

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

FIFTH SESSION OF THE THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT.

The Parliament was prorogued on the 4th April, 1929, to the 18th April, 1929. It was further prorogued to the 30th May, then to the 11th July, and again to the 25th July, when it met for the despatch of business.

Parliament was opened by His Excellency the Governor.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 25th July, 1929.

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The occasion synchronises with the Centenary of the foundation of the State in 1829, and is therefore of particular significance.

Finance.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly—

The financial position continues to receive the most careful attention of my advisors. In all respects the finances of the State are in a satisfactory condition. It is gratifying to note that the credit of Western Australia is still regarded favourably in Australia and Great Britain.

An amount of £350,000, representing the saving to the State in the payment of interest and sinking fund under the new Federal-State financial agreement, has been placed to a suspense account.

There are many evidences of expanding investment throughout the State, and of the confidence of financial and commercial institutions.

Mr. President and Honourable Members of the Legislative Council—

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly—

Because of the rapid development of the primary industries, and the great scope for future development, Western Australia continues to attract widespread attention. The Government is thoroughly and carefully investigating the scheme which has as its objective the opening up of many millions of acres of virgin land, and is confident that,

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Legislative Council met at 3 p.m., pursuant to proclamation.

The PRESIDENT took the Chair.

The Clerk of Parliaments read the proclamation.

GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

His Excellency the Governor entered the Council Chamber at 3.5 p.m., and the members of the Legislative Assembly having also attended in the Chamber, obediently to summons, His Excellency was pleased to deliver the following Speech:—

Mr. President and Honourable Members of the Legislative Council—

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly—

It is with pleasure that I open the Fifth Session of the Thirteenth Parliament of Western Australia for the transaction of public business, and for the consideration of matters of importance to the well-being and prosperity of the people.

with the financial assistance offered by the Imperial and Commonwealth Governments, this large tract of country will within a few years, be brought under cultivation.

Wheat Production.

The estimated wheat yield for the 1928-29 season was not realised. In view, however, of the lack of sufficient rain in many districts throughout the growing period, the actual result was most encouraging, proving beyond all possible doubt the suitability of our lands for wheat growing even in years when the rainfall is much below the average. From an area of 3,343,197 acres under crop a yield of 33,827,601 bushels was harvested. This total was approximately $2\frac{1}{2}$ million bushels less than the record yield obtained in the previous year.

The present season has opened auspiciously, and it is confidently expected that the yield will aggregate between 45 and 50 million bushels.

It is cause for gratification that early adverse reports concerning the market price of wheat for the coming harvest will not be realised, and that the price per bushel will now probably be higher than for some time past. This will be of inestimable value to producers, and will be reflected in improved trade and commerce generally.

Pastoral.

There has been a further steady expansion of pastoral activities.

The number of sheep increased during the year ended December 31 last by 546,336, although the dry season resulted in a diminished wool clip. The prospects this year are much brighter. Splendid rains have fallen throughout the whole of the pastoral areas of the State, whilst development of the clover belt in the Great Southern and South-Western portions of the State is having a marked influence in the development of the industry.

With Wyndham Meatworks as an outlet, steady progress is being made in the development of the East Kimberley cattle areas.

Land Settlement.

Progress in land settlement has been maintained during the year.

A total of 6,114 applications for land under Conditional Purchase was received, and

164 applications for pastoral leases. The applications approved for Conditional Purchase purchases totalled 2,602 for an area of 2,616,762 acres, and for pastoral leases 199 for an area of 14,777,802 acres.

The number of new settlers was 1,433.

An extensive classification of new country was carried out.

Loans approved by the Agricultural Bank totalled £905,075, of which £606,009 was for clearing virgin land and £298,966 for fencing, water conservation, etc.

Soldier Settlement.

Further consideration was given to the devaluation of soldier settlement securities. Relief has now been granted to 1,397 ex-service men.

Wire Netting.

To combat the rabbit pest 1,615 miles of wire netting was supplied to settlers during the year at a cost of £72,878.

Mining.

The value of gold and other minerals produced during 1928 totalled £2,128,179. This was a decrease, compared with the previous year, of £74,258.

The value of gold produced was £1,671,093.

The mining outlook is distinctly encouraging, and, with the development of the Wiluna field, the decline in the gold yield should be definitely checked.

Every encouragement has been given to the mining industry, and scientific investigations are being undertaken which should have beneficial results.

