

NEW SOUTH WALES

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

THIRD SESSION OF THE FOURTEENTH PARLIAMENT.

OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.

THE second session of the Fourteenth Parliament was prorogued by proclamation dated 21st December, 1889, until 4th February, 1890; thence to 4th March; thence to 8th April; and thence to 29th April for the despatch of business; and the third session commenced on that day.

Parliament was opened by his Excellency the Governor.

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 29 April, 1890.

New Members—The Governor's Speech—Assent to Bills—
Member Deceased—Seat Vacated—Leave of Absence—
Papers — Ordnance Lands Transfer Bill (*Formal*)—
Governor's Speech : Address in Reply.

The PRESIDENT took the chair at noon.

The Clerk of the Parliaments read the proclamation convening Parliament.

NEW MEMBERS.

The PRESIDENT reported that the under-mentioned gentlemen had been appointed members of the Legislative Council :—Sir Patrick Alfred Jennings, K.C.M.G. ; Charles James Roberts, Esq., C.M.G. ; John Harman Tarrant, Esq. ; and William Robert Campbell, Esq.

At a later stage, Mr. W. R. Campbell, Mr. C. J. Roberts, Mr. R. Burdett Smith, and Mr. Tarrant, took the oath and subscribed the roll.

THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR entered the Chamber and took the chair. A message was forwarded to the Legislative Assembly, intimating that his Excellency awaited the attendance of hon. members in the Council Chamber, who, being come with their Speaker, his Excellency was pleased to deliver the following speech :—

HONORABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY :

I have called you together before the expiration of the fourth month of the financial year in order that you may have ample time for the consideration of the public business to be submitted to you, without sitting through the season most trying to health in your parliamentary attendance, and when the time of gentlemen engaged in the productive occupations of the country is of special value to themselves in the direction of their private pursuits.

2. During the recess accredited representatives of the Australasian colonies assembled in conference to consider the expediency of holding, under the authority of the several parliaments, a convention to originate the great work of Australian federation; and the conference unanimously resolved that the time has arrived for the union of these colonies under one legislative and executive government, and that the members of the conference should take such steps as may be necessary to induce the legislatures of their respective colonies to appoint delegates to a national Australasian convention, empowered to consider and report upon an adequate scheme for a federal constitution. Both houses of Parliament will be invited to take the necessary steps to give effect to the decisions of the conference; and I feel assured that the prayers of the people of the parent colony will follow the endeavours of the concordant governments to bring the whole of Australia into one enduring bond of national existence.

3. Amongst the earliest measures submitted to you will be a bill to give certainty to the amounts of rents and license fees payable by tenants of the Crown lands.

4. Several lines of railway will be brought before you for approval, with a view to their immediate construction. Additional railway extensions and other public works will be submitted as early as practicable.

5. The desire so generally expressed for extended power of municipal authority will be met by the introduction of a comprehensive measure to establish a system of district self-government throughout the colony, and it is hoped that with your assistance this important bill will speedily become law.

6. A bill will be introduced to authorise the taking of the census of the population during the present year, and this work, so valuable in relation to the general progress

of the colony, will be carried out under forms ensuring greater fulness and accuracy than in former years.

7. A bill will be brought in to make more effectual provision for the regulation of coal-mines and collieries, which it is believed will confer substantial benefits upon and give much satisfaction to the valuable classes engaged in that great branch of industry.

8. You will be invited to consider measures which have been carefully devised to promote water conservation and works of irrigation in the more arid districts of the colony.

9. A bill will be submitted to establish throughout the colony an uniform system of penny postage.

10. Under the existing electoral law defects have been suffered to continue, and anomalies have grown up which are out of harmony with our political institutions; and a measure has been prepared to recast the electorates, to introduce the principle of self-registration, to admit to the exercise of the elective franchise all persons not legally disqualified without distinction of sex, and to limit the right of the suffrage to one vote for one elector. It is felt that the measure is one of so much value and interest to every member of the community that it will enlist your most enlightened efforts to pass it into law.

11. A bill will be submitted to amend the criminal law and the law of evidence in some important particulars.

12. Bills will be introduced to amend the mining laws and promote the development of the mineral riches of the colony.

13. Bills have been prepared, and will be submitted to you in due course, for promoting the drainage of low-lying lands and improving the conditions of the water supply to country towns.

14. The consumption of intoxicating liquor is so closely allied to the moral welfare of the people that it is felt that even

the costly provision for education and the wisest legislative endeavours to preserve the public health are hardly consistent with the neglect of rational safeguards of the sobriety of the population, more especially in regard to the rising generation; and you will be invited to consider a bill to give an effective voice to the householders of any district in determining, in all cases, whether houses shall be licensed for the sale of such liquors.

15. A bill will be submitted for the protection of women and children employed in manufactories and workshops.

16. You will be asked to deliberate upon various other proposals of legislation, including bills to amend the laws relating to public health, and to make better provision for the treatment of leprosy, and also to improve the administration of justice in the inferior courts.

GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY :

17. The estimates of revenue and expenditure will be laid before you at a period sufficiently early to enable you to fully consider the position of the country on the Treasurer's exposition of its financial affairs, and to make the necessary provision for the public service.

HONORABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE
COUNCIL, AND GENTLEMEN OF
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY :

18. In connection with the financial statement, bills will be introduced to reform the existing tariff and to readjust the burdens of taxation in accordance with the principles laid down by the highest fiscal authorities, the soundness of which has been confirmed by our own experience.

19. Steps have been taken to secure the representation of the colony at the exhibition of mineral products and mining machinery to be opened at Sydenham in July next. It is expected that the principal persons in Europe and America engaged in mining enterprise will take part in the

exhibition, and the participation of this colony must necessarily be attended by many advantages.

20. During the recess measures have been adopted to constitute the agricultural branch of the public service and to reorganise and extend the service for the conservancy and extension of state forests.

21. I now leave you to your parliamentary duties, and humbly pray that the Almighty may direct all your labours to the promotion of the public welfare.

House adjourned at 12-23 p.m.

The House met again at 4-30 p.m.

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Royal assent to the following bills reported :—

Appropriation Bill (1889).
Vine Diseases Acts Continuation Bill.
Redhead Coal-mine Railway Act Amending Bill.

MEMBER DECEASED.

The PRESIDENT reported the decease during the recess of the Hon. David Buchanan.

SEAT VACATED.

The PRESIDENT reported that Mr. J. B. Watt having been absent two successive sessions without leave his seat had become vacant.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

The PRESIDENT reported that his Excellency the Governor had granted leave of absence for one year to the Hon. J. H. Neale and the Hon. W. Laidley.

PAPERS.

Mr. W. H. SUTTOR laid on the table the following papers :—

Statement of Accounts of the Government Savings Bank for 1889.

Report of the Department of Mines for 1889.

Further correspondence respecting mail contract between Sydney and San Francisco.

ORDNANCE LANDS TRANSFER BILL.
(*Formal*).

Bill read the first time.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH: ADDRESS IN REPLY.

The PRESIDENT reported the speech delivered by his Excellency the Governor.

The speech was read by the clerk.

Mr. TARRANT rose to move:

That the following address be presented to the Governor in reply to the speech which his Excellency has been pleased to make to both houses of Parliament:—

To His Excellency the Right Honorable CHARLES ROBERT, BARON CARRINGTON, a Member of Her Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Colony of New South Wales and its Dependencies.

May it please your Excellency:

We, her Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the members of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, in Parliament assembled, desire to express our thanks for your Excellency's speech, and to assure you of our devoted attachment to the throne and person of her most gracious Majesty.

2. We shall be prepared to give our earnest consideration to any proposal which is calculated to assist the cause of Australian federation.

3. The measure to confer the advantages of self-government upon the country districts, and the other important bills to be introduced, shall receive our zealous attention, with the single desire to serve the public interest.

