

ting on in years. I have lived to see a lot in Australia. I saw the first 8-hours procession in Australia; and I believe now I will live to see the date when Labour will free itself from these trammels. I am afraid I have trespassed too much on the time of this House. I will content myself with moving the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

MR. TAYLOR: What about the dock?

MR. DIAMOND: Wait until the Estimates. I beg to move that the following Address-in-reply be presented to his Excellency:—

We, the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia, in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our most gracious Sovereign. We thank your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament, and beg to assure your Excellency of our continued confidence in your advisers.

MR. N. J. MOORE (Bunbury): Mr. Speaker, may I be permitted to add my congratulations to those that have already fallen from the speakers who have preceded me, on your elevation to that high and distinguished office of Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia. I feel sure that the Parliamentary experience which you have already had will constrain you to extend to those of us who are newly entering Parliamentary life, that consideration which is usually extended to novices, while at the same time upholding that dignity which has always been associated with the Speaker's Chair in the Legislative Assembly. I should like to say that, as a new member, while having my own views I come here prepared to hear both sides of a question before coming to a decision. I appreciate the fact, as every new member I feel sure does, that we have much to learn; and I can assure hon. members that my main desire is to loyally serve the country of which I am proud to say I am a native. Unlike some other members, before the elections came on I stated which party it was I would support; and my electors have sent me here to support that party whose records are so clearly set forth in the Speech read by His Excellency to-day. That Speech refers to very many matters; but I propose to simply confine myself to those subjects with which, perhaps, I am most closely in touch. At the opening of last Parliament, Mr. Gardiner, I think it was, said, "We recognise—in

fact we must insist—that our finances shall be put upon a sound business basis."

It was appropriate that he should afterwards be called to the position of Treasurer, and that he brought that desired result about. I hope that whether the present Administration continues in power or not, or whether our friends opposite are in power, whoever is Treasurer will be a man with plenty of backbone in him, who will be able to say "no" when demands are made upon the public purse for works which are not of urgent necessity, whether those demands come from either the centres of population or from the outlying districts. I feel sure it is a matter of regret to all sections of the House that the late Treasurer is not with us here to assist with his advice and experience. Broadly speaking, I consider that the first duty of a member of Parliament is to the State, and, recognising that, I think it will be well this session if we put the question of land settlement in the van of legislation. At the present time, although it is stated in the Address-in-reply that our population has increased, and I believe it has increased in a greater ratio than in any other State in Australia except New South Wales—  
[MEMBER: More than that too]—I regret to say that increase is at the expense, to a very large extent, of our neighbours. We do not want to live on the misfortune of the other States, and I quite agree with that paragraph in the Speech which says it is necessary that the attention of Parliament should be turned to the question with a view of inducing population. There is no doubt this State is suffering from a dearth of population, and although every endeavour has been made by the present Government to induce settlement, yet much remains to be done. We have an immense estate very sparsely populated. We have a splendid area of coastal land fertile in the extreme, with a regular rainfall, with the absence of droughts, and yet over the whole of this area of 624,000,000 acres we have but a mere handful of people engaged in tilling the soil, while the whole population of Western Australia does not amount to as much as half that of the city of Melbourne. There is something wrong, and whichever Government is in power I hope its attention will be turned to remedying

this matter. I favour the breaking up of large estates, holding the principle that the man who has good land and does not use it for the benefit not only of himself but of the State should have that land taken from him, or at least he should be made to pay for the privilege of its remaining idle. Of course I do not favour repudiation, but it is opposed to all political economics that the land should be in the hands of the few to the detriment of the many. If a man has a large estate in the vicinity of our railway lines, I should be in favour of purchasing that estate, but certainly I would not be in favour of giving more than the ordinary market value for the land. I am therefore pleased to note that "a measure of taxation upon the unimproved value of such holdings, but containing liberal exemption in favour of the genuine settler, should be passed." I am glad to see this inserted in the programme. I should also be farther in favour of the policy of clearing before selection, because I recognise that what to a large extent keeps many people off the land in Western Australia, and more especially in the South-West, is the fact that they have to pay such a heavy initial cost in clearing. When we recognise that a man has to face a cost of from £5 to £20 per acre for clearing, we see that he not only wants a large heart, but also a fairly large pocket, and something in it; and I think the Government may very well introduce a system of clearing before settlement, and extend payments over a considerable period. The money perhaps might be collected somewhat on the same lines as those on which we collect rent under the conditional purchase system. Everything should be done to attract people on the soil, and when we get them there we should endeavour to keep them. As a member representing agricultural and shipping interests I am indeed pleased to notice from the Speech which is laid before us that the mineral output has increased during the life of the last Parliament from £6,179,802 in 1901 to £8,971,937 in 1904. We must admit that during the last decade the great progress that has been made in agricultural development has been largely due to the fact that the goldfields industry has advanced by leaps and bounds, and I can see no cause for any enmity between the

