

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

SECOND SESSION OF THE EIGHTH PARLIAMENT.

The Parliament was prorogued on 16th January, 1912, until 21st May, 1912. It was further prorogued to 20th June, and finally to 27th June, when it met for the despatch of business; and the Second Session commenced on that day.

Parliament was opened by His Excellency the Governor.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 27th June, 1912.

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OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

The Legislative Council met at 3 o'clock p.m., pursuant to proclamation, which was read by the Clerk of Parliaments (Mr. G. F. Hillman). The President took the Chair.

The PRESIDENT: Hon. members, His Excellency will, at a future time, declare the cause of his calling Parliament together.

NEW MEMBERS.

The following members (one-third of the Council) elected since the prorogation, then took and subscribed the oath or affirmation of allegiance and signed the members' roll:—Hon. J. M. Drew, Central Province (Colonial Secretary); Hon. Sir J. W. Hackett, South-West Province; Hon. C. Sommers, Metropolitan Province; Hon. F. Connor, North Province; Hon. J. F. Cullen, South-East Province;

Hon. R. G. Ardagh, North-East Province; Hon. H. P. Colebatch, East Province; Hon. R. J. Lynn, West Province; Hon. A. Sanderson, Metropolitan-Suburban Province; Hon. J. Cornell, South Province (affirmed).

Prayers were read by the President.

THE GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

His Excellency, Sir Gerald Strickland, entered the Council Chamber at 3.20 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 Gentlemen of the Legislative Council—

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly—

Since the prorogation of Parliament my Ministers have been busily occupied in meeting the requirements of the agricultural settlers whose prospects were menaced by the dry season of last year.

The taking of water to those agriculturists, and the furtherance of schemes for its permanent supply, have somewhat taxed the resources of the State, but the emergency has been met, with the result

that hundreds of settlers who otherwise would have had to abandon their homesteads are facing the prospects of the future with good heart and promising energy.

Notwithstanding these adverse circumstances, agricultural development has proceeded apace, and the prospects for the coming season are promising.

The great wheat belts of the State are receiving every attention, and in this respect special concessions have been granted to the settlers, in the provision of seed wheat and fertilisers, and by deferred payment of rents and better conditions generally.

Land is being placed in readiness for selection in all the agricultural areas, and during the year approximately 2,600,000 acres will have been surveyed. At the present time 61 surveyors, with their staffs, are in the field.

The demand for land is still keen, and appears not to have been affected by the temporary reverses in some of the drier districts.

In view, however, of the difficulties which would beset settlers where the rainfall is doubtful, or where they would be far removed from possible railway communication, many sub-divisions have been held in reserve until provision can be made for adequate water supply and transit facilities.

To secure bona fide settlers upon the soil, steps have been taken to prevent illegitimate speculation, and to insist upon compliance with the improvement conditions imposed by the law.

With equal regard to the welfare of other industries, my Advisers, with the object of preserving the valuable timber resources of the State, have resolved upon a comprehensive examination and classification of the timber areas in the South-West districts, and this work is now in hand.

The area devoted to the production of fruit is steadily enlarging. The products of the labour of the orchardist have been excellent in their quality, and have won the first place in competition with the products of the world in the London markets.

My Ministers have given careful attention to the development of our natural industries, and contemplate in their proposals the establishment of open markets, provision for transit facilities, the erection of State agricultural implement works and assisting generally the cultivator of the soil and the producer in all parts of the State.

My Advisers are imbued with the necessity for assisting the mining industry. They are convinced of the wisdom of encouraging prospecting; and the recent opening up of new fields at Ora Banda, Payne's Find, Mt. Egerton, Mt. Keith, and Mt. Jackson is a testimony to the services rendered to the State by the prospectors.

Notwithstanding that the discovery of new fields may cause the population to scatter, the number of people to be employed in mining operations must necessarily increase. Bearing this in mind, liberal assistance will be given to mining development, and under the provisions of the Mining Development Act, 1902, assistance will be extended particularly in relation to crushing facilities and diamond drilling.

The fresh discoveries made in older localities are satisfactory. Deep mining in the lowest levels of the Golden Horseshoe, the Great Fingall, and Sons of Gwalia mines have been attended with favourable results, justifying confidence in the presence of gold at greater depths.

Amendments of the Mines Regulation Act, 1906, will also be submitted with a view to the improvement of the conditions of working, the health of miners, and the safety of those employed in the mines.

The universal unrest—the appeal for betterment among the industrial workers of all grades throughout the British Empire—has directed the attention of the world to legislation aiming at the amelioration of our social conditions.

There is reason for congratulation in that difficulties which have convulsed other communities have been overcome during my Advisers' term of office in this

State without serious disorganisation or injury to the component parts of the community.

