution Act, 1899, members of both the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly are required to take and subscribe the Oath or Affirmation of Allegiance to His Most Gracious Majesty King Edward VII.

#### SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

Consequent on the demise of Queen Victoria and the accession of King Edward VII., the members of the Legislative Council took the oath of allegiance to His Majesty the King. All the members present swore allegiance, the Hon. J. E. Richardson making affirmation.

#### NEW MEMBERS.

The following members, elected since the prorogation, took and subscribed the oath of allegiance as required by law, and signed the members' roll:—C. Sommers, B. C. O'Brien, and J. D. Connolly.

The Commissioners then left the Chamber, and the President took the Chair.

Commission was read by the Clerk, authorising the President to administer the oath to members not already sworn.

## MINISTER FOR LANDS.

The CLERK read a notification that the Hon. C. Sommers had been appointed Minister for Lands.

THE PRESIDENT left the Chair until 2:50 o'clock, p.m.

## THE GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

At 3 o'clock His Excellency the Governor entered the Council Chamber, and the members of the Legislative Assembly having also arrived in obedience to summons, His Excellency was pleased to deliver the following Speech:—

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

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

It is with profound regret that I remind you of the loss the Empire has sustained through the death of Her Most Gracious Majesty the late Queen Victoria, of blessed and glorious memory.

Her brilliant and constitutional reign marks an epoch not only in the history of the British nation, but of the world.

The accession of His Most Gracious Majesty King Edward the Seventh is an event which assures the continuance of sound government and the recognition of those constitutional principles which distinguished the last reign.

The inauguration of the Commonwealth of Australia at the beginning of the year consummated the expectations of a progressive and ambitious people, and laid the foundation of what, I believe, will be in time a great nation.

The loyalty and affection by which the people of this State have, in common with their neighbours, become bound to the mother country will undoubtedly be intensified under the established Commonwealth.

To mark the high appreciation of the efforts of his subjects in Australasia and his sympathy in their aspirations, His Majesty the King has encouraged and sanctioned the visit of Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, and during the next few weeks the people of this State will have an opportunity of according them a fitting and loyal welcome.

It has fallen to my lot to seek the advice of other Ministers in place of those who greeted me upon my arrival, and whilst I thank the latter gentlemen for their past services, I trust that my present advisers will prove themselves as capable as their predecessors of controlling the destinies of the State, and of promoting the interests of our community.

The establishment of the Federal Government deprives the State of the control of several Departments, amongst the most important of which are those relating to Customs, Post and Telegraphs, and Defence. Restrictions are placed upon the powers of the State with regard to taxation. In these circumstances a re-arrangement of Departments becomes necessary. This question now engages the attention of my Ministers. Economy in the administration of affairs will be their first care, but no attempt will be made to check or interfere with the progress of Public Works already commenced. Obligations incurred by my late advisers will be faithfully carried out by my present Ministry. Such works as the Coolgardie Water Scheme, the Fremantle Harbour Works, Railways, and other works in course of construction, will be completed with all due despatch consistent with the raising of necessary funds for the purpose.

The construction of no new railways will be proposed to you during this session, though the expediency of surveys for additional lines will be submitted for your consideration. Such lines, when constructed, will form part of the great trunk system of State railways, and data to be acquired by these surveys will at all times be useful for the guidance of Parliament.

The equipment of existing lines of railway with a sufficiency of rolling stock has already engaged the attention of my Ministers, and Parliament will be asked to vote a sum of money to provide the necessary number of engines, carriages, and wagons for traffic requirements.

The establishment of a Board, comprising men of responsibility and experience, to report to Parliament as to the necessity or otherwise of contemplated public works seems to my Ministers to be a matter well worthy of consideration. Placing the Railways and Works Departments under separate Ministers will, it is

hoped, prove an advantage. A more complete control over the expenditure of loan money can then be exercised by the Minister for Works, whilst the Minister for Railways will be able to devote more attention to questions of traffic.

The Minister for Lands takes his seat in the Legislative Council, and will there be in touch with the majority of gentlemen who so well represent the great agricultural interests.

The expenditure of money beyond the votes authorised by Parliament must be discouraged as an encroachment upon the great constitutional privilege which recognises Parliament, and Parliament alone, as the body to grant supplies for public purposes.

Provision must necessarily be made for unforeseen expenditure, but Excess Bills need not include sums of such magnitude as those mentioned in Bills proposed during the last Parliament.

The incursion of rabbits to the State from the Eastward has unhappily commenced, and you will be asked to consider the best means to check the ravages of these pests as quickly and effectually as possible.

