

NOMS.

Mr. Angwin
Mr. Collier
Mr. Davies
Mr. Holman
Mr. Jones
Mr. Lambert
Mr. Mitchell

Mr. Munsie
Mr. Rocks
Mr. Troy
Mr. Walker
Mr. Willcock
Mr. O'Loughlin
(Teller.)

Motion thus passed.

House adjourned at 10.33 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 10th December, 1918.

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

OBITUARY—HON. FRANK WILSON, C.M.G.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [4.33]: A few weeks ago it was my painful duty to acquaint the House with the death of Lord Forrest. To-day members are called upon to express their appreciation of the public services of one who, next to the late Lord Forrest, may fairly be regarded as the foremost Liberal politician Western Australian has produced. I have little doubt that the services of the Hon. Frank Wilson to this State will be better understood and more deeply appreciated when, after the lapse of time, they can be viewed in a true perspective. It is perhaps true that luck and merit still go hand in hand, and that your wise man is ever Fortune's favourite. There can be no question that some people enjoy wider opportunities than do others. Much of the political success of the late Lord Forrest was due to the unerring instinct and the lofty courage with which he "took the current when it served." The late Hon. Frank Wilson, by contrast, was faced with pinched opportunities. The period 1905 to 1911, during which he occupied important offices in different Administrations, culminating with the holding of the dual portfolio of Premier and Colonial Treasurer, was a period of acute financial difficulty, resulting from the termination of the period during which Western Australia received revenues from the special Western Australian sliding scale of duties. And again, his period of office as Premier and Colonial Treasurer from July, 1916, to June, 1917, was overshadowed by the war, and the disturbance of all our industries. I am sure that in the future it will be recognised, not only that the late Hon. Frank Wilson rendered invaluable services

to the State in exceptionally trying circumstances, but also that had he been more favoured by opportunity he would have won in unequalled measure that immediate popular applause which is bestowed rather upon success than upon endeavour. Whilst there are members of the House who hold somewhat different views from those of the late Hon. Frank Wilson on political matters, there are none that did not admire his sterling character, none that did not value his unswerving and always loyal friendship. Most of us feel a sense of personal loss by his death. Personally, having had the honour of serving as one of his Ministers for a period of nearly twelve months, I can only say that the very intimate association resulting from that connection served to deepen my admiration of his qualities and to cement the friendship that had existed between us for so many years. It was not only in the political arena that the late Hon. Frank Wilson rendered exceptional services to Western Australia. No man had greater faith in the resources of the country, and no man gave more practical evidence of that faith. Two of our most important industries, the timber industry and the coal mining industry, owe much to his confidence, to his enterprise, to his sound business judgment, and to the determination he always showed to carry to a successful issue anything he took in hand. The commercial and industrial interests of our State are the poorer for his death. Whilst we are so conscious of the great public and personal loss we have sustained by the death of the late Hon. Frank Wilson, our deepest sympathies will be extended to his widow and family, to his family who are here, and also to those two soldier sons whose homecoming, so ardently looked forward to, will be so saddened by this event. We can only hope that the appreciation of their late husband and father, expressed so widely throughout the State and emphasised so emphatically by the conspicuous honour paid yesterday to his remains by all sections of the community, will in some measure assuage their grief. I move—

That this House desires to place on record its appreciation of the public services rendered to the State by the late Hon. Frank Wilson, C.M.G., and to express its deepest sympathy with his family in the irreparable loss which they have sustained; and that the President be requested to forward the foregoing resolution to the relatives of the deceased gentleman.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan) [4.39]: I feel that but few words are required from me in seconding the motion moved by the leader of the House. Indeed, no words could add anything to the magnificent tribute of public feeling and affection paid to the late Hon. Frank Wilson by the attendance at his funeral obsequies yesterday. I do not think that in the history of the State there has been another occasion when all classes and all creeds of political and private opinion met to do unanimous honour to a deceased statesman, as was the case yesterday. For myself I have had very long experience of and long friendship with the deceased gentleman. We

