

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

FOURTH SESSION OF THE THIRD PARLIAMENT.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Fourth Session of the Third Parliament under Responsible Government was convened for the despatch of business on the 21st June, 1899.

Parliament was opened by His Excellency the Governor.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 21st June, 1899.

Opening of Parliament—Governor's Speech—Resignation (East Province)—Contagious Diseases (Bees) Bill, first reading—Papers presented—Address in Reply to the Governor's Speech—Adjournment.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

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

THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

HIS EXCELLENCY, Sir Gerard Smith, K.C.M.G., entered the Council Chamber, and the members of the Legislative Assembly having also attended in the Chamber, obediently to summons, His Excellency delivered the following Speech:—

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

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

I am glad to have the pleasure of meeting you again, and to inform you that the financial position of the Colony

is sound, and that its material interests are progressing satisfactorily.

2. The question of the Federation of Australia has received a great deal of attention from the people of Eastern Australia and Tasmania during the recess. The public feeling in favour of a closer union is almost universal, and that being so, the only question which will require your careful consideration in the event of the Commonwealth Bill being adopted by the rest of Australia, is whether the Bill so safeguards our financial interests at the present time as to justify us, as prudent people, with great responsibilities, giving up, to a very large extent, the control and management of our fiscal policy. The Commonwealth Bill, as amended at the Conference of Premiers held in Melbourne in February last, has been forwarded to every elector in the Colony, and so soon as it has been accepted by all the other Colonies of Australia will be submitted for your consideration. My Ministers are of opinion that the Bill, as now framed, is far less favourable to Western Australia than to any of the other Colonies, and this is freely admitted by all the leaders of the movement in the other Australian Colonies, and by all who have given the financial clauses any close consideration. It will, therefore, be obligatory on you to give that portion of the Bill the closest and most careful examination.

3. The Gold Mining Industry is expanding beyond the most sanguine anticipations. Last year nearly four millions sterling of gold were obtained and exported, and during the present year the production is expected to reach about six millions sterling. The dividends paid by gold mining companies during last year amounted to about £800,000, and during this year already dividends have been declared amounting to about £700,000. The payment of these magnificent dividends has resulted in bringing the Colony into great prominence as a field for investment and enterprise.

4. The establishment of public batteries by the Government has been commenced, and already nine have been erected and are at work at the following places:—Norseman, Bulong, Mulline, Yerilla, Mt. Ida, Leonora, Lennonville, Tuckanarra, and Yalgoo; one has also been promised for Peak Hill. Considerable difficulties have been experienced owing to insufficiency of water and the isolation of the localities where the batteries have been erected; but it is believed that these difficulties will be soon overcome, and that the batteries will prove of great benefit to the gold mining industry. My Government consider that more public batteries should be established.

5. The Coolgardie Exhibition was opened on the 21st March, and has been visited by 70,000 people. It has had the effect of directing special attention to the extent and richness of the gold-fields, and to the mineral, agricultural, timber, and other resources of the Colony, and it has also been the means of producing an exhibit of gold and gold-bearing rocks which has hitherto been seldom witnessed. A Commission has been appointed to arrange for the suitable representation of the Colony at Paris next year, and it is hoped that this magnificent exhibit may be kept intact, and forwarded to the Paris Exhibition.

6. The development of the Collie Coalfield has been marked by most gratifying results, and already 600 tons a week are being used on the Government Railways. It is anticipated that in a short time this coal will serve all local requirements, and will save an import of the value at the present time of nearly £100,000 a year, besides giving employment to a large number of people.

To meet the requirements of this rapidly developing Coalfield, considerable lengths of sidings have been laid into the Westralian Wallsend Colliery, as well as to the Collie Proprietary Company's Mine; and a large marshalling yard has been laid down at Brunswick. Our coal promises to be one of the great products of the Colony, and will largely assist our mining and manufacturing industries. The Greenbushes Tinfields are also attracting attention, and good results are being obtained.

