

Clause 2—Method of signing certain Treasury bills:

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Can the Minister inform me what rate of interest was allowed under the Loan Act of last session?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The Government have authority to borrow in two or three ways. The rate of interest on lower loans, by way of Treasury bills, is not limited. The Government can pay whatever rate of interest they like. The rate of interest fixed by the Loan Act of last session, however, was 6 per cent. or $6\frac{1}{4}$ per cent.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I think it was $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I do not think we should pass this Bill as it stands. I move an amendment—

That in line nine, after "pounds," the words "at a rate of interest not exceeding $6\frac{1}{4}$ per centum per annum" be inserted.

We should not permit to be passed at this stage legislation which allows of frenzied finance.

The Minister for Education: That has nothing to do with it.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: If these Treasury bills can be issued at any rate of interest the Government like to prescribe, we should take care to see that the rate of interest is stipulated.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: We have already authorised the Government to raise the money.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: But it is our duty to guard against the Treasury bills being issued at an inflated rate of interest.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: They are issued at a discount.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Whether at discount or interest, it amounts to the same thing.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I cannot accept the amendment; it is entirely foreign to the purpose of the Bill. The title is "A Bill for an Act to make further provision for the signing of Treasury bills." The only effect of the Bill is to substitute one set of signatures for another. The only effect of the amendment would be to make it impossible for the Government to keep an undertaking into which they have entered.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: It seems to me that this Bill is designed merely for the purpose of saving time. Under existing conditions these Treasury bills could be signed here and sent to London, and this House would have no say whatever in the matter. The Bill will merely facilitate the finalising of the matter. Therefore I support the measure. At first sight I thought it would be dangerous, but, after further consideration, I am satisfied that it is quite in order.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I realise that the leader of the House is quite correct in stating that the Government have ample authority to issue these Treasury bills. The Government have

also their loan authorisation under which they can redeem these Treasury bills, after being discounted, out of the loan to be floated. On the other hand, Mr. Lovekin has undoubtedly presented a phase of the question which should not be overlooked by the Committee. What this means is that the Government have carte blanche to sell Treasury bills at almost any rate of discount. I desire to be corrected if I am wrong. If the Government can to-day discount their paper at $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum for six months, it would be interesting to know what in addition to $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. is charged in connection with this discount. Is there any brokerage attached to it? Have we an assurance from the leader of the House that it simply means £2 15s. for every £100 we are borrowing, and that at the end of six months the amount will be redeemed out of the loan to be raised?

Hon. A. Lovekin: He cannot give you that assurance.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: It is wrong that a Government should have power to discount Treasury bills at any rate irrespective of the cost to the country. If that should be the position then the amendment submitted by the hon. member is in order.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Bill read a third time and passed.

House adjourned at 4.50 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 28th July, 1921.

	PAGE
Meeting of the Assembly	12
Opening by Commissioner	13
Swearing in of Members	13, 14
Election of Speaker	14
Presentation of Speaker-elect	14
Summons from the Governor	14
Bills: Adoption of Children Act Amendment, 1r. ...	14
Treasury Bills (Signatures) all stages ...	14
Governor's Opening Speech	15
Address-in-reply, first day	15

MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Legislative Assembly met at noon, pursuant to proclamation by His Excellency the Governor, which proclamation was read by the Clerk (Mr. A. R. Grant).

MESSAGE—OPENING BY COMMISSIONER.

A Message from the Commissioner appointed by the Governor to do all things necessary for the opening of Parliament requested the attendance of members of the Legislative Assembly in the Legislative Council Chamber; and hon. members having accordingly proceeded to that Chamber, and heard the Commission read, they returned to the Assembly Chamber.

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

His Honour the Chief Justice (Sir Robert Furso McMillan) having been commissioned by the Governor, appeared in the Assembly Chamber to administer to members the oath of allegiance to His Majesty the King.

The Clerk produced election writs showing the return of 50 members.

With the following exceptions all the members elected were present and took and subscribed the oath as required by statute, and signed the roll:—Hon. W. J. George (Murray-Wellington), Mr. T. H. Harrison (Avon), Mr. E. B. Johnston (Williams-Narrogin), Mr. G. J. Lambert (Coolgardie), Mr. A. N. Piesse (Toodyay), Mr. R. S. Sampson (Swan), Mr. F. W. Teesdale (Roebourne), Mr. J. C. Willcock (Geraldton).

ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [12.40] addressing the Clerk, said: Mr. Grant, the House being duly constituted, I now move—

That Mr. Taylor do take the Chair of this House as Speaker.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning): I second the Premier's motion.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret): I submit myself to the will of the House.