That these inevitable accompaniments of social advancement may be considered and dealt with in an amicable instead of a hostile spirit, you will be asked to again consider a Bill providing for a Court of Industrial Arbitration free from legal technicalities and difficulties of procedure.

To further add to the confidence, content, and hope of the workers generally, a measure will be submitted to you to extend the principle of the Workers' Compensation Act to a larger number of industries and a greater circle of workers, so as to provide compensation for industrial diseases as well as for injuries and accidents received in the course of employment.

The operations under the Workers' Homes Act are proceeding apace, and my Ministers are now in a position to undertake the construction of homes on the terms set forth in the Act.

The intention is to establish State brick works and saw mills in conjunction with this undertaking.

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly—

My Ministers have devoted much attention to the provisions of means for the reduction of the cost of living, and at an early date you will be asked to ratify the necessary appropriations for the trading enterprises which have been undertaken for this purpose.

The purchase of steamers for the conveyance of stock from the North-West to the markets of the State, the establishment of abattoirs at North Fremantle and Midland Junction, and other matters with like end in view, you will be asked in proper form to authorise and approve.

Pursuant to the guarantee entered into with the Federal Government to supply sleepers for the construction of the Trans-Australian Railway, the establishment of State saw mills in our karri forests have been resolved upon, and the preliminary steps have already been taken.

Mr. President and Honourable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council—

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly—

In furtherance of the policy announced at the last general elections, my Advisers have been assiduous in their attention to the important subject of education. Since the commencement of the present year 23 new schools have been opened. A new system of training teachers for the small country schools has been inaugurated at the training college, under which about 50 teachers will be prepared every year for this special work.

My Ministers are preparing to open a secondary school for the Kalgoorlie and Boulder district, and agricultural schools on one or more of the State farms.

The Senate of the University came into existence a few months ago and has been dealing with the necessary initial organisation. It is expected that advertisements will be issued in a few days calling for applications for professorships, and that the actual teaching will begin early in 1913.

Recognising the needs of an enormous State like ours, my Advisers are convinced of the wisdom of pushing forward railway communications in the interests of settlement. You will be asked to approve of Bills for the construction of the following railway lines:—

Norseman to Esperance. A line to open up the Margaret River area. The extension of the Bolgart line. A line to tap the country westward of Wagin. A line serving Cowcowing, Mount Marshall, and adjacent areas. The extension of the Yilliminning-Kondinin line, to serve the Mount Arrowsmith and Wadderin areas.

In addition to these lines decided upon, surveys are in hand and data are being obtained for the purpose of submitting a proposal for the construction of a line from Fremantle to Kalgoorlie on the 4ft. 8½in. gauge.

New Bills for the betterment of local government throughout the State will be introduced, and among these may be mentioned—

An amendment of the Roads Act; an amendment of the Municipalities Act; and a Traffic Bill.

The activity of the Public Works Department in the construction of public works during the last twelve months has been unprecedented. During this term 284 miles of railway have been completed and handed over to the Working Railways, and 453 miles are now under construction. At the present time there are nearly 3,000 wages men employed by the department in various portions of the State.

The amalgamation of the whole of the water supplies of the State, and the establishment of a Water Supply Department, will bring about greater efficiency in this branch of the public service, and at the same time economise in the cost of administration.

My Advisers have spared no effort and no expense in rendering assistance to the farmers in locating water. By boring operations supplies have been located, and numerous wells have been sunk. Water was carried over railways and storage tanks provided, from which the farmers drew their supplies on a deferred payment system.

Additional dams have been sunk and others are being extended, and while the expenditure this year has been great there is the satisfaction of knowing that the work is of a permanent character, and will prevent to a very large extent the recurrence of the experience of last summer in certain districts.

A large additional storage reservoir is being erected at Mt. Eliza for the purpose of overcoming the shortage so noticeable last year in regard to the metropolitan water supply. This will obviate a recurrence of the difficulties that have been experienced until a comprehensive scheme to supply the metropolitan area from the hills is accomplished.

The water supplies of Albany, Busselton, and Wagin are receiving attention, and investigation is being made in regard to that for Geraldton.

An irrigation scheme for the cultivated area at Harvey is in hand, and the Government proposes asking the authority of

Parliament for the purchase of the remainder of this estate for the purpose of irrigation and subdivision for closer settlement. The Roelands scheme will be undertaken for the irrigation of the land in the vicinity and between that centre and Bunbury, whilst the town supply of the latter will be drawn from the same source.

The harbours and rivers of our great coast line are receiving the earnest attention of my Advisers. Improvements and extensions are proposed to the harbours at Fremantle, Albany, Bunbury, and Geraldton, and surveys are now in progress. The jetties and tramways of the North-West are to be put in a better state of repair, and efforts will be made to provide additional jetty accommodation. Regulations are also being framed with the object of assisting, by a system of deferred payments, the extension of artesian boring, so as to render further assistance in developing the industries of that portion of the State.

