Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 21st November, 1917.

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

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Premier: Annual Reports of the Commissioner of Police, and the Zoological Gardens and Acclimatisation Committee. Regulations under the Cemeteries Act and the Land Act. By-laws under the Parks and Reserves Act and the Land Act.

By the Minister for Works: Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss Account, and Trading Account for year ending 30th June, 1917, of the State Implement and Engineering Works, State Saw Mills, and Beenup State Brickworks. Roads Act, by-laws, Wyndham and Hall's Creek.

COMMISSION FOR SWEARING IN— ELECTION RETURN—ALBANY.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received a Commission from His Excellency the Governor to swear hon, members. I am now prepared to swear the hon, member for Albany.

Mr. H. Robinson (Albany) took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

URGENCY MOTION—ROYAL COM-MISSIONS,

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received the following communication from the member for Leonora (Mr. Foley):--

I desire to move the adjournment of the House under Standing Order 47 to debate a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the increasing cost to the country due to the continued sittings of three Royal Commissions.

I cannot accept this motion. Standing Order No. 34 prevents it. The Standing Order reads—

No business beyond what is of a formal character shall be entered upon before the Address-in-reply to the Governor's opening Speech has been adopted.

I therefore rule the hon, member's motion out of order,

Mr. FOLEY: I was not aware that Standing Order 34 would prevent the moving of my motion. I am sorry that it does prevent it, because the subject matter of the motion I intended to move is of a very urgent nature.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sorry the hon, member cannot proceed,

Mr. UNDERWOOD: A motion for adjournment has been moved before the Address-in-reply debate was completed.

Mr. SPEAKER: Not in this Chamber.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes. I moved it myself.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have no record of it. In any case, I cannot permit it to be done again.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: It certainly has been done before.

QUESTION—ITALIAN MILITARY ELIGIBLES.

Mr. MULLANY (without notice) asked the Premier: 1, Is he aware that there is a considerable number of Italian subjects of military age residing in Western Australia, principally on the goldfields. 2, Is he aware that many of these men have expressed a desire to join the Australian military forces, but are not permitted to do so? 3. Is he aware that if these men desire to return to Italy and fight for the Allies they are called upon to pay their own fares and arrange for transport, which, at present, is a very difficult matter? 4, In view of the urgent need for men on the various fronts. will the Premier draw the attention of the Defence authorities to the desirability of permitting these men to join the Australian forces, or, failing that, of providing them with free passages to Italy?

The PREMIER replied: I am aware of the facts stated in the question, and I will represent the matter to the Federal Government.

Hon. P. Collier: It is announced in today's newspaper that this has been arranged for.

The PREMIER: If it is already announced that action will be taken, there is no need for me to make any representations.

QUESTION-RENT FIXING.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN asked the Premier: Is it the intention of the Government to introduce this session a Bill to provide for the fixing of fair rents, somewhat on the lines that have been enacted in the Eastern States?

The Premier replied: No.

QUESTIONS (6)—WHEAT.

Government Agents—Terms of Appointment.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN asked Mr. Willmott (Honorary Minister): 1, What amount did the Government demand and was put up as deposit as security to the State in case of damage or neglect by the agents appointed by the Government to handle the wheat for the Wheat Pool for years 1915 and 1916 harvest? 2, How many companies or agents were appointed, and did each company or agent put up the deposit required by the Government? 3, Have the Government appointed the Westralian Farmers, Ltd., sole agents to handle all wheat for the Wheat Pool for the 1917 harvest? 4, If so, what amount of deposit is demanded and put up by the Westralian Farmers, Ltd., as security to the State in case of any damage or neglect? 5, Will he have all papers dealing with this question laid on the Table of the House?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: 1. The total amount of the bonds required from the Government acquiring agents, as a guarantee for the due performance of their obligations under their agency agreement for handling wheat of the 1915-16 and 1916-17 harvests, aggregated £127,500. bonds actually put up amounted to £107,500. 2, Fifteen agents. Dalgety & Co., Limited, did not execute their bond on the plea that they were exempt by a special arrangement made with the then Minister in control of the scheme, Mr. W. D. Johnson. 3, Yes. 4, The full terms and conditions of the agreement, including the amount of the bond to be provided, have not yet been determined. 5, Yes, as soon as the agreement is completed.

Silos to be erected.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN asked the Premier: 1, Has any arrangement or agreement been made with any person or company or companies for the erection and completion of, or providing plans, etc., for the erection of silos in this State on a commission basis? 2, If so, who have such arrangements been made with, and will Parliament have the opportunity of ratifying such agreement, or otherwise?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No such arrangement or agreement has been made. 2, Negotiations are proceeding with Metcalf & Co., Ltd., for the preparation of plans for silos on a commission basis. If these negotiations are satisfactorily concluded the necessary agreement will contain a condition that it be subject to the approval of Parliament.

Payment on old crop.

Hon. J. MITCHELL asked the Minister for Industries: When will the next payment be made on account of 1916/17 wheat crop?

The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES replied: The question of the amount of further payments at as early a date as possible is one of the matters specially engaging the attention of the Honorary Minister (Mr. Baxter) in the Eastern States.

Advance against new crop.

Hon. J. MITCHELL asked the Minister for Industries: Have arrangements been made for the payment of the advance against wheat from the harvest now being reaped as delivered to the pool?

The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES replied: Arrangements have not yet been finalised, and this is a matter upon which the Honorary Minister (Mr. Baxter) is making special representations in Melbourne.

Handling and storage charges.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Industries: 1, Does the 11/sd. wheat handling rate include cost of electricity used, also interest and sinking fund on the cost of wheat handling plant? 2, If not, why not? 3, What is the original cost of equipment used exclusively for wheat handling? What items of expenditure in the 1916 Fremantle Harbour Trust Commissioners' report warrants the charge of £12,000 per annum against the State Wheat Marketing Committee for storage of grain? 5, As the quantity of wheat now stored at Fremantle on which £12,000 per annum is charged for storage would, and is, at Port Williamstown, Victoria, and chief ports of South Australia, charged less than £1,000 per annum, what reason is there for the higher charge? Why were the storage charges on the State Wheat Marketing Committee's grain omitted from the storage regulations published in the Government Gazette of August 17th last?

The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES replied: 1, The handling charge is 1%d. per bag covers all labour costs of receiving wheat from the country, stacking same, and breaking down stacks and delivering the

bags to ships, and includes all electricity used and all administrative charges, but does not include interest and sinking fund charges. 2, The policy of the Fremantle Harbour Trust Commissioners has been to keep the cost of handling all cargo on the wharves, including grain, down as low as possible, and in order to do this they have relied upon the general wharfage dues on cargo to provide interest and sinking fund. There has been no wharfage charge on grain as there is in some of the Eastern States: the interest and sinking fund charges on wheat plant and facilities have been provided by charges levied on other cargo handled in the port and by storage charges. 3. The cost of wheat shed and machinery, railway sidings, and the levelling of wheat stacking areas was £71,775 up to 30th June, 4. The items which the charge of 1916.£12,000 per annum is designed to cover are interest and sinking fund charges, depreciainsurance, tion, special patrolling and watching staff, and special provision for prevention of fire. 5, We have no knowledge as to what are the charges made for storage at the places named, but we do know that whereas at Fremantle a mile of deep water frontage is provided where ships can lie and take in their cargoes of wheat direct from the stacks, no attempt at such facility is made at any of the Eastern States ports, as at all those ports the wheat has to be loaded up again at the stacks and railed to the shipping wharves. No special facilities are provided for stacking wheat places mentioned in the Eastern States, and therefore the position is not comparable Further, for the £12,000 with Fremantle. per annum the Harbour Trust Commissioners have given the Wheat Marketing Committee an area capable of holding two million bags, all of it specially prepared and fitted with facilities for rapid handling and for the reconditioning of grain as well as the storage and shipping of flour. Such a facility does not exist anywhere else in 6, The special concession made Australia. Marketing Committee to the Wheat £12,000 per annum for storage was not included in the general charges gazetted on August 17th, 1917, for the reason that it was a special concession, which is subject to revision from time to time.

Central Storage Sheds.

Mr. JOHNSTON asked the Premier: 1, What arrangements have been made for the erection of central storage sheds for wheat? 2, Will the sheds be ready in time for the coming harvest?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Central depots comprising skeleton sheds for the storage of wheat are to be provided at Geraldton, Spencer's Brook, Midland Junction, Narrogin, and Tambellup. The railway sidings in connection therewith are being constructed departmentally by the Railway Department, and are all expected to be completed by the middle of January. Tenders have been called for the construction of sheds in sections, and are returnable early in December. 2, Yes, as required.

QUESTION — STATE IMPLEMENT WORKS.

Right for Sales and Commission.

Hon, W. C. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Works: 1, Has the sole right for sale of all implements and parts from the State Implement Works been handed over to the Westralian Farmers, Ltd., inluding implements and parts not manufactured at the State works? 2, If so, was any other company or society asked to submit a tender to have sole right of sale of such implements? 3, If not, why not? 4, Are all losses in case of failure in payment of any of the implements or parts borne by the Government? 5. What is the rate per cent. paid as commission to the Westralian Farmers, Ltd.? 6, Will he lay on the Table all papers dealing with this question?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes, for all agricultural implements and spares for two years from 1st September, 1917, with extension for a further three years if business has resulted to mutual satisfaction. 2, No; as no other organisation in Western Australia exists which can offer the same advantageous representation. 3, Answered by No. 2. 4, Yes. The Government reserve the right to refuse to supply any orders until the Department has satisfied itself that the business is a fair risk. If declined no commission is paid. 5,

Seven and a-half per cent. on all business done to £50,000 per year, and 8 per cent. if the turnover exceeds £65,000. 6, All papers can be laid on the Table of the House, and the Minister proposes to make a full statement regarding all trading concerns as they appear to him after a year's connection therewith.

QUESTION-STATE STEAMSHIPS.

Hon, W. ANGWIN asked the Premier: 1, On what date did the motor ship "Kangaroo" leave Western Australia on her present voyage? 2, When is the motor ship expected to return to Western Australia? 3, What is the estimated total expenditure on the ship during the voyage? 4, What is the estimated revenue? 5, What is the State's annual expenditure on the s.s. "Western Australia"? 6, What is the annual revenue? 7, Is it the intention of the Colonial Secretary to provide on his Estimates this year a sum of money to increase the fleet of ships in lieu of the amount struck off from previous Estimates? 8, If additional ships had been purchased as previously proposed, could they have been run by the Colonial Secretary's Department with advantage to the State financially?

The PREMJER replied: 1, 15th August. 1917. 2, June-July, 1918. 3, £125,000 for the round voyage. 4, £268,000 for the found voyage. 5, £750 interest, sinking fund, and depreciation. 6, £18,000. 7, Inquiry is being made as to the best means of meeting the requirements of the North-West in the matter of shipping facilities. S, Yes.

QUESTIONS (3)—LCMPING TROUBLE, FREMANTLE.

Government Conveniences and Government Employees.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN asked the Premier: 1, Have the Government at any time paid the increased cost of providing meals, beds, and other conveniences for men employed on the Fremantle wharves and ships during the lock-out of the lumpers by the employers? 2, If so, what was the total amount involved? 3, How many employers

of the Government, or in the public service, were employed on the wharf during the industrial crisis? 4. Did they receive payment for services rendered both from the Government and from ship-owners, or the Fremantle Harbour Trust? 5. If not who paid?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The Government are not aware of any occasion on which the lumpers were locked out by the employers. 2, 3, 4, and 5, Answered in No. 1.

Hon, W. C. Angwin: I must point out that the Premier's reply does not answer paragraphs 3 and 4 of my question.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon, member may give notice again.

State School Teacher.

Mr. MUNSIE asked the Premier: 1, Is it a fact that Mr. T. Chandler, the head teacher of the James-street school, Perth. volunteered as a national worker for service on the Fremantle wharf? 2, Did he. during the school holidays, work there for one week? 3, If so, was his salary paid as usual by the Education Department, while he was so engaged?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes. 3, Yes.

Circulars in Government Departments.

Mr. JONES asked the Premier: 1, Is he aware that lists were recently circulated in Government departments asking for volunteer labourers to work on the wharf at Fremantle? 2, Will he supply the number of men who volunteered from each department? 3, Did the heads of the departments concerned approve of these men volunteering? 4, If so, as the heads consider it possible to carry on without the services of these men cannot they be retrenched in the interests of economy?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. Lists were circulated inviting the public generally to enroll for National Volunteer Service if, and where, called upon. 2, No. 3, They were not consulted. 4, Answered by No. 3.

QUESTION—LONDON AGENCY, SEC-RETARY'S RETIREMENT.

Mr. SMITH asked the Premier: 1, (a.) Under what Act, section, or subsection of an Act, was Mr. A. Colenso Kessell retired from the Public Service by the late Government? (b) What are the terms of such retirement? (c) Has the office of Secretary to the London Agency been abolished by His Excellency the Governor in Council? (d.) If so, when? 2, Was Mr. Kessell a permanent officer of the Public Service of Western Australia? 3, Did the present Public Service Commissioner recommend Mr. Kessell's retirement? 4, If so, upon whose advice? 5. (a.) Did the new Agent General express any desire for a change to be made in the person holding the office of Secretary? (b.) If so, upon what grounds?

The PREMIER replied: 1, (a.) Under Section 9 (7) of "The Public Service Act, 1904." (b.) Now under consideration. (c.) The office of Secretary has been amalgamated with that of Inspecting Engineer. (d.) Answered by (c.). 2, Yes. 3, Yes. 4, Action was taken by the Public Service Commissioner as a result of his inspection of the summaries of business transacted through the Agent General's office. 5, (a.) I have no knowledge of such. (b.) Answered by (a.).

QUESTION—COST OF LIVING, ROYAL COMMISSION.

Mr. SMITH asked the Premier: 1, What is the cost to date on account of the Royal Commission on the cost of living? 2, When are the Commissioners likely to finish their arduous duties and what is the estimated total cost? 3, Can the country afford the time and the money to continue this Commission?

The PREMIER replied: 1, £162 14s. 7d. 2, (a.) The date cannot be definitely given, but every endeavour will be made to bring the work of the Commission to a conclusion as early as possible. (b.) The total cost must largely depend upon the date of the conclusion of the work of the Commission. 3, Ves.

QUESTIONS (2)—GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY.

Fixing of Fares.

Mr. GREEN asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Were the Government consulted in the fixing of the respective fares on the Great Western Railway (a) from Perth to Adelaide? (b) from Kalgoorlie to Adelaide? 2, Do the Government consider that it is an equitable proposal to allow only 10s. first class and 7s. 6d. second class reduction to the Kalgoorlie public, although the journey is 375 miles less than the distance travelled from Perth? 3, Will the Government enter into negotiations with the Federal Government with a view of making a substantial reduction on a proportional basis in the fares from Kalgoorlie to Adelaide?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes. 2. The fare to and from Perth and the Eastern States is a specially low competitive one: similar conditions do not apply to the same extent between Kalgoorlie and these States. The Common-wealth line must, for years to come, be worked at a considerable loss, and the fares at present in force between Kalgoorlie and the Eastern States will compare favourably with the old rates from Kalgoorlie to Fremantle, plus the steamer fare. It is not customary to allow any reduction on through fares for intermediate passengers, and this concession, though small, is an exception. 3. Under the conditions mentioned in answer No. 2-No.

Allotment of Fares.

Mr. LUTEY asked the Minister for Railways: What percentage of the fares between Adelaide and Perth on the Great Western Railway journey is allotted to the Western Australian Railway Department?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: The fares are divided between the Commonwealth and States concerned, on a proportional basis. The amounts received by the State Railways per passenger travelling between Perth and Kalgoorlie are, first class 33s. 1d. each way, and second class 22s. each way.

QUESTION—TAXATION ON UNIM-PROVED LAND VALUE.

Mr. GREEN asked the Premier: In view of the straitened position of the finances, will the Government introduce a measure this session to tax the unimproved value of land, and thereby remove the necessity for further burdening the goldfields mining industry by another increase in railway freights?

The PREMIER replied: The Treasurer is at present collecting all data with a view of introducing a measure next session dealing with the subject.

QUESTIONS (5)—RAILWAYS, ESPER-ANCE-NORTHWARDS.

Materials on Hand.

Hon. T. WALKER asked the Minister for Works: 1, What materials of all kinds (specifying same in reply) were left on hand at Esperance when the construction of the Esperance-Northwards railway was stopped? 2, Have the same since been stored at Esperance? 3, What is the condition of same?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, 10½ miles rails. 6 sets points and crossings. 14¾ miles dogspikes. 9 miles fishplates. 15¾ miles fishbolts. 34,000 sleepers. Timber and ironwork for bridges and culverts up to 16 miles. General railway plant, camp equipment, and fodder. 2, Horses and drays returned; plant and material stored at Esperance. 3, In good condition. There are about two tons fodder part of which has been sold, and the balance is on hand for disposal.

Earthworks constructed.

Hon. T. WALKER asked the Minister for Works: 1, What extent (giving mileage) of earthworks had been constructed, when further operations on the Esperance-Northwards line were stopped 2, In what condition are these earthworks at present?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, At points over a length of 16 miles north of Esperance, 5¼ miles of earthworks has been completed, and some bridges and culverts have been constructed. 2. In good

condition so far as is known, as proper precautions to prevent damage as far as possible, were taken.

Cost of Royal Commission.

Hon. T. WALKER asked the Premier: What was the total cost of the Royal Commission on the Esperance lands?

The PREMIER replied: £2,248 7s. 5d.

Construction of the line.

Hon. T. WALKER asked the Premier: In view of the report and recommendations therein of the Esperance Lands Commission and the statements made by him in reference to the same at Kalgoorlie, are the Government prepared at once to proceed with the construction of the Esperance-Northwards line?

The PREMIER replied: It is out of the question to proceed at once with the Esperance-Northwards railway, first, on account of the financial position of the State and the impossibility of raising loan money until after the conclusion of the war; second, although rails have been ordered nearly two years, practically no delivery of moment has been made, nor appears likely to be made for some time.

' Farmers position.