A large sum has been expended by the Government under the Miners' Phthisis Act for the relief of sufferers and their dependants.

Railway Construction.

During the year the undermentioned railways were completed and handed over to the Railway Department—

Denmark-Frankland River;
Hay River Deviation; and the
Amery-Kulja Railway, including
the spur from Borrikin to Kalannie.

Other railways commenced during the year, and which are now under construction, are:—

Lake Brown-Bullfinch;
Kulja-Eastwards;
Meekatharra-Wiluna; and
Pemberton-Westcliffe Railways.

Among the surveys being made for new railways is the proposed Southern Cross-Salmon Gums line. This survey was commenced simultaneously at both ends, and is now nearly complete.

Two parties are also making investigation surveys for the proposed 4 feet 8½ inches gauge railway from Kalgoorlie to Fremantle.

Railway Returns.

After payment of working expenses and interest on capital the loss on the operations of the State Railways for the year ended 30th June was £179,000. The decline in revenue was in part due to the diminished harvest and consequent decrease in wheat haulage, and in part to the water-side strike, which resulted in an estimated loss of approximately £100,000.

Electricity Supply.

Completion of the new plant has greatly increased the efficiency and capacity of the electricity supply power house at East Perth. Owing, however, to the rapid increase in consumption, specifications are being prepared for an additional unit of 12,500 kilowatt capacity. Tenders will be called before the end of the year.

Several tramway extensions are now in course of construction, and others are completed.

Harbours.

In accordance with the undertaking given to Parliament, the Government secured the services of an eminent engineer to examine proposals for the extension of the Fremantle Harbour. It is expected that the report will be available in the near future.

Work in connection with the new harbour scheme at Geraldton has been continued; and dredging, maintenance, and improvements have been carried out at Fremantle, Bunbury, and Esperance.

The Swan River improvement scheme has also been continued.

Agricultural Water Supplies.

The Barbalin district water supply, which is the largest agricultural scheme yet undertaken in Western Australia, is nearing completion. The area to be served totals 447,000 acres, and reticulation work will be completed before the summer.

The Narembene scheme, which will serve the town and 113,000 acres of farm lands, has been installed.

Several other agricultural water supplies throughout the State have also been completed during the year.

The Busselton drainage scheme, undertaken to drain lands allotted to group settlements, and older settled portions of the district, has been completed at a cost of £205,000.

Metropolitan Water Supply.

The installation of the Churchman Brook water scheme for supplying the metropolitan area resulted in the greatest consumption on record of hills water.

A report on the investigation of further sources of supply has been submitted, including a recommendation for the construction of a dam on the Canning River to impound 12 thousand million gallons of water. Preliminary work has been carried out.

It is anticipated that an ample supply of hills water will be maintained during the coming summer.

Sewerage.

Sewerage extension work was continued throughout the year, and practically the whole of Subiaco has now been connected with the main system. Extensions in progress in the metropolitan area are estimated to cost £41,000.

Road Construction.

The amount expended by the Main Roads Board during the year totalled £650,798. Of this amount £366,843 was expended on Federal-aid roads, £184,742 on Migration Agreement roads (including clearing works under the 3,500 farms scheme), and £99,213 on other roads. For the current year the

Board has compiled a programme of works on main roads and tributary feeders estimated to cost £1,250,000.

Tenders are being called for the construction of two bridges in the North-West, and two others in the same area are in course of construction.

Forestry.

The area of State forests now totals 2,975,000 acres, and a vigorous policy of reforestation is in progress. The operations of the Forests Department have developed into an important avenue of rural employment, and during the coming year will provide work for over 500 employees.

Apple Production.

The apple crop for the season just closed established a record for Western Australia. The production totalled 1,100,000 bushel cases. Of this total 654,982 bushels were exported to overseas markets.

Dairying.

Butter production continues to advance rapidly. An increase of 25 per cent. over that of 1927-1928 was established last year, and it is estimated that there will be a further substantial increase in the coming year. Considerable attention has been devoted to improving the quality of the dairy stock. In the last decade the pasture area laid down increased from 14,000 acres to 220,000 acres.

Medical and Health.

Substantial financial assistance has been rendered for the extension and improvement of hospital accommodation throughout the State, and for the better equipment of hospitals.

The full amount of £15,000 for the provision of a cancer clinic in Perth has been raised. Plans for the new building have been prepared by the Public Works Department.

