

# Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 18th November, 1919.

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

## QUESTION—BUTTER, PRODUCTION AND IMPORTS.

Mr. STUBBS asked the Premier: 1, Are the Government aware—(a) That a very serious injury is being done to the butter industry of this State by the action of the butter companies of the north coast, New South Wales, and other Eastern States factories? (b) That in spite of a shortage of butter in New South Wales and Queensland owing to droughts, 2,000 boxes are imported into this State weekly, whereas the requirements are only 1,400? (c) That the object of this is apparently to kill the local industry, and that local producers are compelled to place their butter in cold storage? 2, Will the Government take any action which may be possible to remedy this state of affairs?

The PREMIER replied: The importers have been consulted and arrangements made that will overcome the difficulty in regard to the sale of local butter.

## BILL—ANGLO-PERSIAN OIL COMPANY, LTD. (PRIVATE).

Petition.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN presented a petition from the agents for the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, Ltd., praying for leave to introduce a Bill to grant powers and provisions for the storage and supply of oil and for other purposes.

Petition received and read.

Bill introduced.

Bill introduced by Hon. W. C. Angwin and read a first time.

Select Committee appointed.

On motion by Hon. W. C. Angwin, Bill referred to a select committee consisting of Messrs. Angelo, Brown, Collier, Harrison, and the mover.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Freemantle) [4.45]: I move—

That the select committee have power to call for persons and papers, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, and to report on Thursday, 20th November.

## BILL—WHEAT MARKETING.

Council's Amendment.

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

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

The Schedule: Paragraph 8, sub-paragraph (2).—Strike out the figures "4s. 9d." and insert the figures "5s. 6d."

The PREMIER: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

This amendment provides that if the agent short-supplies wheat he has to pay not 4s. 9d. but 5s. 6d., which is nearer the present value of wheat than the lesser amount. This is a perfectly reasonable arrangement.

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

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

## BILL—CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 22nd October.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [4.50]: When the Government announced their intention of introducing an amendment to our Constitution Act, I had hoped that the Bill would contain provisions for a reasonable measure of reform, something worthy of the times in which we live and in keeping with the march of progressive thought that has taken place throughout the world during the past few years. I must confess to a deal of disappointment in that this Bill merely seeks to rectify some of the anomalies which have been found to exist in the present Act; and, with the exception that it is proposed to confer the right upon the women of the State to become members of Parliament, I fail to discover in it even the smallest measure of progress or reform. With the proposal to permit women of the State to become members of Parliament I entirely agree. I suppose that it is the universal opinion in this State that this right has been won by them; indeed it is a right which has been long denied to them. I had hoped that the Government would have endeavoured to introduce something in the way of reasonable reform with regard to the franchise for another place. Instead of liberalising or

extending the franchise for that institution, this Bill really endeavours to restrict or narrow it down. If the Bill should pass in its present form it will mean that there are a number of persons in the State to-day who, though entitled to the franchise for another place, will be deprived of it under the provisions of the Bill. I refer to the clauses which deal with the general householders' qualification. I do not wish to cover the ground I have traversed in a previous discussion in this House with regard to the qualifications for the franchise of another place. I think, however, I should be voicing the opinion of the majority of the people of the State if I were to say that the time has arrived when the Legislative Council ought to be wiped out entirely. If during the long years of this obstruction of progressive legislation it has not been demonstrated that the time has arrived when it should pass out of existence, I think the result of the poll on Saturday last has clinched the matter. When we find that we have in the State a branch of our legislature, into which a man who has given five years of service at the war and risen to the highest post in the army, cannot find entrance, it is the final argument for the abolition of this institution.

Mr. Johnston: They cannot blame the Labour party for that. It is the rich property holders.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The electors, who declare that the man who had rendered such services at the war was not the best qualified to represent them in another place, belong to that portion of the community who regularly and for years past have been standing on the platforms of this country, puffing their chests out, and waving Union Jacks and declaring that those who were opposed to them were disloyal and did not want to win the war, and comprised the profiteers of the community. These are the electors of constituencies where labour has a very small voice indeed. If the result of this by-election demonstrated anything at all, it showed that these people, who screamed from various platforms that nothing was too good for the boys who had done so much to preserve the safety of Australia, were pure and unadulterated hypocrites. I am sorry that the Government, even if they could not go so far as to propose the abolition of another place, did not at least make an attempt to liberalise the franchise. It is astounding to me to think that to-day, when we see in every country of the world old customs swept away, and practically the general body of the public granted rights which were denied to them previous to the war, in this comparatively small State of ours, so far as population is concerned, people are not to be permitted to take one step forward. It would be tedious for me to repeat the arguments which have been used so often in this Chamber, but it is a fact that a considerable proportion of the men who fought for this country

in the war, and their fathers and mothers and relatives, are denied the full rights of citizenship in our legislative halls. Turning to the electoral rolls, we find that there are something like 60,000 voters on the roll for the Legislative Council, as against 150,000 for the Legislative Assembly. When we bear in mind that of the 60,000 voters for the Legislative Council a considerable number of them are enrolled for various constituencies, it is borne in upon us that the 60,000 names would not represent probably more than 50,000 electors. We see by these figures that practically 100,000 of the adults of the State, men and women of this country, are denied a voice in the final shaping of legislation so far as the Legislative Council is concerned. I am at a loss to know by what argument of reason or justice that condition of things can be advocated by our friends on the other side or those who are supporting them. For practically 20 years now the property qualification for the Commonwealth Parliament, the Parliament which deals with infinitely greater concerns and work than does the State Parliament—perhaps not more important in many directions, but, taking it all round, the work is greater—has been swept away, and before the Federal ballot box every man and woman over the age of 21 in this country stands on an equality. If we reflect that in our own electoral spheres in this State we have such restrictions that two-thirds of the men and women of the State who are entitled to elect persons to this House, are not entitled to vote for members of another place, we must all agree that it is time such an anomalous position was set right. By what argument can hon. members, who would not deny the right of any of those people to vote for themselves, deny them the right to vote for members in another place. If persons are qualified to have a vote to elect members to this Chamber, we have the position that those very same electors are restricted as to intelligence or capacity by its being declared that they are not entitled to vote for representation in another place. It cannot to my mind be argued on the ground of reason, logic or equality that the property qualifications should cease to exist. Even were it not swept away entirely, as it should be, I am still astonished to find that the Government are not prepared to go to the extent of granting the vote on the household qualification. Surely it cannot be argued for a moment that the person who has the responsibility of being a householder in the community belongs to the class who are nomads. A householder does not belong to that class, though I would not argue that the nomad should not have a vote as well. The householder is a married man rearing a family and has some fixed interest in the community. Yet we find the Government are not prepared to go to the extent of extending the franchise to the householder. That has for many years been the qualification for the Legislative Council in South Australia and I do not know of any harm that

has fallen to that State in consequence. It is something like 12 years since any alteration has been effected to our Legislative Council franchise, notwithstanding that we have been told over and over again that when the war was over the general mass of the people would have greater consideration than had ever been extended to them in the past—a new world in fact. We find that in the first essential the right of citizenship is denied them. This Bill, instead of going along the road of progress, is going backward. I hope in Committee to move a series of amendments which will have the effect of broadening the franchise for the Legislative Council, and I hope at least a majority of members of this House will not stultify themselves by saying we have not arrived at the stage when the men and women of the state are entitled to the full right of citizenship. The Government propose to liberalise the franchise in one direction—to extend it to men who have served with the A.I.F. I intend to support that provision but only on the ground that it is an extension of the franchise. Wherever it is proposed to extend the franchise to any section of the community who did not have it before, I will support it. I will not support this provision merely on the ground of service with the A.I.F., because I do not think it can be defended on that ground. These men are no longer soldiers; they are citizens once more. If we are going to make distinctions between men who served in the army and the general body of citizens, we must make distinctions in all our Acts of Parliament. If we do that, in a year or two we shall have a special class of citizens enjoying special privileges. I object to a distinction between a man who enlisted and went into camp, but did not go overseas, and the father and mother who reared him and could not go to the war through no fault of their own. The other provision, which deals with the question of members of Parliament contracting with the Government, is a wise one. If the Act as it exists at present, is strictly interpreted, members of Parliament are really contravening it every day of the week. We must observe a certain amount of caution, but I think we might with safety amend the Act in the manner proposed in this Bill. With regard to the proposal that members who take Ministerial office should not be called upon to go to the electors, I do not agree. I am aware that the Attorney General has stated that in many other Parliaments it is not obligatory for a member to go up for re-election on attaining office, but I think this is a safeguard that should be retained, otherwise it would be possible for a man who was elected on one policy to then espouse another policy, and disfranchise the electors who returned him for three years. I know there are arguments on the other side, but I think the existing provision should be retained. With regard to the proposal for the extension of the life of Parliament, the Attorney General has been able to make out a fairly good case so

far as this Parliament is concerned. Prior to 1905, the elections were held at a time convenient to the general public. Because of the dissolution in that year, the elections took place in October. Ever since they have been held about that month, and it has been a real inconvenience to the House to have to meet for a short session before and after a general election, usually carrying the work of the session over Christmas into February and March. There is no proper discussion on the Estimates because the greater portion of the money has been expended before they are submitted to Parliament. It is impossible to do effective work. I think the difficulty could have been got over by a dissolution of the House at an early period. Instead of holding elections in October or September of next year they might be held in June or July by a dissolution shortening the life of Parliament by a few months. However, the Government have decided to take the power to either extend or shorten the life of Parliament. It is an elastic provision which obtains in South Australia and is a real convenience. The only other matter contained in the Bill is that of the procedure on money Bills. While the provisions in this Bill do not entirely safeguard the rights and privileges of this House and are somewhat in the nature of a compromise arrived at by the committee composed of members of another place and of this Chamber, they are the best we can get, and will make this House somewhat more secure in regard to money Bills than the practice which has prevailed during the last year or two.

Mr. LUTEY (Brownhill-Ivanhoe) [5.15]: I feel somewhat disappointed with the Bill. When the Bill of last session, introduced by the leader of the Opposition, was before us the cry from the Government side was that it did not go far enough, that it should be liberalised. We had that repeated time after time. Yet we find that, with the few exceptions enumerated by the leader of the Opposition, this Bill is practically the same as that of last session. The member for Greenough (Mr. Maley) last session suggested that the Bill should be laid aside to make room for a more comprehensive Bill that would so extend the franchise as to be of some real benefit to the people. Now we have this Bill providing for a rental value of 6s. 6d. per week. It will be said by the Attorney General that one could scarcely imagine a place not worth that sum. But that was said when the existing Act was before Parliament, when the proposal was for an annual value of £17; and when people tried to get on the roll no satisfactory conclusion could be arrived at as to the assessment of the value. A large number of people on the goldfields were prosecuted for attempting to get their names on the Council roll. One lady up there was fined by the Federal authorities for not having her name on the Federal roll. In view of this, anxious to secure herself against any

further penalty, she filled in a card for the Legislative Council, and notwithstanding that her husband had been killed in France, she was prosecuted—and was cross-examined in the witness box like a common criminal—for having attempted to get her name on the roll. I want to know who is to assess the rental value? Many places on the goldfields are well worth a pound a week to their owners, who live near to their work, but who, if they were to vacate their houses, would perhaps not be able to get 6s. 6d. weekly rental for them. I have known places, valued by the local authority at £18 per annum, sold lock, stock and barrel for £26. On those parts of the goldfields where the population is moving, houses that cost £250 to erect would not bring £40 to-day. Personally I am in favour of giving every adult a vote, and I certainly think that at least we should have household suffrage. I hope the Bill will be amended to provide for household suffrage. I intend to vote for the provision relating to returned soldiers, but only as an extension of the franchise. The wives and mothers of men at the Front have done really good war work in sending parcels to the soldiers. Indeed the women on the goldfields pioneered this work. In the first instance they sent all their stuff to Perth to be despatched to the Front, but when the shipment was complete it was found to contain very little more than what had been forwarded from the goldfields. A protest was made, the goldfields people refused to send their stuff to Perth, and as a result it awakened up the people down here who then began to tackle the work in earnest. I would extend the franchise to daughters and wives and mothers of soldiers. Just in passing I wish to point out that the gold miner, by sticking to his job, was as good a war worker as the grower of wheat. I hope that when in Committee the Bill will be amended to provide for household suffrage.

Mr. PILKINGTON (Perth) [5.20]: I have little to say on the Bill, for I cannot but feel that some of the provisions with which I heartily agree may be regarded almost as having been passed already. However, I should be sorry to let the Bill pass without entering my protest against certain of its provisions. I regret that the Government should have thought fit to introduce a Bill to make women eligible for Parliament. It has been alleged that such is the general wish of the people of the State. Personally I do not believe it is. Also it has been frequently alleged that it is the wish of the women of the State. Again, I do not believe it is. As a matter of fact, this provision would not pass unless we were all perfectly certain that the good sense of the community would render it practically null and void. The only other part of the Bill I wish to refer to is the provision which extends the Council franchise to soldiers. I deeply regret that the Government should have introduced such a provision. We have to-day in Australian politics the extremely painful

sight of parties bidding for the soldiers' vote. The Federal elections to-day resemble rather an auction mart than an electioneering campaign.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The Prime Minister would not stop at garroting.

Mr. PILKINGTON: It is on both sides. I am not putting it on one side more than another. There is this plain bidding for the soldier's vote; and the worst of it is, not that the parties should be bidding for that vote, but that the public should stand it. Here in this Parliament the same thing is being brought in. I do not think the majority of members on this side of the House believe in the wisdom or sense or sanity of this provision. It is brought in, as far as I can see, as a bid for the soldier's vote. It is humiliating that such a provision should be brought forward by any Government.

Mr. Johnston: The promise was made on every recruiting platform.

Mr. PILKINGTON: I was frequently on the recruiting platform, and I did not hear it. If it was made, it was wrong.

Mr. O'Loughlen: They promised the earth and all the fruits thereof.

Mr. PILKINGTON: That is so. But what do they offer the soldiers here? If it is intended to be some sort of a return or remuneration or reward for what they have done at the Front, then the Government might as well give the soldiers a box of chocolates; it is the cheapest, meanest, most contemptible thing ever offered. But if it is meant to be a sort of bribe—that is what it seems to me—I believe it will meet the reception which it deserves. One of the most painful parts of this bidding for the soldiers' vote is the apparent belief that the soldiers have not any sense. Is it thought that they will not see through this?

Mr. Lutey: They are waking up to a lot of this camouflage.

Mr. PILKINGTON: I am well aware that my protest will be unavailing. Hon. members opposite are voting for this provision for a reason which I conceive to be, at any rate, sane. Any step which increases the number of persons who have a vote for the Upper House will meet with the approval of hon. members on the other side.

Mr. Munsie: Every time.