There being no other nomination,

The SPEAKER-ELECT, having been conducted to the Chair by the mover and seconder of the motion, said [12.41]: Hon. members, I thank you very sincerely for re-electing me as Speaker of this Assembly, and I can only express the hope that the traditions of this Parliament will be maintained during my forthcoming Speakership. I believe that the Parliament of Western Australia so far has an enviable record for the manner in which it carries out its business, and I trust, with the assistance of hon. members, to be able to maintain the traditions of this Assembly. I again thank hon. members for having placed me in the high and honourable position of Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [12.42]: May I offer you, Mr. Taylor, my congratulations on your appointment to the high and honourable office of Speaker. It must be very gratifying to you

to know that you have been unanimously elected as Speaker. Yours has been a long Parliamentary experience, not only as Speaker, but also as a member of this Assembly. I believe you can claim, Sir, to be the father of the House. Your duties during the past three years have not been very strenuous, and I trust that, with the co-operation of hon. members, the coming three years will not occasion any serious trouble.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There may be a little more difficulty.

The PREMIER: I trust that even the hon. member interjecting will allow me to say that I hope not. I noticed that when my hon. friend made that interjection, he glanced towards the member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan). We have, of course, had in this House in days past some hon. members who could claim to be the oldest sitting members, and thus fathers of the House. The position, however, has been somewhat changed by the recent general election. You, Sir, are the oldest member here to-day, and thus the father of the House. As the West Perth election has resulted in the return of a lady, I suppose the member for West Perth may be described as "the mother of the House." Allow me, Mr. Taylor, to offer you my congratulations on your appointment as Speaker of this Assembly.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [12.43]: I desire to associate myself with the congratulations which the Premier has offered you, Mr. Taylor, upon being again elected to preside over the deliberations of this Assembly; and I trust that the term of office upon which you are just now entering will prove pleasant to yourself and satisfactory to the House.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [12.44]: On behalf of the member for Avon (Mr. Harrison), who unfortunately is ill, it falls to me on behalf of the Country Party to offer you, Mr. Speaker, congratulations upon being re-elected to your high position. From my own personal knowledge of you, Sir, as occupant of that Chair, I am quite confident that every member of the Chamber can rely upon receiving absolutely fair and just treatment from you. On behalf of the Country party, Mr. Taylor, I congratulate you.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara) [12.45]: On behalf of those members who have been elected as National Labour members I desire to congratulate you, Mr. Taylor, on being re-elected to the important position of Speaker. Personally, I am very pleased indeed to see you in the position, and I can with confidence express the opinion that you have carried out the important duties of Speaker in the last Parliament with as much ability as any man I have ever seen in the Chair. I wish you every success, Mr. Speaker, and on behalf of those for whom I speak I assure you that we shall use our best endeavours to afford you every assistance.

Mr. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [12.46]: On behalf of the independent members—although I may say that I understood the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) was an independent member, and, indeed, I thought he was my leader—I wish you, Mr. Taylor, a happy term as Speaker; and I trust that you will not experience very much difficulty in controlling me; I appear to be the only independent member of this Chamber.

PRESENTATION OF SPEAKER ELECT.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [12.47]: Mr. Speaker, I have to inform you that His Excellency the Governor has intimated that he will be pleased to receive you forthwith, together with hon. members who may desire to accompany you.

Sitting suspended from 12.48 to 1.13 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER said: I have to report that I have submitted myself to His Excellency, and that His Excellency has been pleased to express his satisfaction at the choice of the Assembly in the following terms:—

The Hon. the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.—It is with much pleasure that I learn that you have been again elected by the members of the Legislative Assembly to the high and honourable office of Speaker of that House. I have every confidence that you will fill the office in a worthy and dignified manner, and I have the honour to affirm the constitutional rights and privileges hitherto enjoyed by the Legislative Assembly of this State. (Sgd.) Francis Alexander Newdegate, Governor.

His Excellency has also been pleased to give me a commission to swear in members of this House.

Sitting suspended from 1.22 to 2.50 p.m.

SUMMONS FROM THE GOVERNOR.

Mr. Speaker and hon. members, in response to summons, proceeded to the Legislative Council Chamber, and having heard His Excellency deliver the opening Speech (vide Council report ante), returned to the Legislative Assembly Chamber. Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.

SWEARING-IN OF MEMBERS.

Mr. F. W. Teesdale (Roebourne), and Mr. G. J. Lambert (Coolgardie) took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

BILL—ADOPTION OF CHILDREN ACT AMENDMENT.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) by leave without notice (by way of asserting privilege) introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Adoption of Children Act, 1896.

Bill read a first time.

BILL—TREASURY BILLS (SIGNATURES).

All Stages.

Standing Orders Suspension.

The PREMIER AND TREASURER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [3.51]: 1 move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to permit of the introduction and passing through all stages in one day of a Bill for an Act to make further provision for the signing of Treasury bills and also to enable the business aforesaid to be entered upon and dealt with before the Address-in-reply is adopted.