To economise in administration of the Government service and to avoid paying rents, Parliament will be asked to authorise the expenditure necessary for the erection of large and up-to-date administrative offices.

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly—

The Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the next financial year are now under consideration, and it is anticipated that they will be submitted to Parliament at an earlier date than has been customary in the past.

Until the accounts for the current financial year are closed on the 11th proximo, it is not possible to state the result of the year's transactions; but, as anticipated by my Ministers, there will be a deficiency in the Revenue Account.

With a view to conducting the business of the State in a constitutional manner, you will be asked, without delay, to grant temporary supplies to meet the requirements of the public service.

A Loan Bill is in course of preparation, and will be duly submitted.

Mr. President and Honourable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council—

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly—

Among other measures that will be submitted will be Bills—

Providing for the purchase of the Metropolitan Tramways;

Dealing with the liquor traffic, and providing (a) for the granting of complete local option, and (b) the amending of the present licensing law, with the object of providing for the better regulation of the traffic;

Declaring the law relating to rights in natural waters, and for the irrigation and drainage of land;

For regulating the pearling industry;

For the better management of our fisheries and fish supplies;

For the amendment of the Land Act, 1898;

For the amendment of the Agricultural Lands Purchase Act, 1909;

For amending the Mining Act, 1904;

Providing for the care and cure of inebriates;

For amending the Land Tax and Income Tax Act, 1907;

For amending the Factories Act;

For consolidating and amending the law relating to Companies;

For amending the Employment Brokers Act; and

For increasing the capital of the Agricultural Bank.

A Bill will also be submitted to enable a convention of representatives chosen by electors to frame proposals for the amendment of the Constitution Act for submission to Parliament.

I now leave you to your labours trusting that by the blessing of Divine Providence they may be conducive to the permanent welfare of the State, and the social betterment of its people.

The Governor then retired, and the President (Hon. H. Briggs) took the Chair.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY laid on the Table reports and papers similar to those presented by Ministers in the Legislative Assembly; also Report of Royal Commission on Miners' Lung Diseases, annual reports of Fremantle Harbour Trust Commissioners, Superintendent of Charities, Superintendent of State Labour Bureau, Inspector General of Insane, Bunbury Harbour Board, Commissioner of Police, Metropolitan Water Supply, Registrar of Friendly Societies.

BILL—ELECTION OF SENATORS AMENDMENT.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew): 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 amend the Election of Senators Act 1903."

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

QUESTION—UNEMPLOYED AT KALGOORLIE.

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: I would like to ask the Colonial Secretary a question without notice. My excuse for doing so to-day is that it is a matter of great importance to the residents of the Eastern Goldfields, and it is a subject also which has been communicated to the Premier of the State during the past week, but to which no reply has been given. The question is as follows:—Are the Government aware that there is a large number of men in Kalgoorlie awaiting work in connection with the Transcontinental Railway, the commencement of which has been indefinitely postponed? If so, do they intend to take action to relieve the situation?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew): I must ask the hon. member to give notice of the question.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. H. Briggs) : His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to supply me with a copy of his Speech, and for the sake of convenience a copy will be placed before each member.

Hon. R. G. ARDAGH (North-East) : I desire to 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 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 at the outset to thank the Government for having given me the opportunity as a new member to say a few words of thanks to His Excellency for having delivered his Speech, and for this reason, that on looking around this gathering of members, I appear to be very nearly the youngest, and perhaps also the smallest member, so far as avoirdupois weight is concerned. These facts make me wonder whether I will properly fill the position to which the constituents of the North-East Province have elected me. However, I shall during my sojourn in this Council do my best to assist in the passing of legislation which may be brought forward for the benefit of the people and the State. At the outset, I desire to congratulate the Government on the progressive work they have accomplished during the recess. I remember, when the Labour party were in office some years ago, they were alleged by their opponents to have been a "mark-time" Government.

Hon. Sir J. W. Hackett: They framed the phrase "mark time" themselves.

Hon. R. G. ARDAGH: According to the public utterances of the members of the Opposition to-day, fault is being found because the Government are very progressive in the matter of State enterprise.