Mr. PILKINGTON: I follow that argument. I realise that it will be said hereafter that if the soldiers, because they have done their duty well as soldiers, are entitled to a vote for the Upper House, any citizen who has done his duty well as a citizen is likewise entitled to a vote for the Upper House. I can follow the reasoning of those who wish that there shall be no property qualification for the Upper House, indeed that there shall be no Upper House at all. Those members will vote for this provision. In these circumstances my protest must be unavailing. I desire to enter a strong protest against the introduction of this class of legislation for the obvious purpose of buying the soldiers' vote.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN (Forrest) [5.25]: As the leader of the Opposition has suggested, there is not likely to be a prolonged discussion on the merits of the Bill. It is largely a Bill for Committee, where the different elements of which the Committee is composed will have an opportunity for proposing amendments with the object of democratising the Bill to a great extent. I do not intend to devote very much time to it, but I believe that any proposal which serves to broaden the franchise is of sufficient importance to bring many members to their feet. The member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) has pointed out that he is a sort of stranded Ishmael, always on his own. That is not altogether our fault. Many propositions emanate from this side which the hon. member, if he were not so reactionary in his opinions, could support. I do not know that he is a political healer, come to sweep away all our ills. If he is he has not demonstrated it. He objects to the provision which will enable women to take their seats in Parliament. After all, the member for Perth, as a democrat, claims to trust the people, and in the final analysis it gets back to the constituency. If the people wish to elect women to Parliament, they will have to take the responsibility. I have yet to learn that women would make a worse job of the work here than many of us. Possibly women are better suited for the home, but at the same time, if one reads the works of some women in different parts of the world he will find it demonstrated that they can think logically and, if given an opportunity, set a lead to public opinion. I am prepared to assist in affording that opportunity, leaving it to the constituents to say whether a woman shall find her way into Parliament. Personally, I think that in Australia it will be a long time before women are elected to Parliament, although at the last Federal election one woman ran within 1,000 votes of winning an 11,000 vote constituency. I was really astounded at the result. Further, I am quite convinced that had the lady got into Parliament, she would have been just as useful a member as many who hold seats there to-day. The hon. member referred to the gratuity. I do not wish to deal with that matter, which is outside the province of the State Parliament. The hon. member spoke of rival factions putting this proposal forward, and expressed wonder that the public would stand it. But the public will stand anything that is put up to them. If the public would not stand anything, should we have a Parliament like we have here to-day? The position is absolutely ridiculous. To-day we are asked to support a Bill of this description, a Bill only tinkering at reform, a Bill that is not worth twopence-halfpenny so far as regards giving any tangible reform to the great bulk of the people of this State. What is the result? The result is that through this Parliament not showing confidence in the people, not showing that it trusts the people to any great extent, the drift of opinion to-day is strongly towards

the Federal Parliament. This institution of which we are members has not the respect of the people in the way it should have. The people speak contemptuously of this State Parliament, because the 100,000 men and women who produce wealth in this State are denied a voice or a vote in the moulding of its destinies. There is nothing that tends to drive people to support unification more strongly than the inadequate franchise existing in this State to-day.

Mr. Davies: They have not supported it in Western Australia.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It is all very well for the hon. member to make that interjection. I do not wish to see unification if it can be avoided, but only within the last fortnight I have stated, and I repeat the statement now, that it is useless for the people of Western Australia to expect any tangible reform from a State Parliament composed as this one is. It is immaterial whom the people send here, so long as the present Constitution obtains. Just on 4,000 men and women send me, or send somebody else, here to represent them; and out of those 4,000 people only 52 have the right to vote for the three members representing that part of the State in the Upper House. Of those three members not one, so far as I am aware, has visited my electorate during the past ten years. Possibly there may be one exception, where, in the course of a pleasure trip, one of those members spent one day in my electorate; but, apart from that, not one of the three representatives of my electorate in the Upper House has been in my electorate for ten years past. Why should they go there? The people have no wealth and no votes.

The Minister for Works: Does that figure of 52 include soldiers?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Only 52 are on the roll and qualified to vote. The others are not qualified, under this embargo.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You will have a thousand or two if this Bill passes.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I admit that the inclusion of the returned soldiers will make an appreciable difference. I do not say whether the inclusion of the soldiers is just or unjust. Viewing the matter from the same standpoint as the leader of the Opposition, and hoping for some element of reform which will stem the tide towards unification, I am supporting that provision. But I say that the attitude adopted here to-day by the dominant power in Parliament is ridiculous. Here we have a Government claiming to be a democratic Government, and yet they bring in a Bill of this description. Apart from pandering to the prevailing sentiment of giving soldiers and nurses a vote, the Bill does not hold out any reform at all to the great body of citizens. The Minister for Works knows that at one place, where he formerly managed, there are 14 couples—I can give the names if necessary—who have lost sons in Gallipoli. They have been there for 30 years, and are rooted to the country; they were born in the country, and cannot

get out of the country; and yet the Government say that these people are unworthy of a vote for the Upper House. Why unworthy? Because they have not the property qualification. In the locality I refer to the house provided is part of the wages; and around the mills and on the bush landings the residents are compelled to move about so continuously that they cannot get the qualification for the franchise set down in our Constitution. And yet a so-called democratic Government brings in a tinkering reform of this kind. I say that every householder in Western Australia is fit to vote for the Upper House, or else is not fit to pay the taxes that keep the Government going. There is the position. We ask these people to produce wealth, and we ask them to rally to the defence of property when property is in danger; we ask them to pay taxes; but as soon as the danger is gone—

Mr. Johnston: Those who rallied to the call are getting the vote.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: True, but those men are not asking for it. They say that every citizen of Western Australia should be entitled to the same voice in the government of the State. And the soldier is not being given anything tangible when he is given a vote for the Upper House. I suppose he will exercise it well. I hope he will do so. That may tend to bring about some small improvement. But I want to hear some logical argument from the member for Guildford (Mr. Davies), for one, as to why the Government are withholding household suffrage. I refer to the member for Guildford because he is all the time talking about democracy and about what can be achieved under it.

Mr. Davies: I think I have already stated my views on the Bill introduced by the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: There are several more hon. members opposite who might express their views, even if they do not take up the unpopular side as the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) has done. I do not want hon. members opposite to get up and say that they will not support the Bill because it does not go far enough. The measure does not give the people much, but it can be made a good measure. If hon. members are alive to the danger in which this Parliament stands, they will set to work to make this a Parliament that will command the respect of the people. Every democrat must admire the franchise for the Federal House of Representatives. I do not care a continental if not a member of the Labour party goes back to the House of Representatives—though of course I should be sorry—but in that case there is not a man on this side of the Chamber who will say that the House of Representatives does not represent the people. For that House every person over the age of 21 years has the right to vote; and if the people like to send back Hughes and Cook, no democrat can quarrel with the verdict. But this Bill proposes to confer no right upon the people. It proposes to leave

matters in the same old humdrum way, with the embargo which says, "Because you have not got blue blood in your veins, or bricks and mortar, or sheep roaming round the meadows, you are not entitled to a vote for the Legislative Council." Brains and character do not count to-day. In three or four weeks there will be returning from the Front the greatest soldier in the Australian Army, but he is not qualified to vote for those old fossils at the other end of the building.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I beg pardon and withdraw that, Mr. Speaker. I have been so used to hear you, Mr. Speaker, describe members of another place as such.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: But that was before you occupied your present position, Mr. Speaker. If there is anything in this Bill of which the Government may be proud, it is the fact that, under it, a man who has covered himself with glory by meritorious conduct in war will not find himself a political outcast when he comes back here. If the greatest soldier in the Australian Army comes back to his place in the bush, as perhaps he will, after years of fighting, after getting wounded seven times, after winning the Victoria Cross and the D.C.M. with two bars, after winning his way from private to colonel, he will not be able to vote for the Upper House unless this Bill passes. That man had not a vote before he went to the war. And there is just as good material as he in the South-West to-day—the brothers, the fathers, the mothers, the sisters, of the men who fought on Gallipoli are there; and we treat them as so many cattle and sheep. That is the one thing which is killing confidence in the State Parliament as a representative institution. It is an institution that does not move with the times. In every other country in the world the people are beginning to realise that good results are to be obtained by the distribution of power, by showing greater confidence in the men and women who make up the community. In this respect the late Premier's motto was to despise change. The hon. gentleman can take this assurance, that although his late colleagues hustled him out of his position, there is no change.

Hon. P. Collier: He may have despised change, but the other Ministers did not despise it.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The others were so keen on change as regards portfolios, that the member for Moore is now sitting on the cross benches.

Sir H. B. Lefroy: I never made any such statement.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: What about the Latin quotation the hon. gentleman used at Moora?

Sir H. B. Lefroy: There was no such quotation at all.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It was a family motto, then. I do not wish to misquote the hon. gentleman. When the leader of the Opposition introduced a Bill to confer the fran-

chise on all householders in this State, the strongest opponent of the measure in this House was the late Premier; and on that occasion he undoubtedly showed that he despised change of every description.

Sir H. B. Lefroy: I opposed the abolition of the Upper House.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The leader of the Opposition did not propose the abolition of the Upper House. He merely introduced a Bill to confer household suffrage on the people of this State, and the strongest opponent of that proposal was the late Premier. However, his successors are equally conservative, equally cautious, and see no wisdom in a liberalisation of the Upper House franchise. What is the result? They are driving the people, in desperation, to look to the only place where men and women are represented—the Federal Parliament. I object to weakening the State institution, but there is no alternative.

The Minister for Works: You do not respect the Senate?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I have no admiration for the Senate, which I think is an unnecessary duplication. The party to which I belong are pledged to abolish the Senate, because it is only a phonograph repetition of what takes place in the House of Representatives. The Senate is not, and for ten years has not been, and is not likely ever to be, a States House. It provides a sanctuary for a few people who happen to secure the favourable consideration of their party and the approval of the electors.

The Minister for Works: That is so on both sides.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I do not say it is confined to one side. We have some good men in the Senate, but I say that the work is well done in the other House, and that therefore the Senate is not necessary.

Mr. Johnston: What about the interests of the small States?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: So far as I see, the small States have received very little protection from the Senate, although that was the original idea. The hon. member who has just interjected started out on his political career with the most laudable intentions, as members of Parliament generally do. When I first knew the hon. member in politics, I thought this was a new Messiah to help Australia out of its difficulties. But politicians, although they start out with good intentions, do not observe them. They get swept off the track. As a result, the State Parliament to-day does not receive the respect it should. We are losing ground.

Mr. Hardwick: Not in my electorate. I am not losing any ground there.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: As individuals we may not be losing ground. As individuals, we may get back. But the State Parliament does not respond to the wishes of the people at all. We are not able to give effect to the wishes of the people because the people have not the votes. The voices of 100,000 people are absolutely unheard in another place.

The Minister for Works: But they are all heard here.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The hon. gentleman might get black in the face and defy the Chair a dozen times, and the Upper House would not take any notice of what he said. The people in a constituency should have power to elect or defeat a member. It is their voice that is listened to. If members of another place had to go up for election on a broader franchise they would adopt a different attitude, they would let Government Bills go through with more expedition. This is only tinkering with reform. The proposal to extend the life of Parliament is one that I do not approve of personally; other members can vote as they like on it. I do not approve of it because this Parliament is moribund. It was made up at a peculiar time when the people were a bit abnormal, and if the leader of the Opposition does not move an amendment in the direction of ending the life of the Parliament at an earlier date, I shall do so in order to compel members to go before their masters before the life of the present Parliament expires.

The Minister for Works: Next March?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: This week if the Minister likes. That may sound somewhat courageous on my part, but I think I have a better chance of getting back than the Minister for Works. We have no right to extend the life of Parliament. We were elected for a certain time, and remembering the manner in which the Government came into existence it would be better to curtail the life of Parliament than to extend it.

Mr. Davies: The electors are complaining now.

Mr. Munsie: They have a perfect right to complain.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I am not objecting to this Parliament running its full term, but we have no authority to extend its life, though there is no objection to going before the electors before the time expires in order to ascertain how much the people appreciate the work we have been doing. I do not think they have much to be grateful for especially when the Government neglects the mass of the people and thinks only of bricks and mortar. If one has property and wealth it is possible to get the ears of the Government, but not otherwise. The Government are the sheet anchor of the privileged class. We shall never get reform until we fight the other Chamber but the Government are not prepared to put up that fight; the Government have no intention of having a brush with them. Why? Because the Government and the other Chamber think alike.

The Premier: You have Mr. Millington there.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: We have five there, but the great majority are there to absolutely obstruct reform which may be attempted by this or any other Government. The Government have no desire to offend members of another place and they bring

down a Bill which is something like the W. M. Hughes gratuity to the soldier. What is proposed now is not reform; it is not worth twopence so far as the enrolment of men and women is concerned, those men and women who have built up the community and who are worthy of consideration. It is the height of "ridiculousity" to discuss a Bill of this kind.

Sir H. B. LEFROY (Moore) [5.50]: I always listen with a great deal of pleasure to the hon. member who has just sat down, but sometimes he gets off the rail, and makes misrepresentations. The hon. member remarked that I had stated either publicly or privately—I do not care which—that I was opposed to any kind of change. I have never heard of such an absurd thing in my life.

Mr. O'Loughlen: I corrected that. I referred you to your speech in the House.

Sir H. B. LEFROY: If I make certain statements in the House or on the hustings, I will stand by them. I have always done so. Because I stand up for certain principles, that is no justification for an assertion by the hon. member that I am opposed to reform. I have been a party to greater reforms in this country than the hon. member has ever been. I helped to extend the franchise to every man in the State; I also helped to extend it to every woman in the State. I granted free education to the children—in fact I brought in the Bill. I also assisted in passing some of the greatest reform measures this State has known. It is ungenerous therefore on the part of the hon. member to make use of the remarks he did this afternoon.

Mr. O'Loughlen: I referred you to your speech.

Sir H. B. LEFROY: We are dealing now with an amendment of the Constitution. This question is an all-important one and it is of a greater controversial character than perhaps any other measure that can be brought before hon. members. I am not in favour of the abolition of the Upper House.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Mr. Collier's Bill does not propose it.

Sir H. B. LEFROY: And because the hon. member is in favour of the abolition of the Upper House, that is no justification for him to say that I am opposed to a change of any sort.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Stick to household suffrage.

Sir H. B. LEFROY: I am perfectly willing to agree to a change in any direction which I consider will be of advantage to the State and to the people. I am not prepared to advocate or assist in bringing about a change in any direction which will not be in the best interests of the State.

Mr. MUNSIE (Hannans) [5.54]: I am not altogether surprised at the hon. member opposing the extension of the franchise to women. But I would like in passing to remind him and others of the recent elections held in England in connection with the Lon-

don Council and County Councils. At their very first attempt, after having been made eligible to contest those Council seats, the women won no fewer than 32 contests. I have yet to learn that women are less suited to make the laws of a country than are men. Even if they were, I am democratic enough to say that the manhood and womanhood of this State should have the right to declare whether a woman should or should not have a seat in our Parliament. If the people desire that a woman should represent them in this House, they should have a perfect right to send her here. With regard to the qualification of electors, when I first saw the Bill I thought the Attorney General had given us some measure of reform, something on the lines of the provision in the South Australian Act. He starts off in that way, but before going very far we find that he qualifies it, and then he tells us that the object of the Bill is to make the position more explicit. The Act provides that the qualification shall be £17 clear annual value, and by the Crown Law and the Electoral Departments we were given to understand that, provided a person paid 7s. 6d. per week rent, that person would be entitled to enrolment for the Legislative Council. That stand has always been taken and it has always been argued that anyone who paid 7s. 6d. per week was entitled to enrolment. The Attorney General proposes to reduce the amount to 6s. 6d., which brings the annual total to £16 18s. There never has been any question with regard to the amount paid in rent and there never has been a prosecution in that regard. But what is desired is—and deputation after deputation has interviewed the Attorney General on the subject—that a Bill should be introduced to make the law more clear than it is in the case of a man who owns property, as to who is to be the value of that property, who is to say whether it is worth 6s. 6d. per week or not.

The Attorney General: That comes under another franchise.

Mr. MUNSIE: The whole trouble at the last elections arose over this question, although in the case of nationalists nothing was said. The latter were able to sign declarations and vote, and no prosecutions were instituted. The other man on the goldfields who owned what was to him a mansion, and whose property was rated by the municipality or road board at less than £17, was prosecuted and fined. That is the position which we desire to clear up now. The Attorney General says that the whole thing is quite clear, but when we get into Committee I shall ask for some information from him.

The Attorney General: Give me a list of the questions beforehand.

Mr. MUNSIE: I will tell the Attorney General this much that I want to know from him how he arrives at the £17 clear annual value. The Attorney General is making it 6s. 6d. a week. Suppose a man owns the property—

The Attorney General: If it is worth £50 he gets a vote under another franchise.



Mr. MUNSIE: Then who is to be the valuer?

Mr. Holman: It depends who the voter is.

Mr. MUNSIE: The amendment will not in the least overcome the difficulty which exists on the goldfields. A man who owns his own property will be in the same position as before. We, as a deputation, waited on the Chief Electoral Officer and asked him to define what he believed was the meaning of £17 clear annual value.

The Attorney General: I understand the clear annual value was the trouble.

Mr. MUNSIE: Yes. Now the Attorney General has made it 6s. 6d. a week. A man who owns his own house is not paying 6s. 6d. a week rent. How will the Attorney General get over that?

Mr. Holman: He will have to give the house to his missus and let her charge 6s. 6d. a week rent.

