

preciate the position as he finds it. I reciprocate the good wishes he has extended to us, and most heartily extend my best wishes to yourself, Sir.

The PRESIDENT: Before putting the motion I desire to thank hon. members for the kind manner in which they have spoken of me. I may be allowed also to thank them on behalf of the "Hansard" staff and the officers of the House, who have not an opportunity of doing so themselves and of expressing their feelings. Perhaps it is as well they cannot express their feelings on this occasion. My task has been made an easy one by the assistance I have had from hon. members, and from the gentlemen I have mentioned who have suffered in silence. I thank hon. members for their good wishes and desire to express to them my own wishes that all the compliments of the coming season may be everything they desire.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.13 a.m. (Friday).

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 23rd December, 1920.

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

QUESTION—MINING INDUSTRY.

Mr. DUFF asked the Premier: 1, Was it with the concurrence of the Government that

the Minister for Mines, when in Melbourne on the 20th inst., made the following statement to the Press: "That industrially the State was likely to suffer the threatened general depression. The gold-mining industry was being hard hit by the latest award, not because the rates were excessive, but because the margin of payable ore had been reached, and but for the premium obtained on the sale of gold several mines would have to close." 2, Is he aware that such a statement is likely to have a damaging effect on any proposal to raise capital for any mining venture?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. 2, It does not follow, as a generalisation of this nature has practically no bearing upon the prospects of individually promising mining propositions with which this State abounds. Moreover, I am not aware that the Minister has been correctly reported.

QUESTION—QUELLAGETTING ESTATE.

Mr. PICKERING (for Mr. Harrison) asked the Premier: 1, Has the Quellagetting estate at Meckering been reported upon with a view to settling returned soldiers? 2, If the report is not yet to hand, will he hasten its submission?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Report has been received and the matter has been referred to the Agricultural Lands Purchase Board for consideration.

QUESTION—WHEAT, SALE TO NEW SOUTH WALES.

Mr. PICKERING (without notice) asked the Premier: 1, Has the question of the sale of the Western Australian wheat to New South Wales been finalised? 2, If so, what are the terms? 3, Do the Government intend to take any further action in this connection and, if so, what?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No, but the Attorney General's opinion has been received. It will be considered and in due course the public will be informed. 2 and 3, Answered by No. 1.

Hon. P. Collier: It seriously affects the wheat growers in your district.

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL BANK, REPORTS.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (without notice) asked the Premier: Is it his intention to lay on the Table this year, in accordance with the Agricultural Bank Act, the reports for the years 1918-19 and 1919-20?

The PREMIER replied: I suppose I ought to answer "Yes," but I am afraid there will not be time.

PAPERS—S.S. "PENGUIN," STRANDING.

On motion by Mr. Duff (Claremont) ordered: That the papers connected with the inquiry into the stranding of the s.s. "Penguin" be laid on the Table of the House.

BILL—LAND TAX AND INCOME TAX.

Council's request for conference.

Message from the Council received and read requesting a conference to discuss the amendment made by the Council which the Assembly had refused to make, and that the number of managers consist of three, the Council having appointed the Minister for Education, Hon. J. Duffell and Hon. A. Lovekin.

Mr. SPEAKER: Before this message is further discussed I desire to point out that the clause dealt with in this message is entirely outside the Standing Orders and practice of the House with regard to conferences on Bills, but a conference may be held on other subjects. This House would be wrong to accede to the request for a conference on the Land Tax and Income Tax Bill, as to which the Council has no powers of amendment except the privilege, conferred by Section 46 of the Constitution Act Amendment Act, 1899, of requesting this House to amend, if it thinks fit. But if the purpose of the conference be to discuss the claims of the Council under that section, seeing that a conference may be requested on any subject, there will be no objection to the House agreeing to such a conference, if it thinks fit.

The PREMIER: Probably a conference will do some good and I think the following motion will meet the case. I move—

That a message be transmitted to the Council acquainting it that the Assembly accedes to the request for a conference for the purpose of discussing the amendment, it being understood that the rights of the Assembly as regards money Bills are in no way prejudiced.

Hon. P. Collier: We have been giving our rights away year after year without prejudice.

Question put and passed.

On motion by the Premier, the Attorney General, Hon. P. Collier and the mover were appointed managers, the time for holding the conference was fixed at 5.30 p.m. and a message accordingly was returned to the Council.

Sitting suspended from 4.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Report of Conference Managers.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [7.33]: I have to report that the managers have met, and have arrived at the following decision:—

That it is desirable to allow deductions for the purpose of assessing income tax of payments made for certain charitable or public purposes, and that as the necessary amendment cannot be made in the Legislative Assembly in the Land Tax and Income Tax Bill, a separate Bill will be introduced for this purpose.

I move—

That the report be adopted.

Question put and passed.

On motion by the Premier leave granted in accordance with the foregoing report to introduce a Bill at a later stage of the sitting.

Sitting suspended from 7.35 to 8 p.m.

BILL—FACTORIES AND SHOPS.

Council's Message.

Message received from the Council notifying (1) that it had agreed to the modifications made by the Assembly in the amendments of the Council Nos. 42, 45, 55, 60, 69, 75, 81, 83, 85 and 87; (2) that it no longer insisted on its amendments Nos. 19, 44, 77 and 4a; and (3) that it had agreed not to insist upon amendment No. 10, subject to the modification that a definition of "boarding house" be inserted in an appropriate place in Clause 4 as follows.—"Boarding house, means and includes any place in which meals are sold or offered for sale to the public and any place in which ten or more boarders or lodgers apart from members of the family are in residence."

On motion by the Attorney General, the Council's modification agreed to.

Sitting suspended from 8.10 p.m. to 8.55 p.m.

BILL—CHARITABLE PURPOSES INCOME DEDUCTIONS.

All Stages.

Introduced by the Premier and read a first time.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [8.55] in introducing the second reading said: The Bill is the outcome of the conference of managers of both Houses held at an earlier stage of to-day's sitting. The amendment which was suggested by another place to the Land Tax and Income Tax Bill was intended to exempt from taxation any payment made by any individual to the trustees of a charitable or public institution, public park or reserve, university or public school, library, art gallery, museum or other institution for public education or recreation. The Bill which is to give effect to the suggestion made by another place will remain

in force until the 31st December, 1921, and no longer. 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.

Sitting suspended from 9 p.m. to 10.30 p.m.

BILL—LAND TAX AND INCOME TAX.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—CHARITABLE PURPOSES INCOME DEDUCTIONS.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of three amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

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

No. 1. Clause 5, Subclause 7, paragraph (b), after the word "holding" in line 1, insert "or beneficially interested in."

No. 2. Clause 5, Subclause 7, paragraph (b), after the word "paid" in line 4 insert "up."

On motion by the Premier the foregoing amendments were agreed to.