My Ministers deem it advisable to revoke the regulations which prohibited the importation of certain kinds of fruit from the neighbouring States, and other regulations containing proper restrictions are being framed. Due regard has been had to the interests of both the consumer and producer, and precautions taken to minimise the risk of introducing insect pests and diseases common to fruit.

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

The finances of the State will require your earnest and close consideration.

The revenue from all sources continues to be well maintained, but the requirements of the people are numerous and demand heavy expenditure. The financial year will close on the 30th of this month, and there will be a considerable deficit on the year's transactions, the exact particulars of which cannot be ascertained for a few days.

This circumstance need cause no alarm, as with due economy during the next few months appropriations can be made from revenue to fully recoup the deficiency.

You will be asked at once to grant temporary supplies for the due administration of the State departments until the annual Estimates are placed before you.

A Loan Bill will be proposed to you authorising the State to borrow a sum sufficient to continue and complete public works already in hand.

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

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

By the Census which has recently been taken, the population of the State is shown to be 182,553, and there are evidences that it is steadily increasing.

To settle people on the soil and encourage good feeling between the consumers on the goldfields and the producers in the coastal districts will be the aim of my Ministers. They propose to extend the system of cold storage, and to offer greater facilities for the carriage of perishable articles on the railways, and will encourage the immigration of persons skilled in labour required upon farms, vineyards, and orchards.

You will be asked to consider a scheme for the adequate supply of water for the Metropolitan districts. Such a supply is urgently required both for the residents and shipping in the port of Fremantle.

Many of the statutes require to be consolidated and amended, and this matter will be taken in hand with all possible despatch.

No great volume of new legislation will be proposed to you during this session, but you will be asked to pass laws dealing with the following subjects: Consent of the State to the construction of a Transcontinental railway through this State by the Federal Government; amendment of the Roads Act; amendment of the Public Service Act, and also of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act; consolidation of our existing social legislation under a more comprehensive Factories Act; amendment of the Electoral Act, establishing a system of electors' rights; the abolition of plural voting and redistribution of seats; a Bill to validate the Acts of last session; and a Criminal Code, including the consolidation and amendment of the law relating to acts of Justices of the Peace.

It is probable that the whole of this proposed legislation may not be passed during this session.

My Ministers realise that, owing to so short a time having elapsed since they took office, their proposals to Parliament during this session will be very limited. Their duty will be to master departmental detail, with a view to a thorough reorganisation of the Civil service, and the more economical administration of State affairs.

I declare this session of Parliament opened, and confidently trust that, aided by Divine guidance, you will materially advance the well-being of the people.

#### ROADS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS** (Hon. C. Sommers): In accordance with custom, and with a view to asserting the privileges of this House to initiate legislation, I move (without notice) for leave to introduce a Bill entitled "An Act to amend the Roads Act 1888."

Bill introduced, and read a first time.

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By **THE PRESIDENT**: Report by the Auditor General on the public accounts for the financial year ended 30th June, 1900.

By **THE MINISTER FOR LANDS**: 1, Report of Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the Rabbit Question; 2, By-laws under the Coolgardie Goldfields Water Supply Construction Act; 3, Regulations as to the control of sea jetties; 4, Reports (annual) Collector of Customs; 5, Chief Inspector of Explosives; 6, Rottnest Prison; 7, Fremantle Lunatic Asylum; 8, Fishing Industry; 9, Education Department; 10, Superintendent of Public Charities; 11, Superintendent Government Labour Bureau; 12, Chief Inspector Stock Department; 13, Operations of the Agricultural Bank; 14, Woods and Forests Department; 15, Gaols and Prisoners.

Ordered to lie on the table.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

**HON. H. LUKIN** (East Province): Sir, I have much pleasure in moving the adoption of an Address in reply to His Excellency's Speech; and I do so with greater pleasure because I recognise the predominant note in the Speech is one of

