

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

FIRST SESSION OF THE SEVENTH PARLIAMENT.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The First Session of the Seventh Parliament under Responsible Government was convened for the despatch of business on the 10th November, 1908.

Parliament was opened by His Excellency the Governor.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 10th November, 1908.

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OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Legislative Council met at 12 noon, pursuant to proclamation, which was read by the Clerk of Parliaments (Mr. G. F. Hillman).

COMMISSIONERS.

His Excellency's Commissioners (His Honour the Chief Justice, Sir S. H. Parker and His Honour Justice Burnside) having entered the Chamber, a Message was sent to the Legislative Assembly requesting the presence of members in the Council Chamber.

Members of the Legislative Assembly having arrived accordingly, His Honour the Chief Justice (senior Commissioner) read the following statement:—

Mr. President, Honourable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly:

We have it in command from His Excellency the Governor to inform you that, at three o'clock this afternoon, the causes of His Excellency's calling this Parlia-

ment will be declared to you; and it being necessary that a Speaker of the Legislative Assembly should be first chosen, it is His Excellency's pleasure that you, gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly, repair to the place where you are to sit, and having been duly sworn by the Commissioner appointed by His Excellency, you do elect your Speaker, and notify the same to His Excellency.

The members of the Legislative Assembly having retired, the Commissioners left the Chamber.

[Sitting suspended at thirteen minutes past 12 o'clock.]

THE GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

His Excellency the Governor entered the Chamber at 3 o'clock, and the members of the Assembly having arrived, in obedience to summons, His Excellency was pleased to deliver the following Speech to the members of both Houses:—

Mr. President and Honourable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council—

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly—

It gives me pleasure to meet the members of the Seventh Parliament of Western Australia.

The election which has just been held throughout the State has resulted in the return of such a majority of members prepared to support my present Advisers as to justify the hope that that stability of Government which is essential to the progress of the State will continue to be assured.

During the past year the development of the mining, agricultural, pastoral, and other industries has been well maintained.

In particular, a most gratifying progress has taken place in the agricultural industry, and during the period under review many hundreds of new settlers have taken up lands, and in each case made a substantial start on clearing their properties, and making them ready to enter at an early date on the producing stage.

The first four months of the present financial year have established a record in land selection, no less than 2,106 applications for 647,152 acres having been approved during that period.

The facilities afforded by the Agricultural Bank have been largely availed of, and 2,329 applications for £308,700 were approved during the last financial year.

The total amount advanced by this institution up to that date was £743,598, and the fact that an area of 3,064,035 acres is now under improvement may be largely attributed to the assistance given by the bank and the more stringent conditions of improvements now insisted upon.

The inclemency of the present season, which has been most marked in the late and severe frosts which prevailed, has seriously affected this year's output of agricultural produce, but the fact that in face of disadvantages of an entirely abnormal character the yield has maintained an average of fair proportions proves the fruitful nature of our soil, and holds out the most flattering prospects for those more propitious seasons we have experienced in the past, and which we have every reason to anticipate in the immediate future.

A most encouraging feature in our mining development is the value at considerable depth of the reefs of our principal mines, which assures the permanency of the industry.

A further and equally important reassuring feature is the much greater and more genuine activity now prevailing in regard to prospecting. This is doubtless largely due to a revival amongst our people of belief and reliance in our own local resources, and in some measure to the more liberal provisions now made available for prospectors under our mining laws.

My Advisers, recognising the extreme importance to the State of this great industry, have obtained Parliamentary sanction for the construction of railways to open the Norseman, Black Range, Marble Bar, and other fields of sufficient promise to warrant such expenditure, and during the present Session authority will be sought to give railway facilities to the promising district of Meekatharra.

The construction of the railways authorised to Norseman, Nannup, Upper Preston, Ravensthorpe, and Wickiepin is progressing satisfactorily, and a contract has been let for the Bolgart line. These works will undoubtedly prove of inestimable value to the districts which they will serve, and considerable factors in the future prosperity of the State.