No. 3. New clause to stand as Clause 7 as follows: "In the event of any railway being constructed through any portion of a pastoral district a re-appraisalment of the leases in such district beneficially affected by such railway shall be made in manner provided by 'The Land Act Amendment Act, 1917,' and thereafter any increased rent so appraised shall be paid by the lessees during the unexpired term of their leases."

The PREMIER: This amendment means that if a railway is constructed through pastoral lands already appraised, the land would be re-appraised. At present we have regard to distance the land is situated from a port or railway. The amendment is reasonable. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If this amendment is passed it will involve the State in a breach of contract with the lessees.

Mr. Hudson: Is it not a betterment clause?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not think so. We have heard a good deal on occasions as to the sacred nature of contracts, and in accordance with the principles of the party to which I belong, I am anxious to preserve the sacred nature of contracts. Under the amending Land Act, 1917, we conceded to the pastoral lessees the right of renewal, subject to certain conditions. They had the right of renewal to 1948 clearly stipulated in the Act, and that there should be re-assessment in 15 years. All those who have renewed their leases have done so under the specific terms of a contract, which states that there shall not be any re-appraisalment of their leases until after the expiration of 14 years. Now it is proposed to vary that contract to the extent of having a re-appraisalment should a railway be constructed through any of those pastoral holdings. I consider it a clear breach of contract. If we vary it now, we shall open the door to further variations. Nothing of the sort is provided for in the Act of 1917.

Mr. Hudson: Assuming that the pastoral lessees have been asked their opinion in regard to the construction of the railway and have admitted that it would be desirable, should they not pay a tax, so to speak?

Hon. P. COLLIER: It does not matter. It would still be a breach of contract. I protest against this attempt to break contracts in this fashion.

Mr. Davies: Is not the State entitled to the unearned increment?

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is an argument for re-appraising the leases every year. The rent is assessed at the value of the lease at the present time; but there will be unearned increment next year and, according to the hon. member, we would be justified in bringing down an amendment year after year. We have made a contract with the lessees, and we are not justified in breaking it.

Mr. Smith: And we would have to apply the same principle to all parts of the State.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Of course so. We would not be justified in doing this.

Mr. PILKINGTON: I support the view of the leader of the Opposition. It is true this position would not frequently occur, but the principle is a very important one, and a breach of contract appears to me to be perfectly clear. It would apply, not only to new leases, but equally, I think, to leases which existed before the 1917 Act.

The Premier: That is so.

Mr. PILKINGTON: Clearly, it would be a breach of contract or a repudiation pro tanto of the contract which has been made. I can quite understand the pastoralists not seriously objecting to it; but that has nothing to do with the question. It is suggested that if a railway be constructed out of public funds through a property it will enhance the value of the property. Certainly so; but nobody would suggest that the terms on which the property is held should be altered because of that.

Mr. Lambert: Not in regard to freehold. That is a distinctly different thing.

Mr. PILKINGTON: It makes no difference whatever in regard to a breach of contract.

Mr. Lambert: The principle is well established in the Eastern States.

Mr. PILKINGTON: Then it is a principle which ought not to be followed. There is no objection to providing that in future grants there shall be a reappraisal in the case of a railway being built, because then the party takes up the land on those terms; but there is a most serious objection to imposing a new condition on an existing grant. It does not matter whether the derogation is great or slight, if it is a derogation from the grant which the Government have given, then it is a thing which ought not to be done.

Mr. Hudson: We should have to protect ourselves on the passage of the railway Bill.

Mr. PILKINGTON: The right of resumption is provided in the statute. The point is, the grant has been made on certain terms and we are now trying to alter those terms, which would not be justified.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am sorry the leader of the Opposition, in opposing the amendment, toyed with what I imagined was a genial satire upon the claims of the pastoralists. The tenure of a mining lease is affected by the regulations, and it is competent for Parliament to deal with these pastoral leases as Parliament thinks fit.

Hon. P. Collier: It is competent for Parliament to do anything.

Mr. LAMBERT: It is certainly competent for Parliament to lay down a principle already well established in the Eastern States. It is one of the finest principles we could have.

Hon. P. Collier: You cannot quote from the Eastern States a provision on all fours with this.

Mr. Smith: They are not made retrospective as this is.

Mr. LAMBERT: Wherever a railway is built and betters any land, the land owner should pay a betterment tax.

Mr. Pilkington: First make it clear in your grant, and it will be all right.

Mr. LAMBERT: The hon. member boldly stated the other night that, irrespective of all the efforts of the Legislature, the legal fraternity could drive a four-in-hand through any Act.

The Attorney General: On a point of order. Is the hon. member speaking to the motion?

The CHAIRMAN: Not exactly. The hon. member must stick to the question before the Chair.

Mr. LAMBERT: I certainly think we should welcome this principle. No serious exception can be taken to it.

Mr. MUNSIE: I agree with the remarks of the leader of the Opposition that the amendment is a repudiation of a contract entered into by the pastoral lessees. I go further and say I welcome that repudiation.

Mr. Lambert: It is not repudiation.

Mr. MUNSIE: When a similar provision was introduced in Queensland, a repudiation delegation was sent to England.

Mr. Lambert: Because they were the most damnably humbugs that ever existed in any country.

Mr. MUNSIE: I agree with the hon. member.

Mr. Lambert: They should not have been allowed to return to Queensland. Because

your political foes call it repudiation you should not do so.

Hon. P. Collier: His political friends call it repudiation. I do.

Mr. MUNSIE: I support the amendment although I believe it is a repudiation of a contract. If ever my vote can repudiate the amending Act of 1917 it shall be given. This is a step in the direction of amending the 1917 Act which is a disgrace to the State.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I also agree with the leader of the Opposition. It is another instance that some persons are trying to repair the error made a couple of years ago when the Bill was passed through Parliament. They have seen the error of their ways and are trying to rectify to a small degree what was then wrongly done. The Land Act laid down clearly that an appraisal should be made every 15 years. This amendment states that an appraisal shall be made immediately a railway is constructed. If a lessee spends a considerable sum on improvements, the appraisal consequent on the construction of a railway might not be commensurate with the benefits derived from the railway. A lessee situated at no great distance from a railway at present might be detrimentally affected.

The Minister for Works: They will find some loophole.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That does not alter the intention of the amendment. The amending Act of 1917 did not express the intention of Parliament.

Hon. P. Collier: But Parliament is to blame, not the pastoralist.

Mr. Lambert: The influence of the pastoralist is to blame.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am surprised that an amendment of this description should have been sent from another place to violate an agreement which members of the Council welcomed with open arms a few years ago. I doubt whether the amendment will have much effect, because there is not the ghost of a chance of getting a railway.