Mr. SPEAKER [3.52]: Before putting the question, I desire to point out to members that it is necessary under our Standing Orders for the motion to be passed by an absolute majority. I have counted the House and have satisfied myself that there is an absolute majority present. I shall state the question and put it, and if there is no negative voice, I shall not take a division, but shall declare the motion carried in accordance with the Standing Orders.

Question put and passed.

Message.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending the Bill.

First Reading.

On motion by the Premier, Bill introduced and read a first time.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [3.55] in moving the second reading said: Copies of the Bill have been distributed and members will have seen that this is merely a Bill asking the House to authorise the Agent General in London and the accountant at the London Agency to sign Treasury bills in lieu of the Colonial Treasurer and the Under Treasurer. The power at present is vested in the Treasurer and the Under Treasurer. We could, and often have signed these Treasury bills here and sent them Home in blank. I do not know that this is a very desirable practice, but it can be done. However, the position is that we have raised two million pounds in London against Treasury bills having a currency of six months.

Hon. P. Collier: Is that the 17 per cent. loan?

The PREMIER: There is no 17 per cent. about it. Provided that the Bill is passed, these Treasury bills will be issued in London to-morrow. I have already wired intimating my intention of asking the House to pass this measure. The Bill does not authorise the raising of a single penny. We already have authority to raise the money. If there had been time to send these Treasury bills Home signed by the Treasurer and Under Treasurer, I would not be here to-day asking the House to agree to this Bill.

Mr. McCallum: Is the authorisation limited to this one instance?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Hon. T. Walker: It does not say so in the Bill.

The PREMIER: It does. It limits the authority of the Agent General and the accountant to sign Treasury bills to the extent of two million pounds.

Hon. T. Walker: But any two millions; the next two millions?

The PREMIER: Not at all.

Hon. T. Walker: Yes, it gives them authority at all times when you raise money by Treasury bills.

The PREMIER: If that were correct I should have a very simple task, in that I would simply have to get authority to raise one £5 note and I could go on raising loans of as many five pounds as I liked.

The Minister for Mines: The Treasurer cannot raise any loan without the authority of Parliament.

Hon. T. Walker: But this is a standing authority.

The PREMIER: The amount is not to exceed two million pounds, and the Treasury bills so signed will be restricted to this particular loan which has been raised. Members are quite aware of the difficulty of raising money in London except by these means. However, I am not permitted to discuss that question here now. All I am permitted to do is to tell the House that instead of the Colonial Treasurer and the Under Treasurer signing the Treasury bills here in Perth, I desire authority that these bills may be signed by the Agent General and the accountant in London. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

THE GOVERNOR'S OPENING SPEECH.

Mr. SPEAKER: In company with hon. members of this Chamber, I attended His Excellency the Governor in the Legislative Council Chamber, where His Excellency was pleased to make a Speech to both Houses of Parliament, copies of which Speech I have had distributed amongst hon. members of this Chamber.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

First Day.

Mrs. COWAN (West Perth) [4.0]: I move—

That the following address be presented to His Excellency in reply to the Speech he has been pleased to deliver to us:—
‘May it please Your Excellency. We, the members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign and to thank Your Excellency for the Speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.’

I have much pleasure in submitting this motion. I stand here to-day in the unique position of being the first woman in an Australian Parliament. I know many people think perhaps that it was not the wisest thing to do to send a woman into Parliament, and perhaps I should remind hon. members that one of the reasons why women and men also considered it advisable to do so, was because it was felt that men need a reminder sometimes from women beside them that will make them realise all that can be done for the race and for the home. I have been sent here more from that standpoint than from any other. You, Mr. Speaker, are aware that everybody said when the elections began that there were three old women putting up for Parliament. I am the only old woman who got in, but then I am the only genuine one of the lot.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There was a nice young woman defeated at Claremont.

Mrs. COWAN: I am very sorry she did not get in.

Hon. P. Collier: We are all very sorry.

Mrs. COWAN: I only desire to say that I am here ready to help hon. members to these ends. That is all I came here for, and it is also my desire to seek the help of hon. members, because that will be most necessary if woman's opinion is to have any effect in this Parliament. It is a great responsibility to be the only woman here, and I want to emphasise the necessity which exists for other women being here. It will be remembered that one of the things that made men, as well as the women, realise the need for having women in Parliament was that a Parliament like this, consisting entirely of men, was able, clearly without thinking what it was doing, to pass an amendment to

an Act not so long ago—the State Children Act—by which any child that was convicted before a State Children's Court would be a State child until it reached the age of 18. When we found that out we felt that it was more than time that someone should come into this House just to remind the men sometimes that these questions should be given more consideration. There are many other things that will crop up during the session in connection with which I feel sure I shall be able to give some help, and I feel certain also that hon. members will be only too pleased to give me their help—for I will need it—whenever they have to be reminded of these necessary things that I shall probably have the honour of submitting to them, and in connection with which I shall have to seek their assistance, if the outcome is to be successful. Then, again, the Scriptures tell us that it is not good for man to be alone. I appreciate the honour that was conferred on me in asking me, though not the youngest member in this House, to move the Address-in-reply. I look on it as an honour conferred on the women of the country, and I therefore thank the Government for it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They only wanted your vote.

