

You could not have stronger terms than that.

And the views of the trustees for carrying out the same at an estimated extra cost of about £600 or £700.

That is, above and beyond the £150 that the proposal of the Government Architect would involve—

they being fully impressed with the probability that it is not temporary work only that is required, but that there is no likelihood of the completion of the central hall being undertaken for many years.

So that this work we propose to carry out in the way indicated in the bill will last for many years. It is a proposal which the trustees place before the House, and it is grounded on the safety and convenience of the public. The trustees point out in another letter that a large number of valuable objects of art which are only partly on view now, some of them hidden away, will under their proposal be fully exposed to view, and the culture to which the hon. member for Bega referred will be rendered more easy.

Mr. WOOD: The whole question is as to who is going to pay for it!

Mr. DICK: Exactly. If the House rejects this bill we will pay the £150 according to the estimate of the Government Architect; if the House passes the bill, it will simply empower the trustees to spend £600 out of their £2,000 annual endowment.

Question put. The House divided:
Ayes, 44; noes, 15; majority, 29.

AYES.

Anderson, R. J.	Levy, D.
Anderson, W.	Mahony, W. H.
Arthur, Dr. R.	McGarry, P.
Ashton, J.	McLaurin, G. R.
Ball, R. T.	Millard, A. M.
Booth, R.	Millard, W.
Carruthers, J. H.	Moore, S. W.
Cohen, J. J.	Moxham, T. R.
Coleman, J. W.	Nicholson, J. B.
Collins, A. E.	Nobbs, J.
Crick, W. P.	O'Connor, B. B.
Davidson, R.	O'Sullivan, E. W.
Dick, W. T.	Perry, J. (Liverpool Plains)
Donaldson, R. T.	Reynoldson, G.
Fallick, J.	Sullivan, P. H.
Fell, D.	Thomas, F. J.
Gardiner, A.	Wade, C. G.
Hall, B.	Young, J. H.
Hogue, J. A.	Young, W. W.
esses, T.	
Jones, G. A.	<i>Tellers,</i>
Law, S. J.	Latimer, W. F.
Lee, C. A.	Winchcombe, F. E.

NOES.

Burgess, G. A.	Meehan, J. C.
Charlton, M.	Nielsen, N. R. W.
Edden, A.	Norton, J.
Griffith, Arthur	Perry, J. (The Richmond)
Kelly, A. J.	Wood, W. H.
MacDonell, D.	<i>Tellers,</i>
McFarlane, J.	Daley, W. M.
McGowen, J. S. T.	Estell, J.

Question so resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read the second time.

In Committee:

Clause 1 (short title) agreed to.

Clause 2. Notwithstanding anything contained in section twenty-nine of the principal act, the trustees may apply any part of the annual endowment, paid or to be paid to their credit under the authority of that section, for the year ending the thirtieth June, one thousand nine hundred and five, in making alterations or additions to the building known as the National Art Gallery of New South Wales, and laying out the grounds and 10 improving the approaches thereto.

Mr. NORTON (Surry Hills) [9·14] said it had been made clear that the real purpose of the measure was to give the trustees power to appropriate £600 of the annual endowment of £2,000 allocated for pictures, and not more than £600. There could be no harm in putting it in the bill, and he would move an amendment for that purpose.

Mr. DICK (Newcastle) [9·15] said that he would move an amendment to that effect. He moved:

That, after the word "endowment," line 4, the following words be inserted; "not exceeding £600.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment; report adopted.

House adjourned at 9·16 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 26 October, 1904.

Advances to Settlers Board—Third Readings—The Baltic Fleet—Suspension of Standing Orders—Treasury Indemnity Bill (second reading)—Ancient Lights Declaratory Bill—Coal-mines Regulation (Inspection) Bill (second reading)—Henry Waite Bequest Bill (second reading)—Constitution Act Amendment Bill—Borough of the Glebe Electric Lighting Bill—Adjournment.