Hon. T. WALKER asked the Minister for Industries: 1, How do the Government intend to deal with the wheat crops grown in the Esperance district, this year? 2, Is it intended to place the Esperance farmers on exactly the same footing as farmers on the wheat belt? 3, If not, what is the difference that will be made?

The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES replied: 1, The Government do not propose to handle these crops. The settlers will be free to make their own arrangements to deliver wheat to the pool. 2, No. 3, Super will be supplied provided satisfactory terms for payment can be arranged by the settlers.

QUESTION—UNIVERSITY FEES.

Mr. JOHNSTON asked the Premier: 1, Has the Senate of the University power to impose fees for tuition contrary to the expressed resolution of this House, carried without a division, on the 13th November, 1912, to the effect that education at the University should be free? 2, If so, will the Government amend the University Act to ensure that the decision of this House on this important principle shall be paramount? 3, Will the Government draw the attention of the Senate to the resolution mentioned?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The "Governing Authority," which is interpreted by Section 5 of "The University Act, No. 37, of 1911," as consisting of the Senate and Convocation, is empowered by Subsection (p) of Section 31 of that Act to make, alter, and repeal Statutes with respect to the fees, if any, to be paid for examinations, for the granting of degrees, diplomas, and certificates, and for attendance at lectures and classes of the University. But any Statute passed by the "Governing Authority" must under Section 33 be laid before Parliament, and can be annulled thereby. The resolution expressed by the House on the 13th November, 1912, that it is desirable that all education at the University of Western Australia should be free, does not affect the powers granted to the "Governing Author-2, The question of the itv" by Statute. amendment of the University Act with a view to insuring the decision of the House referred to is one which has not yet been considered by the Government, but will be considered should the necessity arise. The question of the advisability of acting as suggested will be considered.

QUESTIONS (2)—REPATRIATION SCHEME.

Sums allotted to applicants.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Minister for Industries: Can he give definite information upon the following questions dealing with the proposed repatriation scheme:—

1, The amount set apart for each applicant.

2, The conditions appertaining thereto for (a) land settlement, (b) industrial and general.

3, How much is now available for (a) and (b)?

4, In view of the absolute necessity for the conditions appertaining to (a) being on sound farming lines, will be

approve of the appointment to the central board of a nominee from the Farmers' and Settlers' Association? 5. In view of the exceptional circumstances appertaining to returned-soldier settlers, and assuming that the sum allotted is in the nature of a loan, will be consider the advisability of securing at least 50 per cent. of such amount as a free grant to each selector on completion of a specified term of occupancy and development?

The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES replied: I have not had time to prepare the necessary answers to the hon, member's questions, but I shall be prepared to answer them to-morrow. In the meantime I have handed to the hon, member a copy of the Soldiers' Settlement Scheme which was laid on the Table of the House towards the close of last session.

The Commonwealth contribution.

Mr. JONES asked the Premier: 1, Has any portion of the money promised by the Prime Minister for repatriation purposes yet been received by the Government? 2, If so, what amount, and when received? 3, How do the Government propose to utilise it for the benefit of returned soldiers?

The PREMIER replied: Answered by No. 1. 3, The expenditure incurred to date on land settlement for returned soldiers is £14,292, made up as follows: advances to soldiers, £5,490; surveys, £8,802. It is estimated that £5,000 per month will be required to meet expenditure in connection with land settlement of soldiers. An application has been made to the Commonwealth for Provision is being made in the amount. Loan Bill for £50,000 for advances to soldiers, and £15,000 for survey and other expenses.

QUESTION—TIMBER AREAS, CLASSIFICATION.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Minister for Woods and Forests: 1, Why has the classification of our timber areas been abandoned? 2, As this is a form of national stocktaking, when is it proposed to proceed with the work? . The MINISTER FOR WOODS AND FORESTS replied: 1, The classification of the timber areas has not been abandoned, and it is proposed to proceed with it continuously if funds can be made available. 2, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—CROP AND STOCK STATISTICS.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Premier: 1, Is it intended to collect the crop and stock statistics through the police officers of the State? 2, In the interests of economy, could not the Government make it obligatory on the farmers of the State to post such returns direct to the Government Statist's Department?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, It is considered that the present method of collection is economical. Previous attempts to collect forecast statistics direct from the farmers have been proved to be entirely unsatisfactory. Inordinate delay has resulted, and this difficulty would be accentuated in the much longer annual collection. Further, as the changes in the settlers are known only to the police officers in the various districts, any change from the present system would probably result in inefficiency.

QUESTION—COLLIE COAL FOR TRANSPORTS.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Premier: What steps has he taken towards inducing the Federal Government to use Collie coal on the transports?

The PREMIER replied: Representations on this matter were made to the Prime Minister as far back as November, 1916, Inquiries were received for quotations and an estimate of the quantity that could be supplied, which were duly furnished. Reports are now being obtained from the Mines Department and the Railway Department with the object of inducing the Federal Government to utilise Collie coal on the Great Western Railway, in addition to transports, and the matter generally is at present the subject of negotiation with the Prime Minister.

QUESTION—HANSARD, FREE ISSUE.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Treasurer: 1, What saving has been effected by the abolition of the free use of Hansard? 2, Does he not think it would have been the proper course to seek a recommendation from the Printing Committee prior to taking action?

The TREASURER replied: 1, In a normal session for which, say, there would be 20 issues, the saving would, approximately, be £222 4s. 2, Yes; a quite unintentional discourteous oversight on my part. I wish the hon, member to accept my assurance that it was quite an unintentional oversight on my part.

QUESTION-TIMBER REGULATIONS.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Minister for Woods and Forests: Is it his intention to lay on the Table the telegrams of protest forwarded to him by Mr. Willmott, Honorary Minister, regarding timber regulations when Mr. Willmott was seeking election in the Nelson electorate?

The MINISTER FOR WOODS AND FORESTS replied: I am not aware of any such telegrams. I received only one telegram asking me to arrange for Mr. Lane-Poole to visit Bridgetown.

QUESTION—ASSISTANCE TO INDUSTRIES.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Minister for Industries: 1, Is it a fact that the Government have advanced a greater subsidy than £1 for £1 to the Associated Fruit Growers, Limited? 2, If a bacon and butter factory is started in the Nannup district, will the Government treat the settlers in the same generous fashion?

The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES replied: 1, Yes, by the previous Government. 2, No. The policy of the National Government is to make advances on the following conditions:—(1) Advances to be on a £ for £ basis. (2) Security to be taken over land, buildings, and plant. Site, plans of buildings, and lay out of plant to be approved by the Department. (3) Loans to have a

currency of 20 years, with interest at current rates. Repayment of principal to commence three years from date of advance. (4) Interest and sinking fund to be a first charge on the earnings of the Society, interest to shareholders, not exceeding 6 per cent. per annum, to be a second charge, and any surplus remaining after meeting these charges to be applied to the reduction of the loan. (5) No advance will be made by the Government until the necessary capital has been subscribed by the shareholders. (6) Factories to be established only in approved centres on satisfactory proof that regular and sufficient supplies will be forthcoming. Any application from the Nannup settlers will be considered on its merits.

QUESTION — RETURNED SOLDIERS' CONVALESCENT HOME.

Mr. JONES asked the Premier: 1, Was the Albany Convalescent Home for Returned Soldiers voluntarily relinquished by the Defence Department, or was it resumed by the State Government? 2, It is now being renovated for use again as a summer residence for His Excellency the Governor, and what is the estimated cost of such renovation?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The Governor's residence at Albany was loaned to the Military Department by the State Government on the suggestion of Sir Harry Barron, for a period covering that gentleman's occupation of the office of Governor of Western Australia. Upon his retirement this arrangement automatically terminated. 2, No. If the building is to be used as a summer residence by His Excellency the Governor, some renovations will no doubt be necessary, an equitable proportion of which will be debited to the Commonwealth Government. No estimate has yet been framed.

QUESTION-GERALDTON HARBOUR WORKS.

Mr. WILLCOCK asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is it the intention of the Government to proceed with the construction of the Geraldton Harbour Works? 2, If so, when? The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes. 2, The position is governed by the financial possibilities of the future.

QUESTION-MINING, PHILLIPS RIVER, ASSISTANCE.

Hon. P. COLLIER asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Have the Government granted assistance during the present year to any company or individual carrying on mining operations in the Phillips River district? 2, If so, what was the nature of such assistance, the amount of money involved, when and to whom granted?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, Yes. 2, A loan to the lessees of the Flag lease at Kundip to assist them to unwater the mine and with the object of making available supplies of fluxing sulphide ores necessary for the better working of the State smelter. The agreement for the loan was made on 13th February last and the amount paid to date is £2,100.

QUESTION-CORNSACKS SUPPLY.

Mr. PIESSE asked the Minister for Industries: 1, Is he aware that corn sacks are at present unobtainable in the State? 2, If so, will he state what action is being taken to insure an immediate supply?

The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES replied: 1, Yes. 2, The Government received information some weeks ago that there was likely to be some delay in the arrival of cornsacks due to lack of shipping. Arrangements were immediately made to despatch one of the State steamers to Calcutta to bring down the sacks, but on receipt of definite assurances from the Prime Minister that ample supplies would be forthcoming in good time, it was not thought necessary The department has to send the ship. received information to the effect Calcutta next shipment from Western Australia will not reach Fremantle until about Christmas. will be too late for harvest, urgent representations have been made to the Federal authorities in the hope that arrangements can be made to divert to Fremantle one of the shipments now en route to the Eastern States. With this object in view, telegrams have been despatched to the Prime Minister and Senator Russell, and to Mr. Whitton, the Chief Prices Commissioner, who is in charge of cornsacks. Moreover, the hon. Mr. Baxter, who is in the Eastern States, has been fully apprised of the position, and asked to firmly press our requirements.

SITTING DAYS AND HOURS.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy-Moore) [5.12]: I move—

That the House, unless otherwise ordered, shall meet for the despatch of business on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., and shall sit until 6.15 p.m., if necessary; and, if requisite, from 7.30 p.m. onwards.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle [5.13]: I move an amendment—

That the figures "4.30" be struck out and "2 o'clock" inserted in lieu.

During sessions in the past we have been kept here until one, two, and three o'clock in the morning, and I do not think any person is qualified to properly consider business of the country at those early hours. If this is to be a short session in all probability, especially if we sit during the hot weather, business will be forced on the House in such a manner that members will not have an opportunity of properly discussing it as it should be discussed in the best interests of You, Mr. Speaker, know, but the State. new members do not know, that at two or three o'clock in the morning there are not many members present, and more especially now, as business is to be forced on us with the intention of closing at once, we should have an opportunity of considering the business during an hour or two of the day time. There is some intention of concluding portion of the business of the session this week. Among the Bills on the Notice Paper to be introduced this session are one or two very important measures, each of which will require at least a day's consideration. I think it advisable that we should meet at 2 o'clock instead of 4.30, as there is not the least doubt in my mind members would be able to do better work in the day time than at night. I would remind hon, members that

in times gone by this Parliament has met earlier in the day than half-past four.

Mr. Foley: You always spoke against that proposal when you were a Minister; you are unlucky now.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Every time a motion has been moved in this Chamber to meet at an earlier hour of the day I have voted for it, and I think we should do so, especially at the present time when it is the announced desire of the Government to close down the session at an early date. I realise that the members of the Government have ardnous duties to perform and it is not in the interests of the State that Ministers should be detained in the House until the early hours of the morning.

Mr. LUTEY (Brownhill-Ivanhoe) [5.16]: I second the amendment.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [5.17]: In ordinary circumstances I would be favourable to the House meeting at the usual hour, 4.30; but I think that on this occasion we meet in, if not extraordinary, at least unusual, circumstances. We are nearing the end of the year. Already five months of the financial year have expired, and in view of the decision of the Government to adjourn the session until the middle January, it is quite clear that if we are to give that full, proper, and adequate consideration to the measures to be brought down by the Government next year, and particularly in view of the fact that the discussion on the Budget and Estimates will be of unusual interest and importance this year, if we are to meet at half-past four I am afraid the session will drag on till the end of March, or probably till April. That, as will be known by members of experience, is undesirable. In the circumstances. I think we should meet at an earlier hour. When the Labour Government were office, for one session we met at half-past There was not then the same need as now for our meeting at an earlier hour. We have now a National party with a large preponderance of new members, who, I am sure, are bursting with enthusiasm to get to the business of the House. We should therefore not delay the meeting until 4.30. In all sincerity, I urge the Government to consider the question of meeting at an earlier hour. Unless that is done, I am afraid the session will run on into the next financial year. This Parliament is fresh from the electors and I think we ought to endeavour to show the people that we are imbued with that zeal and ardour with which we endeavoured to impress them before the election, that we should endeavour to live up to our reputation, and for this session at least to meet at an earlier hour in order to try and get the session over before the commencement of the next financial year.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [5.21]: I have always supported the day sittings for Parliament. The member for Boulder has reminded the House that during the term of the Labour Government for a short time Parliament met at half-past three. In Victoria on the final sitting day of each week, Parliament meets at 10 o'clock in the morning—

Hon. P. Collier: So does the Federal Parliament.

Mr. JOHNSTON: And concludes the sittings about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. This enables country members to get home by the afternoon trains. I should like to see an alteration made in the meeting hour, to, say, half-past two, and I think the Government might consider the advisability of starting on the final sitting day each week at 10 o'clock in the morning and adjourning at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

The Colonial Treasurer: What about questions?

Mr. JOHNSTON: From my knowledge working \mathbf{of} the Government service the permanent heads prepare the information for the answers to questions for the Minister. In my opinion the people of Western Australia, who pay us our salaries, are entitled to our time in the day, and not at the end of the day when members are worn out after a day's work. I think, too, the country members are entitled to some consideration, and consideration would be given to us if we were to be permitted to do our work in the day time, at least on one day in the week and return home in the evening.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moora—on amendment) [5.22]: I am not at all sure that by meeting earlier we are

likely to shorten the term of this session of Parliament. My experience is that so long as members are in the House they will continue to talk freely all the time. I admit that late hours are bad, and agree with the hon, member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) when he says he would like to see Parliament close at an earlier hour at night. Members cannot give proper attention to the business of this Assembly when they are wearied out by a late night sitting. At the same time, I think that to sit at 2 o'clock in the atternoon would not be any advantage to the business of the House, nor do I think it would shorten the the session. It might be advisable to meet a little earlier in the day at the end of the week in order to allow members to return The member for North-East Fremantle says that some of the measures on the Notice Paper will practically take days in themselves for discussion, but I would point out that every one of those subjects has already been discussed by this Chamber. The matters to be brought before Parliament during the next few days are merlev Bills to be re-enacted. There is therefore no need for the House to sit earlier, though I agree it would be a good thing if we could close up every evening before half past eleven. I regret I cannot accept the amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [5.27]: I move a further amendment—

That the word "Thursday" be struck out.

The member for Williams-Narrogin has told us that the Federal Parliament and also the Victorian State Parliament meet for business at an earlier hour than we do, and I think that this is a time when we might make this innovation which cannot be otherwise than of advantage to the House. am satisfied from my knowledge of the work of this Chamber that much better business would be done in the daytime than by starting at half-past 4. In the past Bills have been put through this House in the early hours of the morning when memhers were worn out; and at the end of the session business has been transacted at hours when members should not be in the House

at all. There is no reason why we should not make this innovation, and I am satisfied that better work would be done.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [5.29]: I second the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [5.30]: I have no desire to quibble with regard to this matter, but has not the motion dealing with the sitting days of Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and the hours of meeting, been disposed of?

Mr. SPEAKER: An amendment was moved to strike out the hour of 4.30, with the object of inserting another hour, but the amendment was not carried. Therefore the motion is still under discussion as moved by the Premier, and now the member for Mt. Magnet desires to strike out the word "Thursday," with a view of inserting other words.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes				٠.	18
Noes					23
	Majo	rity	against		5
					_
		Ayes	•		
Mr. Angwin Mr. Chesson Mr. Collier Mr. Green Mr. Johnston Mr. Jones Mr. Lutey Mr. Maley Mr. Money Mr. Munsie	ı		Mr. H. J Mr. Roel Mr. Stub Mr. Thoy Mr. Wall Mr. Will Mr. O'Lo	ke nson ker cock	(Teller.)
Nozs.					
Mr. Angelo Mr. Brown Mr. Brown Mr. Davies Mr. Davies Mr. Gerdine Mr. George Mr. Harrison Mr. Hickmot Mr. Hefroy	t		Mr. Mito Mr. Nair Mr. Pick Mr. Pick Mr. Pilki Mr. R. T Mr. Stew Mr. Toes Mr. Und Mr. Very Mr. Hard	n ering ington . Rot art dale erwood ard i wick	

Amendment thus negatived.

Question put and passed.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS, PRE-CEDENCE.

On motion by the PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy) ordered: That on Tuesdays and

Thursdays Government business shall take precedence of all motions and Orders of the Day.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy)
[5.33]: I move—

That for the present Session: 1, the Library Committee shall consist of the Speaker, Mr. Green, and Mr. Smith; 2, the Standing Orders Committee shall consist of the Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, the Attorney General, Mr. Draper, and Mr. Walker; 3, the House Committee shall consist of the Speaker, Mr. Griffiths, Mr. Mullany, Mr. Nairn, and Mr. O'Loghlen; 4, the Printing Committee shall consist of the Speaker, Mr. O'Loghlen, and Mr. Smith.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [5.35]: I notice that in the formation of these Committees there has been a departure from the practice which has been followed ever since I have been a member of this House, that is to say, the practice has been that an equal number of members from both sides has been asked to serve on these Committees. That has been done, too, regardless of the number of members for the time being sitting on the Government side of the House. On the Standing Orders Committee, this side of the House has been allotted only one member, and on the House Committee, again, only one member from this side has been selected, whilst there are three from the Government side. I have never known the party political aspect to be introduced into the appointment of these Committees. 1911, when we were returned with 34 members, and the party who now occupy the Treasury bench had only 16, the personnel of the Committees was equally divided. The same practice was followed in 1914, when we were again returned with a majority. I trust that this side of the House will be permitted to have another member on each of the Committees I have named. Unless the Premier is prepared to agree to add the name of another member from this side of the House to each of these Committees I shall be forced to move an amendment.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore—in reply) [5.40]: I can assure the

leader of the Opposition that there was no intention to offer a slight to the gentlemen who occupy the benches opposite. The procedure which has been adopted is similar to that which was carried out last session. did not know that hon, members were so anxious to fill these positions; I thought they rather wanted to avoid them if possible. It is my desire to see that hon, members who are most likely to find the work on these Committees agreeable to them shall be ap-No exception was taken to the pointed. names suggested last session, and the motion now before hon, members has been framed on exactly similar lines to that passed last session.

