

of congratulation I have received from them. It has been a great pleasure to me to have been associated with honorable members in this Chamber for so many years, and I shall always treasure delightful memories of that association.

**LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANIES
(STATEMENTS) BILL.**

Sir GEORGE GOUDIE (Minister of Public Works).—In order to preserve the privileges of this House, I move for leave to bring in a Bill to re-enact section 536 of the Companies Act 1938.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

**ELECTIONS AND
QUALIFICATIONS COMMITTEE.**

THE PRESIDENT (Sir Frank Clarke) laid on the table his warrant appointing the Honorables W. J. Beckett, C. H. A. Eager, Sir George Goudie, Sir John Harris, G. S. McArthur, D. L. McNamara, and A. J. Pittard as the Committee of Elections and Qualifications.

**TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN OF
COMMITTEES.**

THE PRESIDENT (Sir Frank Clarke) laid on the table his warrant nominating the Honorables Sir William Angliss, J. M. Balfour, J. H. Disney, and R. Kilpatrick as Temporary Chairmen of Committees.

**DEATH OF THE HONORABLE
HENRY PYE.**

Sir GEORGE GOUDIE (Minister of Public Works).—It is with extreme regret that I have to announce to the House that since we last met we have lost by death two honorable members of this Chamber—the late Henry Pye, who was an Honorary Minister in the Government, and the late Archibald Crofts. By leave, I move—

That this House place on record its deep regret at the death of the Honorable Henry Pye, one of the members for the North-Western Province and a Minister of the Crown, and its appreciation of the valuable services rendered by him to the Parliament and the people of Victoria.

The late Mr. Pye had been a member of the Dunstan Government from its inception, and I propose to give a brief *résumé* of his activities as a private citizen, as a member of various public bodies, and as a Minister of the Crown. He was born at Rochester and went to Swan Hill with his parents at a very early age. The family was associated with Swan Hill and district for more than 60 years, Mr. Pye's father being the first to attempt the drying of fruits, such as apricots and raisins, in that district. After leaving school, Mr. Pye served his apprenticeship in the carpentering trade and set up business on his own account as a builder at the age of nineteen years. He left Victoria for Western Australia at the time of the discovery of gold at Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie, and, with two other young men, he carried out many bridge-building contracts for the Western Australian railways. After a successful career in Western Australia, he returned to Swan Hill, re-purchased his original business, and became one of the leading builders in the district. Mr. Pye retired from business in 1924 and went on a world tour. He was always a firm believer in the future of Swan Hill, and expressed his confidence in a practical way by investing in buildings and property, both in the town and in farm lands in the surrounding districts. He was an enthusiastic irrigator, and was possibly the largest irrigationist in that part of the State in which he carried on so successfully, particularly in the raising of fat stock.

Mr. Pye was a member of the Swan Hill Shire Council for seventeen years, and on two occasions was shire president. He was chairman of the Swan Hill Waterworks Trust for 24 years; he was chairman of the local electric light commission and sewerage authority, and for nearly twenty years he was president or past president of the Swan Hill Municipal Brass Band. On the 19th of March, 1932, Mr. Pye was elected as one of the members for the North-Western Province in this House, and he held that seat until his death. When the Dunstan Ministry was formed on the 2nd of April, 1935, Mr. Pye was appointed an Honorary Minister, and since then he

had acted as Assistant Minister of Transport. He was the Ministerial representative on and the chairman of the Board which drew up the scheme of slum reclamation and housing which is now in operation. In addition, Mr. Pye had been a trustee of the agricultural colleges in Victoria.

Personally, I should like to speak of the late Mr. Pye in his association with me in this Chamber as a representative of the North-Western Province. I had known him for many years, and his life was one of honest endeavour and successful accomplishment. He was a popular and esteemed member for the province he represented, and, in addition to being widely known, he was highly respected. Mr. Pye was a loyal colleague, a sage counsellor, and a sincere friend. I esteemed him as one who was actuated by great ideals, a man with an intensely practical mind, and always to the fore in any objective for the furtherance of the interests of the district in which he lived. He also took a very keen interest in the welfare of the State as a member of this Chamber. I conclude by conveying to his family, on behalf of myself and my colleagues, our sincere sympathy with them in their sad bereavement.