He said: I think the Government are to be commended for having advised his Excellency to call Parliament together at this early season of the year in order that we may have cool weather to debate the several important matters which may be submitted to us, and that Parliament may adjourn at an early date to enable hon. members, particularly those resident in the country, to return to their homes, and attend to the duties which the latter end of the year requires of them. We are informed in the Governor's speech that steps have been taken during the recess to bring about the federation of the Australian colonies, and it must be a subject of congratulation to this, the parent colony of the group, that the lines of federation, as shadowed forth by its Premier, were favourably considered by the representatives of the other colonies. The extension of our railways and other public works, as proposed in the Governor's speech, will be considered by the House, and I am sure the good work of the Public Works Committee will be of considerable assistance to hon. members in deciding what lines shall meet with the approval of the House, and

what lines shall be rejected. We shall have not only the report of the members of the Public Works Committee, but also the evidence taken at the several sittings they have held, both in the country districts and in the metropolis. I am sure that up to the present time the labours of this committee will have the effect of saving the country very large sums of money, and also have the very good effect of giving us better gradients on the railway lines which will in future be constructed in this colony than we have upon the lines which are at present in operation. The Local Government Bill, promised in the address, has been dangled before the eyes of the public for a number of years, and I certainly trust that the present Government will at a very early period of this session submit the bill for the consideration of Parliament. They have already shown us that they are in earnest in this matter by, during the last session of Parliament, having a local government bill placed in the hands of hon. members of both chambers, who have consequently had ample time to digest its contents. As there has been some question as to the reliability of the population statistics of the colony, which is now in rough figures about 1,020,000, it is the intention of the Government to introduce a measure to authorise the taking of a census of the population. The country is fully conscious that some legislation for the regulation of coal-mines and collieries is urgently required, and I trust that the measure promised to be introduced will be equally beneficial to the owners of collieries and to the miners in their employment, and that the regulations will have the effect of preventing a recurrence of the disastrous colliery accidents of which we have already had painful experience. As large tracts of the interior of this country are waterless, but with soil of the richest character, the measure to be introduced for the conservation of water should be hailed with satisfaction by the country. Hon. members are aware that a large amount of information on this subject has already been collected by the Water Conservation Commission. In the address, reference is also made to a reduction of the postage on letters from 2d. to 1d. I think this would be a very advisable proceeding. It would be wholly in keeping

with the action which is being taken in the old country—in proposing to reduce the ocean postage on letters between Great Britain and the Australian colonies to 2½d. It has long been considered that the present Electoral Act, particularly in its expansive clauses, required amendment, and it is now proposed to introduce a new electoral bill which will contain several good clauses, particularly those embodying the principles of self-registration and the prevention of plural voting. The proposal to extend the franchise to ladies will, I feel confident, be dealt with by this branch of the legislature with that gallantry to the female sex for which this Chamber is so celebrated. Next to our wool and farm products, our mineral resources are of the greatest value, and I am sure that any measure to promote their development will receive every consideration; and the action of the Government already taken to have our mineral wealth represented at the Sydenham Exhibition, and particularly in sending our eminent Government Geologist to represent us, will meet with general approval. A matter of great importance to the public health of the community is that provision should be made for promoting the proper drainage of low-lying grounds, and to improve the water supply in country districts. I feel satisfied that when such a measure is submitted to this branch of the legislature, it will receive that attention which its importance demands, because if we are to build up an Australian nation, it is absolutely necessary that every detail to preserve the health of its people should receive our greatest attention. I am happy to observe that the Government have decided to introduce a measure originated in this country by my hon. friend, Dr. Renwick—that is the Factories Bill. A similar measure is in operation in the old country, and is found to operate in a most satisfactory manner in the interest of women and children engaged in factories. I have nothing further to say, except as a young member of this House, to thank the members of it for the patient hearing they have given me, and I beg in a formal way to move the adoption of the address in reply.

Question proposed.

Mr. W. R. CAMPBELL: After the speech of my hon. friend, there is not a

great deal for me to say on the different clauses of the address. Of course one could dilate to any extent on the very numerous pieces of legislation proposed for the benefit of the country, all of which are necessary, and in time to come will, I have no doubt, be passed in such a form that they will meet all requirements. First of all, we have the great national question of federation placed before us in such a shape that we have now the opportunity of launching the country into a great nation. That, to my mind, overshadows all other matters of policy; and there can be no question as to changing our present fiscal policy, even if that were desirable, until the question of federation is decided. The master mind which has initiated the proposal in so statesmanlike a manner will no doubt bring it to a satisfactory conclusion. It seems to be agreed on all sides that the federation of the colonies will be accomplished, and that we shall be precipitated into a nation, and have free-trade among ourselves. Is it not a debatable question then whether it should not hold good all round? I am pleased to note through the press that members of the legislature have apparently agreed to sink all minor differences, and to discuss and carry out useful legislation in the interests of the country before testing their fiscal principles by any party vote. A measure is to be brought in to make clear the rents which are to be paid by the Crown tenants, and the passing of such a measure will be a wise policy, because I maintain that the tillers of the soil and the squatters are the backbone of the country, and we all know that when they suffer through droughts or floods, disease in their stock, or rust in wheat, the metropolis and all the other towns are in a languishing condition. After all, are not the squatters and selectors equally beneficial to mankind? Can the tiller of the soil do any more for the general good than the man who rears sheep and cattle to feed the teeming population of the world? I am glad to note that proposals for the construction of further lines of railway will be submitted to us immediately. Public works have been so long at a standstill that it is pleasing to hear that they will soon be again in full swing. Amongst the measures to be submitted to

Parliament is a local government bill, which will no doubt be hailed with acclamations everywhere. If that measure becomes law it will not only instil a spirit of independence and self-reliance in the people, but it will provide a school for the rearing of future politicians. The proposed Electoral Bill, if passed, will effect a great reform. The abolition of the expansive principle alone will be a great improvement in our electoral law. Many other subjects were mentioned in his Excellency's speech to which I need not now refer. I, for one, may say that we can safely trust the administration of our affairs to the present Government for some time longer, presided over as that Government is by so eminent a statesman. I have much pleasure in seconding the motion.

Mr. MACINTOSH : I have for a long time had a grievance which I wish to bring before the House. I have been present at the opening of every session of Parliament for a great number of years, but I have never seen in the Governor's speech any promise that efforts would be made to finish the hospital building in Macquarie-street. Every time I pass that building it offends me. It is time that this grievance should be remedied. It has been a serious grievance for the last twelve years. I do not blame the present Government very much for it; but they have been a year or two in office, and it is their duty to attend to the matter. There are other matters mentioned in his Excellency's speech of less importance than the completion of the Sydney Hospital; but not a word is said about this work, although it is one involving an expenditure of about £200,000, and relating to the comfort of the poor and ailing. To show the importance of it I will quote some remarks made by the Premier recently at Broken Hill. When laying the foundation stone of a new hospital at that place the Premier expressed sentiments worthy of the admiration of every man :

Of all the gratifying incidents of his visit to Broken Hill he said none was more gratifying than the laying of that stone. There was no higher office than to make proper provision for the sick and wounded in any community of any kind. They might build schools of art, erect libraries, open picture galleries, plant and open public parks, but none of those efforts reached the height of the Christian duty of providing means to alleviate the ills and calamities which

[*Mr. W. R. Campbell.*]

may happen to befall humanity. In a community like Broken Hill such institutions were in a special degree necessary by the very nature of the circumstances. They must expect sickness and accidents, and it was a blessed thing that places should be provided where the sick and wounded could be cared for by the best men of science and trained nurses, whose object was to restore their patients to a state of health and strength. True they experienced the ravages of fever, consequent, no doubt, on the assemblage of a large body of people upon undrained land.