The Attorney General: It will not affect anyone until the court has put an interpretation on it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Even if it does, there is not a chance of a railway being constructed through much of our pastoral country during the next 15 years.

Mr. Angelo: Then the sooner the north cuts away from the south the better.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member had better get his water supply first. This is a violation of the agreement and the leader of the Opposition was right in drawing attention to it.

Mr. PICKERING: The leader of the Opposition is quite right. If railways are built through the lands in the South-West there is a re-valuation. The rents are not increased but the taxation value is increased. When railways are built the betterment clauses can be introduced. I shall vote against the amendment and I must express surprise that another place has sent down such a proposal.

Mr. LAMBERT: I still think the leader of the Opposition was dealing with the matter in a gently satirical way. The member for Hannans quoted Queensland. For political reasons a

delegation was sent from that State to the Old Country.

The CHAIRMAN: We are not dealing with any delegation sent to the Old Country. The hon. member must stick to the amendment.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am merely answering the member for Hannans. Everyone knows that the Queensland delegation was sent to England to discredit the Labour Government. I wish to discredit another place whose members are trying to camouflage the position by inserting this provision. They know full well that a railway will not be built and that there will be no re-appraisal during the tenure of the leases, but they wish to hold this up as an example of what they are prepared to do in connection with the re-appraisal of pastoral leases. Where the collective moneys of the State are used to provide facilities, the country should get a portion of the increment and this is why I support the camouflage embodied in the amendment. Members of another place, by sending down this amendment, are practising a piece of the most diabolical political hypocrisy ever practised in any legislature.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not reflect on the conduct of another place.

Mr. LAMBERT: That is the effect of the amendment. They know that not one lease will be affected by a re-appraisal during the tenure of the leases, but they have made this amendment to cloak bigger issues which led the big pastoralists to practically rob the people of this State of the finest pastoral lands in the world.

Mr. LUTEY: I support the amendment. It may be repudiation, but if the expenditure of public money increases the value of land, the people have a right to a share of the increment. There may be some camouflage about this amendment, but I hope the Committee will agree to it and that another place will be hoist by its own petard.

The PREMIER: I fear that I am in very bad company to-night. I have no intention of repudiating this or any other agreement. The 1917 Act says that the rent shall be based on the pastoral capabilities of the land, its distance from a port or railway or other circumstances affecting its value for pastoral purposes.

Mr. Pickering: Then what is the necessity for the amendment?

Hon. P. Collier: That is at the time of re-appraisal.

Mr. Pilkington: The amendment would apply before that time. If it does not impose a new term it is no amendment whatever.

The PREMIER: It did not occur to me that this proposal could be called repudiation. We fix the rental now on this basis.

Hon. P. Collier: But the Act lays down that there shall be no re-appraisal for 15 years.

The PREMIER: We are making the re-appraisements now; none has yet been finalised. Mr. Smith: They will be before the railway is constructed.

The PREMIER: I do not know of any serious proposal to build a railway.

Mr. Lambert: That is why this amendment has been made.

The PREMIER: The member for Coolgardie spoke of people who robbed the country of the best pastoral lands in the world.

Mr. Lambert: In 1928 we would have owned the pastoral lands of this State.

The PREMIER: These people have held the land honestly and under the law of the land, and it is necessary for the country that the leases should be renewed. The lessees have to pay jolly well for the renewal. I have no intention of supporting anything which means repudiation. I have been urged to agree to an amendment which is said to mean repudiation. The amendment seemed to me quite reasonable when I first saw it. I will not, however, risk being charged with repudiation. If there is any possibility of interpreting this clause in that way I would advise the Committee not to agree to it. It did not, however, seem to me, when I suggested the acceptance of the amendment to be likely to do anything that would injure anybody.

Mr. Smith: Would you amend it to make it apply only to leases issued after the passing of the Act?

The PREMIER: If the hon. member likes to move an amendment to that effect I would support it. I have no idea of countenancing anything in the way of repudiation, but at the same time have no desire to injure the pastoralists. I think the Committee would be wise to agree to the amendment.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: There is a possible danger in passing the amendment. It is a pity members have not got copies of it so that they might know clearly what it means. I should be sorry to attempt to advise anyone as to what its real meaning is. I cannot understand it. I do not see how a district within the meaning of the Land Act, and comprising a huge area, can be said to be beneficially "interested" by a railway. The word "district" can mean different things. We had six districts in the State and they were reduced to five. There is nothing to prevent the Government from making one district of the whole State.

Mr. Lambert: It is merely a piece of cheeky hypocrisy.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: And that would mean that the whole State would be beneficially interested by a railway. If that construction were placed upon the word any court would have difficulty in saying how a lease would be affected. Furthermore, a district might be quite apart from a district under the Land Act. It might be a population district such as Katanning or Narrogin.

Mr. Pilkington: It must be beneficially affected by a railway.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The whole thing is ridiculous. If the amendment is to be passed it should be altered in such a way as to be made intelligible.

Mr. LAMBERT: It is an awful reflection upon another place and a reflection upon their decision. Probably nine-tenths of the members of the Council have had their whole attention concentrated upon this one subject throughout the session. So far as anything else is concerned the interests of the country can go to the devil. The amendment only shows to what lengths members of another place will go.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is treading on dangerous ground.

Mr. LAMBERT: They want to humbug not only the public but the Legislature. We have been sufficiently humbugged, and they should be shown by our vote that we will not be humbugged any further.

Mr. LUTEY: I should like to see the amendment altered so as to make it clear how it is intended that a district shall be affected by a railway. We do not know what may happen within 15 years to warrant the construction of a line into some of these pastoral areas. It is only fair that such areas should be reappraised according to the value created by the expenditure of public moneys.

Mr. Smith: Would you include mining leases?

Mr. LUTEY: If the owner of a lease is getting nothing out of it, it may well be said that he is paying too much for it already. I intend to vote for the amendment.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It is very dangerous to indulge in retrospective legislation, for it may be made to cut both ways. If a pastoralist has a succession of bad seasons he has a perfect right to endeavour to get legislation passed to wipe out an appraisement which has been made during an ordinary season and have it substituted by a more equitable one. In 1917 it was laid down under what conditions a pastoralist might renew his lease from 1928 to 1948.

Mr. Lambert: Has faith been kept with that?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes, with the Act. A pastoralist cannot be blamed for taking advantage of something which it might have been the intention of the House to put into the Act but which was not done. Fifteen years after the first appraisement a second appraisement has to be made and the appraisement shall not increase the rent by more than 50 per cent. of the present appraisement. No doubt many pastoralists entered into financial obligations to assist them in improving their holdings. Are we to endeavour to pass legislation which will render valueless the engagements into which those pastoralists have entered with financial institutions? Hon. members talk as if railways meant everything; but it is rain which means everything to the pastoralists in the North. Pastoralists there will always prefer rain to a railway. If Parliament is going to alter the conditions of pastoral leases every session, no one knows where the thing will end. This class of legislation should be avoided. If it is passed, every lawyer in the country will be engaged to try to pick holes in it.