Mrs. COWAN: It is all the more necessary, therefore, that I should make it clear where I stand. I am a Nationalist, and I belong to no party in this House. I was sent here to uphold law and order and constitutional government, and it will be my desire to assist in carrying out these objects in a proper and satisfactory manner; while in the discharge of my duties here I shall be responsible only to my own constituents. That plank was inserted when the fighting platform of the Nationalists was drawn up, and I think the Premier will grant me that he himself was one who helped to draw up that platform. There are too many here to-day who are possessed of the old party spirit, which seems ever to exist, but I cannot see why we should drag party into things that concern the whole of the State. We want every member in this House to realise the mistakes of the past in this direction. I think, too, it has been fairly proved in this House to-day that women can and do stand by women, and will stand by women in the future if it is only to help to get rid of some of that painful party spirit so frequently evinced on questions on which it should never be brought to bear. I must also add that, while a Nationalist, and while supporting a Nationalist Government, I shall always reserve to myself the right to criticise suggestively and candidly any legislation brought forward, and will do everything in my power to remedy any mistakes which may seem to me are being made. With regard to the deficit, I do not propose to deal very much with it to-day, as an opportunity will arise later. We all regret that the country is obliged to have a deficit. I suppose no country can live without more or less of an overdraft. We certainly have a large one,

and it will be a bad day for us if it should be suddenly called up from Europe or anywhere else. Therefore it is a good thing to see that the Government have been putting their house in order. With regard to the Arbitration Court, which has not helped to solve existing difficulties, I would like to make the suggestion that a trained economist, or commercial man, and a Labour man should be appointed to investigate each year the existing economic conditions, get a knowledge of work to be undertaken, and then set wages in any calling. This would help any Government.

Member: Where would you get the economist?

Mrs. COWAN: What do we have professors of economics for in the universities, if they are not to be utilised in such a direction? Reverting again to the deficit, I am glad to say that it has not been appreciably added to by the advent of a woman to Parliament. I was told that the election of a woman would involve an expenditure during the present session of £300 or £400, owing to the necessity for making alterations to a portion of the building; but none were made, and I might add, owing to my moderation, and the care of the Speaker, such an expenditure has not been incurred. As a matter of fact, the cost to the country has been about £20, and the deficit will not be added to, to any extent worth talking about.

Mr. Lambert: Will you invite us to see how the money was spent?

Mrs. COWAN: With regard to the water supply for the metropolitan area, that is a matter that concerns every household, and it is satisfactory to see that the Government are attending to it. There is a reference to the matter in the Speech, and it is to the effect that the question is receiving consideration. I trust it will be possible to have a board appointed at no distant date to deal with it. It is most necessary that we should have some outside authority appointed and something done in a more practical way towards improving the existing condition of affairs. It has been brought under my notice that there is another scheme on the tapis and it is one which might receive early consideration. I am not aware that the Premier even knows the details of it, but it is a scheme that was submitted some years ago by Mr. Shields, who is an engineer possessing qualifications in advance of those held by any officer in the Government departments. I contend that that gentleman's scheme is worthy of serious consideration, and I hope the Government will give it that consideration, even if they have to do so by appointing an outside board, in order that a fair decision might be arrived at as to the merits of that and the other schemes. It is a proposal, too, which I understand will cost a third of the others which have been propounded, and therefore, in the interests of the rate-payers, and particularly the women who have to use water for cooking, washing, and other domestic purposes, something should be done to ensure the cheap-

est supply. A suggestion has also been made to the Government that the temporary supply might be increased from the lakes around Perth. That, too, is worthy of serious consideration on behalf of the ratepayers. If hon. members lived in West Perth they would know what the people there had to suffer last summer; and we pay highly for it. Therefore we are all gratified to learn that the question is at last going to be dealt with, and, it is to be hoped, in a satisfactory way. With regard to education, naturally one will support all that makes for efficiency and that which will help the children of parents who are in the country. We have far too many families in our towns, and we require to give people every opportunity for realising and enjoying the beauties of country life without the loss of this advantage. I judge by the report which has been handed in, from the little one has seen of it, that possibly more may be done in that direction and done better than has been the case in the past. I honestly hope so, because it does seem to be an anomaly that we should be able to spend £1,400 on a gymnasium in the city while some of our teachers outback are living in canvas bedrooms containing at one end the season's supply of bonedust. I wish to specially draw the attention of the Minister for Education to such anomalies.

