

efficient, and to give more assistance to returned soldiers than would the departments split up as they are to-day. If a returned soldier applied to the Minister for Industries for assistance that Minister could very well say that the matter was one for the Minister for Lands and not his business, and the Minister for Lands could say the same thing regarding the Minister for Industries if the returned soldier applied to him. Our returned men require a Minister who would give them all the information that they are applying for, and all the assistance that they want. They should be able to go to that department and, before leaving it, receive all the information there was to be had about repatriation of any description without having to go to any other department. Such a set of machinery would meet with the satisfaction of the returned soldiers and do a considerable amount of good. It is dangerous to keep on saying in this House that it is premature to bring this forward. The whole of the inefficiency of the British army in its earlier stages was due to people saying, "There is plenty of time to do this or that." If the present National Ministry are desirous of assisting returned soldiers, as part of their bargain to do what they can to win the war, they should immediately create a department from which a returned soldier could get any information whatsoever regarding his future employment, and if the Federal Government do create a board of repatriation by enactment, the State Parliament should seek to get representation upon it as a necessary corollary to their functions of State. I hope at all events the Government will make the necessary representations to that end. If the board is going to be one of a political nature, I hope it will not be forgotten there are other elements in the House than that of a National character. It is not my desire to create a separate department, but a special department under the direct control of a Minister. That will not involve any additional expense. Possibly it is desirable that the Minister for Lands should be the Minister in question, as we shall control the land only for the time being, but the department should be one which will have available for the returned soldier or sailor all information

necessary to give to applicants, and each applicant should be told at once to what extent he can be helped, or assisted back to the life and industry of his country.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 9.24 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Wednesday, 1st August, 1917.*

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

### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: 1, Returned Soldiers' and Sailors' Settlement Scheme. 2, Report of the Royal Commission on the Mallee Belt and Esperance Lands. 3, Health Act, 1911-15—Peppermint Grove Road Board: Amendment of By-laws. 4, Pearling Act, 1912—Useless Inlet, Sharks Bay: Prohibition of removal of Pearls or Pearl-shell. 5, Municipal Corporations Act, 1904—By-laws of Municipalities of (a) Fremantle, (b) Claremont, (c) City of Perth. 6, Vermin Boards Act, 1909—Regulations. 7, Plant Diseases Act, 1914—Regulations.

### QUESTION — STATE STEAMSHIP "KANGAROO" AND WHEAT CARRIAGE.

Hon. H. STEWART asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Is it true that the State steamship "Kangaroo" carried a bulk cargo of grain from a foreign port? 2, Are the Government prepared to employ the "Kangaroo" in carrying wheat in bulk from Western Australia? 3, If so, what would be the estimated benefit to the State?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes; cotton-seed from Alexandria to London. 2, Yes. £1,100 was expended on the vessel for the express purpose of making her suitable for bulk grain cargoes. 3, The vessel would carry 150 tons more in bulk than in bags, thus earning £900 additional freight; it would also save five days in loading and discharging at £300 per day. There would also be a saving in bags to the approximate value of £1,000. The Government desired to load the "Kangaroo" in bulk for her next voyage, but the vessel was under charter to the Australian Wheat Board to load at Fremantle and Geraldton. The underwriters would not permit the vessel to load in bulk in two ports.

### QUESTION — POLICE PROMOTIONS.

Hon. R. J. LYNN asked the Colonial Secretary: Will the Colonial Secretary refer all files respecting recent police promotions, together with personal files of all men having qualified for promotion to the commissioned ranks, to the Public Service Commissioner, with a request for a report respecting such appointments?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: The police regulations provide for the appointment of a Board comprising all the District Officers stationed between Geraldton and Albany (inclusive) to select in order of merit candidates for promotion. These officers have extensive personal knowledge of all the candidates, and are required by the regulations to bear in mind all qualifications making efficiency in an officer or non-commissioned officer. As the Public Service Commissioner cannot possibly have such knowledge of the qualifications of candidates, it is considered that no good pur-

pose would be served by submitting the files for his consideration.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: Absurd!

### STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [4.38]: I move—

*That for the remainder of the session, so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable Bills to be taken through all stages in one sitting, and Messages to be taken into consideration forthwith.*

No measures will be submitted except Bills of a purely formal nature, to which it is not contemplated that any exception whatever may be taken. The motion is submitted in order to expedite business, and to allow the session to complete its work as quickly as possible.

Question put and passed.

### PAPERS—POLICE PROMOTIONS.

Hon. R. J. LYNN (West) [4.40]: I move—

*That there be laid on the Table of the House—(a) the file and all papers relating to the appointment of Inspector Mann as a Police Inspector, (b) the personal files of all police officers who have passed the qualifying examination for inspectors, (c) all papers relating to the appointments of Sergeants Thomas and Leen as first-class sergeants.*

This motion refers to a matter on which I had something to say when speaking on the Address-in-reply. I move it in order that there may not be disappointment caused to the public in relation to an important department of the State by an act of the Government when they are on the eve of possibly retiring into oblivion. From a report of remarks by the Colonial Secretary published in this morning's newspaper, I was rather surprised to learn that, apparently, it is not permissible to say something respecting a police officer. In my opinion, the police are entitled, in the matter of promotions, to appeal to someone outside those directly responsible for the administration of the police force. Unfortunately, I was

not present last night when the Colonial Secretary said that the Public Service Commissioner, although possessing all the qualifications necessary for that office, was not in a position to advise as regards the administration of the Police Department. In connection with that department it would seem that what must be, must be, simply according to the edicts of those responsible for promotion. I desire to point out that we have in our police force men appointed, not by qualification but by favour. I believe the motion I am moving will meet with the approval of the majority of the House. We have in the police force men who have served in the backblocks of the State and given the best that is in them to the service of the State. Some of these men have been for years in junior capacities and have qualified by examination for promotion. I hope that the motion will be carried, and the papers tabled, so that I may be given an opportunity of perusing the files enumerated. The Colonial Secretary has declared that he is opposed to the tabling of these papers. When a private member, the Colonial Secretary frequently asked the then leader of the House for information, and as a rule that hon. member saw that he got it. All I ask is that the papers enumerated in my motion shall be laid on the Table. I have no desire to reflect on the individual capacity of members of the Police Force and I shall never be a party to interfere with the equitable administration of any department controlling the destinies of the State. I have no wish to reflect on any member of the House and I have no desire to say that the Colonial Secretary and Mr. Baxter are not capable of administering the respective departments over which they presided, but I say the weakness displayed by the Colonial Secretary and Mr. Baxter is such that they are simply puppets of the departments they represent. We have in the Police Department of Western Australia, which is controlled by the Colonial Secretary, a department which is much abused. Let me quote one instance. Within the last few months a poor widow woman came to me in a most exhausted condition and I inquired from her what was the matter, to which she replied that her child, nine years of age, had been arrested in one of the public schools in Fre-

mantle. She came to my house at about 7 or 8 o'clock at night and said that her child was in the Fremantle Gaol. I went with Mrs. Johns, I mention her name, to the Police Department and asked why this boy had been arrested and found that the lad, nine years of age, had been arrested for intent to commit wilful murder. The boy had not only been arrested in a public manner, but was taken from a public school in Fremantle. Three detectives went there to arrest him on a charge of intent to commit murder.

The PRESIDENT: Does the hon. member think this applies to his motion?

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I think so, because I am reflecting on the administration of the Police Department.