The Attorney General: Give some of us a chance!

Mr. Lambert: Do you think the amending legislation of 1917 is sound?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I thought at the time that it was sound.

Mr. GREEN: I am aware that, as has been hinted by several speakers, there is some motive behind the amendment of another Chamber; but, still, we have an obligation to stick to certain principles. The old poet said, "Beware of the Greeks, especially when they bring gifts." I am doubtful about the motives which induced another Chamber to carry this provision. The extension of the term of the pastoral leases to 1948 was, I consider, a public scandal. Had that legislation been passed while a Labour

Government was in power, an attempt would have been made long ago to right the position.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: If an amendment were moved on these lines it might meet the position—

That after the words "pastoral district" there be inserted "the rent of all leases granted after the passing of this Act and beneficially affected by such railway."

Mr. Pilkington: That would still affect leases granted under the Act of 1917.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The member for North Perth has asked for an amendment of this nature.

Mr. SMITH: I support the member for Boulder in his opposition to the amendment, which, as it stands now, is repudiation pure and simple. Accordingly, I favour the deletion of the clause. The 1917 Act gave the pastoral lessees the right to extend their leases from 1920 to 1948, on the understanding that they paid increased rentals. The rentals, however, were to be re-appraised. In the course of re-appraisal consideration may be given to the extra value attaching to pastoral leases by reason of any railway or other Government improvement. Apart from that, there would be no re-appraisal of these leases until 14 or 15 years later. A pastoralist benefits by the construction of a railway through his property, and should be prepared to make the State a return for that benefit. Under a Bill engineered by the Pastoralists' Association, we have now a proposal to vary the contract by other re-appraisements. The position is rather absurd. All sorts of excuses might be urged. Many pastoralists maintain that railways running through their properties are of no benefit to them, and that they would rather continue the old system of sending their cattle to market by road. They say they would just as soon not have a railway line at all.

Mr. Griffiths: And it costs them now from £30 to £40 per ton for cartage.

Mr. SMITH: That may be so, but the fact remains that lots of these pastoralists do not want the railway through their holdings. They prefer to do their own carting. I move an amendment—

That in line 3 after "leases" the words "granted after the passing of this Act" be inserted.

If we place these words in the amendment there can be no repudiation of contracts. The pastoralist will know then that his land will be subject to reappraisal if the railway line goes through his property.

Mr. LUTEY: I cannot understand the arguments of the member for North Perth. He says that it is right that the pastoralist should pay something more when his property has increased in value. Those who take up the land after the measure is passed will be affected and those who have taken up their land under the old Act, will not be placed in the same position. We talk about repudiation but what does it mean? History shows that acts of repudiation are necessary. King Charles gave Prince Rupert and 16 others North America. Because that was Crown grant, was it repudiation when they

took over that area later on for settlement? There is a lot of guff talked about repudiation. If we want to progress we must repudiate things which have happened in the past. I oppose Mr. Smith's amendment.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am not going back to dig up any dead monarchs in order to support my principles, which are as strong as the Rock of Gibraltar. We should have the right of reappraisement if a railway is built through pastoral holdings. Where railways are built and where land has to be secured for public purposes the Legislature has the right to exercise, and should jealously guard, that right of reappraisement. We can argue on the nationalising of land and on the granting of fee simple. Those are debatable points, but the equity of the reappraisement of land admits of no argument. This clause proposed by another place is so much camouflage for the purpose of cloaking what is probably the most degrading and disgraceful piece of land legislation known in the State. We must oppose this on account of the principles I have referred to. If the Legislature is not to have the right to protect the interests of the public and produce more revenue from these holdings, where the State provides railway facilities, that revenue coming by way of reappraisement, we may just as well permit our legislation to stand as still as a cesspool. The Legislative Council has thrown dust in the eyes of the Assembly. They know that this will not be carried.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The remarks by the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) are not warranted and are not reasonable. I regret that any member of this House should make reflections of such a kind even in the heat of debate. We have an amendment before the Committee which very few have seen and very few understand. I am forced to look upon the amendment in the way I think a court would interpret it. The question is whether this amendment should be made retrospective or not. The member for North Perth has moved an amendment which will save it from being retrospective. I think we should deal with this question of principle.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I assisted in passing the Land Act of 1917, which I have regretted ever since. I hope to-night to wipe out in some measure my action of the past. This proposal emanated from another place and that very fact is a strong one. Unless it is in the nature of a camouflage, it is extraordinary that it should come from the Legislative Council. If it had come from the leader of the Opposition, I would not have been surprised.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Why are you surprised that I should not countenance repudiation? Has any action of mine in this Chamber justified that suggestion? Why are you surprised?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I thought that you as leader of a party which has not seen anything of repudiation in the proposal referred to by the member for Coolgardie, might have been expected to bring forward some such proposal.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is a gratuitous insult. You say that if there is a repudiation proposal before the House it is surprising that it has not come from me. Do you consider this repudiation?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: No, I do not. The member for North Perth says that some of the pastoralists do not wish to see a railway through their holdings. When it is a difference between £2 per ton as against £30 or £40 for cartage of their goods, there must be something pretty good behind the pastoralists. The line is not likely to be built for very many years to come, but the Government should have this provision in the Bill.

Mr. MUNSIE: I do not know what procedure I should adopt. I want to enter my emphatic protest against the Legislative Council dealing with a matter of such importance in this manner. The procedure which has already been adopted four or five times to-night of allowing an amendment and a suggested amendment on an amendment to be typed and distributed among members, might well be again adopted now. The Attorney General says that he does not understand the amendment from the Legislative Council, and how can we be expected to understand it if we have not seen it? I move—

That progress be reported until such time as typed copies of the amendment and the suggested amendment on the amendment are in the hands of members.

Motion put and passed.

BILL—MINING ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of three amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

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

No. 1. Clause 7. Subclause 4, line 7; after the word "licensee" insert "to such an extent as may be necessary to guard against loss or waste of mineral oil."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The object of the amendment is to make the position more clear. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed: the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2. Clause 27, paragraph (a), line 8; after "mining" insert " (but not inclusive of payment for the labour of the tributers themselves thereon.)"

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I was puzzled as to what this meant when I first read it because it occurred to me that on the question of wages it was intended that the tributer should receive current wages. The object of the amendment is to ensure that the tributer shall not get his wages twice over. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. MULLANY: Notwithstanding the explanation of the Attorney General I must confess that I cannot see the necessity for the amendment. It appears to me that the sole effect of the amendment will be that no one will be able to understand the clause at all.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Some confusion arises between the earnings by the tributer

and the payments made by the tributer. The tributer makes his payments out of his earnings, and after that he would be entitled to the current rate of wages. The object of the amendment is that such payments shall not include the labour of the tributers themselves.