The Premier: The Minister for Agriculture?

Mrs. COWAN: Perhaps both of them. It should be possible to have that condition of things altered, for how can we expect to get satisfactory teaching in country districts when the teachers sent out are treated like that? In regard to the State Children Department, I have plenty of suggestive criticism to offer, but not now. I will keep until another day. However, I do deprecate, and I know that the men and women in my constituency deprecate, the expenditure on the new Receiving Home. The women, I am sorry to say, were not in any way consulted in regard to that. Apropos of this! I hope that when the Government again bring in the Architects Bill they will make it easy for women to become architects. We shall never have satisfactory homes and Government buildings until women have a voice in planning them. It seems to me that had we been consulted, much better use could have been made of £12,500 than has been done, and I trust that in future we shall be consulted in such matters. Then there is the question of probation officers and a proper scheme of probation, which should receive serious consideration here whenever amendments are being made to the State Children Act. There is no mention in the Speech of a home for mental defectives. That will create a good deal of discussion whenever it does come up, and I trust that every member will qualify himself for that discussion by reading something of the subject and realising what it means to our national life, unless we deal

with the question wisely. As usual I was to a certain extent misreported in the Press on that subject, but I feel it is my bounden duty at all times to support anything which may be done for the improvement of those who are going to spoil our national efficiency unless we do something to prevent it. I also suggest that we should have a woman on the Price Fixing Commission. At present mutton is sold wholesale at Brunswick at from 4d. to 5d. a pound. That is what the grower gets for it. Yet we in the city have to pay 1s. per pound. In the Eastern States the retail prices are much lower than they are here. I commend that anomaly to the consideration of the Country Party. There are many measures to be dealt with during the coming session. The Municipal Act is to be one of them. When that comes before us I trust that those of us who think that something should be done for old age and invalid pensioners will get the support of hon. members generally. Let me read the following short extract from a letter which I received only a day or two ago:—

Please will you allow me to call attention to the fact that under the various laws or Acts governing the making of rates and taxes there is no power given to any public body to exempt or to lower any valuation on any rates struck in favour of an invalid or old age pensioner. I think, Mrs. Cowan, you will admit that it is very hard to bear, for old people. Take my own case for example: I am allowed an old age pension of 14s. 1½d. a week and my wife gets the same amount. This year's rates were over £8. We have still £2 or more to pay for rates struck on our home, and we have nothing else.

If that does not make members realise that there should be some further consideration given to the old and incapacitated, I do not know what will.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The local authority need not enforce payment.

Mrs. COWAN: They do, anyhow. There should be something definite in the Act to prevent the enforcement. Then again, the Electoral Act is to come up. I hope we shall be able to have something done in regard to compulsory voting. It seems to me an absolute farce to make people place their names on the roll and not follow it up by making voting compulsory. If we did so, people would take a much greater interest in elections than they do. When they understand that if they do not vote they will be fined there will be plenty of voting, for it is when a person has to pay for something that he begins to regard it as of value. I have been asked to help to secure proportional representation.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Do you believe in equality of votes, one vote one value?

The Minister for Mines: This is not question time.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You cannot have proportional representation without it.

Mrs. COWAN: We have one vote one value now, for this House.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: No, we have not.

Mrs. COWAN: We all have the same vote for this House, anyhow. What we want is proportional representation on the lines of the Denmark system, which has proved the most satisfactory. In regard to immigration, it is most necessary that we should select only the right class of immigrant. We earnestly hope that proper examination will be made of immigrants before they come to the State, and that we shall have only the best possible type. To be sure of that we should watch the English ports and also the port of entry here. I have been asked to draw the attention of the Minister for Railways to the fact that by charging a shilling for every perambulator put on a railway train he is militating against the very best class of immigrant, namely, our own children.

The Minister for Railways: I will withdraw it at once.

Mrs. COWAN: It has been suggested that a sort of court-martial should be held to inquire into this question, and that the Government should be asked to make the punishment fit the crime; the suggested punishment being that the Minister for Railways should be made to parade the streets of Perth for the whole of one afternoon with a heavy infant on one arm and a bag of groceries on the other. If that is done it is thought that it will serve to draw the Minister's attention to the very great handicap which is placed upon mothers who wish to come into town to do some shopping and who cannot bring a perambulator, for the simple reason that they cannot afford to pay the railway fee of 1s. It may be suggested that the fee was imposed with a view to inducing the mothers to stay at home. I do not think it will have that effect; they must go out to do their shopping, and since the Railway Department insist upon their leaving the perambulators at home and carrying heavy infants, those mothers do not feel very kindly disposed towards the Government. I hope that before the close of this Parliament we shall see something done for child and maternity endowment. Lately I read an interesting article in the "Sun," a Sydney newspaper. I hope hon. members will read that article, for the suggestions contained therein are well worth considering. Under those suggestions women and children would have an endowment which would prevent much bitterness and unhappiness that at present exist. Also we could ultimately get a more satisfactory basic wage. The basic wage for a man with his wife and three children is not satisfactory and never will be, because there will always be far too many receiving money for thousands of children which the State will never get. I hope members, especially those opposite, will look into this matter and see whether it would not be more in consonance with their ideas as expressed in their suggestions in regard to child and maternity endowment. They en-

