

self-supporting and independent of foreign food supplies.

14. The timber industry is rapidly rising into importance, and its export trade is assuming large dimensions. Great quantities are now being exported from Fremantle, Rockingham, Bunbury, Geographie Bay, Hamelin, and Albany, and it is of the utmost importance that every facility should be given at those places to enable this immense and valuable product to be profitably worked.

15. The survey of the coast of the colony having been temporarily suspended by the Admiralty, and its continuance having become an absolute necessity, my Ministers have been able to obtain the loan from the Admiralty of the services of Commander Dawson, R.N., to carry out the several harbor and other surveys now requiring immediate attention. In order to do these works satisfactorily and expeditiously, it became necessary to obtain a steamship, and the gunboat "Victoria" has been purchased for the work. Although at the present time this colony is bearing the whole cost of the survey, my Ministers have every hope that they will be able to induce the Imperial Government to contribute towards its maintenance.

16. I now leave you to your duties. The future seems bright and promising. You have a great and important task before you, and I trust the Almighty may so guide and prosper your deliberations that the permanent happiness and welfare of the people may be assured.

I now declare this session open.

#### MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

This bill was introduced, without notice, and was read a first time.

#### NEW MEMBER.

The Hon. H. Briggs took his seat as a member of the Western Province *vice* Hon. E. W. Davies, resigned.

#### ADDRESS IN-REPLY.

THE HON. H. BRIGGS: Sir, I rise to move the adoption of an Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech. Before stating the terms of the reply, I think it my duty to say a few words with regard to the full and elaborate statement of

the affairs of the colony, which is set out in that Speech. I should be diffident in doing this, only I know that I shall have that indulgence which the House always extends to a new member. The Speech of his Excellency contains so much material, and is so full of matter, that I cannot pretend to touch upon it with any depth, even if I had the knowledge, and I can, therefore, only touch the various paragraphs with flying fingers, as it were, as I go along; and I do this the more readily and the more easily knowing that I shall be succeeded by the hon. the senior member for the South-West Province. It must have been extremely gratifying to His Excellency to have conducted the Government of the colony during a time of unexampled prosperity. The first important item in the Governor's Speech is that in relation to the great question of the federation of the Australian colonies. In the Speech it is said that the question of federation is occupying the attention of the whole of the Australian colonies. No doubt it is. I have been assured, however, that it is not a great question as far as the public generally is concerned, and this because there are certain difficulties in the way and because at the present time it is not thought that any complete fiscal scheme can be brought forward. There are also other objections to it. There have been objections to many other things, and difficulties which have seemed almost insuperable have often before presented themselves in connection with great schemes. Years ago when we looked at the map we saw vacant spaces marked upon it, which were said to be occupied by lions and cannibals, but now we find the same space, thanks to the enterprise of explorers and industry of the people, all filled up, and I have no hesitation in saying that the difficulties which now appear to stand in the way of federation will in like manner be easily overcome. One great thing with regard to the matter of federation which must be borne in mind is, that it is impossible to inaugurate a system which can be perfect at the outset. The colonies are growing, and in all growing States the appliances and methods of government have to be adapted from time to time according to existing circumstances and conditions. The garb of manhood differs from the



garb of infancy. It is true wisdom to adapt ourselves to any change. There is no doubt that the federation of the colonies will not be accomplished by any one act. Of course, a great deal can be done by statesmen, but, as in organic life, there must be a growth. I feel that there is, and that federation is going on. We have among us now specimens of the best men of the other colonies—the best blood and sinew and brain—and I believe from the way they have conducted themselves in places under trying circumstances, where there has been no control except their own true and right instinct, shows that we have now among us no more law-abiding and just people than our new arrivals, and, as I say, they have proved this by their conduct on the goldfields. This federation movement is only a following out of the law of evolution which is shown to us throughout history. It proceeds from our domestic life, our municipal life, and our national life—one develops into another. Even in our family life differences exist, but the members all bear the same name. The colonies may have circumstances and capabilities differing from one another, but they can all unite under one bond of independence and freedom, and I think this is the spirit in which federation should be carried out. In reading history I have noticed instances where varying claims and conditions have existed, and where the people have welded themselves together for one common purpose. I may, perhaps, be laboring this subject, but I should like to further point out that, in the little republic of Switzerland, we have four languages represented—the French, the German, the Italian, and the Rhetian. They are of two different religions, and yet meet together and are bound together, and there is no more patriotic country than Switzerland. When I hear, therefore, difficulties being pointed out in the way of federation I refer to Switzerland. In the course of my life I have known of the unification of many States. In Europe we have the case of Austria and Hungary, which is an illustration of two separate systems being welded together. We have had in the case of the Russian Empire the States from the Baltic to the Pacific entering a federation under the Roman idea of

