

“and Coolgardie goldfields. The railways
“to Mullewa and to the Vasse are nearing
“completion. The Midland Railway is
“in full progress. The North mole of
“the Fremantle harbour works has been
“extended 2,400 feet, and the Southern
“mole has been commenced. The tele-
“graph lines from Condon to Marble
“Bar and from Geraldton to Cue are
“nearly finished, and communication has
“already been opened between Southern
“Cross and Coolgardie. Public buildings
“have been or are being erected all over
“the colony.

“9. Measures will be submitted to you
“dealing with the law relating to muni-
“cipalities, friendly societies, employers'
“liability, branding of stock, fencing, and
“other subjects of importance.

“10. You will be asked to consider a
“measure for establishing a Land Bank
“for the purpose of making advances to
“farmers, in order to further promote
“the occupation and improvement of the
“agricultural lands of the colony.

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

“11. The financial position of the
“colony is sound and satisfactory. The
“revenue for the year ending the 30th
“June was estimated at £589,500, and
“reached £681,245. The expenditure
“was estimated at £651,962, and reached
“£656,356. The credit balance at the
“end of the financial year was estimated
“at £669, but was actually £88,020.

“12. The loan authorised last session
“of £540,000 has been successfully
“floated, having been largely over-sub-
“scribed, and realised £103 6s. 1d. per
“cent., showing that our credit in London
“is very satisfactory. The estimates of
“revenue and expenditure for the current
“year will be carefully prepared and
“presented to you, as soon as possible;
“and with the existing credit balance,
“and an increasing revenue, my Ministers
“hope to be able to provide for many
“pressing works throughout the colony.

MR. PRESIDENT AND HONOURABLE
GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE
COUNCIL,—

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF
THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

“13. The scarcity of the rainfall during
“the present winter, and the consequent
“lateness of the season, give cause for

“anxiety. I can only express a hope
“that, although the season is late, it may
“yet prove a bountiful one, and that the
“winter rains, which happily appear to
“have commenced, may yet be abundant.

“14. I now leave you to your respon-
“sible duties, with a firm belief that,
“with the Divine blessing, your labours
“will result in much real and lasting
“advancement.”

His Excellency and the members of
the Legislative Assembly then withdrew
from the Chamber, and the President
(Hon. Sir G. Shenton) took the Chair.

DEFENCE FORCES BILL.

This Bill was introduced, and was
read a first time.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

THE HON. E. G. HENTY: I have
much pleasure in rising to move an
Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's
Speech. I may say that I regard the fact
of my having been asked to do so as a
very great honour, inasmuch as I am one
of the youngest members of the House.
In dealing with the proposals in the
Speech, it will be unnecessary for me to
dwell upon them to any extent *seriatim*,
as we shall have a further opportunity of
doing so later on. I may, however, touch
lightly upon certain of the clauses con-
tained in it. In the first place, I think
the colony is to be congratulated on the
state of things shown throughout the
Speech. The Government policy, as set
forth, is particularly progressive, and, as
I think hon. members will agree, well
up to the times. The population of
the colony has, during the year, in-
creased from 61,000 odd to nearly
76,000—an increase of nearly 20 per
cent.—and this, in itself, must be con-
sidered as eminently gratifying. During
the same period the gold discoveries have
placed this colony in the front rank of
gold producing countries, and with all
due deference to those who endeavour to
disparage the Ministry, I think they have
done all they could do to help the gold-
fields. They started, perhaps, a little
late; but now that they have made a
commencement they are doing all they
possibly can. Our fields will, no doubt,
prove permanent, and I say this from my

own knowledge of them. I have seen them, and I feel certain that we have nothing to fear as to their future. They will last our time at any rate, and therefore the policy the Ministry have taken up in connection with them is one they are to be congratulated upon. Of the new railways proposed, those to the gold-fields should receive our first consideration. We have a population there which, although taking the gold out of the earth, is helping to swell the revenue and aiding in bringing about a prosperity for the country. And we must not forget that although the gold is being taken away, it is worth no more than granite to us if it is left where Nature placed it. The railways to the fields should be pushed on as rapidly as possible. Many people advise caution in proceeding with these lines, but I think they will prove of lasting benefit to us, inasmuch as we shall open up nearly 800 miles of payable reefing country. As to the railways proposed at the South, I cannot say much in regard to them; but I believe that if the coal measures prove to be as good as the gold, we shall have another great backbone to the country. With regard to the proposal made as to the lands, I quite agree with the efforts of the Government to settle people on the soil. I am quite alive to the difficulty of initiating measures in a new country, but I think the Ministry are doing their best, and in the end, I believe, we shall have a Land Act as much up to the times as our Goldfields Act. In connection with the settlement of the land, there is the question of water supply, not so much at the South as at the North, where there are immense tracts of splendid country lying undeveloped for want of water. These remarks apply as much to pastoral lands as to agricultural lands. If we had artesian bores put down, such as they have in Queensland, this colony would support a large class of settlers, which it cannot support now. The loan of £1,500,000 which is proposed is, I think, justifiable by the several circumstances I have pointed out; and I believe the Government will experience no difficulty in raising the amount, especially when we consider our increased resources. In connection with the Fremantle harbour works, I think it is very necessary that we should have on the coast one harbour

of refuge, even if we do not require it for commerce. At the present moment, all the way from Sharks Bay to Albany, we have not one harbour into which mail steamers can take refuge, and, if for no other reason, I think the Fremantle harbour should be completed. The Land Bank proposed will be useful if it can be worked upon commercial principles. The mode of working it seems to be the greatest difficulty in connection with it, and we shall have to be cautious. If, however, it can be conducted on commercial principles, it will be very useful to a large class of settlers. I need not now touch on the domestic legislation, such as the Employers' Liability Act, which is proposed. I may safely leave these matters to be dealt with when they come before us in detail. I will now formally move that the following Address-in-Reply be presented:—

*To His Excellency Sir William Cleaver
Francis Robinson, Knight Grand Cross
of the Most Distinguished Order of St.
Michael and St. George, Governor and
Commander-in-Chief in and over the
Colony of Western Australia and its
Dependencies, &c., &c., &c.*

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

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

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

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

THE HON. J. C. G. FOULKES: I beg to second the motion made by my hon. friend, the member for the Central Province. From His Excellency's Speech, it seems that both he and his advisers have every confidence in the destinies of the colony, and when we ourselves come to consider the large increases in population