The PRESIDENT took the chair.

ADVANCES TO SETTLERS BOARD.

The Hon. W. ROBSON asked the VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL,—In regard to the operations of the Advances to Settlers Board up to 30th September, 1904,—(1.) What number of loans has been applied for? (2.) What number of loans has been made? (3.) What has been the total amount of loans made? (4.) What is the amount of repayments of loans? (5.) What is the number and amount of existing loans? (6.) What is the term for which loans are made? (7.) What is the rate of interest charged? (8.) What is the percentage rate for the repayment of loans? (9.) What is the amount of arrears of interest, if any? (10.) What is the amount of arrears of repayments of loans, if any? (11.) What has been the total cost of the board's administration to the date named?

The Hon. J. HUGHES replied,—This information will be laid upon the table in the form of a return, if moved for in the usual way.

THIRD READINGS.

The following bills were read the third time :—

Master in Equity (Deputy) Bill.
City Bank Act Extension Bill.

THE BALTIC FLEET.

The Hon. W. J. TRICKETT: I desire to ask the Vice-President of the Executive Council if the Government have received any authoritative information regarding the recent attack made by the Baltic fleet on certain British fishing boats? I ask the question because I notice that the Agent-General of New Zealand has made a communication on the subject to his Government.

The Hon. J. HUGHES: As far as I am aware, we have received no information of any sort with regard to the matter.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS.

The Hon. J. HUGHES gave notice that to-morrow he would move the suspension of the standing orders to enable the following bills to be passed through all their stages in one day :—

A bill to authorise the issue of Treasury bills for purpose of the redemption of Treasury bills issued under the Treasury Bills Act of 1899; for the application of the moneys raised by such issue; and for purposes consequent thereon or incidental thereto.

A bill to apply certain sums out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of New South Wales toward the services of the year 1904-1905.

He said: I may mention that the Supply Bill explains itself. Supply expires early next week, before this House will have an opportunity of sitting again. The other bill is to meet Treasury bills falling due in London forthwith. There is a necessity to get the bills away by the mails leaving Tuesday next if possible.

TREASURY INDEMNITY BILL.

SECOND READING.

The Hon. J. HUGHES rose to move:

That this bill be now read the second time.

He said: This is a bill which becomes necessary through payments having been made, as recited in the preamble, to contractors and others in anticipation of the sanction of Parliament. The payments amount to £3,750,639 18s. 11d., as stated in the schedule. I think the House knows that when governments go out of office matters of this sort have generally to be looked into by their successors, and an indemnity obtained for the payments made. I need not take up time by going into details; they are given very fully in the bill, the object of which is merely to indemnify the Treasury and all the officials concerned for payments made by the previous Government, in anticipation of votes, which, as far as I can see, were absolutely necessary for carrying on the public service and public works.

Question proposed.

The Hon. W. J. TRICKETT: This is a character of bill we have often had before this Council. It seems to me that the amount mentioned is a very large one indeed. To use the old saying, it does not seem much when you say it quickly; but really the meaning of the bill is this: that we are asked to validate payments made during the last three or four years, amounting to £3,750,000, for which there has not been parliamentary authorisation. The Vice-President of the Executive Council, in referring to the measure, says we shall find full details in the particulars. I will ask hon. members to look through the particulars and see whether there are any details at all. Certainly the names of the departments, and mysterious items of expenditure in connection with those departments, are given;