7. The works in connection with the Helena River Reservoir are being proceeded with as rapidly as local conditions permit. A large amount of the preparatory work—such as excavations for foundation of concrete weir, erection of crushing and other machinery, cement sheds, clearing reservoir basin, etc.—has been done, and contracts have been made for the supply of a large quantity of cement. Contracts have also been entered into for the supply of all the steel required for the main pipes from Mundaring to Coolgardie, in connection with which some thousands of tons of materials have arrived from England and America; and it is expected that the contractors will commence the delivery of pipes very shortly. The tenders for various works incidental to this great project will be advertised for at an early date. The location and arrangement of the several sets of pumping machinery have been decided upon, and tenders for the supply of engines and pumps are being called for.

8. The Harbour Works at Fremantle are making satisfactory progress. The channel from the River mouth outwards has been dredged 30 feet deep, and to the full width of 450 feet for a length of considerably over 3,000 feet, but it has to be continued for a further length of 1,300 feet to the five fathom contour, and in the meantime the limiting depth is 27 feet at lowest low water, the rise of tide being from one to three feet. Opposite the South Quay the Channel has been increased in width to 650 feet, to enable large steamers to swing with safety. Beyond this Swinging Basin the Channel is 25 feet deep and 400 feet wide for a length of 600 feet, and for a further distance of 2,000 feet the dredging has been continued at depths varying

from 20 feet to 12 feet, to a width varying from 600 feet to 300 feet. The total berthing space available inside the Harbour is 5,800 feet, including the North and South Mole wharves. The River Harbour is now in general use by all vessels coming to the Port of Fremantle. The Nord Deutscher Lloyd S.S. Company have made Fremantle a port of call for their magnificent line of mail steamers, and up to the present time the largest ship to enter the river and berth alongside the South Quay has been their mail steamer "Barbarossa," of 10,769 tons burden. At the present time the flagship of the Australian Squadron, H.M.S. "Royal Arthur," drawing over 26 feet of water, is safely berthed at the River wharf. The dredging to the full width of the Harbour is being pushed forward with a view to the erection of the wharves on the North side, and the North Mole is being extended to the Entrance Rocks, about 1,200 feet. It is proposed to begin the construction of a large Dock at an early date.

9. New Jetties with Stock Yards, etc., have been erected at Wyndham and Port Hedland, and have already proved of great advantage. At Carnarvon a Jetty has been constructed, and its connection with the Town by tramway is about to be put in hand. At Bunbury a new approach, constructed of stone and timber, is being connected with the Jetty, capable of carrying a locomotive; the existing head of the Jetty is also being strengthened and widened, which will allow of two additional berths being almost immediately obtained. In order to provide for the large export trade now concentrating at this Port, you will be asked to approve of considerable extension and improvement to this Jetty. The Bunbury Breakwater has been completed for a length of 3,200 feet. A proposal for extending the Breakwater a further distance of 1,000 feet will be submitted to you; the necessity of this is exemplified by the great increase of shipping at the Port, which (as the result of the improvements already made) has become one of the principal export centres for the ever-increasing timber trade; as Bunbury is the nearest Port to the Collic Coalfield, it is believed that a large export trade of Coal will soon be established. At Albany a new approach

(capable of carrying a locomotive) is being made to the present Town Jetty; the present head will be strengthened, and also lengthened about 240 feet, thus greatly facilitating the loading and unloading of vessels. The new lighthouse at Breaksea will be shortly undertaken. Tenders have just been accepted for the re-erection of the Ashburton Jetty, which was destroyed by a hurricane last year. The various ports along the whole length of the coast line have received considerable attention, and leading lights for Broome have been ordered.

10. The whole of the Railway lines authorised by Parliament have been completed and opened for traffic. The Railways so completed during last year are:— From Mullewa to Cue, 196 miles; from Kalgoorlie to Menzies, 80 miles; from York to Greenhills, 14 miles; from Donnybrook to Bridgetown, 42 miles; from Brunswick to Collic, 26 miles; and from Fremantle to Owen's Anchorage, three miles; thereby augmenting the Railway system of the Colony by 361 miles. The question of a revision of Railway freights is being considered. My Ministers, while anxious to make the Railways self-supporting, are desirous of assisting, as far as possible, low priced products, so as to encourage local industries and also enable local producers to compete with importations from other countries.