Mr. CHESSON: If the amendment is carried the tributer will receive no wages at all, but only wages for the men he employs. The intention was that the tributer and the men he employs should both get the ruling rate of wage. With this amendment the royalty will come in before the tributer receives anything, and I intend to oppose it.

Mr. MUNSIE: I cannot understand the amendment even after the explanation of the Attorney General. Nothing can be plainer than the clause as it stands. The amendment may have been intended to indicate that the tributer himself was not entitled to any wages at all. Until the tributer has received what amounts to the ruling rate of wage, the company should not take a pennyworth of royalty.

The PREMIER: The tributer must get his wages before anything else.

Mr. LUTLEY: I support the clause as it stands.

The PREMIER: The amendment means that the wages must be the first charge against anything else. The effect of the amendment would be that the wages of the men employed by the tributer would also have to be deducted. That will amount to a double deduction. I cannot see that the amendment can do any harm.

Question put and negatived; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 3. Clause 34. Strike out all the words after "tributer" in line 3 down to the end of the clause.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This clause defines what a tributer is. The amendment made by the Council is a proper one. Clause 28 deals with the power of the warden to revise the conditions of any tribute agreement, and the amendment is consistent with Clause 28 as passed by this House. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. CHESSON: I oppose the motion. To pass it would mean giving the mining companies an opportunity to let the larger portions of their mines on tribute, in which case the Bill would not apply.

Mr. MUNSIE: I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment. The principal object of the introduction of the tributating clauses of this Bill was to alter, if possible, the conditions under which tributating is now being carried on in this State. The Golden Mile is the only place in Western Australia where tributating exists to any large extent. Quite recently the mining companies, almost without exception, have been forcing the tributers to sign agreements. Now it is proposed to exclude all those tributers from the benefits of the measure. Most of the tributating agreements now in force on the Golden Mile are useless to the men. In order to bring himself within this measure, every one of those tributers would have to abandon his present tribute and make a fresh agreement. If that course were adopted, it would mean chaos on the Eastern Goldfields. The agitation from the tributers there was the

main cause of the introduction of the tribute part of this Bill.

Mr. PICKERING: The clause is retrospective in its operation. If the period of tribute is short, the amendment cannot react seriously on the tributers.

Mr. LUTLEY: I hope the Committee will stand by the clause. As for the retrospective phase of the matter, the Bill has been before Parliament and the country for a very long time; and legislation of this nature is, therefore, expected.

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

Ayes	...	...	...	...	15
Noes	...	...	...	...	11
Majority for					4

AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Broun	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Brown	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Draper	Mr. Pilkington
Mr. Duff	Mr. Smith
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. George	Mr. Hardwick
Mr. Harrison	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Lutley
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Collier	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Green	Mr. Roche
Mr. Heron	Mr. O'Loughlen
Mr. Holman	(Teller.)

Question thus passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported, and the report adopted.

Reason for disagreeing to amendment No. 2 made by the Council adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—DENTISTS.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of four amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

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

No. 1. Clause 3, paragraph (b), after "diploma" insert "in dentistry":

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2. Clause 4, paragraph (d), strike out "forthwith" in line 2:

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 3. Clause 4, paragraph (d), line 7, strike out all words after "mouth" and insert "who

within six calendar months after the passing of this Act applies for registration and who, within three years after he has applied for registration as aforesaid, passes an examination to the satisfaction of the board in practical dentistry in accordance with the schedule":

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: We have dealt with examinations in a previous clause. This proviso is in regard to certain people with double qualifications. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 4. Clause 4. Add the following proviso at the end of the clause:—"Provided that all time spent by the applicant on active service with the Australian Imperial Forces shall be counted as part of such seven years."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I do not feel disposed to agree to this. It is dealing with a special form of qualification for registration. What is demanded is seven years practice in operations on the mouth. But a man who had been away for five years would have to be passed on two year's practice. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

Resolutions reported, and the report adopted.

Reasons for not agreeing to amendments Nos. 3 and 4 adopted, and a message accordingly transmitted to the Council.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendments.

Consideration resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting of Council's amendment No. 3, as follows:—In the event of any railway being constructed through any portion of a pastoral district beneficially affected by such railway, a re-appraisal of the leases in such district shall be made in manner provided by the Land Act Amendment Act, 1917, and thereafter any increased rent so appraised shall be paid by the lessees during the unexpired term of their leases

In Committee.

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

The CHAIRMAN: The member for North Perth (Mr. Smith) has moved to insert after "leases" in line 3, the words "granted after the passing of this Act."

Mr. MUNSIE: I oppose the amendment. If the amendment is amended as suggested, it will not mean anything. The amendment has come from the Legislative Council where it was discussed by some members in all sincerity in the belief that these people will benefit if a railway is built. Those who will benefit by the railway will certainly have to pay something towards the construction of the railway, otherwise it will never be built. The whole thing is a farce or at any rate it will be a farce if the amendment on the amendment proposed by the member for North Perth is carried.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The whole thing is a farce.

Mr. LAMBERT: Members are having some difficulty in understanding the position and the legal effect of it. We have legal men of standing in this Chamber and members generally would welcome the views of the member for Perth, regarding the clause and the amendment. It is rather an insult to the Committee and the Committee will stultify itself if this ridiculous legislation is agreed to.

Mr. Smith: Throw it out altogether if you like.

Mr. LAMBERT: It would be better to throw out the Bill altogether than agree to this amendment upon the amendment.

Mr. TEESDALE: I am opposed to this amendment altogether. There is quite enough juggling with the thing as it is now.

Mr. CHESSON: I support the amendment as sent down by the Legislative Council. The railway will enhance the value of the lands and the pastoralists should pay the reappraised rents.

Amendment on the Council's amendment put and negatived.

Mr. LAMBERT: The Council's amendment should be made reasonably intelligent. The main responsibility for placing these matters properly before the House rests with the Attorney General. We have had an experience of a previous Attorney General in connection with the Land Act. As a layman, I suggest that the member for Perth should advise us as to an amendment which will carry out the intentions of another place.

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

Ayes	...	...	...	...	11
Noes	...	...	...	...	19
Majority against ...					8

AYES.

Mr. Chesson	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Green	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. O'Loghlen
Mr. Heron	Mr. Roche
Mr. Holman	Mr. Lambert
Mr. Lutey	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Hickmott
Mr. Angwin	Mr. Nairn
Mr. Broun	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Brown	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Collier	Mr. Pilkington
Mr. Draper	Mr. Smith
Mr. Duff	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Durack	Mr. Willmott
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. Hardwick
Mr. George	(Teller.)

