

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

THIRD SESSION OF THE SECOND PARLIAMENT.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Second Session of the Second Parliament was prorogued by His Excellency the Administrator on the 12th October, 1895, to the 21st April, 1896; thence to the 2nd June; and thence to the 7th July for the despatch of business; and the Third Session commenced on that day.

Parliament was opened by His Excellency the Governor.

Legislative Council,

TUESDAY, 7TH JULY, 1896.

*Opening of Council—Governor's Speech—
Married Women's Property Act Amend-
ment Bill; first reading—New member
—Address-in-Reply—Adjournment.*

OPENING OF COUNCIL.

The Council met at 3 o'clock, pursuant to a Proclamation, which was read by the Clerk of Parliaments.

THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

The members of the Legislative Assembly, in obedience to the Governor's command, attended the Chamber, whereupon His Excellency (Sir Gerard Smith) delivered the following Speech:—

MR. PRESIDENT AND HONORABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL:

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

This being the first occasion on which I have had the pleasure of meeting

Parliament since my assumption of the government, it is gratifying to be able to assure you of the continuous and increasing prosperity of the colony.

2. The question of the federation of Australia is now occupying the attention of the whole of the eastern colonies, and it is proposed to refer the task of framing a Federal Constitution to a convention, consisting of ten delegates from each colony. My Ministers are of opinion that, in a work so closely affecting the future of this continent, this colony should be fully represented, and a bill will therefore be submitted to you to carry out this object.

3. The rapid development of the goldfields, and the large population residing upon them, have made it imperative to increase their representation in both Houses of Parliament, and a bill will be submitted to you giving greater representation to the goldfields and other important localities.

4. The scarcity of water on the Yilgarn and Coolgardie goldfields, both for ordinary consumption and for mining purposes as well as for the use of the railway, has for a long time engaged the anxious attention of the Government, and after

several years' experience, during which the work at the mines has been much impeded for want of water, the question has become so pressing that it can no longer be left undecided. Viewing the immense interests involved in the speedy and proper working of the mines, the many millions of money that have been invested in them, and the fact that the future prosperity of the colony is so closely bound up with their speedy development, my Ministers have come to the conclusion that the Government should not hesitate in at once undertaking to supply sufficient water of good quality for all purposes; and, with this object, a bill will be submitted to you for the purpose of providing loan funds to enable five millions of gallons of water to be pumped daily from reservoirs to be constructed in the Darling Ranges, and taken along the railway line to a reservoir on the summit of Mount Burges, and thence distributed by gravitation to Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie, and other places, with extensions in the future to other important centres. My Ministers are advised that there are no insuperable engineering difficulties in the way of this great work being undertaken, and that it can be completed within three years from date of authorisation. The estimated cost is about £2,500,000, and it is estimated that water will be supplied at Coolgardie at 3s. 6d. per thousand gallons, after making a liberal allowance for maintenance, for depreciation, and for sinking fund.

5. A bill will also be submitted to you to provide loan funds for the extension of the railway to Menzies and to Kanowna, for the improvement of our railway system, for a large quantity of additional rolling-stock, for the further development of the goldfields, for the continuation and extension of the Fremantle harbor works and the construction of a commodious dock, for water supply for towns, for providing deep sewerage for Perth and Fremantle, and for other purposes. My Ministers are convinced that it is absolutely necessary to take advantage of the present prospects and financial position of the colony, and that it would be unwise to delay carrying out, at the earliest possible date, these urgent wants of the country.

6. In addition to the legislation I

have already referred to, you will be asked to approve of measures dealing with Customs Duties, the Investment of Savings Bank Funds, the Agricultural Bank, Mining, Land Purchase, Land Laws, Water Supply, Public Works, Railway Acts Consolidation, and many other subjects. A bill will also be submitted to you to authorise the extension of the Murchison Railway from Cue to Nannine, for which funds are already available.

7. The goldfields continue to prosper, no less than 100,000 acres being held under lease, and their development on a sound basis is being earnestly undertaken. The opening of the railway to Coolgardie has proved already a vast benefit, and its extension to Kalgoorlie, to Menzies, and to Kanowna will still further stimulate development and enterprise. The railway from Mullewa to Cue is being expeditiously constructed; and, when extended to Nannine, will give renewed life to the enterprising people who have been laboring under such great difficulties in regard to means of transit. It is anticipated that the yield of gold will now speedily increase, as a large quantity of crushing machinery is being erected; but, until a permanent water supply is provided for the Yilgarn and Coolgardie goldfields, difficulties must continue to exist, and the output be much retarded in those rich and promising localities. The goldfields in the northern portions of the colony are receiving attention. It is proposed, amongst other things, to open up a new road to Marble Bar from the wharf now being constructed at Port Hedland; and my Ministers are desirous of giving all possible and reasonable assistance to the population on these goldfields.