but there is an utter blank of explanation. It amounts to this: that we are asked to pass the bill without any information at all. I suppose we have no alternative in the matter; the money has been spent and parliamentary sanction must be given for it. What I take exception to is the very large amount that has been expended. It will be seen that these unauthorised payments have gone on since 1901. Estimates are passed every year at any rate, and why are the unappropriated items of 1901 left to the year 1904 to be explained. Why was not the unaccounted expenditure of 1901 cleared up in 1902? Why was not the unauthorised expenditure of 1902 cleared up in 1903? Why is it that after four years, going back to 1901, we are coolly asked to pass a bill to indemnify the late Government for spending £3,500,000 without parliamentary sanction? I suppose that the Vice-President of the Executive Council can give us no information on the subject, and I do not see here the gentleman who preceded him, and who could perhaps tell us all about it. It is all very well to smile, but it is a transaction that would not be recognised in any other walk of life. I do not think it would be tolerated in the British Parliament. My reading about the ways and means and estimates of expenditure of the British Parliament shows that they are very rarely exceeded by any considerable amount. It is marvellous, considering the enormous expenditure that is sanctioned by the British House of Commons how nearly the expenditure is kept to the actual estimates made at the beginning of the financial year. I have thought it right to make these remarks, because if hon. members read through the schedules they will find that they give no information. If they look through the items for the different departments they will find that an enormous amount is set apart under the mysterious heading of "miscellaneous services." They go beyond anything we have ever heard before. I have not heard what debate there was on the subject in the Assembly.

The Hon. J. HUGHES: Very little!

The Hon. W. J. TRICKETT: I suppose it is of no use to ask for any information from the hon. member.

The Hon. Sir NORMAND MacLAURIN: I quite agree with what my hon. friend

says. It is much to be regretted that bills of this kind are brought forward without proper explanation. We know that, occasionally, it is necessary that payments should be made in anticipation of parliamentary sanction, especially when the Government gets monthly supply bills, because they cannot avoid having from time to time to anticipate authority for expenditure. This bill seems to me to contain items of a very extraordinary character indeed. I shall be glad if the Vice-President of the Executive Council will endeavour to explain why, in two cases, sanction should have been anticipated for the expenditure of such enormous items. I find that in 1900, in the Railway Department, parliamentary sanction was anticipated for the expenditure of £275,000; in 1901, £713,000; in 1902, £638,000; and in 1903, £226,000. We can understand the anticipation of parliamentary sanction for the expenditure of a small amount. That may be necessary; but why £750,000 should be spent before parliamentary authority was given passes my comprehension, and I think we are entitled to an explanation. It is a matter which relates to the administration of the departments. It is certainly a very curious method of book-keeping. I should have thought that it would have been desirable for some gentleman from the Treasury to explain the reason of it. We are entitled to understand what the Government are doing, and it would be very interesting to know why in 1901 the Railway Department anticipated parliamentary authority for the expenditure of £713,000. Surely there must have been some arrangement made. The next great offender is the Department of Public Instruction. In that department, in the year 1902-3, a sum of £116,000 was expended in advance of parliamentary sanction. I have not the slightest doubt that it is all right, but surely that cannot be a good method of managing public affairs. I think there need be no surprise that we have from time to time so many overdrafts on the consolidated revenue fund when we find that it is an habitual thing for the departments to anticipate parliamentary authority for the expenditure of such immense sums. If the Vice-President of the Executive Council can explain the matter, we shall be very glad. What I

particularly want to know is why the Railway Department in 1901 anticipated the sanction of Parliament for the expenditure of £713,000, and in 1902 for the expenditure of £638,000.

The Hon. S. CHARLES: It seems very strange to me that the Government should have to bring in this bill. Nothing could damage our credit more with the financiers of England than the knowledge that we have gone on for three years spending money without the sanction of Parliament. I think it is one of the most serious things that has been brought before the public for years. What would be said of a banking establishment that closed its books for three or four years and gave neither the shareholders nor the creditors any knowledge of what they were doing? It would damn the banks completely. The Government have the management of the financial affairs of the country, and they propose to ask us to allow them to undertake the management of certain banks; but if this is the way in which they manage things, what is the country to expect? It seems extraordinary to me that the whole business should go on for three or four years without matters being brought before Parliament.

