

and the practice of Parliaments throughout the world. Those Standing Orders may appear to many people, as I know they do, to be in some respects ridiculous; and such persons are apt to say, "What do we want to have such and such a Standing Order for?" But I am sure that when we come to consider why these Standing Orders have been passed by some of the ablest Parliamentarians that ever lived, we shall form a different opinion; for we shall find they have three principal objects in view. One is to give power for preserving due decorum during debate. Another is to protect the rights of minorities in the House. And another is to ensure that there shall be certain intervals of time for the due consideration of measures passing through the House. These are, I think, mostly considered to be laudable objects indeed; and perhaps you will agree with me that all these rules of procedure for the orderly conduct of business in Parliament have been devised with the best intent, and are such as I think will be approved by members of this Assembly as being rules which cannot well be improved upon. I thank you again for having placed me in this honourable position; feeling sure that, with your support, I shall be able to conduct the proceedings of this House with satisfaction to yourselves and the country. I would also wish to say to new members of this House that it will always be my pleasure, as it is also my duty, to afford every assistance to those members who may desire at any time to take counsel with me, in reference to bringing forward any measures in which they may be interested, or any matter on which they may wish to have my opinion in regard to the procedure of this House.

#### PRESENTATION OF THE SPEAKER-ELECT.

Hon. members then proceeded to Government House, to present the Speaker-Elect to the Governor; and, upon their return to this chamber,

MR. SPEAKER said: I have to inform the House that, accompanied by hon. members, I proceeded to Government House and acquainted His Excellency the Governor that, in pursuance of the Constitution Act, the Assembly had elected me their Speaker. In the name and on

behalf of the House, I also laid claim to the undoubted rights and privileges of the House—freedom of debate and access to His Excellency—and I requested that the most favourable construction may be put upon all our proceedings. His Excellency was pleased to approve of your choice, and also to confirm the constitutional rights and privileges of the House.

#### THE GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

Black Rod having appeared at the Bar, and delivered a summons from the Governor,

MR. SPEAKER and hon. members repaired to the Legislative Council Chamber, where His Excellency delivered a Speech on the opening of Parliament. [*Vide* p. 2, *ante.*] Mr. Speaker and hon. members then returned to their own chamber.

#### MOTION—ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

MR. KINGSMILL (Pilbarra): Mr. Speaker,—In rising to propose the Address-in-Reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor which honourable members have just listened to, I must put on record my intense appreciation of the honour that has been done, not only to me personally but also to the district of Pilbarra which I represent and to the great and important mining industry, by one section of whose adherents I have been returned to this House. I must, in anticipation, crave the indulgence of honourable members towards one unversed in Parliamentary procedure, and ask them to extend to me the leniency which the circumstances of the case seem to me to demand. The Speech of His Excellency the Governor has allotted to this House a task which, though likely to be a short one, contains as its principal item a measure which I—and I think most of the honourable members of this House will bear me out—regard as one of the most important which the Parliament of Western Australia has yet had to deliberate upon. I refer to the Commonwealth Bill, which it will shortly be our duty to consider. It is to be hoped that Western Australia will furnish to the Federal Convention, to be held in Sydney in September, a Bill embodying principles that will be reconcilable with those contained in the contributions of her sister colonies, and that the combined efforts of the people's representatives in each State

may quickly result in a United Australia, free from those vexatious heart-burnings and petty jealousies which arise from the presence of imaginary boundaries between peoples whose characteristics are the same and whose interests are one. It is a matter for congratulation that a step in the right direction was taken by the last Parliament in the Amendment of the Constitution Act, providing further representation for the people of this colony. It is my most fervent wish that this Parliament may worthily follow in the footsteps of its predecessors in this direction, and render the voice of the people more intelligible by an amendment of the Electoral Act now in force, and under which such irksome conditions are imposed on the would-be elector. The domestic finances of the colony appear from His Excellency's Speech to be in a satisfactory condition. To one like myself, who has on his way hither to traverse the greater part of this immense colony, evidences are forthcoming at every point that the wants of the people are being attended to, by the number and importance of the various public works now being proceeded with. There is little index given in His Excellency's Speech of the further policy of the Government in this direction, but I most earnestly hope that their future endeavours may have the effect of ameliorating the conditions of life and increasing facilities for production throughout the colony for all classes. His Excellency has made reference to the continued satisfactory yield of gold; and it is pleasing to know that almost as the Speech was being peened there arrived from the Eastern goldfields an escort bringing by far the largest amount of the precious metal yet carried in one consignment to Perth—a most eloquent vindication of his statement, and a still more flattering augury for the future. In my opinion, the Government now have it in their power to materially increase the already large yields, by the carrying out of the scheme promulgated by the Hon. the Premier in his speech at Bunbury for the erection of public batteries at suitable centres. I also think that if care and discretion be used in the management of these batteries they can claim to be classed as reproductive works. A most desirable step also on the part of the Government would be the allocation of