11. The important question of water supply for locomotive purposes has continued to receive attention. At Chidlow's Well a reservoir, with a capacity of about 120 million gallons, has been constructed, and along the Cue Railway three concrete tanks, with a capacity of about three million gallons each, are completed. Notwithstanding all the provision that has been made, the water supply for the locomotives on the railway from Northam, *via* Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie, to Menzies continues to give cause for the greatest anxiety.

12. On the Coolgardie, Murchison, and Pilbarra Goldfields there have been sunk fifteen wells, and nearly 200 miles of new roads have been cleared and opened for traffic. The Port Hedland Causeway has been completed, and the wells on the Port Hedland-Marble Bar Road put into good condition, thus enabling mails and other traffic to reach Marble Bar from the Port Hedland Jetty direct. Nine

Wells have been completed on the Westward Stock Route, thus carrying it up to Roebourne, and the Eastern Stock Route has been carried to within 60 miles of the headwaters of the Oakover River. Fourteen new bridges have been built, and repairs have been effected to many others. Many miles of new roads have been constructed during the year by the Government and through the agency of the Roads Boards. The recent hurricanes in the North-West did considerable damage to roads and bridges, which is now being repaired. The Leederville and South Perth Artesian Bores have been carried respectively to a depth of 1,110 feet and 1,855 feet, yielding daily in each case over a quarter of a million gallons of water; the Onslow and Geraldton Bores were carried to depths respectively of 1,729 feet and 1,531 feet, but without any satisfactory result. The Dongara Bore is still in progress, the depth being 1,700 feet.

13. In respect of buildings of special character or interest, the Public Library and the Observatory have been finished. The Mint has been completed (with the exception of a new block of Assay Offices now in progress). The Public Offices at Coolgardie and Geraldton have been finished, and those at Kalgoorlie are rapidly approaching completion. Substantial additions to the Printing Office have been made. The additions to Government House have been completed. The Quarantine Station at Albany; Hospitals at Bunbury and Bridgetown; Police Stations at Lawler's, Hall's Creek, Boulder, Fremantle, and Midland Junction; Artillery Magazine at Karrakatta; Court House at Fremantle; Post Offices at Balladonia, Boulder, Carnarvon, Kowna, Mt. Magnet, and Port Hedland; Warden's Courts at Lawler's, Mt. Magnet, Mt. Malcolm, Peak Hill, and Yerrilla; Schools at Albany, Boulder, Coolgardie, West Perth, Belmont, Bridgetown, Leederville, and South Perth, have all been finished. In addition to the foregoing, a large number of miscellaneous works and services have been carried out.

14. During the year the Fremantle Water Supply System has been considerably augmented. The soakage drives in the sandstone have been extended from 700 to about 2,400ft. in length for the

purpose of ensuring an abundance of water. New engines and pumps have been erected. The reticulation has been extended through all the main streets of Fremantle, East Fremantle, and North Fremantle. The total length of mains has been increased from 12 miles to more than 30 miles, and other minor extensions are in progress.

15. Smelting works have been erected by a private company at Owen's Anchorage, and are now working. These works are very extensive and complete, and supply a great want, as the sulphide, telluride, and other refractory ores can now be treated in the colony instead of being exported to the other colonies as hitherto. My Government has assisted the company in every possible way, feeling assured that the establishment of such works is to the advantage of the colony.

16. The Branch of the Royal Mint was opened for public use yesterday. The building and machinery, and all the appliances, are of a most satisfactory character. The establishment of this Mint will prove of much advantage to the gold mining industry and to the colony, which will for the future be a great distributor of coined gold; and as Western Australia is at the present time the greatest gold-producing part of the British Empire, the good results, it is believed, will be far reaching and important.