The PRESIDENT: I am only suggesting that I cannot see much connection between the incident and the motion.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: The Police Department considered it advisable to arrest this boy in a public school in Fremantle on a charge of wilful murder. At the request of the boy's mother I went with her to see if the lad could not be released from prison. The chauffeur of the car which drove me to the gaol signed the document and I, as a J.P., released the boy. When I interested myself on his behalf, I found in the district of Fremantle an inspector—I will not mention his name—who not only ought to be removed from Fremantle but from the remotest parts of Fremantle—a gentleman who is not worthy to hold the position of inspector, and I had to employ Messrs. Moss & Dwyer to protect the boy who had been arrested on this charge. The boy had been dragged out of the class in a school in Fremantle and lodged in gaol and it was necessary to employ Messrs. Moss & Dwyer to protect him against the Police Department. I paid out of my own pocket the solicitor's costs in connection with the defence of that small boy, who was only nine years of age, and who had been arrested by Mr. Harry Mann's department, and put in gaol and kept there for 72 hours. I would like to ask the Colonial Secretary whether he was reported correctly in the *West Australian* this morning in which newspaper it was stated that no members of the police

force had been called together to appoint one man to a senior position.

The Colonial Secretary: The report in the newspaper is quite correct, though necessarily abbreviated. My statement was that the hon. member was not correct in saying that the inspectors had been called together from all parts of the State merely to recommend the promotion of two sergeants. They were called together to deal with a number of pending promotions.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I am surprised that the Colonial Secretary should make such an admission. Like a policeman—once a policeman always a policeman, and everybody knows it. If they were not called together to make the appointment, why did they assemble in Perth? Those worthy of promotion have been swept aside while others have been appointed to suit the ends of those in authority. Now the Colonial Secretary refuses to place the papers that I am asking for on the Table of the House so that members may peruse them. When the power-house question was before Parliament Mr. Colebatch insisted on having the papers placed on the Table of the House, and strongly objected to the opposition which was shown by the then leader of the House to make the papers available to hon. members. Mr. Colebatch was the one man who then said, "We must have these papers in order to see how the business has been conducted."

Debate interrupted by Standing Order 114.

#### BILL—PERMANENT RESERVE (KING'S PARK).

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Assembly.

#### BILL—CITY OF PERTH ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Legislative Assembly and read a first time.

#### BILL—WAR COUNCIL ACT AMENDMENT.

*Second Reading.*

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [5.32] in moving

the second reading said: The object of this very brief Bill is to ratify the distribution of certain sums of money raised by the Sandbag Committee. The committee raised by public subscriptions donations to the total of £6,498 17s. 5d. for the purpose of providing sand bags. The sum of £2,010 13s. 11d. had been expended when it was ascertained that no further contributions in the way of sand bags were desired by the Imperial authorities. This left a balance in the hands of the Sandbag Committee of £4,488 3s. 6d., besides certain goods which had been donated and afterwards sold. Roughly, therefore, the sum of £5,000 remained to be distributed. The Sandbag Committee was given a guarantee under an indemnity of the late Premier against the claims of any persons if they distributed this money amongst certain specified patriotic bodies. The committee so distributed this money in equal amounts to the War Patriotic Fund, the Victoria League (Trench Comforts Fund of Western Australian battalions), and the Red Cross Society (Amelioration Fund), and this Bill is to ratify the indemnity given by the late Premier for this distribution. I move—

*That the Bill be now 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 *passed*.

#### BILL—MELVILLE TRAMWAYS ACT AMENDMENT.

*Second Reading.*

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [5.36] in moving the second reading said: This also is a very brief measure and has merely one object, namely, the legalising of the suspension of the payment of sinking fund. The money was borrowed some time ago for the construction of a tramway to the Melville district. The original measure made provision for the payment of sinking fund, but in view of the war conditions both the lenders and the borrowers of the money have agreed

to the suspension of the sinking fund payments until after the war. This Bill makes the necessary provision for giving effect to that agreement between both parties, namely, the lender and the borrower. I move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