The Hon. C. H. A. EAGER (*East Yarra Province*).—I join with the Leader of the House in expressing my personal regard for the late Mr. Pye. As the Minister has stated in full the various activities and good works with which our late esteemed friend was associated, both inside Parliament and outside, I shall confine my remarks to the activities of Mr. Pye as a member of this House and an Honorary Minister in the Dunstan Government. As Honorary Minister, Mr. Pye gained the respect and confidence of honorable members by the thorough way in which he explained to the House any Bill committed to his charge by the Government. It was always a pleasure to hear him introduce and explain his Bills. As a business man who had made considerable success of his business activities, he brought strength to the Government in dealing with the practical problems of administration that take up so much of the time of the Government, and the Crown indeed has lost a very useful Minister.

Mr. Pye gained the affection of his fellow members by his modest and unassuming demeanour on all occasions. He was held by us in great esteem; he was a man of genial disposition, and was thoroughly open in all his dealings, conversations, and associations with his colleagues in the Chamber. We deeply regret his passing, and I should like to add to what the Leader of the House has said in expressing sympathy with his family.

Sir JOHN HARRIS (*North-Eastern Province*).—I hope the House will forgive me for rising on this occasion, but I wish to say that I was associated in the Dunstan Government with Mr. Pye for a period of six and a half years and I always found him to be an exceedingly loyal colleague. The Government is composed of members of this House and members of another place. While I was Leader of the Government in the Council there were many occasions on which this House required protection, and it devolved on me to see that this Chamber received as fair a deal as possible. I always found the Honorable Henry Pye right behind me. He was a man who "clicked," so far as I was concerned. He was very noble and very honest.

We had one trait in common; that is to say, we could usually raise a laugh over occurrences in the Government and out of the Government, and in this House and outside the House. Mr. Pye was a man who could always see a joke—I like such a man. I loved him exceedingly as a colleague, and I particularly regret that he was called away suddenly, before he could have an opportunity of expressing himself on certain events that had occurred in the Government.

The Hon. W. J. BECKETT (*Melbourne Province*).—During my membership of this House the hand of the Great Reaper has pressed very heavily on its members. One's period of service in this Chamber is generally limited. Most members are elected when they have passed middle age, but they bring to our deliberations that wisdom and ripe judgment which come only from years of experience. We older members feel that, as our colleagues pass out one by one,

their places are always vacant; to us, a newcomer never successfully fills a vacant place. We look at the spot where an old friend used to sit, and his absence is a continual reminder to us of the passage of time, and of a break in our link with the past. I have lost many friends from this Chamber. When I first entered the House I was greeted by 33 members, and of those, 27 have passed away, while of the remainder four are not now members. Only yourself, Mr. President, and Sir William Angliss remain. That makes one pause and think that we should do what good we can so that it may be remembered of us afterwards. It is not given to every man to be brilliant, but we should all use our gifts to the best advantage.

I have often remarked that the highest ambition one can have is the attainment of the respect and esteem of one's fellow men. The late Mr. Pye had that respect in abundance. He was of a charming disposition, and of a quiet and retiring nature, but he always had a good word for every one, and he did all the good he could for his fellow citizens. To-day we mourn the loss not only of a fellow member but of a sincere friend. On behalf of the party I represent, I wish to associate myself with the expressions of sympathy uttered this morning.

The Hon. W. H. EDGAR (*East Yarra Province*).—It is significant that as we enter the last session of this Parliament, we should be faced with the loss of two highly esteemed members of this House, and of two worthy members of the Assembly. It is really symbolical of what is happening everywhere to-day, with marked changes coming over nations, governments, and individuals. Mr. Pye was of a very friendly disposition—a characteristic that has been eloquently referred to by previous speakers. His sincerity of purpose won our confidence, and we supported him unstintingly when he was propounding the housing scheme in which he took such a marked interest. He applied his practical knowledge to that scheme, and the residents of Fisherman's Bend will have good reason to be ever grateful to him. A new city was created in that area, and I never pass it without feeling that the late Mr. Pye played an essential part in bringing it into being.

Mr. Beckett has referred to the passing out of old members and the coming in of new members. Each member has his own individuality. We size one another up to see how far we can trust each other in a crisis so that the friendships which are formed will not be weakened. Mr. Pye has gone to his great reward. He earned the esteem of every member of this House and also of the other House. He won a great reputation in the province he represented, as was mentioned by the Leader of the House. He did his duty nobly. I join with other members in paying tribute to a worthy man. His sincerity of purpose was shown by his support of legislation to benefit the people of this State. I trust that the Almighty will comfort his relatives, and will stimulate us, in the little time we have left, to do our duty as loyally to the Empire and to this House as did the Honorable Henry Pye.