Hon. P. Collier: That was the first time the alteration was made.

The PREMIER: No exception was taken to it then and I did not anticipate that any would be taken now. I repeat that there was no intention of offering a slight to honmembers who form the Opposition.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I take it that the Premier has only made an explanation. I stated that if the Premier did not intend to fall in with my suggestion I would move an amendment, and I intend to do so.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon, member was under that impression I will allow him to move an amendment.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I will put myself in order by asking another hon. member to move it.

Mr. MUNSIE (Hannans) [5.43]: I do not desire to name who shall be appointed to these Committees; my object in moving an amendment is to emphasise the fact that the Opposition have only one representative on the two Committees named. The leader of the Opposition has pointed out the course which was followed in 1911 and 1914, but the present practice is a departure from that which has always existed. Now we have 15 members on this side, and following customary procedure we are entitled to equal representation. The Premier says that no exception was taken last session to what he proposes to-day. I would point out that since last session certain of the members nominated for these positions have changed their seats in the House. This is a new Parliament, and in the framing of these committees members on this side ought to have

been consulted. I trust the Premier will reconsider his attitude and give consideration to the wishes of those on this side. I move an amendment—

That in line 3 the words "the Attorney General" be deleted with a view to inserting other words.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [5.48]: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and negatived.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: My reason for the motion was simply to give the Premier and the leader of the Opposition an opportunity of discussing the question. In the appointment of these committees it has ever been customary for the leader of the Opposition to be consulted. Personally I do not care who may be on the committees.

Mr. Thomson: Then why waste the time of the House?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have no desire to waste time. I would like the hon. member to withdraw that, I am simply explaining my reason for having moved the adjournment.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [5.50]: I hope the House will treat the amendment in the way it deserves. It certainly cannot be seriously regarded. The hon member who moved it could not have been serious in his suggestion to remove from this committee the Attorney General, the one Minister who should be on such a committee, not only because of his legal training, his position as Attorney General, but as a representative of the Government to deal with the Standing Orders framed for the conduct of the House.

Hon. P. Collier: The Standing Orders have nothing to do with the Government.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is perfectly well known to the hon, member who has interjected that if there is any member who has taken a keen interest in the Standing Orders it is the Attorney General. If an attempt had been made to remove any other member of the committee there might have been some reason for it. If there is anything which clearly shows the insincerity of the amendment it is the attempt to strike

off from the committee the one member essential to that committee.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [5.53]: I have no desire to strike out the name of the Attorney General, because I remember that when previously the hon, gentleman was a member of the Standing Orders Committee he was very keen in attending to his duties. I cannot understand the attitude of the Minister for Works in claiming that Government should be represented on that committee. The Standing Orders framed exclusively in the interests of the good conduct of the House. Members of the Standing Orders Committee have many matters of importance to consider. well known that this House has frequently come into conflict with another place in regard to the interpretation of the Standing Orders. Therefore it is important that we should have on the Standing Orders Committee men who will take a deep interest in their work, and I can bear testimony to the interest taken by the Attorney General. do not desire to see his name removed from that committee, although I think that in the appointment of a committee of this sort the Premier should consult the leader of the Opposition. The Premier said that the gentlemen who occupied these offices did not take any interest in them, and that the appointments were unimportant. There can be no greater fallacy than that.

The Premier: I said I wanted men in a position to attend to the duties.

Hon. P. Collier: Have we not on this side two men who would attend to the duties?

Mr. TROY: I hold that we should have on that committee men of backbone and character. In 1911 the affairs of Parliament House were in a parlous condition.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon, member will discuss the Standing Orders Committee.

Mr. TROY: For the moment I am not discussing any particular committee, I am discussing the necessity for having on these committees men of character. I do not desire to bring before the House things that have happened in the past because of loose conduct in the administration of the affairs of Parliament House, but I contend that men of character should be on these committees, because much good work could then be

done. If we have on these committees men who, in a spirit of camaraderie and good fellowship overlook things that ought not to be allowed to happen, we shall have again happenings constituting a scandal, as we have had in the past. It will be remembered that one of our caterers became bankrupt, whereupon it was found that members and officers of the House-not the present officers—owed him hundreds of pounds. state of affairs had been allowed to come about as the result of good fellowship and camaraderie among the officers and the members of these committees. However, I have no desire to go too deeply into that phase of the question. I hope these things will never be allowed to happen again.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [5.57]: This matter is not so unimportant as some may think. I have no objection whatever to the Attorney General being on the Standing Orders Committee. The amendment is not aimed at the Attorney General in a personal sense. It is admitted that when the Attorney General previously occupied a position on this committee he took a keen interest in the work, and his legal training was of material assistance to the other members of the committee. But I have raised the point on the principle involved, and I submit that the Premier has failed entirely to answer my contention, or to give any tangible reason for departing from the lifelong principle of the House. To say that the names submitted to us are those of men who will give attention to the work means nothing; that is not the point at all. say the Premier has departed from a practice without giving any reason or explanation for so doing. In the first place-although really I take no exception to this--I was not consulted as to the members to be appointed from this side of the House, has always been the custom for the Premier to take the recommendation of the leader of the party for the time being. However, I know that was a mere oversight on the part of the Premier, and that no slight was in-Still, since attention has been called to the departure from the principle of equal representation for both sides on these committees, the Premier ought to agree to vary the personnel of this committee. The

rights and privileges of members are bound up in the Standing Orders. Those rights may be curtailed or extended by any alteration of the Standing Orders which may be upon the recommendation of the made Standing Orders Committee. That being so, and both sides of the House, irrespective of numerical strength, being equally concerned in preserving the privileges of the House, I think the Premier ought to get back to the old-established practice. It is true that in the brief session held prior to the elections this innovation was introduced; but that session lasted only two weeks, and the alteration passed through unnoticed. The Premier now nominates the same members who were on that committee on the previous occasion, notwithstanding that some them have since changed their politics and their positions in the House.

The Premier: I do not think they have changed their politics.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am certain they have; otherwise they would not be found where they are now.

The Minister for Mines: There have been no such changes since those names were submitted.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Then that is to say that those hon. members have steadily maintained their politics for a period of over two months. I still contend that the previous appointment of that committee was passed through unnoticed.

Mr. Johnston: The Chairman of Committees sat on your side last session.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The member for Menzics (Mr. Mullany) sat on this side of the House when he was appointed. He has now transferred his seat to the other side of the House, and whether such transfer also means a change of politics I do not know. At any rate, the fact is that an alteration has been made. I will not press this, but as a matter of courtesy the Premier ought to agree to give the Opposition the representation upon these committees which they have always had in the House since it has been in existence.

Hon. T. WALKER (Kanowna [6.0]: I trust that the Premier will reconsider the position he has taken up. I am sure he does not desire to act unfairly. I would

refer to the appointment of the committee now under debate as contained in Hansard for 1914. I find there that the Attorney General of the day was not upon that committee, that it was not considered necessary that the Government, as a Government, should be represented on that committee at This is a committee for the regulation of the Standing Orders of this House, and it is within the House that the committee is appointed for the purpose of the protection and proper government of the House. find that the committee in 1914 consisted of Mr. Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, Mr. Hudson, Mr. Robinson, and Mr. James Gardiner, showing clearly that there existed then that fair consideration for the opposite side of the House which is now Such a principle has been demanded. carried out in Parliament so far as I can remember at all times, and my memory goes back a good many years. I cannot in the least understand how the principle was departed from last session. At all events, the departure, such as it was, of last session was only a temporary matter, and apparently went through without having struck anyone at the moment. In fact, it slipped through, in the ordinary way of putting it, but should not be allowed to continue. But a mistake made last session should not be allowed to become a precedent and to be perpetuated. The principle adopted by previous Governments in this matter is one which I do not think we should lightly depart from, To my mind, it is only want of consideration and want of memory as to what has been the custom of the House that have led to the present proposal. I quite agree that there is no intention of reflecting personally upon the Attorney General.

Hon. P. Collier: Or upon any of them.

Hon. T. WALKER: Or upon any of the personnel of the Government or the Government side of the House. There is no objection whatsoever to any of them, but there is an objection to what appears to be a slight to this side of the House, and to the forgetfulness of that fair-mindedness which has been the universal custom up to the present time. I think the Premier might well take the matter into consideration again. Personally I would object to the

Attorney General, as Attorney General, being foisted upon the committee in his official capacity. I have not the slightest objection to the member for Canning being upon the committee, but if it is to be a principle that a member of the Government should be placed upon the committee governing the House, then, in my opinion, an innovation will be constituted which will be a dangerous one. No Government as an Executive governing the country, has really anything to do with the governing of the Assembly itself. This Chamber is a selfcontained body, and is not under the thumb or the management of the Executive of the country in any manner whatsoever. I trust that with all these facts before him, and the undeniable customs which have hitherto prevailed, the Premier will concede what has been asked for.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. MUNSIE (Hannans) [6.5]: I desire to move now that the name of the member for West Perth (Mr. Draper) be deleted from the motion. I am not doing this from any personal feelings towards the hon. gentleman, because I do not know him yet. I would like to take this opportunity, however, of saying in reply to the Minister for Works that there was no intention on my part of casting any slight whatsoever upon the Attorney General in the course of mv previous remarks. My reason for moving the former amendment was that I thought I was doing the Attorney General a service, seeing that the Government had nominated another legal gentleman as a member of this particular committee. The Attorney General has his time quite well occupied as it is in looking after the various State matters concerned in his department, without having to spend his time in going into the question of the legal points that might be raised in connection with this committee. I therefore moved the amendment to strike out the words "the Attorney General."

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon member intending to move a further amendment, because if so, he will not be in order?

Mr. MUNSIE: I had intended to do so, but if I am not in order, I will leave it to some other hon. member to move in the matter.

Mr. GREEN (Kalgoorlie) [6.8]: I move an amendment—

That the name of Mr. Draper be deleted from the motion.

I do this because the member for Hannans is not in order in moving the amendment I regret that the Premier has taken up this attitude in disallowing an allotment equally so far as possible to both sides of the House. It is obvious to me that if the appointments have been made in a haphazard manner, and if there had been no intention in the matter, the Premier would have met this side of the House. I regret that at the beginning of the session, when we were anxious to pass through the business of the House with all concord, the Premier, whom we have found to be fair upon all questions, should now not be able to see his way clear to meet us, and it augurs ill for the business which may follow in this Chamber. I trust that the Premier will yet see that what we are asking for is not an unfair request. If the request is an unfair one, then the custom of the House in the matter in the past has also been unfair, whereas if it was fair for previous Governments to allocate these positions equally to both sides of the House, then it is fair to do so now. I hope, therefore, the Premier will not stiffen his back because of the numbers behind him, but will remember that the custom of the House provides that the principle which we are now asking to be upheld is one which had always been established and one which is eminently fair.

Mr. LUTEY (Brownhill-Ivanhoe) [6.10]: I second the amendment.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore—on amendment) [6.11]: This is the first time that I have ever learned that appointments to these committees constituted a political matter. I never looked upon the question as a political one.

Hon. T. Walker: It is the House.

The PREMIER: Appointments to the Standing Orders Committee are entirely outside the question of politics, and the Standing Orders have nothing whatever to do with the politics of the country. You, Sir, as the Speaker of the House, are entirely outside the political life of the country.

Whilst you occupy that high position, you are there holding the scales of justice between both sides of the House. I did not think for a moment that hon, members would have raised a political question in connection with this matter.

Hon. T. Walker: It is not political, but a matter of justice to both sides of the House.

The PREMIER: The hon, member is trying to make it so.

The Colonial Treasurer: This is the first time that I have ever seen this mad rush to get upon a committee of any kind.

The PREMIER: It was, at any rate, my desire to see upon this committee those hon. members who had been sitting upon it before. These hon. members had taken an interest in their duties, and for that reason I had no intention of asking the House to agree to appoint any other hon. members in lieu of them. Consequently, all those hon. members who filled the positious in the past were left where they were, and the only changes that were made were those which occurred in the cases of members who had not been returned to the House.

Mr. Munsie: That is not so.

The PREMIER: I regret that there has been a storm over a matter of this sort. I apologise to the leader of the Opposition if I have been wrong in not consulting him upon the matter, but I thought that the whole thing was merely a simple question. Most of the hon members had been here before, and I believed that the House would agree at once to their re-appointment.

Mr. Munsie: You are not putting the same members upon the committee. If that had been so, we would not have objected.

The PREMIER: In considering the constitution of the Standing Order Committee, I thought it wise to place upon it hon. members who had some legal experience, and I think that the House generally will admit the wisdom of such a course. We had not in the House the number of lawyers in the past that we now have. I trust that hon. members will not alter the personnel of the committee, but will allow the names which have been put forward from the side of the House to pass through.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [6.13]: I should like to make a suggestion to the Premier.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the Premier has replied upon his motion, the debate will now have been closed.

Hon. P. Collier: I submit that the Premier has only spoken to the amendment moved by the member for Kalgoorlie, and that therefore the hon. member is in order in addressing the House.

Mr. LAMBERT: I suggest to the Premier that the question should be allowed to stand over in order to give him an opportunity of considering it. That would only be a fair course to take, and would possibly enable him to find a way out of the difficulty. I therefore suggest that the debate be adjourned.

Amendment put and negatived. Question put and passed.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

BILL-TRANSFER OF LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Council and read a first time.

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.
The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy-Moore) [7.35]: I move-

That for the remainder of the week the Standing Orders be suspended so far as to enable Bills to be introduced and passed through all stages in one day, and all Messages from the Legislative Council to be taken into consideration on the day on which they are received; also, so far as to admit of the reporting and adopting of the resolutions of Committee of Supply and Ways and Means on the same day on which they shall have passed those Committees, and to enable such business to be entered upon and dealt with before the Address-in-reply is adopted.

As hon, members are aware, the Standing Orders provide that no business can be entered upon or transacted until the Addressin-reply to the Governor's Speech has been adopted. Under certain exceptional circum-

stances, however, in cases of urgent necessity, the Standing Orders provide for suspension in order to allow of the transaction of business prior to the adoption of the Address-in-reply. In asking hon, members to agree to the suspension of the Standing Orders, I regret the necessity for doing so. We have just come back from the country, and the Government had hoped, when the elections were over, to be able to ask Parliament to meet with a view of possibly bringing the session to a close at the end of the year, and so avoiding the inconvenience to hon, members of sitting here during the summer months. Circumstances have arisen. however, which render it necessary for me to ask hon, members to discuss certain business and hereafter to adjourn Parliament for a short period. It came to all of us as a great surprise. I may say as a bolt from the blue, to be asked to cast again a vote on the question of conscription. has been decided by the Federal Government to have another referendum of the people on that question, and undoubtedly members of Parliament and others will be actively engaged during the next few weeks in the conscription campaign. It is for the convenience of hon, members that I ask them to agree to the suspension of the Orders so as to permit of the obtaining of supplies and the re-enacting of a few measures which need to be re-enacted before the close of the year. I feel sure hon, members will agree with me that it would be impossible to give our attention properly to the work of this House while the referendum campaign is in progress. I am sure both sides of the House will agree with me in that. In fact, I think it would be even indecent of us to sit here in the Parliament of this State while so vital a question as that of conscription was about to be placed before the people. No doubt the raising of the question again will create a certain degree of bitterness of feeling, and I regret that the necessity has arisen for again embarking on such a campaign. Some of those sores which had been occasioned by the previous campaign had begun to heal, and I am very sorry that it should be found necessary to repeat the work which was carried on only a year ago. But I am sure the entire House will realise and recognise that

it is our duty, as members of Parliament, not to sit here while the referendum campaign is proceeding. I therefore ask hon members to agree to the suspension of the Standing Orders for the purposes which I have mentioned. I trust there will be no debate on this motion. I submit it to the House with the fullest confidence that I am meeting the views of all hon members.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [7.41]: This motion, so far as it relates to the obtaining of supplies by the Government, merely represents the usual practice. far back as I can remember, it has been necessary for every Government opening day of the session, or in the early stage of the session, to ask for a suspension of the Standing Orders for the purpose of obtaining supplies. The motion, however, goes considerably further than that. carried, it will not only enable the Government to obtain supplies, but also to Bills through all their stages at one sitting and, further, to deal with Messages from another place on the day on which they are With the Premier I regret the necessity for any adjournment of the session, though I scarcely see how that course could possibly be avoided when a question of such importance as that of conscription is before the public. Necessarily, members will wish to take part in the campaign; and, that being so, it would not be convenient for this House to be sitting at the same time. Indeed, I suppose the minds of members will be so much disturbed that it hardly be possible for them to give adequate attention to any business which might be brought before this House. when the Premier consulted me regarding an adjournment of the session, while I informed the Premier that he had the strength and the numbers to carry this or any other motion that he might desire to carry, whether we on this side approve or otherwise. I said also that I did not see there was much option for the Opposition but to agree to the proposition which the Premier intimated he would put forward. I, too, regret extremely that the people of this State are going to be torn once again by conflicting opinions and by dissention, as probably will be thev during the next

weeks, all because-but perhaps I had better not go into that aspect of the At all events, I think that, nucstion. the people of Australia having once decided the matter, it might well have been allowed to rest where it was. However, the powers that be in the Federal Parliament think otherwise, and so we shall have a repetition of the strife and disagreement which characterised the conduct of the campaign last year. I do, however, wish to offer a protest against the suspension of the Standing Orders in the circumstances. weeks have elapsed since the general election was held, and the Government might well have met the House at least two or three weeks ago. In these times of financial stress. Parliament should be engaged in its business of discussing the many difficult financial problems which confront the State; and therefore it was the duty of the Government to call the House together at an earlier date and not allow seven weeks to elapse before meeting the House.

The Premier: The elections are only just over.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know that the whole House should have been delayed because one or two members from the North-West were not in a position to take their seats. That has not been the practice in the past. As a matter of fact, the session has been invariably opened and in existence for some weeks in many cases before the members from the North-West have taken their seats.

