

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Read a third time and *passed*.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Second Day.

Order of the Day for resumption of debate on the Address-in-Reply, read.

On motion by Hon. G. Randell, debate further adjourned.

House adjourned at 4.45 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Friday, 30th July, 1909.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (2)—PREFERENCE TO IMMIGRANTS.

Mr. DAGLISH asked the Minister for Railways: 1, How many assisted immigrants to this State have been engaged at the Midland Junction workshops during the past six months? 2, Why such persons received preference over applicants of long standing citizenship in the State?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1. During the last six months 239 men have been engaged at the Midland Junction workshops. In 15 cases their papers showed that they were recent

arrivals from Great Britain; 12 of them are still employed. The department does not know whether they are assisted immigrants or not. 2, No preference was shown to the 15 men referred to in answer No. 1. Their applications were dealt with in the usual way. I have not been able in the short time at my disposal to make sufficient enquiries to answer the question as fully as I would like, but I will have the information supplied to the hon. member.

Mr. DAGLISH: I should like, if I may say it, that the Minister should give preference to persons who have been resident here for years.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: All things being equal most decidedly we would do so. I fancy we have recently had to put on a large number of men in connection with new works in locomotive repairing, and it is possible that it happened through this, but I promise the hon. member that I will make further inquiries.

Mr. DAGLISH asked the Premier: 1, What preference of employment immigrants from England receive over local workers at the Labour Bureau? 2, Why is such preference given? 3, Upon whose instructions?

The PREMIER replied: No preference is given.

QUESTION—TANAMI GOLDFIELD, ROUTE.

Mr. ANGWIN (*without notice*) asked the Minister for Mines: Will the Minister take into consideration the advisability of opening up a route for traffic between the port of Broome and the lately discovered goldfield at Tanami, close to the boundary of this State, as such a route will probably make a considerable saving in time and expense to parties proceeding to this field, and will in addition result in the opening up of Western Australian territory.

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: In connection with the reported discovery of gold at Tanama, since the information was wired to us, I gave instructions to the geological officer travelling with the Canning expedition that he

should immediately go out there to report as to the nature of the discovery, and also that he should advise me as to whether any expenditure should be incurred for the purpose of opening up a route from Hall's Creek. I do not expect to receive any reply within a month from that officer, and if he makes any recommendation advising us to supply water along the route members can rest assured that every action will be taken by the Mines Department with a view to opening up the route. I would also like to say that all we know is that a certain quantity of gold, or rather rich specimens, has been discovered, but that fact should not induce us to believe that a big goldfield exists there, and I would like to prevent anything in the nature of people rushing there unless they have a good outlook. The country is very difficult to prospect; in the summer months it is exceedingly arid, and unless parties are particularly well equipped they may go there with very disastrous results to themselves.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Premier: 1, Balance-sheet of the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board for 1908; 2, Order in Council under Sec. 35 of the Audit Act.

SITTING DAYS AND HOURS.

On motion by the Premier resolved: "That the House, unless otherwise ordered, shall meet for the despatch of business on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, at 4.30 p.m., and shall sit until 6.15 p.m. if necessary; and, if requisite, from 7.30 p.m. onwards."

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS. PRECEDENCE.

On motion by the Premier resolved: "That on Tuesdays and Thursdays Government business shall take precedence of all motions and Orders of the Day."

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

On motions by the Premier sessional committees were appointed as follow:—
Standing Orders Committee: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Foulkes, Mr. Collier, Mr.

Hudson, and the Chairman of Committees, with leave to sit during any adjournment, and with authority to confer upon subjects of mutual concernment with any Committee appointed for similar purposes by the Legislative Council.

Library Committee: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Draper, and Mr. Walker, with leave to sit during any adjournment and during the recess, and with authority to act jointly with the Library Committee of the Legislative Council.

Printing Committee: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Brown, and Mr. Scaddan; to assist Mr. Speaker in all matters which relate to the printing executed by order of the House, and for the purpose of selecting and arranging for printing returns and papers presented in pursuance of motions made by members, and all papers laid upon the Table whether in answer to addresses or otherwise.

House Committee: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Gordon, Mr. Underwood, Mr. Taylor, and Mr. Price, with leave to sit during any adjournment and during the recess, and with authority to act jointly with the House Committee of the Legislative Council.

