

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Council

TUESDAY, 2 DECEMBER 1886

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Thursday, 2 December, 1886.

Prorogation of Parliament.

PROROGATION OF PARLIAMENT.

Shortly after 12 o'clock, His Excellency the Administrator of the Government, Sir Arthur Hunter Palmer, K.C.M.G., arrived at the House in state, and was received at the main entrance by the Presiding Chairman and other hon. members accompanied by the officers of the Council, and was conducted thence to the dais.

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN directed the Usher of the Black Rod to acquaint the Legislative Assembly that it was His Excellency's desire that they should attend on him forthwith in the Council Chamber.

The Assembly being in attendance and seated in the places reserved for them below the bar,

The SPEAKER (Hon. W. H. Groom) read the following address:—

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

"We, the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, offer to Your Excellency our respectful congratulations upon the close of the session.

"It is now my duty to present to Your Excellency, for the Royal assent, a Bill to authorise the appropriation towards the construction of a line of railway from Bowen to Townsville, by way of Ayr, of two sums of £150,000 and £100,000 authorised by the Government Loan Act of 1882 and the Government Loan Act of 1884 respectively, to be raised for the construction of lines of railway from Bowen to Haughton Gap and from Bowen to the Coalfields respectively; a Bill to authorise the issue of Treasury bills; and a Bill to authorise the appropriation out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of certain further sums towards the service of the year ending on the last day of June, 1887, and for the year ended on the last day of June, 1886."

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The Clerk of the Parliaments brought up the money Bills, and thereupon the Royal assent was signified in the customary form.

HIS EXCELLENCY also gave the Royal assent to the Trade Unions Bill, the Liquor Bill, the British Companies Bill, the Gold Fields Homestead Leases Bill, the Crown Lands Act of 1884 Amendment Bill, the Building Societies Bill, the Godsall Estate Enabling Bill, and the South Brisbane Mechanics Institute Land Sale Bill.

HIS EXCELLENCY then addressed the Parliament as follows:—

"HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

"I am glad to be able to discharge you from your legislative duties at the close of a session in which a large amount of useful work has been accomplished.

"The Act to consolidate and amend the laws relating to justices of the peace and their powers and authorities introduces some valuable changes in the law, and will, I trust, effect great improvements in the administration of justice throughout the colony, while the Settled Land Act is likely to remove many of the serious disadvantages under which the infant children of deceased landholders have hitherto frequently been placed.

"The consideration which you have bestowed upon various questions relating to the mining industry has resulted in the passing of several Acts calculated to assist in its development. The increased attention that has lately been attracted to the mineral wealth of Queensland justifies the expectation that this, which is already one of the most important of our industries, will shortly assume a still more prominent and flourishing position.

"You have disposed of the questions of the payment of the expenses of members of the Legislative Assembly in attending Parliament, and the constitution of a tribunal for trying disputed elections, and have removed from the Statute-book the laws relating to the introduction of labourers from British India. I congratulate you on the settlement of these long-vexed questions.

"The Offenders Probation Act is an experiment in merciful legislation from which I confidently hope for the most beneficial results. You have by the British Companies Act removed certain obstacles in the way of the introduction of capital, while you have by the Employers Liability Act and the Trade Unions Act shown an equal desire to recognise and encourage the rights of labour.

"Some minor defects were, not unnaturally, found to exist in the working of the Crown Lands Act of 1884. By the amending Act of this session, you have, without in any way departing from the principles of the law of 1884, made such improvements in detail as will, I trust, be found to conduce in a large degree to the occupation and utilisation of our great public estate.

"The measures to which I have referred, with others which I have not specially noticed, constitute a record to which you may look back with reasonable pride and satisfaction.

"I have received with much gratification your addresses expressing approval of the proposals of my Government for the future administration of British New Guinea. I trust that this action on your part may tend to hasten the long-delayed settlement of a matter in which the colony of Queensland has for many years taken so warm an interest.

"GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

"I thank you for the liberal provision which you have made for Her Majesty's Service.

"I have reason to believe that the colony is fast recovering from the severe shock which it sustained from the long-continued and calamitous drought, now happily at an end. My Ministers, however, recognise that it will for some time be necessary to observe the strictest economy in the public expenditure.

"They will proceed with the construction of the various public works which you have authorised, with the utmost despatch compatible with avoiding an undue strain upon the resources of the colony.

"I thank you for your assurance that you will make good any expenditure which my Government may incur in giving effect to the proposals for the administration of British New Guinea.

"HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

"I regret that the important measure relating to local government to which you devoted so much time and consideration has not become law. I regret also that you have been unable to deal with the subject of the conservation of water. I am confident, however, that the recent abundant rains will not divert your attention from this subject.

"When I declared the causes of summoning Parliament at the beginning of the session, I expressed a hope that time would allow of your dealing with the question of the administration of public business in the more distant parts of the colony, and of adopting measures for the removal

of the grounds of complaint which have occasionally arisen. I am sorry that the pressure of legislative and administrative duties has not afforded my Ministers an opportunity of preparing and laying before you complete and definite proposals on this subject. My Ministers recognise this subject as one of paramount importance, and purpose, during the recess, to prepare for submission to you a measure or measures having for their object to remove, as far as practicable, the evils of undue centralisation in the administration of the government, and to provide for the speedy and economical expenditure in the several divisions of the colony of the revenue raised within them. To effect this object it will probably be necessary to establish, in suitable localities, branches of the Real Property Office, and of the more important administrative departments. If to this be added an extension of the existing powers of local government, I believe that the causes of complaint to which I have referred, and which are especially likely to arise in new lands in a state of constant progress and expansion, will be effectually removed; and I sincerely hope that by these means, and by the hearty union and co-operation of the people of all parts of Queensland in developing its great and varied resources, the progress of the colony will, under the blessing of Divine Providence, receive an impetus in the benefits of which every district will alike participate.

"It has been fitly proposed by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, that the completion of the fiftieth year of the reign of Our Most Gracious Sovereign shall be commemorated by the establishment, in London, of an Imperial institution which will serve as a permanent exposition of the natural products and manufactures of Her Majesty's dominions. The details of the scheme have not yet been communicated to me, but my Ministers propose, acting in consultation with the Governments of the other Australasian colonies, to take such steps as may be necessary to ensure a proper representation of this portion of the Empire.

"I now declare this Parliament prorogued to Tuesday, the 18th day of January, 1887."

The Assembly then retired, and His Excellency and suite left the Council Chamber.