

under our Federal Government, shorn of many of its obligations and of much of the work it had to do; and it is absolutely ridiculous to suppose that the country will submit to the tax of finding salaries for the present number of members in either House. To do so is more than can be expected of the country. Before long, we shall be obliged to have a redistribution of seats, and in both Houses the number of members will certainly be cut down. I now move that the following Address-in-reply be presented to His Excellency:—

To His Excellency the Honourable Sir Arthur Lawley, Knight, Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor, etc., etc., etc.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

We, the Members of the Legislative Council in Parliament assembled, have heard with profound regret of the demise of Her late Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, of blessed and glorious memory, and we desire to assure you of our loyalty and devotion to Her successor, His Most Gracious Majesty King Edward VII.

We beg to thank Your Excellency for the Speech which you have addressed to Parliament.

It will be our endeavour to carefully consider the matters mentioned in the Speech, and all others that may be submitted to us, and we join with Your Excellency in the hope that by Divine guidance we may advance the well-being of the people.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY (North-East): Sir, it is with considerable diffidence that I rise to second the Address-in-reply; and as a member entirely new to this House, I trust that you and the House generally will extend to me that indulgence which is, I believe, always extended to new members. It is not my intention to detain you at any length; but I feel it necessary to make a few remarks on the very important deliverance we have heard to-day. The Government have certainly put forward an excellent programme; but it may reasonably be doubted if the whole of the legislation proposed in the Speech can be enacted in what promises to be a short session. I may say at the outset, I believe the country is thoroughly with the Government in their desire to introduce those domestic reforms which, of late years, have become a crying necessity. I have been returned to this House some two months later than the recent

general election; and I can assure hon. members that the feeling throughout the province I represent is that the Government should get a fair trial in carrying out those necessary reforms, and in introducing new legislation for such objects as cheapening the price of fruit and meat, giving us better administration in the various departments of the public service, and straightening our finances. I might here add a word of congratulation to the Hon. the Minister of Lands and leader of the House on his appointment to Cabinet rank, also to the Hon. Dr. Jameson on his appointment to the Ministry, which appointment is, I take it, a distinct compliment to this House, only one member of which has hitherto had a voice in the Cabinet. Coming to the Speech itself, I may say, in common with all who study the affairs of this State, that we await with considerable interest the financial proposals of the Government. Of course I am well aware that we shall have to wait till after the end of the month, when the Treasurer delivers his Budget Speech, before we can have the complete details. I notice, too, with satisfaction, that those works authorised by the late Government are to be pushed on with all possible despatch. There is special mention made of the Coolgardie water scheme. I do not think the boon of a good water supply to the goldfields can be over-estimated; and as the work has been authorised, it should be completed. If the necessary money be forthcoming, and the same or more energy be put into the work than was previously exhibited, I think the water ought to be flowing in the different goldfields towns within 12 months. I must say I rather regret the announcement in the Speech that we are to have no new railways. [A MEMBER: Hear, hear.] Speaking for the eastern goldfields, I may say it has almost become a necessity of their situation that the present lines should be extended farther inland; in fact, the large mines at Boulder and Kalgoorlie will soon be in difficulties in respect of their supply of firewood, unless these extensions be speedily undertaken. Of course I am well aware of the state of the finances, and I sympathise with the position of the Government; but the splendid profits accruing from the

present goldfields lines should, I think, be a sufficient inducement to the new Treasurer to borrow or otherwise raise some money to build us new lines to populous centres. I now refer more particularly to a line from the Eastern goldfields to Esperance Bay.

HON. J. E. RICHARDSON: Where is the populous centre there?

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: Such a line would not only give us a railway to our natural port, but would give to fields like Norseman and Dundas those facilities of transit for want of which they are at present languishing. I notice too with much pleasure that the railways have been placed under the control of a separate Minister. I certainly think this is a step in the right direction, and it will give that important industry, the railways, a chance of showing what it can do, which I maintain has not been given it before. I would also like to see a change made in the management of the railways by taking them from their present control, and placing them in the hands of an independent commissioner. This system has been tried, with very gratifying results, in the Eastern States, and I know of no reason why it should not act as well here; at any rate, I think most hon. members will agree with me that a change from the present management is desirable. I notice too with pleasure that the expenditure of unauthorised money is to cease. This certainly is a step in the right direction, and I must say that I cordially indorse the sentiment expressed in the Speech that Parliament, and Parliament alone, should authorise the expenditure of money. Referring to the sixteenth paragraph, I notice the prohibition on the importation of fruit is to be abolished. It is high time that this absurd restriction, imposed by the late Government, was removed. At the same time it is pleasing to notice that the Government intend to watch the interests of the fruitgrowers by seeing that a proper supervision is kept over imported fruit, so as not to unnecessarily endanger orchards by the introduction of the codlin moth or any other pests. Referring to the twenty-second paragraph, I notice it is the intention of the Government to extend the system of cold storage, and to give greater facilities for carrying perishable goods on the rail-