The Government have certainly done much to assist settlement on the land during the last season, and many of the settlers would have been forced from their holdings had it not been for the assistance rendered to them by the Government of the day. The large, though necessary, expenditure thus involved will no doubt account for the expected deficiency in the revenue, reference to which has been made in the Governor's Speech. However, I suppose that all these things have to take place, and it is pleasing to note, at any rate, that the Government were able to go to the assistance of those people on the land who were in need of help because of the dry season. I notice also that the Government intend to render assistance to the mining industry. As one who has lived on the goldfields for the past seventeen years, I believe that assistance can be rendered in many ways to prospectors and those in out-back districts in particular. There is not the slightest doubt that the old prospectors of Western Australia have done much towards developing and populating the lands of the State, and, though the mines have up to the present time reached a great depth. I believe that along the Golden Mile there are still good and payable propositions which will be worked for many years to come, and when we know that, I think it is wise for the Government to declare that they intend to assist the industry. There are many fields which, no doubt, have gone back of late, but this has been principally because in a number of instances the mines have not been properly developed. Rich ore has been taken from them and then they have been left to anyone who came along. In the past, Governments have spent a great deal of money in building railways, and erecting buildings on the mining fields, and it is a deplorable thing to see these buildings to-day untenanted. With regard to places like Kookynie and Menzies, I am satisfied that, if diamond drilling were undertaken, those mines which have been worked to a depth of 600 or 700 feet, would be found to be capable of further successful development, and consequently

greater prosperity to the industry. I also notice that it is intended to introduce a number of railway Bills this session, and, whilst I am prepared to assist the Government in this direction of building railways wherever they may be needed—and I believe by railway extension more good can be done than one can imagine, especially in the farming districts—I sincerely hope that one railway at any rate, that is the line to Esperance, will be authorised by Parliament this session. I have not the slightest doubt in my mind about the quality of the wheat-growing land between Norseman and Esperance, through which this railway would pass. There is a large area of it and there are many settlers there with their families, and I think they are entitled to railway communication as much as any other part of this State. There are many other measures that might be touched upon, but probably later on in the session an opportunity will be afforded me to refer to them. The industrial laws of Western Australia certainly need a great deal of amendment, in my opinion at any rate. As one who has been connected with the industrial movement for many years, I can say that the Conciliation and Arbitration Act, the Workers' Compensation Act, and the Factories Act certainly need to be amended in the interests of both employer and employee. I think the Arbitration Act particularly can well be amended, and I sincerely hope to see the matter dealt with this session in a better way than was done last session. It is also pleasing to me to note that the Government are starting State sawmills and brickyards, because they will undoubtedly be of great benefit and assistance to the carrying out of the Workers' Homes scheme. In New South Wales the establishment of State brickyards has proved a great success. Prior to the establishment of these works the New South Wales Government had to pay 42s. per thousand for their bricks, whereas I see by the report of the Standing Committee on Public Works of New South Wales for 1911 bricks were being manufactured for the use of the Government at 19s. 10d. per thousand, thus

effecting a saving of a considerable amount of money each year. I am satisfied that the same good work can be accomplished in Western Australia, and I sincerely hope to see these schemes persevered in. I do not wish to take up any further time to-day. I desire to thank members for the courtesy they have shown me, and I have pleasure in moving my motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

Hon. F. DAVIS (Metropolitan-Suburban): It gives me great pleasure to second the motion moved by the hon. member. Listening to the Speech one could not help being struck with the note of optimism running right through it. As a record of progress accomplished it should be to everyone a cause for congratulation. It also gives evidence of an honest endeavour on the part of the Government to materialise in actual fact the promises of the past. But it is somewhat unfortunate that during the period under review there has been a partial drought—happily a somewhat unusual occurrence in the history of Western Australia. One cannot help thinking what a singular thing it is that this occurrence should have synchronised with the advent of the Labour Ministry.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Another mistake made.

Hon. F. DAVIS: It is possible that the Labour party may have made mistakes, but they have never yet made the mistake of assuming control of the weather, and therefore they are not responsible for the result of the partial drought through which we have passed.

Hon. F. Connor: They got in out of the wet.

Hon. F. DAVIS: Possibly they did. Some cynics have credited the Government with the results of that over which they have no control. However, it is a matter for congratulation that the Government have faith in the possibilities of the State. We have undoubtedly great resources in the State, particularly in regard to agriculture. As many members of the House know, the land has been proved to be excellent for agricultural purposes, and as evidence of their faith

in this respect the Government have decided to establish workshops for the construction of agricultural machinery.

Hon. M. L. Moss: There will be nobody but Government servants in this country presently.

Hon. F. DAVIS: I hope Mr. Moss will live to see it. We trust, indeed we are sure, that when these workshops are established, they will be the means of greatly benefiting the farmers. We have had evidence in the past that exorbitant prices are charged to struggling settlers for their machinery. Of this many members are aware, probably from personal experience. At any rate I have had conversation with many men on the land, who, in proof of what they said, furnished prices paid for machinery which, when compared with the cost of manufacture, left an exorbitant margin of profit. We hope that when these workshops are established it will be possible for farmers to obtain some relief in the provision of what to them are necessary tools of trade. One of the features of the Speech, indeed the dominant keynote, was the reference to industrial unrest. Those of us who have carefully watched proceedings in other lands are aware that industrial unrest is practically universal. Undoubtedly there is a cause for this. We are aware that prior to the introduction of steam and other motive power the employer and employee were very much closer in touch than they are at the present time. Their interests at least appeared to be more in common than they are now. But with the motive power now at the command of those who have capital, it has been possible to obtain far greater results than were ever dreamt of prior to the introduction of steam and other power. With the possibility of greater exploitation of those who produce the wealth there has been, on the face of it, a strong desire to obtain greater results than those which contented our predecessors, and although the productive power in civilised communities has advanced greatly, those who create the wealth do not receive the return which should be theirs as the result of their labours. It is the universal re-