17. The expansion of the Gold Mining Industry renders it obligatory that railways shall be extended to all those centres which warrant it, as already by this means not only have the gold mines been assisted in the best possible way, but agricultural, timber, coal, and all other producing interests in the Colony have been stimulated and assisted at the same time. Bearing this in mind, my Ministers consider that the extension of the railway from Menzies to Leonora has become an urgent necessity, and they propose to again submit the project for your consideration. The railway from Coolgardie to Norseman is one which my Ministers also consider to be justifiable--while the extension and increase of railway facilities between Kalgoorlie and the Boulder group of mines, so as to embrace and give assistance to as many of the principal mines as possible, and a short line to Bonnie Vale from

Coolgardie, are works that are very necessary, and will also prove remunerative.

18. It has been the object of my Government to extend the postal and telegraph system to every place of importance in the Colony, and that object has thus far been accomplished. The expansion of our Goldfields, however, necessitates that the work shall be almost continuous, and my Ministers propose to give increased postal facilities, and to extend the telegraph from Lawlers to Lake Way, *via* Mt. Sir Samuel, a distance of 110 miles; from Mt. Margaret to Laver-ton, near the British Flag mines, a distance of 25 miles; from Nannine to the Star of the East group of mines, a distance of 20 miles, and to other centres as the necessity arises.

19. My Ministers propose to submit for your consideration measures dealing with Dividend Tax, Rural Land Improvement, Encouragement to Local Industries, Conciliation Boards for Industrial Disputes, Trades Unions, Electoral, Public Service, Truck System, Bankruptcy, Patents, Trustees' Investment, Weights and Measures, Foreign Companies' Local Registers, Hospitals, Sunday Observance; and measures dealing with several other subjects. A Bill to amend the existing Education Act, so as to provide for Free Education in the Public Schools, will be submitted to you, and my Government is desirous of giving educational facilities, as far as is possible, to all parts of the Colony.

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

20. The Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure will be placed before you as soon as possible, and due economy will be observed in their preparation. The trade of the Colony for 1898 was valued at £10,201,971, and of this the Exports amounted to £4,960,006, being an increase of £1,019,908 over the preceding year.

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

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

21. The settlement and cultivation of the land are progressing satisfactorily, and in a few years it is anticipated that the Colony will be independent of impor-

tations of soil products. Large quantities of land have been brought under cultivation along the Great Southern and the South-Western and Bridgetown Railways, as well as in the Avon Valley. To still further encourage and stimulate increased settlement my Ministers consider that the Northam-Goomalling Railway should be constructed without any further delay, and that the Lands Department be further authorised to clear and prepare for cultivation lands in localities specially suitable for root products. The last season was a good one for both the agricultural and pastoral producers, and, thus far, the present season promises to be equally favourable.

22. The question of a re-arrangement of the boundaries of Electoral Districts, owing to the disproportion of the population in some Districts, will require consideration. My Ministers think that the subject might well be discussed during the present Session, and still further considered during the next, which, under ordinary circumstances, will be the last Session for the present Parliament. By this means ample time will be provided for the careful consideration of this very important question.

23. I am glad to be able to inform you that H.M.S. "Penguin" is at the present time engaged surveying the coast of this colony between the North-West Cape and Cossack, a work which is very much required.

24. The establishment of a Naval Station at Albany, King George Sound, was some time ago brought under the notice of the Imperial Government. My Government offered to present what land would be required, and to erect at the cost of the Colony a suitable residence for the officer commanding, but so far the matter has not been favourably entertained. My Ministers have, however, renewed their representations, and in addition to their former offers, have undertaken to deepen and enlarge the anchorage area of Princess Royal Harbour, should the proposal to establish a Naval Station be favourably considered. Considering the splendid harbour that exists, and that it is situated near the South-Western corner of Australia, it is to be hoped that the establishment of a Naval base at Albany will soon receive favourable attention.

25. I now leave you to your important and responsible duties, and I pray that the Almighty may prosper all your undertakings.