Mr. MUNSIE: We shall have to depend on some valuer. The Bill makes no provision for arriving at a valuation. On the goldfields there are at least 150 persons enrolled for the North-East and South provinces as freeholders of town blocks, and they would be prepared to give away those blocks and pay for the transfer. Yet they are on the roll as freeholders and I venture to say if 90 per cent. of them presented themselves to record their votes they would be accepted.

The Attorney General: Do they pay rates?

Mr. MUNSIE: They are compelled to pay water rates and municipal rates.

The Attorney General: They probably have a right to vote on the municipal list.

Mr. MUNSIE: I am not talking of the right, but of the actual position. There are, in and around Kalgorlie and Boulder, at least 500 houses worth at least 10s. a week to the people owning and occupying them. These people could not rent for 10s. houses equal to those they are living in at present.

The Attorney General: They will get a vote under this amendment.

Mr. MUNSIE: No, they will not. How does the Minister propose to calculate the value. For the man who owns his property, the position is the same as before. Perhaps in Committee the Attorney General will be able to explain it. With regard to the extension of the vote to returned soldiers, I support that proposal, although I am opposed to the principle. I am supporting the proposal for the same reason as the leader of the Opposition, that it means an extension of the franchise. If any other amendment, which will extend the franchise to a thousand men and women is introduced, I shall support that too. I should like to know why the vote is being extended to returned soldiers only. A friend of mine endeavoured to enlist on seven different occasions: he even underwent an operation, but was turned down each time. If the franchise is being extended to returned soldiers for patriotic reasons, the man I have just mentioned is as much entitled to a vote for the Upper House as the returned soldier. Surely the

father of a returned soldier, who was probably 50 or 60 years of age when the war broke out, should not be debarred. He could not possibly have gone to the war. As the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) said, there is no logical reason why the Attorney General should limit this extension to the returned soldiers. If the franchise is to be extended, why not adopt a broad and reasonable attitude and say that any man or woman who is entitled to a vote for this House shall be eligible to vote for another place. I hope the amendment relating to the joint householder vote will be cut out in Committee. If not, we shall be depriving of the right to vote hundreds of people who to-day are entitled to vote.

The Attorney General: I do not think it will have the effect you suggest. I shall look into that point.

Mr. MUNSIE: I think the Attorney General will find that it will have this effect. There are dozens of cases of persons paying as much as 17s. a week rent for the portion of the houses they occupy and who are at present entitled to a vote for the Upper House. But if this Bill is passed, one householder in each case would be cut out.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They would not allow them to be put on the roll last time.

Mr. MUNSIE: They have been permitted to enrol in the past.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Though the Act states not more than four, they would not allow two to be put on the roll last time.

Mr. Jones: They would not allow Labour votes to be put on the roll.

The Attorney General: Read the proviso to Clause 3.

Mr. MUNSIE: Perhaps the Attorney General will be able to explain that in Committee. I agree with the provision regarding members entering into contracts, but I oppose any alteration of the present system whereby a member, appointed to Ministerial office, must go before his constituents before accepting such office. When a member has to go before his constituents immediately after a general election, it does seem almost an absurdity, but it rarely happens, when a party have been returned with a majority and have elected their Ministers, that any opposition is offered. If we wipe out this provision, a great danger will exist, particularly as parties are constituted to-day. The present arrangement tends to keep politics clean, but without this safeguard we shall be countering corruption. It might happen that a party of two or three members, pledged to a certain policy, might be returned to this House and have practically a controlling influence. The Government might offer one of the three a position in the Cabinet, which would give the Government an absolute majority and the member, without having to appeal to his constituents, would be able to accept office in a Ministry controlled by a party holding opposite views. The House would be unwise to abolish the safeguard requiring an appeal to the constituency; the principle is sound. There

is only one other matter dealt with by the Bill, namely the provision to extend or reduce the duration of Parliament. I agree that the general elections should not be held at that part of the year when they now fall due, namely October. That is the worst part of the year in which to hold the elections. I do not mind whether the period is extended or reduced by three months. If the Government wish to appeal to the people earlier than usual, I am quite prepared to take my chance. I do not think the public will trouble whether the Government extend or reduce the period, but the public do realise that a date in the vicinity of Christmas time is certainly not a suitable time to hold the elections and I say it is a bad time for the Labour party. Whether the elections are held a little later or a little earlier is immaterial to me, and will be the responsibility of the Government.

Mr. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [6.12] : With the members for Brownhill-Ivanhoe (Mr. Lutey) and Hannans (Mr. Munsie), I regret that the Bill does not contain a definite interpretation of the qualification of a householder. When speaking on the Estimates last year, the then Attorney General (Mr. Robinson) said we could get a definite interpretation from the Electoral Department. I sought the advice of the Chief Electoral Officer on many occasions, but could not pin him down to anything definite. We desire that when a new mining field, whether a gold, coal, copper, or lead mining field, is opened up, and people establish their houses on the lease because their employers desire them to live near the mine and because that is often the only place where water is obtainable, the householder should be entitled to a vote. These people have nothing in the way of a right to the ground except that they have the permission of the company to erect buildings for dwellings, and these dwellings are worth to them at least 6s. to 10s. a week. Yet there is no one to officially determine the value of such property. A definite interpretation should be provided, or the elector himself should be permitted to state what he considered the house was worth. The Chief Electoral Officer went so far as to say that he thought it was the intention of the present law that the elector should determine the value of the property in such cases. He considered that if a man determined that his dwelling was worth 6s. 6d. a week, no one could say him nay; but the fact remains that many men who said their houses were worth so much were prosecuted. Many people are afraid to enrol because they fear prosecution, although any ordinary man would tell them they were entitled to have their names on the roll. There should be a definite arbiter of the value of such places, or else the occupier should be permitted to determine the value. But I believe that every householder should have a vote. It is due to misfortune that people have to live in homes so poor as to be worth only 6s. 6d. a week. I would join

with other members of the Opposition and vote for adult suffrage. Failing that, I maintain that every man occupying a house of any description whatsoever should be eligible to vote.

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

Mr. WILLCOCK: Persons who have been on mining and other leases, and own the places they live in there, should be given an opportunity of valuing those dwellings themselves and showing whether they are worth the particular amount which will secure them the right to vote for the Legislative Council. In reference to the question of the joint occupier, at present, particularly in the cities where housing accommodation is not easy to find, there are often two families who live in the same house. They want to live near the city, and want to be close to their work, but at the same time cannot afford to pay a high rent for a house to themselves. They, therefore, live together jointly. In thus living together jointly they get a vote, their combined rent being something in the region of, say, 25s. a week, but under the suggested amendment we find that such persons will no longer enjoy the privilege of having a vote for the Legislative Council. I do not want to see people cut out of the right to vote, merely because they are unable from one cause or another to live in a house of their own. I do not approve of the property qualification but it does mean that people must pay a certain amount of rent before they are entitled to a vote. Most of the people I am speaking of only live in those places because of their particular situation at the moment, whereas if they had a little more wealth they would be enabled to live in a house of their own. It is rather absurd that two families who, for the sake of convenience, are obliged to live in one house at a combined rental should be cut out of a vote because of that, when a man who has a lease of an office in, say, the A.M.P. buildings at £20 a year has a right to vote for the Legislative Council. That is unjust, and some provision should be inserted in the Bill so that this anomaly should no longer exist.

The Attorney General: I will look into that.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Another amendment which might be introduced here is on the question of plural voting. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin) quite justified that on democratic grounds. It should be definitely stated that a man should have only one vote for each Chamber of the Legislature. It seems that the Government are in favour of a property qualification. No one can defend that on democratic grounds. When a certain individual owns property in seven or eight different provinces why should he be entitled to seven or eight votes for the Legislative Council? The member for North-East Fremantle, in the proposed amendment to the Municipal Corporations Act, definitely cuts out the provision for plural voting so far as road boards or municipi-

politics are concerned. If the Government desire to make any show of democracy they should introduce the same sort of provision so far as the Legislative Council is concerned. I suggest that they should bring in an amendment to provide that when a person has property in five or six different provinces he should only be allowed to vote for that province in which he lives. In reference to the soldier's vote, we know why that is introduced. It is suggested that the soldiers should have a say in the government of the country, and that there is no valid reason why they should be denied a vote. I am prepared to support an extension of the franchise in any direction. So far as this particular provision is concerned, my opinion is that it has been introduced in order to combat the arguments that those men who fought for the country should have a say in the government of the country both in the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly. In connection with the extension of the sessions of Parliament, as things are at present we have a Parliament of about four sessions and the business of two sessions is not done properly. I support the fixing of the election some time early in the year in order that we may have three full sessions and be able to do three sessions of good work. The last session is always devoted to electioneering. It only lasts for three or four weeks, and there is no good work done at all in connection with it. If the election took place at the ordinary time we should have another session of this Parliament before the end of next September, in which very little useful work would be done to warrant the expense of calling this House together then. I favour the principle of holding the election some time during the early part of the year. Perhaps if we were to extend the life of this Parliament for another five months, the Government would have an opportunity of carrying out their promise to straighten the finances. It may, therefore, be of advantage to them. I do not think they can do very much in that direction, but I am willing to give them a little more time in which to exercise that business acumen of which we have so often heard. I hope the Government will take into consideration the necessity of introducing the principle of household suffrage, and save a lot of the prosecutions which have undoubtedly been launched under the present Act. I support the second reading of the Bill.

Hon. T. WALKER (Kanowna) [7.40]: I have been wondering who is the draftsman of this measure. Who gave the instructions to the one who did the real work of putting it into verbiage? Whose brilliancy of intellect was it that jumbled all these elements so incongruous in their character, into the one Bill, to come out as we now behold them? Were general instructions given to take a peep at the South Australian Act, the New Zealand Act, and the speeches of the leader of the Opposition, and pay attention to the general agitations of women's leagues throughout Australia? Take all these together, put them all into shape,

and in some form or other to make a Bill of them! There does not seem to have been any aim to accomplish directly and completely any reform. There seems to have been no decided purpose in view when the draftsman commenced his labours. It is patch work; it has nothing of the elements of greatness or statesmanship about it. It is merely adding on to the plaid kilts a bit of cotton from, say, South America, merely making a greater conglomeration than existed in our previous Act. It is piebald in every respect, having nothing marked or relieving in its features. I can well understand the object of the measure, not to really reform, not to make the path of progress more smooth for our successors to march upon, not to point to a glorious aim in front of us, but merely to throw out sops to the public, merely a bone here, a bone there, to keep the people chewing until the next election is over, something to take off the criticisms that might well be levelled against this Government and its predecessors for their lethargy, their ineptitude and their general disqualification for the occupancy of the Treasury benches. If that was their object they may have succeeded, but they have certainly satisfied nobody. I can well understand that they fancy they have achieved a tremendous triumph in winning votes over to their side by giving women the full and logical outcome of the granting of the vote. Truly the remarks of the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) would have been apropos if they had been used against those innovators who gave to this country adult suffrage of course irrespective of sex. If we give woman the right to enter politics, surely we must give her a chance of the fruits. It certainly cannot be regarded as women's sphere generally to enter politics. It cannot be contended that she should use her time and talents in the study of the great questions of the day. Women's part in the life of the nation is great and marvellous, but it is not altogether upon the platform. But that does not prevent those who have that particular kind of talent exercising what talent they have. As a matter of fact, physiologically there are no perfect men and no perfect women. Women have in some instances markedly developed masculine characteristics, and there are men who have developed some feminine characteristics.

Mr. Green: For instance in another place.

Hon. T. WALKER: I would not say necessarily in another place. I do not think we need go so far. In some instances there are manly women and certainly there are old-womanly men. We cannot make hard and fast qualifications for a seat in Parliament on this ground alone. In the process of continuing the human race the calls upon women's nervous energies, her mental qualities, her physical endurance and her vitality are enormous. She cannot compete fairly in the battle of the strong. There are some who do not desire to follow the ordinary course, who to a certain extent annul the qualities of their sex, or hold them in sub-

ordination. If they like to use their energies in participating in the making of the laws which concern the whole race, both male and female, and childhood as well, what logic is there in debarring them? If it were a question of physical or mental fitness, we could weed out a tremendous lot of our politicians throughout Australia. There are some politicians physically weak and mentally imperfect, who are not capable of taking a broad view of anything. Often men of the greatest imperfection, almost imbecility of character in the direction of mental deficiency, have been elected and put in positions of trust, and nobody has complained. Take some of the women who are before the public in Australia, in capacity for reason, in acumen, foresight, analytical qualities and powers of construction, they stand away ahead of many male legislators in Australian Parliaments. They are few I admit, but if their accession to this Chamber would be of value, why shut them out? Wherever they have competed, women have stood high in the ranks. In poetry, science, art, upon the dramatic stage, even in the chairs of the queens of the earth, we have had women of grandeur, greatness, and renown. Once we give woman the vote we should give her equal opportunities. What talent woman has, give her the right to exercise it. Let the doors that are open to men be open to women also. Queens like Zenobia, Elizabeth, and Victoria have stood in the limelight of the world's splendour and have stood the test of the fierce light that beats around the throne. We must not forget, too, that very often our women have been the very foremost in pointing out pathways to men to make human society more complete, and more secure in its passage onward to greater things. There are those in the sphere of womanhood who have laid down the path that men are proud to follow. In modern days who was it that helped the poor match girls in London? Not a man; the leader was a woman. The world knows these facts. I could go on for half an hour mentioning the names of distinguished women. I cannot see any harm in admitting them to an assemblage of this kind. In the London County Council for many years past women have filled distinguished places. Now comes the question of the soldiers. I am at one with the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington). It is absolutely a sham, it is merely a sop thrown out indiscriminately, it is foolish and stupid to a degree, it has not one leg of logic to stand upon. If you give the returned soldier a vote however poor he may be, what logic have you for depriving every good citizen of a vote, however poor he may be? Also, there is danger in this sort of legislation. It is making a military caste in our midst. We are doing what was done in Germany, making a military order, a super order, a class in our midst distinct from ordinary citizens, no longer citizens but soldiers with special distinctions and special liberties. That is the very antithesis of democracy. It is a move in the wrong direction, and the

only argument that can be used in its support is that it is a slight broadening of the franchise. But it is an enlargement without any logic to defend it.

The Minister for Mines: It must have had logic in 1916, because it was then put into the Governor's Speech.

Hon. T. WALKER: Still it has no logic. It has sentiment, but not logic.

Mr. Johnston: You are always guided by sentiment.

Hon. T. WALKER: The hon. member knows nothing of what sentiment is. He never had any in his life.

Mr. Nairn: He has no soul.