Additional infant health centres were established during the year, with greatly increased attendances of mothers and babies.

School medical inspection has been extended, and two additional school dentists

appointed. The children medically examined totalled 13,397, whilst the number dentally examined, under the age of eight years, was 2,238.

Legislation.

You will be asked to give consideration to a measure dealing with the establishment of a Rural Bank, a Health Act Amendment Bill, a Main Roads Act Amendment Bill, a Legislative Council Redistribution of Seats Bill, a Mines Regulation Bill, an Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment Bill, and other matters.

I now declare this Session of Parliament open, and trust that Divine Providence may bless your labours in the interests of this State.

BILL—EASTER.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [3.27]: In order to assert and maintain the undoubted rights and privileges of this House to initiate legislation, I move, without notice, for leave to introduce a Bill entitled "An Act to regulate the date of Easter Day."

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH, DISTRIBUTION.

The **PRESIDENT**: For the sake of greater accuracy, I have obtained from His Excellency the Governor copies of the Speech he has been pleased to deliver. These will be distributed amongst members.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [3.30]: I move —

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to us:—
"May it please Your Excellency: We, the members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia, in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

I desire to take this opportunity of welcoming you, Sir, back to this State. As members are aware, some six months ago you left on a trip to the Old Country, a trip on which you combined pleasure and duty. I congratulate you on the excellent manner in which you placed the possibilities of this State before the people of England. From time to time I saw by the Press that you had been addressing prominent gatherings and that at every opportunity you placed this State well in the forefront. I am sure the people of Western Australia are all thankful to you for your eminent services in that regard. I desire to thank the Government for having again given me the honour of moving the Address-in-reply. I am specially pleased at having the opportunity this year, since it is the centenary year of the State, and since I happen to be a son of the State. It is very gratifying to me that the Government should again have asked me to move the Address-in-reply. It is pleasing to know that our three chief industries, pastoral, wheat-growing and mining, have made great improvement. Last year the wheat yield did not come up to our expectations. Owing to climatic conditions, the yield expected did not eventuate. But in this, our hundredth year, if the season continues as well as it has opened, our wheat yield will enter upon a new stage of expansion and we shall have every probability of reaping a 50 million bushel harvest, which we had hoped to do last year. The pastoral industry also has progressed substantially. As to mining, I was on the goldfields a few months ago and I found there a great feeling of optimism. Whether in Kalgoorlie or in Boulder, it was impossible to obtain housing accommodation. That feeling of optimism, we know, has not been misplaced. It is confidently expected that the opening of the Wiluna goldfield will restore the gold yield of this State to what it was a few years ago. I hope that by the end of the present year it will be definitely shown that the decline has been arrested. I wish to congratulate the Government on their achievements during the past two or three years. They have carried out their duties in a thorough manner. They have been a Government, not for the city alone, but for the whole of the State. Even our bitterest opponents will concede that the present Government have endeavoured to do their duty by the State as a

whole. Whether we go to the extreme North-West or to the farthest corner of the South-West, we shall find that at least something has been done by the Government for those districts. I am sure my friend, Mr. Holmes, will be very pleased to hear the Government are now going to do something in the North-West. The bridges it is proposed to construct there will be greatly appreciated by the people of the district.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: We have heard that too often to appreciate it.

Hon. G. FRASER: The hon. member may have heard it, but I believe that within the next few months the workmen will be on the job. When they start the job, he will be convinced that something is being done in the North-West.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I predicted they would be there at election time.

Hon. G. FRASER: It is particularly unfortunate that the men are going there at election time, but in this case it happens to be the fortune of war.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Several of them would have a good holiday up there.

Hon. G. FRASER: When the Government attempt to do anything in the country—

Hon. H. Stewart: At election time.

Hon. G. FRASER: Not necessarily at election time—their opponents express dissatisfaction.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: What a shame!

Hon. G. FRASER: I am glad the hon. member is satisfied.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: I said it was a shame.

Hon. G. FRASER: The Government are elected for a term of three years. In the first year they are cleaning up something that has been left to them by the previous Administration. In the second year they tackle the problems which surround them. In the third year, when they happen to do something, they are accused by their opponents of doing it because they are approaching the next elections.

Hon. J. Cornell: It is only a coincidence.