dorse the principle of endowment, thereby recognising the service rendered to the community by the mother in the care and nurture of the child, such payment to be a charge on the whole community and recognised as a right, and not associated in any way with the economic circumstances of the husband and father. It seems to me the suggestions made in that article in the "Sun" come nearer to that than anything else I know of, and nearer also to what women have asked for during many years past. One wonders whether it is not possible by an amending Act to bring in the right for women to vote in the unions. Many a strike would be prevented if the women had the right to vote.

Mr. McCallum: And they would have to pay for it later on.

Mrs. COWAN: It is most unfair that a strike should be called simply at the word of mainly the single men, when they would be far better off without the strike.

Mr. McCallum: And quietly submit to the domination of the boss.

Mrs. COWAN: It would not be so bad for the mothers and children if it were not that the children, 16 and 18 years of age, and not the mothers, are allowed to vote on the question of a strike.

Mr. McCallum interjected.

Mrs. COWAN: The women should have a voice in all these matters. Numbers of women in every section of the community would welcome something on those lines if it were possible to make it legal. I think it should be quite as legal to give a woman a vote in the union as it is to give the men a vote. As a woman I desire class consciousness of every kind to be eliminated.

Mr. McCallum: Start on those around you.

Mrs. COWAN: I am willing to do that. I have always stood for having no class consciousness amongst us. What is there that is socialistic about class consciousness? There is no socialism in that; it is anti-social. Better far to get on all together, and work for the whole of the community, than to be talking about class consciousness in an age and time like this. There are other matters upon which I would have liked to touch but the hour is getting late and I am therefore debarred from saying a great deal that I should like to say. Other opportunities, however, will be afforded to me in which to speak. I am very proud to be here this afternoon. I thank hon. members for their kindness to me, though I feel it is perhaps a little hard on them as members of the House that I am here, because my presence has meant the withdrawal from the Speech of the word "gentlemen" as applied to them. There is only one way of remedying that. I cannot personally do so, but hon. members can all help women at the time of the next general election by having elected a sufficient number of them to enable the House to again be addressed as gentlemen, with the addition of the words

"ladies and." I feel sure that the greatest kindness and tolerance would be displayed each to the other by the two sexes in this and all Parliaments. The views of both sides are more than ever needed in Parliament to-day. If men and women can work for the State side by side and represent all the different sections of the community, and if the male members of the House would be satisfied to allow women to help them and would accept their suggestions when they are offered, I cannot doubt that we should do very much better work in the community than was ever done before. I want hon. members to recollect when speaking and thinking of these things that we should all be wiser if we realised the truth of Kipling's lines—

There are nine and sixty ways of constructing tribal lays, and every single one of them is right.

We do not always remember this principle. People are apt to think that the point of view of men only must be right for men, whilst we women think that the point of view of women only must be right for women. That of course does not necessarily follow. What we should aim at is to get a *via media*, so that we may work side by side; the women working along with the men, and thus there will come to us "self knowledge, self reverence and self control, for these three alone lead men to sovereign heights," and to the achievement of those aims which should be sought by all Parliaments—the peace and happiness of those for whom they legislate.

Mr. LATHAM (York) [433]: In seconding the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply, I cannot let the opportunity go by without making some comments upon the question of finances. We have just passed through another year and we still find ourselves on the wrong side of the ledger. His Excellency has also been good enough to point out that the credit of the State is sound. It will not, however, remain long in this condition unless we take better control of the finances. I am sure the party to which I have the honour to belong will help the Government in every possible way to do this.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They are responsible for the deficit.

Mr. LATHAM: That is possible, but it is after all a matter of opinion.

Hon. P. Collier: That was before you came here.

Mr. LATHAM: We will at all events assist the Government to enable them to get 20s. worth of value for every pound they spend. I venture to say that it is a policy of that nature which will ultimately bring us out on the right side of the ledger.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: If it is the other fellow.