ways. This certainly is a step in the right direction, and I do not know that the Government could carry out any system which would so tend to cheapen the fruit and meat supplies on the goldfields than the one to which I have referred. The price of fruit and perishable goods on the goldfields has been kept up by the dilatory manner in which the railway authorities attend to their business. If there were a fast train, with cold storage vans attached, run daily from Perth to the goldfields, the people there would get cheap fruit and fresh food. A train could be run to the goldfields in something like 17 hours, while now the trains containing perishable goods take from 48 to 50 hours, if not longer, to travel to the goldfields. I notice with satisfaction that a Bill is to be introduced giving consent to the construction of the transcontinental railway through this State, and I am pleased indeed to see that the Government do not consider that this is purely a federal matter. In regard to this railway, we in this State of Western Australia, have to be aware of the grasping policy of New South Wales and Queensland, and I take it to be the duty of every member of this House to see that Sir John Forrest and our other Federal representatives receive cordial and sincere assistance from this State. I notice, too, it is proposed to give us an amendment of the electoral law. This, too, is a step in the right direction. At the general election held in April the rolls were in a terrible condition, containing the names of hundreds of people who had left the districts for years, while at the revision courts held in May names of voters who had been resident in a district for years were struck off the roll. I think the arbitrary system of leaving it to the registrar to object to a name being on the roll should be abolished, and that notice should be given to the electors. I see that the system of electors' rights is to be established. This method has been found to work with great success in the other States, at any rate in New South Wales, and I believe in Victoria. The elector's right system will be a very big improvement on our present method of enrolling voters. Another amendment might be made in the Constitution Act in regard to the time of holding the

revision courts. According to the law the courts are held in May, and in connection with the election at which I was returned the revision court was held after the writ had been issued, and between the date of nomination and the polling day. In some instances as many as fifty per cent. of the names were removed from the rolls, and until two or three days before the election it was not known who were to vote and who were not. This is a question which affects this House more particularly, as the elections take place in May. Whatever rolls are in force, when the writ has been issued the roll in force then should be used for the election. I have very much pleasure in seconding the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

On motion by HON. M. L. MOSS, debate adjourned until the next sitting day.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

On motion by the MINISTER FOR LANDS, the House adjourned at five minutes to four until 4:30 o'clock on the next Tuesday afternoon.

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## Legislative Assembly,

Friday, 28th June, 1901.

Meeting of the Assembly—Message: Opening proceedings—Swearing-in of Members—Election of Speaker, presentation—Governor's opening Speech—Papers presented—Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Bill, first reading—Address-in-Reply, moved—Adjournment.

#### 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.

#### MESSAGE: OPENING PROCEEDINGS.

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 Legislative Chamber.

#### SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

HIS HONOUR JUSTICE HENSMAN, having been commissioned by the Governor, appeared in the Chamber to administer to members the oath of allegiance to His Majesty.

THE CLERK (Mr. C. Lee Steere) produced the election writs, showing the return of 49 members as representatives of the Legislative Assembly (one representative having died since the election).

The members present took and subscribed the oath, as required by statute, and signed the roll.

#### ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

MR. WALTER JAMES (East Perth) said: It now becomes the duty and privilege of this House to appoint a Speaker to preside over our deliberations during the course of this Parliament. For many years now we have had that Chair occupied by Sir James Lee Steere, and I think we should all regret the arrival of the time when he will no longer be able to occupy it. I have the pleasure and honour of moving the re-election of Sir James Lee Steere as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly; and I am certain the House will rejoice if he sees his way to accept the high office.

MR. C. HARPER (Beverley): I rise with pleasure to second the proposal of the member for East Perth. For many years having sat in this Parliament, I with all other members have realised the strength and ability which Sir James Lee Steere has brought to bear in his position as Speaker of this House; and I am sure we should all extremely regret any accident which might prevent his taking that position.

No other member having been proposed,

SIR JAMES LEE STEERE rose in his place and said: Honourable members, I desire to say that I am deeply sensible