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

The PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore) moved:

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable resolutions from the Committee of Supply and Ways and Means to be reported and adopted on the same day on which they shall have passed those Committees and also the passing of a Supply Bill through all its stages in one day.

Mr. BATH (Brown Hill): This motion merely asked for the suspension of Standing Orders in order to permit all these resolutions passing through all stages in one day, but in the Standing Orders it was provided that no business other than of a formal character should be entered on until the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's opening Speech was adopted. Under this Standing Order could we proceed with these resolutions?

Mr. SPEAKER: There were several precedents for this course, not only in this State but in the House of Representatives in the Parliaments of Queensland, New South Wales, and South Australia; and as this motion was only of a formal nature it must be in order.

The PREMIER: The point raised by the Leader of the Opposition was whether the wording "that so much of the Standing Orders be suspended" would not include the necessary power to allow us to deal with the resolutions.

Mr. SPEAKER had understood that the Leader of the Opposition referred to Standing Order 34 which said, "No business beyond what is of a formal character shall be entered upon before the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's opening Speech has been adopted." This was a formal motion.

Mr. BATH: The point taken was that so far as the suspension of the Standing Orders was concerned it only applied to the passage of the Supply Bill and the resolutions in Committee of Supply of Ways and Means, permitting them to go all through their stages in one day. The suspension explicitly referred to that and not to the suspension of Standing Order 34.

Mr. SPEAKER had understood the hon. member was raising the point as to whether the motion moved by the Premier was a formal motion. It was a formal motion in accordance with notice.

The PREMIER: In order to arrive at the position to enable resolutions of the Committee of Ways and Means to be passed it would be necessary in the first instance to have a Message from His Excellency the Governor. That was also necessary to enable a Supply Bill to be introduced.

Question passed.

BILL—SUPPLY, £979,045.

All stages.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation in connection with this Bill.

The PREMIER AND TREASURER (Hon. N. J. Moore) moved—

That the House do now resolve itself into a Committee of Supply and also of Ways and Means for the purpose of considering His Excellency the Governor's Message No. 1, recommending that an appropriation be made out of the Consolidated Revenue and from moneys to credit of General Loan Fund and from Loan Suspense Account for the purposes of a Bill for "An Act to apply out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund and from moneys to credit of the General Loan Fund and from the Loan Suspense Account the sum of nine hundred and seventy-nine thousand and forty-five pounds to the services of the year ending 30th June, 1910."

Question put and passed.

In Committee of Supply.

Mr. Daglish in the Chair.

The PREMIER moved—

"That there be granted to His Majesty on account of the services of the year 1909-10 a sum not exceeding £979,045.

He said: As members are aware, it is necessary that until the Estimates have been appropriated by this House temporary supplies should be secured, and the sum of £979,045 represents an amount equal to, approximately, one-quarter of the Estimates, and it represents the money necessary to provide salaries for the public service and also to carry on works which have already been authorised by Parliament and which are in course of progress. The reason we have brought this measure forward so early this session is that, as members know, to-morrow will be the 31st July, and it is necessary that provision should be made for the salaries. Therefore I will ask the Committee to be good enough to agree to this motion for the necessary supplies for the services of the State for approximately a period of three months.

Mr. BATH: I would point out to the Premier that he has exceeded the amount usually asked for in connection with the granting of supplies prior to the submis-

sion of the Estimates to the House. As he pointed out, to-morrow is the 31st July, which means that only one month of the financial year has now passed. If supplies for one month in addition were asked for, in view of the wishes expressed by the Premier, it would mean that only one-sixth of the estimated amount required for the year would be needed instead of one-fourth as asked for. I presume we can anticipate that at the end of August, or in September, the Estimates will be submitted, and if further supplies are needed then the House could be asked to consider the question; but for the Government to ask now for three months supplies is more than is usually sought for by a Treasurer asking for money before the Estimates have been brought forward.

The PREMIER: Last year supplies for four months were obtained, but that was in order to carry on over the general election. I hope to be able to bring down the Budget earlier this year than has been the case for the last five or six years.

Mr. Johnson: We have the same promise every year.

The PREMIER: The Estimates are now further in advance than they have been for many years. I hope if I go to the Eastern States I shall be able to take the Estimates of some of the Departments with me.

Mr. Scaddan: And never bring them back.