Mr. LATHAM: If it is anyone at all. The question of the statutory pool was mentioned in the Speech. It is one which deserves the

utmost consideration at the hands of hon. members. It is the only means by which we can get any revenue into the State in any great quantity. We have to remember the results of the de-control of the wool pool. We do not want the same kind of thing to happen by having de-control in the handling of our wheat.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You are prohibiting the export of wheat.

Mr. LATHAM: It has not been prohibited by the Government.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Yes, by Act of Parliament.

Mr. LATHAM: If there is de-control in the handling of wheat we know it will not be of advantage to the State. The general wealth of the State is coming from that source. It is not enough that we should desire to help the farmer; we should also desire to assist the community as a whole. If we have private dealers in wheat here and they make a big purchase it may at any time be advisable in the interests of the consumer to safeguard him so that a certain amount of wheat is kept in hand. No doubt the broker of wheat would not take that position into consideration. If he saw an opportunity of selling a parcel of wheat at a good price he would not consider the interests of the consumer. Possibly, therefore, we might have to pay a higher price for our bread than we have to do to-day.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: In the interests of the consumer?

Mr. LATHAM: Yes. When the Bill on this subject comes before the House I shall no doubt have more information on the subject and have more to say. It is absolutely essential that we should have control of our wheat for at least another year. With regard to the Land and Income Tax Act Amendment Bill forecasted in the Speech, I should like to see the Government apply that measure to the farming community so that it might be made to cover a period of five years, instead of having assessments made up every year. This would help the farmer to tide over unfavourable times such as drought, unduly wet seasons, pests and other things, which may be injuring his crop. To-day if the farmer gets a reasonable amount of revenue in any one year it is practically all taken away by taxation in the following year, and sometimes he has liabilities to meet in a good year and has to borrow money to enable him to pay the tax that is imposed upon him. It would also be a good way of assisting the mining industry. An attempt has been made to take from the mining industry something that it is impossible to get from it, and in the attempt that is being made the industry is very nearly being killed. Increased taxation, the cost of labour in mines and other considerations, have been such as to prevent any developmental work being done in that industry. I have been credibly informed that four years ago there were mines which could be made to pay, but that to-day it is impossible

to work them owing to heavy taxation, and the high cost of labour and mining requisites. When these things are considered and their importance to the State is realised, probably a better understanding will be arrived at between the mine owners and the employees of mines, with a view to seeing if it would not be better for each side to forego a little in order that the mines might be re-opened.

Hon. P. Collier: You suggest that the miners should forego a little?

Mr. LATHAM: They should.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: What about the man who supplies the mines with goods?

Mr. LATHAM: He, too should contribute towards the settlement of the trouble. With regard to the soldier settlement scheme, I desire to congratulate the Government upon the appreciation they have shown for the services rendered to the country by those men who went on active service. I am sorry that only 5,506 of these soldiers have received qualification certificates and that only 3,954 soldiers have been settled, while there are still 1,500 remaining to be satisfied with land. I do not know whether these men intend to go on with the proposition or not. I do not think the Government are getting a sufficient amount of land ready for the requirements of these men. Soldiers are continually coming to me to find them blocks of land. These men would do better for themselves were they able to get on to Crown lands instead of re-purchased properties.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Hear, hear! That is the cause of the unemployment to-day.

Mr. LATHAM: The repurchase of these estates has cost a good deal of money, and those people who are settled on them are hampered to too great an extent before they actually commence operations. Some of them have been able to get through and have done very well, but many of them have been unable to cope with the difficulties confronting them at the outset. If anything comes along in the shape of a bad season or other troubles to prevent them from getting returns immediately, they are then up against very great difficulties and the State will have paid out money without actually giving the men any benefit. I hope the Government will do something towards finding a solution for this problem.

The Minister for Agriculture: Do you suggest that these men should be put on to pioneering work?

Mr. LATHAM: I do not think that would do many of them much harm so long as they are not kept for a great while without a railway. I do not think it can do much harm to pioneer the country. The man who has made a good pioneer is a better man than he who has been more or less spoon fed. There are 250,000 acres of land available in the Lake Grace country. It is beautiful land. The Premier knows it is there. I suggest he should make a group settlement of that area.

The Premier: What about the railway?

Mr. LATHAM: We could get over that difficulty by constructing good roads and putting on a motor transport service. We need not be saddled with the expense of building railways to-day, for their place can be taken by constructing good roads over which the wheat can be carted to market. I am glad the Government are forwarding the immigration scheme, and that steps are being taken to see that greater supervision is maintained over the selection of immigrants. We have unfortunately in our midst men who are suffering from tuberculosis and other diseases, which of course we do not want in this State. I do not know how these men have gained admission to this State. I am pleased to notice that this position has been recognised, and hope that better supervision will be exercised over the class of immigrant that is brought here.

The Premier: They only amount to about one-half per cent.