26. I now declare this Session of Parliament open.

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

RESIGNATION (EAST PROVINCE).

THE PRESIDENT reported that he had received the resignation of the Hon. John Howard Taylor, as a member for the East Province, and had issued a writ for the election of a member to fill the vacancy.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (BEES) BILL.

Introduced by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, upon leave given, and read a first time.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the PRESIDENT: Public Accounts for year ended 30th June, 1898, with Auditor General's Report.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY: Annual Reports, namely: 1. Customs. 2. Chief Inspector of Explosives and Government Analyst. 3. Rottnest Prison. 4. Charitable Institutions. 5. Fremantle Lunatic Asylum. 6. Lands and Surveys. 7. Stock Department. 8. London Agency. Also: 9. Report relative to Industrial Establishments. 10. Statistical Register for 1897. 11. By-laws of Municipalities of Albany, Bulong, Cue, Coolgardie, Claremont, East Fremantle, Fremantle, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Menzies, Newcastle, Norham, Norseman, Roeburne, Subiaco, Southern Cross, and Victoria Park.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY TO THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

HON. H. J. SAUNDERS (Metropolitan Province) said: Mr. President Sir, I rise to move the adoption of the Address-in-Reply to the Speech we have just heard read by His Excellency the Governor; and, before doing so, I would like to criticise the Speech to a certain extent. The Speech is a very lengthy and inter-

esting one, and with regard to certain items in it, I feel it is impossible, owing to the short notice, to criticise them as I would like. I am pleased to note that the finances of the colony are in a satisfactory position, because, until the present moment, I thought we had a deficit of something like £250,000; but, no doubt, that will be explained later on. With regard to paragraph 2, I am fully in accord with what His Excellency has said, and, to my mind, the paragraph is the best in the Speech. I would like to take this opportunity of pointing out to hon. members, and also, through the agency of the Press, to the country, that the question of federation requires very serious consideration, not only by members of the Council, but also by members in another place, and by the colonists in general, because, so far, the people who have addressed themselves to the subject (I am referring now to those who are in favour of federation at any price) have not altogether considered the question from both sides. I think what the working men and miners have to consider is this. They may possibly get the cost of living considerably reduced in the event of Western Australia federating with the other colonies; but, if the cost of living be reduced, wages will come down within a very short time afterwards. With a united Australia we should probably have wages the same all over this great continent, and I strongly urge people to consider the matter before they take a step in the dark. My impression is that it would be premature for this colony to federate at the present time, and that we had far better wait. In the future we will join on the same terms as, or possibly better terms than, those now offered to us. I am very much in accord with a statement by a member of the Lower House (Mr. Vosper), that we ought to get the question of a transcontinental railway absolutely settled before we federate. I am pleased to note, in paragraph 3 of His Excellency's Speech, that the gold-mining industry is expanding by leaps and bounds; and this is a matter on which we may all congratulate ourselves, because the colony benefits by the success achieved. I approve of the establishment of public batteries, for I know, from my personal knowledge, that a great many working miners are able to

take up leases and claims within a certain distance of these batteries and make a living. The men are, thanks to the Government batteries, taking up claims which it would never pay a company to work. I notice it is not stated in the Speech whether these batteries are carried on at a profit or a loss; but, even if carried on at a loss, it does not very materially matter, as long as the loss is not much, because the country is benefited indirectly. Still, it would be rather interesting to know whether there is a loss or a profit. It must be very satisfactory to the people of the colony to know that the Coolgardie Exhibition has been such a success. The exhibition of specimens is probably the finest that has ever been brought together in the world, and I am heartily in accord with the suggestion of His Excellency that these specimens be sent intact to the Paris Exhibition. If that be done, it will give this colony a great advertisement, and I hope Parliament will sanction the proposal. With reference to the Collie coalfield, I cannot say very much, but I imagine it is of great importance to this colony to have its own coal, and, from what I can learn, the developments are highly satisfactory. As to the Coolgardie waterworks, we hear there has been some trouble with regard to the dam site, but unquestionably that will be overcome in time. Probably it will mean an additional expenditure of money, but I hope the Government will press on this great work with the utmost speed possible, because I am satisfied it will not only be of advantage to the goldfields, but for the general benefit of the colony. I know many members in this House will not agree with me on that point; but I am not afraid to express my opinion, for I am speaking from my own knowledge of the facts and what I have seen on the fields. I think these works will pay, if the Government charge more than 3s. 6d. per thousand gallons. I consider that price too low, and I am satisfied that mine owners would pay a considerably enhanced charge to get the water delivered on the fields. It must be highly satisfactory to members of this House to know that the harbour works at Fremantle have so far been a great success, and that His Excellency Rear-Admiral Pearson has brought his ship, the "Royal