Hon. T. WALKER: I do not wish to be guided by sentiment. In this instance I want to be guided by the logic of facts. There is only sentiment in the supposition that soldiers should have something which others upon their level in life cannot possess. What are these soldiers if not citizens? They are citizens first, soldiers after. If, because of their citizenship, they are entitled to a vote, then the vote should be given to all citizens irrespective of whether they have the good luck or ill luck to have voluntarily gone to the war. There are others with quite as much desire to be patriotic, but who, because of some physical defect or some obligation to dependants were unable to go, or who, because of age stayed at home; but they were quite as loyal, quite as patriotic, quite as anxious to defend the country, quite as desirous of defeating the Kaiser and as enthusiastic in the cry of "Win the war" as were those who went. But they are not to have a voice in selecting our senators or our superiors in another place. Can there be any logic in that, whoever introduced it in 1916 or has advocated it since? Is there logic in depriving others, of the same mental and patriotic basis, neglecting one lot and including another? Is this another reward, is this one of the gifts similar to the promise by the Prime Minister to the soldiers? If it is not, if it is on the score of citizenship, if it is of value, then it is of value all round. Is it admitted that giving these soldiers votes will be of benefit to the country? Is it admitted that including soldiers in the roll of the franchise for the Upper House is to the benefit of Western Australia for all time? If it be admitted, if that is its purpose, for the benefit of the country, then enlarging the franchise on the same basis will be of still greater benefit to the country. If it is not to be of benefit to the country, if it is wrong to the country, if it is to injure the country, what are the Government bringing it down for? It is brought down, presumably, because it is going to benefit the State. If so, then a wider application of the same principle will be of still further benefit to the State, and that is what I want. When we get into Committee we require to still further widen the franchise, and I trust we shall be able to do it. Otherwise the Bill will be an illogical abortion. As to the other changes alleged to be introduced, they are mere camouflage. This distinction

between householders, this definition of a householder's power to vote, is as elusive as it is possible to make it in a legislative measure. We are not one iota advanced on the old Bill. To pretend that this is a reform is a subterfuge. There is no reform in it. To pretend that we are getting rid of the annoyances and irritations and penalties that existed under the old Act is to play the hypocrite. There is no virtue in it at all. The Attorney General has promised to look into that. If he does not do so, I hope hon. members will do so when we get into Committee. I have only one more word to say, and that is as to the lengthening of the term of Parliament. Somebody said we had no authority to do it. Neither have we. If we are going to do it, why not make a bold job of it and keep us here forever? What is the good of this pretence that it is simply to enable us to get to a fitting season, a nice time of the year? They can go before their masters whenever they please! The masters would be only too glad to see them occasionally and have a voice in the destiny of the country. But no, they want to lengthen it out, to get a hold, to get the public used to them, to wait until their sins are forgotten. I shall not give my consent to that. When in Committee I shall have a word to say upon it. I can understand their going about their business and asking their masters to approve them, for they are a new lot, a rag-tail lot, if I may so put it without offence. They have come, nobody knows whence. At the last elections the public never contemplated such kaleidoscopic changes as we have seen. It was never expected the whirligig of time would produce such a miraculous display of froth as we have seen in Parliamentary Government during the last few years. So I will not object if they go before their masters earlier, but without consulting the people I cannot consent to prolonging our time to suit our own sweet will. That is not what wise people do, and I think if women were here they would not allow us to do it.

Mr. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [8.10]: I support the second reading. Unlike the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington), I agree that it would be wise to provide for women having seats in Parliament. The other evening I was one of five who voted against the principle of women being appointed justices of the peace. But the appointment of justices of the peace is political and does not assure that only the best women shall be made justices of the peace. On the other hand, to enter Parliament women must be elected by the electors. That is where the difference lies. We can rest assured that, having to secure the approval of a large number of electors, a woman entering Parliament will be one of some mental capacity and in every way fit to represent her electorate. The member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) has ably advocated the rights of women to enter politics. I endorse what he said. In every walk of life women, where they have had

equal opportunity with men, have proved themselves highly capable. In literature, medicine, education and other professions they have proved fully proficient. They have been debarred from becoming barristers and members of Parliament, and therefore they have not been able to prove themselves in those positions.

Mr. Nairn: They are not barred from the Federal Parliament.

Mr. ANGELO: No, but the male electors have taken care that they should not have a chance. During the war women did a wonderful lot of work, not only in knitting socks and minor avocations of that kind, but in dealing with large funds and carrying on patriotic organisations they have proved themselves highly capable administrators. Again, owing to the ravages of the war, we have lost thousands of our soldiers, and in consequence large numbers of women will never be married, and so will not be represented in Parliament by their husbands. Surely it is only fair that those women should have a chance to sit in Parliament themselves. They have to pay taxes, just as men do. They have to obey the laws which men make. Surely they should be allowed to come here and have some say in the making of those laws and the levying of taxes. However, I think the House has arrived at a determination on the point. Great Britain permits her women to sit in Parliament.

Mr. Davies: Australia has done it long before.

Mr. ANGELO: True, the Federal Parliament has done it also, and I do not think this State will be far wrong in following the two examples set. Clause 5 deals with contracts. The Attorney General has told us that it is very probable every member of the House is infringing our present Constitution by entering in some petty way into contracts with the Government. The clause is a good one, and will remove a difficulty. As the life of Parliament is only three years, there cannot be much danger of any member abusing the fact of his holding a seat in Parliament. Clause 6 deals with Ministers' submitting themselves to re-election on accepting Cabinet rank. In my opinion, this is an extra expense which could well be done without; and again here we can well follow the example of the Federal Parliament. Clause 7 refers to the Upper House and I understand from the Attorney General that we shall only be following the recommendations of the select committee in passing this clause. Clause 8 deals with the prolongation of the life of this Parliament. I for my part care not whether that life is prolonged or shortened, but one phase of the question does appeal to me. We have large numbers of our soldiers returning, and only about 1,000 have so far been settled on the land, whereas the Premier expects to have 5,000 or 6,000 settled there. I do not suppose 50 per cent. of the returned men have yet decided what line of life they will pursue

in future. If the elections are held in May or June next, I fear that not more than perhaps double the number already settled will have been restored to civil life. The position would be different if the elections were deferred until the following March or April. It is hoped that by then the majority of our soldiers will have settled down in civil life once more, having decided what occupations they intend to follow. Thus the putting off of the elections for a period of only 10 weeks, instead of shortening the life of Parliament by six or seven months, will enable practically all our soldiers to have a say as to who shall represent them in Parliament. Clauses 3 and 4 of the Bill deal with the franchise for the Upper House. Hon. members opposite desire that it should be an adult franchise, but that would simply mean an Upper House which was a duplication of this Chamber.

Mr. Munsie: We want the Upper House wiped out altogether. We say there is no necessity for it.

Mr. ANGELO: If the hon. member will bear with me a moment or two, he will find that I am of the same opinion. I cannot for the life of me see the force of the Opposition's argument. To carry out what they suggest would mean the same position here as in the Federal Parliament—a Senate and a House of Representatives returned by the same electors. That is a duplication which can be done without. Hon. members opposite have said that they are in favour of wiping out the Senate. Very good. But then why introduce anything of the same kind here in this State? Our Upper House is costing us from £15,000 to £20,000 a year. My own view is that that £15,000 or £20,000 a year could well be saved. There are a number of good men in the Upper Chamber who could come into this Chamber.

The Minister for Mines: What would you do with all the good men in this Chamber?

Mr. ANGELO: Some of us would, no doubt, be replaced by abler men from the Upper House.

The Minister for Mines: Speak for yourself.

Mr. ANGELO: That is my idea. I have been here for three years, and have watched the operations of the Upper House, the House of review; and I fail to see where the existence of that House is justified.

Mr. Munsie: You should have been here when we were sitting on the Government benches. Then you would have seen the justification for the existence of the Upper House.

Mr. ANGELO: We have to review a great deal that the other Chamber is supposed to have reviewed. Another place sends amendments here, and this House rejects them, and they are never heard of again. I really do not care whether Clauses 3 and 4 are retained, or wiped out, or amended; but I do trust that a chance will very shortly present itself of going the whole hog, as the leader of the Opposition once said, and

of bringing in legislation to constitute a single Chamber composed of the best men and women that this State can produce.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [8.23]: The number of important reforms introduced by this measure shows that the present Government are right up to date as regards progressive legislation—a state of affairs that no doubt is in some degree due to the presence of the Country party in this Chamber. The right of women to sit here and in another place appears to me to be an absolutely logical sequence of adult suffrage. It is surprising to me that during the number of years adult suffrage has obtained under our Constitution this reform was not previously proposed. To my mind the mere accident of sex should not debar any citizen from the right to aspire to any public office under our Constitution. Every voter should have the right to offer his or her services for any position under our Constitution. I feel sure that when the day comes that women reformers occupy the seats opposite it will be a pleasant sight.

Mr. Munsie: You want to be very careful. A woman reformer might get your seat.

Mr. JOHNSTON: Social legislation especially will, I am sure, be improved by women representatives. There are other disabilities under which women suffer, and which might well be removed by this same measure. I fail to see why the Government should insist upon a woman teacher's resigning her position when she marries.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot discuss that matter under this Bill.

Mr. JOHNSTON: The member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) is opposed to women entering this Chamber, but I venture to say that before many years he will find them not only here but also practising in those courts where his forensic abilities are now displayed. The Government should introduce that reform also, so that women might practise as lawyers in the same way as they now practise the profession of medicine. With regard to the giving of a vote for the Upper House to the returned soldiers, I did not think there was one member of this Chamber who would oppose that proposal as the member for Perth has done. If a man is prepared to die for his country, he should certainly have every civic right accorded to him on his return.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Those who tried to go to the war were prepared to do the same thing.

Mr. JOHNSTON: True; but the man who actually went, after being urged from a thousand platforms to go, after unlimited promises of preference on his return had been made to him, is at the very least entitled to the privilege of the franchise for all Houses of Parliament. In view of the promises made to the soldiers, the Government could not have done less than they have done under this measure, especially in view of the fact that our returned soldiers, by a resolution carried at their recent conference, have with practical unanimity asked for the Upper House franchise. This provision

alone justifies the introduction and the passing of the measure. I am sorry to find that on this point the member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker) holds a different opinion to-day from that which he held on the 20th July, 1916, when the Labour Government of the day forecasted, in the Governor's Speech, the extension of the franchise to all returned soldiers on the lines covered by this measure. Unlike the member for Kanowna, I hold on that point exactly the same opinion now as in 1916.

Mr. Jones: Is that the only point upon which you have not changed your opinions?

Mr. JOHNSTON: No; I am consistent. The influence of the returned soldiers will be a democratic one, and will help to alter that constitution of the Upper House which has been so happily described to-night by an hon. member opposite. I regret that the Government, whilst altering the Upper House franchise, have not seen fit to introduce a simple household suffrage. It is very hard to draw the line of demarcation between the man who pays a rent of 7s. a week for a house, and who will be entitled under this Bill to vote for the Upper House, and the man who pays a rent of only 6s. per week, and whom this measure will debar from voting for the Legislative Council. I fail to see why the Government should discriminate between these two classes of citizens. The man paying 6s. per week rent may be better educated than the man paying 7s. per week, and the influence of the former in the affairs of the country might be just as valuable as that of the latter.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There are many householders paying 6s. per week rent on the sawmills.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I do not think the limitation would deny the vote to many householders; but, if that is the case, why should not the Government throw open the gates and grant the franchise for the Legislative Council to all householders? In the meantime I would urge the Government not to make criminals of people by prosecuting them because they happen to be paying 6d. a week less in rent than they think their properties are worth. I refer to those cases where there is merely a desire to have a voice in the government of the country. It appears to me that the basis should be household suffrage: that if a man has his home and his family here, he should be given a vote for the Legislative Council even if the rental value of his home is 6d. per week less than the amount stated in this Bill. The basis of the franchise for the Legislative Council might well be permanence of residency here. If a man has his home and his family here, we know he is a permanent resident whose interests are bound up with the permanency and progress of this State. I think that the existing six months residence in the State should be retained. If a person has lived here six months and his home is here I would ask the Government to accept an amendment on the basis of giving him a vote.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Why not make it six months in Australia?

Mr. JOHNSTON: We have to consider our State in these matters particularly at a time when the political parties in the Eastern States are trying to wrest so many State rights from us. If the Government decide on six months residence in Western Australia and household suffrage, it will be a very good basis.

Mr. JONES (Fremantle) [8.32]: Some time in the eighth century a conference of bishops sat around a table somewhere in the south of Europe and solemnly discussed the question as to whether or not women had a soul.

The Minister for Mines: When was that?

Mr. JONES: The hon. member can look it up in the church almanac.

The Minister for Mines: Yes, but I would rather hear it first hand from one who was there.

Mr. JONES: At a council of bishops held in Nice in 787 the question was discussed whether or not a woman had a soul. It never occurred to them to discuss the question whether or not a man had a soul. That was probably because they were all men.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think this Bill deals with the souls of women or men.

Mr. JONES: This evening the House has solemnly discussed the question as to whether women should sit in Parliament.

Mr. SPEAKER: But it has not discussed the question as to whether a woman has a soul or not.

Mr. JONES: Very well, if the Speaker objects to my speaking at all, I will sit down.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have no desire to prevent the hon. member from continuing his speech.

Hon. P. Collier: I submit that the hon. member should be permitted to continue to argue as to whether or not women possess a soul. That might influence hon. members in coming to a decision on the subject of whether women should be permitted to sit in Parliament.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Is the hon. member rising to a point of order?

Hon. P. Collier: I contend that the member for Fremantle was in order in referring to the question as to whether or not a woman had a soul, and on that point he might decide to oppose permission being granted to women to sit in this House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member will need to discuss that under some other Bill, not under this one. I rule the member for Boulder out of order.

Hon. P. Collier: Then I shall move that your ruling be disagreed with.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is at liberty to do that.

Hon. P. Collier: I certainly shall do so. I do not require any permission. Before the member for Fremantle had time to connect his argument as to whether or not a woman

had a soul with what he intended to say—

Mr. SPEAKER: I did not rule the member for Fremantle out of order. I asked him not to discuss whether or not women had a soul and he said he would not continue, and then resumed his seat.

Hon. P. Collier: I fail to realise the distinction between telling an hon. member that he cannot discuss a question and ruling him out of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member had ample opportunity to discuss the Bill after I drew his attention to the fact that the question of a woman's soul had nothing to do with the Bill. If I had ruled him out of order, it would have been a different thing. The member for Fremantle was quite in order in discussing the Bill as it applies to women.

Hon. P. Collier: I only want the member for Fremantle to have a fair deal.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will give the hon. member a fair deal.

Mr. JONES: I do not intend to proceed further.

Hon. members: Go on; continue.

Mr. JONES: In order to put my arguments clearly before hon. members I shall have to quote Clause 2 of the Bill. It sets out—

The Constitution Acts Amendment Act, 1899, is hereby amended, as follows:—

(a) By omitting from section three thereof, in the definition of "Person," the words "in sections fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, twenty-six, twenty-seven, and twenty-eight;" and

(b) By omitting from sections seven and twenty thereof, respectively, the words "man" and "he be," and inserting in place thereof the words "person" and "such person is."

and the memorandum relating to this particular clause reads, "The effect of Clause 2 is to enable women to be elected as members of Parliament." I respectfully wish, with the permission of the Speaker, to discuss Clause 2, but exactly what phase of the question I am permitted to touch upon it is hard to say. When I was interrupted I was referring to the council of bishops and I intended to say that that council of the dark ages did not discuss the question as to whether men had a soul because they happened to be a council of men. This House to-night has discussed the question as to whether women should have a right to sit in Parliament. It has not occurred to us to consider whether a man has a right to sit in Parliament, probably because we are all men. I want right here to congratulate the member for Perth on his honesty in stating what is an absolute fact. Did we not know that this provision of the Bill would be absolutely useless, it would never have been introduced and we would never have voted for it. No one knows that better than the Attorney General who introduced it. We cannot blame a man for refusing a woman equal right of citizenship any more than we can blame men

giving her the franchise some years ago. I will leave that question, however, and just deal with some points which have been raised. The member for Williams-Narrogin has quite convinced me of the necessity for the section which gives the returned soldier a vote for the Legislative Council. I must say that previously to that I had doubted whether it was exactly the right thing, but the fine patriotic utterances which he has given voice to to-night and the magnificent display of soul-stirring sentimentality which has come from him, have convinced me that the returned soldiers are entitled to a vote, but I am satisfied that the Attorney General has not gone far enough. I am satisfied too that there are men who are not returned soldiers in this State who have more than one vote for the Legislative Council. In fact, I believe certain electors in this State have as many as 10 votes—one vote in each of the 10 Legislative Council provinces. In order to be logical, the Attorney General must consent in Committee to amend that clause to give every returned soldier, every man who has been appointed an officer or enlisted as a member of His Majesty's naval or military forces or the naval or military forces of the Commonwealth, and served in such forces in the recent war, and has resided in the electoral province for which he claims to be registered for a continuous period of one month immediately preceding his claim—that man must be entitled to 11 votes for the Legislative Council.

Hon. Members: Ten votes.

Mr. JONES: No, we are dealing with men who have done more for the country than those who have stayed at home.

Hon. P. Collier: As the electors showed last Saturday.

Mr. JONES: It would appear from that that nothing is too good for our soldiers except of course where it is a matter of a newspaper proprietor coming into contact with a soldier, but this House will not make the mistake that the electors of the Metropolitan Province made.

Mr. Munsie: It was only one section, the West Perth end.