The timber industry has reached a record output during the year, which there is every prospect will be maintained owing to the better appreciation of the value of our woods in the markets of the world.

My Advisers are anxious to see the harmonious relations between employers and workers in this industry maintained, and hope that any difficulties which may have arisen, or may in the future arise between them, will be amicably adjusted by the means provided by the laws of the State for this express purpose.

In response to an invitation by the Commonwealth Government, which was heartily joined in by my Advisers, the Fleet of the United States Government, under the command of Admiral Sperry, visited Albany.

During their stay every effort was made to show courtesy to our distinguished guests, and to make their visit a pleasant one. A warm appreciation of the State's hospitality was graciously ex-

pressed by the Admiral on the eve of his departure.

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly—

The detailed Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure will be submitted to you at the earliest opportunity. The finances of the State require and are receiving the most careful attention at the hands of Ministers. The requirements of the State, for which provision has to be made in order to maintain its progress and to secure its future, are such that my Advisers recognise the absolute necessity of conserving our revenue.

The shrinkage in the return made by the Commonwealth to this State, apart from the detention under the Surplus Revenue Act of the unexpended balances of the one-fourth retained under the Braddon Clause, has entirely removed the possibility of any present relief in the amount received by direct taxation.

Every effort has been made to keep the expenditure within bounds by careful and economical administration, and this policy will be rigorously adhered to in the future.

Expenditure from Loan Funds will be necessary upon the railways already authorised, and upon those railways for which sanction will be sought in the present Session; on Harbour Improvements; on the construction of Sewerage and Water Works in the Metropolitan area, and on various important works for which your approval is required.

Mr. President and Honourable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council—

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly—

In consequence of the lateness of the Session you will be asked to consider matters only of urgent importance.

An Inter-State Conference, at which this State was represented, was held in Melbourne in April-May last. The proposals of the Federal Government for the adjustment of the financial relations between the Commonwealth and the States were considered, but proved unacceptable to the Conference. The resolutions embodying the views of the States upon this important matter, and which were carried

unanimously, will be submitted for your confirmation.

The verdict of the High Court given in favour of the Commonwealth establishing the validity of the Surplus Revenue Act in conjunction with the financial proposals submitted to the Conference is viewed with very grave concern by my Ministers as tending to disturb the financial stability of the States, and thus retard their development.

In addition to measures providing for the construction of the Wilgarup and Upper Chapman Railways, included in the Loan authorisations passed by the last Parliament, and the Nannine-Meekatharra Railway, you will be asked to consider Bills dealing with Metropolitan Sewage and Water, Early Closing, Licensing, Vermin Extermination, Fire Brigades, Bunbury Harbour Board, Employment Brokers, and a Bill for the consolidation and amendment of the law relating to Road Boards.

I declare this Session of Parliament opened, and confidently trust that, aided by Divine direction, you will materially advance the well-being of the State.

BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly): 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 further amend the Health Act, 1898."

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: Annual Reports for 1907 of the Perth Observatory, Inspector General of the Insane, Superintendent of Public Charities and industrial and reformatory schools, Superintendent of Labour Bureau, Comptroller General of Prisons, Chief Inspector of Fisheries, Registrar of Friendly Societies (under Industrial, Conciliation, and Arbitration Act, 1902, and Trades Union Act, 1902), Registrar of Friendly Societies (under the Friendly Societies

Act, 1894, Benefit Building Societies Act, 1863, Co-operative and Provident Societies Act, 1902, Workers' Compensation Act, 1902, and Truck Act, 1899); by-laws of the Municipalities of Perth (2), Claremont, Cottesloe, Guildford, Leederville, Newcastle, North Perth, Subiaco, Victoria Park, and York; by-laws of the Central Board of Health and the Local Boards of Health of Kundip, Leonora, North Perth, and Onslow; regulations under the Early Closing Act, 1902; regulations under the Marriage Act, 1907; Police regulations in regard to transfer and travelling expenses; Fremantle Hospital amendment to rules and regulations; Government Railways Act, reports and returns for the quarter ended 30th September, 1908; Mining Act, 1904, return of exemptions granted during the year ended 30th June, 1908; Land Act, 1908, regulations and amended by-laws; Cemeteries Act, 1897, statement of receipts of Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie, Karra-katta, Nannine, and Southern Cross Boards, and by-laws of Roebourne and Sandstone cemeteries; report on the working of the Government railways and Roebourne and Cossack tramway for the year ended 30th June, 1908; Government railways, regulations for the carriage of exhibits for agricultural shows.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First day.