autocracy. On the other side I can point to the federation of the United States varying in capabilities and conditions far more than the Australian colonies. Many years ago they were all divided, but now there is a federation of the 39 States having 60 millions of people. I will only instance two cases. Connecticut differs from California, and the conditions existing in Louisiana are totally different from those prevailing in Massachusetts, and yet they are united by a true bond of kinship of blood, of human feelings, human aims, and hopes. I feel strongly on this question of federation, and I think we shall be wise to follow the counsels of that late eminent statesman, Sir Henry Parkes, for I can almost hear now his sonorous words spoken at the Fremantle Town-hall on the subject. I am glad also that the Government have seen their way to refer to the question in the Speech which has just been delivered. It may be said that we have no mandate from the people, but still I consider the Government have acted most wisely in proposing that this colony shall be represented at a meeting of the men of light and leading of these colonies for the purpose of formulating some scheme by which federation can be effected. The next paragraph refers to the rapid development of the goldfields, and states that a Bill is to be introduced to give greater representation to the people located there. It is said that population should be the basis of the increased representation, but I do not think that such will inspire confidence either in our pastoral or agricultural areas. I am inclined to believe that separate interests rather than population should be the basis. Let each interest be represented. An ancient lawgiver set forth this principle, "Out of every tribe a man"—every interest a man—little Benjamin equal to royal Judah. That is the basis—representation of interests, not of heads. The fourth paragraph of the Speech deals with the important question of water supply on our goldfields. It is most necessary that such a supply should be procured, not only for health's sake, but for the proper development of the mines, and I am pleased to find that the Government are making this an important feature of their programme. Whether it is to be executed on the plan



pointed out in the Speech, or in some other way, I cannot say. It is rather a matter for engineers. They are gentlemen skilled in these matters, and when they put down the words Q.E.D., we know that, given the means, the work will be performed and become Q.E.F. I understand that this scheme has been planned by our cautious and learned Engineer-in-Chief, and it would therefore be impertinent for me to make any further observations upon it, except to say that it merits our deepest and most careful consideration. The next paragraphs deal with the question of funds which have to be raised. It is proposed to take advantage of the present favorable state of the money market. At the present moment the eyes of the civilised world are fixed in this direction. Some time ago a great deal of money went to South Africa, but, owing to the troubles there, this has ceased, and their loss has become our gain. I believe a great deal of money will flow towards this colony. Most of the measures promised are of great importance, although I have lived sufficiently long not to be too sanguine in expecting to see them all carried out. But we should aim high even if we fail, and I give my hearty concurrence to all that is set out in the 6th paragraph of the Speech. With regard to the Fremantle harbor works, I as a newly elected member feel much pleasure in testifying to the success with which the works have been carried on, and I may add that I think they reflect creditably upon the skill of the Engineer-in-Chief and his subordinate. The work has been done well and economically, and has already stood a severe test. During the last week we have experienced some severe storms which have thoroughly tested the stability of the work, and the result is a matter for great satisfaction. The work is now to be extended, and I am sure we shall all look forward to its completion with much eagerness. I notice that a number of additional railways are contemplated, and I think these are most necessary. What this colony has long suffered from has been want of means of communication between the places of production and consumption. These railways bring the two together to the advantage of both. We should congratulate the Government, I think, not only on looking to those matters which