The PREMIER: I do not put that forward as an argument why I should not be allowed to go to the Eastern States. The Leader of the Opposition has pointed out that the supplies are needed in order to carry us over the interval between now and the date when the Budget is introduced. The earliest date the Budget has been introduced was on the 6th October, 1903, with the exception of one year, when my colleague introduced it on the 1st October, 1906.

Mr. Bath: Then he went to Melbourne.

The PREMIER: I hope to be able to carry out the promise I have made to bring down the Budget early this year, as I realise it is necessary that we

should have the opportunity of discussing the Estimates in detail before one-half of the financial year has expired.

Mr. JOHNSON: Every year we have this same promise that the Estimates will be brought down early, and every year members enter a protest against the lateness of their introduction. There is only one way in which the House can compel Ministers to carry out their promise, and that is to refuse supplies. I do not doubt the promise of the Premier which is made to-day, but the fact remains we have been given that promise every year. We have taken it in good faith, and year after year the promise has not been fulfilled. The way for members to enter an emphatic protest against this course, and the one way in which they can obtain a guarantee that the Estimates will be forthcoming at a reasonable date, is to refuse supplies. If supplies for a lengthy period are granted it means we will not get the Estimates until the greater portion of the year has expired. The Government should be compelled to bring down the Estimates within a reasonable time, and we should never go past September before having them under discussion.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported; the report adopted.

In Committee of Ways and Means.

On motion by the Premier resolved, "That towards making good the supply granted to His Majesty for the services of the year 1909-10 a sum not exceeding £588,25 be granted out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Western Australia, £362,320 from moneys to credit of the General Loan Fund and £28,000 from the Loan Suspense Account."

Resolution reported; the report adopted.

Supply Bill introduced.

In accordance with the foregoing resolutions a Supply Bill was introduced, and passed through all stages, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

ADJOURNMENT—PREMIERS' CONFERENCE.

The PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore): I beg to move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 4.30, Tuesday, 31st August.

I think I should give some reason for asking for this adjournment. I would like to point out to hon. members that at the present time there is a proposal to hold an inter-State Conference in Melbourne with a view to arriving at some finality in regard to the financial arrangements as between the States and the Commonwealth.

Mr. Taylor: You mean a Premiers' Conference?

The PREMIER: Well, a Premiers' Conference. I take it, it is a conference of representatives of the States and the Commonwealth also. I may say that when the Conference was first mooted I wired to the senior Premier (Mr. Wade), stating that so far as Western Australia was concerned, the time fixed for holding the conference was very inopportune, and I was not at all certain that it would be possible to agree to an adjournment of the House during the period the Conference was to be held, but at the same time I realised that if it was determined that a Conference should be held, it was essential that Western Australia should be represented. Notwithstanding that I pointed out the inconvenience, it was considered by those who were in a position to know, that it was advisable that the present Government should have the opportunity of conferring with the other State Governments with regard to the future financial proposals. Hon. members are aware that during last recess a conference was held in Hobart, at the opening of which the Federal Prime Minister, the Attorney General, and the Minister for Home Affairs were also present. Practically all the resolutions which had been unanimously agreed to at the Melbourne Conference, and which were endorsed by this House were again proposed, and a certain fixed sum was arrived at, which was considered to be absolutely the bedrock figure as far as the States were concerned. It was then

proposed that £6,750,000 should be returned by the Commonwealth to the States and that it should be divided on a per capita basis which would allow each State to receive an amount equal to £1 9s. 3d. That accounted for 6½ millions. In addition to that it was recognised that owing to the special circumstances of Western Australia, it was essential that some special consideration should be given to it, and as a result of representations made and arguments used, the Premiers agreed to the payment annually of £250,000 in addition to the per capita sum, decreasing by £10,000 per annum over a period of 25 years. This total sum would amount to £3,250,000. That is the advantage that was gained, and I would like to impress upon hon. members this fact, that the trouble of the Commonwealth Treasurer is not so much how the amount should be distributed as what the amount should be, and both the late Prime Minister (Mr. Fisher) and the present Prime Minister (Mr. Deakin) expressed their gratification at the fact that the States had decided amongst themselves the method of distribution. It will be remembered that when Sir William Lyne put his proposals before the Premiers in Melbourne last year, he then intimated that so far as the Federal Government were affected, they were not concerned as to the method of distribution. So that it is generally recognised that special consideration should be given to Western Australia and a sum has been fixed. If it were simply a question of the States and the Federal Prime Minister and Treasurer deciding what the minimum sum should be, I would say there would be no need for Western Australia to be represented at the Conference, but there is the fact, as I have said before, that the question of distribution is one entirely for the States themselves. There is an old adage, "out of sight, out of mind," and there is every probability that it might apply in this case.

