

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

THIRD SESSION OF THE ELEVENTH PARLIAMENT.

The Parliament was prorogued on the 8th February, 1923, to the 31st May, 1923. It was further prorogued to the 26th July, 1923, when it met for the despatch of business.

Parliament was opened by His Excellency the Governor.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 26th July, 1923.

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OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

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

SWEARING IN OF HON. J. EWING.

The Clerk announced the return of writ for the election of a member for the South-West Province, showing that the Hon. J. Ewing had been elected.

Hon. J. Ewing took the oath and subscribed the roll.

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 Hon. Members of the Legislative Council—

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly—

It gives me pleasure to open the Third Session of the Eleventh Parliament of Western Australia.

My advisers, recognising the paramount importance to the State and Empire of speedy increase in population and development, are

vigorously pursuing the policy of immigration embodied in the agreement between the Imperial, Federal, and State Governments. The agreement was signed on 9th February, 1923, and operates in respect of migrants sailing from England after 25th September, 1922, and, in respect of the financial clauses, from the date of signing.

During the past 18 months, the number of arrivals, including paying third class passengers, has been 10,654. The number of migrants, as defined by the agreement, settled on the land to the end of June is 232.

The advances to soldiers and ordinary clients authorised by the Agricultural Bank for further clearing, principally in the Wheat Belt, and for other purposes, for the year ending 30th June total £1,077,735, and authorisations outstanding total £1,505,199.

Railways authorised, under construction, and projected include Esperance Northwards (now nearing completion), Nyabing-Pingrup, Busselton-Augusta, Narrogin-Dwarda, Narrembeen-Merredin, Piawaning extension, Jarndup extension, Denmark extension, and Ucarty-Yorkrakine. Investigations are proceeding into rail communication between Bridgetown locality and the Great Southern Railway, to the Dale Valley, and between Pithara and Beneubbin.

My advisers anticipate that continuous employment will be available for all labour offering, by private employers, and in railway, feeder road, group settlement, and other necessary developmental and subsidiary works.

The importance of immediate production of our own food requirements is recognised, and special efforts will continue to be directed to this end. Dairying shows a marked advance, and new factories are being established at Pavensthorpe, Manjimup, and Katanning. An examination is proceeding of the swamp lands between Fremantle and Bunbury, in order that a scheme for their development may be formulated.

The increased interest in the lands of Western Australia evinced by Eastern States capi-

talists and land seekers is a source of gratification. The quality of our wheat, wool and fruit is recognised as excelled by the products of no other State, and is responsible for the introduction of considerable amounts of Eastern capital.

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly—

The revenue for the year ended 30th June, 1923, was £7,207,492, showing an increase over that of the previous year of £300,385, whilst the expenditure amounted to £7,612,843, being £26,399 less than that of the previous year. The deficit on the year's transactions was £405,351, making the accumulated deficit at 30th June, 1923, £5,910,916.

The deficit for the year shows a decrease, compared with the previous year's operations, of £326,784, and it is anticipated that improvement will continue.

The operations of the railways continue to show the improvement manifested in the previous year. The gross surplus was £675,517, leaving, after provision by the Treasury of interest (£766,000), and sinking fund (£126,000), a shortage of £216,483. This represents an improvement over 1921-22 of £214,310, and over 1920-21 of £378,379.

You will be asked to grant temporary supplies, and at an early date the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure will be submitted to you. In view of the general activity, and the sound credit of the State, as evidenced by the recent successful loan flotation, no increases in taxation are proposed.

A conference has lately been held to discuss Federal and State financial relations, but no satisfactory agreement was reached.

The sinking fund position continues satisfactory, the direct contribution last year amounting to £229,167, the total now being £8,781,051. The accretions for the past year amounted to £410,891, and redemptions to £183,307, a total improvement of £594,198, as against the deficit of £405,351.

Actuarial calculations resulted in a relief to revenue of contributions to the Goldfields Water Supply sinking fund for 1921-22 of £37,500, and for 1922-23 of £75,000, the latter also applying to the current year.

You will be asked to vote the necessary money to cover expenditure on extensions of the metropolitan water supply and tramways, rendered necessary by the rapid growth of the city.

