

lutely necessary demands of the goldfields in the matter of water supply. There is no doubt that two and a half millions of money is an enormous sum for a small community like this, even supposing that the great work can be carried out for that amount. I am not surprised that some people look with hesitation on the borrowing of such a large sum of money, and thus adding to the burdens of every individual in the country. Still, at the same time, it appears that no other means are available for supplying the goldfields with drinkable water; and what I want to say is that we should have a little more information as to the real reason which is preventing the Government from undertaking the great work at the present moment. I take it that the reason assigned is only one reason, and perhaps not the most important. Another matter I would like to refer to is the Financial Statement. I have no reason to doubt what is put before us here, but I might say, as has been said in other places, that sometimes balances are declared which are not real balances; that you are not able to put your finger on the amount put down as a balance which is said to be the result of the year's transactions. In this case, however, I find that within about £3,000 odd, the expenditure has kept pace with the income of the colony. I would like to know from the Minister representing the Government whether he will be able to satisfy us by-and-by—and this is a hint I throw out to him now—on these important matters. I should like to be assured that the £3,000 odd, which is said to be a balance, is really available for the use of the colony. Apologising for having trespassed at such great length, I now proceed to move the adoption of the Address-in-Reply, which reads 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.

“ MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

“ We, Her Majesty's loyal and dutiful  
 “ subjects, the members of the Legislative  
 “ Council of Western Australia in Parlia-

“ ment assembled, beg to assure your  
 “ Excellency of our continued loyalty and  
 “ affection to our most gracious Sovereign.

“ We thank your Excellency for the  
 “ Speech which you have been pleased to  
 “ address to Parliament.

“ Our most careful attention will be  
 “ given to the various matters referred to  
 “ by your Excellency, as well as all other  
 “ matters that may be submitted for our  
 “ consideration, and it shall be our earnest  
 “ endeavour to so deal with them that  
 “ our labours may result in the advance-  
 “ ment and welfare of this portion of  
 “ Her Majesty's dominions.”

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Mr. President, after the very able speech which has just been delivered, I feel somewhat diffident in addressing myself to the motion before the House. However, before dealing with the subject matter of His Excellency's Speech, which by the way, as mentioned by the last speaker, is an exceptionally long one, I should like to take the opportunity of thanking the Minister of Mines, and also the Government, for the compliment paid to me and my constituency in asking me to second the adoption of the Address-in-Reply. It is indeed right that mention should be made in a foremost position of His Excellency's Speech, of the great ceremonial which has lately taken place in London. It was a ceremonial unique in the history of the Empire, and one fraught, doubtless, with many possibilities. It was a happy inspiration on the part of the Imperial Government to invite the Premiers and representatives of Responsible Governments of the Empire to participate in that great function. That, I think, had the effect, in a great measure, of drawing the colonies more into touch with the mother country; and I do think, at all events, that there was demonstrated on that occasion the affection and attachment of the mother country to the colonies, and also the loyalty of the colonies to the mother country and the Queen. The next point I wish to touch upon occupies, strange to say, a very small portion of His Excellency's Speech; although, to my mind, it is the greatest question that has ever yet been considered by the Australian Parliaments—that is the question of federation. This occupies but three lines in His Excellency's Speech, and perhaps that is because the considera-

tion of the matter has not yet been finally completed. On the other hand, perhaps, it is because, if federation becomes an accomplished fact, it may be many years before this colony will see its way to join. I, myself, am glad that this colony saw fit to send delegates to the Federal Convention, even at the undoubted great inconvenience it was to the country. It was only right that this colony should take part in the formation of a constitution under which we may one day be called on to live. One gratifying feature in the Speech is that referring to the gold output. The manner in which the gold output has increased in the last few months is simply astounding, and there is every promise of the output continuing in the future. It is the more gratifying, because there is no doubt that on the output of the gold depends the prosperity of this colony to a very large extent. As that output increases, so will the prosperity of the colony increase. Already in London, if my information be correct—and I believe it is—the effect of this increased gold output has been felt. There is no doubt there has been a certain amount of depression in London, and also in this colony. There is nothing alarming in this, but there has been a certain amount of depression already referred to by Mr. Randell, and the effect of the increased output of gold, even up to now, is such as to cause that depression to fade away. I should like to draw the attention of the House to a statement made some considerable time ago, that in Kalgoorlie—one of the principal centres of the goldfields—the water supply was fast giving out. We now find that the water in that particular centre is almost sufficient for the purposes of crushing and general use. That brings me to the consideration of the Government water scheme. I can only say that it is a matter of the utmost satisfaction to me that the Government should have thought fit to have dropped the consideration of the scheme, or the carrying out of the scheme, at all events for the present. I have always thought, and have said since its initiation, that the scheme is too great and too big for the colony to enter on at the present time. I believe that the effect of the Government dropping this scheme, at all events temporarily, in London, will be that they will

