

adoption of the following Address-in-Reply to the opening Speech:—

"To His Excellency Lieut-Colonel Sir  
"Gerard Smith, Knight Commander of  
"the Most Distinguished Order of St.  
"Michael and St. George, Governor  
"and Commander-in-Chief in and over  
"the Colony of Western Australia and  
"its Dependencies, &c., &c., &c.

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

"We, Her Majesty's loyal and dutiful  
"subjects, the members of the Legislative  
"Assembly of Western Australia in Par-  
"liament assembled, beg to assure Your  
"Excellency of our continued loyalty  
"and affection to our Most Gracious  
"Sovereign.

"We thank Your Excellency for the  
"Speech which you have been pleased to  
"address to Parliament.

"Our most careful attention will be  
"given to the various matters referred to  
"by Your Excellency, as well as all other  
"matters that may be submitted for our  
"consideration, and it shall be our earnest  
"endeavour to so deal with them that our  
"labours may result in the advancement  
"and welfare of this portion of Her  
"Majesty's Dominions."

Mr. Speaker and members of this honourable House, I thank you very much for the way in which you have listened to me.

Mr. HOLMES (East Fremantle): The diffidence natural to a young and inexperienced member, in rising to second the Address-in-Reply, is in some degree abated by the knowledge that, from time immemorial, it has been the custom of Parliaments to treat with a peculiar courtesy those who essay the painful privilege of making maiden speeches. Every hon. member has had to pass through this ordeal, incidental to newness, and that idea ought to comfort every newcomer. I do not feel bound to discuss every line, phrase, or word in the Speech from Her Majesty's representative, for which Ministers alone are responsible, because it is my intention to give only a general and guarded support to the policy indicated in that document. The first duty of every member is to his immediate constituency; the next duty he owes to the community at large; and after these calls are considered, it is proper that he

should support, oppose, or criticise the policy of Ministers, according to the conclusions forced upon him as to the consequences likely to arise for the colony from the measures submitted. Governors' Speeches, as they are presented to Parliament, do not announce policies to which Her Majesty is committed, but merely the momentary intentions of the Ministry in power; and the exact reverse might be said from the Throne at any moment, when constitutional means had indicated the desire of this House for a change. Hence my seconding the Address-in-Reply signifies no more than that I will give a general support to the present occupants of the Treasury benches, so long as the policy pursued promises to further the best interests of the country. [THE PREMIER: Hear, hear.] I have no reason to suppose that Ministers are likely to be attacked on any issue involved in the Address; but it is well for men, entering upon new and responsible engagements, to indicate from the start what is to be their principle of action. We are not all of us statesmen, but I do hope that we are all men of business, ready to apply, in the new conditions to which many of us are called, the straightforward methods by which we have prospered elsewhere. The conditions of the country demand careful administration of existing laws, as well as many incidental reforms to which it may be my duty to refer on other occasions; but I feel sure that this House, and my constituents, will understand my line of action in thus stating at the outset that I am not a thick-and-thin supporter of the Ministry in office. There can be no good result from challenging the position of present advisers of the Crown, unless there is a responsible body of members on the other hand of the Speaker prepared to face the possibilities of such action; but, in my opinion, every member owes it to his constituents that he should be ready to take his share of such procedure whenever the circumstances of the country demand such action. There have been recent flaws in the administration of the affairs of departments, which demand action in this Chamber—unless the Government can show that due supervision is being insisted on—which make caution and careful thought the imperative duty of members. Ministers have briefly indicated

intention to introduce measures which may prove important; but when the measures in question are placed before us will be the proper time to discuss their provisions. Nothing should be done to disquiet Her Majesty's Ministers without due cause, but we must not lose sight of the fact that the safety of the country is the supreme law for our guidance. Having thus briefly expressed my views as to my responsibility as a representative, I have much pleasure, Mr. Speaker, in seconding the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply, so ably moved by the hon. member for Perth. There will probably be no adverse action, and the House will probably, without delay, be asked to deal with measures of importance likely to assist in advancing the prosperity of Western Australia.

MR. LEAKE: I move that the debate be adjourned to the next sitting of the House.

Motion put and passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the next sitting was fixed for the following day at 4:30 p.m.

The House adjourned at 4:35 p.m. until the next day.

### Legislative Council,

Thursday, 14th October, 1897.

Question: Correspondence *re* Petitions of Right—Paper Presented—Address-in-Reply: second day of debate, conclusion—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### QUESTION—CORRESPONDENCE *RE* PETITIONS OF RIGHT.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I beg to ask, without notice, if the Minister of Mines will kindly favour the House with copies

of the correspondence that has taken place between the Government and the Secretary of State, with reference to the presentation of petitions of right.

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. WITTENOOM): I shall have much pleasure in getting them, and placing them on the table.

#### PAPER PRESENTED.

THE MINISTER OF MINES laid on the table the annual report of the Mines Department (1896).

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

#### SECOND DAY OF DEBATE—CONCLUSION.

HON. H. BRIGGS: I think I may fairly congratulate the Government on the great amount of work done during the past year. As regards paragraph 4 of the Speech, which refers to the Federal Convention, I shall content myself with one observation. When we consider that the population of the colony at the present time is 160,000, and when we remember that two-thirds of that population come from the larger colonies of Victoria and New South Wales, it shows clearly that the present inhabitants of this colony are made up of much the same sort of people as inhabit the larger colonies; and this ought to do away with all feelings of antagonism and bitterness which I found at the Convention were supposed to exist between the populations of the larger and the smaller States. The report on the goldfields is very reassuring and satisfactory, especially when we consider how this colony was spoken about; how everything was attributed to the "boom," and how, when a depression occurred, it was said that the boom had given way. The increasing gold production shows that the colony is making great strides in a forward direction. The estimate made by the Government that the value of the gold production of the colony will this year amount to 2½ millions is, on all these accounts, most satisfactory. It will create confidence in the markets of the world. It will create confidence amongst capitalists, and we shall thereby gain, not only capital, but a steady stream of population flowing into this colony, which we so much want. As regards the Royal Mint, I anticipate