Hon. M. L. MOSS (West): I beg to move the adoption of the following Address-in-Reply to His Excellency the Governor for the Speech he has just delivered to us:—

To His Excellency Admiral Sir Frederick George Denham Bedford, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath Governor in and over the State of Western Australia and its Dependencies, etc., etc. May it please your Excellency, We, 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.

The opening sentence of this Speech refers to the recent election and the fact that the Government are satisfied that they have come back to Parliament with a sufficient majority to give stable government to this country. That condition of affairs is very much to be desired, but the position as the session in another place progresses will show whether that stable government will prove as satisfactory as everybody would wish. Since the last election it has been very clearly indicated that the Electoral Act is a very insufficient piece of legislation for carrying out its purpose. We were led to suppose as the result of three election petitions by which candidates were obliged to test the result of their elections which took place at the time of previous elections that we would have a measure on the statute book enabling every person to believe implicitly in the accuracy of the rolls. Unfortunately, however, the measure on the statute book to-day is not an advance upon the measure passed in 1904, and unfortunately for one of the gentlemen returned recently, we are confronted with another appeal to the Court of Disputed Returns, and the result is that at least this one candidate is in exactly the same position as the candidates were in the cases of East Fremantle and Geraldton and some other electorate. I think it is highly desirable that at the earliest opportunity, certainly before the biennial elections in this Chamber, there should be a further amendment to the electoral law so that people may rely upon the rolls. This Speech indicates clearly that in the future Western Australia is to look up to its primary industries for its success, because I am much afraid, and I agree with those responsible for the drafting of this Speech, that as far as the manufacturing industries of Western Australia are concerned we are much over-weighted by Federation results. In fact, not only from the point of view of these industries but from the point of view of the financial transactions of this State, the Federal compact every day is making itself felt more seriously in Western Australia. We are told of

the enormous strides in agricultural development, but I think a word of warning in connection even with that may not be out of place. The figures of the Agricultural Bank amount now to a million of money, and it is to be hoped that the greatest amount of care and supervision will be exercised in the advances made from that institution. No doubt a vast amount of good is being done, but from what one can understand the country will be landed with a great number of unprofitable securities unless the very greatest care is exercised. As far as I can see it is eminently desirable we should do what we can to foster the great mining industry, for while agricultural development is bringing people here by tens and twenties, if we are able to get another important mining development we shall have them here by the thousand. At Meekatharra there is a promising field, and from the State Mining Engineer's report the whole of that tract of country from Peak Hill to Marble Bar will justify the making of that railway and further prospecting. The Government should leave no stone unturned to open up this natural belt at the earliest opportunity. We know very well by bringing a large population here to take part in the mineral development that we will provide the best market that can be afforded people going on the soil, and this cry, want of population, which is a most serious thing, will be removed at a much earlier date than could take place if we relied upon agriculture only. Our position in regard to Federal politics to-day, serious as it is, would be much improved if we had a larger population in the country. That large population can only be secured by extensive mining development, and it is the bounden duty of the Government in this connection to open up as many of these mineral areas as possible. Viewed from the Federal aspect, once we are able to put a large population on the West side of Australia, so the representation in the Federal Parliament will increase, and the voice of Western Australia will be heard and backed up by more than five votes in the House of Representatives and six in the Senate. Dealing with the timber indus-