8. The Fremantle harbor works are progressing satisfactorily. The North Mole has been completed to the length originally contemplated, viz., 3,500 feet, and it is proposed to extend it another 1,000 feet. The South Mole is nearly finished, and the rocky bar is being rapidly removed. A great amount of work has already been done, and my Ministers look forward with confidence to the successful completion of this great work.

9. The railways and the public works authorised by Parliament have made good progress during the recess. The railway to Coolgardie was opened to through traffic on March 23rd last amidst general rejoicing. The railway to Kalgoorlie will shortly be opened. The railway from Mullewa to Cue has already nearly reached Yalgoo. The Eastern railway deviations have been finished. The duplication of the railway from Fremantle to Midland Junction is in full progress. The new Railway Workshops at Midland Junction are in hand. The surveys for the Collic and Bridgetown railways have been completed, and the work of construction will be soon commenced. The railway surveys to the Pilbarra goldfields have been completed. The telegraph line from Coolgardie to Eucla is being expeditiously constructed. The telegraph lines to Menzies and Kurnalpi have been completed, and extensions to the various mining centres on the Coolgardie, Murchison, and Pilbarra goldfields are in progress. The water supply on the roads of the goldfields has had special attention, and good results have been obtained. Hospitals, Court-houses, Post-offices, police stations, and other public buildings have been erected, or are in course of erection, all over the colony. The contracts for the Mint, the Observatory, and the Public Library have been let. The new lighthouse at Rottnest has been finished, and the lighthouse at Cape Leeuwin is nearing completion. The harbor improvements at Albany have been completed for the present, but the Government hope to continue operations as the necessity arises. The contracts for jetties at Broome, Port Hedland, Onslow, and Maude's Landing have been let, and harbor improvements at Carnarvon will be put in hand as soon as the Admiralty survey now being made is completed. A survey of Cossack Creek has been commenced, and Balla Balla Creek landing is to be improved. Jetty extensions or improvements are being made or are about to be undertaken at Wyndham, Derby, Cossack, Geraldton, Fremantle, Bunbury, Vasse, Albany, and Esperance Bay, and my Ministers are most anxious to give increased facilities for shipping at all ports of the colony.

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY :

10. The financial year which ended on the 30th June last has been one of unexampled prosperity. The total revenue received amounted to £1,858,695, as against £1,125,940 for the previous year. The expenditure has been also very large, but when the returns are completed a very substantial balance will remain to the credit of the colony.

11. The remainder of the loan of 1894, being the second moiety of £750,000, was placed on the London market in May last, the rate of interest being fixed at three per cent., and the minimum at £98. The loan was an unprecedented success, and realised £100 16s. 8d. per cent., being the best price ever obtained for an Australian loan, and showing unmistakably the confidence entertained by investors in the present position and future prospects of Western Australia.

12. The estimates of revenue and expenditure are being prepared, and will be placed before you as soon as possible. My Ministers hope to be able to provide for the construction of railways to agricultural centres and for a large number of public works which have hitherto been constructed from loan funds, including harbor improvements at Bunbury, and other places.

MR. PRESIDENT AND HONORABLE GEN-
TLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUN-
CIL :

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY :

13. The season for the past year has been fairly good, and owing to the markets for produce existing on the goldfields, and to the increase of population generally, the agricultural industry has been stimulated. The increase in the price of wool and the improved market for live stock have assisted the pastoralists, though this important industry is still in a depressed condition. My Ministers confidently believe that, by liberalising the Pastoral Land Laws and the Agricultural Bank Act, by improving the means of transit by railway and steam service, and by giving better shipping facilities at the various ports, they will so assist and encourage the agricultural and pastoral producer as to make the colony, before long,

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, Geographe 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 gold-fields. 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 gold-fields. 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,

With regard to further representation for the goldfields, it is a duty we owe to the great industry of the colony, for it has made us what we are, and will make us greater still. The question of customs duties, I take it, is intended to mean, and I hope my hon. friend the Minister will correct me if I am wrong, that it is proposed to further reduce the taxation upon articles imported into this colony.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (The Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): Hear, hear.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: I accept that assurance. It is too late to consult, even if anything else is intended. Still I think it a duty we owe to the colony at large to reduce some of the duties that are now levied through the customs. Each of these three questions should be settled in the broadest and most liberal manner possible. With regard to federation, it will, I hope, be accepted by this House if only for the reason that, where a great Australian movement is in progress, we should be belittling our country and hopes if we stood aloof and saw others fighting while we remained idle and declined to bear our share in the combat going on. Among the works in the forefront of the Government programme is that of providing a water supply for Coolgardie. It seems to me that if gold is the arch on which our prosperity is built, the keystone to that arch is a water supply on the fields. In glancing round I can see it depicted in the faces of hon. members that the money which is required for this scheme seems to them enormous. When the paragraph referring to it was read it seemed to stagger hon. members, both of this House and an audience which I can now only speak of as belonging to another place; but I say that, unless we are willing to tackle this matter in a liberal spirit, not only in the interests of better life on the goldfields, but in the interests of Western Australia as a whole—unless we are prepared to carry out a water scheme such as the Premier speaks of, I see disaster falling on the country, not in years to come but in months. There have been many objections to the scheme which has been put forward by the Government. It is said that water can be obtained by deep boring, but I am afraid that even if that were successful it will never lead to the development of the fields, inasmuch