Mr. President and Hon. Members of the Legislative Council—

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly—

Abundant rains have fallen throughout the agricultural and pastoral areas. The propitious opening of the season, the additional area sown under cereals, estimated at 500,000 acres, and the more extended use of fallow, promise a record harvest.

The Agricultural Department is engaged in the practical demonstration of the profitable utilisation of light lands.

My advisers are fully seized of the importance of agricultural education, and active steps are being taken towards the establishment of an agricultural college.

Sheep farming is in a highly satisfactory state, and the numbers of the State's flocks will be greatly increased as soon as a plentiful supply of wire netting is obtainable at a reasonable price. Measures are being taken to improve our flocks and herds. Cereals suitable to our conditions are being bred, and fodder crops are receiving special attention.

The export of fruit for the year amounted to about 400,000 cases, which constitutes a record, and the prices realised in the English market demonstrated its quality. The Government is anxious, through co-operation between the railways and the producers, to facilitate distribution to local consumers in case lots, and arrangements to this end are in vogue.

Experimental potato crops on group settlements have demonstrated the possibility of supplying our requirements the whole year round, and of building up an export trade to the Eastern States at certain periods, instead of importing at some seasons, as has been necessary in the past.

Soldier settlement operations indicate the approach of completion of this form of repatriation. The total of registrations at 30th June was 8,116, and of loans approved 4,910. Commitments at that date included £5,025,921 Agricultural Bank approvals, and £1,105,647 for purchase of estates, drainage, clearing, etc., a total of £6,131,568.

Although a considerable number of qualified applicants have not received loans, the total actually waiting for settlement as repatriation is comparatively small. Crown lands and repurchased estates are being made available regularly to absorb these.

Group settlement is proceeding steadily, and the bulk of the suitable Crown lands adjacent to existing railways are now being utilised; 64 groups were established at 30th June carrying 1,271 settlers and a total population of about 5,000. The next fields of operation will be south of Pemberton and west of Denmark. While the inception of this new system of land settlement requires some adjustment of details, it is generally working satisfactorily.

Land settlement continues active, 2,997 rural selections, totalling 1,826,681 acres, having been approved for the year, in addition to blocks occupied under group settlement.

The development of the North and North-West continues to receive special consideration, and a tropical agriculture expert has been appointed. The Agent General Designate has made inquiries into cotton-growing in Queensland. Private enterprise is endeavouring to organise the exploitation of the natural resources in power of this territory, with the encouragement of the Government, which will if necessary submit to you legislation to enable the prosecution of various developmental projects.

Prospecting for gold and oil is proceeding actively. There are 82 parties searching for

gold, 141 parties having been assisted during the past year, in addition to two Government parties. Boring for oil in the Kimberley district has been undertaken by two parties, traces of petroleum having been obtained.

Suitable arrangements have been made for a proper display of exhibits from the State at the Empire Exhibition in 1924, and the work of organisation is, with the assistance of voluntary committees, well in hand.

Notable advances in secondary industries are the opening of electric steel works at West Guildford, and the launching of the woolen mills at Albany.

The Government recognises that road boards cannot construct and maintain from rates the more substantially constructed main roads rendered necessary through the super-session of horsedrawn by motor traffic, and has under consideration measures to enable this work to be at once undertaken, with the assistance promised by the Federal Government.

Schemes for more adequate provision of water supply in the agricultural areas, both on the farms, and in key dams as reserve supplies, where suitable catchments exist, will be put into operation.

My advisers, believing that finance and development are the matters of vital importance to the State, will ask Parliament to devote the greater portion of the session to their consideration.

Following on the passage last session of the Electoral Districts Act, a Royal Commission was appointed to determine new electorates in the manner prescribed, and a Redistribution of Seats Bill will be introduced to give effect to the recommendations. Other important measures to be submitted will include Bills to consolidate and amend the Friendly Societies Acts, and the Law of Property and Conveyancing; to regulate and license the use of Firearms; for the better observance of Anzac Day, and to amend the Road Districts Act.

I now leave you to your labours, trusting that by the blessing of Divine Providence they may prove of material advantage to the State.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH, DISTRIBUTION.