try, we are told there has been a record output this year. His Excellency the Governor hoped that the industrial troubles could be put an end to, and the machinery on the statute book might be sufficient to cope with disastrous strikes. It is long since I have been satisfied that the Conciliation and Arbitration Act has broken down. I entertain no hope for the future with regard to the settlement of these disputes in that direction. Quite the contrary is what I expect will take place, not only in Western Australia but throughout Australia and New Zealand, where these industrial troubles have been rampant. It always seems to me absurd to keep a measure on your statute book which is a magnificent instrument in the hands of the worker, and compels the employer of labour to observe every award—because it is obvious when an award is given a man of property can easily be got at by attacking that property, but where you are dealing with men who have no property to take and you have simply to enforce the award by resort to imprisonment, we know well that a measure of that kind must and has broken down. To resort to imprisonment with large bodies of men would necessitate having prisons as big as military barracks. That would be an intolerable method of settling disputes. The position is plain. On the one hand you can enforce an award against a master, but it is incapable of enforcement against the men. That is not the kind of tribunal that is desirable. That tribunal has been brought into contempt by the very people who brought it into existence. I have no hope that by this machinery we may settle these disputes. I do believe that public opinion is against strikes and that it may exercise some influence on the community, but legislation of this kind, which is capable of enforcement as regards the master and incapable of enforcement against the men, in my opinion has proved itself to be what I have said on other occasions, a signal failure. I see no reason to alter my opinion with regard to it. The great necessity for this State to-day is that we shall bring population into it. This is the great necessity for all Australia, and the Australian

people cannot hope to hold this Commonwealth against the outside world, and have no right to hold it, if they do not do their duty in regard to a reasonable and proper attempt to people it. Take Germany as an instance. That country teems with millions of people and there is insufficient territory for them; whereas on the contrary we have here this enormous tract of country known as Australia, and yet only the fringe of it around the coast is occupied. It will be impossible for our country to be held unless the Australian people do their duty in the way I have indicated. That duty is to people the country with white faces, if possible, and I believe it is perfectly possible too. The Commonwealth Government say they are prepared to do their best to advertise the country so soon as the Australian States are agreed as to the best methods to be adopted to bring the people here. The various States are at loggerheads as to the methods to be adopted. We here have control of a very large part of this continent, and to suppose for one moment that the 270,000 or 280,000 people, who now populate Western Australia is the sum total of what this country is capable of holding, is absurd, and an argument to which I will not listen for one moment. Western Australia is capable of holding a vast population, and it is the duty of any Government in power to come down with a comprehensive scheme to carry out the very important work of getting the country populated. The work must be done, not only from an Australian and Imperial standpoint, but, as far as we are concerned, from a State point of view as well. Under the Federal Constitution our representation in the Federal Parliament is measured by the ratio the population bears to the population of Australia. We are on the eve of a time of very great importance to the whole of Australia. I am now referring to the condition of the finances of the State, a subject to which a large part of the Speech is devoted, and the abolition of the Federal financial arrangements with the States. We are fast approaching the year 1910, when the Braddon "blot" will cease to have further existence. The

question arises as to how the country will be able to carry out all the duties devolving on the public men representing the people in Parliament if the wherewithal to carry on these duties is stripped from us. It has been openly stated by the Commonwealth Treasurer that in 1910, so far as his party is concerned, the further partnership of the States and the Commonwealth as to revenue raised by Commonwealth methods will not be tolerated. All the revenue raised from customs and excise after 1910, when the Braddon "blot" ceases to exist, may be held by the Commonwealth, for there will be no duty incumbent on them to return even one-fourth of the sum; it will be solely for the Federal Parliament to say how much, if any, of the revenue shall go back to the States. So far as we are concerned the position is exceedingly serious. When we know that there is a comprehensive scheme of old age pensions, a comprehensive scheme of defence, and a scheme for the erection of the Federal capital, we realise that there will be mopped up a very large portion of the Federal revenue for many years to come. How is our developmental work, even one half of the work indicated in this Speech, to be carried out if the bulk of our revenue is taken from us. According to the report of the last Premiers' Conference a proposal was made that six millions of money should be refunded to the States on the basis of population. Western Australia would fare very badly in these circumstances; and I do not hesitate to say that if our financial arrangements with the Commonwealth are brought down to that system this country will be unable to carry out its functions. The state of affairs between the States and the Commonwealth clearly indicates that there is an onward march towards unification, and persons holding prominent positions in the Federal Parliament make no secret of the fact that, when the financial arrangements were made in 1900, at the time the Constitution Act was passed, and also when the draft of the Bill was considered by the Federal Conventions, it was never thought fit that the financial question should be dealt with at that time, but

