

Hon. G. W. Miles: But you can make it what you like.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It was suggested by Mr. Holmes that millers and bakers would stock up in one month on a falling market and the next month would be undersold by South Australia. Is not it ridiculous to suggest that millers and bakers, knowing they could get their requirements from day to day and week to week at a fixed price, are going to stock up on a falling market? This only shows the class of argument the hon. member is prepared to put up in support of any proposition he wishes to urge. Not only to-day, but ever since the pools have been in operation, all through the period of the war, members have been talking as if they thought this method was right in war time, but not otherwise. Still they used to fight the principle as bitterly in war time as they do now. All the time there has been a desire to kill in its infancy the farmers' co-operative movement, and this is at the bottom of much of the present opposition. Mr. Baglin spoke of the Government being dominated by some other party. That is entirely foreign to the position. The Government are comprised of two parties about equally balanced, one-half being the Country Party, and not only the Country Party but the other half of the Government are just as earnest that the farmers and all other producers should get the full value for their products. The section of the Government who do not belong to the Country Party are just as favourable to co-operation as the Country Party themselves and will fight just as hard to maintain it. I am confident that more than half of the opposition to this Bill is merely opposition to the co-operative movement of the farmers, and I hope this opposition will fail.

Question put and a division taken, with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	13
Noes	..	..	..	8

Majority for .. 5

#### AYES.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh	Hon. J. W. Hickey
Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. R. J. Lyne
Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. C. McKenzie
Hon. J. Ewing	Hon. H. Stewart
Hon. J. A. Greig	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. J. Mills
Hon. E. H. Harris	(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Hon. J. Duffell	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. J. W. Kirwan	Hon. A. J. H. Saw
Hon. A. Lovekin	Hon. G. W. Miles
	(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### BILLS (2)—RETURNED FROM ASSEMBLY.

1. State Children Act Amendment.  
With amendments.
2. Coroners' Act Amendment.  
Without amendment.

#### BILL—SUPPLY (No. 3), £1,047,000.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

#### PARLIAMENTARY TOUR OF SOUTH-WEST.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [11.14]: The Premier has asked me to acquaint members of the fact on Thursday of next week a special train will leave for a tour of the South-West, extending over some eight or nine days. Full particulars will probably be published in the morning. The Premier desires to extend an invitation to all members of this House to take part in this expedition. I shall be pleased if those members who intend to make the trip will advise me so that the necessary arrangements can be made.

House adjourned at 11.15 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 18th October, 1921.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

#### ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to Supply Bill (No. 2) £542,000.

## AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received the report of the Auditor General on the Treasurer's Statements of the Public Accounts for the year ended 30th June, 1920. The report will lie on the Table of the House.

## QUESTION—PUBLIC SERVICE GRADE INCREASES.

Mr. MANN asked the Premier: What do the Government propose to do with regard to paying grade increases to all grades of the public servants in accordance with the terms of the settlement of the Civil Service strike last year?

The PREMIER replied: This has been done.

## BILL—SUPPLY (No. 3), £1,047,000.

All stages.

The PREMIER AND TREASURER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [4.38]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable resolutions from the Committee of Supply and Ways and Means to be reported and adopted on the same day on which they shall have passed those committees, and also the passing of a Supply Bill through all its stages in one day.

Question put and passed.

## Message.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation in connection with the Bill.

## In Committee of Supply.

The House having resolved into Committee of Supply, Mr. Angelo in the Chair,

The PREMIER AND TREASURER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [4.41]: I move—

That there be granted to His Majesty on account of the service of the year ended the 30th June, 1922, a sum not exceeding £1,047,000.

It is necessary to ask for Supply, because the Estimates have not yet been passed. They have been introduced and a full explanation of the position has been made by me. I do not propose to go into details now. I am asking for Supply for two months to cover October and November. Before November is out, I hope we shall have passed the Estimates, and that it will not be necessary to bring down another Supply Bill. This is the third Supply Bill which has been introduced this session. When I introduced Bill No. 2 I asked for supply for one month, because I thought that members should have an opportunity to see the Estimates before granting Supply for a longer period.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [4.43]: I would like some information from the Premier. It is likely that the Premier will be leaving for the Eastern States to attend the Premier's Conference within the next week or two, and he will doubtless be absent from the State for at least three weeks.

The Premier: No, only one week.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Probably the Premier has no desire to tarry in Melbourne, but I am afraid he will not be able to make the journey there and back within one week.

The Premier: I mean that I shall be absent from the House for only one week.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is intended that the House shall adjourn on the 27th October for one week and we shall be able to make very little progress with the Estimates prior to that date. In all probability, we shall not have the Estimates passed by the end of November. Does the Premier intend to push on with the Estimates between now and Thursday week? I would like the Premier to give some information regarding the business which the Premiers' Conference has been called to consider. There seems to be a certain amount of doubt regarding the nature of the business to be discussed.

Mr. O'Loughlen: To wipe out the Arbitration Act is one thing.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is rather unusual to call a Premiers' Conference at this time of the year, and especially to give no intimation to the public as to the purpose for which it is called. There seems to be a move in certain influential quarters, both inside and outside some of the Parliaments, to make a serious attack upon the principle or method of arbitration. So far as I have been able to learn from statements published in the Press, this is one of the subjects which will be discussed at the Premiers' Conference. In any case, I see no reason why the Prime Minister should withhold from the public the information as to why the Conference is being called at this particular time of the year, seeing that such Conferences are as a rule held during the recess, say in March or April, when Premiers have more time and opportunity for attending them. I hope the Premier will be able to afford us some information on that point, and also on the question of how soon he expects to finish the Estimates.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [4.46]: Personally, I see no reason why we should not put through the Estimates in a very short time. I should offer no objection if they were disposed of this week. However, I do know that the consideration of the Estimates occupies some time, though I suppose this year the items will not be discussed at any great length, seeing that Parliament has agreed that Public Service salaries shall be finally determined by the Appeal Board. We might push along with the Estimates if we sat for longer hours during this week and next. I shall leave Perth on, I think, the night of the

26th instant, and shall be absent for one full week, returning to Perth on the following Tuesday morning. I shall really be away during the time the south-western trip is taken, and also on the Thursday of next week. I shall be in Melbourne from the Sunday morning till the Friday evening, and surely that will be quite long enough to allow of consideration of the matters that are to be discussed. There are, in fact, important matters to be discussed at the Conference. There is the question of soldier settlement, which is important to us from the financial and other aspects. There is also the question of the per capita grant to be discussed. Then I suppose the broad gauge railway from Brisbane to Perth will have to be discussed; that is always discussed at every Conference. Further, the question of unemployment will come up for consideration; and so will, probably, industrial legislation. I want to say at once that nothing in the way of interfering with our Arbitration Court can be done except by this Parliament; no one can touch our Arbitration Court except this Parliament. I have not any knowledge of what may be in the minds of other Australian Premiers. I daresay, however, that the methods of industrial arbitration might be improved. At any rate, the control of our Arbitration Court and of our Arbitration Act is with this Parliament. The matters of finance to be discussed at the Conference, of course, are of the greatest importance to this State. There is the Federal Capital for instance; and I presume the matter of the Convention will be considered. I personally have no desire to make a hurried trip to Melbourne; I should very much prefer to remain in this State doing the work that is needed in order to keep our people occupied. But of course a Premier must attend a Conference when summoned, if the matters to be discussed are of sufficient importance to demand the presence of the Premier for the time being. As regards the Estimates, I suppose we shall get some fairly full discussion to-day and during the rest of the week. However, as I have said, I do not anticipate that this year's Estimates will occupy the attention of the House for very long.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN (Forrest) [4.51]: Possibly the Premier is correct in anticipating that the general discussion on the Estimates will not be of long duration this year. Probably there will be only three or four speeches on the Estimates generally. There has been opportunity on the Address-in-reply and on Supply Bills to discuss matters generally. The Premier, however, is wrong in assuming that because Parliament has agreed to certain tribunals fixing Public Service salaries, there will not be discussion of the items. There will be discussion of the items, and I hope there will be frequent divisions. During the past year the Government, unfortunately, have not been guided by divisions of this Chamber: I know of no instance in which

a reduction voted here has been carried out by the Government. The practice has simply been to excess the item.

The Premier: No; the items were generally reinstated.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I rose specially to draw attention to the atmosphere of secrecy surrounding this Premiers' Conference. I have always held the opinion that the Premiers' Conference were an absurdity. There is no provision in the Constitution for them. To hold a Premiers' Conference is to set up a sort of additional Parliament. Year by year for the last decade, we have had these Premiers' Conferences. So far as I can judge, very little of utility has come out of them. I have had a Minister explain to me privately the Conference procedure. A certain proposition is brought forward; the members of the Conference are not in possession of the necessary data to deal with it, and in fact have no power to do anything but recommend. Eventually the proposition is generally left to another Minister to draft into a Bill, to be submitted to a later Conference of Premiers. At that Conference the State in question is not represented by the same Minister, but by some other Minister. Consequently, nothing results. To judge from the Premier's statement this afternoon, the matters to be discussed at this Conference are hardly annuals with the exception of one, the question of unemployment.

The Premier: I say that will probably be discussed.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The Premier evidently has no information as to the business of the Conference.

The Premier: Yes, I have.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: One subject to be discussed is the break of gauge. That has been discussed for the last 15 years at Premiers' Conferences, without anything being achieved. Fancy the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth calling a Conference of Premiers at a time when every Australian Parliament is sitting, in order to discuss the break of gauge at the cost of throwing all the legislative machinery of this continent out of gear! We know that a uniform gauge is utterly impracticable in view of our present financial position. I am convinced in my own mind that this Conference has been called at the request of two Premiers, Mr. Barwell of South Australia, and Mr. Lee of Tasmania. I hope our Premier will not lend any countenance to certain nefarious proposals of those two Premiers. Mr. Barwell is the most reactionary politician in Australia, and I hope, for the sake of the smooth conduct of industry here that we shall never have a man of the Barwell type in power in Western Australia. I hope that anything proposed by Mr. Barwell, or even by Mr. Lee, in the direction of materially disturbing the legislative machinery we have for dealing with industrial matters in this State will meet with opposition at the hands of our Premier. The Premier admits that he can only recommend as the result of a Conference, that he can only give support to a resolution which will

later have to be approved by this Parliament, before our laws can be altered. But a certain weight attaches to a Bill that is brought forward to be ratified by Parliament, if Parliament is assured that the measure has been approved at a Conference of Premiers. At the present time the clamour of Mr. Barwell and Mr. Lee is for getting back to normal by reducing wages and bringing about industrial paralysis. I would rather concur in the Prime Minister's views as expressed only yesterday, to the effect that any drastic reduction of the high prices at present ruling will cause disturbance, and that reduction must be gradual. While the Prime Minister said that there had to be no reduction of hours of work, he said nothing about limitation of profits. All he said was that Australia must work longer hours. Personally I see no need for these Premiers' Conferences. Our Premier has said that the question of financing soldier settlement is to be discussed, but our scheme in that connection is well under way, and the hon. gentleman has expressed himself as satisfied with the progress being made. He is not seeking another financial allocation from the Federal Government in that respect at present. The only other matter to be discussed at the Conference, so far as I can see, is the demand put forward by the two Eastern Premiers, which demand has caused the summoning of the Conference. This has been published in the Press. Our Premier is no party to it, and I hope he will prove a restraining influence on the two industrial Bolsheviks who are seeking to create industrial unrest in Australia, whose idea is to hit the producer, and hit him hard. I ask my friends on the cross benches whether there is any more pronounced enemy of the Australian farming community than the Premier of South Australia. He has thrown the farmers of his State to the wolves. He refused to give them the sanction and security of a legislative enactment for their pool, as this State has given to Western Australian farmers. That omission in South Australia has been and is being felt by the farming community and also by the industrial community there.