Hon. G. FRASER: In this case it is purely a coincidence. These things are happening in electorates in which there will be no Labour candidates. During the past 12 months three new railways have been built, and between now and the end

of the year four others will be under construction. Some of these are in districts in which there will be no labour candidates. We do not hear the people there crying out about it, but others are doing so because it is approaching election time.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Those railways will be built after the election.

Hon. G. FRASER: But the elections are not until next year.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: And the railways will not be built until then.

Hon. G. FRASER: They will be built this year. Recently I attended the opening of the Amery Northwards railway. There will be no labour candidate in that district. Not only are the Government building that railway, but are now going 72 miles further to the east.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: They must come our way some time.

Hon. G. FRASER: The hon. member is not prepared to give the Administration credit for this.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Yes, we are.

Hon. G. FRASER: And yet people are prepared to give the Government credit in places where there are no labour candidates standing. In other cases they claim that these works have been started only with the object of getting votes for the Government.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: We should not interrupt so charming a speaker.

Hon. G. FRASER: I have shown what the Government are doing in the North-West and in the South-West. They have not neglected the city. The electricity plant at East Perth has been increased, and before the end of the year further additions will be made. In most of the agricultural districts no labour candidates will be standing, and yet water supplies have been provided in many parts. In a few months we shall witness the opening of other country water supplies. In the metropolitan area the water supply has been greatly increased, so much so that there should now be no shortage for the consumers. Other features have been dealt with by the Government, such as forestry and dairying, both of which industries have been greatly assisted. I recently visited some of the group settlements and am optimistic enough to say that most of these will be a success. I know Mr. Holmes will challenge that statement because he thinks

that nothing in the South-West will succeed.

Hon. E. H. Gray: He does not know it.

Hon. G. FRASER: He does not now live in that part of the State.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Why pick me?

Hon. G. FRASER: He lived there once and moved elsewhere. The part of the State in which he is now interested is the only part that concerns him. If people will take the trouble to visit the group settlement at Manjimup and Pemberton, they will be convinced that success lies before the settlers there.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: And in other cases too.

Hon. G. FRASER: Of course. I mention these districts because in recent years we have heard a great deal about group settlement and those parts in particular. I am satisfied that the majority of the settlers there will get on. We have only to see the increased production from the dairying industry to realise the great strides that are being made. Most of the development that has occurred in that industry has resulted from group settlement. In Manjimup two butter factories have now been established. If so much can be accomplished in the early stages of group settlement we have every reason to look forward with confidence to the future of the scheme. Even the despised Peel Estate holds out promise of success. I am convinced that, with the right people put upon the good blocks there, they will successfully develop their holdings. One of the many things upon which I congratulate the Government is the stand they have taken in connection with the establishment of infant welfare centres. They have rendered great assistance to various municipalities that have been prepared to establish those centres. Quite recently new centres were opened in the North-East Fremantle and Melville districts. The Minister controlling this department has put his whole heart and soul into the work, and I wish to pay a tribute to what Mr. Munsie has done. By the establishment of these centres the people will reap a benefit in coming years. If a child is looked after in its infancy, many of the ailments to which it is heir may be avoided in after years. I do not say that the establishment of infant health centres will make people healthy all their lives. If these centres are established and people give them the support they deserve, many ailments that might occur in

after-life may possibly not occur. One of the big questions confronting the people, particularly of the district I have the honour to represent, is that of harbour construction. The Government have carried out certain works at Geraldton, Bunbury, and Esperance, and have effected certain improvements at Fremantle. The big question the people of my province are particularly concerned about is with regard to the building of the Fremantle bridge. The Speech refers to the matter, but nothing definite is stated except that it will be discussed in the near future. My constituents, particularly those who are most affected, are anxiously awaiting the decision of the Government. Many have their homes in the affected area, and want to know whether they have to get out or not. I hope that during the session the Government will bring down a Bill, and that something decisive will be done. At present people do not know where they are because of what is hanging over them. I hope the matter will be finalised within the next few months. I regret that we have unemployed with us again this year, as we seem to have at this period every year. I realise that if work was found for everybody to-morrow, within a short time there would still be unemployed amongst us because of the influx from the other States. Much could be done by the Government to relieve distress. There is any amount of work to be done in my province. I do not want all the unemployed to come to Fremantle, but I contend that in our districts there is enough work in connection with sewerage connections in East and North Fremantle and elsewhere, in re-conditioning the wharves at the port and in other ways, to absorb all the unemployed now in the community. I hope in the near future the Government will make some provision whereby a large number of these people may be given work. The Speech makes very little reference to legislation for the current session. Most of it refers to what has been done in the past. It is always pleasant to be reminded of things that have happened in the past, especially when they stand to the credit of the State, but it is also useful to know what the intentions of the Government are for the future. I am sorry that very little information in that respect has been given. I am particularly sorry to see no reference to hospitals in the Governor's Speech. Last year we were hopeful of overcoming the