Hon. J. F. ALLEN (West) [5.37]: I should like to add a few words to those of the Colonial Secretary. The money was borrowed for the purpose of constructing this tramway a little while before the outbreak of war. The local board had anticipated that the profits derived from the running of the trams would enable them to finance the operation, but on account of a large number of people in the district having left, the rates are not being paid as they would otherwise be, although the board are not pressing for the payment of the rates. The tramways were constructed particularly for the purpose of opening up the Melville foreshore on the river as a holiday resort, but, as we know, the people are not with us to-day to create the traffic and produce the revenue which was expected would be derived from the tramways. The work also, on account of the war, has cost considerably more than was anticipated at the outset, and that also has increased the difficulties of the position. I do not know that I need say anything further in this respect. The Minister has pointed out that the roads board and the people who have lent them the money are in accord in this request. The people who have lent the money have intimated their willingness to the roads board to forego the payments for the time being and, in order to assure the House of the bona fides of this statement, I will read the letter which the roads board have received from these people who have lent them the money. The letter is written from the Australasian T. & G. Mutual Life Assurance Society, Ltd., Melbourne, under date 16th May, 1917, and is addressed to the Secretary, Melville Road Board, Bicton,—

Dear Sir, *Re* Debentures No. 1/130 for the sum of £13,000. Your letter of the 8th inst. was laid before my board of directors to-day and I have to inform you that the society is prepared to fall in with your request and waive the provision

of a sinking fund in connection with the above loan for a further term of five years. Yours faithfully, (sgnd) J. McKenzie Henry, General Manager.

This shows that it is not the roads board alone who are asking for this, and also that there is no injustice being done to the people who have lent the money, because they have agreed by their letter to the Bill being placed on the statute book.

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 *passed*.

#### BILL—UNIVERSITY ACT AMENDMENT.

*Second reading.*

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [5.43] in moving the second reading said: This is another very brief Bill with a single purpose. The intention of the Bill is to amend the University Act in the direction of permitting the University authorities, with the approval of the Governor-in-Council, to grant leases of their endowment lands for periods up to 99 years. The present Act empowers the University to lease land up to 21 years, but in the case of land leased on building leases the term, with the approval of the Governor, may be extended to 99 years. This Bill strikes out the word "building," thereby giving power, again with the approval of the Governor, to grant leases up to 99 years without restricting them to "building" leases. The University has some 4,000 acres of endowment land, some at Subiaco, some at Cockburn Sound, and two leases in the country. The Cockburn Sound land has been subdivided into allotments of from five to ten acres. This land is suitable for poultry farming, fruit growing, and for other purposes. After subdivision it was found that the term of 21 years—the limit of the Senate's authority except for building leases—was too short to induce people to take up the land. The endowment lands:

are exempt from taxation, but this exemption would not extend to the lessee in the event of the land being leased. The main purpose of the Bill is to provide that the university authorities, with the consent of the Governor-in-Council, may lease land up to 99 years. 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.

Read a third time and *passed*.

#### BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT ACT CONTINUANCE.

*Second Reading.*

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [5.47]: This is a rather important matter. The Act passed last session continued the operation of the Act which empowers the Governor-in-Council, if it is deemed necessary so to do, to close the hotels in any part of the State. That Act has been in operation since the commencement of the war, and it has been found to be of use. The Act expires on the 30th day of September, and therefore it is necessary that this House should agree to its continuance. I move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

Hon. J. J. HOLMES (North) [5.48]: I desire to point out that no action is taken by the State in connection with legislation of this nature. Personally, it seems to me that the interference by the Federal authorities in a State matter such as this is due to this laxity on the part of the State, which has resulted in the military authorities stepping in and taking the whole control of this business out of the hands of the State. In order that the leader of the House may not reply that he did not know what was going on, I would draw his attention to page 682 of last *Hansard*, in which I made the following statement—