Mr. Sampson: We were thrown to the wolves last year.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: What an interjection to come from the hon. member, having regard to what has transpired since! Is he not aware that in Victoria, which had no compulsory pool, the farmers' representatives in Parliament did not present themselves as a solid body, but voted five with the Government and six with the Opposition? The effect of this action was a general election, costing £30,000, with the result that the political situation remained unaltered. The effect has not only been to paralyse the sale of the new season's wheat in Victoria, but also to produce a detrimental effect on the sale of the two million bushels which this State has to dispose of at the present time. The question here is not one of the maximum price of 7s. per bushel for wheat for local con-

sumption. That is all the motion of the Leader of the Opposition dealt with. The question is what price can be secured for the coming harvest's wheat. Every farmer in Western Australia would be glad to accept 6s. per bushel.

Mr. Troy: Let us cut out the minimum.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: We never had the minimum in. How can we cut it out then? The Australian Wheat Board advised the Commonwealth Government, and the Commonwealth Government fixed the price. All the Leader of the Opposition desired was to limit the maximum price for wheat for local consumption to 7s., and the farmers know that they cannot get 7s. for their forthcoming crop. The paralysis of the wheat market is a very serious matter for this State.

Mr. A. Thomson: I am glad you realise that.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I always realised what might happen with a voluntary pool operating irrespective of the State. I greatly regret the inconsistency of the Victorian farmers' representatives, who did not vote, as a body, one way or the other. They came together with the Opposition in favour of a compulsory pool, and voted the Government out of office. The expenditure of £30,000 on a general election resulted, as I have said, in leaving the political position unaltered. Thereupon the farmers' party split in two, and six of its members voted with the Government and five with the Opposition. The result is before us: Ministers of Agriculture and members of wheat boards and the farming community are at their wits' ends to know what is to be done. There has been a marked movement on the part of interested parties—people who have shown themselves too keen-witted for the Governments and the wheat boards.

Mr. Troy: A political movement.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Yes, but a political movement made by commercial men. No doubt the wheat position will be discussed at the forthcoming Conference. If means can be found, even at this late hour, to prevent disaster occurring through the unscrupulous action of certain interested parties, it will be a blessing to the farming community of Australia; and the Premier will be doing good work if he explains to the Premiers' Conference this State's position in that respect. I hope he will not be a party to supporting those reactionary Premiers in the desire that they have. If he comes back and introduces a Bill with the backing of the Premiers' conference, in favour of altering our industrial legislation in the direction that those two Premiers want, I can promise him a pretty warm reception here. We may not defeat the Premier in his object, but at least we shall be able to put up a very good fight.

Mr. Mullany: It may be the other way.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I am pointing out to the Premier that he is occupying a position very different from that occupied by the other two Premiers. Their past actions have proved what they are aiming at. I rejoice to think.

that we have not had a similar move here. But if it should come as the result of the Premiers' conference—

The Premier: It is wrong to threaten.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It is just as well to threaten, because the Premier will have no mandate to go to that conference with the intention of altering the industrial legislation on the lines indicated by Mr. Barwell and Mr. Lee.

The Premier: We do not know what they want.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: We can only guess what they want. The Prime Minister has not declared what Mr. Barwell wants, but he has convened the conference at the instigation of Mr. Barwell and Mr. Lee, both of whom have indicated that they have no time for arbitration. The Premier does not know exactly what the proposals that will be submitted will amount to. I may point out on behalf of the people I represent that if the conference arrives at a decision which will mean an alteration of the industrial legislation of the character sponsored by Mr. Barwell and Mr. Lee, this side of the House will give the Premier a warmer time than he has ever had in his political career. That is not a threat.

Mr. A. Thomson: It is a promise.

Mr. Troy: You almost invite him to do something.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I trust that whatever he does will be neither reactionary nor retrograde.

Mr. Troy: You are suspicious.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I am suspicious when he is about to get into the hands of two men like Mr. Barwell and Mr. Lee. He may be like the girl who took the wrong turning.

The Premier: I think you know my views on this question.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: We have not heard them pronounced. I think I know the Premier's views on the question of arbitration, but we must also remember that there is in view a conference which has been convened at the request of the Premiers of South Australia and Tasmania.

The Premier: I think you are wrong.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The Premier is not able to tell us what is the real purpose of the conference.

The Premier: I have done so.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The Premier has outlined the question of soldier settlement. That, however, is an established fact, and it will take up very little of the time of the conference. He has also mentioned the break of gauge. That, too, will not occupy more than a few hours, and then it will be postponed for consideration by a future conference.

The Premier: I also mentioned industrial legislation.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Yes, but the Premier did not indicate what the proposals were. He should be able to outline what Mr. Barwell and Mr. Lee contemplate doing.

The Premier: I think you are wrong in the views you hold.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I may be and I hope I am wrong, but I cannot help thinking that what I have mentioned is correct.

The Premier: You would not expect me to be able to tell you what is in the Prime Minister's mind.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The Prime Minister should be frank about this approaching conference before breaking up sessions of Parliament in every State of Australia. There must be something more than soldier settlement and break of gauge, which can at best but occupy a few hours, and which it will be found will be left to future conferences to deal with.

The Premier: Soldier settlement is not going on too satisfactorily in the other States, and they may want us to take some of their soldiers.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: That has not been mentioned, and at any rate it is not a burning question in the Eastern States. We know, too, that the Prime Minister is not over-enthusiastic in fighting a policy which the "Age" and the "Argus" will hit up to the hilt. Besides, it is not enriching Australia to take people from one part of it and put them in another. After all, the Premier may have his hands more than full in finding suitable land for those who may want to come here. I merely desire to utter a word of warning to the Premier, and to tell him that the other States are not likely to approve of a scheme which will rob them of settlers. It is clear that the proposition is that which has been put forward by the big commercial houses of Australia to bring about a reduction of wages at the earliest possible moment. It is more than evident that they are going to attempt something in that direction regardless of the human misery that would follow. I trust the Premier will be wide awake at this conference and that he will make it clear that he has no sanction from the people or the Parliament of Western Australia to agree to radical alterations in the industrial laws.

Mr. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [5.7]: The Premier has stated, by way of interjection, that he is not aware of the proposals of Mr. Barwell and Mr. Lee.

The Premier: I do not know what they will be.

Mr. McCALLUM: There is no doubt what the nature of the proposals of both those gentlemen are, that is, the proposals which they have already submitted to the Prime Minister and upon which the Prime Minister decided to convene a conference. Mr. Barwell, in South Australia, made a clear pronouncement that if the Commonwealth will repeal the Federal Arbitration Act, he will give an undertaking that his Government will within a couple of weeks wipe off the statute-book in South Australia the industrial laws at present in force. That statement was en-

dorsed by the Premier of Tasmania, who said that he thoroughly concurred in it. Following that, the Prime Minister declared that there was a considerable amount of good in the proposals which had been submitted, and he announced his intention of summoning a conference of Premiers.

The Premier: He spoke of convening a conference before he left Perth. There is the question of the Federal convention to be discussed.

Mr. McCALLUM: According to the Melbourne Press, it is evident that the Prime Minister is convening the conference to discuss the proposals submitted by Mr. Barwell and Mr. Lee. I remind the Premier that the conference cannot interfere with our arbitration laws. The sanction of Parliament must first be obtained. But of course any recommendation from the Premiers' conference will carry weight. If the repeal of the Commonwealth arbitration law is contemplated, and if the Prime Minister, anticipating the sanction of the Parliament, repeals the Federal Act, that will materially affect the position in Western Australia. We very largely depend on transport, and every time there is a transport strike, Western Australia is penalised more than any of the other States of the Commonwealth. Without the Federal Industrial Arbitration Act, Western Australia would suffer considerably more than any of the Eastern States. Therefore the repeal of that law means more to Western Australia than it does to any of the other States. There is a suspicion in trades union circles, and it has existed for a considerable time, that a movement is on foot to repeal the Federal Arbitration Act. The Commonwealth Government made it so warm—to put it mildly—for Mr. Justice Higgins to hold his position on the bench that eventually he had to get out. A law was passed called the Industrial Peace Act, the object of which was to circumvent the arbitration law, but which they have never put into operation except in connection with the coal industry. If the Industrial Arbitration Act is wiped off the statute-book in South Australia and in Tasmania, that fact will materially affect Western Australia as well as those States where the industrial laws will not permit the Arbitration Court to deal with the limitation of union labour or to regulate industrial employment. I do hope the Premier will keep in mind what we have said, and that he will tell the conference what the effect will be of interfering with those States who desire to retain their industrial laws. Is it not now possible for the Premier to get more definite information from the Prime Minister as to the exact nature of the proposals it is intended to submit to the conference? Then it would be possible for this House to debate the question before the Premier's departure for Melbourne, and he would know what the feeling of members was in regard to the question. This Parliament has a right to

know what business is likely to be introduced at the conference, especially if it is likely to affect the industries of Western Australia, and it is not requesting too much to ask that the Prime Minister should declare what the proposals are that are to be discussed at the instance of the Premiers of South Australia and Tasmania. Failing that I hope, with the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Forrest (Mr. O'Loughlen), that the Premier will take a determined stand and point out how seriously such an interference with the industrial laws would affect Western Australia. The Premier will remember that we have had to approach him to seek relief for industries when we have not been involved in disputes that have had their origin in the other States. These disputes have thrown thousands out of employment in Western Australia and the Government have had to carry a good deal of the obligation. I hope the Premier will take a determined stand against any proposal affecting the industrial laws.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [5.15]: The Premier will go to the Eastern States representing Western Australia, and presumably whatever he does will be dictated by the policy which at the late elections won for him a majority in this House. As for Mr. Barwell and Mr. Lee, they express the views of the people in their respective States. I do not want to influence the Premier in any way. Let him go to the conference and carry out that policy which he and his party represent because that is the dominant view of the country. If at the conference the Premier does anything calculated to undermine the prosperity of Western Australia, he and his Government must take the responsibility. There is throughout Australia a strong movement to bring about reactionary legislation. I never had any faith in the statement that everything would be different after the war.

Hon. T. Walker: It is different; it is worse.

Mr. TROY: I knew that it would be worse. Just as, after the Napoleonic wars, the British Empire went back half a century, so at the present time the people of this country must lose many of their liberties. To-day people throughout the British-speaking countries are worse off pecuniarily than they were before the war. Throughout Australia reactionary influences, represented largely by members on that side of the Chamber, are endeavouring to bring about a state of affairs which will be exclusively in their own interests. In Western Australia they are clamouring that the Government shall sell the trading concerns. They want to get back to the old methods of trading in wheat, wool and other commodities. In Victoria and South Australia they have achieved that purpose. They would have achieved it in New South Wales and Queensland but for the Labour Governments in those States. They would have achieved it in Western

Australia had not the farmers been an organised body with representatives in this House on whose support the Government depend. There is also a big body of reactionary influence behind the Government, and that influence is out for the abolition of State trading concerns and of co-operative institutions. They have succeeded in the Eastern States, but not here, because this is a more democratic State than the others. Many of our farmers have come from the goldfields, and so are more intelligent than are other farmers. The one saving grace of the farmers' party is that they comprise a body of men who were previously banded together in industrial associations, and so they know exactly what they want. If the old reactionary farmer had his way there would be none of these beneficent institutions. In consequence of the reactionary influence, some of the pools have disappeared from the Eastern States. The result will be disastrous to the farmers, because the operations of South Australia and Victoria will undermine the remaining pools. In Western Australia business men have come forward and demanded that the trading concerns shall be sold. Even in this House we have had members endeavour to secure the disposal of the Wyndham Meat Works. Mr. Hughes subscribes to the same policy, but Mr. Hughes is very cunning. He is not so much concerned about the reactionary interests as he is about political power, and therefore I do not think Mr. Barwell and Mr. Lee will have their way in respect of the abolition of the Arbitration Court. Mr. Hughes is astute enough to know that if he abolishes that court the great body of the people will lose confidence in him and begin to realise exactly what he is. Mr. Hughes is familiar with crowd psychology, and he will be entirely guided by that index. So I do not think he will agree to the abolition of the Arbitration Court. I am surprised that such sticklers for constitutional action as Mr. Barwell and Mr. Lee should have advocated the abolition of that court, for only a little while ago anybody who ventured to put up such advocacy was pointed to as being disloyal. I say let the Premier pursue at the conference the policy on which he and his party rest. The policy even of the Commonwealth is to adopt reactionary legislation, and the whole tendency of the Federal Parliament is to bring down wages and make the general community pay the cost of the war. It is the policy of the Press, also. Mr. Hughes, in pursuance of that policy will go just as far as he dare go, but he will walk warily and I do not think either he or our Premier will agree to the abolition of the Arbitration Court, State or Federal. Respecting immigration, I see a good deal in Mr. Carruther's programme of a million farms.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It is big anyhow.