The Colonial Treasurer: There was the proposed opening of the Transcontinental line.

Hon. P. COLLIER: In that respect, I may say that I did not agree with the Government proposals for the holding of certain functions. No doubt the opening of the Transcontinental line broke in at a time inconvenient to the Government, but I still think that Parliament could have met earlier. After the 1911 election the House met in three weeks after polling day, and on this oceasion we could have met within a month from the day of the election. More particularly was this desirable this year in order that the fullest time and opportunity might be available to members to discuss the financial position of the State and the

proposals of the Government for dealing with the situation. The Premier has informed us that it was the original intention of the Government to adjourn before Christmas, had the conscription campaign not intervened.

The Premier: To endeavour to do so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That would have been impossible, in my opinion, if members were to do justice to the matters to be discussed. Members who have had experience will admit that the time would be too limited in a session of four weeks for the consideration of taxation proposals and the discussion and consideration of the Estimates. We are faced with the position to-day of being forced to adjourn until the middle of January without discussing, or giving any consideration whatever, to matters of vital importance to the people of the State-all because the Government failed to call the House together at an earlier date. regard to the question of passing Bills through all stages at one sitting. I trust the Premier will give an assurance that there is no intention of unduly rushing through any Bill which there is a desire on the part of members to discuss. The four Bills in the list are re-enacting measures. Nevertheless there is at least one of very great importance, I refer to the Wheat Marketing Bill; and I hope the Premier will afford ample opportunity for discussion on that, as well as on any other Bill in regard to which members may show a desire to indulge in discussion. I hope this will be done even though we may have to sit here for a day or two longer than is now intended. There is no real reason why the House should adjourn before Friday if there be business before us which calls for attention up to that Members will not be starting out to take part in the conscription campaign before the beginning of next week. While I shall offer no opposition to the motion, I urge the Premier to give the House ample opportunity for the discussion of all Bills to be introduced under cover of this motion.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore—in reply) [7.50]: I can assure hon. members that every reasonable opportunity will be given for the discussion of these reenacting measures. It seems to me reason-

able and necessary to re-enact those measures. With regard to the Wheat Marketing Bill, it is proposed only to re-enact the measure, with some small amendment, to bring it into line with opinions expressed in this House. The leader of the Opposition has taken the Government to task for not having called Parliament together earlier. But I would point out that the elections are only just over; in fact, the writs for the Kimberley electoral district have not yet been returned, and it was only within the last few days almost that the member representing Kimberley has an opportunity of getting to Perth. In the circumstances, Cabinet considered they were perfectly in order in their endeavour to give those members an opportunity of being in their seats when Parliament opened. Again, there was the opening of the Trans-Australian railway which interefered with the arrangements for the opening of Parliament; and, although the arrangements for the official opening of that railway have been cancelled, very much to our surprise, I would point out that it had been the intention of members of the Government to attend, as representing Western Australia, at the opening ceremony. It would not be fitting for Ministers to have refrained from representing this State at such an important function. I think the opening of that railway was certainly an important event, although some people appear to think that any opening function was entirely unneces-

Hon. T. Walker: Was that the reason for postponing the opening of Parliament?

The PREMIER: That was one of the The other reason was that the reasons. Government were desirous of seeing members in their places when Parliament was opened. I submit the Government have been in no way blameworthy for having put off the meeting of Parliament until now, though we would all have been glad had it been possible for us to meet earlier. as we would then have been able to carry on our work without being disturbed. Ι am pleased that the leader of the Opposition recognised it would be impossible for members to give that attention to the work of Parliament which is necessary while a referendum campaign was proceeding, and

I thank the hon. member for not entering any opposition to the proposal I now submit to the House.

Question put and passed.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES, ELECTION.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore) [7.56]: I move—

That the member for Wagin (Mr. Stubbs) be appointed Chairman of Committees.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [7.57]: I am sorry that I feel bound to oppose the motion moved by the Premier. I do so for the reason that I desire to renominate the member for Murchison (Mr. Holman) and I shall later move an amendment to that effect. I need not give the assurance to hon, members, and particularly to the member for Wagin (Mr. Stubbs) himself, that in opposing this nomination to the position I am not actuated by any personal motive. As a matter of fact, I had the privilege and honour earlier in this year of nominating that hon, member for a still higher office, that of Speaker of this House; but my friend's modesty on that occasion would not permit him to accept the nomination. I think it will be conceded that Mr. Holman, during the six years he has filled the position of Chairman of Committees in this House, has given complete satisfaction to the members of the two Parliaments. Therefore, in submitting the name of some other hon, member on this occasion, I conclude that the Government are not doing so because of any failure on the part of Mr. Holman. I recognise that the Government in this instance are merely following the practice-a pernicious practice perhapsadopted in the past, which is best described by the designation, "Spoils to the victors."

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But there are no parties in this Parliament.

The Minister for Works: It is your fault that there are any parties.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am reminded that the Government are merely following a course which was pursued by the Government of which I was a member in 1911, in nominating members from their own side of the House to fill offices in this Chamber. Whilst that is true I had hoped that we had arrived at a better age. I have read frequently in the Press of this State during the past few months that the time had arrived in our history when party politics should be abandoned. Party politics have been abandoned so far as I am concerned; I believe I belong now to the only National party in the State.

Mr. Thomson: It is only your belief.

Hon. T. Walker: It is more than a belief.

Hon. P. COLLIER: When we formed in this State a National party, I had hoped that this practice of "spoils to the victors" or party politics would be abandoned for ever.

Mr. Harrison: Who is the stumbling block?

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member is, because I find he is still the same voting machine in caucus to-day as he has always been. The hon. member and those associated with him—and, by the way, the hon. member is the father of the idea of Nationalism in politics—I understand, took part in a ballot at a party meeting either yesterday or to-day, at which party the member for Wagin was selected for the nomination of Chairman of Committees.

Mr. Harrison: It is a pity you and your colleagues were not there also.

Hon. P. COLLIER: My object in nominating the member for Murchison is that at the very commencement of the life of our Parliament we should see that we do not start on the wrong track. Already by the action of the Government we are making this a party matter. They have already vitiated the National atmosphere of Chamber, and now we have the position of hon, members declaring that they have come to this Parliament absolutely free to exercise their own judgment upon all or any of the measures that may be brought forward. We lind, however, that at this early stage of our history their hands are absolutely tied by caucus decision. The member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) who moved the Address-inreply yesterday, complimented the Government upon the abolition of party politics in this Chamber. He told the House that he

was absolutely free to exercise his own judgment on all matters that were brought before the House, and that he would be responsible to his electors. I submit that the hon. member is not free to exercise that judgment upon this particular matter, because he has to fall into line and accept the vote of the party which was given at the meeting either vesterday or this morning. If the hon, member was free, and other hon, members were free as well, this matter of the appointment of Chairman of Committees would not have been decided at a party meeting, but would have been left an open question for hon. members to decide according to their own judgments, and without being bound. There is not an hon, member who took part in that ballot that is not honourably bound to abide by the decision of that majority-even the member for Williams-Narrogin, Mr. Johnston.

· Mr. Troy: He is no longer an independent.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We shall have the extraordinary position, having regard to what took place in this Chamber in the early part of this year between the member for Williams-Narrogin and the member for Wagin, of the former hon, member being bound to record his vote for the member for Wagin.

The Minister for Works: Why bound?

Hon. T. Walker: Because the machine has got him.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Bound by the vote that was recorded at the party meeting. And this is the hon. member, and ofhers with him, who have talked so much and so freely regarding their liberty and freedom.

Mr. Harrison: Your amendment has not yet been put to the vote.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member will have an opportunity of recording his vote, and having some knowledge of the manner in which he fell into line last Parliament. I have no doubt of the direction in which his vote will go on this occasion. Anyhow, the vote will afford the public an opportunity of judging as to whether members are bound to caucus decision. I have no doubt myself as to its direction, but I do say it would have been well if the Government had lived up to their professions of

Nationalism and the abandonment of party politics in connection with the appointment of the Chairman of Committees. The public will now be able to judge as to the sincerity of the talk that has been indulged in during recent months with regard to the abolition of party politics. If there is one question or one matter more than another that will come before this House, to which we might expect the application of National principles, it is with regard to the appointment of a member to the position of Speaker or that of Chairman of Committees. Yet we are starting off at the outset of our career along party lines, thus emphasising the statement that I and others associated with me have been making with regard to the professions of Nationalism by our friends opposite. I regret that the party opposite have made this a question of "spoils to the victors." As one who occupied a position in the Government of this country for some years, and a Government, too, which had as large and as unwieldy a majority as now sits behind the Government---

Mr. Underwood: You did it in-

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon, member contributed largely to doing in that majority of ours. That famous statement of his about the farmers getting work will help to do in the party he is now associated with. I congratulate the Government on their acanisition of this hon, member. The Government will no doubt appreciate the opportunity of appointing one of their number to this position, because large majorities are somewhat embarrassing to Governments, and even with the number of portfolios and Honorary Ministerships that are available, it is necessary, in order to satisfy a number of their supporters, that the Speakership and the Chairmanship of Committees should be at their disposal. I move-

That the words "member for Wagin Mr. Stubbs," be struck out with a view of inserting other words.

When the division takes place I do at least hope to see that the member for Williams-Narrogin will range himself amongst the members on this side of the House.

Mr. Johnston: I will vote for the better candidate.

the	following	result	:		
	Ayes			 ٠.	13
	Noes			 	26
					_

			_
Majority	against	 	13
			_

Amendment put and a division taken with

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Munste
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Rocke
Mr. Collier	Mr. Troy
Mr. Draper	Mr. Walker
Mr. Green	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Lambert	Mr. O'Loghlen
Mr. Lutey	(Teller.)

AYES.

Noes.			
Mr. Angelo Mr. Broun Mr. Foley Mr. Gardiner, Mr. George Mr. Hickmott Mr. Hudson Mr. Johnson Mr. Lefroy Mr. Mitchell Mr. Money Mr. Money Mr. Money Mr. Money Mr. Mr. My	Mr. Pickering Mr. Plesse Mr. H. Robinson Mr. R. T. Robinson Mr. Smith Mr. Stewart Mr. Stubbs Mr. Teesdale Mr. Thomson Mr. Underwood Mr. Veryard Mr. Brown (Teller.)		

Amendment thus negatived. Question put and passed.

Mr. STUBBS (Wagin) [8.14]: Permit me to say that I deeply appreciate the great honour which has been conferred upon me, and that with the kind assistance of hon. members I shall endeavour to discharge the duties pertaining to the office of Chairman of Committees in a faithful and satisfactory manner.

BILL-SUPPLY, £310,000. Message.

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

In Committee of Supply.

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

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. J. Gardiner-Irwin) [8.15]: I move-

That there be granted to His Majesty on account of the services of the year 1917-18 a sum not exceeding £310,000.

I offer you, Sir, my hearty congratulations upon your election as Chairman of Committees. I feel sure that with the assistance of the Committee you will be able to discharge the duties of your office in a way that

will reflect credit on the Committee and yourself. I also wish to pay my tribute to the highly capable manner in which the late occupant of that Chair discharged his duties. I refer to the member for Murchison (Mr. Holman).

Mr. O'Loghlen: He deserved a continuance of the office:

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Before adjourned last session, the mittee were good enough to grant supplies for five months, calculated the expenditure of the previous year. Those supplies comprised £1,456,000 from Revenue, £400,000 from Loan, £70,000 Property Trust Account, £300,000 from Temporary Advances to the Treasurer, or £2,226,000 in all. I promised the Committee then that I would try to see how little of this money I could use, rather than how much. As a result, I am now asking for only £300,000 from Revenue, which will carry me on to the end of January, instead of £550,000 which would be required if calculated on last year's expenditure. I require nothing from Loan, for I am going to make the £400,000 suffice till the end of January. I require only £10,000 from Property Trust Account, and nothing at all from Treasurer's Temporary Advance. I think the Committee will agree with me that in these circumstances I have redeemed at least one promise given to the Committee. I expect the smallest Supply Bill for two months ever requested. I made another promise. It was that immediately the new Parliament should meet I would be prepared to lay the Estimates on the Table —and I trust that those Estimates will be found acceptable in accordance with the wish of the House and of the State. Notwithstanding the fact that we have been in office only a little over four months, during which time we have had to meet Parliament, we have had an unfortunate strike, a general election, and a mess-up over the Great Western Railway, notwithstanding this I have those Estimates ready, and had nothing intervened I would have been prepared to deliver my financial statement to-morrow night. However, I cannot do that, but I do conceive it my duty on the first possible oceasion to take the House and the Committee

into my confidence and with the fewest possible words and the fewest possible figures try to place before the Committee and through them, the country, the financial position of Western Australia. The reason why I feel this is because I am not a servant of this side of the House alone. I realise that I am a servant of the whole House, and through the whole House, particularly at this juncture, I am the servant of the people and of the constituents who returned me. I do not purpose dealing with anything pertaining to last year. The present is all that I can realise. From the past I only desire to gather lessons of what not to do, and leave it there. The only way in which I shall use last year will be to make a comparison as between last year and this year. revenue for last year was £4,577,007; the anticipated revenue this year is £4.481.996. or a decrease in revenue of £95.011. The expenditure for last year was £5,276,764; the estimated expenditure this year is £5,171,920, or a decrease in expenditure of £104.844. This reduction in expenditure includes the suspension of the sinking fund from the 1st January next year, totalling £186,185. Without this deduction our estimated expenditure for the year would show an increase, not a decrease, an increase of £81,341. By deducting the decrease of revenue, £95,011 and the increase of expenditure, £S1,341, I am facing the financial year £176,352 to the bad. Notwithstanding this disability I expect to end the year, if my anticipations are realised-I think hon. members will agree that it is really at the present juncture a difficult task to foresee two or three months ahead-if my anticipations are realised and the Government proposals are carried I expect to end the year with a deficit of £564.924 as against last vear's deficit of £699.757 or a reduction of £135,000. Now with further figures in this statement I am only going to deal in round numbers. The shortage of revenue is due to an anticipated decline in railway receipts this year of £117,400, land and timber receipts £4,000, water supply £19,700, Yandanooka estate £7,000, the Commonwealth £12,000, or a total of £160,100. But we are going to have increases. The increases are, from trading concerns £51,000, bacon and butter factory £12,600-here is a new item: past Ministers will understand how these new items creep in-sundries £1,500, or an increase of £65,100. If we deduct that from £160,100, it leaves £95,000 deficiency. Dealing with the shortage in railway receipts, it is estimated that the total shortage of those receipts this year will be no less than £172,000. But we anticipate getting additional revenue of £54.000. How we are going to get this additional revenue is one of the stiffest problems I have ever tackled. are satisfied—and I do not think I am saving this only for the members of the Committee; I am saying it for a large number outside the House that the present method of imposing freights is not good either scientifically or developmentally. Whilst we desire, and intend if we possibly can, to devise a scheme whereby the amount named can be raised, we want encouragement given to those who are attempting to develop our back country, both land and mineral. have had many offers of assistance from both sides of the House. If any member has specific knowledge of how to deal with the intricate question of adjusting these freights so that they will give us the revenue we require, and still assist development, I shall be very glad if he can assist me to solve the problem. The shortage in the consumption of water from the Goldfields Water Scheme accounts for £19,700, while the Commonwealth reduction shown is the reduction of £10,000 a year plus, I expect, some shortage on the 25s, per head. The increases are from the trading concerns, principally from the profits of our ships. I will deal with these later on, as I intend to lay before the Committee the earnings of all the trading concerns as represented by their balance sheets on the 30th June.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Just pause awhile and let that sink in.

Mr. Munsie: Let hon. members consider it, particularly your colleague, the Minister for Works.

Hon. T. Walker: You all had the mania. The COLONIAL TREASURER: Although the gross revenue of the State is anticipated to be, roughly, £4,481,996, the actual net cash left me to administer the whole of the State is £2,505,479. Naturally when people see that the State has a revenue of nearly four and a half

millions, they think "Goodness gracious! one ought to be able to finance a little State containing 300,000 people on that and have something in pocket, instead of a deficit." But when it is brought down to a cash basis it makes a vost deal of difference, and instead of having four and a half millions, I have actually to administer the whole affairs State with a cash balance of £2,505,479. And this is what I have to do special Acts take £1,832,641. with it: These special Acts are as follows:-Interest and Sinking Fund, £1,717, 641; His Excellency the Governor, etc., £11,400; Parliamentary Allowances-I think we have heard something about these during the election campaign-£25,400; Pensions and Retiring Allowances, £22,000; Land Improvement Loan Fund, £15,000; University of Western Australia, £13,500; Tramways Purchase Act, £3,900; Aborigines, £10,000; sundry items, including judges, etc., £13,800, or a total of £1,832,641. I have to pay that away whether I like it or not. We all know that the interest bill has to be paid if we are to protect our securities. In this case these are obligations which I have to meet whether I like it or not. When I have met these I have £672,838 left, and I have to pay the whole of the administration of the State out of it. That amounts to £1,362,762. I do not know how any hon, member would like to have only £672,000 with which to meet an expenditure of £1,362,000. The result is I am faced with a deficit, after paying for the whole of the administration, of £689,924. I anticipate from taxation measures, which will be laid before the Committee, and which include an income tax, an extra tax on dividends and an extra stamp duty tax, realising for the six months of the year £100,000. think I can effect further savings on these estimates of at least £25,000. I am adopting business methods with regard to this. telling the departmental heads Ministers-incidentally making myself unpopular-quite plainly that whilst these estimates are their final estimates, having been sent back in several instances six or seven times, they have to get through on less money than the amounts they have provided. If we deduct that we shall then arrive at the deficit which I have shown of

£564,924. I hope I have made it quite clear to the Committee that this is the position of affairs in the State, that this is the actual cash we have; that this is what we have to do with it, and that this is a deficit we will have to carry over afterwards. I wish to draw the Committee's attention to this fact, that part of the increased expenditure, roughly, amounting to £40,000, is for increased wages in the railways, in the police, in the public works, and on account of what are known as statutory increases in the Government service, that is in allowing men to go up from, say, £156 to £204 a year. There is another provision which we have had to use a great deal during the war, and that is that when a man takes a higher position he is paid a higher salary. The most striking thing in the public expenditure is the cost of our domestic administration. By domestic administration I mean that administration which we know as public policy, and which has been the policy alike of every Government that has been in power. The expenditure in this direction totals no less a sum than £813,628, made up as follows:-Aborigines £19,049, Gaols £19,795, Lanaey and Inebriates £64,246, Medical and Public Health £163,169, State Children Department £54,014, Police £133,307, Education £360,048, totalling £813,628. When general discussion upon the Estimates comes it will be for the Committee to say how far we can continue many of these items of expenditure, or to what extent they shall be curtailed. This Committee can readily understand that it is not within the power of a Minister or within the control of the Government to make inroads into these particular votes without the consent of the Committee. We may look into the administration most carefully so far as we can, but outside that, when it becomes a matter of public policy, it is for this Chamber alone to decide whether and how far we can continue to advance in this direction, and to what extent there should be curtailment.

