

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

and revenue during the last few years, we must all agree that that confidence is justifiable. It seems that the population has increased from 45,000 to 75,000 in three years, and the revenue has almost doubled itself. Up to a few years ago the colony was practically doing nothing but mark time, but now she has entered upon a quick march along the road of progress, and the programme which has now been put before us shows that we shall have still further prosperity. We have a proposal to connect us with our goldfields by rail. Most hon. members will agree that the fortunes of the colony are largely bound up with the goldfields, and, in a sense, we must sink or swim by them. Even up to the present they have done an immense amount of good for us, and especially have they attracted to us thousands of people, with their capital, who never would have heard of Western Australia unless it had been for the discoveries at the Murchison and Coolgardie. The two railways proposed will, I think, add further to our progress. We all know what Ballarat and Bendigo were to Australia in times gone by. Before the discoveries were made at these places, Australia was nothing better than a sheep-run, and I have every confidence that what the discoveries at these places have done for them, the discoveries at the North and at Coolgardie will do for us. They will raise this colony from her present position to a place in the front rank of the Empire. Then it is proposed to raise a loan of £1,500,000. So far, I am glad to say, our credit stands high in the London market. The last loan was floated at a premium, and I have no doubt but that we shall be able to raise the fresh loan on satisfactory terms. We must remember, however, that although it is easy to borrow money, it means interest. For every million of money we borrow, we have to send to London £40,000 a year in interest, and this proposed new loan, therefore, means that we shall have to send £60,000 every year to London in addition to our present liability, and we have to consider how the money is to be raised. This we do know, that it will have to be paid by the permanent settlers of the colony, and we shall have to consider seriously what steps are necessary for us to take to foster that settlement. I am glad to say that the Ministry propose to

build a railway to one of the best agricultural districts in the colony—the Donnybrook line—which will add more to the real development of the country than anything else, for it will mean that the Southern districts will be able to supply more produce, and thus enable us to escape the necessity of importing so much. I am glad to see that the Collie coalfield is to receive some attention. I do not know whether hon. members are aware that the whole of the coal used by the Government is imported, but it is, and at a cost of about £30,000 a year. If we could raise the coal it would mean that we should keep this large amount of money in the colony; besides which we would be able to give employment to hundreds, or even thousands, of men, and also provide a market for our farmers and agriculturists. I am glad also to see that it is proposed to found a bank to assist farmers, by making them small advances. At present it is exceedingly difficult for people in the country to borrow money; if they are able to, they have to pay high rates of interest for it, which means that many farmers are prevented from developing their properties in the way they would like to. If farmers could borrow money at a low rate of interest they would develop their properties, and the result would be that more food and produce would be grown in the colony. I am glad to see that the Midland Railway episode has been finally closed. A year ago was an anxious time for the colony to know what was the right thing to do; but we may now congratulate ourselves on having done the best thing both for the colony and the company. The other measures referred to are important, particularly an Employers' Liability Bill. At present an employé has no remedy against an employer for any injury or accident caused to him, and when the Bill is passed I am sure it will do a great justice to the working classes. I am sure that all the matters mentioned in the Speech will receive the serious attention and care of all hon. members; and I am certain that we, one and all, shall approach the measures which are put before us with one single idea only before us—the best interests of the colony. For my part I have every confidence that the result of our labours will be not only to add to the

dignity of the House, but also add to the prosperity of the colony.

THE HON. S. J. HAYNES moved the adjournment of the debate.

Question—put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Council, at 3:45 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, 26th July, at 3 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 25th July, 1894.

Meeting of the Assembly—Message from Commissioners—Members Sworn—Election of Speaker—Presentation of the Speaker-elect—Temporary Adjournment—Message from the Governor—Supply Bill (£150,000)—Report of the Auditor-General—Fencing Bill, 1894: first reading—The Governor's Speech—The Address-in-Reply—Adjournment.

MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The House met at noon, pursuant to Proclamation of His Excellency the Governor, which was read by the Clerk.

MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONERS.

A Message from the Commissioners appointed by His Excellency the Governor was delivered by the Usher of the Black Rod, as follows:—

Mr. Gale,—

“The Commissioners appointed by His Excellency the Governor to do all things necessary for the opening of the present Parliament, request the attendance of the Members of the Legislative Assembly in the Legislative Council Chamber, to hear the Commission read.”

Accordingly members of the Legislative Assembly went to the Legislative Council, where, the Commissioners being present, the Clerk of the Council read the Letters Patent.

The Senior Commissioner (His Honour Chief Justice Onslow) then said:—

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

“We have it in command from His Excellency the Governor to inform you that, at three o'clock this afternoon, the causes of His Excellency's calling this Parliament will be declared to you; and it being necessary that a President of the Legislative Council and a Speaker of the Legislative Assembly should be first chosen, it is His Excellency's pleasure that you, Honourable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council, having been duly sworn by the Commissioner appointed by His Excellency, do elect your President, and notify the same to His Excellency; and that you, Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly, repair to the place where you are to sit, and having been duly sworn by the Commissioner appointed by His Excellency, you do elect your Speaker and notify the same to His Excellency.”

Members of the Assembly then returned to their own Chamber.

MEMBERS SWORN.

His Honour Mr. Justice Stone having entered the House, and having been conducted by the Clerk-Assistant (in the absence of the Sergeant-at-Arms) to the chair, handed to the Clerk at the table the commission authorising His Honour to administer to members the prescribed oath or affirmation prescribed by the 52nd Vic., cap. 23, sec. 22. This having been done, the Commissioner withdrew.

ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest):
Mr. Gale,—I have very great pleasure in proposing that our old friend Sir James George Lee Steere should be appointed Speaker of this House. He is well known to all of us in this colony; and I think I am right in saying that he is the oldest member of Parliament in our midst at the present time. His entrance into Parliament dates so far back as a quarter of a century ago, and during all that time he has held a prominent position in the Legislature, and has been highly re-