caution, and I am positively certain that all the well-wishers of this State must admit that at this particular juncture we need to move with extreme caution. I am sure this House is very pleased to notice in the opening paragraphs of the Speech that reference is made to the great loss the whole nation has sustained by the death of our beloved Queen. I feel it is impossible for any one of us to estimate the blessings or benefits that have accrued to the whole nation throughout her late Majesty's long and beneficent reign, and if our present King Edward VII. only approaches in a small degree the level of his illustrious mother during his reign, the whole nation will have something to be considerably thankful for. It is also mentioned in the Speech, what we all know, that we are shortly to have the honour of entertaining the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York in our State. We cannot hope to approach anything like the lavish display made in their honour in the sister States; nevertheless our welcome will be as heartfelt and genuine as that given in the sister States. His Excellency remarks in his Speech that since he has come to this State he has had to seek the advice of other Ministers, and these other Ministers we now know have taken office. I know this House will agree with me when I say the new Government are tackling a very ugly business: the legacy that has been left to them is one which very few of us would care to tackle, and I think the thanks of the country are due to the new Ministers for taking up the work which they have done and in the spirit they have shown. If the present Administration do not exercise, in all affairs, the strictest economy, I am afraid we soon shall have trouble. I am also very glad to see in the Speech that the Government are not prepared at the present time to go in for new or fresh railway construction, but are rather turning their attention to more fully equipping our lines; and if they do this I am sure they will receive the thanks of the whole community, because there has been so much trouble throughout the whole of the country, and trade and commerce have been suffering for the last 12 months for the want of rolling stock. The necessity for more rolling stock has been the cause of more trouble and loss

than anything else to the trading community. I also think this House has cause for congratulation in having as its leader the present Minister for Lands (Hon. C. Sommers), because nearly all members of the House are either land-owners or considerably interested in land; and it must be for the benefit of the whole House in its counsels, and for the benefit of the country at large, to have the Minister for Lands in such close touch with us. As far as we know, the Minister is an untried man; but from what little he has let us know of his policy, I think we have every reason for giving him our confidence. At all events, he is a worker who, I am positively certain, will do his best; and on this ground alone I think he ought to have our fullest support. Another matter which I am much pleased to see mentioned in the Speech is that the present Government intend to do their best to put a check on the unauthorised expenditure which, for the last few years, has been going on in this State. This expenditure has, I know, been a very sore point to many hon. members, and to a great many people outside the House. Unquestionably, there has been a tremendous amount of unauthorised expenditure, which was altogether unjustified, and on which if the present Ministry can manage to put a check, they will deserve the thanks of the whole community. Another matter touched on in the Speech is the incursion of rabbits into our State. This is a matter with which I do not feel competent in any way to deal. Like the Government, I have been endeavouring to get all possible information on the subject; but it is a matter in which one feels very doubtful how to act. Nevertheless, there is one fact which must be obvious to every hon. member, that whatever is to be done in this respect should be done quickly and decisively, if done at all. The Speech also deals with the regulations prohibiting the importation of fruit. I for one—although I shall get any amount of abuse for it—am inclined to think that fruit should be admitted, with proper restrictions. [SEVERAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] By using proper precautions, we manage to keep other pests at arm's length. Why cannot we do the same with fruit pests? It is evident that the whole country feels very sorely the pro-

hibition of imported fruit; and if, as the present Ministry have decided to do, it be admitted with proper precautions both at the port of export and here at the port of landing, I do not see why it may not come in with perfect safety, and with benefit to the public. Farther on, the Speech states that we shall close the current financial year with a deficit, the amount of which is not known. I wish it could have been definitely stated.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: It is only a handful.

HON. H. LUKIN: Now that we have joined the Commonwealth, we must recollect that the whole of our circumstances are altered. The deficit, heretofore, would have been nothing; but now I look on it as a serious matter. (A MEMBER: Why?) Although I quite agree with the statement in the Speech that there is no cause for alarm, still I consider that there is any amount of room for serious caution, without being unduly alarmed. And, bearing on that, there is another fact mentioned farther on in the Speech, which must forcibly strike the House. By the last census, our population is shown to be 182,553. All hon. members will recognise that our population is increasing very slowly, while our debt is increasing by leaps and bounds. These are two matters which should always be thought of in conjunction, and it is on this ground that I wish to view the present financial position of the State with considerable caution, not to say alarm. I am glad to see the Governor mention that steps will be taken towards altering and consolidating many of our statutes. To anyone who may have occasionally to administer those statutes, the condition in which they are is very obvious. Here, in trying local cases, we have often to go back to old Acts of Queen Elizabeth's time, and even farther; and such Acts do not properly apply to us or to our existing conditions. At the close of the Speech, it is mentioned that a number of Bills will be brought down, such as an amendment of the Roads Act, and Bills for establishing a system of electors' rights, for the abolition of plural voting, and for the redistribution of seats. I shall touch on only one of these subjects, the redistribution of seats. It must now be obvious to every member that our local Parliament is, or will be,

under our Federal Government, shorn of many of its obligations and of much of the work it had to do; and it is absolutely ridiculous to suppose that the country will submit to the tax of finding salaries for the present number of members in either House. To do so is more than can be expected of the country. Before long, we shall be obliged to have a redistribution of seats, and in both Houses the number of members will certainly be cut down. I now move that the following Address-in-reply be presented to His Excellency:—

To His Excellency the Honourable Sir Arthur Lawley, Knight, Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor, etc., etc.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

We, the Members of the Legislative Council in Parliament assembled, have heard with profound regret of the demise of Her late Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, of blessed and glorious memory, and we desire to assure you of our loyalty and devotion to Her successor, His Most Gracious Majesty King Edward VII.