Let any one go and examine the premises next door to this Chamber. I venture to say that there is no area of land in the city of Sydney which is so filthily kept as that piece of ground within 20 feet of us. On that ground there is decayed vegetable matter, there are ash-pits, peach trees growing out of the foundations of the building, water green with filth, and other abominations. All this is within 20 feet of where I stand. Any one who visits the premises will see the seats used by the cripples supported by rotten logs, or cocked up on two stones, or they will see persons sitting on rotten logs. I do not think that that is a state of things which ought to exist in the city of Sydney. I assert, without fear of contradiction, that there is no similar area of ground in the city which contains more filth than that to which I have referred. Why should it be so? The hon. member who moved the address in reply, and several other influential members of Parliament, are upon the hospital committee, and no less than twenty-two gentlemen of the highest standing in society appear in the report as medical officers to the institution; but they have used no influence in the matter. The present state of things has existed for the last twenty years. In 1870 a committee of Parliament inquired into and reported upon the desirability of pulling down the old diseased hospital, and the trustees and the Government agreed that designs should be invited for a new building. They were invited, and accepted on the 8th April, 1879. From that time to this several governments have been in power. The Hon. Michael Fitzpatrick granted the title deeds of the land to the trustees, and Sir Henry Parkes, the late Mr. J. S. Farnell, the late Sir Alexander Stuart, Mr. Dibbs, Sir Patrick Jennings, and Sir Henry Parkes again have all been in office since. The conditions upon which

the land was given to the trustees are very simple. At a board meeting on the 11th July, 1878, a letter from the Colonial Secretary was read, stating that the Government have resolved that a deed of grant of the present site be issued to trustees, as recommended by the select committee of the Assembly, 27th April, 1870, on the following terms:—

If the proposed new buildings are to be erected wholly out of the funds of the Sydney Infirmary, then the deed will contain only the usual condition that the land shall be devoted to the purpose of a public hospital, and to no other purpose whatsoever.

The Sydney Infirmary has been continually stripped of its rights during the last fifty years. Part of the land granted for a hospital by Governor Macquarie was taken for the erection of parliamentary buildings. Afterwards another strip was taken for the erection of the Mint, and the portion lying between these two places is all that is left of the original grant, and it ought to be as well attended to as the ground in front of this Chamber.

2. If the Government contribute largely to the cost of the permanent building, then the Government will retain a voice in the direction to be secured by an act of incorporation, as in the case of the Prince Alfred Hospital, or by an amendment of the existing Infirmary Act. On this condition, the Government will recommend to Parliament the grant of a sum not exceeding £2,500 in, say, two instalments, to supplement the amount now in the hands of the committee, or expected to be immediately subscribed, namely, £20,000, and on the reassembling of Parliament the Government will invoke the authority of both houses for the removal of the existing but disused building fronting Macquarie-street.

The above letter was acknowledged, and the terms and conditions of the Colonial Secretary's letter were agreed to. The Government must have known what the building would cost, so why do they not finish it? They have advanced £45,000 towards its erection, and the trustees have expended between £24,000 and £25,000 upon it, and, with the consent of the Government, have overdrawn their account in the bank by £10,000, on which they have been paying 8, 9, or 10 per cent. interest for several years. I think the time has come when the Government should take steps to complete the work. The medical profession seem to cast the eye of envy upon the building, and its erection would be offensive to the aris-

tocracy of Macquarie-street; but I would even give up the building in order to have something done. If it is impossible to have it finished as a hospital, I would suggest that a hospital be erected between the Museum and St. Mary's Cathedral, in a line with those buildings; although I think it almost a sacrilege on my part to propose that any part of the park should be taken for purposes other than those for which it is intended. The average number of sick people in the hospital at all times is 250. There are never less than 230 there, and it is impossible to cram in more than 260. Some of the patients are suffering from fever, and others from accident; and how could they be removed if a fire broke out? The result, if a fire took place, would be terrible to think of; and I think that the Premier, after the high sentiments which he has expressed, is greatly to blame for the delay that has occurred. I am positive that if he went next door, and saw the state of things that exists there, there would be a change within a week. Thousands of cases are treated out of the institution; and I know that the officers have to refuse admission every day, through want of room, and this when there is so much sickness about. Even if they had the room, I do not think that the place is very healthy in its present condition. It will be difficult, because of the difference of opinion which exists about the matter, to get anything done; but I think that something should be done, so that the money already expended should not be entirely wasted. There are no better or more influential men in the colony than the trustees of that institution. The first on the list has gone to his rest—the Hon. E. Deas-Thomson, whom all will acknowledge to have been one of the best colonists we ever had. Others are Dr. Renwick, Mr. J. R. Street, Mr. John Pope, and Mr. Sydney Burdekin. The board of directors include several members of Parliament, as Mr. Abigail, Mr. Chapman, the Hon. John Davies, Mr. Lees, the Hon. Dr. Mackellar, and the Hon. R. Burdett Smith. Then, looking at the medical officers, we see the names of Dr. Renwick, Dr. Quaife, Dr. Cox, Dr. MacLaurin, Dr. O'Reilly, Dr. Thomas Dixson, Dr. Munro, Dr. Pickburn, Dr. Huxtable, Dr. Roberts, Dr. Sydney Jones, Dr. McKay, Dr. Tarrant (the

mover of the address in reply), Dr. Craig Dixon, Dr. MacCormick, Dr. O'Connor, Dr. Evans, Dr. Maher, Dr. Chambers, Dr. Worrall, Dr. Brady, and Dr. Rennie. A better staff of medical gentlemen could not be obtained in any city in the world; yet such neglect as I have described is allowed to exist. I challenge any hon. member to put my statements to the proof, and if it can be shown that I have in the least degree exaggerated the state of affairs, I will never say another word in this Chamber. I hope that steps will soon be taken to remove the causes of complaint, and in order that we may see what the Government intend to do, I shall return to the subject after a reasonable time, say a fortnight from the present, so that the Government may have time to come to a determination. I regret that on the first day of the session I should have this duty to perform; but no other opportunity would have been afforded, except upon a motion of adjournment, and I thought this a suitable occasion.

Mr. SALOMONS: I cannot pretend to express any opinion upon the matter discussed by the hon. gentleman who has just resumed his seat, and I do not rise, of course, with the intention of moving an amendment. I agree with the hon. member, Mr. W. R. Campbell, that there is one question which, in its importance, overshadows all others, that is the one referred to in his Excellency's speech as the federation of the Australian colonies. I take it that the address to which the House is now about to assent, cannot be construed into an expression of opinion upon that vital question. It must be admitted by any thinking person—whatever may be said by irresponsible writers, with whom I decline to debate the matter—that by reason of its importance only, it must be considered carefully and deliberately. And I venture to point out that there are two passages in the speech of his Excellency the Governor which are characterised by a want of accuracy. If I understand the English language, it cannot be properly said that “during the recess accredited representatives of the Australasian colonies assembled in conference” to consider this question. A man cannot appoint himself as a representative. This colony was said to be represented by the head of the Government and by the Colo-

[*Mr. Macintosh.*

nial Treasurer. They were appointed by themselves as members of the Government, and they cannot accurately be spoken of as accredited representatives of this colony. Further, what was proposed was not the “union of these colonies under one legislative and executive government.” There are many hon. members who are at least as familiar—probably more familiar—with this matter than I am; and they know that there is a marked difference between the two expressions—a legislative union and a federal union. Any one who takes the trouble to look at the records will see that both those expressions were considered in the House of Commons in the debate with regard to the Dominion of Canada. So far as my knowledge goes, not one word was said at the late conference about a legislative union. A legislative union is one thing; a federal union is another. What was debated at the conference was, whether a federal government should be constituted and the several colonies be limited to provincial government. I do not intend, on this occasion, to debate the subject; but I think it my duty, as far as my limited abilities will allow me, to insist on its careful consideration and on the use of expressions which are not capable of being misunderstood. The matter is not one of a party character. No one can say that I am hostile to the present Government; but should I be fit to sit in this or any other assembly, if, by reason of my desire that the Government should remain in power, I repressed my views upon a subject of the most vital importance to the future of Australia? I do not presume to say for a moment that my ideas are absolutely right. I am not so self-sufficient as to think that the views of others may not be better founded, and I have read all that has been written in these colonies on this matter. I hope soon to have an opportunity in calm and deliberate language of dealing with the subject. It will be found that the strongest expressions in accordance with my views have been uttered by the distinguished head of the Government, and but recently, because in regard to a matter of this kind a few years are as nothing. Although it may be that we all desire a union of the whole of the colonies, two things have to be considered—first, whether it should be a legislative or a federal union; and

