

## Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 22nd August, 1928.

	PAGE
Assent to Bill ... ..	350
Question: Parliament House, completion ... ..	350
Address-in-Reply, ninth day, conclusion ... ..	350
Adjournment, special ... ..	389

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read, notifying assent to Supply Bill No. 1 (£1,910,500).

### QUESTION—PARLIAMENT HOUSE, COMPLETION.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM asked the Chief Secretary: What action has been taken by the Government to carry out the mandate of Parliament as expressed in resolutions carried during the 1927 session in both Houses for the completion of the front of Parliament House?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: An estimate for the cost has been obtained, and the matter is receiving consideration.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

*Ninth Day—Conclusion.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**HON. J. T. FRANKLIN** (*Metropolitan*) [4.36]: I had not intended on this occasion to address the House except by way of uttering a few words of congratulation to the Government on having expressed their intention to introduce a Bill for the amendment of the Municipal Corporations Act. During last session the Minister for Works, Mr. McCallum, promised the Perth City Council that if it was at all possible he would introduce such a measure during that session, adding that if this course were found impracticable the Bill would be brought forward during the following session. From the Governor's Speech I observe that the measure is to be introduced, and I am pleased that at last there is to

be a possibility of municipal matters coming up for discussion. The existing Act is obsolete. It was passed a number of years ago, and the time has more than gone by for the inclusion in it of further provisions for the advantage not only of the City of Perth but of all municipalities in Western Australia. When the original Act was passed, the fast traffic that now obtains did not exist. From that aspect alone, the time is more than ripe for further legislation on the subject of municipal government. I know Sir William Lathlain will support me in stressing the necessity for not only a new Municipal Corporations Act, but also for a Bill relative to the City of Perth. The importance of our capital city warrants a separate Act for the conduct of its affairs. Many problems that arise in connection with city government have no application to suburban municipalities, and the Municipal Corporations Act should not be swollen with a number of provisions which would never apply to or be put into operation by suburban municipalities. In the past, legislation relating to road boards has been amended frequently. I am not in any way speaking against the road boards, which are, in my opinion, entitled to various amendments of the legislation applying to them; but I consider that it would be advisable to have an Act dealing with municipalities and road boards conjointly. Such a measure would tend towards working in unison. As to town planning, let me add my meed of praise to the Government for having appointed a Commission. I congratulate the Government especially on the personnel of the Commission. If the whole State had been searched, more capable men to sit on that Commission could not have been found. Let me add, however, that this Commission should not be placed in the same position as the Town Planning Commissions of the Eastern States. Those are good Commissions, and have done wonderful work, but, unfortunately, they cannot have effect given to the recommendations resulting from their work, as the necessary powers have not been conferred on them. I wish to sound a note of warning with regard to the Local Government Association, whose deliberations should not be made public until such time as a town planning measure has been enacted, so that the recommendations can be embodied in legislative form. If reports of the proceedings

are published, opportunity may be given for speculators to come in and make unfair use of the information. We expect that association to do a great deal of good. Certainly they are going the right way to work, as they are obtaining evidence from individuals and business people who consider themselves qualified to give advice. Further, they are guided by the experience of corresponding bodies in the Eastern States. With the information they are gathering, they will be able to bring up an excellent report, which can be utilised in conjunction with the recommendations of the Town Planning Commission to furnish an effective Act. If it is at all possible, I should like a Town Planning Bill to be introduced during the current session. Whether it would go through both Houses of Parliament on this occasion, I do not know, but it would be a commencement, and if we can only get a commencement the measure will be enacted next session, if not during this one. Another matter I would urge upon the Government is the extension of the sewerage system which has been inaugurated in the City of Perth. Experts may say that the Government have gone as far as they possibly can with the existing system, since the septic tanks at East Perth are already carrying more than the capacity for which they were designed. However, I suggest that the Government obtain a report from the responsible officers as to whether it is not possible in the near future to carry the sewage from the filter beds out to the beach, or to Wanneroo, in a locality where there are no inhabitants. Then possibly a sewage farm could be established and the Government would reap some benefit from the outlay. I do not know whether I am correctly informed with regard to the fall, but the man in the street—who generally knows—says that there is a fall of about 8 feet from the East Perth sewage tanks to the ocean. That may be so or not; it is a matter for expert advice. In the event of the fall not being sufficient, the time is more than opportune for the Government to consider the abolition of the receptacle at East Perth and the pumping of the sewage to some distance from the centre of the city. I am of opinion that the sewage could be taken by natural flow to Wanneroo. At the same time, I am not particular as to the destination of the sewage being Wanneroo. I am told that a