Mr. Collier: They are the same Premiers.

The PREMIER: The personnel has been altered somewhat, inasmuch as in Tasmania Sir Elliott Lewis has succeeded

Captain Evans; in South Australia the late Mr. Price has been succeeded by Mr. Peake, while the New South Wales delegation to the Conference will be altered by reason of the fact that Mr. Ashton, who proved such a good friend to Western Australia, is now not a member of the Wade Cabinet. That is a strong reason why I think we should be represented. In view of the manner in which the House received and confirmed the resolutions dealt with at the Melbourne Conference, I considered that it would be advisable, with the concurrence of the other Premiers, that we should be represented, in addition to myself, by the Leader of the Opposition, and in accordance with that desire, when it was intimated to me a few days ago by the Leader of the Opposition, who was not able until then to give a reply as to whether the Opposition would be agreeable to the representation—I immediately wired and asked whether it could be so arranged to have the Leaders of the Oppositions of the various States present at the Conference. I have received no reply to that wire. I have no doubt the delay is to a large extent accounted for by the fact that the senior Premier (Mr. Wade), on whom devolves the calling of conferences together, having to consult the other Premiers, but apparently from Press intimation at least two of the Premiers are averse to the proposal. No doubt this is due to the fact that in the other States there is not the same unanimity in regard to the desirability of retaining a certain amount of the revenue.

Mr. Collier: They have weaker Oppositions.

The PREMIER: I do not know that that would make any great difference. When this Government had a much larger majority than at the present time, the Leader of the Opposition accompanied the then Treasurer.

Mr. Collier: Why did you not invite him to the last Conference?

The PREMIER: Because there was no suggestion made in regard to it. I do not think that the hon. member would accuse me of simply doing it as a political dodge. As a matter of fact we were practically

unanimous in this House that the resolutions of the Melbourne Conference should be adhered to, and as a result these resolutions were adopted unanimously by this House. I would like to say in this connection that the other States have, I believe, arranged to adjourn over a certain period. As a matter of fact both the Federal Parliament and the Victorian State Parliament have arranged to adjourn over a fortnight. Personally, I cannot see that there is nearly the same necessity for adjourning there as there is here, inasmuch as they are in very close touch there, being practically in the same building as that in which the Conference is to be held.

Mr. Collier: The Federal House has not arranged to adjourn; it is only anticipated that it will adjourn.

The PREMIER: The Prime Minister has stated that he is prepared to adjourn, and if he has a majority he will adjourn. The Victorian House will adjourn for a fortnight, and also the Tasmanian and the New South Wales Parliaments have decided to adjourn. I am not in a position to say whether Queensland will adjourn or not; apparently they have not too large a majority there. While it may be contended that it may be advisable that the House should continue in session in the absence of the Premier, I think those members who have had Parliamentary experience, recognise it is absolutely necessary that the leader of the Government, whoever he may be, should be in his place, more especially when the Address-in-Reply is in course of debate. That is the time chosen by hon. members to criticise the action of the Government, and it is only proper that the Minister responsible for the policy criticised should be in his place to listen to the criticisms and suggestions made by hon. members as well as to have the opportunity of replying to those criticisms. It was necessary to call Parliament together to obtain Supply. The other alternative would have been to prorogue Parliament for another three or four weeks, but it was much preferable, we thought, to meet the House, obtain Supply in a constitutional manner, and then secure permission of the House to ad-

journal, in order that the State should be represented at the Conference. In these circumstances, I think it is only fair and reasonable that we should call a truce to party warfare for the next three or four weeks in order to retain the advantage gained at the recent Conference in Hobart, and thus be able to secure due recognition of our position both by the Commonwealth and the other States.