The Hon. N. HAWKEN: It seems to me that this indemnity bill is one which would tend to show that, to a greater or less extent, democratic rule is a failure. No king, however powerful, would dare to spend a sum of money like this in any country regardless of the will of the people. It seems to me that, if this sort of thing is allowed to go on, the question of impeachment in some form will be essential, in order that the affairs of the country may be carried on in a way that would be satisfactory to everybody. Why did not the Government that spent this money bring in a bill of indemnity and clear up the mess that they made with regard to economics before they went out of power? Why did not that Government, at least once in each year, put before this Parliament an account of moneys spent without the leave of Parliament, and get an indemnity each year. It appears to me that, as the Government has gone out of office, we are compelled now to give an indemnity. What would happen if Parliament refused the indemnity? We have universal suffrage, we have socialistic measures, we have everything

[*The Hon. Sir Normand MacLaurin.*

which is intended to help the country, and to make the people happier and better, so as to gain a superfluity of enjoyment; but in the economic line where are the gentlemen who should attend to these things? Where were the labour party, which, during the last five years, have been watching the finances of the country, and have yet allowed this £3,750,000 in this "hugger-mugger" manner to be spent without the will of Parliament? That is a question that must become serious if the country is to retain its credit. Although I shall be compelled to vote for the bill, I indignantly protest against this piling up of expenditure without a shred of authority. A sum of between three and four millions has been spent, and now they ask us to pass a bill of indemnity. With regard to these miscellaneous services, how do we know whether the money has been spent? Has any of this money been applied to the payment of the Public Works Committee?

The Hon. J. HUGHES: No; the details are all given!

The Hon. N. HAWKEN: I asked the question because I understand that there is a large sum of money under the heading of "Miscellaneous" which has been spent without the authority of Parliament. Was any of that money used for the payment of those committees which Parliament has condemned for years past? These are questions which ought to be answered. It must not be imagined that I am blaming the present Government. What we are dealing with is a legacy left to them by the previous Government; and it is a worse trait in the conduct of the Government than the charge of extravagant expenditure that has been made during the last five years. Surely these matters could have been brought before the House year by year. It is perfectly true, as has been said by the hon. member, Sir Normand MacLaurin, that no government could continue to exist and carry out its engagements without at certain times doing royal acts and spending money even without the sanction of Parliament. No one will deny that, but everyone will deny who has any sense of true economy that these sums should have been allowed to accumulate year after year, and that after the Government had gone out of power a bill of this kind should have to be brought in by their successors.

The Hon. J. HAYES: I think hon. members have reason to complain of a bill of this kind being brought in without the Vice-President of the Executive Council being in a position to give full information to the House in regard to it. I take it that the items mentioned by the hon. member, Sir Normand MacLaurin, in connection with the railways, and every one of the other items have been dealt with on the estimates. It will be found that each of these items has been passed.

The Hon. J. HUGHES: Yes!

The Hon. J. HAYES: Then why bring in a bill of indemnity?

The Hon. J. HUGHES: Because the payments were made before they were authorised by Parliament!

The Hon. J. HAYES: When the estimates were passed it cleared the Government of responsibility.

The Hon. J. HUGHES: It did not clear them of responsibility for having made payments without authority!

The Hon. J. HAYES: I think it is the first time since I have been in Parliament that such a bill has been brought in. The Audit Act, which was passed three years ago, provides that all moneys that have been expended outside the purpose for which they were appropriated by Parliament shall be referred to a committee. Then the report of the committee is submitted to the House. This seems to me an extraordinary measure to bring forward, without a particle of information about it. We are all in the dark. I myself can say nothing about it, beyond the mere fact that the items to which I have called attention have already passed both Houses and been included in the estimates.