cognition of this fact which is responsible for the industrial unrest throughout the world. Those who create the wealth are beginning to realise that it is only right and just that they should obtain a greater share of the wealth they produce than has been the case in the past. It is fortunate that the results some of us anticipated in consequence of the rejection of the Arbitration Act Amendment Bill last session did not take place. The feeling engendered by the rejection of that Bill was one of intense irritation among those who wished to come under the provisions of the Bill. Amongst the workers there was set up a feeling of intense indignation and irritation at the action of this Chamber in rejecting that Bill.

Hon. M. L. Moss: The Bill was not rejected.

Hon. F. DAVIS: I maintain that it was. From conversations I have had with those who suffered as the result of that Bill not being accepted by this House I feel there can be no other conclusion arrived at than that its rejection has been a constant source of irritation. But for the advice and help of those who wish to see harmonious relations maintained, the rejection of that measure might easily have led to very serious industrial results.

Hon. M. L. Moss: You know that fourteen out of sixteen of those clauses were passed by this House.

Hon. F. DAVIS: But the Bill in its entirety was not passed, and therefore it was not the Bill desired by the people.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Because we would not swallow the whole, out of pique you put it in the waste-paper basket.

The PRESIDENT: The Hon. Mr. Davis has the audience.

Hon. F. DAVIS: I trust that when the Bill is introduced this session the Legislative Council will see that it is accepted, possibly in a slightly amended form as compared to that in which it was submitted last session. If this is done I feel confident the measure will be of immense benefit to the State. One of the matters referred to in the Speech was that of the Workers' Compensation Act amendment, a most beneficent measure and one

that should have found a place on the statute book long ago. The clause to which the chief objection is offered, namely, that of insisting upon a fortnight passing before any compensation is paid to those injured, is not, I maintain, in the best interests of the State. Against that, the objection was raised that if compensation were paid directly from the time of accident, a number of men would take advantage of that provision; but I venture to say that difficulty can be easily overcome by the provision of a doctor's certificate in every case of claim. I trust that when the Bill is brought down it will be given effect to, and we as a State shall come more closely into line with the legislation of older, and perhaps wiser, lands. The Workers' Homes Act has come into operation to a limited extent. There has been possibly some unavoidable delay in the establishment of this department. At any rate at the present time it is in operation, and when the clauses and regulations are better understood I feel sure it will be availed of far more than it has been up to the present. It is unfortunate that the regulations do not appear to be understood by a large number of people. A misunderstanding obtains as to the assistance which can be given, but it is only a question of time when the provisions of the Workers' Homes Act will be more generally accepted and used than they are to-day. However, I agree with the Government in the decision not to advance money to any extent for the building of new houses until the State brickworks and sawmills have come into operation. Obviously it would be unfair to those who might borrow money in the early stages of the operation of the Act, when the prices of bricks and timber are very much higher than what they will be when these materials are supplied by the State. It would be unfair to those who had to pay a higher price as compared with what will subsequently obtain when the Government mills have been established, and therefore the decision of the Government to hasten slowly in this respect appears to me to be undoubtedly wise. One of the important points dealt with is

that of the cost of living. This has been a live question for a long time. Probably there is not one person in the community who is not more or less affected by this problem, and therefore it may be said to be a burning question. Prior to the last election, in October, the party with which I am associated had as one of its principal planks the object of reducing the cost of living by all possible means, and, as we are all aware, that party was returned to office by a very much larger majority than has been known for a long time past. It is, therefore, to be assumed that the people as a whole endorse the policy of an attempt to reduce the cost of living.

Hon. F. CONNOR: The policy of the party you refer to was that of non-borrowing.