difficulty by the introduction of a tax. Unfortunately, although the measure was passed in another place, it met its fate in this Chamber. I thought the Government might have re-introduced that measure this session, and was hoping that the members of this Chamber who opposed it last year would have relented and voted for it this time.

Hon. J. J. Homes: This House passed the Bill.

Hon. G. FRASER: At any rate, that was the outcome of the action taken by this Chamber.

Hon. A. Lovekin: We passed both Bills!

Hon. G. FRASER: I wish that statement were in accordance with the facts.

Hon. J. R. Brown: That is merely camouflage on their part.

Hon. G. FRASER: This Chamber passed the Bill I refer to with amendments that were absolutely useless, and consequently the Government refused to go on with the measure.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Government are not the only judges on that score!

Hon. G. FRASER: The hon. member will be able to judge for himself later on.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Be fair, now!

Hon. G. FRASER: At any rate, that is my opinion and the public of this State are convinced that it was the action of this Chamber that resulted in the wrecking of the Hospital Bill.

Hon. J. Cornell: A lot of people threw up their hands when the Bill was thrown out.

Hon. G. FRASER: The public of the State believe that the Council wrecked the Bill.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. member will resume his seat. Under the Standing Orders an hon. member may not reflect upon either branch of the Legislature and consequently the hon. member must withdraw his remark.

Hon. G. FRASER: To which remark do you refer, Mr. President?

Mr. PRESIDENT: To the hon. member's remark that this House was responsible for wrecking the Bill.

Hon. G. FRASER: If I have said anything that may be regarded as a reflection upon the Chamber, I will withdraw.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Unconditionally?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, unconditionally.

The PRESIDENT: Then I take it the hon. member unreservedly withdraws his statement?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member may proceed.

Hon. G. FRASER: We were hopeful that the Hospital Bill would have become law. However, whether the fault was with this Chamber or with someone else, the fact remains that no such measure has become the law of the State. Mr. Cornell said that many people threw their arms up when the Bill was defeated. In my province the public still desire that legislation of that description should find a place on the statute-book. I am sorry to have taken up so much time. There are many other matters I would like to deal with, but as the proceedings this afternoon are more of a social description, I will not proceed any further. Before concluding, I desire to congratulate the Government on the fact that on the occasion of the opening of this, their last session of Parliament—

Hon. C. F. Baxter: I am glad you said it is their last session.

Hon. G. FRASER: If I left out one small word, or rather if the hon. member failed to hear me properly, I wish to make it clear that I meant to refer to the "last session of this Parliament." The point I desire to make is that the Government have refused to do what is usually done by Governments at the opening of the last session of a Parliament. They have declined to introduce legislation that is in the nature of window-dressing. The present Government are content to go to the people on the work they have done during the past three years. I have much pleasure in submitting the motion.

HON. J. R. BROWN (North-East) [3.53]: I formally second the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

On motion by Hon. C. F. Baxter, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 3.55 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 25th July, 1929.

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MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Legislative Assembly met at 3 p.m. pursuant to proclamation, which was read by the Clerk.

The SPEAKER took the Chair.

SUMMONS FROM THE GOVERNOR.

The Speaker and hon. members, in response to summons, proceeded to the Legislative Council Chamber and, having heard His Excellency deliver the opening speech (vide Council report ante), they returned to the Assembly Chamber.

BILL—TRANSFER OF LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [3.34]: By way of asserting and maintaining the undoubted rights and privileges of this House to initiate legislation, I move, without notice, for leave to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend Section 133 of the Transfer of Land Act, 1893.

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

Mr. SPEAKER: I beg to announce that in company with hon. members of this Chamber I attended His Excellency the Governor in the Legislative Council Chamber to hear the Speech which His Excellency was pleased to deliver to both Houses of Parliament. For the sake of convenience and better authority I have caused copies of the Speech to be distributed amongst hon. members of this Chamber.