Mr. JONES: Members of this House I think will certainly deal more justly and more logically with the question than it was dealt with last Saturday, and I think the Attorney General in view of that will agree to an amendment to grant 11 votes to every man who was a member of either the army or navy during the last war. At any rate I intend in Committee to test the feeling of the House by moving such an amendment. The member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) is anxious to see the extension of the life of this Parliament. I must say that I am not in accord with that. If the Government really want an election in February, why not have it next February? I do not see any reason to prevent it. I do not think the Attorney General has put forward any reason why an election should not be held next year instead of the year after.

Mr. Hardwick: Would you like an election next year?



Mr. JONES: Yes.

Mr. Hardwick: I will see what I can do for you.

Mr. JONES: If it is necessary to dissolve Parliament in the month of February let us have it six months earlier instead of six months later. The member for Gascoyne has also told us that he wants to wait until all the returned men get back so that they can vote at the coming election for both this Chamber and another place. I would suggest to the Attorney General that such a proceeding is not necessary; he could take the votes of soldiers as they are coming home. In that matter probably the State Electoral Department has a little to learn from the Commonwealth Electoral Department, and the same procedure could be adopted in connection with the soldiers returning to the State as was followed in the case of the soldiers who were returning on a transport only on Sunday last. It was not even necessary for those soldiers to come ashore in order to vote. The Commonwealth electoral officer waited on them on the vessel and, without giving them an opportunity to find out what election was on, they were permitted to vote just how they liked.

Mr. Angelo: Many of them did not even know where they resided.

Mr. JONES: And many did not know for whom they were voting. I am submitting to the Attorney General that here is an excellent way of getting in votes that are required to enable the Government to hold their majority. It would be an excellent thing to get the votes of soldiers before they found out who was standing or even what kind of Government it was that they were asked to support. It is certain that, with the present occupants of the Treasury benches, as with the Federal Government, once the soldiers find out what sort of Government they are asked to support, no support will be forthcoming. With the one amendment I have indicated, I am prepared to support the second reading of the Bill. I very much regret that I was not allowed to deal further, as other members have done, with the question of women sitting as members of this House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is quite in order in dealing with that aspect of the question if he wishes.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Mr. ROCKE (South Fremantle) [8.46]: The time has long past since it has been necessary to offer any apology to the granting of equal rights to women. Even if it is to allow them to sit in Parliament or occupy seats on the judicial benches, women have qualified and are qualifying every day to occupy any position at present obtainable by men. I think it was on the opening day of the present session that I brought under the notice of the Government the need for reform in this direction. I asked several questions, one of which was whether the Government would introduce legislation to permit of women being eligible to sit in

Parliament. I am glad to see this Bill, cause it is a step in the right direction, though the reform has been tardy in appearance, it is better late than never. I think it will be welcomed by every member of a democratic turn of mind. If we go back a little—and it is not necessary to go far into the dim ages—we come to a time when primitive man set forth from his cave to kill an animal or two, and then retired to a secluded nook in the forest jungle, with other primitive men, there to discuss the beginning of politics and, incidentally, to keep for himself every right and privilege. This order of things continued from that time almost up to the present, until just now we are trying to break through the error of those dark ages and let a little light into the sphere occupied by women. Primitive woman in the cave not only cooked the game and made clothing of its skin, necklaces and bracelets of its teeth, etc., but, in every way, she was a slave to her lord and master. Man had advanced immeasurably from that in the twentieth century, but the same cannot be said of woman. She has not made the same advancement and, in fact, she is still in many respects a cave dweller, only because she has been prohibited by man from rising to that position for which Nature has fitted her. During the last week or two, I have seen some of the work accomplished by women in connection with the caring for children who have been taken under the wings of charity. The work was remarkably fine but apart from the work, their administrative ability was apparent to the observer.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is where they excelled.

Mr. ROCKE: If they have administrative ability in one phase of life, they will have it in another, even in the realms of Parliament. If a woman is capable of being a reasoning being, it follows that she herself must be capable of reasoning, for a stream can rise no higher than its source and in that fact alone we have sufficient justification for giving to women that which this Bill is designed to grant them. Dealing with other aspects of this measure, I have no objection whatever to soldiers having a vote for another place, whether they are possessed of bricks and mortar or not. While I am sorry to see any attempt to build up a military caste in the community, I would grant to soldiers this privilege because I desire to see every man and every woman placed in the same position. If the soldier is entitled to this special privilege, then the bona fide reject is also entitled to the same consideration. A man who offered himself for active service could not do any more. Although the man who was able to go further and place his body in the trenches and risk his life did a great work, the reject was prevented from doing so probably because of physical disability for which he was not responsible. If the privilege is granted to one section of the community, it should also be granted to the other.

Mr. Willcock: Some men were rejected because of their age.

Mr. ROCKE: Some men were too old to engage on active military service, but I am looking forward to the day when the property qualification will be entirely eliminated. I look forward to the time when the fact of a man being a citizen will be sufficient qualification for him to have a vote for another place. The Bill also provides for the extension of the life of Parliament. It is admitted on every hand that the general elections take place at the wrong period of the year. The session has to be broken and members have to go to their masters and ask to be returned for another term. As it is not possible under present conditions to deal with the Estimates which come before Parliament each year, the change will be one in the right direction. When I say it is not possible to deal with the Estimates, I mean in every way except that which approaches a farce, because the money has nearly always been expended before Parliament sanctions the spending of it. It is a matter of only a few weeks. I do not think the electors will have any objection to the prolongation of the life of Parliament for that short period. There are one or two other provisions in the Bill which will make for the advancement of the community, and any measure coming before the House which makes for any advancement I intend to support. I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [S.55]: When the Constitution Act Amendment Bill was before the House last session, exception was taken by a majority of members to the inclusion of the proposal embodied in the present Bill for extending the franchise to returned soldiers. I should like to quote from "Hansard" a few lines to which I gave utterance on that occasion—

No evidence can be given of any such movement (in other States) except in one direction which nearly every member has condemned, namely, the extension of the franchise to those men who have made every sacrifice for the country. Those are the very people that, members say, deserve no consideration from the State other than that extended to any other citizen.

No exception was taken to those remarks, and it can be readily conceded that the general trend of opinion of members of this Chamber was opposed to this concession, though it might reasonably be inferred from my remarks that I was prepared to extend that privilege to those men, as I am to-day. With regard to the latter part of the Bill, with which I wish to deal more particularly, namely the extension of the life of this Parliament, members seem to be confused on this issue, judging from the expressions which have fallen from their lips. The member for South Fremantle (Mr. Roche) confined the measure to this Parliament. I take it this is not the main point at issue. The amendment will apply to all Parliaments in the future which will be in a like position

to the present Parliament. Because we are favourably disposed towards the life of this Parliament being extended, there would have been no reason to condemn the measure if the alteration had been in the other direction and had shortened the life of this Parliament. Not alone in view of the fact that the Bill will extend the life of the present Parliament by a brief period, but also in view of the better date which the Bill provides for the general elections, I shall certainly vote for the second reading.

Mr. Johnston: You will be able to travel without getting bogged.

Mr. PICKERING: During the last election it was almost impossible to get over any part of the country. Travelling was exceedingly heavy. Roads were washed out and it was only by riding or driving that one could get through my electorate and surely, when travelling is so difficult, that is the wrong time of the year to hold the elections.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They might be burned out in the North. You might as well be bogged as that they should be burnt out.

Mr. PICKERING: The member for North-East Fremantle can scarcely sympathise with country members because, to members of the metropolitan area, it matters not at what time general elections take place. They have every convenience at their disposal. In the country, however, where men have large areas to traverse under very adverse conditions, it is only right that a date should be fixed which will enable them to travel with reasonable safety and comfort.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: On the eastern goldfields and in the north, winter time is the best.

Mr. PICKERING: The rain would not make much difference on the goldfields at this time of the year. Regarding the question of the extension of the privilege to women, after the oration of the member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker), any member who had any doubts of the wisdom and justice of the innovation must have had his doubts dispelled. I do not believe that the passing of this measure will very much alter the complexion of this House. I do not think members, in their hearts, believe it will, and I am of the opinion that, like much more which has taken place, this is only a concession which members think it judicious to grant. It is not a case of any belief that women should occupy seats in this Chamber, but members are actuated by the belief that it is a concession, and the more they give the more they are likely to obtain in the way of suffrages. With the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington), whom I honestly admire for the convictions which he expressed so fearlessly, I deplore that at this time everything is being made a matter of electioneering. To-day we are offering anything and everything for the sake of our political souls. It is not a matter of belief in principles, but every motive seems to be backed with the one idea of getting returned to Parliament. There is not much sincerity in this.

Mr. Roche: You are speaking for yourself.

Mr. PICKERING: Yes, and what I believe is the general opinion of members of this House. I do not think they believe the passing of this measure will have any effect. Personally I do not oppose the Bill. With the member for Kanowna, I agree that there are exceptional women who might adorn this or any other Chamber. We can rest assured that these women are the exception, so much so that when the member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker) was recounting their names, he did not mention more than half a dozen. I believe that every hon. member is convinced that it is not his seat that the ladies are going to occupy.

Mr. Johnston: Wait a few years and we shall see changes.

Mr. PICKERING: Touching the question of the alteration of the franchise for the Upper House, I am disposed to join issue with the member for Carnarvon (Mr. Angelo), who says that he prefers to go the whole length and favour the abolition of the Council. If we look at the result of this universal suffrage for the Federal Parliament, we find that the Senate is a reflex of the opinion of the House of Representatives. Even the Federal Government are proposing the extinction of that House of legislature. We are threatened with an extinction of State Parliaments throughout the Commonwealth, and the time will surely arrive when the only House that will remain to Australia will be the House of Representatives. This will be a deplorable condition of affairs for this State.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It can only be done by the vote of the people.

Mr. PICKERING: Yes, but if we listen to those who desire to obtain the power to voice the sentiments of the people, these things will come about which were forecasted. It is for that reason I am opposed to widening the franchise for the Upper House, because it will affect the usefulness of that Chamber. Rather than do that I would go to the full length and vote for its extinction. Hon. members on the other side of the House do not desire that the Council should remain on the same franchise as is the case with the Legislative Assembly. They desire, by bringing about this state of affairs to abolish altogether the Upper House.

Mr. Willcock: It is the only way to do it.

Mr. PICKERING: I believe in the bi-cameral system and that being so I cannot agree to a form of franchise for both House of Parliament, each form being identical with the other.

Mr. DURACK (Kimberley) [9.5]: With respect to the remarks of the member for Forrest (Mr. O'Loughlen), who says that women can think as logically as men and that they have the same reasoning power as men, I am not at present prepared to support the argument. Women, I believe, are often actuated by sentiment. I also think they can act more intuitively than men can, and often provide a more correct solution of a problem than a man can with all his reasoning and logic. We know from the records

of history that women have figured prominently in the world, particularly in the war in the many actions and good work that they have done, but they have not loomed very largely in the political world, due perhaps to the fact that they have not had the opportunity to do so.

Mr. Angwin called attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung, and a quorum formed.

Mr. DURACK: Since the constitution of the Commonwealth has given to women the right to sit in Parliament, and other countries in the world, including Great Britain, have also acknowledged that right, I see no reason why, as they have the right to vote, they should not also be permitted to qualify to become members of Parliament. I support the Government in that direction. With regard to the question of giving to returned soldiers the right to vote for the Upper House exclusive of the property qualification, I realise that I am in the minority. I do not say that the soldiers have no right to that vote, but I cannot see any justification for them having that right apart from the other sections of the community. There has been a good deal of reticence on this question on the part of the different hon. members. I would go so far as to say there has been a good deal of camouflage. We know that many other sections of the community did equally as well as our soldiers did. They sacrificed as much in some directions, though not in the direction of losing their lives, but they were prepared to sacrifice their lives. The member for Kanowna has referred to the Bill as an illogical abortion. It is a good term to use. I could understand the Government bringing in a measure liberalising the franchise and proposing to recognise that the soldiers should have a right to vote without the property qualification if accepted by a referendum of the people. Such a big issue is one which might be referred to a referendum. If the people say that they are prepared to give this right to returned soldiers, to the exclusion of other members not so qualified, let them have it, but let not a section of the people, as represented by members of this Chamber, say that we are to give it to them. I am opposed to that. I am prepared to support the Bill in its other aspects.

Mr. CHESON (Cue) [9.10]: I support the second reading of the Bill and will vote for the amendments indicated by the leader of the Opposition. Every householder should be entitled to a vote. I am in favour of giving returned soldiers the right to vote for the Legislative Council, because I am opposed to the bi-cameral system. The more names we can get on the Legislative Council rolls the more opportunity we shall have of seeing that Chamber abolished. I am in accord with the idea of giving women the right to become members of Parliament. They have a vote now for the Legislative Council

if they possess any property, and should also have the right to enter Parliament. It remains for the people to elect them if they offer themselves as candidates. A great injustice is done to a large section of the community in the matter of the qualification to vote for the Council. A married man may take on domestic responsibilities. He is the best citizen we can have, but may not be entitled to a vote because he is not qualified. Another person might start a small business in a district and be paying rent at the rate of 10s. a week and be entitled to a vote. This person may be a naturalised subject, a Greek, or an Italian, but simply because he pays 10s. a week rent he is entitled to vote for the Upper House. The position is an injustice to the man I have just spoken of. The man who takes on domestic responsibilities is the best citizen we can have, and should be entitled to a vote for the Legislative Council seeing that that House vetoes measures that go to it from this Chamber. I am in accord with the idea of extending the life of Parliament by two or three months. To hold a general election at Christmas time is inconvenient to all concerned, and there is also the fact that a great many of the electors are outside their constituencies at that time. It would be very much better if we could prolong the life of Parliament in this case to two or three months, in order that the elections may be held as proposed at a more suitable date. I support the second reading of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

### BILLS (3)—RETURNED FROM THE COUNCIL.

- 1, Perth Mint Act Amendment.
  - 2, Inebriates Act Amendment.
  - 3, Licensing Act Amendment.
- Without amendment.

### ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1919-20.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the 13th November; Mr. Stubbs in the Chair.

Department of Public Health, Hon. H. P. Colebatch, Minister (Hon. J. Scaddan in charge of the votes).

Vote — Medical and Public Health, £183,584:

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Scaddan—Albany) [9.15]: The Estimates of expenditure for the Medical and Health Departments are much on all fours with those of past years with the exception of expenditure due to two principal causes, firstly the outbreak of influenza and, secondly, the increase in the cost of maintaining hospitals, etc., due to the rise in the cost of commodities. Regarding influenza, due to the precau-

tions taken by the department, it was kept out of the State for some time. Notwithstanding those precautions it finally appeared and I think it was here some little while before it was recognised. Up to the end of September 2,986 cases were reported in the metropolitan area and 1,399 cases in the country. The deaths numbered 233 and 130 respectively. We must admit that little reliance can be placed on these figures because a great number of mild cases, probably outnumbering considerably those reported, were not reported at all. For instance, recently at Albany almost half the population was down, but it was not a severe form of the disease and most of the cases were not reported. I think it was largely due to the efforts of the department that we achieved the result we did. We gained from the experience of other States. The disease was not understood when it arrived in the Eastern States and it played great havoc. It was no respecter of persons. It affected country and town, slums and otherwise. It is estimated that something like £40,000 will be the cost of fighting this disease during the time it was here, but that does not represent the true position regarding the cost to the State. Many departments lost revenue and there was a greater amount of sick leave in the departments than ever before, due to this disease, and the whole community suffered tremendously. In comparison with other countries we have been somewhat fortunate. In the United Kingdom, with a population of 46 millions, there were 120,000 deaths in six months, or 2.6 per thousand of the population; in New Zealand, with 1,160,000, there were 6,000 deaths, or 5.2 per thousand; in New South Wales, there were 5,404 deaths, or 2.8 per thousand; in Victoria, with 1,411,000, the deaths numbered 3,300, or 2.3 per thousand; in Western Australia, with 310,000, there were less than 500 deaths, or 1.6 per thousand of the population. The main feature about the position in Western Australia is that we had warning of the approach of the disease, and quite naturally we made considerable preparations, which, even had it not come, would have cost a large sum of money. Although it will cost from £35,000 to £40,000, the comparison I have given will show that this was money well spent. The hospitals have been maintained as in the past. In some cases, owing to the possibility of the influenza epidemic coming along, we made preparations to receive a larger number of cases. It will be admitted that our hospitals to-day are well maintained. The expenditure has increased owing to the extra cost of commodities. Take Wooreloo, for instance. In July, 1918, 12,204 lbs. of meat cost £272. In July of this year 12,263 lbs. of meat cost £426, or nearly double the cost for the same month of the previous year. It was the same with many other commodities. The total estimated increase in expenditure upon the department amounts to £7,324, and the estimated increase of revenue to £2,277, reducing the net increase of expenditure to £5,047.