Hon. F. DAVIS: They are two different things. I am speaking of the cost of living. With a view to bringing about a reduction in the price of meat the Government have decided to purchase steamers in order to procure the commodity at first hand, bring it to the metropolis, and there dispose of it by their own agents direct to the retailer, and so make it possible for the consumer to obtain it at a reasonable price. In doing so the Government are acting in accordance with promises made at the last general election, and so should receive the unstinted support of the House. I hope that when the time comes the House will endorse the action of the Government in this regard. Among the many things which the Government have to deal with during the course of the year, and which will not perhaps appeal to the public mind so readily as other subjects, is the question of education. I was very pleased to see a reference in the Speech to the progress which had been made in connection with education, and the provision for new schools, and, more particularly, the proposal to train a number of teachers, especially for country schools. We are aware that the tendency at the present time is for people to drift into towns, possibly on account of the greater attractions there, and the greater number of pleasures it is possible to obtain. That

tendency, however, is to be deplored. Unfortunately, in the curriculum of the schools at the present time, there is not that attention paid to subjects which would cause the children to take an interest in natural subjects, such as agriculture, horticulture, and kindred matters. Some years ago, while I had the privilege of conducting a newspaper for a considerable time, I made a special point of publishing a series of articles dealing with the importance of country schools having a different curriculum, one which would enable the children to be taught in natural subjects, and matters which, in their after lives, they might be able to turn to useful account. This course I am particularly pleased to notice the Government are adopting, and I trust they will see their way to extend it in the future. During the recess we had presented to us a report by the Inspector General of Schools dealing with the question of continuation schools. This is a most desirable form of education. During the past few years we appear to have drifted somewhat in regard to our manufactures. When I say "we" I speak of the British people generally, in competition with other nations, and that fact is largely due to the greater efficiency of the technical schools in other lands, particularly in Germany, and to the evening schools which have been provided for the youth of those countries. The Inspector General in his report outlines the possibility of continuation schools being established in this State, and points out that there are two alternatives, one for the boys to continue at school in the daytime until they arrive at a certain age, and the other for schools to be established in the evening, which the youths could attend until they reached the age of 18. But he pointed out that day continuation schools inevitably entail a large amount of expenditure. There can be no doubt that the conditions obtaining in Western Australia are far different from those which exist in a country like Germany, where so much success has been achieved. We are a more scattered people; we have nothing like the dense population that exists in Germany, and the

cost of providing that form of education, therefore, would necessarily be a good deal higher. I certainly think this Government should make an effort to establish continuation schools as far as practicable, within our means, in order to bring them into line with those of other nations. Possibly a compromise might be effected, and it might be possible for the Government to enable the boys to continue at school until they attained the age of 16 years, then to spend two years at an evening continuation school. That, perhaps, might meet our special circumstances, and achieve the objects we have in view. The present curriculum appears to be somewhat swollen, and I think there is room for alteration by the substitution of other subjects for some of those which exist at the present time. One that I would like to see introduced is the study of political affairs. An honourable gentleman exclaims "Oh," but I think this is very desirable. I had an object lesson in this some time ago. While editing the *Country Teachers' Journal* I had occasion to visit a school, and the teacher in charge asked a number of questions of the boys in order to prove that they had a knowledge of political and social affairs. Most of the questions were satisfactorily answered, but amongst them was one as to whether the boys could state who was the Prime Minister of Australia. A number of hands were held up and the answer that one lad gave was "Please, sir, Sir John Forrest." That evidently showed that the boy was loyal to the State in which he lived, but he had not acquired any knowledge of Australian political affairs.

Hon. F. Connor: That is coming all right.

Hon. F. DAVIS: I sincerely trust that the suggestion will be adopted, because there are many questions in connection with civic as well as political life which the boys and girls should have a knowledge of. We expect them to exercise an intelligent vote at election time, and unless we train their minds we cannot expect that from them. I trust that the boys and girls will be trained in this way, because after all we have to remem-

ber that the period of youth is the time when the mind is plastic to receive and marble-like to retain. I note with pleasure in the Speech that it is proposed to nationalise the tramway service in the metropolis. It seems to be, on examination, only reasonable that the two great transport services of the metropolitan area of the State should be under the one head. I will give an idea how sometimes divided control works out. A few years ago, when attending meetings of the Belmont Park Road Board, I remember that an effort was made to obtain tramway communication with that part of the metropolitan area. The request was met with a blank refusal. It was the authorities who refused to allow the trams to go over the railway lines at Burswood, or for a sub-way to be constructed at that place. The reason was that the tramway service would be controlled by private enterprise and would come into conflict with the State system. If the two services had been under the one head there would not have been any need for that district to remain without the communication which they were then seeking, and to which they were entitled. I trust that from the action of the Government the same good results which have obtained in England, through the municipalisation of the tramways, will follow in this State. I notice that it is intended to introduce a Bill to deal with the liquor traffic, in which one of the principal items will be complete local option. We believe that complete local option should obtain in this connection, because there can be no question that if it be good in the one case, it must be good in the other.

Hon. Sir J. W. Hackett: Would you wipe out the ten years' provision?