that such a question should be postponed for the future to deal with, as it was recognised that to come to a definite conclusion on that question then would have meant that no federation would be brought about. The position to-day is that in 1910 not only Western Australia but also some of the other States, particularly Tasmania and South Australia—the smaller States—will find themselves in a most lamentable position. I recognise that the Government, when saying that the financial position of the State gives them the greatest concern, are expressing what is a real fact, and their position can be readily understood. Last month we were confronted with a deficiency of £80,000. I hope that will not be a gauge of what is to be expected in the future. When one figures out what the recurrence of such a state of affairs would mean he will find that the State would be running astern to the extent of a million pounds a year. It is time this matter was taken into consideration very seriously. Considering the fact that there is a large number of works which must be carried out, that money must be borrowed, and that there will be an increase in the amount to be paid as interest and sinking fund, the position of the Treasurers and the Governments of the State for the next two or three years will not be cheerful. It will require all the co-operation of members of both Houses in order that the troublous times may be safely passed through. It may be said that I am taking an unduly pessimistic view, but in my opinion the prominence of the financial question in this Speech is quite deserved, and it will take all the ability Parliament and the Government can bring to bear upon the question so to economise and administer the public departments that every saving possible shall take place, and that the greatest amount of revenue shall be conserved for only necessary purposes. I have been told that on the present occasion I am not expected to make a long speech, and I propose to carry out the instructions given me. There are, I have been informed, more important places where the bulk of the audience present to-day desire to go, and accordingly I

will now conclude. I beg to move the motion I have read.

Hon. S. J. HAYNES (South-East) : It is my privilege on this occasion to second the motion so ably proposed by Mr. Moss. It gives me pleasure because, although I have listened to many Governors' Speeches, few have been more congenial to me than the present one. There is nothing in the Speech so far as I can see to warrant a lengthy debate. After having perused it, in the limited time at my disposal, I find that debatable matter is most conspicuous by its absence. In the circumstances, therefore, I shall follow the good example of the mover of the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply and be as brief as possible. There is an old saying that brevity is the soul of wit, and in this instance, having regard to the other functions which follow this sitting of Parliament, brevity might also be described as being the soul of good humour. As to the first paragraph of the Speech, while this House has nothing to do with Premiers or with men, but deals with measures, I agree with the sentiments expressed in the paragraph and hope there will at any rate be no unholy fighting between the "Outs" to get in and the "Ins" to retain their seats, for some time to come. It seems to me that in many material matters there is very little difference between the Ministry and the Opposition, and in the interests of stable government it is best that changes of Ministries should not be too frequent. Where numerous changes in Governments take place the true interests of any State are not conserved. I am pleased also to note by the Speech that the development in the mining, agricultural, pastoral and other industries has been well maintained in the past, and so far as I am concerned I think the outlook for Australia is an extremely good one. His Excellency refers with special gratification to the fact that great progress has been made in the agricultural industry. The present Ministry have done their level best to settle people on the land, and there is no doubt that if we do that we are successfully performing one of the greatest factors to the prosperity of any country, and