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

BILL—AMENDMENTS INCORPORATION.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. Ewing—South-West) [3.34] 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 incorporate amendments in amended Acts of Parliament."

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

Hon. G. POTTER (West) [3.36]: I move—

That the following Address be presented to His Excellency 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 deliver to Parliament."

It is a matter of supreme satisfaction to members and to the citizens of the State that His Excellency has returned renewed in health from his recent journey to the seat of Empire. While His Excellency was sojourning in England and the British Isles we watched his movements with the greatest concern. It was with considerable pleasure that we read, in the cabled advice, of the good things His Excellency had to say about Western Australia in getting the State better known, and in many ways supporting the work of the Premier, who happened to be there about the same time. It is the hope of every one that His Excellency has been benefited in health to resume his duties as a representative of His Majesty, duties which His Excellency does not shirk in any circumstances. Since the close of last session the ex-leader of the House, Mr. Colebatch, has been called to the high office of representing Western Australia in London. Mr. Colebatch will be missed very much. He left here under an avalanche of good wishes, and no doubt he will be welcomed back again in due course. It is satisfactory to us to have Mr. Colebatch's assurance that he intends to return to the State. Although Mr. Colebatch led this House in his own inimitable manner, we are able to congratulate the Government upon their choice of his successor. No doubt the courtesy and tactfulness with which Mr. Colebatch was endowed will be perpetuated in Mr. Ewing, and the House will suffer nothing by the loss of Mr. Colebatch, since he has a worthy successor, whom I wish to congratulate on his return unopposed at the by-election. Coming to the Speech delivered by His Excellency, it is good to know that the Government are concerned chiefly with increasing the population of the State. It is of the utmost significance, not only to the State and to the Commonwealth, but also to the Empire. This transference of portion of the population of the Empire from one place to another within the Empire means more than a mere transference; it means very much to Western Australia and still more to the defence of the Empire, enabling the Empire to be held together and kept at what it was, and what it is, and what we hope it will be in the future. All that

has entailed a great deal of work, of planning and plotting. The Government are to be congratulated on the success of their operations in respect of the immigration policy launched by the Premier. That policy of immigration will stand as an eternal monument to the foresight and wisdom of the Government led by Sir James Mitchell. We find that nearly two million acres of land have been allotted during the past 12 months. This fact alone suggests the magnitude of the undertaking. People placed on the land are not left neglected. The application of science to agriculture calls for the greatest commendation. Much good will result from the establishment of the proposed agricultural college. The breed of cattle throughout the State is to be improved. That, of course, will commend itself to those who know most about the subject. It is also comforting to learn that the Government are seriously undertaking the development of the lands between Fremantle and Bunbury. Survey parties are actively engaged on that land, and doubtless their operations will reveal the means for creating untold wealth. It is strange that so many years should have elapsed before the development was tackled of the wonderful swamp lands so close to the metropolitan area, where a market is provided that will easily absorb the produce of those lands.

Hon. J. Cornell: The trouble is to get rid of our produce to-day.

Hon. G. POTTER: I do not think it would be the intention of the Government under any circumstances to encourage settlers to produce something that is not required. We want produce for export, and to so re-organise our local markets as to enable people in the country to get that which they cannot now get for lack of proper facilities. It is this lack of organisation in our local markets that has led to the various gluts we have experienced. If the producers allied to and assisted by the Government could perfect the marketing system, the people in the country, who at present are in need of various kinds of produce, would be able to get that produce. I am pleased to note that the question of road construction will receive earnest consideration at the hands of the Government. This is the age of the motor vehicle, the internal combustion engine. When additional roads are constructed they must not be regarded as in competition with the railways, but feeders to the railways. The roads will give those in charge of our railways a chance to prove what they are worth to the State, and give Western Australia an opportunity to prove what she is worth to the railways. No part of the State will benefit more from the construction of roads than that portion lying between Fremantle and Bunbury. Many of the things we buy in shops are handled too much, and are therefore dearer than they ought to be. We should not consider this question of road construction as if it would interfere with our railways. The good that roads will do for our railways is too obvious to require mentioning. No one questions the fact that the less often

an article is handled, particularly produce of a perishable nature, the cheaper will be the price at which it will reach the consumer. It will also reach the public in a better condition if it is handled as little as possible. With additional road construction and a better marketing system, we should escape the position that occurred in the fruit industry last year. I congratulate the Government and the settlers, particularly of the Esperance district, upon the development of our railway system. It must be a great satisfaction to the Esperance people to know that their long deferred hopes will shortly be realised. I am sure the wisdom of the Government in building that long promised railway will be reflected in the prosperity of that portion of the State, as well as of Western Australia as a whole.