Arthur," into the harbour. From what I can learn, the P. and O., Orient, and Messageries Companies will shortly follow the example of the North-German Lloyd Company, and I sincerely hope they will do so. Doubtless, the only people to object to that will be those at Albany; but what we have to consider is the general good of the colony. It is also a great satisfaction to the country to think that the Mint has at last been opened. Many members were there yesterday, and saw the first Western Australian sovereigns turned out, I think I may say, in a most perfect condition. I see by the Speech, it is proposed to construct a railway from Menzies to Leonora, one from Coolgardie to Norseman, and various others; but there is no hint given us as to how the money is to be found, and I fancy that both this House and another place will be a long time before they vote the amount. Seeing that at the present moment there is a deficit of something like £250,000, I think this House will not sanction any fresh expenditure on railways for a considerable while. It is against my personal interests to say so, but, as a business man, I am of opinion that when you are in debt it is not right to go on increasing your indebtedness, unless you see where you are going to get the money from to meet your liabilities. I will not detain the House longer. I have not really had time to go through the Speech as I would have liked, and, having made these few remarks, I will now simply move: That an Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to the Council, as follows:—

To His Excellency Lieut.-Colonel Sir Gerard Smith, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Colony of Western Australia and its Dependencies, &c., &c., &c.

We, Her Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the Members of the Legislative Council of Western Australia, in Parliament assembled, beg to assure Your Excellency of our continued loyalty and devotion to our Most Gracious Sovereign.

We thank Your Excellency for the Speech which you have been good enough

to address to Parliament, and we beg to assure Your Excellency that our most careful consideration will be given to the important matters you have referred to, and also to all other matters that may be submitted to us, and it shall be our earnest endeavour to so deal with them that our labours may result in the permanent advancement and prosperity of the colony.

HON. D. K. CONGDON (East Province): I have much pleasure in seconding the motion submitted by my hon. friend, Mr. Saunders, that an Address be forwarded in reply to the Speech with which His Excellency has been pleased to open this session of Parliament. The Speech itself is, in my opinion, very encouraging. It gives a satisfactory account of the proceedings within this colony for the year, since the last session, showing as it does that large public works have been undertaken, and many of them completed. But the Speech opens with the statement that the financial position of the colony is sound. I am sure we are all glad to hear that statement, notwithstanding what Mr. Saunders has said about a deficit of a quarter of a million. I sincerely hope the statement may prove to represent the case as to our financial position, and that we may find eventually we have overcome the depression which prevailed some few months back; that we have now reached the lowest depths of our difficulties, and that the condition of things will improve, and gradually bring about a credit balance in favour of the country.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: We all hope that. I have hoped it for the last two years.

HON. D. K. CONGDON: And that is what I am hoping now. The federation of Australia is a question on which I do not propose to say much, because I know it will be threshed out either here or in another place. At the same time, I really fail to see why we, in Western Australia, should be in such a hurry to enter into federation. In our present stage of development I do not think we should be justified in taking such a step, and I am in accord with that portion of paragraph 2 of the Speech which says we should find out whether we would be acting as a prudent people in allowing our fiscal policy to go out of our own con-

trol. I sincerely hope hon. members will look at this question very carefully. Federation will, no doubt, affect Western Australia, but I do not see why we should not be able to join later on. I see no necessity to rush into federation all at once.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: We can always federate if we pay for it.