Mr. O'Loghlen: You have already started retrenchment, have you not, prior to consulting the House?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It is within the power of Ministers to effect retrenchment, but this is a question regarding matters of public

policy. It may be reasonable to ask why the expenditure is so much more than it was last year. For the information of the Committee I have taken out statutory and special items which we have to provide this year, that are increases on those of last These total no less a sum than £245,000. As against this there was an item in last year's estimates for loss on control of trade, totalling £45,000, and a decrease in compassionate allowances, totalling £5,000, really that we are providing £201,000 more expenditure, allowing for these two items, this year than Here are some of the did last year. items-increase in Interest and Sinking Fund £138,000, Education £26,000---

Mr. Munsie: Is that for the half year's Sinking Fund?

COLONIAL TREASURER: The Ιt not touch that. That the does Fund. whole Interest and Sinking elections Other items are general \mathbf{of} provisions, clothing, £9.000. cost venereal disease and other things £6,000, increase in wages of police £9,000, and as if things were not bad enough for us the Creator took a hand here and gave us floods, which will cost us for roads and bridges something like £10,000, and repairs due to damage by floods to wharves, jetties, and other structures something like £27,000, statutory increases £10,000, and small items amounting to £16,000, making a total of £251,000 in all. These are items over which I have no control, and over which, no matter who occupied the position of Treasurer, no one could have had any control. I deduct from this the big item of loss on control of trade and compassionate allowances, making up £50,000, showing a sum of £201,000 which I had more to pay this year than was to be paid last year. Roughly, the position is that we have a shortage of revenue of £95,000 and an increased expenditure of £201,000, or £296,-000 in all. From this deduct £186,000 Sinking Fund. With regard to the Sinking Fund I have communicated with the Treasurers in the Eastern States, Queensland, New South Wales, and South Australia, and find that those States are by Act of Parliament suspending payment to their sinking funds.

Hon. P. Collier: All those States have not had a sinking fund.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: They have all a sinking fund more or less, but have suspended it, though they have not a real sinking fund such as we have.

Hon. P. Collier. They have in South Australia.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: That State has been utilising its surplus as such. This shows £110,000. This brings interest bill £10,000 our below that of last year, and without allowing for increased taxation shows a saving in administration and other things of £135,000. Assuming that saving could have been spread over a period of 12 months it would have been nearer £150,000. It is idle for me to tell the Committee that I am satisfied with that. not, although I have done my best in trying to keep my promise to the House. I have rather been looking for the big amounts than looking into the details. Those members of the Committee who have been members of previous Governments will agree with me when I say there are dozens and dozens of instances in which economies could be effected. Indeed all hon, members must know this. I cannot effect these economies, however, in 24 hours and cannot have a hundred eyes to see into them.

Hon, P. Collier: You are not the only Minister in the Government.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It is no use the hon, member trying that old gag on me. Let him try that on some of the younger members. Let him not be absurd.

Hon. P. Collier: Are not the other Ministers assisting you?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Of course they are.

Hon. P. Collier: You say you have no time to attend to the whole of these matters. The COLONIAL TREASURER: Cer-

tainly not.

Hon. P. Collier: Then what are the other Ministers doing?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: They are assisting me. The hon, member himself knows that eventually all these things come to the Treasurer.

Hon. P. Collier: A Minister controlling a department ought to be in a better position to say how economies could be effected than the Treasurer who is not in control of that department.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I am glad to hear the hon, member say that, because when we come to the department which he has control of he will be able to give us some useful information as to how economies could be effected there. Every Minister knows that finally he has got to pass the Treasurer, and the lender of the Opposition knows that as well as The further £25,000 economy which I think I can effect includes some of the departments only partially touched at present.

Hon. P. Collier: Have you given the figures of the amount of economies that you are already effecting?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The estimates are £135,000.

Hon. P. Collier: Covering the year?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Covering practically from January downwards. If these economies could have been effected for the whole year, probably the amount would have been £150,000. They are not all the economies; I do not wish to mislead the House. The further £25,000 economy includes, as I say, some of the departments only partially touched. When I use the word "I," I only do so because I am the This amount includes economies in the administration of Parliament itself. It will be for members themselves to sav whether these economies shall be effected or not.

Hon. P. Collier: There have been some economies introduced in some of the departments of Parliament House without our consent.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: At any rate, these economies are going to affect members of Parliament to a far greater ex-There will be tent than any department. other questions upon which the Committee will be asked to give its decision. That is practically the financial position as it stands I anticipate ending the financial to-day. year with £135,000 less deficit than we had last year. I have tried, just in the fewest figures, to tell the Committee exactly how the State stands. Now we come to the State trading concerns. The conduct by the Government of these concerns has been the subject of much comment lately.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Not half so much as a

couple of years ago.
The COLONIAL TREASURER: I can only say that the Government are trying to conduct these concerns on business lines, and that whenever the concerns come into competition with private firms-however regrettable that may be-it is our duty to the country and to ourselves, plainly, to pursue the course we have mapped out until Parliament otherwise determines. I am taking the amounts shown in the balance sheets of the State trading concerns for the year ended the 30th June last. The State Steamship Service earned a profit of £70.618 7s. Sd., and made provision for interest £11,561 1s. 6d., sinking fund £74 17s. 9d., and depreciation £12,494 14s. 9d. That concern has a redemption fund in respect of the "Kangaroo" amounting to £5,250. The sawmills for the same year showed a profit of £1,975 making 6d., after provision interest £15,900 16s, Sd., and depreciation £12,241 15s. 7d. The quarries made a profit of £443 2s. 1d., after allowing interest £265 1s. 6d., sinking fund £46 19s. 7d., and depreciation £67 2s. Sd. The brickworks show a loss of £1,528 2s. 9d., after making provision for interest £872 12s, and depreciation £384 9s. 3d. It is fair for me to tell the Committee what a public works officer told me regarding the brickworks. He said that the brickworks, even if they did not pay, represented a very good policeman, and that the probabilities are that the country is none the poorer for the investment in them, by reason of the difference in the price of bricks.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Is not the interest bill heavier on account of the works having been closed down?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I will allow that. The Implement Works show a loss of £27,501 19s. 11d., after providing interest £14,754 12s. 3d., sinking fund £39 1s. 1d., and depreciation £5,887 16s. 4d.

Member: Is the full interest charged on the capital outlay of the works, without anything being written down?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: There is nothing written off the capitalisation, but the day will come when we will have to do

that. The ferries show a profit of £41 12s. 5d., after providing interest £567 16s. and depreciation £601 17s. 11d. Meat distribution shows a profit of £249 6s. 2d., after making provision for interest £46 4s. and depreciation £113 6s. 2d. The profit on the Government's cattle deal last year was £24,902 2s. 10d. I may sum up these figures for the Committee by stating that for last year the profit on the whole of the State trading concerns was £99,475 3s. 4d., less losses £29,030, a difference of £70,000 odd profit after providing interest £45,748, sinking fund £420 18s. 5d., and depreciation £33,099 8s. 8d. Having outlined to the Committee the operations for last year, I will now state what we anticipate getting in cash from these enterprises during the current year. From State brickworks we expect £254, from State ferries £187, from State hotels £1,342, from State quarries £640, from the State Steamship Service £117,850—that is eash, but the capital account will go up £3,896-and from State sawmills £9,772, which will be represented by stock on hand. The anticipated loss on shipment of cattle from the North-West amounts for this year to £32,504.

Hon. P. Collier: Is that for the season which has just passed?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: No: for the season that is not quite past.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Is that the deal made by the late Premier?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Yes.

Mr. Troy: What is the reason for the loss?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: So far as one can gather, the reason is simply that the season for sheep has been exceptionally good, and that therefore the cattle this year have not realised nearly the prices they brought in the previous year. Stock owners have benefited, and the consumer has benefited; but there is no disguising the fact that the taxpayer has to make up the loss of £32,000. That is the position. The estimated amount to be transferred from the trading concerns to Consolidated Revenue is £94,177. Concerning the steamers, we have had a statement to-night. The charters which have been fixed for the 12 months ending June, 1918, mean earnings of £266,000. Just to relieve the minds of hon.

members of any feeling of soreness due to the "Kangaroo's" having to be towed 1,500 miles. I may mention that that is a charge which will have to be borne on general average by the insurance companies. now give the Committee a rough outline of the loan expenditure for the year. In view of the stringency of the money market, and in view of the financial outlook, it has been necessary to carefully scrutinise the loan expenditure, and as a result of that scrutiny it has been found imperative to stop some works and to curtail others. I want the Committee to realise that, however willing the Government may be, we must at the present juncture cut our coat according to The total expenditure on loan our cloth. account for the current financial year will be £850,000. That is roughly what the expenditure was last year. The Wyndham meat works represent the largest item of that expenditure. I think it will be admitted that, having started the works, we must complete them; we cannot stop half way. The Commonwealth has yet to provide this State with £635,000 on account of the year ended 30th June, 1917. That is in accordance with the arrangement which the Commonwealth made.

Mr. Munsie: The Commonwealth made other arrangements, too, but have not yet come to light with the cash.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: When I interviewed the Commonwealth Treasurer he told me that I could draw on him for a considerable proportion of that amount if I was stuck. However, I think I can husband this State's financial resources so as not to be compelled to draw on that amount materially; and I believe that course will commend itself to hon, members. they will agree that if I can possibly get through the year without trenching on that amount, I ought, in view of the further outlook for next year, to do so. The Commonwealth have already notified us that for the next financial year we shall have to put up with one half of what we got this year. Further, I cannot disguise from myself, and I do not think any member of the Committee can disguise from himself the fact, overshadowing us all the time, that we have to make provision for a deficit. I think I can provide so as not to draw to any considerable extent upon that £635,000 of money to come from the Commonwealth. I want the people of this State to realise that we cannot borrow ourselves into prosperity, that we cannot tax ourselves into prosperity, and that we cannot retrench ourselves into prosperity.

Hon. P. Collier: We are hard up against it, then.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Yes. To show that we cannot borrow ourselves into prosperity, I need only mention that during the last three years this State has borrowed between five and six pounds, and that during the same term the has increased from £446,000 There is the whole argument £2,060,000. in a nutshell; nothing more is needed to prove that we cannot borrow ourselves into We must, however, still find prosperity. money for the development of our primary and secondary industries. That is an obligation on whoever sits here-I do not care whether it is myself, or the leader of the Opposition, who I know does not envy me my present task, or anybody else. Whoever sits here must realise what we have to do in that direction. For this purpose I intend asking Parliament to pass a measure making all fire insurance companies operating in this State put up a cash depositeash this time, no bricks and mortar. The amount of the deposit I propose to fix at £5,000 per company, on which amount the State will pay the companies $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest. The measure would bring in from £150,000 to £200,000, and it is the Government's intention to earmark that sum as far as possible for the development of primary and secondary industries.

Mr. Troy: That is a forced loan.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: It is money on which the State will pay 4½ per cent. interest, and therefore it must be a loan.

Mr. Troy: We are going to borrow compulsorily.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The object is to make sure that I shall have some funds to help the primary and secondary industries.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It amounts to commandeering money.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I want these terms in order to secure the country as far as possible, and in order to assist these various co-operative concerns. I would not confine the assistance to the co-operative societies only. I think there are industries which we can wisely assist other than butter, bacon, cheese, and jam factories. believe they are here; and no matter how hard up we may be, I want that sum kept, if possible, for that specific purpose. I would like here to strike a note of warning, and that is that if those co-operative concerns are to be a success I hope, with my friend the member for Greenough (Mr. Maley), that they will receive the assistance of the people themselves. I want to see them as successful as they are in Victoria, where the men themselves are shareholders, and their being shareholders ensures that they will have to keep them going. That is one of the main things necessary if we are to make our secondary industries a success-each individual shareholder must feel upon himself an obligation to see that the supply is there to keep it at full level.

Mr. O'Loghlen: What will happen if the companies do not pay up?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: hon, member need not worry about that; they will be only too glad. They will not be able to carry on business unless they do. In view of all the circumstances I still think that I have not taken on unduly depressing view of the outlook. At any rate, I wish to tell members that the obligation and responsibility for the finances rests on them as well as on the Government or the Treasurer. may say that most of the suggestions for taxation which I have received have been suggestions for the taxing of other people, and the first man who comes to me with a suggestion which will mean the taxing of himself, I shall believe to be in earnest. I want members to realise that it is useless for them to come into this House and ask questions for the sake of keeping themselves sweet with their constituents when they know that the Government cannot grant the request. Responsibility for the financial position is as much on the shoulders of members as on those of anybody else.

Mr. Troy: Where is that policy going to lead to?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: So far as I am concerned, I am going to throw as much responsibility as I can on to members, because I feel that members are responsible. Let us show the same courage in tackling our disadvantages that the nation is showing to-day in tackling hers; let there be some reflection of that spirit, and I venture to say that this State will then be the better for it when we get back to normal times. Members on the Opposition side, and also some on the Government side, have been good enough to say, "Do all you can, and we will help." That is the proper spirit. I have felt it to be my duty to-night to take the House into our confidence to the I honestly regret fullest possible extent. that I am not now making a Budget speech. Mr. O'Loghlen: You are going pretty

close to it.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: If I had been, I should have felt that I had got a great load of trouble off my shoulders. I have given the Committee the concrete position so far as it has been possible for me to do, and I trust I have given members evidence of our determination to do what Parliament wants the Government to do. I have every confidence in asking the Com-

mittee to grant me this supply. Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [9.5]: The Treasurer disclaims having delivered a Budget speech, and whilst the figures he has given are fairly exhaustive, it is not my intention at this stage to indulge in anything in the nature of a criticism of the financial position of the State as disclosed by the figures given by the Treasurer. It is unfortunate that matters of this description are being discussed under existing circumstances. When the Treasurer came before us on the last occasion, I think in July, he asked for supply for five months up to the end of November. On that occasion the Treasurer stated he was asking the Committee to give him a blank cheque. It is unfortunate, but I suppose in the circumstances unavoidable, that the Treasurer is asking for another blank cheque now to carry him on to the end of January. position will therefore be that seven months of the financial year will have expired before this House has an opportunity for fully discussing the financial condition of the

State and the Government's proposals for meeting it. I referred earlier in the evening to the circumstances which necessitated this course, but as those circumstances are unavoidable there would be no use my referring to that again. I do not remember since I have been in this House any year in which seven months' supply has been granted to any Government prior to the House having an opportunity of dealing with the Government's financial proposals as embodied in the Estimates. As I have already said, there has never been an occasion in the history of the State when there was greater need for the fullest possible opportunity of discussing these matters than exists at present. The Committee, however, have to take the Government on trust at least until the Budget has been brought. The Treasurer has stated that the responsibility is not his alone, or even the Government's, but that the responsibility rests on the whole of the Committee and that it belongs also to the Opposition. That may be true to a certain extent, but I must disclaim any responsibility for the financial position to-day as disclosed by the Treasurer. The Opposition cannot shoulder any responsibility for the reason that they have not been in possession of the Treasury bench and have not controlled the policy of the Government, financial or otherwise; they have had no part in the administration of the State's affairs. The Treasurer has unfolded a doleful tale, if I may use such a word. I think it would be wise on the part of the Treasurer in placing the facts before the Committee and the country not to indulge in too pessimistic a strain. There is certainly necessity for the truth to be told in order that the public may realise their obligations. At the same time, there is the possibility, if too pessimistic a tale be told, of it reacting in the very opposite direction to that which the Treasury desires. Pessimism will tend to restrict the general activities and industries of the State, and that in turn would be reflected in the financial returns to the State. Whilst the Treasurer should place these facts fully before the Committee, I think he ought not to be unduly pessimistic. It is interesting to recall the attitude taken by members opposite two years ago. I recollect well that when the

Labour party occupied the Treasury bench there was then no question of the Opposition accepting the responsibility for the position of the finances or the administration of the Labour Government. I recall, as a matter of fact, that members opposite when sitting on this bench rose in their place and bewailed what they described as the insolvent position of the State due to the incapacity and mal-administration of the Government of the day.

Mr. Pickering interjected.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have no doubt the hon. member was of the opinion of those members to whom I have referred. I am pleased he now has a seat in the House, because the Committee will have the benefit of his advice and assistance. As I said, I recall that the then financial position was said to be due—to use a hackneyed phrase—to want of business training and to incapacity on the part of the Government. The Treasurer to-day has in the Government's following a larger proportion of men with business training if one may judge by their election speeches, than ever occupied seats in this House.

Mr. Teesdale: You never saw my speeches, therefore you do not know what I said.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If the hon. member will provide me with a copy I shall be pleased to read it, but if the hon, member's speeches differ in any way from speeches of members I have read, I shall be surprised indeed. The fact remains that we have a large number of business men in the House, and I hope they will give the Government and the Treasurer the benefit of their advice and assistance. As my friend Mr. Hughes has said on so many occasions, now is the time to act, and those hon. members are in a position to give the Treasurer valuable assistance. The outstanding fact is that whilst the Labour Government was condemned on all hands for the financial position to which they brought the State, that position has gone from bad to worse since the present Ministers have occupied the Treasury bench.

The Minister for Works: The present Government are not responsible.