Mr. BATH (Brown Hill): In reference to this motion I wish to make a few explanations, in the first place, because I think it will be necessary to disabuse the minds of some people in regard to the statesmanlike qualities they have credited me with in leading articles and speeches during the last few days. Naturally, we often differ as to what statesmanlike views are, and I may say that when the hon. the Premier first consulted me in regard to accompanying him to Melbourne, I was somewhat averse to the proposal. Knowing that the Conference had been held by the Premiers earlier in the year and that the finance resolutions carried then had confirmed the view that was endorsed by members of this House during last session I could not see the necessity for holding a Conference at such an inconvenient time, just after the assembling of Parliaments in the various States. I may say also that I have another view, and I have not altered it, namely, that in relation to the motives which prompted Mr. Wade in convening the Conference. At the time it was mooted I credited Mr. Wade with the design of assisting the party desires of the present Federal Government which is now in control; and the attitude which has since been assumed and the proposals which he asks shall be considered at that Conference over and above the finance proposals, confirm me in that view. I did not want to go under false pretences. I certainly could have gone and cordially endorsed the attitude of the Premier and the resolutions of this House in regard to the financial considerations—in regard to the basis upon which the surplus revenue should be distributed, and in regard also to that additional amount which Western Australia is entitled to; entitled

to, not as a consideration, that is, not as a special consideration, but rather as a return to Western Australia of that large amount per head of population which is contributed by our population, and which, of course, involves extra expenditure in administration.

Mr. Jacoby: It is our own money.

Mr. BATH: Yes, and therefore is not in the nature of a special consideration. I could have gone that far and assisted the Premier; but at the time I was consulted I felt it would not answer if it came to other considerations, the introduction of proposals by other Premiers with the object of making party capital for the present Federal Government. In such case I certainly would be compelled to take up a different attitude, and I did not want to go to Melbourne and perhaps be in opposition to some of the proposals put forward by the Premier, or in opposition to the views he might take of such propositions by other Premiers. That was the view I gave to the Premier. At the same time I said as I was asked to go as Leader of the Opposition I thought it was my duty to consult the members of my party. I did so, and they felt that if the Leaders of the Oppositions in the various States were represented I should also go, and that if any of these propositions of which I have spoken should be brought forward for party purposes it would be my plain duty at the conference to deal with them from my own point of view, and consequently I would have the fullest authority from them to take up what attitude I thought right. Under those circumstances the resolution was adopted. On my return to Perth I had an interview with the Premier and personally stated my views. He put before me what he considered was the urgent need for me to go, representing that if we appeared to be indifferent the Conference might alter their decision and their resolutions in regard both to the distribution and the extra amount which would be provided for Western Australia. He stated that although it would be at an inconvenient time for himself he felt that as the Conference was to be held it was his duty to be present; and under

those circumstances I said that so far as I was concerned, while I could not bind the members of the party—as this was a matter in which they had an entirely independent hand—so far as I was personally concerned I would not object to an adjournment to enable the Premier to go to Melbourne. I want to point out, though, that I fail to see why it should be necessary to adjourn until August 31st. The Premier in his first statement in the Press said he thought it would be sufficient to adjourn till August 23rd.

The Premier: The only reason is this: I telegraphed them to the effect that if they could get through by the 19th I could get back home on the Tuesday. I have had no reply to that telegram, and I now notice that the Victorian House is adjourning from the 12th to the 24th. Under those circumstances I have concluded that it would be advisable to secure the additional week.

Mr. BATH: Well, although it appears to me that the proposed adjournment is a very long one, still as I said before, having assured the Premier that I would not personally oppose the adjournment I am not going to do so. But I just wish to sound a note of warning to members, and it is this: so far as Western Australia is concerned, so far as State rights, its financial position, or any other thing pertaining to the welfare of Western Australia is concerned, we will have to adopt an entirely different view from that taken in the past if we are to conserve even the powers we have at the present time. I want to point out that so far as this Assembly and the Federal Parliament is concerned we appeal to the same electors; and the one thing that actuates the mind of the majority of people in Western Australia is not so much a question of State boundaries, or of any friction supposed to exist between the States and the Commonwealth as it is a question of what is best for the welfare of the people, and the best means of securing it. And they are people, many of them, who are ahead of the average of this Assembly in the advancement of their opinions; people