Mr. TROY: And it is worth considering. I would not mind investing in a loan for that purpose. To settle a million men on

the land in Western Australia would be to make work for two millions more.

Mr. Harrison: Five millions more.

Mr. TROY: Well, perhaps five millions more. If the Premiers in conference assembled, discuss some policy for the raising of a big loan to bring out settlers and put them on the land, it will not be time wasted, at all events. As for unemployment, Mr. Hughes declared that we shall have to work harder and produce more. I would ask Mr. Hughes where the market is to be found for the things when produced. We can produce base metals in abundance, but there is no market for base metals. We can produce meat in abundance, but there is no market for meat.

The Premier: There will be a market when it is required.

Mr. Davies: When the consumer can buy it, there will be a market.

Mr. TROY: There is no possible chance of getting a market for a long time to come. In England the packing-houses are choked with meat. If we were to produce abundant meat to-morrow, we could not sell it, because there is no market. So when Mr. Hughes talks of producing more, it is only reasonable that we should ask him how we are going to market what we do produce. The question of immigration is of the utmost importance to Western Australia. Mr. Hughes, on his return from England, drew our attention to the grave menace to Australia of the millions of population in Asia. He said we must populate the vast spaces. But his method of carrying out this advice contemplates not more than 10,000 immigrants per annum! He tells us we are menaced by the millions in Asia, and he puts forward as a remedial policy the bringing in of 10,000 immigrants per annum.

Mr. Pickering: Our Premier says that Western Australia can absorb 25,000 per annum.

Mr. Davies: Did not Mr. Hughes give his reason for stating so low a figure? Did he not point to the want of capital?

Mr. TROY: On his return from England he had the one great message for us, namely the menace of the hordes of Asia; and he put forward as a remedy the bringing in of 10,000 immigrants per annum! If the Premiers' Conference discuss the question of immigrants, our Premier ought to see whether an internal loan could not be raised for the purpose.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Or an American loan.

Mr. TROY: I do not care where it may be raised, so long as we get the money to bring people to this State and put them on the land. If we do that, Western Australia will enter upon a new era of prosperity. At all events I do not wish to influence the Premier in any way whatever in regard to the Premiers' Conference. He will be representing the dominant view of this country, and if the Premiers in conference and the Prime

Minister determine on any policy not in the best interests of Australia, they will have to accept the responsibility.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported; and the report adopted.

Supply Bill introduced, etc.

Resolution in Committee of Ways and Means having been passed, a Supply Bill was brought in providing for the expenditure of £1,047,000 out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Bill passed through its remaining stages without debate and transmitted to the Council.

#### BILL—BUILDING SOCIETIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Council with amendments.

#### FÉDERATION AND THE STATE.

Select Committee—Publication of  
Proceedings.

On motion by Mr. Angelo, resolved: That the Standing Orders having reference to the publication of the proceedings of a select committee be suspended so far as to permit the select committee appointed to prepare for the Federal Convention to exercise its discretion in admitting the Press to its meetings.

#### BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1. State Children Act Amendment.  
Returned to the Council with amendments.
2. Coroners Act Amendment.  
Passed.

#### ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1920-21.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the 27th September on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and on the Annual Estimates Mr. Munzie in the Chair.

Vote—Legislative Council, £975:

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [5.43]: The House has granted to the Government to-day an additional two months' supply, which will enable us to devote the intervening period between now and the end of November to the consideration of the Estimates. I am not sure as to whether we will gain very much by any discussion which may take place. My experience, extending over a number of years, has been such as to show me it would make very little difference if we passed the whole of the Estimates

this afternoon in about the same time that we took in discussing the Supply Bill. Eventually the Estimates as introduced by the Government with very slight alterations or variations are always passed. There may be a reduction of £10 here or £20 there, but invariably the Estimates are finally adopted as introduced by the Government. This brings me to the fact that Parliament—this is not due to the action of this or any other Government—for many years past has entirely lost control of the finances. When we consider the fact that five months of the financial year will have passed before the Estimates are finally adopted, individual members must realise what little influence they can exercise on the financial proposals of the Government. There is, too, a degree of indifference on the part of the general public regarding the finances of the country. I venture to say that not one in every thousand persons who read the morning paper considers it any business of his to read the discussion or debates in Parliament or outside Parliament, regarding the general financial position of the State. That being so, and having discussed deficits and financial proposals at very considerable length for some years past in this House, I have no desire to be unduly critical on the present occasion. I realise what a very difficult and severe task the Treasurer has in handling the finances at the present time; therefore, I say I have no desire to be unduly critical.

The Premier: I have noted that remark.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Nor do I intend to speak at any great length. If we are going to endeavour to shape our course for the future in a way which may lead to more solid ground—

Mr. O'Loughlen: We are not!

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is essential we should review and thoroughly understand the financial history of the State, not merely for the year that has just closed, but for several preceding years. The Treasurer estimated that he would close the last financial year with a deficit of £399,000. I do not know why he fixed it at that sum.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Like drapers' sales.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member took the words out of my mouth. I do not know why the Treasurer fixed his estimates at £399,000, unless it was on the principle that a draper marks his goods at 3s. 11d. or 1s. 11d. on the score that the price does not seem so big.

The Premier: I would have had to fake the figures to make it £400,000.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Premier was extremely optimistic right up to the end of June.

The Premier: No, till March.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Up to the 12th March at any rate. The Premier was extremely optimistic when he adhered to his belief that the operations of the year would result in a deficit of £399,000. Notwithstanding the fact that during the months of January, February,



and right up to the 12th March the estimated deficit had been exceeded by something like £300,000, he adhered to his opinion. In February, when the deficit had reached £700,000, the Premier adhered to his characteristic optimism and said he would close the financial year with a deficit of under £400,000.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He had the Minister for Education poking him in the ribs, reminding him of it. He would back him up.

Hon. P. COLLIER: For my part, I was never at any time during the year so optimistic. I felt not long after the financial year commenced that the Premier's figures would not be realised. Thus we find that instead of closing with a shortage on the revenue side of, in round figures, £400,000, he closed with a deficit of £686,000. That brought the total accumulated deficit up to £4,772,000. I hope I shall not be considered unkind if I say that of that total, £1,360,000 was the result of the administration from 1911 to 1916, and the balance, £3,412,000, has been the result of the past five years.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Since the National Governments have been in power.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Hon. members know when the party opposite took office. That, however, is the position to-day and it is well to consider what the burden of this deficit means. Unfortunately as year succeeds year and the amount keeps piling up, or, in other words, the longer we continue without making a recovery, the more difficult it will be to regain our financial feet. The deficit has to be met from somewhere and as members know, it has been funded. In other words, it is funded from other loan funds and upon it interest has to be paid. Some of the earlier deficits were funded at a rate of interest ranging from 4 per cent. upwards, until, with the year just closed, we shall have to pay something like 6 per cent. That really means that we have to build up our interest which has to be added to the accumulated deficit and which has to be met out of loan funds. It means that on the deficit for last year in round figures, we have added £240,000 as a permanent charge to be met for all time or until such time as the loans are redeemed. That is why, although we find ourselves with an ever increasing revenue each year, we are still unable to reduce the total deficit because each year we have to raise an additional amount to meet the interest bill. Taking the deficit for last year, which was £686,000, when it is funded at a rate of 6 per cent. interest it will mean another £40,000 added to the interest bill or a total, as I have already mentioned, of £240,000. Turning for the moment to the expenditure of loan moneys, we can see where the difficulties which are confronting us, really are. Regarding the ever increasing interest bill, in 1916-17, the first year my friends opposite were in office, the expenditure from loan funds amounted to the small sum of £853,183. In 1917-18 the loan expenditure was £1,054,178 and in 1918-19 it was £1,049,736; for the financial year 1919-

20 the loan expenditure jumped up to £2,663,321.

The Premier: That was principally on account of soldier settlement.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I know that. I am not complaining about it, but I am merely pointing out what this means. In the year just closed, the expenditure from loan funds amounted to £2,586,504 or an average of about £2,600,000 for the past two years. I have already shown that the interest we have to meet amounts to £240,000 on the accumulated deficit, and taking the interest on loan money expended for the last year only at 6 per cent., it represents a sum of £150,000 and £40,000 for the deficit. Hon. members will see how the interest bill is mounting up. We have added that to our interest charges and made a permanent addition, as the result of the loan expenditure last year, to our indebtedness of £150,000 per year. That largely increased loan expenditure has been incurred on account of soldier settlement. Let us look at it from the economic point of view to see how it affects the State. As I have stated on previous occasions, a very considerable proportion of that loan expenditure on soldier settlement is not, and will not, result in any additional production for this State, in that it has been merely buying one farmer out to put another farmer in his place. We are adding to our loan indebtedness and interest bill merely to put one farmer off his holding and another one upon it. If we were increasing in due proportion the number of those settled on the land who would be producing and helping towards the general prosperity of the State, it would not be so bad. While we have been spending this loan money and increasing our interest bill, the population of the State has remained practically stationary.

Mr. Willcock: We have gone back, for we lose some of these farmers who are bought out each year.

Hon. P. COLLIER: One of the principal charges levelled against the Labour Government—and I believe it was no fault of ours—was that our administration was unsound because it was alleged we were spending a large sum of loan funds without increasing the population to share the burden of the increased expenditure.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We brought in 22,000 immigrants in three years.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That was one aspect which eventually led us into difficulties and it will land any State in difficulties if we spend a considerable sum of borrowed money and add to our interest charges without taking such steps as are necessary to see that the population is increased in due ratio, in order to share the burden. We have added in the last two years over £5,000,000 to our loan expenditure, which means an added interest burden of £300,000 at 6 per cent. Even if it were at 5 per cent. interest, it would run into £250,000 a year. Our population has remained stationary, or, as the member for Geraldton (Mr. Willcock) has stated, we

have gone back slightly. I was looking at the "Statistical Abstract" and I see that our population is about 330,000.

Mr. Mann: It is 335,000.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We know that we went back during the war period but as I read the "Statistical Abstract," the figures shown were 330,000.

Mr. Mann: We are 3,000 ahead now, compared with the population before the war.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We are less since the census was taken.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If the hon. member looks up the "Statistical Abstract," I think he will see that the latest figures are 330,000. We are adding enormously to our interest bill; that is what is landing us in difficulties.

The Premier: Four millions is lent at interest to the farmers.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes. The Premier contends that this loan expenditure of the past two years on soldier settlement will return interest.