came into Parliament at the same election in 1897. I have had opportunities of viewing his work and his life from what I might describe as a variety of angles. I have been his colleague, and I have been in opposition to him, and always have I found that he commanded my respect and admiration; for some qualities perhaps above others, and those were quickness of perception, determination, and promptitude of action, all of which are badly needed in this State. The political life of this State lost a very great factor when the deceased gentleman passed away. It is also to be regretted that his last days were, perhaps, embittered by the notorious ingratitude of the public—which manifested itself in his case more than in the case of most men—by the fact that a portion of the State should have thought fit to reject services which had been used for the benefit of the State for so many years. I feel that this country has suffered a very great loss by the death of the late Hon. Frank Wilson, and it affords me a certain pride to be able to second the motion which has been so ably and eloquently moved by the leader of the House.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES (North) [4.42]: I feel impelled to say a few words in support of the motion so ably moved by the leader of the House and so ably seconded by Mr. Kingsmill. It has been my good fortune to be closely associated with the late hon. gentleman for nearly 25 years. After 25 years' experience, I can honestly and truthfully say that I know nothing but good of him. The sad part of it is that I received a message from him at the end of last week saying that he would like to see me for ten minutes or so. I arranged to see him yesterday, only to find when the time came that he had passed away. The example he set in public life, in commercial life, and in his home life, would have been a credit to any of us who had the capacity and strength of character to live up to the standard he set. The best tribute that could be paid to the late hon. gentleman was paid to him about three months after the Labour party assumed office, when they announced that they had searched every office he had ever been in, had scrutinised every file that had passed under his hand, and that they could find nothing but evidence of his ability, his honesty, and his integrity. That tribute, coming as it did when he was thought to be in the prime of life, meant far more than anything that can be said now, when it is too late. The lesson we have to learn is that, when we have a man of the character and capacity of the late Hon. Frank Wilson, prepared to do his duty, as the late hon. gentleman did, then I say let Parliament and the public rally round him and stand to him, not when it is too late but at a time when they can be of some service to him. My sympathy goes out to Mrs. Wilson and her family in their sad bereavement. I find it almost impossible to convey in words my appreciation of the deceased gentleman. I can only say, "Think of what a good husband and a good father ought to be. He was that." I have much pleasure in supporting the motion so ably moved and seconded.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE (South-West) [4.45]: I also wish to pay my tribute of respect to the late Mr. Wilson. Though not an intimate friend of his, I was a great admirer of the deceased gentleman. He was one who possibly took some little time to make up his mind as to who were his real friends; but through it all there was that dignified, sterling character which always stands out foremost in my mind when I think of Mr. Wilson. As has been remarked, he was a keen business man; and he was also a strong and keen debater, and his opponents could never breathe one word against him personally. He was one of those men whose sterling qualities are not fully recognised until it is too late. Mr. Wilson was keen at everything he took in hand. No man who knew Mr. Wilson personally, could do other than respect him as a politician and as a gentleman, the type of politician and of man that we want in Western Australia.

Hon. H. CARSON (Central) [4.46]: As one who enjoyed the very high privilege of sitting in the Assembly with Mr. Wilson for some years, I too desire to pay my tribute of respect to the deceased gentleman's memory. Mr. Wilson was unlike many politicians of to-day: he did not take the line of least resistance. He was a courageous fighter, and fought for his ideals. During his service in Parliament he had a most strenuous time, and in him Western Australia has lost indeed a valuable asset. To sum up Mr. Wilson's character, one need only say that he was a thorough gentleman. I heartily support the motion.

Hon. J. E. DODD (South) [4.47]: I regret very much the occasion which has arisen for the moving of this motion. For no public man of Western Australia had I a greater admiration, in some respects, than for the late Mr. Wilson. In my opinion, the term from 1911 to 1914 during which Mr. Wilson led the Opposition in the Assembly, was the greatest period of his career. The late gentleman was then faced with an almost hopeless task, and in his discharge of it he commended himself not only to his friends, but also to his political opponents. Whether what Mr. Holmes has stated is correct, I am not in a position to say; but I can state that the late Labour Government had an intense admiration for Mr. Wilson both as a man and as a fighter. I do not know of anyone who was more deeply imbued with the British bull dog courage and tenacity than Mr. Wilson. I am indeed glad to pay this tribute to his memory. I would also like to say, perhaps by way of imparting a personal touch, that when the war broke out the Government of which I was a member, invited Mr. Wilson to several Cabinet meetings in order to secure the benefit of his advice, because we recognised that he was undoubtedly a strong and able man. May I also say that at a later period, when the war became so serious, Mr. Wilson's son went to France in the same unit as one of my own boys. The last time ever I saw Mr. Wilson, we were able to exchange news regarding what was taking place in the unit in which our lads were fight-

ing. If one thing would tend to lessen political animosity and political antagonism, it is the fact that our two boys were fighting in the same force. I deeply regret the occasion which has arisen for this motion.