who will secure those reforms by the shortest way. And if they find that through the Federal Parliament they can not only get more liberal legislation and more liberal administration but a more earnest attention to business, we are going to lose our influence as the years go by. What I would say is that here in Western Australia, if we want to retain our autonomy, if we want to retain what we have at the present time, we should be concerned not so much with quarrels or differences with the other States, but with the making of our own Government, our own Legislature, and our own Constitution rival those of the Commonwealth in liberality. And if we continue these delays, if the people see that we are adjourning, that we are not meeting to carry out that legislation and administration which they desire, then we are doing ourselves an injury. As it is at present there are people who say, and say emphatically, that Parliament should meet a great deal earlier, and that the time fixed for this year, July, was altogether too late. They point to the fact that the Federal Parliament meets much earlier and deals with its business much earlier, and they make comparisons entirely unfavourable to us. We want to bear these facts in mind; and while, as I say, I am not going to oppose the adjournment, I think that the Premier—I would not have been averse to pairing with him—should recognise that we can still continue the business of the House and get on with that business without the position of the Premier or his colleagues being in any way jeopardised. I do not know whether he is suspicious of his colleagues that he finds it necessary to adjourn in order that they may have no opportunity of supplanting him. We could have dealt with the Address-in-Reply. Surely the ex-Treasurer and the new Attorney General are quite equal to meeting the attacks of the members of the Opposition. Then we could have dealt with first and second readings of legislation that is proposed. We certainly could have dealt with business which would have facilitated the work of the session and yet in no way compromised the position of the Premier. I just ven-

ture these few remarks and at the same time again repeat that in view of the assurance I have given to the Premier I am not going to personally oppose the adjournment.

Mr. WALKER (Kanowna): Whilst fully recognising that it is the duty of this State to do all that it possibly can to participate in any scheme which involves the future welfare of this part of the Commonwealth, I am regretting the necessity at this moment for taking the very extraordinary procedure of coming down with the Supply Bill before the Address-in-Reply is completed, a course which I venture to say is entirely unconstitutional and a most dangerous precedent to set up.

The Premier: There are any number of them.

Mr. WALKER: There are not any number of them, and I question whether those precedents which are alluded to as a sort of excuse for this are such as have been tested; that is to say, that the point has not been taken at the proper time. And if all the precedents which are cited were to be thrown at us it cannot be denied that it is a departure from the old law that has prevailed in England ever since constitutional liberty was won. There is no precedent in England for it. There may be a few in the careless Legislatures that exist in the Commonwealth. Unfortunately we are getting more and more careless as the years go by, and forgetful of those landmarks which have made the British Parliament what it is, an example to all the world. I say whilst I regret all that, and whilst I recognise the unfortunate necessity that there is for the Premier going over, I cannot for the life of me see that this necessitates closing up the doors of Parliament for a whole month. Surely it will not be said that in the absence of the Premier this Parliament can do no business at all; we surely have not come to that stage where we are not to be trusted with our duties or have not any capacity to perform them. What would happen if the Premier were to fall sick? I am exceedingly sorry to see that he has his overcoat on to-day, an evidence

of weakness. If that weakness were to increase and necessitate a temporary absence from the House would the Premier advise this House to adjourn until he was able to come back to his duty? He undoubtedly would not. He would have every confidence in his colleagues then.

The Premier: I have that now.

Mr. WALKER: Where? Where is the confidence? Is there not one to be left, not one to take charge of the business? Where are all those brooms? Is there going to be a clean sweep out, a new clearing away of Ministers, or fresh changes during the Premier's absence? Is there anything of that kind to be expected? Why, the Minister just taken in, the member for Greenough, that marvellous power of strength that has broken ministries before to-day—cannot he be left now in charge of this House? Why then must we be in this helpless, this paralytic state that when the Premier goes on the high seas all the legislation of the country has to come to a standstill? What are we reduced to? What has Parliament come to? Is not there a man there (on the Government side)? Why, I believe the Minister for Works that was could be resurrected again to take charge of the Government while the Address-in-Reply is going on. I do not know I am sure that any member on this side, or on the other side, of the House particularly desires that we should be reduced to that terrible strait, that the only one who could take charge is the Minister for Works that was. I say that without any feeling. I want to know what has reduced us to this inane condition, this helplessness, this poverty of capacity on the part of the Ministry. The Premier has made one excuse that it would be well for the one who has charge of affairs—the Minister—to be able to listen to the speeches and, if necessary, to reply to them. Well, of course, we should like him to be able to listen to them very much, and we should be pleased to receive his reply; but has he never been away before when legislation was going on in this State, and has not legislation proceeded? And if what happened before went along successfully cannot it now? And though it may be

a misfortune to have the Premier absent, yet—

The Premier: You stop out too late at night when I am away.