The Hon. J. MACINTOSH: In my opinion this is the most humiliating bill that has ever been brought before any colonial Parliament. The idea of £3,750,000 having been spent without the consent of Parliament is monstrous. It shows the weakness of our parliamentary system that such matters can be tolerated. I do not think that even in England, with all the troubles which exist there, the spending of even £1,000,000 in this way would be tolerated. I do not remember an indemnity bill having ever been brought forward in England? But how can things be otherwise here? To a large

extent Parliament consists of members who represent metropolitan constituencies. There are nearly forty members representing the constituencies of Sydney and suburbs; and when any of these representatives require anything from the Government, the Government speaks with bated breath. There are nearly 20,000 voters in the service of the Government; and how can any government stand against them? About a couple of hundred years ago there was a great outcry in England about a standing army, but here we have a standing army in the employ of the Government; and how can any government stand against them? Most of them are members of different organisations, and can speak strongly. It would therefore be hard for any government to stand up for right and economical administration in the face of the terrible force that can be brought to bear against them by the large number of people whom they employ. A large proportion of this money has been spent on account of agitation by the representatives of Sydney. A sum of £200,000 has been spent in connection with education, besides what has been provided in the estimates.

The Hon. J. HUGHES: No!

The Hon. J. MACINTOSH: Then there is the item for roads and bridges. That is a good card to play because it pleases a great number of members. As to "Harbours and rivers," there is no revenue from the use of the dredges, so far as I am aware. Millions of money have been spent on the rivers, but a large portion of it has been thrown away on both the north and south coasts. I hope there will be a change in the management of affairs; and although I do not know how far to trust the professions of economy of the present Government, yet I shall give my vote at all times to support the Government when I consider it is entitled to it.

The Hon. B. R. WISE: I share the opinion of many hon. members, that a bill of this kind ought not to be presented to the Chamber without fuller explanation, and I would suggest to the Vice-President of the Executive Council, that he should postpone the discussion upon the bill until he is in a position to state officially, for the benefit, not only of ourselves, but of the public, the reasons that necessitate its introduction. I, myself, believe that those

reasons are perfectly sound. If my memory serves me rightly, a similar measure to this is introduced at every change of government, but at the same time there ought to be some official declaration to that effect. Whether such a bill is necessary or not is a matter upon which some doubt may be entertained, but I apprehend that what the bill intends is to legalise certain payments which were made prior to the passing of appropriation acts. But even then, I do not understand why it is necessary. Certainly many of the items were included in the temporary supply bills which became acts of Parliament. And if it is not really necessary to pass a measure of this kind, it is very undesirable that an opportunity should be given to those who are only too ready to criticise our financial methods of administration, to declare that this enormous sum of £3,750,000 has been spent in four years without the authority of Parliament. Of course those who really know, are aware that that is utterly incorrect. As to all the money that has been spent, the spending of it was sanctioned by Parliament, either in a temporary supply act or in an appropriation act. Whether it is technically necessary to pass an indemnity bill to relieve the officers who sanctioned expenditure in the interval between the temporary supply bill and the passing of the Appropriation Bill is a question upon which I express no opinion. It may however be necessary, for the purposes of account keeping, that there should be a general mopping up at a change of government, and that all these charges should be brought into one bill. I would urge in the interests not only of the House, but of the country, that the Vice-President of the Executive Council should agree to the adjournment of the debate, and, at the next sitting day, submit to the House an authoritative statement which could go to the country explaining the reason of this measure. If my hon. friend will allow me, I will move the adjournment of the debate—I do so in no unfriendly spirit—and if the hon. gentleman is opposed to such a course, I will withdraw my motion. I only do so to give him an opportunity of explaining the items. I move :

That the debate be adjourned until next sitting day.