as the quantity procurable will never be sufficient for crushing purposes. The Government are confronted by an alternative scheme which, although I hope it will be given a fair hearing, will not be allowed, I trust, to interfere with the scheme which is submitted by the Government. We hear of the storage of supplies of rain water and of artesian supplies obtained by deep boring, but let me say one word as to this, and if in doing so I trespass too much on the time of hon. members, my only excuse can be the importance of this question. I say, if you leave this paragraph in and strike out all the other parts of the Speech—if you refuse the railways and other public works and leave this one, prosperity will be ensured. If you strike it out and go on with everything else you will discover in a short time a state of things which leaves us without money to carry on the Government or to pay the interest on our huge loans. We are told that the storage scheme is the most promising, and although I trust the Government will throw no obstacle in the way of giving it a fair hearing, it should be on the understanding that everything that can be done both by private and public enterprise should be done to supply these fields with water. Take the most promising scheme. What does it contemplate? A huge basin having a depth of 18ft. or 20ft. of water to be supplied by rain from the clouds. We do not know the hydrographical circumstances, but we know the circumstances of other districts in a similar condition. Droughts occur, and close by, in similar country, a drought has been known almost unbroken for over three years. The evaporation in that region reaches from 10ft. to 12ft. a year, so that if you had these basins, and you started with them full, and it did not rain for two years, you need not draw a single gallon of water for the whole basin to disappear, and with it the hopes of the goldfields, and the rising hopes of Western Australia. Others have urged that we may get artesian water. Anyone who trusts to artesian water in the face of the acts and opinions of those who know all about it seem to me to trust to a dream. There are many persons who believe that the North Pole is surrounded with tropical climate, and others, who

expect to extract sunbeams from cucumbers, and it is quite as reasonable to extract sunbeams from cucumbers as to expect to obtain an artesian supply there. Artesian water can only be expected where we know that minerals are not found; otherwise, all you can look for is a local and intermittent supply. But on a field of this character the forces which put the minerals there prevent the existence of artesian supplies. We are told to bore. No doubt £40,000 or £50,000 will be spent before some people are satisfied that it is impossible to extract sunbeams from cucumbers. Even if we put a bore down, when it gets to a depth of 2,000 out of the 3,000 feet proposed it will be found that the pipe will have become so small that the trickle you can get from it, even if the water is found, will not be sufficient to keep one mine going, and the cost will be so stupendous as compared with the Government scheme that the water obtained can only be looked upon as a luxury. In the face of this the Government are wise, I think, in putting forward their scheme. On the Darling Range we have water which can be procured at no cost, and which can be delivered on the fields at a low rate, and therefore I earnestly trust that the Government will make this one of the planks of their platform on which there is no surrender, and will resolve in view of the enormous advantages it will confer that there shall be no faltering, and that if Parliament declines to accept it, they will consider their position and hand over the reins of Government to others who will propound a better scheme. I can only say in regard to the cost it is as well to understand what the Government ask us to assent to. They desire to raise a loan of £2,500,000 for this scheme. They go further and bring in a programme of public works which I estimate cannot be carried out under another three millions, and this means, therefore, that the Government contemplate entering upon the expenditure of five-and-a-half millions of money during next year. This will more than double our debt, but on the other hand we have to realise that all these works are urgently demanded. No one can gainsay that the great majority of them will be other than reproductive, and further it is inevitably forced on our conviction that

if only three or four works are assented to, there is hardly one, in the four corners of the Governor's Speech, that could not rightly claim a position. I will not delay the House longer. It seems to me that the Government in drawing up the programme have acted with as much sagacity as courage. Even those who are not acquainted with half the reasons for these various works, must see that there are grounds for a general acceptance of the programme by both Houses. The Government are going to work discreetly as well as boldly, and if Parliament will only act with equal caution and wisdom I believe we shall find before the close of this century the amplest realisation of our expectations, and undoubtedly find, as I believe we shall, that we are about to enter upon a bright, dazzling future. I have much pleasure in seconding this address.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER moved the adjournment of the debate until the next sitting of the House.

Question put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House at 4.20 p.m. adjourned until Wednesday, 8th July, at 4 o'clock p.m.