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES (North) [4.49]: I desire to add a few words, and I fully endorse the remarks which have fallen from the mover and from the other speakers. Personally, I had known the late Mr. Wilson for 26 years. I went to work under him when I was a lad of 19, and I worked under him for seven years; and I can say this of Mr. Wilson, that he was always the same no matter what position a man occupied in life. To one and all, Mr. Wilson was the same good old British gentleman. I consider it an honour to have been one of his pall bearers yesterday—an honour which I shall remember all my life. As to the report published of the funeral, I consider it was a slight oversight to state that a large number of members of both Houses of Parliament also attended. In my opinion, it would have been better had the names of those members been mentioned, more particularly in view of the fact that the whole of the late Mr. Wilson's political opponents were present. A man could not have had a greater tribute than that paid to him by his political opponents. As an old friend of his, I greatly appreciate the eulogy passed on the deceased gentleman by the leader of the Opposition, Mr. Collier. Nothing could have come better, and I feel sure the deceased gentleman's relatives greatly appreciate the sentiments expressed by Mr. Collier. While regretting that the names of members of Parliament who attended the funeral have not been published, I support the motion.

Hon. H. J. SAUNDERS (Metropolitan) [4.51]: When the late Mr. Wilson entered public life, I had the honour of being Mayor of Perth; and I fully endorse all the appreciative expressions which have been uttered by members of this House regarding my late friend. Mr. Wilson was of great service to the city when he sat as a councillor, and he has been of still greater service to the State of Western Australia. Indeed, I believe that had it not been for his trouble and anxieties over State affairs, our friend would have been with us to-day. He was a gentleman, and he was a man of his word. If he said he would do a thing, he did it. If he said yes in reply to a request, it was yes; and if he said no, one might as well never speak to him on that subject again. I have had many private transactions with Mr. Wilson, and always found him a man of his word and absolutely a white man. I deeply regret the loss which the State has suffered in the death of our friend, also the loss his family have sustained, and they have my deepest sympathy.

Question put and passed, members standing.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [4.52]: As a further

mark of the respect of members for the late Mr. Wilson, I move —

That the House do now adjourn.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.53 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 10th December, 1918.

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

OBITUARY—HON. FRANK WILSON, C.M.G.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore) [4.32]: On Saturday evening last there passed away from us one who had been closely associated with the public life of this country for 20 years. His severance from this world came after a long and painful illness, borne with characteristic fortitude, and, I may say, with cheerfulness. The name of the Hon. Frank Wilson is well known throughout Western Australia. In the course of a long and labourious public life he was one who never spared himself. For a long time he was in the thick of the fight. Perhaps no Government ever had a harder time than the Government over which he presided. He will be remembered by this House as one of its keenest debaters, a man of remarkable tenacity of purpose, and great determination. His courage was characteristic of the man. I may safely say we all missed him when he did not return to this Chamber. I may also safely say that he filled a niche which no one but himself was able to fill. No one possibly had been more closely associated with the political life of this country for many years past, and no one had been more thoroughly through the turmoil and struggles of a political career. There must be turmoil for all who engage in political life, but he surmounted all the difficulties which came before him, and left behind him a distinguished and honourable name. He had many friends, and when the adoption of these friends was tried he grappled them to his soul with hoops of steel. He was a good friend and a loyal friend to all with whom he was associated. He has passed away to the great majority, as we all have to do, and yesterday we laid him to rest from all the trials of this world. It was a fitting tribute to one who had been so actively associated with the life of this country. This House would, I am quite sure, desire to offer a further tribute to the memory of our departed friend, who held such a high and memorable