Mr. WALKER: Well, surely that could be arranged. The Premier has only to control the Treasurer that was, only to get him a bit good tempered; and the old Attorney General is out of the way; so surely there could be now a give-and-take, and we could arrange that there should be no need to keep the House sitting all night because one's liver happened to be out of order—on the Government bench. We could arrange all that now. I see no earthly reason, but I see much harm to this institution in the course now proposed. And the harm is this: people outside are commencing to say that Parliamentarians are shirking their duties; they are beginning to say that this country does not need this House to manage it, or rather that this House does not care whether it manages the country's affairs or not, that it is quite willing to have a recess for three months, six months, or twelve months, according to the will or whim of the Ministry. The country is beginning to imagine that we are either not capable of managing our duties, or deliberately shirking them. That is the position. What is the after consequence? Simply this. There are people commencing to say, "We have no hope whatever in our local legislation. If we want to have this country so liberalised by wise and just conditions and laws, our appeal is to that great body in Melbourne, the Federal centre, and the sooner the local legislature is wiped out the better it will be for us." That is absolutely what they are saying. It is a pain to me to listen to it and to know it, and to feel that this feeling is spreading. We give strength to that opinion. I am of the firm conviction that this State needs above all a strong Government and a strong Parliament to look after it in this its present youthful and growing condition; that it needs above all a Parliament attentive to its duties, and strictly on the spot when work is to be done, exhibiting no form of laziness, no tendency to shirk its responsible duties. Yet here, because

Mr. Wade and a few others want to play ducks and drakes with conditions already reached, this House must shut up, we must stop legislation after this long recess. It is an insult to the country, and more. I say in defence of federalism and in defence of this State, it is an insult to Federation that we should have these unnecessarily constant repetitions of Premiers' Conferences. A few days have passed and we have come to a certain decision good for this State, solid and binding for this State: another Federal Government steps in, and in rush the Eastern Premiers again. "Another conference, boys!" And to oblige them for their whims and their un-federal—that is the point—their un-federal purposes, we must shut up our Legislative halls, we must be turned out from doing our duty to our constituents, all must be stopped to oblige the convenience of those Eastern Premiers, those Eastern Premiers who are selfishly grasping all for the East and themselves, who are distinctly un-federal in spirit. For their sake we must do this. For their sake, it is true, it is now necessary to spare the Premier, and spare perhaps, the Leader of the Opposition. If it is agreed to send the Leader of the Opposition he must go. It is a loss to this House to be deprived of the services of those hon. members during this period, but that we shall have to put up with, and they will have to put up with the disappointment of not being able to participate in what is proceeding in this Chamber, and in the general legislation of this country. It will be some self-denial to them, but they will have to bear it. But why should we have the further self-denial—that paralysing of legislation in the interim? That is the point. Is there nothing we can do? What is the Premier afraid of? That this side of the House will take some unfair advantage?

The Premier: You have not all your members here.

Mr. WALKER: Supposing we had them, are the Government side so devoid of capacity of managing the business of this House that they must throw bones to the dog to get worried? Cannot we in some way devise a programme of carrying on in the meantime so that party

conflicts are, to a certain extent, avoided? Are there no issues where we shall not have to turn Ministers out? But supposing it comes to turning out, what happens? The Premier goes. Well, we send the Leader of the Opposition with him. That equals the votes. Or, if the Premier goes by himself—

The Premier: You might form a coalition while I am away.

Mr. WALKER: I am afraid there is no coalition between angels and devils. I say, even supposing the Premier goes by himself and the Leader of the Opposition is left here; well, the Leader of the Opposition will pair with the Premier, and the numbers are equal. Now, where is the Premier's fear? Not that this side will take any advantage, but that there are some over there (on the Government benches). It is the fear of his own household that is making the Premier shiver.

The Premier: Not a bit of it.

Mr. WALKER: Then trust them. If the Premier can trust his own house—

The Premier: The member for Forrest and the member for Pilbara are away.

Mr. WALKER: If we brought them all here on this side we could not beat the Government side; we could not turn you out. If your side is faithful the Opposition cannot harm you. You have got us under your whip. If you have confidence in your own party there can be no danger.

The Premier: Why do all the other Parliaments adjourn?