previous Government had an idea of pumping the sewage to Canning. Speaking as a layman, I should not like to see that scheme adopted, because it would mean a continuance of the nuisance created by running the effluent into the Swan River. I want to emphatically protest against the continuation of the system of running the effluent into the Swan River. It is time that nuisance was removed and the sewage taken some distance from the city. In Melbourne, I understand, it is pumped 25 miles to a farm that has proved to be a revenue-producing affair. It would be of great benefit to the Government and also to the people of the metropolitan area if we could get that abortion removed from the centre of Perth. I trust the Government will take that into serious consideration. Another matter to which I would draw attention is the deep storm water drainage. A report should be obtained from the responsible officers of the Government as to whether we could not instal a deep storm water drain, so that the local authorities would be able to get rid of the nuisance created by flood waters, with which at the present time it is impossible to cope. We have seen in the newspapers recently illustrations of the water and slush out Inglewood way, where they have had fire engines at work pumping out the water in order to relieve the residents. Although people live in such localities, they are just as much entitled to the convenience of deep drainage as are those living in more favoured areas. The man who lives out in the suburbs should be enabled to get rid of the storm waters. Storm water drainage would not mean any extra cost to the Government, for although the Government would have to find the initial expenditure, it must be remembered that the ratepayers have to pay water rates. I suggest also that the Government, instead of having so many concerns under their control, should consider the appointment of a metropolitan board of works to carry out various undertakings. This would be better both for the Government and for the people. If certain works were placed in the hands of a competent board, that board would be entitled to borrow sufficient money to finance those undertakings and so the Government, instead of working on a deficit, in due course would be able to show a surplus. I hope that

something will be done this session in regard to that suggestion. I am not asking for a commission to go into the matter, because I realise that in our State departments we have men perfectly competent to advise the Government respecting these matters. To revert to the question of deep storm water drainage, I suggest that possibly the Government should consider the advisability of linking up the storm water drains at Mt. Hawthorn and Leederville with the Herdsman's Lake drain. That would mean a big saving to the Government, for we have there a drain capable of coping with boundless storm water, and that drain would be more than sufficient to carry off any extra volume of water diverted to it. I am somewhat diffident about referring to the development of the North, for I see Mr. Holmes and Mr. Miles in their places. Still I would be glad if the Government could by some means assist those representatives of the North in bringing forward a workable scheme of development. Those two gentlemen are thoroughly conversant with the position in the North and could give sound advice, so that instead of having the North vacant as it is, it might be properly developed. This would give a fillip to the whole of the State. Until something of a progressive nature is undertaken in the North, we shall still have the danger of some portion of that territory being taken away from us. I am almost inclined to say I regret that the amount of money spent, I will not say wasted, on the Peel Estate, was not spent on the development of the North. The result would have been more satisfactory, for we would have known that the money expended was expended on a useful purpose. I throw out that as a suggestion, and I hope that some notice will be taken of it. I have not been sufficiently long in the House to go into the question of railways, but I notice the Government are extending their railway system into the backblocks. If it is at all possible, I should like the Government to appoint an honorary committee to take into consideration the advisability of urging the various local authorities to keep back sufficient work to tide the unemployed over the winter months. Then perhaps, we should not have this question of unemployment continually before us. My reasons for making that suggestion are

these: We are all aware that in the metropolitan area it is necessary that roads and footpaths be constructed during the summer months. But in country districts many of the roads to be constructed are water-bound roads. It is more economical to carry out that work in the winter rather than in the summer, for when constructing a water-bound road it is necessary to have plenty of water, so that the road can be properly consolidated. I am sure we have sufficient competent men who would be only too willing to serve on an honorary committee that would advise the various local authorities with a view to keeping back certain work for the winter months, so that the unemployed in that season of the year could be sent into the country to do useful work. What we are doing now for the unemployed is only a makeshift. We are providing work that otherwise might not be required for a number of years to come. If during the winter months we could have sufficient work to occupy all the unemployed, it would be to the advantage not only of those bodies who have work to carry out, but of the whole of the State. Really that could easily be done. Possibly the Government might fall in with that view, and I am sure the local authorities would gladly assist. I will support the Address-in-reply.

**THE HONORARY MINISTER** (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [4.55]: First of all may I thank those members who have referred to my recent elevation for their complimentary remarks. I trust they will have no cause to alter their opinion. There are quite a number of matters referred to by various members that I wish to reply to, the first and foremost being the question of unemployment. This is recognised by every member and every responsible person in public life as a most important question. Those who have discussed it in this Chamber have more or less criticised the Government for their attitude towards the question, and it is only fair to say that in some cases they have laid the blame at the door of the Government. It is, however, a much harder question to solve than some people realise. It is not peculiar to Western Australia. Unemployment is prevalent in the other States to a greater degree than it is here, and it is prevalent in the Old Country also. In fact at the present time it is a world-wide problem. Mr. Cornell was, perhaps, correct when he said the problem of unemployment was purely an economical one.