Hon. P. COLLIER: As I said on a previous occasion, I should be pleased if the

Minister would fix the date from which he is prepared to accept responsibility for the financial position of the State. Whilst the Treasurer is dealing with the present, I would remind him of the fact that the majority of his colleagues have been in office for the past 16 or 17 months, so that whilst he might not feel inclined to shoulder the responsibilities of the position dating back prior to his acceptance of office, that does not apply to his colleagues now sitting on his left. Surely this 16 or 17 months is a sufficiently reasonable time in which to show We have results certainly, but in results. a direction opposite to those promised. The deficit has been mounting up, and last year in round numbers it totalled approximately £700,000. Now the Treasurer hopes to end this financial year with a deficit of £564,900. and that only after having imposed additional taxation to the extent of £100,000 and with the suspension of the sinking fund. The Treasurer did not dwell upon the suspension of that sinking fund, and, as a matter of fact, I did not catch the figures.

The Colonial Treasurer: From January, £186,000. The interest falls due in this period of the year.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is an advantage for the Treasurer. In effect had not the Treasurer suspended payment of the sinking fund, he would have been £36,000 to the bad, and the position would have been no better than it was in the last financial year; as a matter of fact, it, would have been worse. We have the position, therefore, that in the first year of the present Government's administration they went to the bad to the extent of £700,000, and if the suspension of the sinking fund be not taken into consideration, the second year would end even worse.

The Colonial Treasurer: You know you did so much borrowing that I have to pay £130,000 additional interest.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I will give in the increased payments in interest on account of the borrowing of the Labour Government, and even then they will not account for the difference in the deficit the hon. member will have and the largest deficit the Labour Government had. If I give all that in—the increased amount payable by way of interest—even then the Government will come

out badly by comparison with the administration on the part of Labour Governments.

Mr. Nairn: They must be pretty bad, then.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member has lapsed into silence now that the State is drifting on to the rocks, but he used to be a very active critic we were in office, although position was not then as bad as it is now. There is scarcely a matter to which one could not refer that members sitting on the Government side of the House did not roundly condemn the Labour Government for, that they are now either adopting themselves, or which they are now themselves supporting. I remember that when the question of the suspension of the sinking fund was suggested by Mr. Scaddan, so seriously did members who were then sitting on this side of the House regard the matter that the present Minister for Works made it the subject of a special motion. The hon, member could not contain himself on this bench.

Mr. Troy: And he cannot contain himself now.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member could not contain himself when the suggestion was made that there should be an interference with the sinking fund.

The Minister for Works: It was a different thing; Mr. Scaddan wanted to collar

Hon. P. COLLIER: Mr. Scaddan's proposals were not so open to criticism as the proposals of the Government at the present time.

The Minister for Works: We do not propose to interfere with the invested funds; he proposed to collar them.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If the hon. member questions my statements too much, I shall be forced to read his speech to Committee. However, as Ι ďο not wish to be unfair to the new mem-I shall not inflict it on them. The hon, member could not contain himself when any suggestion as to interference with the sinking fund was made. He dilated upon the effect it would have on investors in the old country, the difficulty which would follow in regard to the flotation of new loans, and every other phase. His then leader, Mr. Frank Wilson, agreed with him and to-

day those who were condemnatory on that occasion are forced to turn round and adopt the proposal which they then opposed. am not disagreeing with the action of the Treasurer; I see no other course to follow. The position of the State is such that I believe the suspension of the sinking fund is in all the circumstances warranted at the present time, and I only mention the matter in order to call attention to the attitude adopted by hon, members then and their attitude to-day. With regard to the question of economy, the Treasurer in submitting his Budget last year stated that there were duplications of departments right through the service. I do not know whether the Treasurer still holds that opinion or not. and I do not expect that he has been able to accomplish a great deal during the time he has been in office. So far, however, we have no indication of any amalgamations having taken place. The Treasurer said that he expects to effect a saving by these economies to the extent of £150,000.

The Colonial Treasurer: One hundred and thirty-five thousand pounds. You will see when the Estimates come up.

Hon P. COLLIER: The word "retrenchment" would be more applicable with regard to these savings. After all, retrenchment is not economy. I believe that a considerable amount of this saving or economy will be really by way of retrenchment in the public service.

The Colonial Treasurer: I do not think so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Already there is a policy of retrenchment abroad, particularly in the Railway Department, and I do not know how it applies to other departments. I have no doubt that that policy will be pursued throughout the various ments. When making his policy speech the Premier announced that there would be no retrenchment, but shortly after the elections were over the pruning knife was applied in various directions. It will be for hon, members who represent country constituents to say whether that pruning knife has been wisely applied. Certainly there is a policy of retrenchment but it is impossible to discuss the matter in the circumstances in which we find ourselves this evening.

Treasurer has departed, perhaps wisely, from the usual practice that has obtained in the past in asking the House to grant him Previously, Supply. Treasurers merely named the sum they required and given very little information, but to-night the Treasurer has delivered what might be described as a Budget speech, and it is impossible to discuss it without the opportunity of digesting the facts and figures he has supplied. I would, however, like to refer to one matter, namely, the trading concerns. All that I have said regarding the criticism in connection with the previous proposal to suspend the payment of the sinking fund, and also in regard to other matters, applies with equal force to the trading concerns. There again the present Minister for Works comes in. I can remember the nights and the nights which ran into weeks, and the weeks which ran into months. and months into years during the time we were in office, when hon, members criticised our policy in connection with the trading concerns. It was the one subject which tended more to reduce our majority at the 1914 elections and ultimately defeated the Government. But what a silence has since come over the scene! Where, in the ranks of the Government supporters do we find a critic of the trading concerns, except it be our friends the Chamber of Commerce who get into holts now and again with the Minfor Works, From nowhere else ister there a voice raised against the trading concerns. It has been quite the other way. The hon, member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo), who moved the Address-inreply yesterday, is not only satisfied with the State trading concerns introduced by the Labour Government, but he has made a demand for more, and he has declared that unless the Government purchase two additional steamers to trade on the North-West coast, they will find him a pretty candid critic. So we have to-day in regard to these concerns which were plunging the State into ruin, so our friends opposite said, which were responsible for the deficit and the whole position of the State as we have found it in recent years, the Treasurer supplying us with figures to show that had it not been for these same trading concerns. he would have had to announce to this Committee a larger deficit at the end of the financial year than he has announced this evening. The State steamships were the bugbear of hon members, and we now have the pleasing announcement that the estimated profit for the year from this service alone is £120,000. If the Parliament of the day had not cut out the item that we made provision for on our Estimates for the purchase of an additional steamer, the Treasurer would to-day have been in an even happier position.

The Colonial Treasurer: I would not be here; there would be so many people wanting by position.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Right throughout. even though some of the concerns have shown small losses, bunching all together, profit amounts to something like £70,000 after making provision for charges. I am sorry the House will not have an opportunity of dealing with the taxation proposals of the Government before Janu-So far as these are concerned ary next. they appear to be still in a nebulus stage; they are in the clouds somewhere, or in the pigeon holes of one of the departments. We do not know what form of taxation the Government propose. The Governor's Speech states that it is proposed to ask the House to agree to certain additional taxa-Nothing could be more vague than tion. "Certain additional taxation." we shall have to wait until those measures are placed before members before we have an opportunity of commenting upon them, except that we may take it for granted that the Government intend to pursue policy of increasing railway rates, as announced by the Premier in his Policy Speech. For the moment I have forgotten what provision the Treasurer has made in his estimates of increase in railway freights.

The Colonial Treasurer: Exactly £54,000. Hon. P. COLLIER: Well that will be a subject for pretty lively discussion, no doubt. The Treasurer, I suppose, will have made the increases before the House has an opportunity of discussing them, since he proposes to start from the beginning of January. However, it will be for members representing country districts to say how far they approve of the policy of the Government in that connection. I have no ob-

jection to raise to the passing of supplies, because I recognise that the Government must have the money necessary to carry on till the end of January.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam) [9.32]: I have not much to say, but I wish to explain the position, particularly in regard to the last few years. The leader of the Opposition has said that the Labour party did very much better during their term of office than has been done during the past 16 months. I would remind him that his party were borrowing very large sums of money throughout that period.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: To build the rail-ways which you had persuaded Parliament to authorise.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Of course, to build railways and for expenditure on public works. But the expenditure of those vast sums of money meant increased revenue. We never had anything like the revenue they had. If we were spending to-day five millions on public works the revenue would be very different.

Hon. P. Collier: Five millions a year!

Hon. J. MITCHELL: During your five years you borrowed something like fifteen millions.

Hon. P. Collier: That is not five millions a year.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I did not say five millions a year. It was the expenditure of that vast sum which created revenue and has left us in trouble ever since, owing to the increased interest bill. I do not say that the money has not done good. If the then Government had brought out 20,000 people per annum while that money was being spent we would not have been in trouble today. But this vast expenditure was not accompanied by any vigorous immigration policy. I do not say that the money was wasted. The works constructed used and turned to good account some day. Let us come to the Treasurer's statement, in which it is shown that the State ships are making a profit. Those vessels of ours are doing well because of the war. But for the war they would not be making money. Freights on wheat between Fremantle and London are now something like 240s., whereas before the war they were in the

region of 20s. Freights to-day are times as high as they were before the war. It is easy to understand that the Nor'-West members are anxious that the Government should have sufficient boats on that coast to run the traffic. We cannot expect private ship-owners to run against State-owned ships. I doubt if these trading concerns have helped the workers of the State. am not going to endorse them merely because the ships are helping us under extraordinary conditions, without which would be showing a loss. I do not say that the State Implement Works cannot turn out good implements, or that they may not in time produce a profit, but I say that the general prosperity of the country has not been helped in the slightest by these trading concerns, and I doubt if it ever will be. wish to make clear this position: during the last 12 years, only once since the first year of Responsible Government, we had a credit balance, a credit balance of something like £13,000 in 1911. Last year the deficit on the year's operations was £600,000.

Hon. P. Collier: Nearly £700,000.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Yes, according to the book. But the Treasurer knows that £93,000 expenditure which ought to have been charged up in 1915-16 was not so charged up, expenditure incurred before the Liberal Government took office. It had to be paid, and the deficit that year was £600,000. If the sinking fund, amounting to £390,000 per annum had been suspended, the deficit would have been £210,000. Let no one expect that this State in these times can be carried on without a deficit. Our legitimate trading concerns, the railways and the harbours, are idle. There is no shipping today, and we have to face a deficit. At any rate a deficit of £210,000 would not have mattered very much, and that is what it would have amounted to if the sinking fund had been suspended. I do not know that it is a good idea to suspend the sinking fund. After all, it comes to the same thing. We have to borrow to pay the sinking fund, and so it leaves us in exactly the same position. If we do not contribute to the sinking fund we are not reducing past indebtedness, whereas if we reduce the past indebtedness and set it up as a new indebtedness the position is the same. Our sinking fund is now £5,000,000, a very considerable amount. Since 1912 it has increased by over £2,000, If there had been no sinking fund there would have been no deficit to-day. Our sinking fund is a very heavy one. In the old days of the construction of the Coolgardie water scheme, the sinking fund fixed at three per cent. In the other States it is very small indeed. There they contribute no more towards the liquidation of their debts than we do, although probably their indebtedness is eight or nine times as great as ours. Our sinking fund is a very heavy burden, and was increased by £507, 000 last year. After all, take the deficit of last year, £600,000, and the sinking fund set aside to pay off the borrowings of the past, £507,000, and there we have really the cash difference. That is not a bad achievement in war time. Just now our legitimate trading concerns, the chief of which is the railways, must do badly because there are not sufficient ships to take away our produce. The sawmills, too, are idle. If we had shipping the State sawmills would be doing very much better than they are. However, in the State sawmills we have something that speedily lose their value. I just wish to point out the position. New Zealand is a great and prosperous country. Her borrowing per head is equal to, if not greater than ours. Her sinking fund is very small, is confined indeed to one or two of their war loans. Our revenue in the first quarter of the present year was £23,000 more than in the corresponding period of last year, and Mr. Wilson's expenditure in the first quarter of last year was £20,000 more than the expenditure of the present Treasurer during the first quarter of this year, due I suppose, to some extent to the paying off of the deficit.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That was funded. Hon. J. MITCHELL: The deficit then was £360,000. I would like to point out that owing to the value of the production of our soil and the sales of the produce the general financial position of the State is not at all unsatisfactory. There really is money in the country, and there will be a good deal more when the produce already realised shall have been sold and paid for. If we turn to the deposits in the State and Com-

monwealth Banks we find that the Commonwealth has secured three-fourths of the total increase. If we turn to the ordinary banks we find they have gone up considerably since the war, the deposits being £1,600,000 more as against increased vances of £780,000. That, surely, is no mean achievement, a million of money more to the credit of depositors than when the war broke out. Our produce, too, is all sold, and the wheat farmers have at least three-quarters of a million of money to come from the old season's wheat. Our wool clip and wheat crop, which has now come in, have yet to be sold and represent something like four millions, if not five millions of money. It will be seen, therefore, that the position is not altogether impossible. As a matter of fact, we should be able to get all the money we need for legitimate development in this State without very much trouble. That is common to the whole of Australia. Australia has been getting better returns of wool and wheat and other produce, and the money at the depositors has increased and credit of should go on increasing year by year. Sheep, everyone knows, increase rapidly, and we have considerably more sheep in this State than there are in South Australia at present. It is true, however, that we are not turning our sheep to the best account. In South Australia they export one and a half million sheep per annum, whereas in this State we cannot send one away. This is very unfortunate because, in these times, we could be getting a high price for our mutton. I hope that, notwithstanding the present state of the finances, we shall be able to market a good deal of our mutton in a short time through freezing works which must be erected in Fremantle. In 1911 a vote was passed for the purpose of erecting such works but completed, thev were never although abattoirs were erected. It is sometimes said that to export meat when it is so dear is a wrong policy, but the people will want a food commission once a year unless they produce an exportable surplus, not only of meat but of other articles necesto feed them. We shall never get cheap meat in the country until we get into the position of being able to export.

It is utterly impossible for the people of this State to consume one-third natural increase in the stock that is now within our borders. I mention this because I believe that the only way out of our trouble is by way of increased production. Every English speaking country in the world to-day is endeavouring to increase its production. In New Zealand, notwithstanding the fact that they already have a large exportable surplus, they are still endeavouring to increase production because think it is the only way by which the finances can be kept straight. When the Treasurer says that borrowing is difficult, he says what is true, but if we are to have employment we must make that money which comes from increased production. I should have been very sorry indeed not to have had the opportunity of placing the position, particularly in regard to the past year's transactions, before the Committee. position is a serious one, and economy must be practised now and always. No Government has the right to do other than practice economy at any time, and it is specially necessary now. We want economy but want the right kind. I agree with the leader of the Opposition in what he says regarding the dismissal of civil servants. This cannot be regarded in the light of an economy. If there are men in the service who are unfit for their positions of course they should go. but I doubt if it is wise economy to economise by the destruction, practically, of a very important branch of the Agricultural Department. I do not understand hon. members from the South-West allowing the pathologist and the two Commissioners to go without a protest. It is patent to everyone that the thing to do now is to feed ourselves, and that the South-West has to produce 11/2 millions worth of butter, potatoes, bacon, and so on, in order that we may do this. The Treasurer has referred to the butter factories in that part of the State. He says with truth that there is an increase there. I was down in that part of the State the other day and learned that 8,000lbs. of butter had been made at the Bunbury factory for the week, and I saw nearly 100 cases on the train in which I travelled to Busselton. I think that much of the development which has taken place is due to

the efforts of Mr. Connor. Mr. Moody is also necessary to the fruit industry, and I believe that the plant diseases should be looked after by Dr. Stoward.

Hon. P. Collier: It is not the way to obtain increased production.

Hon, J. MITCHELL: I think it is altogether a wrong method to adopt. Germany found, some 16 years ago, that her armies could not be fed unless she materially increased her production, she turned to her scientists, with the result that science directed the people engaged in agriculture and, whilst England was doing no better than in the past and worse in some directions, Germany multiplied the number of her cattle from 14 million to 28 million, the number of pigs increased vastly, and also the crop of hay, and her produce increased all along the line. It is because Germany directed her agriculturists in this way that she is able to fight on as she is doing today and feeding herself. There is no country in the world that is unwilling to devote some money to the payment of experts whose business it is to direct the farming operations within its borders. I think the present action of the Government is a shortsighted one and that the policy is a wrong one. We are not yet up the spout and we can afford to keep these officers, and ought to keep them. Indeed we cannot afford to let them go. There is no hope for the country except through production. I think the figures I have quoted to-night in connection with at all events the private finances show what this means to the State. I have been condemned almost by every member in this Chamber during the past 10 years, because some 12 years ago I insisted that this was the only policy for the country to pursue. To-day we have the results.

Mr. Willcock: You are not alone in

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I never said I was. I always call the one tune, "Produce, produce, produce." It was always the same tune that I am calling now. Twelve years ago our position was not at all a good one. There was much unemployment and we were suffering from the first effects of Federation, which was a hard dose to take. Something had to be done, and this agricultural development was undertaken. To-

day this development is just as necessary as it was then. The only hope that Western Australia has lies in the small landholder who has to be assisted, and if this assistance is to be successful, there has to be increased production. It is a magnificent position to be able to stand in to-night and say that the value of our wool clip and of our wheat is something like four million pounds. There is no other industry in the State which can say to-day that it will produce anything of that value which to-day is coming from our farms; not even the gold mining industry.

Hon. P. Collier: We shall pass the gold value this year.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Yes, and the amount will increase year by year. The Treasurer has to square the ledger this year, next year, and will be doing it for the next five years, but the country must go on notwithstanding that the ledger does not balance. Hon, members must bear in mind that last year we had our heaviest deficit up to that time, that our increase in sinking fund was only £100,000 less than our deficit for the It ought to be remembered, too. that this is the only State in the Commonwealth which is materially contributing to its sinking fund. We ought not to be expected to do more than any other of the States because of the developmental work that has to be undertaken here. It is not the work of the Government after all that means so much but the influence of the Government, and we must see to it that we do not tell an unduly doleful tale.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [9.56]: I wish to take the opportunity of again putting to the Treasurer the question I put to him by interjection. Included in the Bill now before us is a sum of £10,000 from the Government property When the Treasurer was speaking on this point I interjected, "Is the money there ? " because I have been informed on a very good authority that the system we have been adopting for many years, in connection with the Property Sales Account, has been a wrong one, that goods, instead of being sold, had in many instances been transferred from one department to another, and there has been no money received for the goods which are supposed to have been sold. At the same time these goods have been put into the Property Sales Account and debited up, but the money has not been there at all. The account has been a wrong one altogether, hence my interjection. Whilst we have been voting for many years £60,000 or £70,000 per annum for the Property Sales Account, there has really been no money at all.