Question thus negatived; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

Reasons for not agreeing to No. 3 of the Council's amendments adopted and a Message accordingly transmitted to the Council.

BILL—DIVORCE ACT AMENDMENT.**Council's Message.**

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it did not insist on amendments Nos. 1 and 3, and that it had agreed to the Assembly's modification of Amendment No. 4.

Sitting suspended from 1-21 a.m. to 2-40 a.m.

BILL—MINING ACT AMENDMENT.**Council's Message.**

Message received from the Council notifying that it did not insist on the amendment disagreed to by the Assembly.

BILL—DENTISTS.**Council's Message.**

Message from the Council notifying that it did not insist on its amendment No. 3, which had been disagreed to by the Assembly, and requesting a modification of its amendment No. 4, now considered.

In Committee.

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

No. 4. Clause 4, paragraph (d), add the following proviso at the end of the clause: "Provided that all time spent by the applicant on active service with the Australian Imperial Forces shall be counted as part of such seven years":

Modification requested by the Council: Strike out the proviso as suggested by the Legislative Assembly, and insert after the word "Australia" in the last line but three of page 2 the following words: "or in the dental corps of the Australian Imperial Forces":

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The modification desired by the Council is of a very simple character, and affects the Bill but very slightly. It is the only alteration of any importance which has been made in the Bill since it left this House. The Council has added a proviso to Clause 4, which clause was the subject of nearly all the discussion when the Bill was before the Council.

The proviso reads—

Provided that the following persons shall be entitled to be registered by the Board of Dentists, that is to say, every person who for seven years prior to the first day of August, 1920, has been engaged in Western Australia—

The words which the Council now proposes to add at that point are—

or in the dental corps of the Australian Imperial Forces.

If the amendment is carried, the clause will provide for seven years' service in Western Australia or in the dental corps of the Australian Imperial Forces. The only portion, therefore, of this proviso which is the subject matter for discussion now, is whether the words "or in the dental corps of the Australian Imperial Forces" shall be inserted as proposed. I move—

That the modification on the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. LAMBERT: It seems to me that a man serving in the dental corps must serve with co-partners, and so forth, as the proviso reads when modified.

The CHAIRMAN: We are not discussing that.

Mr. LAMBERT: We are discussing that.

The CHAIRMAN: Pardon me. I say we are not, and I am the judge.

Mr. LAMBERT: I want to know exactly what will be the effect of inserting those words. It will be very regrettable, I consider, if this clause emanates from both branches of the Legislature in the form now proposed. The additional words of which the insertion is proposed by another place will affect nobody.

The Attorney General: Then they will do no harm.

Mr. LAMBERT: I fail to see that the modification will affect anybody. There were, of course, dentists who served in the dental corps and who never went to the war, as well as dentists who served in that corps and did go to the war.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Under the Bill, they have to be at work as dental surgery assistants by the performance of dental operations in the mouth. As far as experience goes, it makes no difference where they are.

Mr. PICKERING: Does this include only an employer or co-partner? It should also include any employee.

The CHAIRMAN: I have already ruled the member for Coolgardie out of order on that point. We have to consider only the words in the amendment before us.

Mr. PICKERING: I suppose we can consider the application of those words. Other persons than employers or co-partners should be included.

The Attorney General: On a point of order, is the hon. member in order, seeing that it is impossible at this stage for him to move to insert the word "employee"?

Mr. PICKERING: We have the assurance of the Attorney General that this will affect no one and it is absurd to consider an amendment which will be of no effect.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: How do you know that will be of no effect?

Mr. PICKERING: We have the Attorney General's assurance.

Hon. P. Collier: He did not say that.

Mr. PICKERING: I understood him to say that, and the member for Coolgardie made a similar statement. We should not support legislation which will be of no effect.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must speak to the amendment.

Mr. PICKERING: As we have an assurance that the amendment will be of no effect, I shall oppose it.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not think that the amendment clearly expresses the intention. There were a number of dentists in the Australian Imperial Forces who were not in the dental corps, I move—

That the Council's modification on the amendment be further modified by inserting after the word "Australia" the words "or in the Australian Imperial Forces or in the dental corps of the Australian Imperial Forces."

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Coolgardie has moved that after the word "Australia"—and there is no word "Australia" in the amendment—the words "or in the Australian Imperial Forces or in the dental corps of the Australian Imperial Forces" be inserted. Even if the words were inserted after the word "Australian" they would not make sense. Therefore I rule the amendment out of order.

Mr. LAMBERT: Then I will respectfully move that your ruling be disagreed with. The amendment means a man who has served as a soldier in the A.I.F., not in the dental corps at all.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member to confine himself to the amendment.

Mr. LAMBERT: I want my amendment to come in after the word "Australia" in the Council's amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: "Australia" does not appear in the Council's amendment.

Mr. LAMBERT: It appears in the clause.

The CHAIRMAN: We are not dealing with the clause.

Mr. LAMBERT: Will you accept the addition of my words?

The CHAIRMAN: The Attorney General has moved that the Committee agree to the modified amendment of the Council. We are dealing with that alone. Your amendment refers to Australia. That word does not appear in the Council's amendment. Apart from that, your amendment would make the whole thing ridiculous.

Mr. LAMBERT: I know registered dentists who enlisted as ordinary soldiers, not in the dental corps at all.

The CHAIRMAN: I suggest to the hon. member that he insert after "or" the words "in the A.I.F." and then continue on "or in the dental corps of the A.I.F."

The Attorney General: How could a man have seven years' experience as a dentist, if he were not in the dental corps?

Mr. PICKERING: I would have preferred to support the amendment moved by the member for Coolgardie which has been ruled out of order. There is a difference between being a member of the A.I.F. and a member of the dental corps of the A.I.F. If a man had been in the A.I.F., and had had experience as a dentist, he should be included, more particularly seeing that as a member of the A.I.F. he would be a combatant whereas he would be a non-combatant in the dental corps.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The effect of the proposal would be to admit a man merely because he had been a member of the A.I.F. If that is the object of the member for Coolgardie, where does the provision regarding seven years' experience come in?

Mr. Lambert: He may have had that experience before the war.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: If that is so, that man would be eligible for registration in any case.

Question put and passed, the Council's modification on the amendment agreed to.

Resolution reported, the report adopted and a Message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Message.

Message received from the Council notifying that it insisted on its amendment to the Land Act Amendment Bill for reasons set out in the schedule, now considered.

In Committee.—Request for Conference.

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

The PREMIER: I move—

That a conference be requested.

Mr. O'Loghien: Let it go.

The PREMIER: It will mean the loss of the Bill.