secondly, whether the time has arrived for the creation of a body like that. And in discussing these questions it will be found that they branch into matters much more important and far-reaching than have yet been thought of. I am not blind to the fact—and it satisfies me that the ablest advocates of the proposal have given no thought to it whatever—that the Premier, in no doubt a well-considered article that appeared in a local magazine, spoke of New South Wales as a patch, that is to say, a territory as far as I know nearly as large as the whole of the united empire of Germany with France added. If the government of a territory like that is not worthy of any man's ambition none that can be created by a federal government is likely to be considered worthy of the control of any man. But I did not come here with the intention of saying a word on this matter. Noticing in the address the expression to which I have referred, I thought I ought at the first moment to point out that words are used that are not strictly accurate. I admit with regard to every hon. member, that however strongly his opinions are opposed to mine, he is animated by as honorable and disinterested motives as I am, though I claim the right and believe I have the intelligence to form and express on this matter an opinion as worthy of serious consideration as that of those who have come to a different conclusion. I am glad to see that the hon. member, Mr. Tarrant, used these words in the address:

We shall be prepared to give our earnest consideration to any proposal which is calculated to assist the cause of Australian federation.

Certainly, we shall be prepared to give every consideration to it; but, until long, serious, and protracted consideration has been given, and the question has been debated and viewed in every light, we must not give over the government of this country, which we now hold exclusively, to the control of a federal parliament. This matter is not to be decided by grandiloquent expressions; nor is my judgment to be weighted or moved by quotations from poets, however distinguished. This is a serious political business. Does any one doubt that if we once create a federal parliament, and allow the Government of this colony to become a provincial government, there is no retreat?

On that ground alone I say we must look well where we are going to. I implore hon. members, on a matter of most vital significance to this colony, to read up the debates in the Imperial Parliament on the federation of Canada, and to consider whether there is not great dissatisfaction, at least on the part of many of those who joined that federation. But whether that be so or not, to any man who is competent to form an opinion on the subject, and who has read the speeches of the governors-general of that great territory, and the addresses which at various times have been delivered in connection with that dominion, it will be apparent that the circumstances of Canada are in no way analogous to our own. It will be found that that confederation was forced in a great measure by reason of the enormous border-line between Canada and the United States. I only ask that no hon. member will be led by any article, however able, by any speech, however specious, without individual and careful thought on the matter, and without ascertaining what is to be done. Only recently I had the honor of travelling with a distinguished member of the other House who, on my handing him a copy of the act of Parliament under which the Federal Council was created, frankly admitted that he had never read it, and was astonished to find that everything aimed at by those who put forward this proposal can be attained under that act. The proposal, I admit, is more ambitious; but let hon. members reflect on this point: We have not, I believe, more than 250,000 electors in New South Wales, perhaps not so many, and it is proposed to have a federal government, a provincial government, a local government, and a municipal government for 250,000 electors. Have hon. members ever thought of the expense involved? We are already, and properly, in my humble judgment, expending a sum of about £40,000 a year; but what sum shall we be expending if we travel in the line that is indicated? In some matters the question of opportunity is the whole question, and so it is in this matter. My view is that the proposal is premature. I do not stoop to impute motives to any man who has proposed it. I will not turn aside to find out whether it is some political reason that has brought the matter suddenly to

the surface. I will not even inquire whether a man has spoken one thing the other day and the opposite now. It is sufficient for me to say that the matter can be dealt with on its own merits, and that every member of the legislature is entitled to speak out clearly his views, and if he can be shown to be wrong, let it be shown. But it cannot be shown by abuse. It cannot be shown by ridicule. It cannot be shown by denying to every man the right to consider the question. And still less can it be shown by useless and irrelevant quotations from distinguished poets. There is one other matter only upon which I should like to say a few words. I suppose we will all agree with my hon. friend, Mr. Tarrant, that any question affecting women will be debated here with every mark of gallantry; but he must forgive me for saying that I decline to ground legislation on gallantry. The proposal which is hinted at here to give to all women the suffrage, is also a question which will have to be carefully considered, and—though I say it neither with a blush nor the opposite—I believe no one would be likely to stand before me in my advocacy of the rights of women, yet as a legislator I occupy a different position, and I should require very strong arguments—much stronger arguments and much better language than can be heard in the school of gallantry—to satisfy me that women should be admitted to the suffrage. I do not commit myself to any opinion on the matter now; I only say it is a great departure. Although it may have the sanction of a distinguished name in England, it has always to be borne in mind that that distinguished name may be connected with other eccentricities. It is an alteration which must not be brought about under the influence of any name, however great. It would have a serious effect not only on the constituencies, but also on the persons returned to Parliament. I should like the person who brings in the measure—and he will have plenty of time to answer the question—to tell me if the fair sex are to be admitted to the franchise, why they should not be admitted into this Chamber? I see no difference. I am certain it would have an influence on the attendance of hon. members. Some younger members who are here so seldom might be more regular in their

[*Mr. Salomons.*

attendance if some fair lady were to grace the chair so ably adorned by my hon. friend, Mr. W. H. Suttor. Many of them might be eager to join a government which included women distinguished, perhaps, not only by political ability, but also by great personal beauty. At some future day some fair lady with pearly teeth, sitting in the place of my hon. friend, Mr. W. H. Suttor, might win for a government the support of many of those who would have voted against a vice-president of my own sex. It will be seen on reflection that the consequences of a measure of that kind are most serious. It is a step taken in a direction the end of which, I submit, no man can foresee. Perhaps my hon. friend, Mr. W. H. Suttor, who probably has had an opportunity before to-day of considering the proposal, may in the generosity of his heart give us some hint as to the reason why women should be admitted to the franchise, but not sit in Parliament. If a wife on the hustings may be allowed to hold up her husband to ridicule and abuse him for the course he is taking in political life, why should not that distinguished woman be allowed to be returned as a member? If the women were to unite their forces we might have a house in which the majority were women; but whether it would be to the advantage of legislation or the advantage of gallantry will be well worthy of serious consideration. Those are the only two matters to which I have presumed to refer to-night; but in view of the gravity of the subjects, I hope I may be pardoned for having occupied the time of the House for a few minutes.

Mr. W. H. SUTTON: I desire to say a few words on what has fallen from the hon. member, Mr. Macintosh, with regard to the Sydney Hospital. The hon. gentleman was very lavish in his blame of the Government; but the Government are not altogether to be blamed, for if he had looked up the records he would have seen what was done in the matter two sessions ago.

Mr. MACINTOSH: There has been nothing done to the building!

Mr. W. H. SUTTON: Two sessions ago the Government placed a large sum on the estimates for the purpose of completing the building; but in consequence of an arrangement made by the head of

the Government with the leader of the Opposition, it was withdrawn in order that the estimates might be passed without much debate. At all events, the Government intend, if they remain in office, to place a sum on the estimates for carrying out the building. With regard to the question of federation, it seems to me to be the refinement of criticism for the hon. and learned member, Mr. Salomons, to find fault with these two words "accredited representatives."

Mr. HOSKINS : But there were no accredited representatives !

Mr. W. H. SUTTON : They were appointed by the Governor and Executive Council ; they went to Melbourne under that authority.

Mr. HOSKINS : They appointed themselves !

Mr. W. H. SUTTON : Of course ; there was nobody else to appoint them.

Mr. SALOMONS : They were self-accredited !