Mr. LATHAM: We can do with as many men and women of the right class as it is possible to get. We want people here who will work. In the South-West there is any amount of employment for those who want it. The credit of the State is sufficiently good to enable us to borrow money for the development of the South-West, and also for the opening up of other lands of the State in the wheat belt and elsewhere.

Hon. P. Collier: What about utilising the land that is already served by existing railways?

Mr. LATHAM: I will refer to that later. It has been stated publicly that axe work is too hard for many men. I do not think that provided a man does not do more than eight hours a day at this class of work it will be found too hard for him. It is only recently that it has been thought to be too hard. There are hon. members in this Chamber who have swung the axe, and who have had to do it perhaps eight or 10 hours a day, and they are none the worse for it. It is not as hard a job cutting scrub and timber as it is swinging an axe on the mills. With regard to the utilisation of land already served by railways, I would point out that we have a lot of land already held by private individuals, and that we are not getting the best use out of it from the point of view of the State. I do not say I am going to suggest any remedy for this position.

The Premier: Idle men and idle land!

Mr. LATHAM: If we travel along our railway system we can see a lot of land that is lying idle, land that would be quite capable of supporting hundreds of soldiers who are anxious to get it, but for whom no land can be obtained. Whilst that land is lying idle there are other areas adjoining which are being put to their fullest use, and are thereby improving the value of the land that is being neglected. I am also pleased to note that it is the intention of the Government to push along with some public works. These will be a

means of absorbing some of the unemployed, if such should exist at any time; and they will help, moreover, to provide work for immigrants.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Unemployment exists to-day, unfortunately.

Mr. LATHAM: But not to any extent, because there are parts of the State in which sufficient labour is not available for the work that is offering. I admit that it is not every man out of work now who can do what is required by the farmers. However, such work is offering. The Speech makes mention of a metropolitan water supply, but there is no reference to a permanent water supply for certain areas in the eastern portions of the State. While the city people have at all times an excellent water supply, it was costing many settlers last year 2s. 6d. per 100 gallons for every drop of water which they had to use for their animals. I feel sure that the Government, when taking into consideration the metropolitan water supply, will also give consideration to this phase of the question, to the man outback who has to cart his water over considerable distances, while everybody in the city has an ample water supply. Really, the only trouble of the resident in the metropolitan area seems to be that he is not supplied with a garden as well as with water. No one in the city is ever short of a drink of water; but I have been at settlers' houses when it has been impossible to get a drink of water because there has actually not been any available; it has been a matter of waiting for teams to come back, teams carting water 14 or 15 miles. When the question of water supply comes up, I hope hon. members will realise the needs of the man outback, and will bear in mind that no appreciable disabilities in this connection are being borne by city people. I am very glad to know that a forests products laboratory has been established. I believe this means that in the near future Western Australia will be able to supply itself with paper. Some of the paper manufactured in the trials has come under my notice, and I have no hesitation in pronouncing it equal to any paper that we are importing to-day. The amalgamation of State and Federal departments is to me another source of gratification, and I hope to see very speedily an amalgamation of the two Electoral Departments.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Do you believe in unification?

Mr. LATHAM: I do not.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Amalgamation of departments is a step in that direction, and moreover an unconstitutional step.

Mr. LATHAM: I feel quite sure that the condition of the electoral rolls will not be worse under Commonwealth control than it is now, under State control. Hundreds upon hundreds of names are omitted, in spite of the provision for compulsory enrolment. People simply cannot be made to

understand that they must get their names on the roll, or how to get their names on the roll. A great many Bills, I observe, are to be introduced during the present session. An omission from the list of those Bills which, in my opinion, represents a highly regrettable omission is a measure for the bulk handling of grain, a Bill for the establishment of grain elevators. I hope the Government will take the earliest opportunity of introducing a measure for that purpose. It means so much to the farming community.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Why do not the Government proceed with the scheme? They can do so now.

Mr. LATHAM: I do not know. I am really asking for an explanation on that point. Finally, though I am now sitting on the Government side of the Chamber, that fact must not be understood as pledging me to support each and every measure that may be introduced by Ministers. I do realise that everything done in this Chamber should be done for the benefit of the entire State, or at all events for the benefit of the greatest number of the inhabitants of Western Australia; and while I am here, my efforts will be applied in that direction. If at any time hon. members now occupying the Opposition benches should find themselves on the Ministerial side of the Chamber, I shall be prepared to accord them the same support, provided their legislative proposals are in the best interests of the State. I do not consider that I should regard myself as absolutely tied in any respect, unless it be in respect of a measure affecting the interests of the party with which I am associated; in such a case I should feel in duty bound to vote with my party. Still, anything designed to promote the interests of the State generally, will always have my support. I have much pleasure in seconding the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

On motion by Hon. P. Collier debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 4.51 p.m.