more directly concern ourselves, and which are more or less of a selfish nature, but for taking, on behalf of the colony, a fair share in respect to the duties which devolve upon nations. We have had national works already undertaken by this colony, and they show that the Government have not been actuated by any narrow views in order to swell their balance at the Treasury. I especially allude to the two great lighthouses which have been constructed, one at Cape Leeuwin and the other at Rottnest. There is one matter to which I have omitted to refer, and upon which I feel strongly. It is gratifying to me to find that the Government are prepared to undertake the responsibility of sewerage works for our towns. The great work of the Government is to see that every citizen has pure air, pure water, and freedom. It ill becomes us, I think, to spend large sums of money on costly buildings and scamp the foundations. I think that deep sewerage schemes and pure water are necessary elements in the progress of any civilised community. Under our present insanitary conditions I feel assured that many of our brightest and best have fallen. As a great writer has said, a foul back yard is more deadly than the venomous asp of the Nile. Though many people will spend money on outward show, they ought not to neglect the inner clothing of ordinary decent life. I shall not weary hon. members further except to say that I am pleased to see the last paragraph, which says that in all these things we must trust to the Almighty. Under the English Constitution, there are three estates of the realm, the Lords spiritual, the Lords temporal, and the Commons; and, although we are not in England, I am pleased to see that the persons who represent the Lords spiritual here are among the foremost pioneers in works of mercy and charity. Depend upon it, no country will thrive which directs all its efforts to its material interests. I hope that this paragraph has not been inserted as a literary flourish or garnish, but that it is intended that we should really put some trust in Him to help us to do right, and to carry out the golden rule of doing unto others as we would be done by. I now propose that the following address be presented to his Excellency the Gov-



error in reply to the speech which he has been pleased to deliver:—

To his Excellency Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Gerard Smith, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, Governor, &c., &c., &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

We, the members of the Legislative Council of Western Australia, in Parliament assembled, desire to assure you of our continued loyalty and affection to our Most Gracious Sovereign.

We beg to thank your Excellency for the speech which you have addressed to Parliament.

It will be our endeavor to give the most careful consideration to the important matters mentioned in the Speech, and to all other subjects that may be submitted to us; and we join in your Excellency's hope that the Almighty may so guide our deliberations that permanent happiness and prosperity may result.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: I am sure, Sir, the House will agree that it did not need the words of deprecation with which the Hon. Mr. Briggs commenced his speech to let us welcome him among us as one of the new members most likely to do service not only to the province he represents, but to the colony at large. I trust he will remember that we have already sufficient silent members in this House, and that he will not be backward in future in expressing himself as fully and largely as he can on the various matters which come before us. I say this because I believe it is a source of reproach to this House that matters do not receive the consideration they should, although it is a fault not altogether due to ourselves. I as the oldest member of the House, outside the presidential chair, welcome the hon. gentleman. To come to the question before us—the Speech which we have just heard read, I feel sure the House will agree, contains a programme of such breathless character, that it is impossible to do justice to it without a more extended consideration than I have been able to give to it. I was called upon to second this Address-in-Reply at a late hour last night, and I warned the Hon. Mr. Wittenoom that, if he trespasses on the loyalty of so devoted

a follower as myself, further strained relations must ensue, and he will then have to settle matters between his Premier and himself. However, in glancing over the Speech no one can fail to observe, and observe with astonishment, the extraordinary tale it unfolds. It is a tale of progress greater, more extensive, and more hopeful than that which any Australian colony has witnessed since the golden fifties which created Victoria the leading colony of the group. If anyone will look at the scheme the Government have put before us, and compare it with the largest and most comprehensive of the schemes put forward in any of the other colonies, he will find that this is the most noted for its magnitude and promises, and indicates a far better future than anything which has preceded it. They will observe that during the five years Western Australia has possessed self-government she has undertaken a programme both larger and more comprehensive, and infinitely more indicative of better results, than anything which has been attempted in the other colonies, at any rate in my time. It seems to me that we should look seriously at the Speech, and ask ourselves two questions. First, is the scheme great enough for our wants? And next, is it beyond the capabilities of this country to carry it out and see a fairly certain return for the expenditure contemplated? When we consider that when Responsible Government commenced in this colony the entire revenue for the preceding year amounted to no larger sum than £414,000, and that for the year just expired the amount received was £1,858,000, or more than four times the amount the Government took over from their predecessors, I think we may feel sanguine that the expectations of the Government will be fully realised, and that we shall not be going too far either in the path of progress or expenditure. Before I come to the works proposed, I would draw attention to three questions—the question of federation, the question of further representation, and the question of customs duties. I am not going to dilate on these subjects, because sufficient opportunity will be given to us later on to deal with them more particularly, but I would just point out in regard to federation that it is a duty we owe to Australia.