Mr. GRIFFITHS (York) [9.23]: Before we get to the items there is the question of medical and nursing facilities being provided for outback districts, which I should like to have discussed by the House. In my electorate we are getting on fairly well in this matter, but not so well as we would like. During the investigations of the Royal Commission on Agriculture this question of medical and nursing facilities for agricultural areas was dealt with and they made certain recommendations. It has been generally admitted that there has been a great dearth of doctors and nurses in the back country. We know a good deal of this was unavoidable, on account of the war. The Royal Commission drew attention to the unfortunate position of many of these people owing to the lack of medical facilities, and particularly of maternity facilities, and pointed out what a bar to settlement that was. They suggested that the best system to meet the situation would be for qualified medical men to be located in a central position with control over a given radius, at various points at which nurses would be stationed. They recommended the establishment by the State of reasonable medical and nursing facilities for those areas, with charges fixed on a reasonable basis. During August a gathering of bush representatives in the city discussed this question. In collaboration with Mr. Carson, who is running a very useful institution—the Silver Chain—and in collaboration with two ladies very deeply concerned, they put up certain schemes, one practically a town scheme and the other to apply to the country, and the Minister would do well to look into these schemes. I think the House can very well take into consideration what steps can be followed to organise the medical and nursing facilities available to the best possible advantage, as suggested by the Royal Commission. There is one thing I wish to congratulate the Minister on—the attempt he has made to provide for the conveyance of the sick in the country, to get them to medical and nursing facilities. I am referring to his experiment between Denmark and Albany. I have seen so much of this suffering in country districts that it makes my heart bleed. My wife has on her own account, attempted to get an ambulance for the road, and I think the necessary funds will be collected. All the same, an ambulance for the railways, particularly on my own section, would do away with a great deal of suffering and might even save fatalities. For instance, a young mother outside Greenhills was injured in a chaffcutter. They hurriedly put her into a trap and drove her into York. Of course, they had to keep her in an upright position in the vehicle, and before they passed Greenhills she expired from loss of blood. Four young children were left behind. Had there been some means of carrying that woman in a reclining position, no doubt she would have been saved. We should see whether some-

thing cannot be done to make the best use of the facilities we have.

Mr. CHESSON (Cue) [9.32]: At the Woolooloo Sanatorium the rain, when accompanied by wind, blows into the open wards and right on to the patients confined to their beds. Something in the nature of a screen should be erected to protect those patients from the rain. Also, on wet days the convalescent patients, being unable to go out, have no place in which to assemble and, perforce, remain in bed. It would not cost much to provide a hall in which those patients could assemble on wet days. Dependents of sufferers from miners' phthisis have no chance of receiving help unless the patients go into the Woolooloo Sanatorium; in other words, the patients are compelled to go there. That being so, the least we can do is to afford them protection against rain and wind, and to give those of them who are convalescent some hall in which they can assemble on wet days.

Mr. DUFF (Claremont) [9.35]: Yesterday I paid a visit to the Old Men's Home. From what I could see they are very badly in need of hospital accommodation. At the present time the ordinary wards are being used for sick cases. It is highly desirable that all sick cases should be isolated. This position would not have arisen but for the over-crowding of the institution. When the building was erected it was intended to accommodate 500 inmates. There are close on 700 there to-day. If there were a special hospital ward there some of our public hospitals would be relieved of numbers of old men who really should be in the Home. The hospital accommodation there is confined to the ordinary wards, which are not properly equipped for the purpose. I hope the Minister will see whether it is not possible to provide a special hospital ward for the use of the sick patients. I have also a request from the old men themselves. In consequence of the over-crowding of the institution, what was the recreation room has been turned into an ordinary ward. All will agree that we should endeavour to make the closing years of the lives of these old men as pleasant as possible by providing a recreation room in which cards, draughts, dominoes or chess may be played. The old men should be able to go to a room fitted with the necessary tables for this purpose.

The Minister for Works: Drawings are in hand now.

Mr. DUFF: But they are only for a kiosk for the serving of refreshments. The recreation room is badly needed. I am sure the Minister will agree that it should be provided.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [9.37]: When speaking on the Estimates of the Education Department I drew attention to the lack of

medical inspection in schools. The Minister said it was purely a health matter. I take this opportunity of again drawing attention to it. In the latest report of the Education Department is a paragraph as follows—

The last Annual Report of this Department dealt at considerable length with matters affecting the physical development and health of the children. It was pointed out that our present system of medical inspection was quite inadequate and also that legislation was urgently needed on several matters. The system of medical inspection has remained unaltered, and, until all the doctors who went to the Front have returned, there will do doubt be great difficulty in securing any expansion. It was pointed out last year that Western Australia is the only State in the Commonwealth that has not a staff of medical officers attached to the Education Department. The Public Health Department has one medical officer for schools, who carried out full inspections in nine large schools in the metropolitan district during 1918, besides making numbers of special inquiries. Fifteen small country schools and four private schools were also inspected by local medical officers. The total number of children examined was 4,804 as compared with 6,072 in the previous year. In most countries now the minimum system of inspection provides for three examinations during the period between the ages of 6 and 14. To accomplish this in our State we should need to have about 20,000 children examined each year. This is for children under fourteen. The older children in High Schools, Technical Schools, etc., would need additional inspections. We are therefore at present providing for less than one-fourth of what should be regarded as the minimum. Several additional medical officers are needed, as well as nurses to "follow up" and see that the doctor's advice is not neglected. Persistent neglect to comply with the doctor's warnings should be made a penal offence as it is in Great Britain and other countries.

It is a very important phase of the public health. Yet the medical examination of the child, which is considered so vital to other countries, is palpably neglected in this State. I hope the Minister will endeavour to remove this neglect at the earliest possible moment. Repeated applications have been made by the committee in charge of the Busselton hospital for the provision of a maternity ward. I have been asked to use my influence in this matter. I took the usual course of approaching the Medical Department to ascertain their views. I was assured by the department that a recommendation had been passed on to the Minister that a sum should be provided on the Estimates for this additional facility. I have been unable to trace the item on the Revenue Estimates, but I hope to find it on the Loan Estimates. I wish to draw attention to the sparsity of

medical officers throughout the country districts. As has been instanced by the member for York (Mr. Griffiths), this is due in large measure to the war; but the doctors are now returning, and it should be possible to provide the additional facilities so urgently required. Another aspect of this which is vital to the people is that many doctors who took the places of others who went to the Front are old men or men not quite capable of dealing with the large areas that have fallen to their jurisdiction, and in consequence many patients are put to additional heavy expense through having to go to distant centres for proper treatment. This is very serious and I hope the Minister will take the earliest opportunity to remedy it. Also I hope some provision will be made for the motor ambulances referred to by the member for York.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [9.42]: I support the remarks of the last speaker in regard to the need for medical inspection of our school children. This was in general practice prior to the war but, during the war period, owing to the scarcity of medical officers, it has been discontinued almost entirely. If one reads the very instructive addresses delivered at the child welfare conference which has been sitting in Perth during the last week, wherein the views of the highest medical authorities in the Commonwealth have been expressed, one will be struck with the need for a greater degree of medical examination in our schools. Now that there is a greater number of medical officers available for the work I hope the Government will again take up the inspection of our children in schools and will make it even more thorough than it was prior to the war. I desire also to support the remarks of the members for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) and York (Mr. Griffiths) in regard to the provision of additional medical attendants in our country districts. One of the greatest disabilities and discomforts of country life is that large numbers of people are situated in remote districts 40 or 50 miles from the nearest medical officer. It must be a source of continuous anxiety and worry to those people to contemplate what might happen if a medical officer is required and if it is not possible to obtain his services. In some parts of the State the Railway Department has made provision for motor trolleys so that in cases of urgency injured persons may be conveyed to the nearest doctor or alternatively the doctor may be taken out to the patient. During my period at the Railway Department the officers had great objection to anything of this kind, and it was only after a good deal of correspondence and discussion with the head of the department, it was only at the point of the bayonet so to speak, that I was able to force the Railway Commissioner and his officers to provide an electric trolley in one of the outer districts. But it is a system that could well be developed and extended. At least it would bring a greater degree of confidence to the

people located in the remote portions of the State. I hope the Minister will endeavour to do something in this direction so that we may not have people, as we have had them, actually dying for the want of medical attention. Perhaps an instance which occurred on the occasion of my visiting the Williams-Narrogin district may be worth relating in this connection. When travelling in an outlying portion of that electorate some 20 or 30 miles distant from the railway, we met a man coming in with a horse and cart, and the dead body of his wife was in that cart. The man had then been two days on the road, having travelled a distance of about 60 miles. The woman had died without being able to obtain medical attention, and it was subsequently ascertained that her life might have been saved had the services of a medical man been available. When the husband came into the town the local doctor was away some 30 miles in the opposite direction, and the body could not be buried until the doctor had returned and had made a post mortem examination and given a medical certificate. The incident is one which goes to show what people in the outback districts have to put up with. Next I wish to say a word or two regarding the condition of things obtaining at the Old Men's Home. As the member for Claremont (Mr. Duff) has stated, the building formerly used for the purpose of recreation by the old people is now being used for sleeping accommodation. The result is that the old folks have been denied the little pleasure they used to obtain in that building. But that is not the worst phase of the matter. As the member for Claremont has pointed out, although the building has accommodation for about 450 persons, it now numbers more than 700 inmates. The result is that the verandahs of all the wards have been closed in with hessian awnings and are now all occupied with beds packed so closely as merely to leave room for persons to move in and out between them. Thus the windows of the wards have to be kept closed all the time. They cannot be opened, because to open them would merely let in the foul air from the verandahs instead of fresh air. Therefore the light cannot enter the wards, and fresh air scarcely ever enters them. I was amazed when visiting the institution recently to observe such a state of affairs. In every ward the same position exists: the verandah has been entirely closed in with hessian because as many of the inmates as can find room on the verandahs—in some cases as many as 40 on one verandah—sleep there. If one were to house his cattle, sheep, or pigs in that manner, one would be prosecuted by the health authorities for doing so. It is a shocking state of affairs and constitutes an absolute reflection on the whole of the people of the State. Here we have those who through mental or bodily infirmity are confided to the care of the State—the inmates of the Claremont Hospital for the Insane and the inmates of the Old Men's Home—treated in such a fashion. We have to admit that the

insufficiency of accommodation is due to want of the necessary funds. However, the condition of things is such as to cast a reflection upon our civilisation. We have been able to find money for other purposes less worthy. In the case of the Old Men's Home, although the erection of a wing has been spoken of for years, and although plans have long been drawn for it, recourse is had to the methods I have described of closing in the verandahs and so shutting out the fresh air from the old men in the wards, and at the same time shutting in the foul air, rather than provide the necessary funds. I hope that whatever we may have to find money for in the near future, provision will at once be made for the erection of an additional wing at the Old Men's Home. Undoubtedly, if the present position there were generally known to hon. members, there would be protests from all sides of the Chamber. My experience during recent years leads me to believe it almost necessary that this Chamber should appoint a select committee at least once a year to investigate conditions at the Government hospitals, in the State Children Department, in the asylums, and kindred Government institutions. The heads of the institutions are responsible to other Government officials, say permanent heads in Perth, who possibly take very little interest in these places, visit them rarely, and know little of what goes on in them except from the reports of the officers in charge. As the inmates have no friends in the world, nobody cares how they get on, and so the institutions are sometimes allowed to drift into a condition of chaos and mismanagement.

Mr. Duff: But the man in charge of the Old Men's Home appears to be a good man.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not wish to criticise the superintendent of the home, who I believe is doing the best he can under unfavourable conditions. Certainly it is not his fault if a bad state of things exists because of overcrowding. In that case the fault is ours. I am not blaming the present Government in this regard. Perhaps the Government of which I was a member may have some responsibility in that connection. But it is the responsibility of the whole House to see that those people who by either mental or physical disease are unfortunately stricken down should have provided for them homes that are worthy of an up-to-date and civilised community. I urge the Minister for Works to make a special note of this matter. He has to do with buildings. If the Government decide to erect a new ward at the Old Men's Home, it will be for him and his officers to draw the plans and carry out the work. I know the Minister for Works has a large and soft heart where humanity is concerned, and I trust he will make a special note of the matter, so that when he is preparing his Estimates for next year—and I hope he will be permitted to prepare Estimates next year—he will include in the list of public works the erection of a new wing at the Old Men's Home, which new wing is so very badly needed. If hon. members would go and see the condition of things for them-

selves, they would not allow it to continue for another day. The old folks are overcrowded there to the number of 250 beyond the accommodation provided. I say again, I hope the Government will give this matter their immediate attention.

Mr. FOLEY (Leonora) [9.57]: With hon. members who have spoken on the various charitable institutions of the State, I think it would be wise if the Government provided some special means of supervision. I will not say, supervision by a select committee; because I have voted against every select committee proposed since I have been a member of this Chamber. But I consider that members of thoroughly representative bodies should periodically visit these various institutions, not with a view to criticising them from a political aspect or anything of that nature, but with a view to providing the best facilities for the unfortunate people who cannot help themselves. I think every member is of opinion that during the next two or three years we are likely to have these institutions even more crowded than they are now. Until things become thoroughly normal and ways and means have been found of providing for all those who unfortunately have been maimed during the past few years, there will be need for public-spirited men to assist the Government in this connection. I believe too that the time has arrived when a further step should be taken in regard to health matters. During the war period many members of the medical profession who previously were entirely opposed to nationalisation of medicine or any interference with the professional rights of doctors have become earnest advocates of a system of national health insurance, either contributory or otherwise. The establishment of such a system would do away with the anomalies existing in our hospitals at present. We have in this State two classes of hospitals—the subsidised institutions and the wholly Government institutions. From the records prepared by the officials of the Charities Department it appears that the cost per patient in institutions wholly maintained by the Government is much larger than that in hospitals which have organisers whose business it is to see that the people in the surrounding districts do something to assist towards the upkeep of the institutions. According to last year's figures, 230 patients in the Narrogin hospital were treated at a cost to the Government of 7s. per patient per day. In the Northam hospital, wholly a Government institution, 282 cases were treated at a cost of 7s. 1d. per day. In the Bunbury hospital 213 cases cost the Government 7s. 3d. per day; and in York the figures were 137 cases and 10s. 6d. All these are Government hospitals. Turning now to the other class, the subsidised hospitals, we find all along the line a much lower cost. I wish particularly to speak of the hospital in my own electorate, because it is the largest of the subsidised hospitals. In the Leonora hospital 227 cases were treated at a cost to the Government of 2s. 7d. per day.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is not a fair comparison.