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 by Divine guidance we may advance the well-being of the people.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY (North-East): Sir, it is with considerable diffidence that I rise to second the Address-in-reply; and as a member entirely new to this House, I trust that you and the House generally will extend to me that indulgence which is, I believe, always extended to new members. It is not my intention to detain you at any length; but I feel it necessary to make a few remarks on the very important deliverance we have heard to-day. The Government have certainly put forward an excellent programme; but it may reasonably be doubted if the whole of the legislation proposed in the Speech can be enacted in what promises to be a short session. I may say at the outset, I believe the country is thoroughly with the Government in their desire to introduce those domestic reforms which, of late years, have become a crying necessity. I have been returned to this House some two months later than the recent

general election; and I can assure hon. members that the feeling throughout the province I represent is that the Government should get a fair trial in carrying out those necessary reforms, and in introducing new legislation for such objects as cheapening the price of fruit and meat, giving us better administration in the various departments of the public service, and straightening our finances. I might here add a word of congratulation to the Hon. the Minister of Lands and leader of the House on his appointment to Cabinet rank, also to the Hon. Dr. Jameson on his appointment to the Ministry, which appointment is, I take it, a distinct compliment to this House, only one member of which has hitherto had a voice in the Cabinet. Coming to the Speech itself, I may say, in common with all who study the affairs of this State, that we await with considerable interest the financial proposals of the Government. Of course I am well aware that we shall have to wait till after the end of the month, when the Treasurer delivers his Budget Speech, before we can have the complete details. I notice, too, with satisfaction, that those works authorised by the late Government are to be pushed on with all possible despatch. There is special mention made of the Coolgardie water scheme. I do not think the boon of a good water supply to the goldfields can be over-estimated; and as the work has been authorised, it should be completed. If the necessary money be forthcoming, and the same or more energy be put into the work than was previously exhibited, I think the water ought to be flowing in the different goldfields towns within 12 months. I must say I rather regret the announcement in the Speech that we are to have no new railways. [A MEMBER: Hear, hear.] Speaking for the eastern goldfields, I may say it has almost become a necessity of their situation that the present lines should be extended farther inland; in fact, the large mines at Boulder and Kalgoorlie will soon be in difficulties in respect of their supply of firewood, unless these extensions be speedily undertaken. Of course I am well aware of the state of the finances, and I sympathise with the position of the Government; but the splendid profits accruing from the

present goldfields lines should, I think, be a sufficient inducement to the new Treasurer to borrow or otherwise raise some money to build us new lines to populous centres. I now refer more particularly to a line from the Eastern goldfields to Esperance Bay.

HON. J. E. RICHARDSON: Where is the populous centre there?

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: Such a line would not only give us a railway to our natural port, but would give to fields like Norseman and Dundas those facilities of transit for want of which they are at present languishing. I notice too with much pleasure that the railways have been placed under the control of a separate Minister. I certainly think this is a step in the right direction, and it will give that important industry, the railways, a chance of showing what it can do, which I maintain has not been given it before. I would also like to see a change made in the management of the railways by taking them from their present control, and placing them in the hands of an independent commissioner. This system has been tried, with very gratifying results, in the Eastern States, and I know of no reason why it should not act as well here; at any rate, I think most hon. members will agree with me that a change from the present management is desirable. I notice too with pleasure that the expenditure of unauthorised money is to cease. This certainly is a step in the right direction, and I must say that I cordially indorse the sentiment expressed in the Speech that Parliament, and Parliament alone, should authorise the expenditure of money. Referring to the sixteenth paragraph, I notice the prohibition on the importation of fruit is to be abolished. It is high time that this absurd restriction, imposed by the late Government, was removed. At the same time it is pleasing to notice that the Government intend to watch the interests of the fruitgrowers by seeing that a proper supervision is kept over imported fruit, so as not to unnecessarily endanger orchards by the introduction of the codlin moth or any other pests. Referring to the twenty-second paragraph, I notice it is the intention of the Government to extend the system of cold storage, and to give greater facilities for carrying perishable goods on the rail-