miner and the farmer. The farmer in the past assisted the miner to a very large extent when the Coolgardie Water Supply was introduced. Who gave support to Sir John Forrest to secure a water supply there? It was the agricultural people; and I am very proud to know that those who preceded us in representing agricultural interests had enough foresight to recognise that they were bringing in a measure which would improve the conditions of life on the goldfields, while at the same time we who are interested in agricultural industries are under a favour to those on the goldfields, owing to their providing a market for our produce within our own boundaries. It is only a few years since gold was first discovered in Western Australia. Since that period no less than £15,000,000 worth of gold has been won. From every acre held under a gold-mining lease last year gold to the value of £236 was produced, and for every man employed both above and under ground gold of the value of £486 was won. I think this is a marvellous record, and one which cannot be reached by any other country in the world. The Government batteries have produced over £900,000 worth of gold, and at the same time they have given encouragement to the small man and have enabled him to prospect and develop his own property, while his stone has been treated at a minimum cost. It is pleasing to notice it is the intention of the Government to introduce legislation dealing with the timber industry. When we recognise that there are between 3,000 and 4,000 men employed in the timber industry, exclusive of those engaged in handling the timber on the wharves and on the tramways and railways, and that there is a capital of over £1,500,000 invested in works, we must realise that it is incumbent upon Parliament to give every encouragement to that industry, while at the same time conserving as far as possible the future of our forests. In my opinion the present system under which timber leases are held is against the best interests of this State and should be abolished, and the timber should be disposed of on the royalty principle, only the royalty principle should be based upon measurement in the round. I feel sure that if this recommendation of the Forestry Commission is adopted, a lot of

the great waste which is going on at the present time will be considerably minimised. Every encouragement also should be given to the small man to enable him to enter into competition, and I would be in favour of the Government assisting him by constructing light lines to connect the timber forest with the railway system, the cost to be paid by the various mills which will reap a benefit from them. If such a policy were adopted, I am confident that it would prevent any one company from having practically a monopoly of the local trade. The Government have shown in the Governor's Speech that they recognise the need there is to give greater facilities for developing the three great industries—mining, agricultural, and timber, to which I have already briefly referred: and particularly does this apply to the early necessity for providing proper harbour accommodation. The Fremantle Harbour Works are now complete, and the management of those harbour works has been handed over to a Harbour Trust which, I understand, has given great satisfaction.

MR. ANGWIN: The mover of the motion does not think so.

THE PREMIER: Do you agree with him?

MR. ANGWIN: No; I do not.

THE PREMIER: Then don't worry about the mover.

MR. MOORE: If this local control is satisfactory I shall be pleased to see local control extended to the other ports. The increase of trade that has followed the development of the timber industry in the South-West has been simply astounding, when it is recollected that in 1896, when the first load of stone was tipped in the harbour at Bunbury to build a breakwater, the exports at Bunbury were £16,000, and in 1902 were £240,000, while last year they came within a few thousands of half a million sterling. That is a record which I do not think any other port in Australia can show; and I hope, when the gentlemen opposite are over on this side, they will recollect that it is absolutely necessary to assist, as far as possible, the timber industry by giving increased harbour facilities. I do not propose to weary hon. members very long; but I should like to say, previous to sitting down, that I would like to see

a Bill introduced amending the present Municipalities Act. I was in hope I would see reference to it in the Speech. There are several gentlemen in the House who have had considerable municipal experience, and I feel sure that if such a Bill be introduced one will be passed that will meet with the satisfaction of all the various municipalities of this State. The majority of members, I think, will also agree with me that, although the present Electoral Act gives every facility for men to register their claims, it is open to very great abuse, more especially in regard to postal votes. I have referred to only a few matters in this very interesting Speech, although, if time had allowed, I should have preferred to have dealt a little farther with them; but I have not the least doubt that before this debate is finished I will have an opportunity of saying a few words from the other side of this House. When I remember what has been done in the last three years, and after reading the record of the James party as set forth in the Speech—a record which I know all men acknowledge to be true, having been content in the past to give my support to a body of men who have shown that they have the highest and best interests of the State at heart, I mean to stick to them if they are going downhill. I consider they have been faithful servants, not only of one section but of all classes of the community. I feel sure that hon. members here present will join in the wish expressed in the first paragraph of the Speech:—

That the people will at all times find members devoted to the loyal and unselfish service of the State, advancing in legislative and administrative reforms with due deliberation, and fully conscious of the duties and responsibilities no less than the rights and privileges of Parliament.

I have pleasure in seconding the Address-in-reply. (General applause.)

On motion by MR. DAGLISH, debate adjourned.

#### ADJOURNMENT, REMARKS BY THE PREMIER.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Walter James) moved: "That at its rising the House do adjourn till 4.30 o'clock on Tuesday afternoon."