Mr. FOLEY: I am satisfied with the treatment I have received from every hon. gentleman who has filled the position of Minister for Health. For the past few years there has been need for an advance in the subsidy, and I want to pay a tribute on behalf of my district to the Ministers who have been in charge of this department, for the sympathetic manner in which they have dealt with questions affecting health, particularly in my electorate. My friend the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin) was exceptionally good to the Leonora hospital, and I can say the same of every gentleman who succeeded him. Mr. Cockbatch, who now fills that office, has seen fit during the past week or two to raise the subsidy again. I would like to place the position in which that hospital stands before hon. members. Last year a subsidy of £600 was paid, and there was a subsidy of £200 granted to the doctor and £100 was given as a special grant, making a total of £900. The gross cost of that year's operations was £4,224 17s. 4d., towards which, as I have just mentioned, the Government contributed £900. A sum of £220 was received from paying patients, which left £4,004 17s. 4d. Therefore the people of the district were given the duty of finding £3,104 in order to see that the standard of the hospital was maintained. By subscription the people raised £1,700. That still left £2,404, and out of that amount the people got altogether no less a sum than £1,904. Even then the hospital remained in debt to the extent of £502 for that year. There is this to be said in favour of a subsidised hospital, that the treatment accorded to patients who are unfortunate enough to have to use the hospital is very much better than it is at any other hospital, but the time is fast coming when the people in the outback districts, as was the case in the district I represent, having to find a considerable sum towards the maintenance of an institution, will ask themselves whether they are not being unfairly taxed in comparison with those places where Government institutions exist. If people are to be expected to go on paying to such a great extent towards the maintenance of the hospitals, the question whether an alteration should be made in the working of the Hospitals altogether, will have to be taken into consideration. As far as the Perth Public Hospital is concerned, it may be stated in connection with that institution that the people who use it come from all parts of the State. The same thing applies to other hospitals, and it will always be found that where the facilities are good and where the institution is carried on on modern lines, the people will go to those places in preference to others, because they can be sure of receiving the very best treatment. What we have to consider is that if the amount voted for the hos-



pitals still keeps climbing, whether those people in the districts which have contributed so much towards the maintenance of hospitals are to be expected to pay the same surcharge, if one is to be made, as those in other districts which have not done as much. I am not criticising the administration. I am thankful for what has been done in the hospital in my district, but if things go on as they are doing with prices of commodities as high as they are to-day, and with an ever growing cost of essentials for such institutions as hospitals, the time is approaching when the whole question will have to be considered as to whether or not the people in every district should be put on a fair and equitable plane regarding payments for the care of the sick.

[Mr. Foley took the Chair.]

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [10.7]: I have very few words to say on this vote. It seems passing strange to me that with the increasing interest that is taking place in child welfare in this and in every civilised country, something is not done by way of establishing dental clinics in connection with our State schools. There is an absolutely criminal neglect on the part of the Government towards this great question. One would think that in a State like Western Australia the Government would realise the necessity for doing something in this direction. We have in the State at the present time a distinguished gentleman who is lecturing upon the necessity for taking an increasing interest in the welfare of the child and applying more scientific methods towards the child's development. But that is absolutely impossible under the conditions obtaining. There is the greatest possible necessity to-day for paying particular attention to the medical inspection of children, and seeing also to their dental efficiency. Take America. That country is advancing by leaps and bounds in a direction that I suppose the member for Claremont would hardly agree with. Still, they are progressing, and in that respect they are advancing to an extent unknown in any other part of the world. They have big and well organised odontological societies, and their paramount duty is to force under the notice of the public the necessity for dental efficiency, and particularly has this been so in connection with children attending State schools. I sincerely hope that when the Government Whip has finished the conversation he is now engaged in with the Minister in charge of these Estimates, the Minister will make a note of what I have been saying. The Minister must realise, as the leader of the Opposition said a few minutes ago, that if time will be sufficiently kind to him to allow him later to be in charge of these Estimates, we hope when the next Estimates are introduced to see some provision made to carry out the suggestions

that I have brought under notice. From 50 to 75 per cent. of the children in this State are allowed to develop and grow into manhood without proper attention being given to them. In the Eastern States they have realised the need for carrying on this work, and in the Old Country the necessity for it has also been made apparent, while in America, as I have stated, there are thousands of societies giving attention to the question. I know that the Minister is sympathetic towards the question of the welfare of the children of our State, and I hope therefore he will make a note of what I have said. With the leader of the Opposition, I had the opportunity lately of paying a visit to the Old Men's Home at Claremont. Certainly there is considerable overcrowding there, and as stated by the leader of the Opposition I trust the Minister for Works will seize an early occasion to provide additional accommodation. The home is certainly overcrowded, and as mentioned by the member for Leonora, it would lead to greater efficiency if we had a number of small committees appointed—not for political reasons—to visit the various institutions such as the Old Men's Home, the Hospital for the Insane, and the like, all of which have been the subject of so much adverse criticism lately. I trust the Minister for Mines will see that sufficient money is provided by the hard-working Minister for Works so that he may take steps towards giving the old men the extra accommodation which they so urgently require. There are also one or two complaints at that home that the Minister in charge of these Estimates could look into. I understand there has been a man there running a canteen for private gain. If that is the case I hope a stop will be put to it.

The Honorary Minister: Does he sell intoxicants?

Mr. LAMBERT: No, it is a dry canteen. It is none the less wrong.

The Minister for Mines: What is wrong about it if it is properly conducted?

Mr. LAMBERT: The prices charged are altogether out of proportion.

The Minister for Mines: Then there is profiteering.

Mr. LAMBERT: A considerable amount of it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But why should a private individual run a canteen there?

Mr. Duff: It was given to a returned soldier, but he turned it up and then it was given to someone else.

Mr. LAMBERT: As a matter of fact, I know the history of it. I need not mention here what fees he is charging. I merely wish to direct the Minister's attention to the fact that the canteen is run on lines which do not meet with the approval of the greater number of the inmates. I think one of the old men could run it much better than it is being run. I am sorry that not many members of the House have had an opportunity to visit the institution. I was astounded

to see its ramifications. I need not magnify the difficulties of running such a place, but it is only fair to say that the superintendent is doing his very best in the circumstances. I wish to impress on the Minister the necessity for taking up enthusiastically the policy of adopting and attaching dentist clinics to our State children so as to ensure that their initial health shall be protected.

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington)** [10.17]: Hon. members will find there is a sum of £350 on the Estimates for renovations at the Old Men's Home including improvements to the verandahs. Plans are in preparation for a larger scheme. I am particularly interested in the question of providing facilities for bringing to the nearest doctor sick or injured persons in remote areas. I have had a scheme in mind for a long time past. I contend it is part of the duties of the Railway Department to arrange such provision. The trolleys referred to are capable of being used in an emergency, but they are entirely unsuitable for the carrying of an injured or sick person over long distances, because they are hard in their running and would shake a patient considerably. Beyond the question of expense—which should not be considered too seriously in this respect—I see no reason why there should not be at all junctions of outlying lines a motor car to run on the rails. This could be used for bringing in a sick person to the medical officer. On many of our agricultural lines trains run but infrequently, perhaps only once a week, and so there would be no danger in allowing those motor cars to run on the lines. Those cars, with the use of the telephone which should be established at every railway station, would do something towards making life in the outback districts far more livable than it is at present. The leader of the Opposition spoke of having met a buggy in which was the body of a woman who had died while being brought in to the doctor. Two years ago a similar occurrence was brought very forcibly under my notice by an application for employment, which I felt constrained to entertain. In that case the father and mother had undertaken a 3½ days' journey to bring their son to the nearest hospital. The boy died on the road. Shortly afterwards the mother was fatally attacked by the same complaint, and her husband had to bring her body in for burial. Those who go out into remote areas are literally taking their lives in their hands, because they can get no medical assistance when required. I am sure the Minister for Railways, with his big heart, will bring this before the Commissioner of Railways. It is not a question of pounds, shillings, and pence, for the House would readily vote the money to enable these facilities to be provided. As showing that it can be done, I may mention that the charabanc running on the railway line between Jarlanup and the No. 2 Mill has proved

very successful. It has already paid for itself. It runs very cheaply, and it has saved the State Sawmills a great deal of money. We simply took an ordinary charabanc which had been plying about the city, and replaced the customary wheels with wheels of steel, removed the steering gear and added an efficient brake. The thing runs at very small cost and gives great satisfaction. As we went on with the running, it was found that one or two little alterations were required. These have been made, and we are now converting another charabanc at the State Implement Works. These cars can do up to 25 miles an hour on the ordinary railway lines. Even if a man could not afford to pay for the use of the car at a time of sickness, it would be only right that the State should provide the convenience. We can do this, and we ought to do it. If a person be lost in the bush, all available means, public and private, are brought to bear to rescue and save life. It is to my mind equally as much the duty, both public and private, to use every means to rescue and save life in such cases as I have referred to. I am sure the Committee would readily agree to vote the necessary money.

**MR. MALEY (Greenough)** [10.24]: I was pleased to hear the Minister urging the necessity for the provision of these facilities in outback districts. If there is one thing more than another driving country people into the city it is the lack of educational and medical facilities. The proposition outlined by the Minister has been vigorously advocated in every branch of the Farmers and Settlers' Association. The member for York (Mr. Griffiths) has been very active in this direction, and for the Minister for Works now to advocate the project seems very like one man trying to take the wind out of another's sails. I have been surprised that practically no reference should have been made to the influenza epidemic. True, the Minister offered a few remarks, but apparently merely with the object of disarming criticism. Contrast the position to-day with that which existed when first the epidemic broke out in this State! To-day if one dies from influenza, even though the corpse may go black almost immediately, no care is taken to safeguard the other inmates of the house from infection, and no haste is displayed in burying the body.

**Hon. W. C. Angwin:** It is said that there is no danger at that stage.

**MR. MALEY:** If there is no danger, where was the necessity for all the panic in the beginning?

**The Minister for Mines:** They had not then the knowledge. They have now adopted different methods.

**MR. MALEY:** I wish to draw attention to the fact that the Government have permitted shameless profiteering in connection with inoculations against the epidemic. The alleged safeguards taken before one was permitted to travel were nothing short of far-

cical. I should like the Minister to explain whether, for the periodic examinations, the medical officers were paid so much per head for every person they handled or whether they carried out their duties as officers of health. I am given to understand that they received 1s. for every person examined. Putting it on a fairly low estimate, on this basis each doctor would receive for an hour's work anything from £15 to £20. Several other instances of shameless profiteering in connection with the influenza epidemic have come under my notice. In many outback districts medical officers were asked by the local authorities to attend on a given day and carry out inoculations. In all those cases a fee of 10s. was charged by the medical officer, who was probably using serum supplied by the Department of Public Health. I do not know whether there was any scale of charges for medical men. To render myself immune from the disease in order that I might help to safeguard my district, I was inoculated and the medical officer charged me £1, though I could have gone to the Geraldton town hall and got it done for 1s. This sort of thing has happened in my district and I believe in every other district in the State. Though the serum was supplied free of cost by the Public Health Department, one medical officer charged a road board £32 to go to a district 40 or 50 miles from Geraldton to inoculate such of the residents who cared to put in an appearance on one particular day. When it was given out that inoculation was a preventive against influenza, it was scandalous that the Government did not regulate the doctors' fees.

Mr. Munsie: And also block chemists from shoving up the prices of likely preventives.

Mr. MALEY: The hon. member has had more experience of chemists than I have. I live in a district where there is no chemist practising.

Mr. Munsie: There is no chemist in my electorate.

Mr. Wilson: Very lucky!

Mr. MALEY: The inference drawn by some members was not intended by me. The Minister should tell us why these charges were not regulated. I trust the Minister recognises the need for motor ambulances throughout the country so that, in cases of sickness or accident, patients may be taken to the nearest town for treatment. The Minister should advance to the utmost any scheme for bush nursing, the establishment of hospitals, and the stationing of trained nurses in the country.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: How would you get them to go there?

Mr. MALEY: That would not be a difficult matter.

Mr. ROCKE (South Fremantle) [10.34]: The department deal with matters that affect the poor and needy. I am not surprised to find that the vote is so large; on the other hand, I doubt whether the vote will be sufficient to meet every need. The State was

unfortunate in being visited by the influenza scourge and, although the death-rate was lower here than in the Eastern States, the circumstances attending many of the deaths here have bordered on the pathetic as well as the tragic. In many instances, death supervened because the bread-winners left their beds too soon after an attack of the malady. They felt the needs of the family weighing heavily upon them, and the assistance rendered by the Government being insufficient to keep the children in food and clothing, they made attempts to return to work and so lost their lives. A P. & O. steamer arrived at Fremantle and was granted a clean bill of health. Of the humpers who went on board to discharge the cargo, 34 were infected with the complaint and 10 lost their lives. Someone evidently blundered. Greater precautions should have been taken.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There was a patient on board.

Mr. ROCKE: And if proper precautions had been taken, these 10 valuable lives would have been saved. The member for North-East Fremantle said there was a case on board. I believe there was a corpse on board.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: No, a man was taken to the hospital where he died.

Mr. ROCKE: Anyhow the ship was not free from the disease and this should have been apparent to the doctors. I endorse what has been said regarding the need for district nurses and medical attention in the outback country. The residents of the country are equally brave as the men who have faced death in foreign countries during the last year or two, and it is incumbent on the Government to make every possible provision to meet the necessities of these people. I was particularly pleased to hear the remarks of the Minister for Works relating to the measures taken to relieve needs in the outback country. I was pleased to hear that the motor-wagon can be successfully run on the railway lines. This shows that departmental prejudice is being broken down. It is less than two years since the then Minister for Railways, in reply to a question, told me that these motor vehicles could not be run upon the railway lines. No doubt the Minister based his answer on the advice of the departmental officers.

The Minister for Mines: Who was the Minister?

Mr. ROCKE: Mr. Hudson. I pointed out that these vehicles had been run successfully in Canada and America. I am of opinion that the success of these vehicles will solve one of the problems of our agricultural railways. I regret that the assistance granted to the Fremantle hospital is less than it was last year. The Fremantle hospital treats people who are members of an industrial community and, consequently, gets a number of patients of the poorer class who are not able to pay their way. There is evidence of harassing on the part of the authorities of the Fremantle hospital to force people to pay the fees due. Many of the people, I

believe, would have paid without any compulsion if they had been in a position to do so. In one case, twins less than three months old were taken to the hospital. They were premature and the mother was unable to give them the necessary attention. Though the father was earning only an ordinary worker's wage, he was billed with an account for 12s. a day and threatened with prosecution if he did not pay. Probably this harassing attitude adopted by the Fremantle hospital authorities is due to the inadequate subsidy granted by the Government. I know the Government have many calls upon their purse, but I feel that the case of those who are in less fortunate circumstances demands attention, even at the sacrifice of some other service. The question of school children has been referred to. This is a most important one. We have one medical officer attending schools, namely, Dr. Roberta Jull. I have been informed by the department that if the necessity arises, and the department is informed of the fact, Dr. Jull is at once sent to a school. I have taken cases myself to the department, and I believe Dr. Jull is doing fine work in connection with school children. This lady, however, is not able to do all that is necessary, and I hope that more adequate provision will be made in the near future in this direction. I wish to add my meed of praise for what has been done at the Old Men's Home, where Mr. Rust is the master. This gentleman has performed very fine work.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Hear what some of the old men have to say about it.

Mr. ROCKE: He has transformed a wilderness into a veritable garden. I know what the old men would say if one spoke to them about Mr. Rust, but it is a most thankless task to try and please old men. I appreciate the work he has done, and also that of the staff. I hope every consideration will be given to the difficulties under which those in charge of our institutions are working. I am sorry that the need exists for the expenditure of so much money in this direction, but I believe the vote will have to be increased. The position of the people to-day is infinitely worse than it was last year, for the simple reason that every penny they are earning has to go to provide sufficient food and clothing, and nothing can be put by for a rainy day. The result is that many people have to seek the assistance of Government institutions.

Mr. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [10.43]: I should like to follow on the remarks made by the member for Leonora when speaking in connection with Government hospitals, apart from assisted hospitals. Of the Government hospitals there are 22, and the cost to the Government last year was £52,003, whereas the fees and donations only amounted to £11,870. These fees and donations, therefore, come to under 25 per cent. of the total cost. In some cases the position is very much worse than that indicated by this total. For the Albany hospital the cost was £14,098 and the fees and

donations only came to £398. The cost of the Wyndham hospital was £1,246, and the fees collected only amounted to £191. The case of the Carnarvon hospital is also bad, for the cost was £1,198 as against the fees collected, £408.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That report is 12 months old.

Mr. ANGELO It is dated the 31st December, 1917.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You have the other report.