My principal object in speaking is to urge upon the Government to administer special legislation in this matter. Parlia-

ment has passed special legislation empowering the Government to close hotels at any time under certain circumstances. I blame the Labour Government because it did not give effect to that special legislation, and this being a purely non-party House I now blame the Wilson Government and urge upon the Colonial Secretary the necessity for taking some action in connection with the closing of hotels when disgraceful scenes occur, as they have done in the past. I claim it to be the clear duty of the Government to close hotels when a transport anchors in Fremantle and men are liberated in hundreds. In the earlier days of the war we had some disgraceful scenes, but I had thought the difficulty had been got over by the military authorities by not allowing men to land from transports. When these men come ashore they are supplied by the hotel-keepers. I have myself seen them supplied in the presence of the police. I have seen men full of beer go into hotels and be served. And in my opinion the only way to deal with that difficulty is to close up hotels when a transport arrives. (Member: What about dealing with the policeman?) I presume the policeman could also be dealt with; but the principal culprit in this case is, I think, the publican, for supplying, or allowing to be supplied, liquor to the soldiers who are not in a fit condition to carry any more. It would not be fair to victimise the policemen; we should punish the publican—if he will not properly conduct his hotel he should be made to face the consequence.

No action was taken by the State Government until the Federal Government moved in the matter. Another point I wish to make is that when Parliament reached a deadlock on the question of closing hotels, I was one of three delegates appointed to meet three from the other Chamber, and it was agreed that 9 to 9 trading should apply to clubs as well as to hotels. Mr. Walker, the Attorney General in the Labour Government, was one of the delegates from another place, and Mr. Robinson, the present Attorney General, was present as another delegate; and we agreed emphatically that 9 to 9 should apply to clubs as well as to

hotels. But no action has been taken in regard to clubs. Hotel-keepers have to pay big licenses and have to comply with all sorts of conditions; they open at nine in the morning and close at nine at night. The clubs, which pay a nominal license fee, trade till all hours of the night and nothing is done in the matter. I will ask the Colonial Secretary to tell this House why the police have not taken action. Have they instructions not to do so? I am aware that it has been suggested there is a flaw in the Act; but if there is a flaw, the sooner it is discovered the better, because this going behind an Act of Parliament is not fair to Parliament or the publican. Why should the publican have to close at nine when a club is permitted to trade until all hours of the night? I should also like to know whether, if the police will not act in this matter, a private citizen would be permitted to get on the track of those gentlemen who trade till all hours. I want the Colonial Secretary to tell me whether a private citizen would be entitled to take action. Another point I want to bring under the notice of the leader of the House is this, that when the 9 to 9 proposal was before this Chamber and when certain members were urging the closing of the Parliamentary bar, we were urged not to include the bar in the measure, because it was pointed out that the Bill applied only to licensed premises and Parliament House is not licensed premises. We were told that the matter was one in the control of the House Committee and that the House Committee would deal with it; but the House Committee has not dealt with it. Although we had that definite promise that if we excluded the bar from the measure, action would be taken, nothing has been done. Although the publican has to close at nine, the Government who trade in the bar attached to this House are able to trade all night. I am not permitted to deal with my anti-shouting proposal this session. That is a question that will occupy a prominent place at the general elections. Members may smile, but when the general election comes on, every candidate for Parliament will have to decide on which side of the fence he is on on this liquor question whether he is for or against anti-

shouting. I bring these few facts to the attention of the Colonial Secretary in order to convince him that when this House passes legislation of this character, the House desires we will insist that it be put into operation.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN (South) [5.55]: I do not propose to deal with the Bill before the House, but merely to ask the Colonial Secretary if he will be so good as to say why a departure has been made in this instance. The Bill is intended to provide for legislation being continued and the point I wish to call attention to is the proviso to Section 2 which reads—

Provided that if prior to that date a resolution is passed by both Houses of Parliament to the effect that the said Act shall continue for a further period expressed in such legislation, the said Act shall continue in force accordingly.