Mr. W. H. SUTTON : Those gentlemen went to Melbourne, but there were not proposed there, nor was it intended to suggest, any details as to the manner in which federation should be brought about. All that was proposed was, as stated in the speech of his Excellency the Governor, "to consider the expediency of holding, under the authority of the several parliaments, a convention to originate the great work of Australian federation." A resolution was passed to the effect that it was desirable that the federation of the Australian colonies should be carried out, and that the matter should be submitted to the various parliaments in order that representatives should be sent to a convention to be held on a future date in Melbourne to consider the question. The whole matter must therefore come before Parliament when the motion for the appointment of delegates to the convention is submitted. The hon. and learned member laid considerable stress on the small number of electors in this colony ; but it must be borne in mind that federation will be for the benefit of the population of the whole of the colonies, and not only for that of the people of New South Wales. The populations of all the colonies will benefit from federation if any at all benefit from it. The hon. and learned member also referred to the United States.

Mr. SALOMONS : The Dominion of Canada, not America !

Mr. W. H. SUTTON : What I want to refer to are the American States. I think I am correct in saying that at the present time the population of Australasia is considerably larger than the population of the American states at the time they severed their connection with Great Britain, and declared their own independence. Before that took place they were separate states as we are. Before separation took place they were in very much the same position as we are in Australia. But we want to have federation without fighting the old country ; we want to have federation and yet be bound by the silken threads which at present connect us with the old country ; and, that being so, I think there can be no harm whatever in our considering, together with the other colonies, whether it is desirable to have complete federation of the Australian colonies. Because, after all, even supposing our delegates were sent to Melbourne, and they decided on a system of federation, the matter must be further considered by our Parliament, and there is no fear whatever of our being rushed into a union without the consent of our people, and also that of the Imperial Government, which would be necessary before the question could be completely settled. The hon. and learned member has been very witty at the expense of women's franchise. I must confess that I do not altogether know how I feel in the matter. However, it is a question that may well be considered and discussed ; it is, at all events, worthy of consideration. I hope I have satisfied my hon. friend, Mr. Macintosh, with regard to the *bona-fides* of the Government in regard to the hospital.

Sir ALFRED STEPHEN : No one, I think, can doubt that the question as to the condition of the hospital in Macquarie-street is one of great importance. There is no subject more connected with the interests of humanity and the poor, and no question can be considered of deeper importance than that of erecting a proper hospital ; but before the House comes to any decision on the subject of finishing the building intended for a hospital close by, I hope that hon. gentlemen will be so good as to read and consider very carefully the evidence taken

before the select committee appointed by this Chamber as to the expediency of using that building for that purpose. I know there is a very great difference of opinion amongst medical gentlemen as to whether it is desirable to use that building for a hospital; but the question does not depend merely on considerations upon which the medical profession are most competent to form an opinion, for there are many other considerations; and if I mistake not the general opinion was that the building which has been left unfinished for so many years might be put to much better use than it would be if devoted to the purposes of a hospital. That something ought to have been done—that some proper provision ought to be made for the poor unfortunate people who are now attended to in the wooden building—no one would dispute; but whether the present site is, under all the circumstances, the best for a hospital is a very different question; and if hon. gentlemen would read the evidence taken before the select committee they would find that the expenditure of another £100,000 or more on that building would not be putting the public money to the best possible use. That was the opinion I formed, and also the opinion of the committee. If there be opinion adverse to that conclusion no doubt another committee could be appointed and fresh evidence taken; but as facts at present stand the conclusion formed by most competent authorities is that the building ought not to be finished for the purposes of a hospital, for one reason because it will cost far too much money even if there are no better positions for the hospital. I do not think that the building ought to have been allowed to remain in its present state, after such an enormous sum had been spent upon it. No doubt many thousands of pounds might have been saved by devoting the building to the purposes of public offices. We have public offices scattered all over the town—a house rented in one street, part of a house in another street—and if you want to find where an office of the Government is you have to inquire of the police, and perhaps they cannot always tell you; whereas all those offices ought to be in one building, so that the public might know where they are. I have no doubt

[*Sir Alfred Stephen.*]

that if this question is looked at seriously with an honest desire to put up the most suitable structure, and in the most desirable place, there will be no difficulty in deciding upon a better position. We have a very large hospital in another place with all the necessary appliances and means for the reception of hundreds of persons. It would be very easy to add to that hospital at little expense and in a short space of time; whereas this hospital would require an enormous sum of money expended upon it. Even then you would have a building with scarcely any grounds attached to it, and on which the sun would blaze practically for more than half the day, whilst the patients would be disturbed by the hundreds of vehicles passing by, and so large a structure as that is, I think, not wanted in any part of the city whatever. I do not profess to have the same means of determining such questions as some gentlemen have; but all the best available evidence on the subject was obtained by the select committee; and before they form a decided opinion on the matter I beg hon. members to read very carefully the evidence that has been taken. They will certainly arrive at the conclusion that something ought to be done; but whether the partially-erected building should be finished as a hospital is another matter.

Mr. HOSKINS: I did not expect that my hon. friend, Mr. Macintosh, would bring up the question of the present condition of the Sydney Hospital in a discussion on the address in reply. However, as my hon. friend has done so, I desire to say that in my opinion the state of that building—the miserable, dangerous, and uncomfortable building in which the poor unfortunate patients are kept at the present time—is a scandal to the country. We have the evidence given by the superintendent in charge of the fire brigade in Sydney, that the wooden building contains a large number of patients, that it is erected on piles, and that if there were a strong gale blowing the building might be consumed, and all the inmates be burned to death, although the brigade were there, within a quarter of an hour. Is it not a scandal that such a state of things should exist in the colony? This matter ought to be taken in hand with the least possible delay. The present Government, I admit, are not more blame-

worthy than their predecessors ; indeed, last session they placed an amount on the estimates to provide, I believe, for the completion of this hospital building. Of course the session being brought to a sudden termination, the matter dropped ; but I hope that in the interests of the sick poor the Government will see that the matter is taken in hand out of the usual routine and dealt with with the least possible delay. The Garden Palace was wholly destroyed by fire in an hour. How great then must be the danger in which the 250 inmates of the hospital are placed in their helpless condition in that wooden building ? The hon. and learned member, Sir Alfred Stephen, has told the House that a select committee have inquired into the question of the completion of the hospital, and that the best authorities on the subject are of opinion that the present site is an unsuitable one for a hospital ; but I should be inclined to take the opinion of the medical men on that question. That piece of ground was granted for a hospital, and has been used for a hospital for a number of years ; and I say that it would be a very harsh proceeding to take it from the poor of Sydney merely to suit the caprice of some who, perhaps, are not the best judges as to where the hospital should be. The present site is near to the shipping of the port where the largest number of accidents occur. It is close to the centre of the town, and it is in a place where the services of the best medical talent can be obtained. If the hospital is removed, as suggested by the hon. and learned member, Sir Alfred Stephen, to a distant suburb, the best qualified medical men will not be able to afford time to visit the patients. It is a very serious thing that a number of unfortunate people who cannot be moved should be lodged in a wooden building which might at any moment be destroyed by fire. I hope that the Government will take the matter in hand. The hon. member who seconded the motion said truly that the speech of his Excellency the Governor promises the introduction of a great many legislative measures. I undertake to say that the legislation foreshadowed by his Excellency will hardly be accomplished within the next twenty years. In the Imperial Parliament it is all they can do to dispose of one or two important questions in one session, in addition to

dealing with the annual expenditure. The question of federation is, of course, referred to in the speech. The Premier took up this question all of a sudden. Some years ago he actually opposed federation in the Legislative Assembly. If he has taken it up in earnest, what was the reason of his opposition to federation when it was proposed by the Stuart Government ? A federal council was at that time established to deal with matters of general public concern, and that institution does not entail any very large expenditure. Two ministers, representing each of the colonies, were to meet at Hobart, where they would confer together on questions of general public concern which ought to be dealt with by the legislatures of the whole of the colonies. I will refer to two matters with which a federal council, representing all the colonies, could have dealt. A federal council could have taken steps for the establishment of a federal court of appeal. It is too bad that persons, who are not satisfied with the decisions of our Supreme Court, should have to appeal to the Privy Council in England. If we had a federal court of appeal in Australia the expenses of appellants would be materially reduced, and they would enjoy the advantage of having their cases dealt with by men with a better knowledge of the colonies than any tribunal sitting 12,000 miles away could possibly possess, and the decisions would probably be more satisfactory than they are at present. The federal council could also have dealt with the question of the defence of the colonies ; and if they had come to a decision on that point their views would have been embodied in legislation, and the defences of the various colonies would have been put into an efficient state. A simple way of bringing about federation would have been to have gone on the lines of the bill introduced by the Stuart Government. But what do we find ? The very man who opposed the measure of the Stuart Government, without giving any reasons for the alteration of his views, comes forward with a scheme for the establishment of a full-fledged federal dominion. It is true that they have a federal dominion in British North America, but the circumstances of Canada are very different from those of Australia. Canada has a boundary line coterminous