money for the encouragement of *bonâ fide* prospecting by private individuals. There is probably no class of men who do more to benefit the country—and in most cases do it with a wholly inadequate personal reward—than the men who risk, not only their money, but in many cases their health and even their lives, in opening up fresh country. It is pleasing to be able to note that minerals other than gold are attracting considerable attention. The coalfields of the colony promise to become an important source of prosperity, and coppermining is being assiduously and prosperously carried on near Roebourne in the North West, where the erection of smelting works will shortly, in my opinion, conduce to further discoveries. It is satisfactory to note from His Excellency's Speech that matters agricultural and pastoral are in a prosperous state. We may hope that the Government will continue to encourage those engaged in these pursuits in what appears to me to be the most fitting manner, that is, by giving them every facility for production and disposal of their staples by a judicious policy of public works. It is to be regretted that in my attempt at a forecast of the proceedings of this House, I can derive so little direct or definite information from the Speech of His Excellency the Governor, so that I am reduced to expatiate on what I myself consider desirable more than on what is laid before us for consideration by the Government. Although a proportionate increase in the prosperity of the colony to that which occurred during the last Parliament is almost too much to be expected, still I think I express the hope of every member of this Assembly in wishing that the prosperity of the colony may steadily and surely increase and that our efforts may be guided towards that end. Mr. Speaker, I now submit the following Address-in-Reply for the approval of this House, and hope that unanimous support will be accorded to it:—

“To His Excellency Lieut.-Colonel Sir  
 “Gerard Smith, Knight Commander of  
 “the Most Distinguished Order of St.  
 “Michael and St. George, Governor,  
 “&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  
 "Parliament 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 good enough  
 "to deliver to us.

"Our most careful consideration and  
 "attention will be given to the important  
 "matters referred to by Your Excellency,  
 "and all other matters that may be brought  
 "before us, and it shall be our earnest  
 "endeavour to so deal with them that our  
 "labours may tend to beneficial results  
 "and the welfare of this colony."

MR. PENNEFATHER (Greenough):  
 Mr. Speaker,—I have very much pleasure  
 in rising to second the motion proposing  
 the Address-in-Reply. I ask, through you,  
 sir, the same privilege the last speaker  
 claimed, as one inexperienced in the ways  
 of Parliament; and while I know that  
 hon. members of this House will grant  
 to every person who arrives amongst  
 them unacquainted with the procedure  
 of this House, the indulgence I ask,  
 I also feel sure that every maiden speaker  
 in this House will use it with discre-  
 tion, and will appreciate it extremely  
 as an indulgence coming from older  
 members. The first subject in the Speech  
 we have had read to us is that of the  
 amendment of the Constitution of the  
 colony. If it need any evidence to justify  
 those who were the mainspring in bringing  
 about that amendment of the Constitution,  
 I think it will be found in the fresh  
 accession of strength which the new mem-  
 bers for the goldfields have introduced into  
 this House; and if we may judge by the  
 utterances of the last speaker, I am sure  
 we may conclude that these new members  
 will bring to the deliberations of this  
 Assembly a knowledge and a readiness  
 and a facility of speech that will do credit  
 to themselves and assist our deliberations.  
 If any further amendment of the Consti-  
 tution becomes necessary, I, for my part,  
 shall always take it as my duty to see  
 that the goldfields and mining constitu-  
 encies, which are undoubtedly the main-  
 stay of the colony, obtain, as they have a  
 right to obtain, a full and adequate  
 representation in this House. Then comes  
 the question which overshadows all others;  
 that is the question whether or not we as  
 a colony are prepared to throw in our

lot with the other colonies of this vast  
 continent and become a united nation.

It is a grand subject to contemplate—a  
 subject which at first seems to awe one  
 by the importance of its considerations.

At the same time, I cannot hide from  
 myself that there are many considerations  
 of a most open character which it behoves  
 every hon. member of this House to  
 thoroughly weigh before he commits the  
 destinies of this colony to the united  
 action of the States of the other colonies.

We must recollect that our position,  
 geographically, is very different from that  
 of any of the other colonies of this vast con-  
 tinent. We are removed by a wide waste  
 of water which takes three or four days to  
 traverse, and that water, as many of us  
 know from experience, rarely sleeps, but is  
 always, more or less, in a state of wondrous  
 activity. That is the first consideration.

The next is that we have much to do in  
 this young colony; and let us not shut  
 our eyes to the fact that we have before  
 us a boundless field for well directed  
 activity. I will ask hon. members of this

House to consider whether those of our  
 wants which are of a pressing nature can  
 be more adequately attended to by having  
 the central power, which controls them,  
 at an extreme distance—say in any part  
 of Victoria or New South Wales—than  
 if we retain the same governing authority  
 amongst ourselves. I venture to say that

there is not one hon. member in the  
 House who would think for one moment  
 that, during the past three or four years  
 of wonderful activity, such as I might  
 say electrified the various departments of  
 the State, we could have obtained the  
 same facilities for communication, whether  
 by rail, telegraph or post, if the authority  
 which has the direction and control of  
 these services were situated in New South  
 Wales or Victoria. I look on federation  
 as a subject that is fascinating. When I

read, as most hon. members, I am sure,  
 have also read, some of the most eloquent  
 speeches which were delivered in the  
 recent Convention in Adelaide—some  
 wonderful examples of eloquence, bril-  
 liantly put and illustrated by imaginative  
 minds—I almost wondered whether I  
 was living in the regions of politics, or  
 reading a romance such as might have  
 been written by Rider Haggard or some  
 other imaginative author. We are apt to  
 be carried away by the glamour of elo-