In other words, this Bill can be continued if it is necessary to continue it by the passing of resolutions brought before both Houses of Parliament. I know it may be necessary to continue the legislation on the Statute-book, but fail to see where the advantage lies in altering the existing system for the continuance of legislation by the means of Bills. In the case of a Bill, there are several phases—the Bill has to be read three times in each of the two Houses in the ordinary course; but if the procedure is to be altered so that by means of a resolution legislation is to be continued, I consider it is a departure which it is inadvisable to make. I should be glad if the leader of the House would be good enough to supply members with information as to the reason and also the reason why that particular subsection should be in this Bill, because I cannot find it in the Continuance Act passed last session. I shall be glad if the Colonial Secretary will give us the reason for this.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East—in reply) [6.0]: In reply to the point raised by Mr. Kirwan, I would draw his attention to the same Act passed in 1915. That Act was identical in its wording with the one now before the House. It contained this proviso—

Provided that if prior to the said date a resolution is passed by both Houses of Parliament to the effect that the said Act

shall continue for a further period expressed in such resolution, the said Act shall continue in force accordingly.

As a matter of fact, in 1916 this particular Act was continued by resolution of both Houses of Parliament. But the 1915 Act permitted only of the one continuance by one resolution, and consequently it was necessary this year to bring in a further Bill. If this Bill is passed in its present form, it will be competent next year for both Houses of Parliament by resolution to continue it for a further period expressed in the resolution, but it would not be open to keep on passing resolutions for continuance. That could only be done once. What is here proposed is not a new departure. No doubt the course of continuing the Act by resolution of both Houses would have been adopted on this occasion, were it not that the 1915 Act permitted only a continuance for the period stated in the resolution. Accordingly it was considered necessary by the Crown Law Department to introduce a new Bill. I am very much in sympathy with the views expressed by Mr. Holmes; but hon. members will recognise that when the Act was first passed it was clearly stated that the measure was only to be used in cases of emergency; and I think it was suggested that the emergency which might arise was racial trouble, particularly on the goldfields, and so forth. I do not disagree with Mr. Holmes when he says that the Government would have been justified long ago in making use of the Act for the regulation of sales of liquor on the occasion of transports being in port. I am glad the military authorities have taken the matter up. If the Government are to blame for not having done so, they must accept their share of the blame. When the Act was passed, however, it was distinctly promised that the measure would be used only in cases of emergency. There is still a possibility of emergencies arising, and therefore I would ask Mr. Holmes not to object to this power being still left in the hands of the State Government.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: How about clubs?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Although that matter does not arise under this Bill, I shall certainly have it inquired into. I do know that there are differences of opin-

ion as to the legal standing of clubs. I believe the advice has been given that clubs can continue to serve their members after nine o'clock, and I understand there is some difference of opinion as to whether or not they are permitted to serve strangers after nine o'clock.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Why not test the matter?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Without looking the matter up I am not in a position to tell the hon. member what has actually been done, but I will look into it. It was certainly not intended that clubs should be allowed to serve liquor to non-members after the hotels were closed. I am sure that whatever the effect of the Act may be in this respect, such was not the intention of the framers of the Act.

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 *passed*.

## BILL—CITY OF PERTH ACT AMENDMENT.

*All Stages.*

Received from the Legislative Assembly and read a first time.

*Second Reading.*

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [6.8]: In moving the second reading of this Bill, I have only to say that the object of introducing it during this session was to enable the amalgamation which is desired by both the Victoria Park Municipality and the City of Perth to be accomplished in the present municipal year. Had the Bill been allowed to stand over until Parliament could assemble after the general elections, it would have been too late for the amalgamation to take place so that the two bodies could have started the new municipal year under the amalgamation scheme. As originally introduced in another place, the Bill made general provision for amalgamation, but that provision was



struck out. Presumably it was thought that, as this measure was being passed without the time usually given to the passage of such a Bill, it should contain nothing that could possibly be of a contentious nature. The Bill is confined entirely to sanctioning the union between the City of Perth and the Municipality of Victoria Park on the terms and conditions agreed to by the two parties. 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.

Read a third time, and *passed*.