now have little or no difficulty in obtaining moneys on loan to carry out urgent public works. There is one other matter I should like to draw attention to, and that is the Mining Commission. I am exceedingly glad that, at last, this Commission has got to work. I do not know whether it has completed its labours, but I think not. There is no doubt that the Goldfields Act and Regulations require amendment in very many particulars, and I do not think a better method could be adopted of arriving at what is necessary in the way of amendment, than that of a Royal Commission. No doubt a very large amount of work has been done by the Government of this colony in the development of the goldfields; and in the future more work will have to be done, and will be done. I should like to take this opportunity, at the beginning of the session, of saying that any reasonable measures brought forward by the representatives of the goldfields, with the object of developing the mining industry, will meet with my heartiest support. I should like to refer to some of the public works which are mentioned in His Excellency's Speech. The first one I desire to refer to is that of the deep drainage. It is a matter of sincere regret to me that the Government—and I believe this is a fact, because it has appeared in the daily press—should have thought fit to even consider for a moment the advisability of postponing the consideration of the deep drainage scheme. In the face of all the reports we hear continually, and all the experience we have had in this colony during past summers, and in the face of what we are likely to experience in the future in this matter, I cannot understand how the Government should have gone out of their way to postpone this scheme. Doctors on all sides are agreed that there is only one way to stop this terrible scourge of typhoid, and that is by the adoption of a deep drainage system. I hope the Government will not for a moment consider the advisability of postponing the deep drainage for Perth, but will take the matter in hand and deal with it vigorously and firmly. What are £2,000 or £3,000 a year to the number of lives lost? A few thousands of pounds are nothing, and the money ought to be spent in the construction of this necessary work. One other important work is that of the

Fremantle harbour. I cannot avoid congratulating the Government on the great progress which this work has made. Even now the most sceptical of persons should be satisfied that the harbour will soon not only be able to but will accommodate the mail steamers. Only the other day one of the biggest steamers that ever came here was accommodated with a berth in the harbour, and that steamer, I am given to understand, and I think correctly, is as large as any of the mail steamers, or as most of the mail steamers, that call at the Southern port. The Government are to be congratulated on the progress the work has made, and I believe that not only will the mail steamers call at Fremantle in a short time, but that the work will be an absolute success. With regard to the Observatory I am glad to learn that this has been constructed; but I should like to know whether the gentleman who is going to occupy that building—I believe he has paid several visits to the colony and departed again and again—when he returns, if ever he does (we are getting doubtful) to take up his position, will remain. I hope he will. I can hardly find words to express my pleasure at learning that the Government intend to introduce a Bill dealing with undesirable immigrants. If there is one question more than another that is agitating the public mind at the present, it is that of the Asiatics in this colony. The feeling of the people in certain centres is worked up almost to fever heat; and unless something is done very shortly I honestly believe that the local tradesmen and workmen will be practically driven out of the running. I am delighted to find the Government have taken the matter up. A Bill drawn somewhat on the lines of an Act lately passed in Natal should be suitable to this colony, with certain modifications and amendments. If a Bill is brought in it will, subject to a perusal of its provisions, receive my heartiest support. I see that a number of Bills are mentioned in His Excellency's Speech as likely to be brought before Parliament. Some of these Bills are most important, but it is a matter of absolute impossibility to discuss any of them, because we do not yet know what their provisions are. There is one Bill I wish the Government had not included, and that is the Bill dealing

with workmen's liens; for I myself had taken the trouble to draft a Bill dealing with the subject, and, unfortunately, the Government have got before me. I am very glad indeed, however, that the Government have taken this matter up, and their Bill will receive my heartiest support.