Hon. J. Cornell: We want materialisation, not realisation.

Hon. G. POTTER: There is every prospect of materialisation. Throughout the Governor's Speech we find that the whole State is receiving attention. May I pay a tribute to the work of Mr. Miles, who unfortunately is not here to-day. He has done and is doing great work for the development of the North-West. Such a man as he will do much to bring about that materialisation to which Mr. Cornell has referred. I see that the people of the Eastern States are turning to Western Australia with the object of sharing in the prosperity and development of the State. There is little room for wonder that the capitalists of the Eastern States should be investing their money here. There is no comparison between the value of and price charged for the land in Western Australia and that which appertains in the Eastern States. People over there who are hungering for land are expected to pay very high prices, and are naturally turning their eyes towards the cheaper land in this State. The more people who come here to settle and develop the land, the better will it be for Australia as a whole. We cannot point out too frequently the advantage to people in the Eastern States of satisfying their requirements in the way of land in Western Australia. We often prate about the balance of exchange being against us as a Commonwealth and an Empire. We should recognise that we have only one means of adjusting that balance, and that is by becoming an exporting community. This is really the factor ruling the rate of exchange. Our prosperity will be marked by the surplus of exports over imports. The announced policy of the Government will, I submit, tend in many directions to bring that about. This is not merely a blind guess. The policy of the Government as reflected in the financial position to-day constitutes an improvement. It is satisfactory to know that the expenditure has decreased, and the revenue increased. This must be attributed to better administration of the affairs of State. If the Government are allowed to pursue their policy in this respect the position should become even better. While the financial position is more satisfactory than it was last year, I cannot help

feeling that the Government are losing a grand opportunity to still further improve the financial position by not refusing to carry any further the burden of those deficit producers, the State trading concerns.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. G. POTTER: We state that we are throwing out inducements every day to private enterprise to develop Western Australia. On the other hand we see what the State trading concerns are doing for Western Australia. There may be one particular branch of these concerns that is showing a profit. If, however, these were privately owned concerns, and there existed that competition that is always engendered by the activities of private concerns, the revenue of the State would benefit. Their profits would be taxable. At present we suffer the absolute loss of the money that was sunk in the State trading concerns, money that is dead and gone; whereas if they were privately owned the State would be collecting taxation from them.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Hear, hear!

Hon. G. POTTER: I cannot understand why anyone should be reluctant to dispense with something that constitutes an incubus to the progress of the State. I hope in his reply the Minister for Education will be in a position to give us an assurance that, until such time as the Government can see their way to abolish State trading concerns, they will not add to them, or extend the ambit of State trading activities. It is a matter for congratulation that the Government are so State-wide in their views that they are not confining their energies solely to land development. They are also doing what they can to develop and exploit the natural resources of the State, and encouraging the search for oil and minerals of all descriptions. The pessimist may say that a lot of money has been spent in directions which may not lead to a return, that those who are prospecting for oil and minerals may not find what they seek. In my opinion, however, whether the result of the research work be good or otherwise, the Government should be strongly supported in their efforts to develop the resources of the State. Much has been done and will be done with regard to the supply of water, not only for the agricultural districts, but for the metropolitan area. We have heard much of late concerning the question of water supplies. Some 40 years ago no one prognosticated that the metropolitan area would grow to the extent it has done. Because of this development it is not to be wondered at that there was a shortage of water last year. It is satisfactory to note that the Government recognise their responsibilities in the matter, and it is hoped that an adequate water supply will be forthcoming for the needs of the people during the ensuing summer. Some people deplore the fact that the metropolitan area is growing so fast. This fact need cause no alarm to the citizens of the State. If the metropolitan area expands and the country is also being settled, secondary industries will begin to grow up. Where else should we have

our secondary industries than near our principal port and close to the sources of our raw material? Year in and year out we have deplored the fact that so much money is being sent out of Western Australia to the Eastern States for the purchase of commodities we could produce here. Secondary industries are just as essential to the State as is farming and the development of our natural resources. How are we going to provide for the sons and daughters of our farmers? Because a man has been a successful farmer it does not follow that his sons will pursue the same avocation.