Mr. Lambert: They want to settle the Bill all right.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not know why the Premier wants a conference on this question. The majority of property owners in the State have looked upon the Legislative Council as the bulwark of the Constitution. The last Premier but one pointed out very clearly that he considered the Upper House the bulwark of the Constitution although some of us considered there was no necessity for the second Chamber. It was pointed out that with one House only it was possible that nomads would take away the property of private individuals. There would be confiscation and repudiation of contracts. Now we find that the bulwark of the Constitution, representing the interests of a minority of the people of the State, have entered upon an endeavour to put up a scheme of repudiation.

Mr. Smith: This is done for a purpose.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Quite so, but the people throughout Western Australia considered there was no necessity for the bulwark.

The PREMIER: Let us have a conference then.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: This is an indirect method of showing that the Council is not necessary, because property rights no longer exist in their eyes. No one, after this, can ever go on the public platform and point to the Legislative Council as the guardians of property. The Council is the section of Parliament which is particularly expected to see that a contract entered into is honoured to the very letter. The stronghold of the public, as it has been called, will be wiped out, because of to-night's doings. It has given some of us, who desire to see the abolition of another place, some ammunition to employ and we can now show the people that the faith they had in that particular part of the Legislature has not been well founded. I am pleased that the Council has proved that it is no longer necessary as portion of the parliamentary institution of this State. Property rights are sacred in this Chamber, and contracts entered into are kept, but another place thinks nothing of repudiating honourable contracts that have been entered into.

Mr. LAMBERT: I cannot support the motion of the Premier. The Council are not sincere in insisting that we should adopt the amendment.

The Attorney General: On a point of order! Is the hon. member entitled to impute motives against another place?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not impute motives against another place.

Mr. LAMBERT: Another place certainly has not the best interests of the State at heart. The establishment of the principle of the re-appraisal of lands is as foreign to their ideas as it is possible to conceive. Anyone could understand the principle of the reappraisal of land on an equitable basis.

The Premier: You have no quarrel with the Upper House, then.

Mr. LAMBERT: I should like to know the reasons which prompted them in insisting upon this clause.

Mr. O'Loughlen: They think it is all right.

Mr. LAMBERT: In the interests they serve. They know it will never have any application.

Mr. Griffiths: Do you not favour it?

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes. We know now the reason for the motion of the Premier. There are elements in another place which would go to any bounds in serving their own interests. I enter my emphatic protest against that principle.

Mr. Griffiths: Not very long ago the hon. member was supporting the amendment.

Mr. LAMBERT: I know that.

Mr. ANGELO: Having been in the other Chamber when this clause was being discussed there, I am of opinion that a conference would not do much good. We are now at a deadlock. Only two methods are available: one is to lose the Bill, the other is to agree to the clause, which, as the leader of the Opposition has rightly said, carries a flavour of repudiation with it. I suggest that we might amend the clause by inserting after the word "leases" such words as "granted, after the passing of this Act."

The CHAIRMAN: It cannot be done now. That matter has already been decided by a vote of the Committee.

Mr. LAMBERT: I want to be quite clear on one point in particular. If a conference is held and at that conference the Council still insists, will the question come back here for consideration and will it still be competent for us to reject the Council's amendment?

The CHAIRMAN: There will be a further opportunity for the discussion of the matter in this Chamber when the report from the conference comes before the Committee.

Question put and passed.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Resolution reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

Appointment of Managers.

The PREMIER: I move—

That the managers be the Premier, the Attorney General, and the leader of the Opposition.

Question put and passed.

Sitting suspended from 3.40 to 5 a.m.

Report of Conference Managers.

The PREMIER: I beg to report that the managers of the two Houses have considered

the amendment and have agreed that the Council no longer insist upon the amendment. I move—

That the report be adopted.

Question put and passed, the report adopted.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You put up a joke on us by appointing three members of the same opinion to attend the conference.

Council's Further Message.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it no longer insisted upon its amendment to which the Assembly had disagreed.

ADJOURNMENT—CLOSE OF SESSION.

Complimentary Remarks.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell-Northam) [5.8] a.m.: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till the 11th January, 1921.

Mr. Hudson: Can the Premier give us an indication as to when the elections will take place?

The PREMIER: They must take place in March. Before the motion is put I should like on behalf of the members of the House to wish you, Sir, the Chairman of Committees, and the officers of the House a very merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. We have had a very strenuous session, and although it has not lasted unusually long we have sat during the five months pretty consistently and for fairly long hours and have put in very hard work. I believe the "Hansard" this year will establish a record. All through the months your task, Sir, has been an arduous one. We congratulate you upon the way in which the affairs of this House have been managed during your term as Speaker. I hope that when we meet again there will not be a great many strange faces in the Assembly. Five or six members do not intend to stand for re-election. I am sorry for that. If I had my way I would not have any change made at all in the Assembly. Of course I cannot expect the leader of the Opposition to agree with that. I hope we shall have an opportunity after the House adjourns to meet members for a few minutes in order to propose the health of those who do not intend to seek re-election. I wish to convey to you, Sir, and to the officials the good wishes of members of the House.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [5.11 a.m.]: I join with the Premier in wishing you, Sir, the compliments of the season. You are now the father of the House, the oldest member who has sat continuously, and we are pleased to see that you have retained your health and vigour so well throughout a trying session. We hope you will enjoy the rest you have so well earned. To the Chairman of Committees and the deputy chairmen I wish a very pleasant Christmas, and I desire to express my gratitude to the Clerk and the Clerk Assistant, to the "Hansard" staff and to the whole of the officers and servants of the House for the uniform kindness and courtesy extended to members on this side

throughout the session. This is not quite like the close of an ordinary session, for it marks the close of the life of this Parliament. In the course of the next eight or ten weeks we shall have to face our masters, and I suppose, as in every other battle, at the battle of the polls there will be casualties. While I can say that on personal grounds I shall very much regret losing the close association of any one who has occupied a seat in this House, yet the Premier will scarcely expect me to join with him in the wish that there shall be no alteration. I hope rather that as a result of the elections we shall redress the balance somewhat. Notwithstanding that, I can say I wish every member such luck and fortune as one political opponent may offer to another. I regret that a number of members, some of whom have been with us for many years, have decided to retire from political life. There is the member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) who 20 years ago occupied a prominent position in the councils of the State. I am sure the loss of his services will be a State loss. More particularly will his kindly and genial presence be missed from this Chamber. There are others also whose absence from the Chamber will be a distinct loss. I understand it is the intention of the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) not to seek re-election. Whilst we may not all agree with the views expressed by that hon. member, yet we readily admit that his contributions to our deliberations have been illuminating and of very great assistance indeed. I am informed it is the intention of the member for Swan (Mr. Nairn) not to seek re-election. I regret that very much, although the party to which I belong would be endeavouring to unseat him if he did seek re-election. Nevertheless he has attached himself to everybody who has enjoyed his personal friendship. I am sure that, had he cared to devote himself exclusively to a political career, he would have attained a very high place in the councils of his party. The member for Claremont (Mr. Duff), I understand is not seeking re-election. Although he has not been so long in the House as the other members to whom I have referred, yet because of his courtesy and kindness and the prominent part he has played in the social side of our life, as well as in the more important discussions in the House, we regret that he will not be amongst us in the new Parliament. Then there is the member for Leederville (Mr. Voryard), a very old member of this House. He too, I understand will voluntarily retire. Those are the members who we know will not be here next session. There may be others. However, it is not a subject upon which one wishes to dwell. I can only say that the session we have just closed has been freer from acrimonious debate than some of the sessions of which older members have had knowledge in the years gone by. We have managed to get along and to differ strenuously, perhaps, but agreeing always to differ without importing into our discussions anything in the nature of personal recrimination or abuse. I say that as one with 15 years experience. When I recall the Parliaments of my earlier political days I realise that there is a marked contrast in the manner in which we have got along during this Parliament and particularly this session. I think we can do the work we are sent here to