with that of a country in which there are a great many rowdy people; and on various occasions filibustering expeditions from across the border have attacked some of the Canadian townships. It was therefore thought necessary to establish a federal government, and to have federal forces to protect the country. Here we are not threatened with attack by any nation, and it is not necessary for us to adopt the expensive machinery of a form of government similar to that in existence in Canada. It is not necessary for us to have a governor-general at a high salary, a principal secretary for Australia, a federal army, and a large staff of officials, simply because we are free from any fear of attack; and as long as we are connected with the parent country the parent country will cheerfully afford protection to our shores. We ought to think seriously over the matter, and not to rush into a crude scheme for the establishment of a dominion government. Let us consider the question of expense. At present all the Australian governments are impecunious. They all want more money. They rarely have a surplus, and they keep increasing their debts. But suppose that a dominion government were established, what would follow? In addition to bearing the expense of the government of this colony, we shall have to tax the people for the maintenance of the dominion government with its governor-general and all its staff of officials. What else would happen? Every free-trader in this country would be sold. The legislature would never consent to the imposition of an income or a property-tax, therefore the revenue to support the dominion government must be obtained through the Custom-house, and do hon. members suppose that even the Premier would be able to persuade the other colonies, who are all in favour of protection, to adopt free-trade as the dominion policy? Certainly not. We should have to subordinate our fiscal views to those of the other colonies, and a policy of protection would be established. Heavy duties would be imposed on all goods coming from abroad; but I believe that every thoughtful man, every one who does not want to see violent changes in the Constitution of the country, every one who does not want to see the country overburdened with taxation, every one who does not wish to see this

[*Mr. Hoskins.*

colony taking up a position hostile to the parent country, which is our best friend, will be of opinion that it would not be a wise policy, that it would not be a sound policy, that it would not be a patriotic policy to impose high duties on articles imported from the mother country. This colony is part of the British empire, and any new-fangled system of federation which, though ministering to the vanity of an ambitious statesman, would tend to place us in a position of hostility to the parent country, would be a system of federation which we ought not to adopt. It has been pointed out by the hon. and learned member, Mr. Salomons, that the second paragraph in his Excellency's speech is totally inaccurate, and the explanation offered by the Vice-President of the Executive Council was really no explanation at all. The paragraph says that the duly accredited representatives of the colonies assembled in conference; but we did not accredit any representatives. The Executive Council appointed two of their number to attend the conference. The course adopted by the Government in reference to this matter was different from that followed by the governments of the other colonies. In Queensland a member of the Ministry and a member of the Opposition were appointed to attend the conference, and similar appointments were made in South Australia and Tasmania. By whom were the gentlemen representing this colony accredited? Isay that they were accredited by no one. Parliament has not expressed any opinion in favour of sending delegates to any conference. The gentlemen who went to the conference as representing this colony simply went of their own motion. The federation question is a most serious matter, and I will tell hon. members that if through any ill-considered arrangement, brought about by the short-sightedness and vanity of some person representing the colony, we enter into a federation the terms of which we have not carefully considered, we must suffer very greatly by so doing. As the hon. and learned member, Mr. Salomons, has pointed out, we have a magnificent country, a country almost as large as France and Germany combined. We have a larger extent of land than any other colony suitable for grazing and agricultural purposes. We also have larger

mineral resources than any other colony. We have a sea-board indented with rivers; we have a much greater extent of river navigation than any other Australian colony; and if, possessing all these advantages, we go into a federal conference in which the same spirit prevails that prevailed in the last conference, where nearly every one was hostile to the Premier of New South Wales because he took too much upon himself; if we go into a conference where the representatives of the other colonies go together, this colony will go to the wall, and all those great advantages which bring wealth to the city of Sydney will be sacrificed by us, and the benefit of them secured by the other colonies. I do not believe that twenty men in the colony have thoroughly thought out the question of federation. It is a question that requires special consideration on the part of this the richest colony of Australasia. I shall now leave this matter of federation. The next paragraph of his Excellency's speech states that

amongst the earliest measures submitted to you will be a bill to give certainty to the amounts of rents and license fees payable by tenants of the Crown lands.

Is Parliament to determine what rent Mr. A or Mr. B should pay for a run? I thought that by the Land Act of 1884 tribunals were appointed to decide what rent should be paid by persons occupying Crown land. But now the executive government of the colony is to be handed over to Parliament. I think that it is a matter which deserves great consideration. There are also a number of other matters to which attention is called; but I am quite persuaded that all the proposals made in the speech will not be embodied in the legislation of the colony for the next ten years.

Mr. COX: I should like to say a few words on this occasion; but, as I am suffering from influenza, they must be very few indeed. I am not one of those who have been led away by any claptrap with regard to federation. It seems to me that federation for purposes of defence is about all that we require, and that the other matters of mutual interest which were discussed at the conference were matters which could be settled without federation. I also feel disinclined to lose the individuality of this, the oldest colony of Australia, by its amalgamation with a young colony like

Western Australia, which is hardly out of its leading strings. Such a thing would, I think, be much to the detriment of New South Wales. Referring to what fell from the last speaker, although I am an Australian, I am still proud to be considered a British subject, and I should feel exceedingly loth to do anything that would lead us to treat our mother country as a foreign nation; and that I am sure would be the effect of federation, knowing as I do the attitude which some of the other colonies are taking with regard to her. As to the other matters mentioned in the speech, I will give them the fullest consideration possible; but I believe that if we give them all as much attention as they will require, we shall be sitting here for many months, and then will not get half through the business before us.

Dr. BOWKER: I am very much in the same case as the hon. member, Mr. Cox. I have had an attack of influenza, and am not in a condition to say what I have to say; but inasmuch as the matter of the hospital, in which I took a great deal of interest some time ago, has come up, I feel bound to say a few words about it. I also desire to speak about one or two other subjects. In the first place, it seems to me an injustice to the people of New South Wales that any important measure should be brought before Parliament before there is a general election, though I am afraid that I shall not please many by so radical a notion. My ground for this opinion is that we removed one of our checks on ultra-democracy when we passed the Payment of Members Act. Of course I opposed that measure; but it was given as a reason why it should be passed that, although we had manhood suffrage, the people could not elect those whom they wished to represent them, because their representatives when elected were unable to support themselves. That being the case, the people should have the advantage of the act now, especially as some very important measures are shadowed forth, one or two of which will sap the very foundations of society. We have the Divorce Bill, which will alter society altogether, and an extraordinary measure for the enfranchisement of women, and I think that an appeal to the country should be made. With regard to his Excellency's speech, what has especially struck me is the desire, notwithstanding

the indebtedness of the country, to incur the enormous expense of federation. It seems to me that New South Wales would be sacrificing all its advantages by consenting to federation, and that it would be outvoted by the other colonies. Everything that it is proposed to do by federation might very readily, I think, be accomplished by our existing institutions. I hold the opinion expressed in the admirable speeches which we have heard to-night from the hon. and learned member, Mr. Salomons, the hon. member, Mr. Hoskins, and the hon. member, Mr. Cox, that it is a matter requiring very serious consideration, and I am glad to see it manifest that this House will give it that consideration. With regard to the hospital, I may say that I have always done my very best to improve the sanitary condition of the people of New South Wales. I have taken the greatest care that every cause of ill-health that came in my way should be removed, and that the people should have every advantage in their sickness and extremity. I think the hon. member, Mr. Hoskins, will bear witness that I bothered him very much, when the question of a water supply for Newcastle was under consideration, in order to show him that typhoid was caused by people drinking surface water; and in the ventilation of schools I did what I could. This hospital business is second to none in importance, and there are very many serious matters involved in it; but the most serious is that working people, in their extremity, should have the very best means of getting well. But a hospital built in a large town is opposed to that position. The inmates of such a hospital have not the best means of getting well; that is, more die than would die if the hospital were out of town. No one can deny that. Common sense as well as science tells us that country air is better than the town air in helping sick people to get well. I can show that by many authorities, and hon. members may rely that I will never make any statement in this House which I cannot support by abundant authority. The latest authorities declare that there should be small receiving hospitals in towns and large hospitals outside. If we do not give the sick poor the best possible advantages it is a shame and disgrace to us. I agree