The Colonial Treasurer: There was that which came back from the waterworks and from the purchase of ores.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is a very small The member for Northam pointed out that the deficit had sprung up owing to the fact that the Government, of which I had been a member, had borrowed so much money. The Treasurer by interjection said that he could not help it if we borrowed a lot of money heedlessly which they had to pay for. Hon. members should know that out of the large number of miles of railway constructed in the State, approximately 1,000 miles of it were passed by the Government preceding the Labour Government, and that though we borrowed money with which to build them, they did not build them. When Parliament pledges itself to the people that it will build certain railways, it is the duty of the Government to carry that pledge into effect. Government has the right, when Parliament says to the people that they are going to have a railway to develop the holdings they have taken up, and has approved of it, to veto the action of Parliament in that direction. Practically 1,000 miles of railway-which, I believe, the hon, member had a share in passing-were left as a legacy for the Labour Government to start on when they took office; and every mile of those railways was built. The hon. member also contended that there should be no State trading concerns. He does not believe in them. According to him, had it not been for the war, the State steamship service would not make any profit whatever. But the hon, member forgets that the "Kangaroo," which ship has been reaping all the profit, was purchased after the outbreak of war. The opposition to that purchase came, not from the present Treasurer, but from other members of the present Government.

Hon. P. Collier: Yes; they nearly took a fit.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I exonerate the present Treasurer from having opposed the Labour Government in that connection. The member for Northam wanted to show that, according to the Treasurer, there was £93,000 carried over into last year which the Labour Government ought to have paid in the previous year. But the hon. member overlooked the fact that there was placed on the Table of the House the Auditor General's report for the financial year ended 30th June, 1916. This report shows that outstanding revenue due to the State at the time the Minister for Works and his colleagues took control was £400,086 Of that amount £63,150 was due from five trading concerns alone. In addition to that the last Government had handed over to them stocks of machinery, timber, and so on-not plant, but stocks-amounting to £233,000. Would not the present Treasurer have liked to find a nest egg such as that awaiting him when he took office? The Auditor General further states that claims outstanding on the 30th June, 1916, on account of Consolidated Revenue, amounted to £52,311. On account Loan funds there was £27,000. Outstanding revenue, due to the State, amounted to no less than £400.086. That was the position when the last Government took office; that was the legacy left them by the Labour Government, but for which legacy they would have been bankrupt. I was pleased to hear the Treasurer say that in running the State he has adopted business methods. I wish he would try to induce his colleagues also to adopt business methods. A few weeks ago tenders were called for the disposal of the meat shops in the metropolitan area, and tenders were accepted for the purchase of one or two of the buildings. The Treasurer to-night has pointed out that the meat distribution business has shown a profit. If the meat distribution business had been yours, Mr Chairman, would not you have tried to obtain as much money for it as you could? Would you not have endeavoured to obtain for. it a price based on the amount of profit you were receiving from the business? I maintain that in this respect a Minister of State should place himself in exactly the same position as if he were selling a business of his own. But Mr. Willmott, the Honorary Minister—who I regret is not present—when calling tenders by advertisement for the purchase of the shops on the 17th November last, said that as the result of the Government's experience of the meat shops they had come to the conclusion that they were no longer justified in carrying them on at a loss. Was that a fair statement for a Minister of this State to make when calling tenders for the purchase of businessess which were in existence, and which, according to the Treasurer, show a profit? Was it fair for the Honorary Minister to delcare that those meat shops were being run at a loss?

The Colonial Treasurer: They have been running at a loss for some time.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I watched the Fremantle shop pretty closely for many months—perhaps for a much longer period than the Minister now in charge of them—and that shop was a very payable proposition to the State, after all expenses were paid.

The Minister for Works: Where did the profit go to, then?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It was shown in the balance sheets. The weekly reports sent in showed it. Perhaps the profit has disappeared, thanks to the business acumen of the present Government.

The Minister for Works: That is merely a bald statement.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If I were selling those businesses on behalf of the State, I would do the best I could for the State. I would not tell prospective tenderers that the business was being conducted at a loss when it was actually showing a profit. The facts show clearly, to my mind, that while the Treasurer desires to adopt business methods, his fellow Ministers do not intend to assist him.

The Minister for Works: You have no right to say that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have given absolute proof of it. The absolute proof is published in the West Australian of the 17th November last.

The Minister for Works: We are not responsible for what appears in the West Australian.

Hon. P. Collier: When you pay for what appears there, you should be responsible.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have had between six and seven years' experience as a Minister of the Crown, and I have never known an instance of the reporter of a newspaper to whom I have made a statement printing something different from what I told him. I believe that the statement appearing in the West Australian on the 17th November last is a correct account of what was said to the reporter. I am indeed pleased to have heard the Treasurer's statements regarding the trading concerns. Had it not been for the war, the brick works would, I believe, have been as good a paying proposition as any trading concern we have.

Mr. Munsie: With the exception, perhaps, of the State sawmills.

The Colonial Treasurer: But the implement works will require re-capitalisation.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I admit that. I told the House that two years ago. But the brick works would have been one of the best paying propositions in the State had building continued as it was at the time of their establishment. They were producing bricks at £1 2s. 6d. per thousand, or at £1 10s. 11d. per thousand after all charges had been added.

The Minister for Works: No; at 32s. per thousand.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Had those works been kept going as they would have been under normal conditions—they were not started before the war broke out—they would have produced from 750,000 to 800,000 bricks per month. The highest quantity produced in one month was 643,000, and that was produced at the price I quoted.

The Minister for Works: They have never been able to do it since.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The demand for bricks has not been such that the works could be kept going under proper conditions.

The Minister for Works: The trouble was to keep the men there.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier to-day refused to answer me certain questions which I claim were put in a thoroughly orderly manner. If the Government have been at any expense in connection with the industrial crisis at Fremantle, that expense is included in the amount which we are voting. No one regrets more than I do

that the Fremantle crisis lasted so long. When I stated yesterday that the trouble was a lock-out, there was laughter. But I now say without fear of contradiction that during the last four or five weeks there has been a lock-out so far as the employees on the Fremantle wharves are concerned.

The Minister for Works: Rubbish! Nothing of the kind.

Hon. P. Collier: It is the absolute truth. Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: While I believe that the men were mistaken in the first instance—

The Minister for Works: You admit that?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have admitted it many times. This is not the first time I have admitted that there was a mistake made. The men themselves admitted it. They offered to go back to work, not on pre-strike conditions, but on the conditions of the Arbitration Court's award. Premier and some of his colleagues have for the last two months been doing their utmost, shall I say, to bring the employers and the employees together. Why? Because the employers want to enforce conditions which are not to be found in the arbitration award, though they say they are willing to abide by that award. Those conditions are outside the Arbitration award. That is why I said to-day it was a lock-out.

The Minister for Works: What conditions are they working under now?

Mr. Munsie: Under "scab" conditions. The Minister for Works: Are they working under the award?

Mr. Jones: No.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They are not working under the Arbitration award conditions now. The Premier is aware of the position because my leader and myself discussed this question with him. I want to say that this State is suffering to-day through the action of the employers.

Mr. Munsie: Assisted by the Government.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The demand of the lumpers is merely that they shall not be asked to work under any conditions which have not been first agreed upon. But the employers have refused absolutely to discuss matters with the men for the last month or six weeks. Member: What about the men at the front who want to be fed?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I want to say that never at any time during the period of crisis did the lumpers of Fremantle object to the sending of supplies to the men at the front.

Mr. Munsie: Or in any other port of the Commonwealth either.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Two days after the lock-out took place they were asked to work on a transport, and they have been there since when transports have come in and they have never been asked to go to work. I am sorry that the Premier did not answer my question to-day. will say no more on that question. I trust that the war will soon be over in order that the present pressure may be relieved. I have told members of this Assembly repeatedly that the effects of the war are responsible for the condition of our finances. That was stated times out of number in this House while the Labour Government We realised the position was in power. in regard to the trading concerns and the public accounts. But at that time it was stated that all that was required to put the finances in order was business acumen. There was no necessity for anything else. I want to say this in that regard, that I care not how any Treasurer may try to square the finances in existing conditions he will never succeed. It has to be realised that every penny received by way of direct taxation is spent on education, with the result that no money from that source is available for other necessary purposes. maintain that if the people of the State desire free education, and I believe they do, then they must be prepared to pay for that taxation and for other necessary services to be carried on.

The Colonial Treasurer: Your proposals realised £140,000.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Had Parliament passed our taxation proposals of three years ago, the State would not have been in the position it is to-day.

Mr. Munsie: Those proposals were passed by this House three times.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If we had adopted two years ago proposals similar to those contained in the policy speech,

instead of ending with a deficiency, there have would been a surplus of million and a half. Parliament would not accept the position when it was placed before members then, now they have to accept it whether they like it or not. For myself, so long as proposed taxation is equitable it will have my support because I realise taxation is necessary to carry on the affairs of the State; but I shall not agree to any scheme of taxation which will hit the poor man and let others go free.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [10.23]: I do not propose to say very much on this motion. Like the leader of the Opposition, I think that the Treasurer's remarks are too pessimistic and that they will have a bad effect upon many of the industries of the State. I am with the Treasurer in his desire to make some provision for the establishment of secondary industries and for assistance to primary industries. I will support any proposition having for its object the production of those commodities which we now import from the other States. But I do think that the Treasurer and the Government, if they desire the support of members of this House, should not confine their efforts to the encouragement of the agricultural industry alone, but should extend it to all the industries of the State. I have come to the conclusion that the agricultural industry has many difficulties yet to overcome, and I agree that probably but for the war we might have been in a better position to assist our industries. The development of one new goldfield would be of equal value to the State as 10 years of agricultural prosperity. The Minister for Mines knows this, and I believe he realises the necessity if the Government are to encourage industry, of encouraging the gold mining industry. I think, too, that means of helping the development of our industries can be found without resorting to cheese-paring methods. If the railway charges are to be increased, I hope it will be along lines that will ensure that the people who are developing the country will not be dis-The mining industry of Western Australia is in the position that it cannot bear a further increase in railway freights. And it must be remembered that if a mine be closed down, the loss is not confined to the 2,000 ounces of gold produced each month, but there is also the loss of the money expended in wages to employees in the mine. The Treasurer remarked that it was not possible for any country to borrow itself into prosperity. I cannot agree entirely with that, because if it be true, why is it that we have a Government Agricultural Bank Industries Assistance Board? and an It is all very well for critics to condemn what has been called the wholesale borrowing policy of the past. If that policy is to be condemned, then the whole community must share the blame, because any Government in the past which has preached caution has been condemned as unprogressive. I do not think the country will recover its stability without borrowing; we have not the capital ourselves to develop this State. But if the Treasurer can secure money, that money should not be expended as has been done so often in the past in the building of thousands of miles of railway. Millions of pounds have been expended in building railways to help the farmers, to provide water supplies and other facilities incidental to the development of agriculture. The industry unfortunately has not responded as quickly as we thought it would. This is not the fault of the agriculturist but it is because we have had bad seasons; and just as we began to enjoy reasonably good seasons the war broke out.

Hon. P. Collier: It was absolutely essential for the future prosperity of the State that that money should be spent.

Mr. TROY: I have never condemned the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) because of his optimism. As a matter of fact I have been a victim of his optimism. My opinion is that the majority of those engaged in the agricultural industry will yet pull through. I agree with what has been said with regard to the retrenchment of certain officials. I think that Dr. Stoward was a most useful officer in the Agricultural Department, and if his duties had been restricted to scientific research and his time had not been taken up by the examination of botanical specimens, he might have been able to help the farmers to cope with the difficulties arising out of the presence of disease.

The Minister for Works: Do you suppose that the farmers are going to be left alone now?

Mr. TROY: I can only speak as I find the position to day; I do not know what the Government propose to do.

The Minister for Works: The same thing can be said about every other man who is retrenched.

Mr. TROY: I am not an advocate for Dr. Stoward; I do not know the man at all.

Mr. Munsie: He is the only expert in the department.

Mr. TROY: I know this much, that the men on the land have to contend with numerous diseases and pests, and in other countries, Governments wisely encourage experts by the payment of high salaries to try and discover remedies for diseases. In this State we effect economies by abolishing positions which are necessary.

Mr. Hickmott: How long has he been here?

Mr. TROY: I do not know.

The Minister for Works: Six years.

Mr. Hickmott: What has he done since he has been here?

Mr. TROY: I do not know. I would like to inform members that Dr. Stoward has never approached me, and I have never spoken to him and neither has any person expressed to me any opinion about him. Other gentlemen have spoken to me, but I have not mentioned their names in the debate to-night. I hope that the Treasurer will not be influenced by the Chamber of Commerce in his effort to straighten the finances of the State. I have looked through the recommendations by the Chamber of Commerce and in my opinion they are utterly barren of any proposal and there is nothing in them beyond pious resolutions and hazy expressions of opinion. I cannot see how the Treasurer can profit them. Furthermore I am opinion that the Chamber of Commerce should be discouraged because I convinced that they are a body of men who in this country take the place of the robber barons of the middle ages, who, establishing their strongholds overlooking the routes taken by travellers demanded toll without giving any service.

Mr. Green: You are too generous to

Mr. TROY: They take toll of all the commodities coming in the country and all the commodities export. My complaint is that that toll which they take is too heavy.

The Minister for Works: And they develop a political conscience when all the money is spent.

Hon. P. Collier: And many of them are only agents for absentees.

Mr. TROY: They are a body of men who, I hope, will not be allowed to interfere too much in the government of this country.

Mr. Munsie: Is it not these gentlemen who want the Food Commission abolished?

Mr. TROY: I am prepared to take a hopeful view of the existing situation, and am prepared to leave the responsibility with the Government. I know that we must have a very hard time in this country for many years to come, because we are not going to enter upon a period of prosperity immediately the war ceases, as in addition to our present burdens, we shall have the additional burdens of the war. We must realise that we shall have to cut our coat according to our cloth, that is, if we can But I do hope that in afford a coat. effecting economies, and in considering the various positions in this country, the Government will give a fair deal all round, that they will not consider one, but all interests. As a labour man I can justly claim that when the Labour Government were in office, if they gave consideration to one industry more than to another, it was to the agricultural industry which was represented by our opponents. We were abused for establishing State trading concerns and yet time has justified the establishment of those concerns. I have always spoken in this House and supported every measure for the encouragement of the agricultural industry. In my own constituency there were complaints that the Labour Government gave more consideration to the agricultural industry than to the mining industry, but I am glad to say that my actions were always endorsed. The Treasurer will not find me a very harsh critic because I know what his difficulties are. I hope however, that when the taxation measures are brought forward, those

persons will be taxed who can best afford to bear the tax, those who are reaping from the State the greatest advantage, and that the burden of taxation will fall lightly on those developing the State and bearing the heat and burden of the day.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [10-40]: It had not been my intention to address the Committee to night, nor do I intend to speak at any great length, more especially since I listened to the remarks of the leader of the Opposition. If a gentleman of his experience in the House finds some difficulty in dealing off-hand with a question of the nature of that submitted by the Treasurer, hon, members generally might well find excuse for a politician of so short an experience as mine. The reason why I rose to night is that I might answer some of the remarks that fell from the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell), who cast a stigma on the South-Western members in regard to their attitude towards the retrenchment of the commissioners of the Agricultural Department. I regret that the Minister in control of the Agricultural Department is not here to explain the position of the department. As a member coming from the South-West, I realise the importance that belongs to the proper answering of various questions that come before the department, and I feel that when that department dispenses with the services of officers capable of giving advice and assistance to the farming community generally, it may be that those officers have in some way neglected to fulfil expectations, and not that it is intended to abolish the offices. I sincerely hope the retrenchment does not mean the closing of those offices, but merely the removal of the officers to make room for others more capable. am not here to criticise those officers, but I hope the Minister, in considering the retrenchment forecasted, will not decide positively on the abolition of the offices. Several hon, members to-night have cast reflections on members of the Country party. Let me explain that there is no primary industry which does not appeal to the hearts of all members of the Country party. I can assure the member for Mt. Magnet (Mr. Troy) that he may, with confidence, rely on getting the utmost support

from members of the Country party in any advocacy of the interests of kindred industries, whether mining or timber. consider those primary industries as much our care as those which fall more specifically It has been sugwithin our jurisdiction. gested that certain reduction of services and increase of freight should be made in connection with our railways. mind it is a very shortsighted policy on the part of the Government or of the Minister in control of the railways. My experience in other parts of the world teaches me that a railway department should attract as much traffic as possible to its lines. other countries railways have their own special ports, which they advertise as seaside resorts and do all that they can to attract traffic thereto. But what do we find in connection with our own railways? At Busselton we have opposition to the railway in the shape of a steamer service. Instead of bringing down the railway rates to a point where they would compete with the steamer charges, the Government have increased the railway rates by nearly 100 per cent., with the result that much of the railway traffic has been diverted to the steamers. Again, the Government have gone to great expense in endeavouring to establish the butter and bacon industries. Just here I would like to quote a few figures. In 1915 the butter produced in this State aggregated 716,408lbs. it reached 1,072,000lbs. or an increase of 355,592lbs., being approximately 50 per cent. The bacon produced in 1915 reached the aggregate of 202,824lbs. and in 1916 it was 425,749lbs., or an increase of 222,925lbs. approximately 120 per cent. And this in 12 months! It should be the business of the Railway Department to encourage an industry which shows such marked improvement; yet, on the contrary, we find the Minister suggesting a reduction in the railway service and an increase in This is not the way in which to freight. develop an industry of such importance to the State. We have had the cry, "Produce! produce!" on every hand, and when we make an honest effort to bring about the development of an industry, it is suggested that the Railway Department should adopt a policy inimical to the best interests of that industry. I hope the Minister will carefully consider this before inflicting such a load upon so important an industry. Another matter is the question of co-operation. Finding that the farming industry has reached a position where it cannot expect to get from the Government that assistance which it has received in the past, we have taken upon ourselves the initiation of a co-operative movement, for which we hope to receive the heartfelt sympathy and support of the House, particularly when we come to handle wheat.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [10.48]: I do not intend to speak at any length upon the position set forth by the Treasurer, but he dealt with one or two matters which should not be lightly passed over, even at this juncture. For the moment I will confine myself to the statement he made regarding the deposit he intends to exact from the insurance companies operating in this State. It is amazing that Governments of the past should have neglected the hig profits-earning avenue exploited by life and fire insurance companies. I do not think the position has been paralleled in any other part of the world. Every country ever at war has found it necessary to nationalise certain industries so as to meet the cost incidental to war. If the Treasurer is sincere in his desire to get revenue, whether to encourage primary or secondary industries, there is no better opportunity offering than the nationalisation of the life and fire insurance business. It is a diabolical shame that these people should have been allowed to carry on in the manner that they have year in and year out. On the goldfields they have been allowed to charge most exorbitant rates, and this has been obtaining ever since fire insurance has been in vogue in Western Australia. It is time that members opposite who profess to have business acumen, business knowledge, and business ability, were seized with the necessity of nationalising for Western Australia this very important profit-earning industry.