Mr. McCallum: It is five years before they pay anything.

The Premier: No, they pay straight away.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They get a reduced rate of interest. They pay 3 per cent., increasing in the course of five years to the cost of the money, and the difference between the 3 per cent. they pay and the actual cost of the money is borne in equal proportions by the State and Commonwealth Governments.

Mr. McCallum: That applies only to soldiers, not to other settlers.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Quite so. This large sum of loan funds has been expended almost entirely on soldiers; very little of it has been spent outside of soldier settlement.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The population of the State is 329,000.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Those are the correct figures as a result of the recent census. When I said 330,000, I was not far out.

Mr. Mann: I can show you better figures than those.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Those are the correct figures according to our local "Knibbs." As I was saying, the position is that, while we have ever increasing revenue, we find ourselves unable to reduce the deficit. It is worth while noting that the total revenue of the State has increased since 1916-17 by no less than £2,212,558.

The Minister for Mines: Largely due to Government activities.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Not more than one-half. The expenditure has gone on increasing as well. It increased by £2,199,000 during the same period, not owing to Government activities entirely. Going back a year earlier, the revenue under the heading of taxation—that is inclusive of dividend duty, stamp duty, land tax, income tax, totalisator tax, probate duty, and licenses—has increased from £407,958 in 1915-16 to £955,358 in 1920-21. In other words, we have raised more than double the amount in direct taxation during the past five years, and the Treasurer budgets this year for an amount of £1,033,000 under these headings. There

have been enormous increases by way of taxation in some directions. The income tax has increased from £91,630 in the year mentioned to £334,320 last year. Right along the line the amounts raised under these headings have increased tremendously, with the one exception of land tax, regarding which I shall have something to say later on. It may be as well to have the other figures on record. In 1915-16 dividend duties amounted to £103,585, and in 1920-21 to £244,969; stamp tax increased from £64,858 to £177,404; land tax from £47,711 to £59,791.

The Premier: The land tax shows an increase of 25 per cent.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, a small increase as compared with 300 per cent. increase in the revenue derived from income tax during those five years.

The Premier: The people were more prosperous and had more money to pay on.

Mr. Willcock: No, you have got right down on the worker for it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: While the income tax increased from £91,000 to £334,000, an increase of more than 300 per cent., the land tax increased by an amount of only £12,000.

The Colonial Secretary: The farmers pay income tax instead of land tax.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They pay only the one tax. Why do not they pay the two taxes, the same as other people?

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Minister should remember that the farmer is not the only person who pays land tax. That is another point I hope to deal with later on. There seems to be an assumption that the farmer is the only one who pays land tax.

The Premier: I think he pays most of the taxes.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No matter where taxation is levied, it eventually filters back to each one of us, or so we think. The largely increased revenue of £2,212,000 in five years is not due to increased amounts from our public utilities or trading concerns. These figures account for somewhere about £600,000 and during the same period, under the heading of "Departmental," there was an increase of £408,000. In 1915-16 the amount received was £1,478,091, and last year it was £1,886,176. This is the position in which we find ourselves after briefly reviewing the past.

Mr. Pickering: What about the increase in expenditure?

Hon. P. COLLIER: The fact that our revenue has been increasing in the manner I have indicated and that our deficit has always remained at about the same point makes it obvious that our increased expenditure has kept pace with our increased revenue. Generally, it is contended that the difficulties of Governments consist largely in falling revenue; it is found more difficult to finance successfully when times are such that each year there is a decreased revenue. But the fact is that in this State we have had an ever-increasing revenue. I know there

are explanations which are frequently made—they were made by the Premier—as to the reasons for our expenditure keeping pace with the increased revenue. The increased wages and salaries of Government employees, the increased cost of commodities and requirements, especially during the past few years, have made it very difficult for the Government to keep the expenditure within bounds. In many cases the Government have had no control, or perhaps I should say only a limited control, over the expenditure. The wages and salaries of Government employees have been fixed by tribunals which the Government did not control; the cost of commodities for the public service have been fixed by influences over which the Government had no control, and I admit that the difficulty has been considerable. But we are still confronted with the position that, though we levy increased taxation each year, no matter what we do to increase our revenue, we find ourselves unable to reduce the actual deficit on revenue account. The deficit has been in the vicinity of £650,000 to £700,000 each year.

Mr. Pickering: Steadily increasing for five or six years past.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, it is remarkable how the deficit remains round about the same figure. During the past five years the deficit has ranged between £636,000 as a minimum and £705,000 as a maximum. Although we have levied increased taxation to the extent of £600,000, trebling the income tax and doubling other taxation, yet we have always averaged a deficit of about £650,000. An examination of the figures will show that this is largely due to the fact that the annual interest bill keeps on increasing. We have now to find, and every year will have to levy—if we are going to keep the deficit within the bounds I have indicated and not allow it to increase—additional taxation to the extent of £150,000 to £200,000, and although we are increasing the burden of taxation each year to the extent of £150,000 or £200,000, nevertheless it will have no effect in reducing the annual deficit. We find ourselves still at the same amount. This is indicated during the current year by the proposal to increase taxation to the extent of £110,000. Our accumulated deficit averages about £14 per head of the population of the State. It is of no use trying to shirk the position. It is a very staggering amount.

Mr. A. Thomson: And at the rate it is going on, it will soon be much more.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is the trouble. If we were well on the road to recovery, it would not be so bad, but here we have a deficit of 4½ millions for a population of 330,000 people, averaging £14 per head. Notwithstanding all that may be said regarding the sinking fund, those are the charges we have to meet year by year. It is certain that we cannot go on as we are going, or plead that we are unable to do any better than finish the year with a deficit

of £600,000 or £700,000. This cannot continue. Just as surely as one who consistently heads for the precipice one day reaches it, so it behoves us to make an attempt to radically alter the position. I do not wish to be critical of the Government. I know their difficulties. I do not pretend that, if others had been in their place, they would have been able to do better.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Oh yes they would.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not wish to be conceited in the matter, or to be unduly critical, but it would be foolish to close our eyes to, or ignore, the serious financial position of the State.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Hon. P. COLLIER: Before tea I had been trying to analyse the financial drift of the past ten years, since 1911. I had been trying to show that particularly during the past five years we had been going to leeward at an average rate of about £650,000 per annum, and this notwithstanding the fact that we had heaped enormously increased taxation upon the people. That is the record of the past five years. Now let us turn to the Estimates presented to the House by the Treasurer. I venture to say an examination of them must bring to every thinking member of this Committee the keenest disappointment. The best that can be done, it seems, is to present a financial statement which estimates a shortage, at the close of the current financial year, of £571,728; and even that is only to be achieved after imposing additional taxation to the extent of £110,000. Adding the £110,000 of additional taxation to be obtained from liquor, to the £571,000 of estimated deficit, we get almost precisely the figure of the shortage which we had on last year's account, namely £681,000.

Mr. Pickering: There is something uncanny about that.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes. It seems not to matter whether we increase direct taxation or railway freights or charges for services rendered: we always get back to the same point around or about £650,000 or £700,000 of deficit. The best that the Premier proposes to do for the current year, even if he is given this additional taxation of £110,000, is to end up with a shortage of £571,000. I venture to say, however, that, as was the case last year, the Premier is somewhat optimistic.

The Premier: I hope there will be no strikes this year.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There are always some untoward circumstances. I know that should the Treasurer fail to realise his estimates, he will not be short of explanations—it may be, justifiable explanations. But I want to remind the Treasurer of the fact that whilst he counts on winding up the year with a shortage of £571,000, he has already on the first quarter, the September quarter, a shortage of £331,000, in round figures. Of

course I do not take that shortage as a guide for the year. I know that in the opening months of the year there are causes operating to make the finances drift to leeward, causes which are usually overtaken during the remaining portion of the year. Still, it is a bad beginning to find ourselves £331,000 short in the September quarter. I would not take so much notice of the July or August returns, but we know that September is the month during which certain payments come in.

The Premier: Land rents.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes; rents and other payments. So that, while we may drift very considerably during the first two months of the year, we generally make somewhat of a recovery during September. September and March are the months in which we expect to regain lost ground. Of course, were we to continue to drift to the same extent for the remaining nine months of this year as for the first three months, we should find ourselves about £1,300,000 on the wrong side at the close of the 12 months. I am afraid the Treasurer will find that he has again underestimated his expenditure, as was the case last year. I hope it may not prove so. I hope that notwithstanding the very considerable shortage which we have on the September quarter, the Treasurer will find himself able to realise his anticipations of revenue at the end of the year. But what are the Premier's proposals? What does an examination of these Estimates or of the Budget Speech reveal to us? Simply this, that there is no policy, no proposal whatsoever, to meet this very heavy, annually recurring deficit. I read the Premier's speech very carefully, and all he says with respect to meeting the situation is this—

There will be a gradual improvement and increased trade which will, I hope, bring about a balancing of the revenue and expenditure in connection with the public utilities.

Further on the hon. gentleman says—

Probably we shall be able to get more revenue from various public utilities than we are getting now.

The Premier hopes!

The Premier: I do hope.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But that is all. In the absence of a definite policy or proposal, the Premier says that he hopes.

The Premier: I have reason to hope, too.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The figures up to the present are not suggestive of hope; that is, apart from the wheat harvest, which does look healthy, and which will probably help the Treasurer out of his difficulties somewhat. But I submit that when a State or a Government finds itself faced with the situation that confronts this State and this Government, something more definite, something sterner, is required than merely to express hopes. This policy of hoping to square the finances by increased trade and increased production has been the policy of Western

Australia for the past four or five years. Whenever a discussion was on here with regard to the finances of any particular year, it was always admitted that things were bad and had been bad, but it was always contended that increased trade and production would balance the ledger. I think we have had ample demonstration, during the past five years, that this policy of mere hopefulness and expectancy is not going to right our finances. We have seen that such a policy is in no way effective. We are faced with a stern question, and the longer the answer is delayed the harder it will prove. I do not hold that we can continue as we are doing and have been doing—getting round on our finances by simply waiting for increased trade and increased production.

The Premier: The position is due to the want of railway traffic.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Certainly. We can place our finger on the cause of the loss all right. The Premier has done that, pointing to the losses incurred in connection with public utilities, and notably the Railway Department. But that in itself does not help the situation at all, unless we are able to devise effective remedies which will alter that state of affairs. No doubt the railway system is to a large extent responsible for the position. But increased settlement and increased production represent altogether too slow a method of enabling this State to get round, by enabling the railway revenue to recover. The question we are faced with is, which of two alternatives we shall adopt—increased taxation, or a policy of severe economy, not to say retrenchment? It may be, indeed, that this or any future Government will be faced not with two alternatives as I have suggested, but with the necessity for imposing additional taxation and also embarking upon a policy of severe economy. The late member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) preached that doctrine on several occasions in this House. He warned the members of the last Parliament that sooner or later both operations would have to be performed. He contended that the only means of overcoming our financial difficulties was to increase taxation severely, and to retrench drastically. It looks as if in some measure that prophecy of the late member for Perth is being borne out. I have shown that it is not sufficient merely to sit down and say, "We hope that things will right themselves because of increase in trade and production." We know that will not be so. We know that something more definite, something more specific, is required. Now, we have in this State idle lands and idle hands and idle railways. Those three factors combined are mainly the cause of our financial difficulties. We have idle lands in the rural districts, idle hands in the cities, and idle railways throughout the country because of the fact that the lands are idle. To me it seems that one way out which will have to be adopted, and ought to be adopted at the earliest possible moment, is a re-adjustment

of land taxation on what is termed a scientific basis.