[*Dr. Bowker.*]

with the hon. member, Mr. Macintosh, that the indecision connected with the Sydney Hospital is culpable; but the hon. member did not refer to the most important matter in connection with the institution; he did not show that the existence of a large hospital in town was opposed to the recovery of the sick.

Mr. MACINTOSH: I left that to the medical staff!

Dr. BOWKER: I would also say, in support of what I advance, that some time ago, a very distinguished member of the medical profession found fault with the late Sydney Hospital, declaring that more died in it than should die, and it was taken down. It may be supposed that other causes besides the site might account for the undue number of deaths, but there was a suspicion that the site had something to do with it. I remember that when the question was discussed in the Assembly Sir Henry Parkes, speaking in favour of the hospital being on its present site, said that there was no smoke there, as if the presence of smoke was the principal objection to having a hospital in a large city. I believe that the chief reason why hospitals in towns are less favourable for the recovery of the sick is because the air is polluted by the breathings of the population. At any rate, it is a well-known fact that hospitals in town are less conducive to the restoration of health than are hospitals in the country, and that being so the Government were quite right in hesitating before completing the existing building. The Bradford Hospital is almost, I believe, the perfection of a small hospital in a large town. It is built upon a large area of ground, which the Sydney Hospital is not. A large space of ground is essential to a hospital, so that the pavilions may be kept separate and additions made as required.

Mr. R. E. O'CONNOR: I rise for the purpose of addressing a few words to the House on the paragraph which is to my mind immensely more important than any other in the Governor's speech; that is, the paragraph which deals with the question of federation. I do not know that at this stage of that question, I should have been disposed to say anything, were it not that the speeches delivered upon that question this evening, with the exception of those of the mover and seconder of the

address, and of the Representative of the Government, while purporting to give a fair and deliberate consideration to the subject, have evidently been conceived in a hostile spirit towards it ; and as I, after giving to it the best consideration I could up to the present time, have formed an opinion in favour of some form of federation, I think it only right to state the principles upon which I have come to that conclusion. If we are to arrive at a right conclusion upon the subject, it will not be by entering into considerations which have been advanced by several hon. members this evening. What does it matter as to the feasibility or desirability of adopting any form of federation, that Sir Henry Parkes may at one time have said something different from what he says now, or that he may have some motive in bringing forward the question of federation at this particular time? I am not saying whether he has or has not. From what I have been able to see I should think that he is advocating federation in the true interests, as he conceives them, of these colonies. But whether that be so or not, the question must be considered apart from any mere personal considerations of that kind. Is Sir Henry Parkes the only person who has advocated federation? The other members of the late conference are men of whose reputations and political life in the various colonies of this group, any country in the world might be proud, and without exception they agreed that some form of federation is desirable.

Mr. SALOMONS : Not now !

Mr. R. E. O'CONNOR : The whole effect of their resolutions was that the consideration must be entered upon at once ; otherwise what is the meaning of the resolutions? Hon. members will recollect that in the early part of the conference there was a proposal to the effect that the Federal Conference was quite sufficient for all present needs. That proposal was withdrawn, and in its stead an unqualified resolution was passed that at some time during the present year a convention should be held of representatives from all the colonies to decide upon a form of federal constitution. If that does not show that the members of the conference believe that the time is ripe for some form of federal constitution, their resolutions are mere make-believe.

Mr. HOSKINS : Some delegates did not vote at all !

Mr. R. E. O'CONNOR : I speak of the resolution arrived at, without division, by the conference. When one looks at the names and reputations and political experience of the men who took part in that conference, one cannot help coming to the conclusion that there is very little ground for the accusation made by the hon. member, Mr. Hoskins, and other hon. members that those who think differently from them have not considered the subject. An objection has also been made to federation on the ground of expense. It is said that this is not the time, when the colonies are all in rather an impecunious position, to launch into the large expenditure involved in establishing a federal government. But if the federation of the colonies would bring about the advantages which are claimed for it, the expense is a small matter and utterly unworthy of being put in the scale against the advantages to be derived. There is a species of federation which may unhappily be forced upon these colonies, whether they like it or not—federation against a common enemy—a federation such as was entered into by the United States during the War of Independence—a federation such as was entered into by Canada, when dangers, external and internal, were pressing on the different states from all sides ; but a federation entered into under these circumstances has all the disadvantages of a sort of political huddling together, all the disadvantages which come from a union ill-considered, not providing for different interests, and not having the proper machinery to carry on the political business of a large territory. No doubt that is the kind of federation which may be forced upon us at some time. But a calm and deliberate union of countries with equal rights, equal resources to a large extent, and equal possibilities in the future—a federation in which the interests of all are carefully guarded, and provision is made for every possible contingency, and the proper government of the whole—that is the kind of federation which, if not entered into within a very few years, we may entirely despair of. The history of the world proves that countries situated as we are now either grow together or grow apart. We are so situated that year by year small difficul-

ties with regard to rival tariffs and border questions are continually drifting us further apart. It will be apparent to any one who has marked the course of negotiations between the colonies for several years past that year by year the difficulties are becoming more apparent. What do we find? That year by year when these colonies come to confer about a matter of common interest—the Chinese question, for instance—there is some little question of precedence, some matter of punctilio, some little discourtesy or suggestion of undue pressure on one side or the other. We have in these things the germ of what will increase in the future—the germ of difficulties which will raise a vindictive spirit, which no doubt will make it impossible to federate in the manner in which we wish to do. I will take one question which is pending between the colonies. What are the rights of Victoria and our rights with regard to the waters of the Murray? There may be one point of view, the legal point of view, in which our rights may be considered strong; there may be the intercolonial point of view, in which our rights assume an altogether different complexion; and when we wish to use the waters of the Murray for irrigation purposes perhaps we shall have to make use of Victorian soil. These are all questions which must be settled between the colonies in a way to establish a *modus vivendi* with regard to this great matter. If there is a false step in the negotiations a little hot blood may drive us apart, and a union that could be brought about peaceably now might become impossible in time to come. I mention this matter only as an instance of the questions which will be continually arising between the colonies, and as the colonies become wealthier the question of federation will become more difficult. Of course this matter opens up a very wide field of thought and argument. I do not intend for a moment to discuss the principles upon which a federation of this kind should be founded. I thoroughly agree with my hon. and learned friend, Mr. Salomons, and my hon. friend, Mr. Hoskins, as regards the desirability of carefully considering the matter before arriving at any conclusion, and much as I should like to see a federal union of these colonies—a union which, while it gave

[Mr. R. E. O'Connor.

power to the central government, did not unnecessarily interfere with the individuality of the different states—still I should be very sorry to see it unless the great majority of the people of this country thoroughly understood what they were giving up to gain such an object, and what they were gaining. That is a matter which will have to be put before the country in many ways. I say the Government have acted in the matter in the only way in which they could act. Federation must be accomplished by degrees, and the first step to be taken in the negotiations must be the step taken by the Government, and no other step.

Mr. SALOMONS: No!