Mr. WALKER: Why? Because they are not in the position we are in. They have not been shut up and have not just met after six months' recess. They can afford to have a healthful period of holiday, and they have not the important duties to attend to that this Parliament has. There has been no crisis in the history of this country or of the Australian States, so far as I know, where it was more important for Parliament to set silently to work and adjust the finances than is the case here in Western Australia. The others have got what they want. The other States have passed through what this State is passing through, and, perhaps, has yet more to undergo. They have had their financial

depression; they have had their periods of decay; bedrock, almost starvation and pennilessness; they have recovered; they are going ahead, and they can afford to take a spell. But we cannot. Our duty is now here; we have no time to waste. The country is not renovated by Ministers attending simply at their desks in their Ministerial offices; it is here in these halls where the legislation, here where the review, here where the suggestions, here where the commands are to be made that are to give life and energy to this country in its present state. Yet we can appear to treat with absolute indifference the great problems at our door. There are depressions weighing us down now. Treat them as nothing; have a short trip to Melbourne for three weeks; see the other Premiers; come back; Parliament is nothing. I will not believe this House is reduced to the condition that we are obliged to be in that state. There is an Address-in-Reply to discuss. The time the House sits depends upon Ministers. Each night the Minister in charge can at any time arrange to have the debate adjourned. We can sit to a reasonable hour in the meantime.

Mr. Bolton: What is a reasonable hour?

Mr. WALKER: Ten o'clock. We can sit till then each night and adjourn, and that would keep us going at least a fortnight; and then, after the Address-in-Reply is disposed of, are there no measures that can be debated up to their second-reading-stage? If Ministers be afraid to have a vote taken they can have the debates adjourned until the Premier comes back. What is to prevent it? It is only another evidence of the desire of the Ministry to avoid Parliament. Whatever good they may be doing, or ill, they are content to do it behind the back, as it were, or in the absence of Parliament. Our functions are being taken away from us. The cry of the street-man is being verified by the Ministry. "We can do without Parliament. This Parliament is no good." The Ministry are doing all they can to prove it. I strenuously object to this Parliament adjourning because the Premier, unfortunately,

is compelled to make a trip to Melbourne. I say there is work which we can do, and work which the Ministry should be able to take charge of—if not, they are very incapable—until the Premier returns; and in these circumstances I am compelled to dissent from the position taken up by the Premier and assented to by the Leader of the Opposition, to adjourn the House for such a long period.

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

Ayes	27
Noes	12
Majority for				15

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Jacoby
Mr. Barnett	Mr. Layman
Mr. Bath	Mr. Male
Mr. Brown	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Carson	Mr. Monger
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. Daglish	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Davies	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. Osborn
Mr. George	Mr. Price
Mr. Gregory	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Gordon
Mr. Horan	(Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Bolton	Mr. Swan
Mr. Collier	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Gill	Mr. Walker
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Ware
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Gaurley
Mr. McDowall	(Teller).
Mr. Scaddan	

Question thus passed.

House adjourned at 4.50 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 3rd August, 1909.

Papers presented	PAGE
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Public Health, &c.	33
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Address-in-Reply, third day	35

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.50 p.m., and read prayers.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: 1, Rules of the Supreme Court, 1909; 2, Rules under the Limited Partnerships Act, 1909; 3, Audit Act, 1904.—Amendments of the Regulations.

BILLS (3)—FIRST READING.

1, Employment Brokers; 2, Municipal Corporations Act Amendment; 3, Public Health; introduced by the Colonial Secretary.

MOTION—PHARMACY AND POISONS LAW, TO COMPILE.

Hon. M. L. MOSS (West) moved—

That the Pharmacy and Poisons Act, 1891, and its amendments be compiled in accordance with the Statutes Compilation Act, 1905.

He said: In the session of 1905 Parliament passed an Act known as the Statutes Compilation Act copied from the New Zealand Statute, and the object of the measure—which was a very short one—was to enable the work of the consolidation of Statutes to go on during a recess. That is to say, under the provisions of this Act, on both Houses of Parliament passing a resolution calling upon the Attorney General to compile an Act with its various amendments, the work could be undertaken during the recess, no alteration being made, of course, in the enactment of the Legislature. An Act so compiled could subsequently be submitted to Parliament, and if Parliament was quite satisfied that the compilation had taken