[*The Hon. B. R. Wise.*

The Hon. J. HUGHES : I think the House will understand that I have never at any time shown any desire to burk the fullest inquiry, or to deprive hon. members of their right to get the fullest information upon any bill brought before us. I must confess that I am somewhat in the position of hon. members. We have been given very few details about this bill, and even the debate in the Assembly with regard to it furnished very few details. Perhaps I am to blame for not making it clear on the second reading that the bill does not in any way authorise the Government to make any payments ; the payments were made long ago. Nor does the bill in any way increase the liabilities of the public. All these payments, whatever they were, whether they were paid out of revenue or out of loan funds, have already appeared in the balance sheets of the Treasury from year to year. All treasurers, under a system which may be right or wrong, and as to which I am not asked to express an opinion, have been in the habit of paying, as this bill shows, very considerable sums out of the Treasurer's Advance Account, that is of making payments before they are authorised by Parliament. It may have been that the payments were absolutely necessary. It may have been so with regard to the amounts mentioned by the hon. member, Sir Normand MacLaurin, in connection with the railways. The Railway Commissioners require very large sums of money to pay wages, which wages are paid every fortnight ; and if, at any particular date when the wages became due, there was no appropriation bill or supply bill authorising the Treasurer to make the payments, I suppose no hon. member would quarrel with the Treasurer for paying, trusting to get an indemnity from Parliament afterwards. As a matter of fact the payments have been made, and made in that way, but I understand that every item was subsequently included on the estimates and passed by Parliament. So in no sense are they unauthorised payments. The only difficulty is that the officers who made the payment at the time, having paid away the money without the authority of Parliament, would be subject to certain pains and penalties if any individual took action against them. It is to make the matter absolutely sure, and also to give effect to a suggestion of the Auditor-General with regard

to some of the payments, that this bill is brought in. If hon. members are satisfied with this explanation of the bill, perhaps they will allow it to pass the second reading now, but if they want any further information—and I quite agree they are entitled to get it—I shall be prepared to accept the motion of the hon. and learned member, Mr. Wise, and let the debate stand adjourned until to-morrow. I leave the matter in the hands of the House.

The Hon. J. HAYES: In justice to the late Government, I think the information should be got!

The Hon. J. HUGHES: Then I will accept the motion for the adjournment of the debate.

Motion agreed to; debate adjourned.

ANCIENT LIGHTS DECLARATORY BILL.

Bill received from the Legislative Assembly, and, on motion by the Hon. Dr. Cullen, read the first time.

COAL MINES REGULATION (INSPECTION) BILL.

SECOND READING.

The Hon. J. HUGHES rose to move:
That this bill be now read the second time.

He said: This is a very short bill of two clauses dealing with section 47 of the Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1902. Under the act the miners have a right to appoint representatives at their own cost to inspect mines. As the act reads the words are "two practical working miners." That has been construed to mean that they can only appoint men who are actually in work, and it frequently happens that practical miners who are in every way qualified to represent the men and make an inspection are thereby debarred. It was mentioned by a deputation to the Secretary for Mines the other day that in one case a man, a practical miner, who had had very large experience of mines, but who, owing to an accident, had lost his arm, and, therefore, was unable to work in a mine, but possessed the fullest confidence of the men, was debarred from making an inspection. I understand there is no contentious matter in the bill. The men themselves have asked that this amendment should be made, and by omitting the word "working" before the word "miners" it means that they can select

practical miners who are not necessarily practical working miners. That is to say, the men selected to make the inspection need not be actual miners working in a mine at the time. I cannot see any objection to that. Of course, if hon. members see any objection I shall be prepared to deal with it, but personally I think the matter is simple and plain. In a matter like this I think the House might fairly pass the small amendment required, and allow a practical miner, without being necessarily a working miner at the time, to represent his fellow-men.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read the second time.

In Committee:

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2 (Amendment of section 47 of act of 1902).

The Hon. Sir NORMAND MACLAURIN said he would like to know what was the interpretation of the expression "practical miner." How could we distinguish a practical miner from any other kind of miner?

The Hon. J. HUGHES said the act provided for practical working miners—that was to say, men who were actually working in a mine at the time an inspection was made. The term "practical miner" would mean what the existing words meant, but would not be limited to a man in work at the time the inspection was made.