Mr. ANGELO: Perhaps that would be worse. Some two years ago when speaking on the Estimates I drew the attention of the Government to the disability existing then, and made a recommendation. The Colonial Treasurer was kind enough to say that the suggestion was a good one and would be adopted. Later on I saw the result of that suggestion in the Colonial Treasurer's office. It had been elaborated to such an extent that it was useless and too costly to carry out. My suggestion was that at each of the centres where Government hospitals existed a committee consisting of the resident magistrate, the head of the police of the district, and one private person should be appointed for one purpose, namely, to consider a list every fortnight of those people who had been in the hospital and left without paying fees. If that suggestion was carried out, instead of collecting £1,000 in fees we should collect twice that amount. There are many people who should pay fees who are not doing so. I know this from experience, especially in regard to hospitals in the North-West. I have known of numbers of cases of men who have come in from the country to get medical treatment. They have had plenty of money when they arrived in town but unfortunately this has gone into the hands of the publican, and by the time they have reached the hospital they have not had a penny left. They are allowed to leave the institution and the State has to pay for them. If when a man comes out of hospital he is unable to pay the fees the committee could make inquiries as to his position. That is why I should like to see a policeman on the committee, because it would be his duty to inquire into the standing of the man and the possibility of his being able to pay. If a man cannot pay then a promissory note could be got from him to pay, say, within six months, so that in the future it might be possible to get the fees out of him. At some of the hospitals the doctors get a certain amount by charging fees for surgical attendance, and so forth. I am afraid some of them get the first cut out of any money that a man has. If a patient of this description has any money with which to pay for his treatment the doctors in the hospitals should whack it in with the hospital, and the State should not be deprived of a share. The country has to support these hospitals at a fearful expenditure and is getting nothing like the fees that should be paid. In Wynd-

ham only 15 per cent. of the cost of the hospital is being paid by the patients. That is to say only one man out of seven or eight can pay the fees for medical attendance. I am certain there is not one man there who is earning under £3 or £4 a week. The same thing holds good at Carnarvon. It is ridiculous to think that there is only one man out of six who can pay his hospital fees in that centre. Last year when I brought this matter before hon. members the Carnarvon hospital only had seven per cent. of the cost paid in fees but this year it has 33 per cent. The present doctor is doing his utmost to collect the fees. The consequence has been that the fees paid have gone up from £100 odd to £490. If one doctor can do that other doctors can also do it. I strongly recommend the appointment of these committees. They will cost nothing because the resident magistrate is there and the policeman is there, and the mayor, or the chairman of the road board or some other gentleman, to form such committee. These gentlemen could attend at least once a fortnight for half an hour, in order to go through the list of patients who had not paid and decide who could pay, and if they can pay take steps to see that they do. Another matter to which I should like the Government to attend, if possible, is the fixing of the fees that subsidised doctors may charge in the back country. In this connection there have been cases of profiteering. Before the present doctor came to my district, a patient at a distance of 140 miles from Carnarvon was charged a mileage fee of £1 per mile for the whole of the journey, in addition to a medical fee of £20 or £30. Such charges may have been excusable in the days gone by, when the journey would have involved the hiring of a vehicle and horses and would have occupied several days; but they are inexcusable in these days of motor cars, when the distance can be covered in one day. There was another case in which the doctor had to travel some distance in order to see a man who had been severely burnt. The doctor refused to go unless he was first paid the sum of £100, and a collection had to be made by the injured man's friends before the doctor even saw him. I consider that the thanks of the community are due to Dr. Atkinson, our Principal Medical Officer, for the work he has done during a very trying time.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Mr. Colebatch got the credit for that.

Mr. ANGELO: The right man is Dr. Atkinson. My remark applies not only to the influenza period. From officers of the Health Department I know that Dr. Atkinson has been doing the work of two men. He has spent his evenings in the laboratory doing work that an assistant should have performed. I think we should say a word of thanks to a gentleman who takes so keen an interest in his work as Dr. Atkinson does.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [10.53]: I am surprised at the remarks of the last speaker on the charges made by medical men. I thought he would have sufficient experience of doctors to know that they possess one of the strongest trade unions in Australia.

Mr. Angelo: They never go on strike, anyhow.

Mr. Green: They went on a murderous strike in Victoria.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They went on strike here once, refusing to examine the school children. As regards the northern portion of the State, the position is that the Health Department cannot select a doctor to go there. When a doctor in the North sells his practice, the amount of Government subsidy paid to him passes to the doctor purchasing the practice. If that were not so, portions of the North would not have the services of a medical man at all. At all events, during my time at the Health Department that was the condition of things—the department had to appoint the doctor who purchased a practice in the North. Undoubtedly some doctors have taken advantage of their position to make unduly high charges, and I should advise the member for Gascoyne to try to get that altered, though I hardly think he can. If legislation for that purpose were introduced, every doctor in the North would leave. The fact is that the doctors control the position. I trust, however, that in the near future the Government will take in hand the question of a State health service. On more than one occasion I have discussed with the present Minister for Mines the possibility of introducing legislation placing a doctor in exactly the same position as a worker under the Arbitration Act. A doctor who goes on strike for higher fees should be sent to gaol for doing so. That is the only means of overcoming the difficulty. If the doctor breaks the law, he should be punished for it. The man who takes up the medical profession does so in order that he may assist mankind in times of need; and if a doctor will not practice his profession under fair conditions, Parliament should compel him to do so. However, many doctors act very fairly. Doctors are not all alike. Some, however, with whom I was brought into contact while in charge of the Health Department, I would rather see out of the State than in it. Undoubtedly the doctors rule the roost under existing conditions; and therefore the Government should take on the training of doctors. Doctors should come under State control. The Government should assume the responsibility of furnishing the people with medical attendance, and the only means of doing that is to build up a State staff of doctors, who would be under agreement compelling them to remain in the Government service for a considerable period after taking their degree. I believe that the establishment of such a system affords the only means of providing settlers in the back country with the necessary medical atten-

dance. Let me illustrate the present position of affairs in the medical profession. Dr. Pearson came to the Children's Hospital as an expert in children's diseases. He was acknowledged to be one of the foremost experts in Australia in that respect. Now, if a man could afford to pay for the treatment of the child, he was not permitted to take the child to the Children's Hospital and obtain the benefit of Dr. Pearson's expert knowledge; not on any account. One of the local doctors said, "We will not allow Dr. Pearson to treat such cases."

Mr. Lutey: Would you call that Bolshevism?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The doctors had the control, and there was no help for it. However, as I have said before, all the doctors are not alike. One subject on which there has been a good deal of comment in connection with these Estimates is that of bush nursing. Undoubtedly there is great difficulty in getting nurses to go into the country. However, that matter received attention long before the Farmers' and Settlers' Association came into existence.

Mr. Pickering: I referred to maternity nurses.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The trouble was that nurses could not be induced to go into the country, where there was no proper accommodation for them. They are subsidised by the State in order that they may attend the back country people who need their services, and that practice has existed for years. It existed even prior to the Labour Government taking office in 1911. The Country party have nothing whatever to do with that.

Mr. Pickering: Have they not pushed it along, at all events?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: With all due respect to our friends of the Country party, they have been kicking up rows about a lot of things that were in good going order long before the Country party came into existence. It is easy to bark, but it is another thing to build up.

Mr. Harrison: The system of bush nursing was not apparent previously.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It was apparent in every district where a nurse was required. Wherever the services of a nurse were needed one was supplied and subsidised by the Government. When they could not get trained nurses they got trained maternity nurses. There is a matter which you yourself, Mr. Chairman, brought up in regard to assistance for hospitals. I always maintained that the present system is not fair, and in some of our country districts not a shilling is given towards the hospitals.

Mr. Harrison: Which hospitals?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Fremantle last year raised considerably over £1,000. The country districts get little in comparison to the population served, while in a number of places they receive nothing at all.

The Honorary Minister: What about Jaradanup?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is an assisted hospital. The district of Leonora con-

tributed more to the hospital than any other in Western Australia. I do not know whether the position is changed now. At the same time I desire to point out the difference in the system on the goldfields and in the timber mills compared with other parts of the State. The goldfields and timber mills subscribe so much per week to the hospitals.

Mr. Wilson: And the coal fields.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes; under which the subscribers get medical attendance.

Mr. Wilson: No.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They do in the timber districts and on the goldfields, and those contributions are much heavier when the hospital is open to anyone who desires to enter it. A system like that cannot be carried out in places like Perth or Fremantle. So far as the Fremantle hospital is concerned the Government of the day made it almost compulsory that that institution should see that the fees were paid and that every case was investigated. If a person appears before the board and proves his inability to pay, no charge is made. If, however, a person neglects to appear before the board accounts are sent out and a threat is used if payment is not made. I consider we have one of the best officers in Australia in the person of Dr. Atkinson. He is alive to his duties and is not afraid of work. At the same time, I think he slipped from grace when he gave way to the Federal authorities in connection with the influenza epidemic. His action then was the cause of the introduction and rapid spread of the disease in this State. There is no doubt that the epidemic was introduced to Western Australia by sea and it was the cause of the death of a large number of people at Fremantle. Many men died and left large families—men who to-day with ordinary care would have been alive. I regret that the Estimates appear as they do, lumped. I would like to know what is being done with the village area sanitation. That is one of the questions which require to be carefully looked into. In country districts it should be the duty of the Board of health to carry out this work. It should not be done from Perth. The local board should see that the charges made meet the expenses. Instead of that it is costing the department in Perth more money and the contract which is let is the only price charged so far as the sanitation is concerned. I opposed this for years, and if the system is allowed to continue in all probability we will have the whole of the health work dealt with and controlled by the central office. The inspectors are increasing in number. I drew attention to this matter two years ago. There were several inspectors then at the war and it was proposed that when those men returned they should have their old positions, and that the others who had been taken on would not be retained in the service. I know, however, that the others are still in the employ of the department. There were 12 inspectors originally; now there are 18 or 19. That question should be looked into because the department is one that will grow if it is not carefully watched.

Every local authority has an inspector, and an inspector to-day has to be certificated. He must pass an examination under the rules of the Royal Sanitary Institute. Therefore, there is not the necessity to have the same number as previously. It should be possible to keep the cost down and people should not be expected to pay to the State and again to the local authority. The excuse may be made that so many inspectors are employed on account of the influenza epidemic having been so severe. I cannot say whether that was so, but if we turn to the Public Service Commissioner's report we find that there are now 17 or 18 inspectors in the Health Department. The member for South Fremantle (Mr. Roche) dealt with the question of the Old Men's Home. During the time the select committee were investigating the affairs of the Hospital for the Insane the case of a man named Edwards who was dismissed from that institution came under notice. Edwards secured employment at the Old Men's Home and an attempt was made to secure his dismissal from that place because it was found that he had been previously employed at the Hospital for the Insane. The select committee were inclined to blame Dr. Anderson, but it was found that the master of the Old Men's Home was responsible.

Mr. Roche: Did you get corroborative evidence?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. I got the evidence myself from the master of the Old Men's Home by means of the telephone. He said that he did not know the conditions under which Edwards was dismissed from the Hospital for the Insane. The attendants at the Old Men's Home are engaged by the Perth office, and it was the place of the Master of the Home to take the man who was sent to him and if anything was wrong he should have made a report to Dr. Atkinson or Mr. Milner. The Master, however, went out of his way to ring up Dr. Anderson, an officer who had nothing whatever to do with the institution. That shows clearly that a man who takes an action of that kind is taking a wrong action and is not fit for the job he holds. If I had been Mr. Milner and I had the power I would have sacked the Master of the Old Men's Home.

Mr. Duff: He is a good man, though.

Mr. Roche: Did he not say that he was not aware of the conditions?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The conditions had nothing to do with him. Edwards was sent there by Mr. Milner, his own boss. When he found that the officer had come from the asylum, instead of going to Mr. Milner or to Dr. Atkinson about it, he rang up Dr. Anderson, with whom he had nothing whatever to do. When the matter was under discussion in the House we blamed Dr. Anderson for the dismissal of the officer. Now we find that it was this man, Rust. We had better send him back to the "Daily News," where he might be of more use. This is the only opportunity

I shall have to deal with this matter. Rust took an action which, in my opinion, was calculated to undermine his immediate head, Mr. Milner. A man who will try to undermine his superior officer is not fit to be entrusted with the charge of any institution, and the sooner we get rid of this man Rust the better. Rust knew very well that the discussion had taken place in the House. He knew that Dr. Anderson was blamed for the position. Did he volunteer to come before the select committee and give evidence, to point out that it was not Dr. Anderson's fault? No.

Mr. Roche: He said he was labouring under a misconception.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: He said nothing of the kind. The last evidence we took was from Dr. Anderson. I rang up Rust and asked if it was true. Rust said, "Yes, it is, but I did not know under what conditions Edwards was dismissed." No matter what the conditions, they had nothing to do with Rust. If Edwards had been dismissed for thieving, it had nothing to do with Rust.

Mr. Roche: If you did not call him, he had no opportunity for clearing himself.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have told you what he said.

Mr. Duff: That was only over the telephone.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: He confirmed it. He said, "I admit speaking to Dr. Anderson on the telephone in regard to this matter. I thought it was not right for a man dismissed from one institution to be put in another institution under the same conditions, but I was not aware at the time of the conditions under which Edwards was dismissed."

Mr. Duff: Seeing that it was so serious an allegation, do you think the telephone was sufficient?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We had other evidence at the time. My point is that we blamed another man wrongly. No matter what Edwards did at the institution, if Rust found out that Edwards was discharged from that institution, it was Rust's place to speak to his superior officer, Mr. Milner, and not to Dr. Anderson, with whom he had no connection. He tried to undermine his superior officer.

Mr. Duff: It looks like an act of indiscretion, that is all.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is easy to term it indiscretion. If I had power to sack the man Rust, I would do so.

The Minister for Mines: You would ask him to find out whether he was going to resign.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I think things are not altogether satisfactory at the Old Men's Home. I intend to go there, but I have been too busy lately. I have had several complaints from the institution, and I intend to go along and see things

for myself. In respect to the officials of the Medical and Health Department, I think most of them endeavour to carry out their work to the best of their ability.

Mr. HARRISON (Avon) [11.16]: I am surprised at the remarks made by the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin). I wish to draw attention to the wide disparity between the voluntary subscriptions to the Perth and Fremantle public hospitals, on the one hand, and the country hospitals on the other. These two hospitals at Perth and Fremantle are not supported by the citizens as they ought to be, as compared with hospitals in the country districts. Something ought to be done by the public to more fully maintain the Perth and Fremantle hospitals, instead of our having these large and increasing grants on the Estimates.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Fremantle people have subscribed over £5,000.

Mr. HARRISON: We have on the Estimates these grants to the hospitals in Perth and Fremantle. We have 25 assisted hospitals, yet those on the goldfields and in country districts are almost solely maintained by public subscription. All that they get on the Estimates is £8,000.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Take the Government hospitals.

Mr. HARRISON: The money supplied under this vote should go increasingly to the country hospitals. To keep people in country districts, two things are supremely necessary, namely, the provision of educational facilities, and secondly the provision of hospital or medical facilities. The State contributions to country hospitals ought to be far more liberal than at present. I remember that the Ugly Men's Association took up this point long ago. Such a board would be a good thing for Western Australia, and I trust something in this direction will be done. I endorse the remarks made by other country members regarding the need for bush nursing. I am glad the Minister for Works recognises the utility and success of motor ambulances. It was pleasing to hear the leader of the Opposition express the opinion that the country districts should be better served in the matter of medical attention. I am surprised that the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin) should put up a case that the country districts—

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They do not contribute a shilling.

Mr. HARRISON: The country districts are contributing all the time, for, as taxpayers, the residents of the country have to help to find the money for this vote.

Mr. JONES (Fremantle) [11.21]: I move—

That progress be reported.

Motion put and passed.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11.22 p.m.

## Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 19th November, 1919.

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

### ASSENT TO BILLS.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:

- 1, Mining Act Amendment.
- 2, State Children Act Amendment.
- 3, Midland Railway Company.
- 4, Supply Bill (No. 2).

### QUESTION—LAND SETTLEMENT, MANJIMUP.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON asked the Minister for Education: 1, What area of land has been surveyed and subdivided for settlement in the district of Manjimup? 2, How many blocks have been made so available? 3, How many blocks have been sold or taken up? 4, How many blocks have been forfeited? 5, How many blocks are now being worked? 6, What area in this district has been ring-barked by the Government? 7, What has been the cost of these activities?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: The answer to this question will involve the preparation of a return, which the hon. member can move for if he so desires.

### BILL—POSTPONED DEBTS.

Read a third time and passed.