Hon. F. DAVIS: No; I would not. It is also suggested that we should make provision for the regulation of the traffic, in addition to the complete local option. Those are the two main items of the measure, and farther down in the Speech we have reference to the provision of cure and care of inebriates. To my mind the two should go together. While it is undoubtedly right that the producing power of every man in the State should

be utilised to provide the wealth of the State, and therefore the care and cure of inebriates should be dealt with properly and thoroughly, it seems only fair and just that those who create the inebriates, and make a profit in so doing, should pay the cost of the control and care of those unfortunate enough to fall under the influence of alcohol. The suggestion at first sight may not appear to be a palatable one to those particularly concerned, but, as a matter of abstract justice, I fail to see how objection can be taken to it. There is also to be a provision for an amendment of the Factories Act. For a considerable time certain of the provisions of the Act were not carried into effect; owing to the absence of inspectors it was not possible to carry into effect a number of its provisions. I sincerely trust that the amending Bill, when it comes to the Chamber, will contain provisions for making the Act a thoroughly workable one. There can be no doubt that if those who have to toil for their living do so under healthy conditions there is likely to be more efficient work performed than would otherwise be the case. We have a splendid object lesson in the instance of the National Cash Register works in the United States. The proprietors of that establishment were apparently seized with the view that if they gave their workers the best possible conditions they would reap a result which, in the end, must recoup them. The wisdom of this view was shown in the results. Originally their people worked 10½ hours a day, but the firm gradually reduced the time to 8 hours, and provided dressing rooms and uniforms, and in other ways studied the comfort of their employees. The surroundings were made as pleasant as possible compatible with the carrying on of the work, and at the end of a few years the output was just the same for the eight-hour day as, under the old conditions, it had been with a day of 10½ hours. This object lesson might well be copied by employers in other lands, and it is to be hoped that some of the social problems with which we are faced to-day will be met in that spirit, and solved

by provisions of that character, rather than the more drastic and violent remedies suggested by certain writers. There is only one other matter I wish to refer to, and that is the convention proposed in the Speech. It seems a novel idea that a convention should sit to frame a new Constitution for the Legislature of the State. There are many who hold that a Constitution should be as rigid as possible. From those I differ. The experience of the United States has revealed the existence of continued irritation and outcry against the rigidity of their Constitution. In fact, "the dead hand of the Constitution" has become a current phrase in America. The people their hold that the men who framed the Constitution many years ago, when the conditions were very different from what they are to-day, had no right to impose upon their successors for ever conditions which those framers of the Constitution never dreamt would arise. I hold, therefore, that it is wise to make the Constitution as flexible as possible, and I hope that the proposed convention will be productive of much good.

Hon. M. L. Moss : What is wrong with the present Constitution?

Hon. F. DAVIS : Amongst other matters not mentioned in the Speech, but which I have been requested to touch upon, is that of initiative, referendum, and recall.

Hon. F. Connor : That is not in the Constitution.

Hon. F. DAVIS : No, I would be pleased if it were.

Hon. F. Connor : Is it the abolition of the Upper House?

The PRESIDENT : The hon. Mr. Davis has the audience.

Hon. F. DAVIS : In the past we have had instances of how this principle works out, so far at least as Federal matters are concerned, while, on one occasion, we had an opportunity of voting on one subject as a State matter. The point we want to raise is that while it is possible for a Government to place before the people questions in respect to which they wish to ask their opinion, it is not possible for the people themselves to insist

upon any particular question being submitted to them for acceptance or rejection. We hold that this condition should be granted to them. In this we assume that we are in accordance with the wishes of the people. The Legislature is supposed to be a reflex of the people, and there is no more decisive method of determining the will of the people than by the use of the referendum. In an ordinary election many side issues enter into the calculation. There is, for instance, the personality of the candidates.

Hon. C. Sommers : And the charges made against them.

Hon. F. DAVIS : Perhaps. Then there are their views on many questions of other than a political character. All these things enter into the calculation, and very often the electors, instead of deciding upon the principles the candidates advocate, decide upon issues outside the main question altogether. For that reason we hold that the principle of initiative, referendum and recall, should obtain in this State.

Hon. Sir J. W. Hackett : Would you put the referendum above Responsible Government?

Hon. F. DAVIS : If the results of the referendum are better than those of Responsible Government, then the interests of the State would be better served by the referendum, and for that reason I trust the Government will see their way clear to introduce the Bill. I beg to second the motion moved by the hon. member.

On motion by Hon. M. L. Moss, debate adjourned.

BILL—SUPPLY, £1,003,361.

Received from the Legislative Assembly.