Hon. P. Collier: In Queensland in one year they showed a huge profit in national insurance.

Mr. LAMBERT: I desire to draw attention to the statements issued on this subject by the Queensland Government. If it does not constitute an eye-opener to the public here and show the necessity for nationalis-

ing an industry which is contributed to by almost every citizen in the State, and which should be collectively owned by the citizens of the State, then I do not know what will. If fire and life insurance are not subjects for nationalisation there is not an industry under the sun that is suitable for nationalisation. I am surprised at the Treasurer suggesting that by way of recompense the 30 companies in Western Australia should lodge a bond of £5,000 in cash per annum.

The Colonial Treasurer: There are 41 companies.

Mr. LAMBERT: The Treasurer said he expected to get £150,000.

The Colonial Treasurer: There are 41 of them, and I said the amount would be from £150,000 to £200,000.

Mr. LAMBERT: I understood he said £150,000, and I assumed from that there would be 30 insurance companies operating in Western Australia. In the small Republics of South America, which are established on a better and sounder business basis than any of the States of the Commonwealth, and where they have many small wars to contend with, they have found it necessary, owing to the peculiar conditions appertaining, to nationalise certain industries. sooner this Government, whether National or Labour, realise the necessity for following suit in this direction the better for the State. If the State is to preserve its solvency there is nothing else for it but pursue this course, and to nationalise some of the big profit-earning avenues, which are to-day in many instances unfairly exploited by the men engaged in them.

Mr. Hickmott: What are they?

Mr. LAMBERT: Insurance is one. The losses made by the implement works are rather startling, and unless some remedy can be found for this and some better showing can be made these State works ought to be closed down. There is one direction in which they can be made to assist the farmers of the State. Western Australia will never be any good as a wheat-producing country unless we utilise superphosphate freely. To allow outside companies to go on indefinitely exploiting our farmers and charging them what they like for their superphosphate is a standing disgrace to any Government, who profess to believe that the farmers are the

backbone of the country and of its industries. There is over £1 per ton being made to-day not profit by the superphosphate companies operating here. By a certain agreement with the Pacific Islands Phosphate Company Australia is in their grip, for the reason that this company would not to-morrow morning supply the Western Australian Government or any other Government who desired to embark upon this industry. Western Australia. however. backed up by its credit, could relieve and assist the farmers of the country if the Government were sincere. That is one instance in which the Government could be sincere to the tune of £50,000 to £75,000 in supplying fertilisers to this State at a minimum of cost. As long as the agricultural industry exists in Western Australia it is vitally necessary to supply the farmers with superphosphates. It is not necessary to exploit the revenue of the railways on account of mere political bribery to a party for temporary support. It is absolutely necessary to tackle these industries as they are to-day, and realise that everything which the farmer requires must be given to him at the minimum cost. Until that is realised and until there is some sincere desire to give that support to the farmers which they have a right to expect, they will continue to labour under the adverse conditions which have been their lot in the past. The same thing applies to our mining industry, which I shall have an opportunity of discussing later on. I hope that the Treasurer, instead of asking for a miserable £5,000 from these insurance companies, which have grown fat out of high rates and high premiums in this country, will give them as I would do three months' notice to get out of business, and nationalise the profits for the good of the State.

Mr. Teesdale: You would not do this if you held any stocks in them.

Mr. LAMBERT: If the hon, member is here long enough he will realise that if this State is to arrive at any condition of solvency all avenues of profit must be nationalised, not for the people who own stocks or anything else, but for the good of the State. Has not this National Government told us that we are living under most adverse conditions? Unfortunately that is true and some of our flesh and blood have sacri-

ficed their lives for the conditions imposed upon them to-day. Whilst these conditions exist and we are calling on the manhood of the country to sacrifice their lives, surely we can call upon some of these stock-holders, whom my hon. friend appears to hold so sacred, to sacrifice a little also. Until the Government are bold enough, have the audacity and the desire, to see that the country's solvency shall be preserved by the preservation to the State of its very finest assets of production and prosperity, will the country remain in the insolvent condition in which it finds itself to-day.

Mr. JONES (Fremantle) [11.1]: With all the due bumility of a new member, I intend to address myself briefly to the Treasurer's statement. With other members on this side of the House, I wish to express my sympathy with the Treasurer on the ground that that hon, gentleman, while holding extremely Liberal views, is severely hampered in giving effect to those views by reason of the reactionary opinions held by many of the members sitting alongside and behind him. A good deal has been said to-night on the cost of construction of The subject is one on which I realise the Treasurer is possessed of considerable first-hand knowledge. Not only does the hon, gentleman appreciate the cost of the construction of railways, but he appreciates also who are the principal beneficiaries from the construction. That being so, I feel sure that he, like hon, members on this side, who are actuated by a true national feeling, will hold that the cost of the railways, which according to his statement is responsible for so much of the deficit, should be borne by those who chiefly benefit from them. In this connection a good deal of pleasure has been expressed by various members at the reply given to-day by the Premier to a question asked by the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Green), a reply to the effect that the Government are considering the introduction of taxation on the unimproved value of land. Hon, members cenerally, and in particular members representing country districts, will feel that at last Western Australia is likely to come into its own if the Government are seriously considering means of retaining to the community, by taxation of unimproved land values, the values which are created by the community. Much has also been said regarding the State enterprises which were initiated and carried on with great éclat by the Labour Government. There is one State enterprise, however, which has not been mentioned to-night, and as to which, I can assure hon, members, many people in this country are anxiously waiting to be in-I refer to the State catering department on the Fremantle wharf. Never. so far as I know, in the industrial history of the world, has the Administration of a country shouted, stood by, and dry-nursed men for whom industrialists have a certain term. but to whom, I believe, hon, members opposite refer as loyalists, in the manner adopted by the present Government during the recent industrial trouble at Fremantle. regrettable fact that the Premier has not seen fit to answer the questions of the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) relative to the cost of providing meals and beds for the lovalists on the Fremantle wharf. I consider that if the Government are in a financial position to cater for the bodily needs, and for aught I know also for the spiritual needs, of men who happen to be working on the wharf, the Government should also be able to provide meals and beds for workers receiving lower rates of wages elsewhere. Indeed, the Government should extend these privileges to workers throughout the length and breadth of Western Australia. At the present time I could take members of the Ministry into hundreds of homes in Fremantle where bread is the staple diet, into homes where women are expecting to face the great trial of woman's life, the trial of maternity, and where bread and jam is the only nourishment they have on which to prepare for their time of trial. It is up to the Government to state to this Committee and to the country what amount of public money has been expended in providing meals and beds for able-bodied men, many of whom are fit to be in khaki and serving their country in a more loval and more effective manner than can be achieved on Fremantle wharf. the Government give the Committee a statement of the cost of feeding these loyalists. and at the same time let them furnish an estimate of the cost of making similar pro-

vision for other workers who are in greater need. That is a point to which I hope the Government will give consideration. I can assure them that the country wishes to know, very seriously, what is the true position as regards the feeding of those men on the Fremantle wharf. Unfortunately, this is the only opportunity we have of seeking that knowledge. The difficulties which present themselves for white men endeavouring to get on the Fremantle wharf are of a very character. Barriers have been erected to prevent sheep from coming down on the wharf and eating the men at present working there. As a consequence, there is extreme difficulty in obtaining any informa-Thus it is only when we assemble in this Chamber that we have an opporunity of finding out how much the Government are expending in this latest State enterprise. I trust that the Treasurer in his reply will afford the Committee some idea of what is is costing the taxpayers of Western Australia to provide food and beds and Heaven knows what else for the able-bodied men who are "lovalising" on the Fremantle wharf.

Question put and passed; resolution reported, and the report adopted.

Supply Bill introduced, etcetera.

Resolution in Committee of Ways and Means having been passed, a Supply Bill was brought in providing for the expenditure of £310,000.

Bill passed through its remaining stages and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILL-WHEAT MARKETING.

Introduced by the Premier and read a first time.

BILL—SALE OF LIQUOR REGULA-TION CONTINUATION.

All Stages.

Introduced by the Attorney General and read a first time.

Second Reading.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. T. Robinson—Canning) [11.15] in moving

the second reading said: The main section of this Bill deals with what is known as the 9 to 9 closing, its main provision being continued in clause 5 wherein section 97 of the Licensing Act of 1911 is amended by striking out the word "six" and inserting the word "nine," and also by striking out the word "eleven" and inserting the word "nine." It is necessary that this Bill be reenacted, otherwise we shall go back to the position under the Licensing Act, 1911, in which hotels were entitled to remain open until 11 o'clock in the ordinary way. I beg therefore to move—

That the Bill be now read a second time. Question put and passed.
Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILL—POSTPONEMENT OF DEBTS CONTINUATION.

All Stages,

Introduced by the Attorney General and read a first time.

Second Reading.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. T. Robinson-Canning) [11.20] in moving the second reading said: This is a measure for the continuance of the Postponement of Debts Act. The Act can only be put into operation by proclamation on the advice of a Royal Commission, and the Act has only so far been brought into operation as regards the debts of settlers in respect of assistance under the Industries Assistance Act. Under Section 21 of the Industries Assistance Act the surplus proceeds of assigned crops are applicable by the Colonial Treasurer to the liquidation of the debts of the assisted settlers, and the object of the proclamation is to prevent any creditor by legal process attaching the surplus and thereby gaining a preference over the creditors as a whole. As I have said the only time the Act has been used has

been in connection with the Industries Assistance Act. I admit it is a war time Act, and it is essential that it should be on our statute book. It has been in force in Western Australia for some time. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN (Forrest) [11.23]: I desire to elicit a little information in regard to the operation of this moratorium as it affects the settlers. I would like the Minister to give the House some idea of the amount claimed by various creditors from assisted settlers, and which has not been met. I have in my mind fully a dozen instances where farmers employed men without getting the approval of the Industries Assistance Board, and consequently when it came to a claim for wages, when they received a verdict in the court, this Act prevented them getting what they were entitled to. I put half a dozen cases before the Board, and in some instances compromises were effected. There has been a great deal of unfair dealing with some settlers who were unscrupulous enough to employ men without getting the approval of the Industries Assistance Board for such employment.

Mr. Thomson: Not necessarily unscrupulous.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It is not a fair thing that the employee should suffer through lack of knowledge.

Mr. Thomson: I object to the word unscrupulous.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The hon, member will agree with me that a wages claim should be the first claim. The position is entirely due to the lack of knowledge displayed by employees that approval has to be secured before a farmer can obtain the services of a man. In cases where there is no surplus to distribute this Act operates harshly.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. T. Robinson—Canning—in reply) [11.25]: The Industries Assistance Board has discretion in connection with these payments. I have not the figures, but I shall be very glad to supply the information to the hon, member if he asks a question or I can furnish him with it. The object in carrying out the Industries Assistance Act is to assist those farmers who are in dis-

tress, and I would point out to hon. members that most of that assistance extends over a period of five years. During that period the farmer must be protected from outside claims otherwise the assistance rendered by the State will be entirely valueless. At the same time I agree that the Act must be administered as to create no undue hardship on the general public who may have assisted a particular settler. Cases of distress brought under the notice of the Minister are carefully inquired into, and I shall be glad to aid those that come under notice.

Mr. THOMSON: I should like to ask the Minister what is the position of the man—

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minister has replied, and the hon. member cannot address the House at this Stage.

Mr. THOMSON: I thought he was only replying to a question asked by the member for Forrest.

Question put and passed. Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcelera.

Mr. Stubbs in the Chair, the Attorney General in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1-agreed to.

Clause 2-Continuation of Act:

Mr. THOMSON: What I would like to know is what the position is of a great many of our settlers who have spent a considerable amount of money in the wheat belt, and who are in the unfortunate position that they have wheat in the Pool, but are not getting payment in full for the wheat which is there. These men have to pay their land rents and all that they owe in full. Cases have been brought under my notice where machinery agents have actually taken possession of the machinery. If these farmers had been in the position of getting all the money owing to them they would have been able to pay their debts in These men are entitled to consideration. I regret that the Bill should be hurried through this way. The Attorney General has told me that these people could not be assisted under the Bill. I should like to know what he proposes to do for them.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The only particular class of debts which it has been sought to protect under this measure are the debts of the settlers assisted

Industries Assistance under the If a sufficiently good case is made out in respect of any particular class of debts that should be held over, the Governor is entitled under the statute to consider them, and if the Royal Commissioner appointed under the measure agrees, the prescribed proclamation can issue. safeguards are necessary, because this is a drastic piece of legislation. There is in the first place the consent of the Governor, and secondly the consent of the Royal Commissioner required before the Act comes into play. Individual cases cannot be dealt with. There must be a class of cases. But the Government will be prepared to consider any class of cases the hon, member may bring forward.

Mr. THOMSON: I know of one man who has a considerable amount of money in the wheat pool, notwithstanding which machinery agents and the Lands Department are presssing him for payments. Seeing that so many of these men are under the Industries Assistance Board, and seeing also that the board is refusing to take on fresh cases, one section of the community finds itself in a very difficult position. However, we shall have to get a considerable number of cases and bring them before the Government.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The existing Act gives the authorities full power to afford relief where they think it warranted. But it deals with classes of cases and not specific cases.

Mr. Thomson: How many would be required to make a class.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That would be for the Governor and the Commissioner to decide. All that is asked is that this statute should be continued during the time of war, because it should be there to be used in an emergency. The Act is and must be read in conjunction with the Industries Assistance Act, which relies absolutely on the Postponement of Debts Act for saving the settlers whom it has assisted from the other person who, when these men, recovering, are ready to leave the might come in and grab all that they have. This Act, more than anything else on our statute-book, helps the settler.

Clause put and passed.

Preamble, Title-agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILL—LAND AND INCOME TAX.

All Stages.

Introduced by the Colonial Treasurer and read a first time.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. J. Gardiner—Irwin) [11.20] in moving the second reading said: This is a measure of necessity. It ought to have been brought in at the end of last session. It is a continuance measure, authorising taxation to the 30th June. I have all the assessments ready, but no legal authority to collect them. I desire that authority so that I may get the cash. Further taxation proposals will be placed before the House later on, and if they are agreed to there will be nothing to prevent us from surcharging as to the 1st January, or any other date which the House may decide upon. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time. Question put and passed. Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—ROADS ACT CONTINUATION. All Stages.

Introduced by the Minister for Works and read a first time.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George — Murray-Wellington) [11.43]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [11.44]: Is it the intention of the Government to introduce an amending Bill? I take it that this is a Bill to renew the Act at present in operation. Do the Government intend to introduce a new Roads Board measure entirely, or merely a Bill to amend the present legislation?

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [11.45]: Would the Minister consider the relationship between the Municipalities Act and the Roads Board Act if any such amendment is contemplated? Some time ago in Victoria under the Municipalities Act, of which the Western Australian Act is a model, a reclassification of the older municipalities throughout the State was made on the basis of earnings and cost.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George-Murray-Wellington) reply-11.46]: This Bill simply re-enacts the Roads Board Act of 1911, as amended in 1912 and 1915, and its provisions will continue in operation until 31st December. 1918, and no longer. There has been a new Roads Board Act on the stocks for a long time, and it is the intention of the Government, if permitted to meet the House then, to endeavour to bring it forward next year. With regard to the question asked by the member for Coolgardie, a measure regarding municipalities has already been partially drafted, but what its main provisions are I do not know. If the hon, member will let me know what his ideas on the subject are I will endeavour to arrange for him to sec a copy of the proposed measure.

Question put and pased. Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcctera.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

ADJOURNMENT-SPECIAL

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy--Moore) [11.50]: I move--

That the House at its rising adjourn antil to-morrow (Thursday) at 3 p.m.

On this matter I have consulted with the leader of the Opposition. The Legislative Council will meet at three to-morrow afternoon, and consequently it would be well for this House to meet at the same hour, in order that we may be able to deal with business as it comes from the Upper Chamber. In the circumstances I trust hon, members will agree to the motion.

Question put and pass al.

House adjourned at 11.52 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 22nd November, 1917.

Committees for the Session
Bills: Supply, £310,000, all stages 74 Roads Act Continuation, all stages 83 Sale of Liquor Regulation Act Continuation, all
Roads Act Continuation, all stages 83 Sale of Liquor Regulation Act Continuation, all
Sale of Liquor Regulation Act Continuation, all
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Transfer of Land Act Amendment 84
Wheat Marketing, all stages 84
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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 3 p.m. and read prayers.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

On motion by the COLONIAL SECRE-TARY, ordered: 1. That the Standing Orders Committee shall consist of the President, the Chairman of Committees, Hon. J. M. Drew, Hon. A. Sanderson, and the mover. 2, That the Library Committee for the present session shall consist of the following members, viz., Hon. W. Kingsmill, Hon. H. Millington, and Hon. J. F. Allen. 3, That the Printing Committee shall consist of the Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom, Hon. R. G. Ardagh, and Hon. A. Sanderson. 4.