Mr. R. E. O'CONNOR: My hon. and learned friend says "No"; but I should like to know whether there would be any use at this stage in appointing elected delegates to deal with the question. The first thing to be done is to bring the governments of the different colonies into accord, and the next step is for the government of each colony to submit the question to their own people, and get their decision as to sending delegates to the convention. I think the verbal criticism of my hon. and learned friend, Mr. Salomons, as to the use of the words "accredited representatives," is a little hard upon the Government. I do not think myself that the word "accredited" means anything.

Mr. SALOMONS: Oh!

Mr. R. E. O'CONNOR: They were representatives, and they were sent there in the only way in which they could be sent by the colony: they were chosen by the Government and sent by the Government. I think a certain amount of latitude is always allowed in speeches of this sort, with the view of making the sentences round and full. The expression "accredited representatives" has a much finer sound than the word "representatives" alone. If I chose to go through the speech, I could instance similar expressions which no doubt tend to give a full sound to the speech as it is read, but do no harm and do no good. It is suggested to me that I should bring the minds of hon. members back to what the conference really did decide by reading the resolution.

Mr. SALOMONS: Several colonies did not vote upon it!

Mr. R. E. O'CONNOR : The resolution was as follows :—

That, in the opinion of this conference, the best interests and the present and future prosperity of the Australasian colonies will be promoted by an early union under the Crown, and, while fully recognising the valuable services of the members of the convention of 1883 in founding the Federal Council, it declares its opinion that the seven years which have since elapsed have developed the national life of Australasia in population, in wealth, in the discovery of resources, and in self-governing capacity, to an extent which justifies the higher act, at all times contemplated, of the union of these colonies under one legislative and executive government on principles just to the several colonies.

That is followed by a resolution, which fixes the meeting of the convention at some date in the present year. I have addressed the House at this length, not for the purpose of raising a discussion on this question at the present time, but for the purpose of stating that, as the result of considerable thought and research, I have arrived at a different conclusion from that arrived at by my hon. and learned friend, Mr. Salomons. I have only a few more words to say. The Government have very cleverly, it seems to me, gone over the whole possible ground of legislation for the next two or three years. They seize upon every possible ground of reform, so that if at any time any other government should think fit to propose a measure of the kind, they will be able to say, "Oh, that is part of our policy." I take it that the purpose of a speech of this sort is to give some insight as to what the Government intend to do. Instead of that, however, it seems to be a kind of pegging out of claims for futurity. The legislature, we are told, is to adjourn before the dry season of summer comes on, which will be in seven or eight months. If we pass one measure alone—a local government bill—and the federation resolutions, I think we shall have done work of which we may very well be proud.

Mr. JACOB : If there were an amendment proposed on the address in reply, I could easily sympathise with those hon. members who have been enlarging on the various topics alluded to in the Governor's speech, notably the observations of my hon. friend, Mr. Macintosh, about the Sydney Hospital. I think, to a certain extent, he has justly condemned the Government for the state of affairs prevailing

there. It seems to me deplorable that 250 patients should be in the condition described without the Government taking the proper steps to house them suitably. But for the hon. member to try and commit the Government to the completion of the hospital, especially after the evidence which was given before the select committee, of which my hon. and learned friend, Sir Alfred Stephen, was chairman, is, I think, going too far altogether. With regard to the question of federation, I agree, to a great extent, with the views advanced by the hon. and learned member, Mr. Salomons, and the hon. member, Mr. Macintosh, and disagree entirely with much that has been advanced by the hon. and learned member, Mr. R. E. O'Connor. I think we may, to a certain extent, interpret all that he has been saying from our full knowledge of the fact that he is an out-and-out protectionist. We know that the question of federation is a fad of the Premier, and that he is a professed free-trader; but if he carries out these views he will be playing into the hands of the protectionists. We see that a great many protectionist members of the other House are going to play into the hands of the Government, because they say it will play into their own hands. I believe with the hon. and learned member, Mr. Salomons, that this colony will be the greatest loser of all the colonies if they are federated. With regard to the expression "accredited" I think the hon. and learned member, Mr. Salomons, was only finding unnecessary fault with a word which has been, perhaps, improperly used. Of course it may be properly said that the Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, appointed the two delegates to represent the colony, and that they were, therefore, accredited representatives. But as has been pointed out, the decision of the conference has not been correctly stated. The resolution of the conference which was read a few minutes ago by the hon. and learned member, Mr. R. E. O'Connor, does not accord with the statement in the Governor's speech, that the conference unanimously resolved that the time has arrived for the federation of the colonies. We have been told, and it is a notorious fact, that the representatives of New Zealand, South Australia, and West Australia were not in accord at all with that view—in fact, they did not vote, so

that it cannot be truthfully said that the conference was unanimous on this point. We have no particular paragraph in the address in reply committing the Council to any line of action laid down in the Governor's speech. The scope of the address in reply is very wide. I think we may safely wait until proposals are submitted for our consideration with regard to federation and other important questions. The hon. member, Mr. Hoskins, said that what has been shadowed forth by the Government in the Governor's speech, in regard to what is going to be proposed to Parliament, will occupy twenty years in consideration; but I do not agree with him, for all the matters have been under consideration for a long time past. The Local Government Bill, which now appears under another name, has been under consideration for a long time past. I do not see why a long time should be occupied in its consideration now, and I do not see why the Electoral Bill which it is proposed to introduce should occupy much time. There are not many other matters referred to; but I do not see why they should occupy more time than the legislature generally bestows in dealing with such questions. I concur in everything advanced by the hon. and learned member, Mr. Salomons, in reference to granting the franchise to women. I do not see how we could stop at that. It would become necessary that we should give them not only voting, but also representative power. What a nice thing it would be to have women in both houses of Parliament? This is another fad of the Colonial Secretary. The Premier intends to give not only voting power to the female sex, but also the right to represent the electors in Parliament. Of course the very idea of such a thing as that taking place would be scouted out of the legislature. I have felt it necessary to make these few observations, because I do not feel myself committed in any way by voting for the address in reply to the Governor's speech. We are not called upon to vote for any amendment. The reply is in general terms, and we can safely vote for it without committing ourselves, and wait for the measures the Government promise to introduce.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

House adjourned at 8.8 p.m.

[*Mr. Jacob.*]

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 29 April, 1890.

Vacant Seat—New Members—Assent to Bills—Opening of Parliament—Select Committees—Privilege—Randwick Toll-bar—Ordnance Lands Transfer Bill (*Formal*)—Bull's Fund—Governor's Speech: Address in Reply—Illawarra Harbour and Land Corporation Bill—St. Leonards—School of Arts Enabling Bill—Toronto Tramway Act Amendment Bill—The Floods at Bourke—West Wallsend Coal Company (Limited) Bill—Carlington Bridge—Stockton Gas and Electricity Bill—Adjournment (Registration of Deaths).

The House met at noon, pursuant to the proclamation of his Excellency the Governor convening Parliament.

The clerk read the proclamation.

VACANT SEAT.

Mr. SPEAKER reported the receipt of a letter from Charles James Roberts, Esq., C.M.G., resigning his seat as a member of the Legislative Assembly for The Hastings and Manning.

NEW MEMBERS.

ELECTORATE OF MONARO.

Mr. SPEAKER announced that on the passing of a resolution during last session declaring vacant the seat of Harold Wilberforce Hindmarsh Stephen, Esq., one of the members for the electorate of Monaro, he had issued a writ for the election of a new member, and that such writ had been returned indorsed with a certificate of the election of Gustave Thomas Carlisle Miller, Esq.

Mr. Miller took the oath and subscribed the roll.

ELECTORATE OF THE HASTINGS AND MANNING.

Mr. SPEAKER informed the House that he had issued a writ for the election of a member to serve in the Assembly for the electoral district of The Hastings and Manning in place of Charles James Roberts, Esq., C.M.G., resigned, and that the writ had been returned with a certificate of the election of Walter Hussey Vivian, Esq., indorsed thereon.

Mr. Vivian took the oath and subscribed the roll.