particularly of a country like this. The figures with regard to the selection of land that has taken place are nothing short of marvellous. During the first four months of this financial year applications for no less an area than 647,152 acres of land have been approved. That is exceedingly gratifying; nevertheless, although so large an area has been taken up, it must not be forgotten that Western Australia, with her very sparse population, is eight or nine times the size of the United Kingdom. Mention is also made in the Speech of the work done by the Agricultural Bank. No doubt that institution has done very good work indeed, and the figures as to the sum lent out from the bank now assume the proportions of about £750,000. I trust that while giving facilities and help to the farmers there will be due regard to security. It is also exceedingly satisfactory to know that with regard to the mining development the deep lodes are turning out so successfully. We know that the goldfields have only a certain life. When these lodes turn out as rich as they are doing it shows that the life of the mines is being considerably prolonged, and the prolongation of that life assures prosperity for some time to come to these great mining townships and also prosperity to the agricultural centres, for the reason that while the mining industry is prosperous there will be a good prosperous market for the occupants of the soil. This will have the effect of attracting people who are not drawn to the State by gold mining. With this pleasing element with respect to the deep lodes the market for the agriculturist seems assured for many years to come. Most members here have travelled over the large areas on the goldfields, and although this has been said before it will bear repetition, we have really only scratched the surface of our great mining wealth. I think every encouragement should be given to prospectors. The Government I think have done their duty in this direction; I think also they have done it rather lavishly in providing railway lines to the mining centres so that prospectors may have better facilities

for carrying on their work than was the case in the early days of mining in this country. I note that the authorised railways are being constructed, and I trust these railways will reach the most sanguine expectations of the Ministry. The timber industry too is in a satisfactory condition, and although it went through a gruelling some time ago by reason of the strike, I hope now a period of prosperity will be enjoyed to compensate for the losses sustained both by the men and the employers. The Governor in his Speech refers to the harmonious relations existing between the employers and the employees. I agree with that. Although I think the Arbitration Act has not been a success, I consider that at times it has been the means of averting what might have proved dangerous, troublesome, and expensive difficulties which might have done considerable injury to women and children, and might have resulted in considerable loss to capital. To the extent of minimising these troubles I believe at times this Act has been of value. I hope, however, the present Ministry will conceive some Act which will assuage these troubles. I have to admit that the problem is a very difficult one. It is very patent to everybody who has studied the matter that the Act of Parliament dealing with the worker and the employer is not a success, for on the one hand it can be enforced, and on the other hand there is no mode of enforcement. What I think is to be condemned with respect to the Arbitration Courts is that, at any rate with regard to one side, if the award is not in its favour, the judgment and the members of the Court are abused. The tribunal should be treated with the same respect as the civil courts which are presided over by our Judges, and the decisions should be accepted just as loyally as we bow to the decisions of these civil courts. I think with respect to the arbitration and conciliation courts a cure must be brought about by the forbearance and good sense of both parties. I trust every member is in accord with me when I express the hope that some method will be found by which strikes will be put an

end to and capital and labour will work hand in hand together. I notice also that our American cousins had a right royal reception here, and although I was away and had not the pleasure of participating in the welcome extended to them I am pleased to see how well we received them, and I am sure that the hospitality extended to them and the welcome given to them will have the effect of doing good, even though the relations between ourselves and our American cousins have been for many years past most friendly. Still, receptions of this kind tend to do good, and in addition no doubt will cement and assist to increase the trade between two of the greatest civilised powers on the face of the globe, America and the inhabitants of our respected British Empire. I quite agree with what has fallen from the lips of Mr. Moss with respect to the trouble we are having with the Commonwealth in regard to financial matters. I will not go into that question now as fully as he did, as it would be presuming too much on the time of the House; but I trust that an arrangement will be arrived at between the Commonwealth authorities and the smaller States whereby some equitable scheme will be adopted, and that there will not be that stress and pressure and loss in financial matters which is so forcibly pointed out in the Speech, and which is really something very alarming. I am pleased to see that in the concluding portion of the Speech, where reference is made to the measures to be introduced this session, it is notified that not many Bills will be brought before Parliament. Some of the measures indicated, however, are of great importance, but I scarcely think that the House will be able to deal with them at all before the adjournment for the Christmas holidays. Parliament will have quite enough to do in considering the Estimates, especially having regard to the present financial position of the State, to occupy them all the time between now and Christmas, and if this work alone is achieved an exceedingly good result will have been obtained from the work of the session. Among the Bills mentioned is one with regard to