HON. D. K. CONGDON: I suppose so: and I hope the Federal Constitution Bill, when it comes before us, may be of such a character as to justify us in —

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: Throwing it out.

HON. D. K. CONGDON: As to justify us in carefully considering it and deciding what its fate shall be. In paragraph 3 of the Speech we read, "The gold-mining industry is expanding beyond the most sanguine anticipations," and I am very glad to hear that. We all know the gold-mining industry is expanding by leaps and bounds; at the same time hon. members better realise the fact when it is forcibly laid before them, as in this Speech, than when it is merely mentioned in casual conversation. But this paragraph 3 also contains the statement, "The dividends paid by gold-mining companies during last year amounted to about £800,000, and during this year already dividends have been declared amounting to about £700,000." This country gets very little of the gold produced, and I am glad to see that, later on in the Speech, there is foreshadowed the introduction of a Bill providing for a tax on dividends. I take it that the State ought to get some return for the enormous amount of money which, in the shape of dividends, leaves the colony. Gold is not like agricultural production, inasmuch as it does not renew itself; and we all know that eventually the gold must come to an end. No doubt gold has been a great factor in pushing the colony ahead to its present stage of development; but the time must come when there will be no gold at all, and it is only fair that those who reap large profits from the industry should pay some portion of those profits towards the revenue of the colony. Like Mr. Saunders, I am very glad to know that the Coolgardie Exhibition has been so great a success. At the same time I regret the Exhibition was placed at Coolgardie, my own impression being

that the Exhibition, if held in Perth, would have met with much greater success than it has on the goldfields. I hope, with Mr. Saunders, that the magnificent exhibit of gold now at Coolgardie will be kept intact and forwarded to the Paris Exhibition; more especially do I hope this, because I understand that Western Australia will be the only Australian colony represented at Paris in 1900. The works in connection with Helena River reservoir I leave to be dealt with by members who know more about the subject than myself.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: You supported the Government in the matter: let us know something about it.

HON. D. K. CONGDON: I did support the Government, and would do so again under the circumstances.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: Because you do not know anything about it?

HON. D. K. CONGDON: Nothing of the sort. We are told in the Speech that the harbour works at Fremantle are making satisfactory progress; and that is only what any unbiassed man would say of these works, which are a credit to the whole of the colony. The harbour was a big undertaking, which I thought—as some hon. members may think in regard to the goldfields water supply scheme—the Government were hardly justified in proceeding with, on so small a population in the colony; but the work has been carried out thoroughly well, creditably and satisfactorily to every one concerned. We are told that “the whole of the railway lines authorised by Parliament have been completed and opened for traffic.” That is good news; but it does not follow that other railway lines will not be wanted. The question should be looked in the face and discussed before we decide what shall be done as to railway construction. Let us fairly approach the subject, and consider whether it is desirable to raise money for the construction of new railways. Another important question in the paragraph dealing with the railways is that of a revision of freights. I hope freights will be revised and reduced, and that as much as possible will be done to develop the great industries represented by the Smelting Works and the Collie coalfields. The water supply for locomotives is a matter of which I do not know much, and which

I shall leave for others to deal with. Public works have been progressing to an extent which many members did not realise until the Speech was put before them. To me these works are absolutely wonderful in their number and extent. Public works have been carried out which will, no doubt, greatly assist in the development of the North-West; and a very valuable part of the colony the North-West will, in my opinion, some day turn out. Paragraph 13 of the Speech refers to other public works, and says:

In respect of buildings of special character or interest, the Public Library and the Observatory have been finished. The Mint has been completed (with the exception of a new block of assay offices now in progress). The public offices at Coolgardie and Geraldton have been finished, and those at Kalgoorlie are rapidly approaching completion.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: Those at Geraldton are not furnished yet.