Clause agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment; report adopted.

HENRY WAITE BEQUEST BILL.

SECOND READING.

The Hon. J. HUGHES rose to move:
That this bill be now read the second time.

He said: This is a small and unimportant bill as far as it goes, but it is important in one direction. The late Henry Waite, by his will, made certain bequests to charities. Among them he made a bequest of £1,000 to what he called the Infirm and Destitute Asylum of Parramatta. It turned out that there was no institution answering to that particular title, although the Perpetual Trustee Company, representing the executors of the will, were perfectly satisfied that the money was intended for certain charities of Parramatta, and that there was no one else to claim it

or to question the payment. Under the circumstances, they paid the money to the Director of Government Asylums for the Infirm, who holds it at present in trust for the Parramatta institutions that were intended to benefit. All this bill proposes to do is to authorise the Director of the Government Asylums, who now has the money, to divide it in equal sums between the Parramatta District Hospital and the Parramatta Benevolent Society, those being the two local institutions in Parramatta that represent, as far as can be ascertained, what the testator intended when he left the money to the Infirm and Destitute Asylum, Parramatta.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read the second time, and reported from Committee without amendment; report adopted.

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL,

The Hon. B. R. WISE rose to move:

That leave be given to bring in a bill to enable ministers and members in charge of a bill to speak in both Houses, and to amend the Constitution Act.

He said: I propose to state very briefly what the purport of the measure referred to in the resolution is. It proposes to allow any Minister to speak in either House. It also proposes to allow any private member in charge of a bill to speak in that House of which he is not a member. The member in charge of a bill is defined as the member who has obtained the usual necessary leave to introduce it, or, in his necessary absence, some other member of that Chamber in which the bill was originally introduced, certified under the hand of the Speaker as being the substitute for that particular sitting. The general arguments in favour of a measure of this kind are not appropriately or legitimately mentioned on a motion for leave to introduce it; therefore I cannot offer any arguments in support of the bill until the second reading. I could mention, if I liked to depart from the rule which I have just laid down, that the occurrence of a few minutes ago in connection with the Treasury Indemnity Bill amply demonstrated the great advantage it would have been to the Chamber if the Colonial Treasurer could have come in and explained the measure which was before us. A precedent for a measure of this kind exists in

[*The Hon. J. Hughes.*

Victoria; but I had overlooked the fact when I drafted the bill. By the last amendment of the Constitution Act of Victoria, ministers are allowed to speak in either House; but that privilege is not extended to private members in charge of a bill. Under the French Constitution, ministers also speak both in the Senate and in the Assembly. In the United States, which, of course, is not strictly an analogous case, because of the absence of responsible government, ministers attend in either House and explain measures.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill presented, and read the first time.

BOROUGH OF THE GLEBE ELECTRIC LIGHTING BILL.

The Hon. F. T. HUMPHERY: I wish to withdraw this bill, as it is proposed to introduce it in the Legislative Assembly. I move:

That the bill be withdrawn.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill withdrawn, and order of the day discharged.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Hon. J. HUGHES rose to move:

That this House do now adjourn.

He said: I would point out to hon. members that I shall have to ask them to make a House to-morrow to get the Supply Bill and the Treasury Bills Issue Bill through, and, as there does not seem to be much work ahead, if we get through those bills to-morrow, I think there will be no necessity for the House to sit during the following week.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

House adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 26 October, 1904.

Questions with Notice—Papers—Questions without Notice—Suspension of the Standing Orders—Day Labour—City Bank Act Extension Bill—Treasury Bills Redemption Bill (second reading)—Consolidated Revenue Fund Bill, No. 3—Library and Art Gallery Amendment Bill—Miners' Accident Relief (Validating) Bill (second reading)—Order of Business—Infant Protection Bill (second reading)—Adjournment (Infant Protection Bill).

Mr. SPEAKER took the chair.