ways. This certainly is a step in the right direction, and I do not know that the Government could carry out any system which would so tend to cheapen the fruit and meat supplies on the goldfields than the one to which I have referred. The price of fruit and perishable goods on the goldfields has been kept up by the dilatory manner in which the railway authorities attend to their business. If there were a fast train, with cold storage vans attached, run daily from Perth to the goldfields, the people there would get cheap fruit and fresh food. A train could be run to the goldfields in something like 17 hours, while now the trains containing perishable goods take from 48 to 50 hours, if not longer, to travel to the goldfields. I notice with satisfaction that a Bill is to be introduced giving consent to the construction of the transcontinental railway through this State, and I am pleased indeed to see that the Government do not consider that this is purely a federal matter. In regard to this railway, we in this State of Western Australia, have to be aware of the grasping policy of New South Wales and Queensland, and I take it to be the duty of every member of this House to see that Sir John Forrest and our other Federal representatives receive cordial and sincere assistance from this State. I notice, too, it is proposed to give us an amendment of the electoral law. This, too, is a step in the right direction. At the general election held in April the rolls were in a terrible condition, containing the names of hundreds of people who had left the districts for years, while at the revision courts held in May names of voters who had been resident in a district for years were struck off the roll. I think the arbitrary system of leaving it to the registrar to object to a name being on the roll should be abolished, and that notice should be given to the electors. I see that the system of electors' rights is to be established. This method has been found to work with great success in the other States, at any rate in New South Wales, and I believe in Victoria. The elector's right system will be a very big improvement on our present method of enrolling voters. Another amendment might be made in the Constitution Act in regard to the time of holding the

revision courts. According to the law the courts are held in May, and in connection with the election at which I was returned the revision court was held after the writ had been issued, and between the date of nomination and the polling day. In some instances as many as fifty per cent. of the names were removed from the rolls, and until two or three days before the election it was not known who were to vote and who were not. This is a question which affects this House more particularly, as the elections take place in May. Whatever rolls are in force, when the writ has been issued the roll in force then should be used for the election. I have very much pleasure in seconding the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

On motion by HON. M. L. MOSS, debate adjourned until the next sitting day.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

On motion by the MINISTER FOR LANDS, the House adjourned at five minutes to four until 4:30 o'clock on the next Tuesday afternoon.

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## Legislative Assembly,

Friday, 28th June, 1901.

Meeting of the Assembly.—Message: Opening proceedings—Swearing-in of Members—Election of Speaker, presentation—Governor's opening Speech—Papers presented—Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Bill, first reading—Address-in-Reply, moved—Adjournment.

#### MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Legislative Assembly met at noon, pursuant to proclamation by his Excellency the Governor, which proclamation was read by the Clerk.

#### MESSAGE: OPENING PROCEEDINGS.

A Message from the Commissioners appointed by the Governor to do all

things necessary for the opening of Parliament requested the attendance of members of the Legislative Assembly in the Legislative Council Chamber; and hon. members having accordingly proceeded to that Chamber and heard the Commission read, they returned to the Legislative Chamber.

#### SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

HIS HONOUR JUSTICE HENSMAN, having been commissioned by the Governor, appeared in the Chamber to administer to members the oath of allegiance to His Majesty.

THE CLERK (Mr. C. Lee Steere) produced the election writs, showing the return of 49 members as representatives of the Legislative Assembly (one representative having died since the election).

The members present took and subscribed the oath, as required by statute, and signed the roll.

#### ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

MR. WALTER JAMES (East Perth) said: It now becomes the duty and privilege of this House to appoint a Speaker to preside over our deliberations during the course of this Parliament. For many years now we have had that Chair occupied by Sir James Lee Steere, and I think we should all regret the arrival of the time when he will no longer be able to occupy it. I have the pleasure and honour of moving the re-election of Sir James Lee Steere as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly; and I am certain the House will rejoice if he sees his way to accept the high office.

MR. C. HARPER (Beverley): I rise with pleasure to second the proposal of the member for East Perth. For many years having sat in this Parliament, I with all other members have realised the strength and ability which Sir James Lee Steere has brought to bear in his position as Speaker of this House; and I am sure we should all extremely regret any accident which might prevent his taking that position.

No other member having been proposed,

SIR JAMES LEE STEERE rose in his place and said: Honourable members, I desire to say that I am deeply sensible