do without too violently striving with each other. I hope every member of the House may have a very enjoyable Christmas and may, whether friend or opponent, enter the political fray in good health. I trust that when the elections are over we shall all be able to say we fought the fight fairly.

Mr. HARRISON (Avon) [5.20 a.m.]: I should like to endorse the good wishes expressed by the Premier and by the leader of the Opposition to yourself, Mr. Speaker. Both in the Chair and elsewhere, Sir, you have rendered members very important assistance in carrying on the business of the country. At all times you have been ready to help members who found themselves in any difficulty. I desire also to endorse the observations of the Premier and of the leader of the Opposition with respect to the officers of the House and the "Hansard" staff, all of whom have shown a constant readiness to give of their best to every individual member of the Chamber. It is a matter of great regret to me that several hon. members are voluntarily retiring from the service of the House: and this is an observation I wish to stress as applying to the member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner), who was the first leader I had in politics. There are very many things told me by him during my first few weeks here which I shall ever remember. Then there is also the member for Swan (Mr. Nairn) retiring. Both these hon. members are adherents of our party, and I feel that in losing them the party will lose some portion of its main strength. I should like, further, to pay to the leader of the Opposition (Hon. P. Collier) and the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) the tribute of acknowledging that alike in their criticisms and their actions they have been guided by complete honesty and sincerity. I especially learned to value the member for North-East Fremantle during the proceedings of the Royal Commission on the Wheat Marketing Scheme, on which body I had the pleasure of being associated with him. It was then the hon. member's worth was specially borne in on me. If it is my good fortune to come back after March next and to renew my acquaintance with these gentlemen, I trust all our deliberations will tend towards the benefit of Western Australia. Allow me to conclude, by wishing you, Sir, a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Mr. GARDINER (Irwin) [5.24 a.m.]: I thank the leader of the Opposition and the Premier for their kindly references to those of us who are leaving political life. One might almost express oneself in the ancient phrase of the Roman gladiators, "We who are about to die, salute ye." It is pretty hard when we are compelled conscientiously to admit to ourselves that we have lost our usefulness in public life. It is sad indeed. But it is sadder still to look back over the last 12 months and mark how puerile have been the efforts of the world to meet the problems of peace. I was one of those who thought that when the armistice had been signed, there had been signed a new Magna Charta for the freedom, happiness, and peace of our people—a Magna Charta worthy of the terrible sacrifices that had been made. But what do we find? Cupidity and stupidity in the

place of generosity and humanity. To those of us who love our land it almost looks as if the river of blood and tears which flowed for five years has failed to wash the sordidness from the soul of our nature. On both sides we see representatives with lowering brow and clenched fist, using the sternest words, whereas they should meet together with considerateness and with the outstretched hand of friendship. That position becomes still harder to understand when one calls to mind the composition of a House such as this. Here are 50 of us differing in mental outlook, 50 of us differing in political outlook; and yet on those very problems we can take rational counsel together in order to devise ways out of our difficulties. If only those representatives abroad could meet in that spirit! That would mean the consummation of those wishes which have been so well expressed—that the new year may be full of peace, happiness, and prosperity for all our people. I shall carry out of this House the recollection that I found in it, and that I tried to find in it, the fine gold that is in the heart of every one of my brothers. When I pass from this Chamber and, in later days, glance through the leaves of the book of my life here, those leaves will, I know, smell as sweet to me as they smell even now.

Mr. SPEAKER [5.28 a.m.]: Before putting the motion, I desire to thank the Premier and the leader of the Opposition, and also Mr. Harrison and Mr. Gardiner, for the kind references they have been good enough to make to myself and to those who have been associated with me in this House. I think we may say, without being egotistical, that we have conducted the business of the country in this House of Assembly on such lines as the people would desire. This could not have been achieved by any efforts on my part had I not had the co-operation of the House. I want to thank the House—using that term, I make no distinction—for the kindness and generosity shown to me during my term of office. I want, too, to say that I have been very ably assisted by the Clerk and the Clerk Assistant, and by the officers of the House

generally, including the "Hansard" staff. If I had not received the co-operation and good feeling of the officers, as well as that of hon. members, I do not think that in closing this session we would be able to show such a good record. I feel that I am losing some of my old friends, especially the member for Irwin, Mr. Gardiner, who entered this Parliament when I entered it, in 1901—20 years ago early next year. Mr. Gardiner was indeed an acquisition to the first Parliament in which he sat; and, after some respite from public life, he decided to come back to this Legislative Assembly. Members who have known him as long as I have, will have been able to judge him while he has been in the Chamber. He has decided not to come back to public life. Many members will endeavour to come back, but, of course, the electors will have all to say on that question, Mr. Gardiner has decided not to contest that point. Parliament will be the poorer by reason of the absence of that gentleman after the next elections. Whatever we may think, and no matter how we may differ in politics, we must all recognise the ability he has displayed. The member for Irwin has given ample evidence of that ability which is so necessary in the best interests of the State. I will not say anything further beyond thanking members generally for the kindly expression of good feeling. I hope after the elections not to see too many strange faces, notwithstanding the remarks of the leader of the Opposition. I think we have got on very well during the past few years. If the electors knew us as well as we know ourselves, they would not hesitate to send us back again. They would not hesitate to send us back to carry on the affairs of the country, because I think we have done it with credit to ourselves in a way the electors should admire. We will have an opportunity of adjourning to the refreshment room, and I will not go any further at the present juncture beyond thanking members for their remarks.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.32 a.m. (Friday).

Parliament was prorogued to 24th January, 1921 by proclamation published in the "Government Gazette," issued on Friday, 7th January, 1921. By further proclamation published in the "Government Gazette" on 21st January, 1921, the Legislative Assembly was dissolved as from and after the 24th January, 1921.