#### QUESTION—PARLIAMENT HOUSE GROUNDS.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: I desire to ask the leader of the House, without notice, a question affecting the privileges of Parliament. My question is: 1, Is the Colonial Secretary aware that an attempt is being made to mutilate the grounds attached to these buildings? 2, Will he use his best endeavours to prevent such a happening before Parliament has had an opportunity of expressing an opinion on the subject, considering that the said grounds are under the control of Parliament direct, and not of the Government or any Minister?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, No; I am not aware of it. 2, I will make inquiries into the matter. I am not pledging myself to any particular course of action, but I am in sympathy with the ideas of the hon. member, and will see how the position stands. At present I know nothing at all about it.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: Perhaps I may be permitted a word of explanation. It is the desire, and I understand an attempt has already been made, to cut 16½ feet off the Hay-street frontage of Parliament House grounds. This will entail the mutilation and the eventual destruction of a consider-

able portion of the gardens, and notably of a very fine hedge which has been in existence now for some eight or nine years, and which will be practically irreplaceable except within the same period of time.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Will not the proposed action result in advantage to the public?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: I think not.

Hon. A. Sanderson: Who is doing this?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: The Perth Municipality. Further, I would point out that these buildings and the grounds surrounding them are the property of Parliament. They occupy quite a different position from any other land and buildings in the City; and, that being the case, Parliament itself either through you, Mr. President, in conjunction with your colleague the Speaker, or through the delegates of Parliament, the House Committee, which is appointed to administer these buildings and the lands in connection therewith, are the only people who have the right to deal with them. In the circumstances I would ask that the Colonial Secretary and his colleagues should protect the privileges of Parliament, and prevent this deed being done without Parliament being first asked for its assent. It is quite possible that Parliament may assent to the proposal, but Parliament should undoubtedly have the opportunity of saying yes or no before the action is carried out.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have heard what the hon. member has said, and I will give the matter attention and find out what has been done and what is contemplated.

#### ADJOURNMENT—CLOSE OF SESSION.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [6.14]: I move—

*That the House at its rising adjourn until the 21st August.*

The business which the Government have to submit to Parliament is now completed, and I accordingly move an adjournment to the 21st August. In the meantime it is the intention to dissolve Parliament and to appoint the 29th September as the date for the general election. Parliament will then

re-assemble in October, on a date to be subsequently announced. I can only express the hope that we shall all meet again when the time comes, and that you, Mr. President, in particular, with other hon. members will enjoy the brief period of rest.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 6.15 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Wednesday, 1st August, 1917.*

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

### QUESTION — ROYAL COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE.

Mr. HICKMOTT (without notice) asked the Premier: 1, When will the report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture be available? 2, Can the Premier give the House any information with regard to the Commission's recommendations?

The PREMIER replied: I can only state that the report will be made available after it has been presented to the Governor. The report has not yet come forward. An interim report, however, has been presented

and that is now on the Table of the House. As soon as the Commission have finished their labours and presented the report it will be made public.

### QUESTION—RETURNED SOLDIERS, GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON asked the Premier: Will he, for the information of returned soldiers who were, before enlistment, employees of the Government service, outline the Government's attitude in regard to—1, Soldiers whose service was over six months but under term which made them permanent hands, but whose service at the Front extended beyond that which would make them permanent had they neglected to enlist? 2, Will the Government add to term of Government service the term served in A.I.F., and pay holiday and extend same privileges as is given to men who were on permanent staff before enlistment?

The PREMIER replied: 1, This does not apply to the Public Service generally, as duration of temporary service alone is not a qualification for permanency. The temporary and casual men employed in the Departments are subject to their services being dispensed with at any moment. Those of them who joined the A.I.F. left the Departments on the distinct understanding that their services while abroad should not count, but that they should receive preference for employment on their return after the permanent staff had been provided for. 2, The addition of the term served in the A.I.F. to temporary service would not make temporary employees permanent officers, nor entitle them to the same conditions as those given to permanent men.

### QUESTION—RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION, ESPERANCE-NORTHWARDS.

Mr. GREEN asked the Minister for Works: Is he prepared to proceed with the construction of the Esperance railway at once, and so make provision for the coming wheat crop, and in order to fulfil a promise made to Hon. T. Walker (the member for the district) that the work would be proceeded with within a fortnight after the