The Premier: You will get applause from the gallery for that statement.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I ought to get applause for it from every thinking person in this State. The Premier has demonstrated that our financial position is largely due to the Railway Department, which public utility has been going to leeward year after year, until it accounts for almost the whole of the present shortage. Turning to the returns presented by the Premier, we find that as far back as the year 1913-14 the total tonnage carried by our railway system was 3,100,918 tons, and in the last year the total tonnage was 2,251,000. So that actually between 1914-15 and 1920-21 the tonnage carried decreased by no less a total than 560,000, and that too notwithstanding the fact there was in that period a considerable addition to the mileage of the railways.

The Premier: There was a big falling off in the quantity of firewood carried on the fields.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But that would not account for such a big falling off. Of course it is inevitable that an industry like that of mining will decline, but it is our duty to see that we increase other activities in order to replace those that are declining or which some day may go out of existence altogether. The fact is that we are over-built with our railways. With our population of 330,000, we have one mile of railway to every 3,500 people.

Mr. J. Thomson: We must develop the State by means of railways; there is no other course.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know whether in the past we followed a wise policy. I venture to say that we could have settled an equal number of people in our agricultural areas in a more scientific way during the past 15 years, and with perhaps half the mileage of railways which has been added to the system.

Mr. Latham: You would have to open up the unimproved lands.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, but it is not a sound policy to construct 100 miles of new railways into new country to serve, say, 40 or 50 settlers, whilst the greater portion of the land along that line remains unused. That is what we have done in the past, and having constructed one line, we proceeded to do likewise in another direction to serve another 40 or 50 settlers.

Mr. Latham: That has been done owing to the patchy nature of the land.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member knows that during the period of intense land settlement, say, for four or five years after 1908, we were building hundreds of miles of railways more than we really needed.

Mr. Harrison: You were glad enough at that time to build railways for the pioneers to settle anywhere.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Even so, but we have reached the point that we must recognise, before further railways are built, that it is a sound economic policy to see that the lands already served, and especially the better class lands are being utilised.

Mr. Mann: What you say applies more to goldfields lines than to the agricultural lines.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know that it is so.

Mr. Mann: Take the line from Mt. Magnet to Sandstone.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Take the line to Kalgoorlie, which has been one of the most profitable and which more than balances any loss made on the line referred to by the hon. member. The hon. member must realise that the newer agricultural lines have been non-paying. That must be so, and not only the newer agricultural lines but some of the older ones as well. With regard to the period that the newer settlers have been on the land, say, the past 15 years, they have done a greater amount of work than was ever done before by the older settlers who had been on the land for 50 or 60 years. If the latter had not been able to do more, perhaps it was because of the difficulties that were in the way.

Mr. Latham: You will have to tax some people into bringing the older lands into cultivation.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The tax will not hurt them. We have the man holding his little quarter acre block in the city who will pay perhaps more than the big farmer under a scientific system of land values taxation. We have reached the stage that our present system of land taxation is absolutely out of date. Last year we collected from the whole of the lands of this State the insignificant sum of £59,000. There should have been collected four or five times that amount from the city lands alone. The values in the city have been increasing year after year without the expenditure of one shilling on the part of the owner. Take the Economic Stores corner in Perth. If that vacant block were offered for sale now, I wonder what it would bring. The sum would be very big; it would run into scores of thousands of pounds. That value has not been created by the energy or the activity of the owners. That value has been created by the work and industry of the men scattered all over the country, those in the farming areas and those in the goldmining districts, and wherever they have been engaged in opening up and developing the State. All those people have contributed their quota in that direction.

The Premier: If you impose a tax, it is passed on.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It cannot be passed on where there are vacant areas. Why should not the owners of these city values created by the industry of all the people in the State be compelled to contribute towards the public funds?

Mr. Latham: You would find it would be passed on all right.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member would find, on going closely into the matter,

that it was one of the most difficult taxes to pass on.

Mr. Mann: The rents would be raised.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Certain selected sites in the city will always retain their value, but in a place like Perth, where there are any number of vacant blocks, it would not be such an easy matter to pass on the tax. In any case, what do the Government propose to do to settle the lands in the country? There is no proposal in the Budget Speech or in the policy of the Government to tax land into use or to resume or repurchase land. The Premier knows well that the Parliamentary party—already described as being likely to be a picnic party—which is going to the South-West the week after next, will see within a radius of 100 miles of the city of Perth, along some of the oldest constructed railways of the State, tens of thousands of acres of land carrying only a few families which could and should be carrying thousands of families. An expert of the Agricultural Department pointed out to me through the window of a railway carriage recently vast areas that were held by three men, 20 acres of which, he said, would provide a handsome income for a family.

Mr. O'Loughlen: I would not go nap on him.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Of course he was not referring to the whole of the vacant lands along the line. We know perfectly well, however, that one can go through towards York and Beverley, and along the Great Southern Railway, as well as the South-West, and see lands which should be carrying ten times the population they are carrying at the present time.

Capt. Carter: How would you people these lands?

Hon. P. COLLIER: It should not be impossible to devise some scheme.

Mr. Latham: It is not impossible.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The holders should be dispossessed by several means. The history of land settlement in all new countries is this: first of all, the population is small and the areas taken up are large. That is inevitable. In such conditions, the land has always been taken up by pioneers in large holdings. Then with an increase in the population and the growth of development it has become necessary to provide additional land for the people, and the big holders have been dispossessed, in some cases by way of taxation, but in most cases in Australia they have been dispossessed by way of the repurchase of the estates. And so the rights of the individual have had to yield to the rights of the many. Generally it is in the interests of the community that the individual should be bought off or taken off, and a hundred or a thousand settlers or families placed where one individual lived before.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Lord Northcliffe saw that, after he had been in Australia for only a few days.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is the history of all the States of Australia. In Queensland

there will be found comparatively small farms where previously there were big sheep walks.

Mr. A. Thomson: They have a better general average land there.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is so. First of all the land was settled by squatters, and in time the pressure of population demanded that land and the squatters had to yield to those who needed it. And so we find tens of thousands of people settling along the Darling Downs and the Great Western Downs in Queensland. The same story applies to the pastoral country of New South Wales. The Riverina was all station country 30 years ago and for hundreds of miles did not contain more than a few hundred people. To-day the squatters have been dispossessed and there are tens of thousands of people settled through that great country.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: It was not taxation that did it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: At any rate the squatters were dispossessed. The same thing happened in Victoria. I am arguing the need for closer settlement. It is a question of policy as to how this is to be done. I am endeavouring to show the need for closer settlement along our railways. With closer settlement those railways will no longer remain a burden upon the people, because there will be thousands, instead of scores, of passengers using them and because a largely increased quantity of produce will be carried by them, and so they will become profitable. We are up against the question of idle lands and idle hands.

Capt. Carter: Do you think such a system of taxation practicable in Western Australia.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We could have a system of land taxation infinitely more equitable than the tax we have at present. I do not say it would achieve all that ought to be done. The land tax we have to-day is the most unscientific I know of. It was passed in 1906, and its incidence has never been amended. It is time we reviewed our system of land taxation and brought it up to date. Unless we do something of that kind it is idle for the Government to cry that increased production will get us out of our difficulties.

The Premier: We have cut up many estates.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Only a few, for soldier settlement. We are still pursuing the same old policy. We have had surveyors out surveying a line from Manjimup to Denmark with a view to the construction of a railway. We are now placing this community settlement out in a district not yet served by a railway, where the settlers will be isolated from the general community and shut off from the market unless the State builds a costly railway for them. The Premier knows that those settlers on the Margaret River—

The Premier: They are beside a line.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Not yet built.

The Premier: Yes.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Only a part of it.

The Minister for Mines: To a port.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am afraid that will not be altogether effective in providing them with a market.

The Minister for Mines: But sea carriage is cheaper than carriage by railway.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, but there is very little shipping, and there are all sorts of difficulties to be overcome. They might be able to get a market nearer at hand if only they had a railway. When any addition to land settlement is mooted, it immediately becomes a question of building a new railway.

The Premier: We are putting hundreds of people on the land between Bunbury and Fremantle.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I know of the Peel estate.

The Premier: And the Harvey.

Mr. Simons: What about Pinjarrah?

The Premier: We shall see about that.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not think we are doing enough in the matter of forcing the idle lands into use.

The Premier: Taxation will not be enough for that. There will have to be resumption.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I know there is an abhorrence of land taxation.

The Premier: The land pays more taxation than does any other form of industry.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Take those idle lands at Como, which it is proposed to serve by a tramway. They are worth, say, £50 per block. The State decides to spend £20,000 or £30,000 in constructing a tramway, and immediately those blocks appreciate in value up to £100, and the holders reap all the increased value resulting from the expenditure of public funds. Is that a fair proposition? Should not such landholders be called upon to contribute something to the revenue, whether by way of a betterment tax or some other form of taxation?

The Minister for Mines: It will have the effect of bringing other land into use by releasing city property.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That enables the city landlord to pass on taxation by increasing the rent. If the State were to get any considerable revenue by way of taxation it would be in a better position to extend railway and tramway facilities into unserved districts, and so prevent the city landlord from passing on taxation by increasing rents. My suggested remedy for the present position is that there should be stern and severe economy. Any careful analysis of the expenditure in recent years will show that in many directions economy has not been practised. There has been all along the line expenditure that could well have been cut out. In these severe financial days we must not be too sympathetic as to whether we hurt. Economy will have to be practised here, and for years to come that policy will have to be pursued by every State Government in Australia, including the Commonwealth Government. We must eschew living beyond our

means. A policy of economy such as has not been practised hitherto will have to be adopted by the Government.

The Minister for Mines: Would it not do as well to explain that economy in Government departments means reduced facilities for the public.

Hon. P. COLLIER: In some ways it does. I know that the Minister himself has endeavoured to practise economy during the last few months. Although we have not heard any outcry about it in the House, no doubt the Minister has received many protests.

The Minister for Mines: Yes, he has been getting it pretty solid.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Doubtless he has, by way of correspondence and deputations. But the circumstances of the State demand that Ministers, with the backing of the House, stand up for economy.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Now you are talking—with the backing of the House.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, with the backing of the House; and I venture to say Ministers will get that backing wherever sound, reasonable and sensible economy can be effected.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But it must not be economy for one section alone.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, it must be consistent.

The Minister for Mines: Everybody sees only what happens under his own eyes, and so imagines that he is the only person adversely treated.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No doubt that is so. It seems to me something more in the way of general all-round economy will have to be practised by the Government. A more up-to-date scientific land tax will have to be introduced. We ought easily to get several hundreds of thousands of pounds per annum more from land revenue than we are getting at present.

Mr. A. Thomson: What do you mean by more scientific taxation?

Hon. P. COLLIER: A system under which existing rebates and resumptions would be discarded. However, it will have to be the subject of debate in the House. The existing taxation is 15 years old, and out of date. We should be able to largely increase revenue without imposing injustice on any section of the community. Those are the two things that will have to be practised. Also there is the question of closer settlement, whether it be effected by land taxation or by resumption.

The Premier: It must be by resumption.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The question of closer settlement will have to be pressed more than it is at present.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Where are you to get the people?

Hon. P. COLLIER: If facilities be offered to the people, the people will be found ready enough. Tell people to go out on the land beyond the railways, and they

will say "No"; but if to-morrow you were to place before 500 citizens of Perth a proposition within, say, 100 miles of the city, on some of the older settled lands, you would have no difficulty in obtaining the necessary settlers.