licenses, and I hope the Minister will be privileged to introduce a Bill dealing with the Licensing Acts, for at present they are scattered all over the Statute Books. It is extremely difficult to find them, and just as hard to understand them, and the members of the legal profession find it an extremely hard matter to deal with questions arising thereunder. I hope the new Bill will be on equitable lines, and that there will be no injustice done to vested interests or to the hotel-keepers. Although the latter are condemned by many people, there are very worthy individuals among them, and justice should be meted out in all directions. A large amount of capital has been spent in the building of large hotels throughout the country, and none will deny that these houses have been of great convenience in the matter of providing accommodation for travellers where such was badly needed. I am second to none in the desire that this great State should be a temperate and altogether sober one. There should be greater watchfulness shown as to the quality of the liquor sold, and a greater determination on the part of the licensing authorities to see that in the licensed houses there should not be bar accommodation alone, but also adequate accommodation for the travelling public. If this is done a great deal towards the promotion of temperance will have been achieved. I am pleased to see that temperance has made strides here and in the old country as well. The Government have done their best in the past with a view of introducing population, and there is no doubt that population is needed in order that we can push ahead the true interests of this State. In the past, as I say, the Government have done their duty in this direction, and I feel sure they will do it in the future, and they are greatly aided by their representative in London, who takes every trouble to see that he gets as immigrants persons of the right class. I am satisfied from the several occasions on which I have seen the Agent-General at Home that he is dealing with the question of immigration in a businesslike and courteous manner. I am pleased to see that there are not many Bills referred

to, and I hope when the next Speech comes down there will be even fewer, because we do not want legislation at all. Our statute books are primed up and pressed to overflowing with legislation, and some of it is a dead-letter. We want less legislation and more administration, and if I may be permitted to say so, I think if the sessions were shorter and fewer Bills were introduced and the Ministry of the day had an opportunity to spend all their time in administration, it would be better in the interests of the State. I will not trespass much longer. The tenor of the Speech as a whole is of confidence, and I think that should be so. Recently I had the privilege and pleasure of travelling to the old country and seeing other countries and places as well, and I have returned perfectly satisfied with the outlook of this great State. As mentioned in the Speech, we find the pastoral industry in a satisfactory condition, the mining industry improving, the timber industry all right, and a large population settling on the land, so that the agricultural industry is also sound. While we have a great territory, the area that has been settled upon—600,000 acres—is only, figuratively speaking, a drop out of the bucket. In addition we have another asset not mentioned in the Speech. It struck me when travelling through Egypt that in the future there will be great schemes of water conservation in this State, and the lands at present arid and useless will become sources of wealth. Mr. President, I will not detain you further. I have much pleasure in seconding the Address-in-Reply.

On motion by *Hon. J. W. Langsford* debate adjourned.

The House adjourned at 3.45 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 10th November, 1908.

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MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Legislative Assembly met at noon, pursuant to proclamation by His Excellency the Governor, which proclamation was read by the Clerk (Mr. C. Lee Steere).

MESSAGE: OPENING BY COMMISSIONERS.

A message from the Commissioners appointed by the Governor to do all things necessary for the opening of Parliament requested the attendance of members of the Legislative Assembly in the Legislative Council Chamber; and hon. members having accordingly proceeded to that Chamber and heard the Commission read, they returned to the Assembly Chamber.

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

His Honour the Chief Justice (Sir S. H. Parker), having been commissioned by the Governor, appeared in the Assembly Chamber to administer to members the oath of allegiance to His Majesty the King.

The Clerk produced election writs showing the return of 49 members as representatives for the Legislative Assembly, the writ for Menzies not being returned owing to the election having been upset on appeal to the Court of Disputed Returns and a fresh election ordered.

All the members elected were present and took and subscribed the oath as required by statute, and signed the roll.

ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

The PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore), addressing the Clerk, said: Mr. Lee Steere, the House being duly consti-