

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. H. Briggs) : His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to supply me with a copy of his Speech, and for the sake of convenience a copy will be placed before each member.

Hon. R. G. ARDAGH (North-East) : I desire to move that the following Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to us :—

May it please your Excellency, We, the Legislative Council of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

I desire at the outset to thank the Government for having given me the opportunity as a new member to say a few words of thanks to His Excellency for having delivered his Speech, and for this reason, that on looking around this gathering of members, I appear to be very nearly the youngest, and perhaps also the smallest member, so far as avoirdupois weight is concerned. These facts make me wonder whether I will properly fill the position to which the constituents of the North-East Province have elected me. However, I shall during my sojourn in this Council do my best to assist in the passing of legislation which may be brought forward for the benefit of the people and the State. At the outset, I desire to congratulate the Government on the progressive work they have accomplished during the recess. I remember, when the Labour party were in office some years ago, they were alleged by their opponents to have been a "mark-time" Government.

Hon. Sir J. W. Hackett: They framed the phrase "mark time" themselves.

Hon. R. G. ARDAGH: According to the public utterances of the members of the Opposition to-day, fault is being found because the Government are very progressive in the matter of State enterprise.

The Government have certainly done much to assist settlement on the land during the last season, and many of the settlers would have been forced from their holdings had it not been for the assistance rendered to them by the Government of the day. The large, though necessary, expenditure thus involved will no doubt account for the expected deficiency in the revenue, reference to which has been made in the Governor's Speech. However, I suppose that all these things have to take place, and it is pleasing to note, at any rate, that the Government were able to go to the assistance of those people on the land who were in need of help because of the dry season. I notice also that the Government intend to render assistance to the mining industry. As one who has lived on the goldfields for the past seventeen years, I believe that assistance can be rendered in many ways to prospectors and those in out-back districts in particular. There is not the slightest doubt that the old prospectors of Western Australia have done much towards developing and populating the lands of the State, and, though the mines have up to the present time reached a great depth, I believe that along the Golden Mile there are still good and payable propositions which will be worked for many years to come, and when we know that, I think it is wise for the Government to declare that they intend to assist the industry. There are many fields which, no doubt, have gone back of late, but this has been principally because in a number of instances the mines have not been properly developed. Rich ore has been taken from them and then they have been left to anyone who came along. In the past, Governments have spent a great deal of money in building railways, and erecting buildings on the mining fields, and it is a deplorable thing to see these buildings to-day untenanted. With regard to places like Kookynie and Menzies, I am satisfied that, if diamond drilling were undertaken, those mines which have been worked to a depth of 600 or 700 feet, would be found to be capable of further successful development, and consequently

greater prosperity to the industry. I also notice that it is intended to introduce a number of railway Bills this session, and, whilst I am prepared to assist the Government in this direction of building railways wherever they may be needed—and I believe by railway extension more good can be done than one can imagine, especially in the farming districts—I sincerely hope that one railway at any rate, that is the line to Esperance, will be authorised by Parliament this session. I have not the slightest doubt in my mind about the quality of the wheat-growing land between Norseman and Esperance, through which this railway would pass. There is a large area of it and there are many settlers there with their families, and I think they are entitled to railway communication as much as any other part of this State. There are many other measures that might be touched upon, but probably later on in the session an opportunity will be afforded me to refer to them. The industrial laws of Western Australia certainly need a great deal of amendment, in my opinion at any rate. As one who has been connected with the industrial movement for many years, I can say that the Conciliation and Arbitration Act, the Workers' Compensation Act, and the Factories Act certainly need to be amended in the interests of both employer and employee. I think the Arbitration Act particularly can well be amended, and I sincerely hope to see the matter dealt with this session in a better way than was done last session. It is also pleasing to me to note that the Government are starting State sawmills and brickyards, because they will undoubtedly be of great benefit and assistance to the carrying out of the Workers' Homes scheme. In New South Wales the establishment of State brickyards has proved a great success. Prior to the establishment of these works the New South Wales Government had to pay 42s. per thousand for their bricks, whereas I see by the report of the Standing Committee on Public Works of New South Wales for 1911 bricks were being manufactured for the use of the Government at 19s. 10d. per thousand, thus

effecting a saving of a considerable amount of money each year. I am satisfied that the same good work can be accomplished in Western Australia, and I sincerely hope to see these schemes persevered in. I do not wish to take up any further time to-day. I desire to thank members for the courtesy they have shown me, and I have pleasure in moving my motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

Hon. F. DAVIS (Metropolitan-Suburban): It gives me great pleasure to second the motion moved by the hon. member. Listening to the Speech one could not help being struck with the note of optimism running right through it. As a record of progress accomplished it should be to everyone a cause for congratulation. It also gives evidence of an honest endeavour on the part of the Government to materialise in actual fact the promises of the past. But it is somewhat unfortunate that during the period under review there has been a partial drought—happily a somewhat unusual occurrence in the history of Western Australia. One cannot help thinking what a singular thing it is that this occurrence should have synchronised with the advent of the Labour Ministry.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Another mistake made.

Hon. F. DAVIS: It is possible that the Labour party may have made mistakes, but they have never yet made the mistake of assuming control of the weather, and therefore they are not responsible for the result of the partial drought through which we have passed.

Hon. F. Connor: They got in out of the wet.

Hon. F. DAVIS: Possibly they did. Some cynics have credited the Government with the results of that over which they have no control. However, it is a matter for congratulation that the Government have faith in the possibilities of the State. We have undoubtedly great resources in the State, particularly in regard to agriculture. As many members of the House know, the land has been proved to be excellent for agricultural purposes, and as evidence of their faith