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. WITTENOOM): Perhaps your Bill may be the better one.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Perhaps so, but I would like to see yours first. I now come to the burning question of the day; that is the question of the food duties. Well, on this question I cannot help saying I regret that the Government have not seen their way to reduce those duties. I do think the feeling of the major portion of the people of this colony is in favour of a reduction. I also think that the protection which is at present afforded to persons engaged in those industries is too great, and that the duties are capable of reduction to a very large extent. I do not mean to say I would sweep away the duties altogether—far from it; but the duties should be reduced in an equitable degree to both the producer and the consumer. I do not suppose there is much chance of it; but it would be most pleasing to me if the Government could have seen their way to re-consider their decision on this point. This is a matter of keen discussion, not only inside Parliament, but out of it, and whatever the result may be, I am confident the major portion of the people of the colony are in favour of a reduction of the food duties. I do not think the colony is in favour of a clean sweep away of the duties; but I am confident it is in favour of a reduction to an equitable extent. I feel sure that if the Government could have seen their way to reduce those duties to a certain extent, they would have been conferring a boon on the whole colony. We want to keep people here, and have the money spent in the colony. Many desirable settlers come here, but cannot, on account of the cost of living, bring their families here. They send their money away in sums approaching one million per annum, which money should be spent here, and assist in the development of the colony. There is one matter, I am sorry to say, has been omitted from His Excellency's Speech,

and which, apparently, is not going to be dealt with by the Government. That is a Civil Service Bill. I have looked forward session after session to seeing some mention made in the Governor's Speech of the introduction of a Civil Service Bill. Such a Bill is badly wanted here, and why such a measure has not been introduced is a mystery to me. I hope the Government will see their way to introduce a Civil Service Bill, because I feel confident it would be a matter of the utmost satisfaction to the whole colony. Another matter I should like to see taken in hand is that of the consolidation of the statutes. Time after time the statutes are amended in Parliament, and even lawyers themselves have difficulty in tracing these different amendments. It would be a matter of great good to the whole community if the consolidation of the statutes were taken in hand. If I may be permitted for one moment, at the risk of wearying hon. members, I should like to refer to one local matter. On such an occasion as this, it may not perhaps be right to refer to local matters, but as I will have no opportunity of speaking again, I may be pardoned. This local matter is in connection with the Fremantle hospital. There is a strong feeling in my constituency that the management of this hospital should be put on a more sound basis than it is at present. The method of the management is of a kind fit for the year one. At any rate the method of the management is not fit for the conditions of the present day. I cannot understand why the management of the Fremantle hospital cannot be on the same basis as that of the Perth hospital. The session before last an Act of Parliament was passed dealing with the various hospitals of the colony, and the only hospital that has been affected by that Act is the Perth hospital. I should desire to see the provisions of that Act applied to the Fremantle hospital, and that institution, as I have said, placed on a similar basis to that of the Perth hospital. Now, sir, I have done. I have only to congratulate the Government of the country on the very sound state of the finances. I also express a hope which I feel sure every hon. member in this House will concur in, that the increasing prosperity of this colony may long continue, and

that before long the colony will take her place, as I believe she will before many years are over, in the front ranks of the Australian colonies.

HON. H. BRIGGS: I move that the debate be adjourned to the next sitting day.

Put and passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom) moved that the House at its rising do adjourn till 4:30 p.m. on the following day.

Put and passed.

The House adjourned at 4:30 p.m. until the next day.

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## Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 13th October, 1897.

Meeting of the Assembly—Message: The Governor's Opening Speech—Swearing-in of a Member—Election Petition: Judicial Certificate—Papers Presented—Jury Bill; first reading—Motion: Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech; first day of debate—Adjournment.

#### MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

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; Mr. Speaker, Sir Jas. G. Lee Steere, presiding.

#### MESSAGE—THE GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

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

MR. SPEAKER and hon. members repaired to the Legislative Council Chamber, where His Excellency delivered a Speech on the opening of the second session of