The Premier: From the city, I think you would.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If the policy of immigration is to be successfully pursued, that will have to be done. We say we want population. We cry out to the Old Country for immigrants; but where are we going to place them? We shall have to prepare for them. If we expect the policy of immigration to be successful, we cannot start too soon to prepare for the immigrants. The fact that no preparations were made to settle the returned soldiers until they were all coming back was the immediate cause of the big loan expenditure which the Premier has had to incur during the last two years. If the thing had been taken in hand earlier, much of that loan expenditure would have been saved. If we cannot get settlers in Western Australia we will get them in the Eastern States, and if they are not available there we will get them from overseas. In the Eastern States tens of thousands of persons would be found ready to settle on the land in Western Australia if only they were given the opportunity. In the older States, in a State like Victoria, land is impossible of acquirement unless one can afford to pay a high price for it. Show the people of Victoria that land is readily available in this State, and they will be perfectly willing to come here. When, 10 years ago, land settlement was booming, the Premier had no difficulty whatever in getting settlers. Thousands of them were then placed on the land.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Then they said the land was too dear. Now they say it is too cheap.

The Premier: There is a disposition to go on the land now.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is so. We cannot give too much encouragement or publicity to this question at present. The visit which the Premier paid to Fremantle the other night was provocative of much good, in that he obtained 70 or 80 men who should prove good farmers. He also gave publicity to the question of land settlement which will reach to other parts of the State. This is likely to cause others to be smitten with the idea of going on the land, and should certainly develop that desire in their minds. If we have good land offering within a reasonable distance of the city and close to a railway line, we should have little difficulty in getting settlers to go upon it.

Mr. Teesdale: That is only substitution. It would not be increasing the population of the State.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It would lead to numbers of people leaving the city.

Mr. Teesdale: The Brisbane conference is opposed to immigration now.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Oh, no!

Mr. Teesdale: One can only believe what one sees in the papers.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am not disposed to run counter to the Brisbane conference, but, speaking quite frankly for myself and the party to which I belong, I say that we in this State are certainly not opposed to immigration. I would welcome the arrival of tens of thousands of settlers from overseas if we could satisfactorily settle them under proper conditions.

Mr. Teesdale: We do not mind what the Brisbane conference says so long as you hold to that view.

Mr. Willcock: The Brisbane conference says that too.

Hon. P. COLLIER: So long as people do not crowd into the cities. What the Brisbane conference say is this, that there is now a considerable section of the community in the Eastern capitals, where there are thousands of men employed in the manufacturing industries, which section has formed itself into million clubs and other associations to encourage immigration. The desire, however, is not to get people on to the land, because there is none available for them, but the object is to crowd people into the cities so as to bring about a reduction in wages and an alteration in the conditions of labour. That is why the Brisbane conference has pronounced against that form of immigration. I am sure that no member of the House in this State would do other than endorse that view. No one wants to see people crowding into the cities to join the ranks of the unemployed, to become dissatisfied with their conditions, and to be continually pestering the Government. That is not a sound policy of immigration. If we had a proper system of immigration whereby we could get people satisfactorily settled on the land, I would welcome it. We want scores of thousands of people here. The more people we have the more prosperous is the State likely to become. If we had 1,200,000 people here it would make the State more prosperous, because population makes work for others.

The Minister for Mines: They also make their own market.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is so. If we had double the population we have to-day we would not have to submit to the dumping of goods from the Eastern States. We would have our own local market, and we could establish our own secondary industries.

The Premier: It is a great thing to get our own people to go on the land, and get others to do the work.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I hope the Government will press forward with land settlement along existing railways, and that they will also reconsider the question of land taxation. I also hope they will practice stern and severe economy, and that they will do all that is possible to encourage the establishment of secondary industries. It is cost-



ing taxpayers scores of thousands of pounds to educate their young people, but after they have gone through their technical schools and their secondary schools, and are turned out well educated, there are no occupations for them to fill.

The Minister for Mines: One of the difficulties is the limited local market available, and the great competition of manufacturers in the Eastern States.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is desirable that we should increase our population here, and that we should create a local market which will secure to the local manufacturer a reasonable chance of getting rid of his goods within the State. To-day we have no local market, and therefore manufacturers in the Eastern States have every chance of competing with us. Rather than spend loan moneys and other funds in building railways hundreds of miles away from the city to serve a handful of people, I would prefer to see that money expended in the direction of assisting, or in other ways subsidising the establishment of secondary industries of our own.

The Minister for Mines: We cannot do that without a market. A limited market makes it difficult for any proposition to pay.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We have to start in a small way.

The Minister for Mines: That is our trouble. We get plenty of applications.

Hon. P. COLLIER: In Melbourne and Sydney they have a local market, and they can dump their surplus goods into Western Australia and thus wipe out any struggling industry that may be starting in this State. Notwithstanding these difficulties I hope the Government will do their best to assist in the establishment of these industries. I also sincerely trust that the Premier will realise his Estimates and at all events will not go beyond them. I shall also be extremely pleased if I can congratulate him upon having come out of it at the end of the year with a surplus of £200,000 or £300,000.

Progress reported.

#### PAPERS—STRANDING OF S.S. "BAMBRA."

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received a request from the State Steamship Department asking me to discharge a file that is on the Table dealing with the stranding of the s.s. "Bambra" which, it appears, was asked for by the member for North-East Fremantle. I intend to discharge the file to-morrow.

#### BILL—STAMP.

Recommittal.

On motion by the Premier, Bill recommitted for the purpose of further considering Schedule 2; Mr. Munsie in the Chair, the Premier in charge of the Bill.

The PREMIER: I move an amendment—

That in Schedule 2, Exemption 22, the following words be struck out:—"Receipt given for any payment made by or in satisfaction of any bill of exchange payable on demand or at sight or on presentation."

The Parliamentary Draftsman explains that these words may be misunderstood and may be made to apply to bills of exchange in such a way as to do away with the necessity for stamps on receipts. That being the case, we may lose revenue.

Amendment put and passed; the schedule, as amended, agreed to.

Bill again reported with a further amendment.

#### BILL—AUCTIONEERS.

In Committee.

Resumed from 13th September; Mr. Munsie in the Chair, the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clause 14—Temporary license to clerk or deputy of licensed auctioneer:

Mr. McCALLUM: I gave notice of an amendment to the clause to provide for a change in the payment for temporary licenses. The clause provides that where an auctioneer is unable from illness or any other sufficient cause to act as an auctioneer, a temporary license may be granted to his clerk or deputy, and Subclause 3 provides for a fee of one guinea for each day for which the temporary license is granted. The amendment of which I gave notice provided that the fee of one guinea should cover a period of two weeks. Upon further consideration, I think it would be better to make the guinea apply to one week. The business of an auctioneer entails a severe strain on the voice and it becomes particularly strenuous in the case of the small man, who is unable to engage assistance and has to do the auctioneering himself daily. It is essential that he should give his voice a rest. After conducting sales for six days in the week—

The Premier: They do not do that.

Mr. McCALLUM: They do on five days a week in my electorate—the strain on the voice is considerable. In the case of a man who has to rest for a week, it would cost him six guineas in order to provide a substitute to conduct the auctions for him.

Mr. Pickering: Can you give instances of that?

Mr. McCALLUM: Yes, more than one individual in my electorate has come to me and discussed the position. The clause provides that these temporary licenses can only be issued in the case of sickness or other good causes. In other words it is merely for a substitute. There is an annual license fee of 25 guineas and it would be impossible to over-ride that provision.

Mr. Pickering: There will be consequential amendments if your proposal is agreed to.

The PREMIER: What the member for South Fremantle wishes to do is to provide that there shall be payment of one guinea for a temporary license which shall last for one week.

Mr. McCallum: That is so.

The PREMIER: I agree that if an auctioneer becomes ill and has to provide a substitute to conduct his business for him while he is sick, a guinea a week will be sufficient. It is not a question of making money under this clause, for we already have the license fee from him. I think it would be better if the amendment were made to apply to cases of sickness. I have no objection to the charge of one guinea being made to apply in that case.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I suggest that the difficulty could be overcome if the amendment the member for South Fremantle proposes to move, were to provide for the deletion of the word "day" and the substitution for it of the words "period of seven days."

Mr. McCallum: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of Subclause 3 the word "day" be deleted and "period of seven days" be inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. PICKERING: In addition to a consequential amendment in Subclause 5 there will be a consequential amendment necessary in Subclause 1.

The CHAIRMAN: The necessary consequential amendments will be made in due course.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

[Mr. Angelo took the Chair.]

Clause 15—Auction sales for which no license required:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I move an amendment—

That a new paragraph, to stand as paragraph (c), be inserted as follows:—"At a bazaar or sale of gifts for charitable, educational, or church purposes."

If the amendment be agreed to, it will not be necessary to have an auctioneer to dispose of goods at bazaars or sales of gifts.

Mr. Teesdale: Don't the auctioneers give their services free?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is not always possible to get auctioneers.

The PREMIER: No one will object to any person selling goods at bazaars if the whole of the proceeds go towards some charity. It often happens that only part of the proceeds are devoted to charities. It happens at times that part of the money goes to charities and part to the payment for goods.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I have not seen anything of that going on.

The PREMIER: Yes, such instances have occurred. For instance, some nice

looking young ladies stopped the Minister for Mines and sold him a theatre ticket. Half the profits went to the Salvation Army and the rest went to the theatrical company.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Did they offer to go to the theatre with him?

Mr. Troy: That was not charity.

The PREMIER: I have no objection to the proposed amendment, if it applies only to such sales as we have known of at bazaars. If the amendment provided that it would be imperative that the whole of the proceeds must go to charities, I would be prepared to agree to it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier can accept the amendment as I moved it because the cases that the Premier referred to would only be exceptional ones.

The Minister for Mines: If the member for North-East Fremantle inserted the words "wholly devoted" in his amendment, it would get over the difficulty.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I move an amendment—

That the following new subclause be inserted:—"At a bazaar or sale of gifts where the whole of the proceeds are devoted for charitable, educational, or church purposes."

The Minister for Mines: There is a great danger in that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Minister sees danger everywhere. Such sales are carried out by unlicensed auctioneers and, without a provision of this kind, they would be liable to a penalty for a breach of the A&T. Sometimes there is a difficulty in getting a licensed auctioneer to sell goods left over from a bazaar.

Mr. Mann: What do you intend should be included under the term "educational"?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Large numbers of parents' associations are holding sales of gifts to raise funds for the purchase of pianos. If the Government consider that there is any danger, they can consult the Crown Law authorities and have the subclause altered.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have no objection to the object sought by the hon. member, but I am doubtful whether he will achieve it by his amendment. If we provide that the whole of the proceeds are to be devoted to these purposes, it is questionable whether any portion of the proceeds could be utilised towards the payment of expenses.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I put in those words at your suggestion.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Quite so. During the war persons often put a price of £10 on a certain article and donated whatever it brought in excess of that amount. Sometimes as much as £100 was realised. The easiest way would be to give the Minis-

ter the right to grant permission in such cases. If the amendment were passed there would be all sorts of points and even abuses arising. During the war we issued certificates without fee in order to meet such cases.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am not in favour of increasing the revenue of the Commonwealth or the staff of the Colonial Secretary's Department. Every letter containing an application and a reply would cost 2d., and in two-thirds of these cases it would not be known until the last day whether an auction would be required. What I suggest should meet the case.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 16 to 22—agreed to.

New Clause—Application of trust moneys:

Mr. SAMPSON: I move—

That the following be inserted, to stand as Clause 19:—“(1.) All moneys received by an auctioneer in respect of any sale shall be applied as follows:—(a) In payment of the commission and other charges and expenses of or incidental to the sale. (b) In payment of the balance to the person legally entitled or authorised to receive the same; and until payment such balance shall be paid into a bank to a general or separate trust account. (2.) Every auctioneer who commits a breach of this section is liable to a fine not exceeding fifty pounds. (3.) Moneys so paid into any such trust account shall not be available for payment of the debt of any other creditor or the auctioneer, or be liable to be attached or taken in execution under the order of any court at the instance of any such creditor.”