Standing Orders Suspension.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew) moved—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended so far as is necessary to enable the Bill transmitted by Message No. 1 from the Legislative Assembly to be taken into consideration and passed through all its stages at one sitting.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY (North-East): While it is not unusual to ask that the Standing Orders be suspended, to permit of a Supply Bill being passed through all its stages, it is certainly due to the House that the Leader should make some explanation to enable members to decide whether or not the Standing Orders should be suspended in this instance. It is only right that the Leader of the House should pay to members the respect due to them and give an explanation for adopting the unusual course of moving the suspension of Standing Orders, in order to pass the Supply Bill through all its stages on the opening day of Parliament.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (in reply): It should not be necessary for an hon. member, especially one who has had considerable experience of Parliamentary life, to require an explanation. I intended to make my explanation later on. The position should be patent to everyone who has a knowledge of politics. The financial year will end on the 30th June, and we want Parliamentary authority for expenditure that may occur. Previous Governments have not sought the sanction of Parliament before the expenditure of the money, and they have gone into July and sometimes August before submitting a Supply Bill. We are coming forward before the 30th June and asking Parliament to authorise the expenditure that will occur after the 30th June. I did not think it was necessary to explain this; I thought it would be clear to every hon. member.

Hon. M. L. MOSS (West): I think it is extremely desirable that Parliament should be called together before the 30th June, with the idea of getting the necessary appropriation to carry on after the termination of the financial year. As I have frequently in the past expressed the opinion that the Government should always follow this course I will vote with the Minister. I merely rose with the object of saying that I do not propose to utter one sentence when the Bill is before the House. My protest at the present time is this: there has been an enormous amount of unauthorised expendi-

ture, for which, in my opinion, the Government have adopted a highly unconstitutional method.

The Colonial Secretary: That is not so.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: It is my opinion. I am not going to object to the Standing Orders being suspended, but I want to make the strongest protest so that I shall not be accused later on of having agreed to this appropriation going through, and allow it to be said that we openly ratified the unconstitutional practices of the past few weeks.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN (South-East): I presume that the Minister will tell us fully and plainly at the right time what this Bill endorses. If he intends to do that I shall be disposed to let the motion go through.

The PRESIDENT: According to our Standing Orders a motion for the suspension of the Standing Orders without notice has to be passed by an absolute majority of the Council. I declare that it has so passed.

Question thus passed; the Standing Orders suspended accordingly.

First Reading.

On motion by the Colonial Secretary, Bill read a first time.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew) in moving the second reading said: It is quite unnecessary for me to remark that there is nothing novel, new, singular, or remarkable in connection with the Bill. During the whole course of my Parliamentary career I have never heard one single word uttered in objection to the course similar to that which has been taken to-day. The Bill has been rendered necessary by the fact that we have to carry on public administration between the present time and the date on which the Estimates will be submitted, which will be within two months. The object of the Bill is to provide supplies for the Government to enable them to carry on over that period. The amount we solicit

is based on two-twelfths of the actual expenditure for the present financial year; nothing more is sought or asked for. I beg to move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY (North-East): My desire in objecting to the suspension of the Standing Orders was not in any way to block the Bill, but I certainly think it was due to the House that the Leader should make some explanation for the extraordinary course he saw fit to take. The Colonial Secretary has stated that during the time he has been in the House—and he has been a member of this House for a considerable number of years—no questions have been asked and no explanations given whenever a Bill of this description has been introduced. I totally disagree with the hon. member because I myself was Leader of the House for nearly six years and I never brought down an Appropriation Bill without making a full explanation as to what it covered. Even now, from the Colonial Secretary, we have had only a partial explanation. He has explained that so far as the £493,846 of revenue is concerned, this will be required for the ordinary expenditure of the State for the next two months. That explanation is a simple and the usual one, but he has not said one word in reference to the £409,515 which is to be applied from moneys to the credit of the General Loan Fund, nor with regard to the £100,000 from the Loan Suspense Account. As Mr. Moss has already mentioned we are entitled to some explanation as to how this enormous sum of money is to be spent. Whenever an Appropriation Bill has been brought down before, some brief explanation has been given, and what I want to know is whether it is for past expenditure which has been authorised by Parliament? If that is the case there is nothing more to be said. Or is it new expenditure for the purchase of steamers, or for other money expended, as Mr. Moss has suggested, in an unconstitutional way? Before I give my vote for the second reading I will require from the Leader of the House some

explanation in the direction I have mentioned.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (in reply): Before I came to the House to-day I looked up *Hansard* for the past seven years and I found that in that period the longest speech made in connection with the introduction of a Bill of this character measured three and a half inches. With regard to the information sought by Mr. Connolly, I may say that the money required from loan is to be utilised in connection with the construction of public works already authorised and in progress. It is not intended to cover the purchase of steamers.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: That is all we want to know.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No novel principle has been introduced in connection with this measure. We are following the same course as was adopted in 1910-11 with regard to the money from Loan Suspense Account, until details are finally settled for inclusion in the Loan Bill, which the Government propose to introduce to Parliament at an early date.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: All I want to know is whether the expenditure has been authorised by Parliament.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Every penny we propose to spend has been authorised by Parliament.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment; and the report adopted.

Read a third time and *passed*.

House adjourned at 4.55 p.m.