Hon. J. Mills: It often turns out to be the other way.

Hon. G. POTTER: A farmer's son may choose some other form of livelihood. We must have secondary industries in order to supply our own requirements, and provide an outlet for our raw materials. It is pleasing to note that woollen mills are likely to become a material factor in the absorption of the wool that is grown in our hinterland.

Hon. H. Stewart: No thanks to the metropolitan area.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: Or to the Government.

Hon. G. POTTER: The metropolitan area will have its uses. It will be able to absorb at least a proportion of the output of those mills, as well as of other secondary industries that will be established. If the metropolitan area is faithful to local industries, their success will be assured. I notice that something is going to be done to bring about homogeneity in the celebration of Anzac Day. I am not discussing this question from the holiday point of view. It is a sacred day to Western Australia and to the British Empire as a whole. I hope nothing will prevent this day from being celebrated, not as a holiday, but as a holy day in its truest sense. It means so much to the rising generation of Western Australia. I again lift my voice on behalf of some of our men who should remember Anzac Day, men who, I hope, will never have reason to remember it in any other way than with great satisfaction that they were actual participants in that great landing. We told those men who went to fight for us what we would do for them when they came back, and in what manner they would be looked after on their return from the Front. It is unfortunate that so many of those men are at present unemployed and that their prospect is a dismal one. I do not say the Government should turn themselves into an unemployment agency, but I would specially appeal to the great employers of labour to extend to those men all the help they can. I will not mention the names of those captains of industry, but the names of some are well known as being those of men who make a real effort on behalf of the less fortunate. They do not take into consideration the question of profits in connection with the employment of returned soldiers. I particularly refer to the employment of those men who belong to the Maimed and Limbless Soldiers' Association. Those men are unfortunate, in that they are not all

able to place themselves in positions which will secure for them adequate re-establishment in civilian life. Men of that description are looking for work now, and if something could be done through the columns of the Press to again awaken in the minds of generous people, a realisation of their responsibility to these men, something tangible could be achieved. I hope these men will never have to plead that the prayer of their petition for the right to work has been spurned.

Hon. F. ROSE (South-West) [4.2]: I formally second the motion.

On motion by Hon. A. Lovekin debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 4.3 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday 26th July, 1928.

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MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Legislative Assembly met at 3 p.m. pursuant to proclamation by His Excellency the Governor, which proclamation 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.

The Speaker resumed the Chair.

BILL—REGISTRATION OF DEEDS AMENDMENT.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam): 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

for an Act to amend an ordinance to consolidate and amend the laws relating to the registration of deeds, wills, judgments and conveyances affecting real property.

Leave given; Bill introduced and read a first time.

GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

Mr. SPEAKER: 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 greater accuracy, I have had printed copies of the Speech distributed amongst hon. members of this Chamber.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

Mr. MANN (Perth) [3.45]: 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 Assembly of the Parliament 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 am pleased to note that the outstanding feature of the Governor's Speech is that of the further development of Western Australia and of the State's industries.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I thought it was finance.

Mr. MANN: It is apparent that we must have a very large development of the interior of the State before we can realise the establishment of secondary industries.

Mr. Underwood: How do you define "interior"?

Mr. MANN: The hon. member comes from the interior and ought to know. I wish to commend the Government for their policy of development. I doubt whether anyone, in power or out of power, has been so persistent in urging the necessity for developing the lands and industries of this State as has been the Leader of the present Government.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You do not always say that.

Mr. MANN: Of course there are some people who criticise the actions of the Premier. Sir James Mitchell had critics when he was developing the wheat lands, and there are people who criticise his policy for developing the South-West. These critics are not always of the constructive type. They do not possess the vision or the foresight of the Leader of the Government.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is very hard language to use.

Hon. P. Collier: What about Mr. Monger?