Similar provision is made in the Land Agents Bill and, as the work is of a like nature, a clause of this description is necessary to complete this Bill. An auctioneer frequently handles large sums of money, and it is only right that clients should receive proper protection.

Capt. CARTER: How would an auctioneer be affected if, after conducting a small sale, he received the money and paid it out immediately? In many cases the money is paid over at once, the auctioneer acting quite honestly and in the interests of expedition. I agree with the principle of the new clause, but I would like this point explained.

Mr. SAMPSON: The member for Leederville will find the explanation in the first portion of paragraph (b) of the new clause.

New clause put and passed.

Mr. Sampson: There is a certain clause which must be altered.

The Minister for Mines: That will have to be done on recommitment.

Schedules, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

## BILL—LAND TAX AND INCOME TAX.

Returned from the Legislative Council with a requested amendment.

## BILL—CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 29th September.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [9.5]: This is a small Bill which I think may be allowed to pass. The measure deals with a matter which for many years has been the subject of dispute between this House and another place. Bills which impose fees for licensing, or appropriate money in other respects, have been held to be money Bills, and therefore not to be introduced in the Legislative Council. The Bill also deals with a question which may be involved in the measure just returned from another place—namely, the right of another place to press amendments to what are described as money Bills. However, it is clearly understood by this House what is intended by the term “money Bill.” Such Bills as were ruled out last session—the Bill for the registration of nurses, to give an example—measures merely imposing license fees, were not intended to be regarded as money Bills. For the sake of convenience we may make it clear that such Bills, which are clearly understood not to be money Bills, can be introduced in another place.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [9.6]: I remember the subject of this Bill being discussed at a conference between the two Houses. So far as the main principle is concerned, namely, the right of this House to introduce legislation appropriating money and legislation imposing taxation, I am glad to see that the Bill gives nothing away.

The Premier: It asserts our rights.

Mr. TROY: Yes, and in that respect I am doubtful of its reception by another place. Something ought to be done to make the position clear, because this House was in the situation of insisting upon certain rights and then having to adopt the ridiculous attitude of departing from those rights. We held that it was our right to introduce all measures dealing with appropriation or taxation, but the Upper House questioned that right on so many occasions that this House was compelled, by resolution, to give way. The proposed Section 46 in this Bill makes the line of demarcation very clear. Whilst I think the measure would work satisfactorily, I am exceedingly doubtful of its receiving the approval of another place. If it does receive that approval, the position will be made clear once and for all so far as the rights of this Chamber and those of the Legislative Council are concerned. I should like to know from the Premier whether he has consulted any member of another place with a view to having this measure accepted.

The Premier: I have not.

Mr. TROY: I have had a little experience of the other Chamber, and I am doubtful whether in dealing with the measure we shall be doing anything except waste our time. I commend the Government for introducing this amending Bill, which is absolutely necessary; but I doubt whether any time which this Chamber may devote to the Bill will be justified by its reception in another place.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### In Committee.

Mr. Angelo in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Repeal of Sections 66 and 67 of 52 Vict., No. 23, and Section 46 of 63 Vict., No. 19, and substitution of new provisions:

The PREMIER: I move an amendment—

That after the word "for" in the last line of proposed Subsection 1 there be inserted "registration or other."

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The amendment, it seems to me, would give the Legislative Council a general power as regards all the services of the State.

The Minister for Mines: The amendment limits the Council's power.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It may or may not do so. Progress should be reported, in order that the amendment may be placed on the Notice Paper and fully considered.

The PREMIER: I do not know what the objection is to this amendment. Its intention is to limit the Council's power. The services referred to are services rendered to the public. The intention is not to empower the Legislative Council to introduce taxation Bills or other means of raising revenue, except as regards the small means indicated by this measure. Without the amendment another place would, under this Bill, have the right to impose license fees on hotels, for instance.

Mr. TROY: It seems to me that the effect of the amendment would not be to limit the power of the Council, but rather to extend that power.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: As the Bill deals with procedure between the two Houses I am somewhat interested in it. If Subclause 2 passes as it is printed we shall have difficulty just as we are having at present, and we shall again be compelled to rule out Bills as was done last session in connection with the Nurses' Registration Bill and the Stallions Bill. If the amendment be carried no doubt whatever will exist. Bills of the nature referred to will have to originate in this Chamber. I discussed this matter with the Crown Solicitor, and to get over the difficulty he suggested that the words referred to should be added.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

#### BILL—NURSES' REGISTRATION.

In Committee.

Resumed from 13th October, Mr. Angelo in the Chair; the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Nurses' registration board:

The CHAIRMAN: An amendment had been moved by Hon. W. C. Angwin to strike out the words "a medical practitioner and" in lines 2 and 3 of Subclause 5.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Instead of the registered nurses having the right to nominate two nurses and a medical man, they will be able to nominate only two nurses. The others will be appointed by the Government.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 3, 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Who may be registered as nurses:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I move an amendment—

That in line 4 of Subclause 1 the words "recognised by the board" be struck out.

It should not make any difference to the board where the young lady gets her training so long as she can pass her examination which will entitle her to be registered. Why should the board have the opportunity of saying to a girl being trained, say in the Busselton hospital, that her training there would not be recognised because the institution was not recognised?

Mr. Pickering: Why the Busselton hospital?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Because I know from past experience that the Busselton hospital is one of those that would not be recognised. A few years ago the only hospitals that would be recognised were the Perth, Fremantle, Kalgoorlie and Wooreloo.

Mr. Mann: And the Children's Hospital.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No. The Colonial Secretary told us only the other day that they did not get enough experience there.

Mr. Mann: You would not suggest that a girl would get the same experience in the Busselton hospital that she would get in the Perth hospital?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Whether she got the same experience there or not, what difference would that make if she could pass the examination? It had been my intention to consult the Crown Solicitor in order to get an amendment drafted to deal with this question, but I did not think the Bill would be reached to-night. My desire was to make it illegal for trained

nurses taking action in regard to any person who desired to go into a hospital for training. This Bill only deals with a person trained. Analyse the position. A young girl desires to train as a nurse, and according to the present system, and according to the member for Guildford, she could never become a member of the A.T.N.A., which has branches throughout Australia, unless she was first approved by that body. Under the Bill she could register as a trained nurse, before training took place, whether the A.T.N.A. approved or not. Here is the position. As soon as she left this State she would be boycotted in any part of Australia.

Mrs. Cowan: You could not prevent that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I want to make it illegal for that action to be taken. The Government appoint a board of responsible people, and that board only should have the right to say that that girl could go in for training. We know of only three or four fully equipped hospitals in Western Australia. I am confident there will be only four Government hospitals recognised by the board as fit for the training of nurses. None outside of Perth, Fremantle, Kalgoorlie, and Wooroloo will be so recognised. No matter what examinations a girl may pass, she can never be registered under the Bill if the hospital in which she was trained is not recognised by the board. Is that fair?

Mrs. Cowan: I think it is.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Then God help the women represented by the hon. member! Two-thirds of the nurses trained in this State can never be registered under the Bill. I would sooner see the Bill thrown out altogether than that it should go through with this provision in it.

The Colonial Secretary: If it be thrown out you will be in a worse position than ever.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That cannot be. Every girl who desires to take up the profession should be given an opportunity to qualify.

Mr. MANN: Since the Bill was last before us I have consulted the Commissioner for Public Health. Dr. Atkinson advised me that the Bill would widen rather than narrow the avenue for training, inasmuch as it was intended that the board should create a circuit and so make training available for a larger number of trainees than is now possible.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: How is he going to alter the system? The board has no power over hospitals.

Mr. MANN: But it will have power over the trainees. The board hopes to widen the scope for training rather than narrow it.

Hon. P. Collier: Will the hon. member show how it can be widened under the Bill?

Mr. MANN: It will be at the discretion of the board.

Hon. P. Collier: But if you limit the number of hospitals where nurses can be trained, how can the training scope be widened?

Mr. MANN: The number of hospitals is limited at present.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: No, that is not so.

Mr. MANN: At present the only training institutions are the Perth Public Hospital, the Fremantle Hospital, the Children's Hospital, the St. John of God Hospital, and the Kalgoorlie Hospital. If a circuit is created the nurses will be transferred between various hospitals over which the board will have control. A nurse at Busselton cannot gain the same knowledge as a nurse at the Perth Public Hospital.

Hon. P. Collier: That is provided for in the clause.

Mr. MANN: But if she does a portion of her training at the Perth Public Hospital, it is perfectly sound that she should finish it at, say, Busselton. Dr. Atkinson suggested to me that a nurse should not get the whole of her training in one small hospital. I will oppose the amendment.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: As chairman of the largest training school in Western Australia, namely the Perth Public Hospital, I wish to remove an impression created by the member for North-East Fremantle. There is no interference on the part of the A.T.N.A. in respect of probationers.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I was quoting a member of the board when I said that.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: If a girl desires to train as a nurse in a training school she has to pass the educational test, which is the sixth standard in a State school. The A.T.N.A. test is somewhat higher, but a girl who can pass the sixth standard has not much difficulty in getting through. Some years ago we decided that our trainees should pass the educational test of the A.T.N.A., because it was of no use furnishing them with nurses' certificates if they could not pass the educational test of that organisation.

Hon. P. Collier: A new form of preference to unionists.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The A.T.N.A. is really a union of nurses, different from any other union in that the union guarantees its members to be trained workers fully qualified to handle cases under the direction of a medical man.

Mr. McCallum: All the unions give a like guarantee.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I have organised many unions in my time, but I have never known a union to guarantee that all its members were good workmen. A nurse cannot hope to be fully qualified without practical experience, which she can get only in a large hospital. To expect a nurse to get the necessary training in three years at a small hospital is absurd.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Minister said he would not accept the Children's Hospital as a training school.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It is a training school, but the St. John of God Hospital is not, at all events not to my knowledge.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They should all be training schools.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I can understand the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) going to the Principal Medical Officer for advice, since the Principal Medical Officer drafted the Bill. I see in the Bill no provision giving the board the power indicated by the member for Perth. That can only be done by regulation, and unless the Bill be amended it will be impossible to draft a regulation giving the board power to say who shall or shall not be trained. All the board can say is who shall or shall not be registered. So far as I see it, the object of the board, as contemplated in the Bill, will be to tighten up the position.

Hon. P. Collier: There can be no doubt about that. It is perfectly clear.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am surprised at the opposition to the words "recognised by the board." What is the use of registering a nurse on a qualification not worth working for?

Mr. Troy: The board will see to that.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Owing to the action of the A.T.N.A. it has been very difficult for nurses to register. It has been pointed out that they are unable to go to certain hospitals and that they would not be allowed to be registered as qualified nurses unless they complied with certain conditions laid down by the A.T.N.A. If the A.T.N.A. refuses to recognise qualified nurses unless they pass through the Perth Public Hospital they can still practice as qualified nurses, because the P.M.O. can give them a certificate showing that they are qualified. A midwifery nurse could only be trained in an establishment recognised by the midwifery board. That is already provided for in the Health Act. This Bill is taken from the Queensland and New Zealand Acts, which lay down that a nurse can only be registered if she has been trained in an establishment recognised by the board. The first subclause that we are dealing with provides for the registration of nurses already registered, provided that they have practised in an establishment recognised by those who grant the certificate, and that they have undergone the theoretical and practical training. A standard is set down under which nurses shall be examined. It is absurd to think that a nurse is qualified merely because she can pass a theoretical examination. It is essential that they should have a certain amount of practical training for a certain number of years under qualified officials, and in an institution containing a certain number of beds. In the Old Country the minimum number of beds is 100, but under the A.T.N.A. the minimum is 40 beds. In Fremantle, Kalgoorlie, Perth, and the Children's Hospital and Wooroloo Sanatorium we have institutions recognised for training purposes. Then there are the hospitals at Narrogin, Beverley, and Northam, where the average number of beds is only 17. It is better to have the proposed basis

of training than the present basis. If a nurse has been practising in one of the smaller hospitals I have referred to for a certain number of years the board may recognise that as sufficient qualification, but it is essential that the institution in which a nurse receives her training shall be large enough to enable her to get the varied experience necessary. This Bill does not make any difference in the case of nurses already practising.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They cannot be registered nurses.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They can if they put in the necessary period of training in a recognised institution.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: In a recognised hospital.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Or training establishment. What is wanted is both practical and theoretical training.