HON. D. K. CONGDON: The paragraph goes on:—

Substantial additions to the Printing Office have been made. The additions at Government House have been completed. The Quarantine Station at Albany; Hospitals at Bunbury and Bridgetown; Police Stations at Lawlers, Hall's Creek, Boulder, Fremantle, and Midland Junction; Artillery Magazine at Karrakatta; Post Offices at Balladonia, Boulder, Carnarvon, Kanowna, Mount Magnet, and Port Hedland

have, with other works, been undertaken and finished. During the year the Fremantle water supply has, we are told, been considerably augmented. We were aware of that fact, but I am very much afraid the supply has not been improved, the water being so salt and brackish as to be almost undrinkable. I hope some scheme may be devised, by which the inroad of salt water may be stopped, and the drinking water, which even the Government Analyst says is bad, made fit for consumption. Turning to the next paragraph in the Speech, I should say that those who were present yesterday at the opening of the Perth branch of the Royal Mint must have been very much gratified on witnessing the operations of the beautiful machinery. The arrangements seem to be complete in every respect, with ample appliances and accommodation for carrying out the work; and the results of the establishment of the Mint will no doubt be, as the Speech says, far-reaching and important, and to

the benefit of Western Australia. Paragraphs 17 and 18, referring to the extension of the railways and of the post and telegraph system, enable us to still further understand how careful the Government have been to see that all parts of the colony are supplied with the necessary means of development, and with the accommodation required for commercial and other purposes. We are told that it has been the object of the Government to extend the post and telegraph service to every place of importance in the colony; and it is quite right and proper there should be these extensions. Another paragraph informs us that the Government propose to submit measures dealing with a dividend tax, rural land improvement, and other subjects; and I hope the rural land improvement measure will be as successful as similar legislation has been in New Zealand. Then, we must bear in mind that we are sending away from the colony large shipments of timber; and I would like to point out to the Government the desirability of replanting on the land thus cleared, in order to recoup the country for the present loss of trees. There is only one other item to which I would like to refer, namely, the proposal to construct a graving dock. This is a matter of great importance to the shipping interests of Western Australia, and I hope the Government will not lose sight of the proposal, but will carry it into effect. I do not know I need speak further than to repeat that I have much pleasure in seconding the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply.

On the motion of the Hon. F. M. Stone, the debate was adjourned until the next sitting day.

ADJOURNMENT.

On the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, the House adjourned at five minutes past four o'clock until 4:30 p.m. the next Tuesday.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 21st June, 1899.

Opening of Session.—Message; Governor's Speech. Papers presented—Evidence (Proof of Colonial Acts) Bill, first reading—Address-in-Reply to Governor's Speech, first day of debate—Adjournment.

OPENING OF THE SESSION.

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

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. C. Harper) took the Chair, in the absence of Sir Jas. G. Lee Steere (visiting England).

MESSAGE—THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

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

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER and hon. members repaired to the Legislative Council Chamber, where His Excellency delivered a Speech on the opening of the fourth session of the third Parliament. [*Vide* p. 1, *ante*.] Mr. Deputy Speaker and hon. members having returned to the Assembly Chamber, the business of the session was proceeded with. Several notices of motion, and of questions to Ministers, were given.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the DEPUTY SPEAKER: Public Accounts, showing the revenue and expenditure of the colony for the financial year 1897-8, accompanied by the Auditor-General's Report: in accordance with statute.

By the PREMIER: 1. By-laws of Municipalities of Albany, Bulong, Cue, Coolgardie, Claremont, East Fremantle, Fremantle, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Menzies, Newcastle, Northam, Norseman, Roebourne, Subiaco, and Southern Cross. 2. By-laws of Local Boards of Health of Coolgardie, Field's Find, Gullewa, Lennonville, Red Hill, Woodarra, and Yalgoo. 3. Report of the Collector of Customs, etc. (1898). 4. Report of the Chief Inspector of Explosives and Government Analyst (1898). 5. Report on Rottnest Prison (1898). 6. Report by the Inspector of Charitable Institutions, etc.