Hon. P. Collier: You do not understand the clause.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There should be a fixed standard and a fixed qualification that will make the profession more highly valued. Is it to be supposed that the board would do anything to limit the number of nurses who could go through for registration? The board is out for registration all the time. I cannot agree to the amendment.

Mr. DAVIES: I think the Bill will widen the scope of training for nurses, and that the amendment is necessary. Before the committee of management of the Perth Public Hospital can take in a probationary nurse she has first to submit herself for examination at the hands of the A.T.N.A.

Mr. Marshall: From what source do they get their authority?

Mr. DAVIES: The Perth Public Hospital could have ignored the A.T.N.A.

Hon. P. Collier: In the interests of the girl you do not want it to.

Mr. DAVIES: That hospital trains on an average 30 probationers a year. These cannot be absorbed into the Perth Public Hospital, and a certain number has to be turned adrift each year. Unless they are recognised by the A.T.N.A. what chance have they got? I do not suggest that the A.T.N.A. would exclude anyone who came up to their standard. Their object is to see that the nurses are fit for their profession.

Mr. Marshall: They are not any better judges than the hospital committee.

Mr. DAVIES: The officers of the hospital should be able to judge as well as the A.T.N.A. as to that point. If only certain hospitals are to be recognised, this may restrict the number of nurses who may be turned out in each year. The same argument may be applied to the locomotive workshops at Midland Junction and to the Midland Railway workshops. In the one case some 400 locomotives a year are turned out and in the other case only 12. The training is surely as good in the one case as it is

in the other. If the training of midwifery nurses is to be confined to the one midwifery hospital we have in the State, how shall we keep up the number of midwifery nurses required? The great thing is to have examination after the training is finished. We want as many qualified nurses as we can get.

Hon. G. Taylor: We want nurses and not Gamps.

Mr. DAVIES: There should be a board of examiners to examine. If they can pass the test put upon them by the board, that should be sufficient.

Progress reported.

## BILL—EVIDENCE ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Order read for the resumption of debate from 29th September.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Angelo in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—Short title.

Progress reported.

## BILL—GRAIN.

In Committee.

Mr. Angelo in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Interpretation:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I move an amendment—

That the following subclause be added: " 'Warehouseman' means any corporation, company or person having charge or care of any grain store in any elevator."

Mr. Pickering: Why do you ask for this amendment?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I propose to move an additional amendment that will empower the board to issue instructions to persons in charge of wheat. The Bill makes no provision whereby the board can issue instructions to anyone to see that the grain is properly stored, properly inspected and adequately cared for. It is necessary that some such provision should be made. A similar provision appears in the Canadian Act.

The Premier: We can have too much of the Canadian Act.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not know about that, because everyone in favour of the Bill has quoted from the Canadian measure, and if we had that measure in its entirety, it would be a stronger one for the company than the Bill before the House.

The Premier: This is a good Bill.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is a very poor one. To show the necessity for the amendment, I will read a proposed new clause, also taken from the Canadian Act, which I intend to move later on. It is as follows:—

In any terminal elevator where facilities do not exist to permit of the inspecting officer securing proper samples of grain which is being shipped from such elevator, the board may order the warehouseman of such elevator to immediately supply such additional facilities as in its judgment will secure the desired results. Any terminal warehouseman neglecting to comply within reasonable time (not to exceed thirty days) with the order of the board as aforesaid, shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine of not less than One hundred pounds for each offence.

The benefits to accrue to the farmers of the State, if there are to be any such benefits, will depend upon the inspection of the wheat and upon proper samples of wheat being sent forward to other parts of the world where the wheat is to be disposed of and also upon the proper inspection and grading of the wheat to assure that the wheat sold is in accordance with the samples submitted.

The PREMIER: Will the term "warehousemen" include the company under the Bill?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Yes, any person.

The PREMIER: If the words proposed by the member for North-East Fremantle are included in the interpretation clause they will mean nothing.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I have explained why I want them in.

Hon. P. Collier: The member for North-East Fremantle may want the clause if he succeeds in getting the other amendment carried.

The PREMIER: The inclusion of the words cannot do any harm, although they cannot do any good.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: If you want this Bill, you will agree to it.

The PREMIER: I have some objection to what is to follow, although I have no objection to the amendment going through at this stage. It may be necessary for these words to be included in order to deal with the further amendment, to which I will agree, and which the member for Williams-Narrogin will move.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3—Right of company to construct elevators:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I move an amendment—

That in line 3, Subclause 1, the word "sole" be struck out.

I intend to move, if the amendment is carried, to delete the words "for the term of 25 years" from line 4 of the subclause. The measure provides that the company shall have the sole right for 25 years to construct and use elevators.

The Premier: You want to wring the duck's neck by some left-handed method.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not desire to do anything underhand.

The Premier: I do not suggest that, but you will do it thoroughly.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I merely wish to protect the people of the State from a monopoly. Twelve months ago I was under the impression that the memorandum of association of the company was really the embodiment of the Federal Act which approved the advance of money, but the registered memorandum of association is entirely different.

Hon. P. Collier: They got the money, and then came back and altered it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I fear that this measure will have the effect of creating a monopoly with regard to the food supply of the people.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: The memorandum of the company is superseded by the Federal Act.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That statement is not correct. It is true that the company cannot deal in grain, but we have heard of an oil trust which could not be got at because it had so many subsidiary companies that one scarcely knew where the head was.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: You did not use that argument when putting the Anglo-Persian Oil Bill through two years ago.

Hon. P. Collier: But the British Government were the principal shareholders.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I pointed out that the British Government had put two millions of money into the Anglo-Persian Oil Company to keep it outside the oil trust. The member for North Perth has given no reason why the company should have the sole handling of the wheat. There is a firm in Western Australia backed up by the Government and by political influence, the Westralian Farmers Ltd. There is also a subsidiary company, the Grain Elevators Company, Paragraph 20 of the company's memorandum of association reads—

To promote any company or companies for the purpose of acquiring all or any of the property and liabilities of this company or for any other purpose which may seem directly or indirectly calculated to benefit this company. To take or otherwise acquire and hold shares in any other company having objects altogether or in part similar to those of this company or carrying on any business capable of being conducted so as directly or indirectly to benefit this company.

Powers are thus given whereby the company could start a subsidiary company to relieve them of the provisions of the Federal Act, and to buy or deal in grain. I am satisfied that the bulk handling of wheat in Western Australia will be an unprofitable proposition. The only way to make it profitable will be by the company taking advantage of the natural increase in the grain, an increase of which the farmers now get the advantage. Under the bag system it costs £38,000 to

take the wheat from the farmers' wagons and put it into the ships. I am referring now to handling charges only. If the company spent £800,000, as is proposed, they would have to find £72,000 annually for interest and depreciation, without taking into account the handling charges. I was told that my estimate of 3 per cent. depreciation was too high. It was based on the report of the Engineer-in-Chief and I think it is really under the mark. This is likely to be a losing proposition and who will make up the loss?

The Premier: The shareholders, of course.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, they will not. One company will have the sole right to store wheat in bulk. The other company, which could be established under the memorandum of association, could have the right to deal in wheat. Neither company could regulate the overseas markets, but must accept world's parity for all wheat exported. They would, therefore, fix the price of wheat in Western Australia in order to make up any deficiency, and the increased cost locally would have to be borne by the community. We have no right to give any company the sole right to handle the wheat. After the optimistic views expressed by the Premier and members of the Country Party regarding the millions of acres of land in the State still to be brought under crop, we should not give the sole right to one small company to handle wheat in bulk. By this clause we are handing over certain rights for 25 years, or rather 29 years. The object of the company interested is to prevent any other company or any other persons from trading in wheat. However, the farmers are beginning to realise the position with regard to the Westralian Farmers Ltd., and are showing a disposition to withdraw from that company. Let this opportunity of erecting elevators be open to all the world.

The PREMIER: If the amendment is carried, and the company are not given the period of 25 years, I do not think they will go on with the work. In this country any proposal which will provide facilities that are needed, and provide work, is invariably opposed. Here we are wanting industries established in Perth, and yet this proposal, which means much to the city and also to the country, is strenuously resisted. Without a guarantee of 25 years' tenure the company would not be justified in taking the farmers' money to establish a system of bulk handling. Every farmer in Western Australia can take a share in this company, which is a farmers' company.

Mr. Troy: A farmer may take a share in the company, but that does not give him any voice in the management of the company, having regard to the large number of shareholders.

The PREMIER: In this instance the farmers are putting up the money them-



selves. The taxpayers of this country are not asked to put up any money.

Mr. McCallum: Yes, they are; £2 for every £1 of the farmer.

The PREMIER: The hon. member may think the passing of the Bill will reduce the work on the wharves.

Mr. McCallum: I do not think anything of the sort.

Mr. Troy: The hon. member would be very foolish to think so, seeing that the work would still have to be done somewhere else.

The PREMIER: Notwithstanding bulk handling facilities, wheat will no doubt continue to be sent away in bags, which will become very much cheaper than they are now. There is no obligation on any farmer to send his wheat through the elevator company; he can always send it away in bags, if he likes. The period of 25 years is not a long one in view of the expenditure involved. When a farmer delivers his wheat to the elevator company he gets a storage docket, which he sells himself at his own time. If the elevator company offered less for the wheat than could be obtained from some outside purchaser, they would not secure the wheat. I hope the Committee will consider very seriously before agreeing to the amendment.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Federal measure does not give a period of 25 years.

The PREMIER: I do not know what that measure gives, but I know that the Federal Government are making an advance to the farmers of this State, which advance the farmers will have to repay.

Mr. Munsie: Suppose the farmers did not meet their obligation, would not this State have to pay?

The PREMIER: No. We should not hesitate to encourage co-operation, and to encourage the farmers to handle their own wheat.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 10.44 p.m.*

## Legislative Council.

*Wednesday, 19th October, 1921.*

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### QUESTION—STATE'S FINANCES, ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN asked the Minister for Education: Whether the Government will follow the example of the Imperial Government and appoint a committee of financial and business men to advise on financial matters, especially as to the best means for checking the drift?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: The Government are giving serious and continuous consideration to the financial position, and will continue to take all steps necessary for its betterment.

### FEDERATION AND THE STATE.

Select Committee—Publication of Proceedings.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN (South) [4.33]: I move—

That the Standing Orders having reference to the publication of the proceedings of a Select Committee be suspended so far as to permit the Select Committee appointed to prepare for the Federal Convention to exercise its discretion in admitting the Press to its meetings.

In moving in this direction, I do so at the request of the committee appointed by this House to inquire into the financial relations between the State and the Commonwealth. A similar motion has been passed by another place.

Question put and passed.

### BILL—SUPPLY (No. 3), £1,047,000.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [4.36] in moving the second reading said: This is the usual Supply Bill introduced to enable the Government to carry on the affairs of the country during the time the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure are under discussion by Parliament. As members are aware, the Estimates were introduced a week or two back and they are now under discussion.