The Hon. P. T. BYRNES (*North-Western Province*).—As Mr. Pye's successor, I wish to pay my tribute to his memory. I am proud of the fact that he and I were personal friends. In private and public life Mr. Pye earned the respect of every one, and his passing on is deeply regretted. He was a man of tireless energy, with a great and abiding faith in the future of the north of Victoria. He did much to pioneer that district.

The death of men such as Mr. Pye means a loss not only to this House, but also to the community at large. He has left behind him a monument in the work he did, and his memory will ever be respected in the north of Victoria. I trust that as the years go by I shall also be able to do similar work; but if I am able to achieve half as much as was achieved by Mr. Pye I shall be satisfied.

The Hon. P. P. INCHBOLD (*North-Eastern Province*).—I wish also to express my regret at the death of our esteemed colleague, the Honorable Henry Pye, and to voice my sympathy to his relatives and friends. When I entered this House one of the first members I contacted was Mr. Pye. In the years that have passed I learned to understand and appreciate his worth and his friendship. He was one who always gave sage

counsel. His mind did not run on subtle lines—he was always direct and honest. He approached every subject from the aspect of whether it was right and good—not whether it would pay to follow a certain course. We appreciate that trait in our fellow men. I was also impressed by his love for the work of master craftsmen. On many occasions when in his company in this building or walking along the streets of Melbourne Henry Pye would break off a conversation to draw attention to some work by a master craftsman. He knew what good craftsmanship was, and, whatever he did, he did well. He always tried to lay a good foundation for any work he started.

I think the State owes Mr. Pye a debt of gratitude for having prepared the housing scheme at Fisherman's Bend, not only because he believed the houses should be of good quality and sound construction, but also because the scheme would be for the benefit of the community. Underlying Mr. Pye's honesty of purpose was kindness to his fellow men. I regret his passing. I appreciate the years of friendship I had with him, and I offer my sympathy to his family.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Frank Clarke).—Before I ask honorable members to signify their assent to the motion I should like to add a word or two of personal tribute. Every member who has spoken has commented on the feeling I share in regard to the character of the Honorable Henry Pye—that is to say, a sense of honour seemed to inform his life and guide his every action. That was lighted by a sense of humour, and it made for friendship. For very few men in this House could there be such a general feeling of friendship as there was for Mr. Pye. I have a feeling of personal loss.

I shall arrange for the transmission to the late Mr. Pye's family of the sentiments embodied in the motion submitted by the Leader of the House, and also those conveyed by the remarks uttered by other members of this Chamber.

The motion was agreed to in silence, honorable members standing in their places.

DEATH OF THE HONORABLE ARCHIBALD CROFTS.

Sir GEORGE GOUDIE (Minister of Public Works).—(*By leave.*)—I move—

That this House place on record its deep regret at the death of the Honorable Archibald Crofts, one of the members for the Monash Province, and its appreciation of the valuable services rendered by him to the Parliament and the people of Victoria.

Although he had been a member of this Chamber for a comparatively brief period, the late Mr. Crofts was for a long time deeply interested in public affairs. The son of a British soldier, he was born at Secunderabad, India, and came to Victoria at an early age. He began work with the firm of Robert Harper and Company, with whom he gained the experience which was to serve him in good stead when he decided to enter business on his own account. In 1905 he opened his first shop—a grocery store at the corner of Park-street and Roy-street, South Melbourne—and from that beginning he built up the enterprise which has spread its branches throughout this State and also the Riverina. Mr. Crofts was president of the South Melbourne Football Club from 1903 to 1937 and was a dynamic force in attracting many fine players to that club's colours. Up till the time of his death he was a playing member of the South Melbourne Bowling Club, of which organization he was president for several years until his retirement from that office four years ago. He was a member of all the leading race clubs, an enterprising purchaser of blood stock, and an extensive buyer of yearlings in Australia and New Zealand. Further, he was the owner of the two famous racehorses, Valiant Chief and El Golea. He was sponsor of the popular broadcast feature—Crofts' Radio Revels—which for some time past has been one of the leading entertainments for men of the fighting services, both Australian and American.

In 1931 he was elected councillor for the Queen's Ward, South Melbourne, and held the seat until his death. He was Mayor of South Melbourne during the centenary year, 1934. On the 30th of March, 1935, he was elected as one of the members of the Legislative Council for the Melbourne South Province and held that seat until June, 1940, when he was elected as one of the members for

the Monash Province. As regards his other public services, it is to be noted that Mr. Crofts was for some years a member of the Albert Park Committee of Management. As a member of the Board of Management of Prince Henry's Hospital he successfully organized balls and other entertainments which, over a period of eight years, resulted in the raising of thousands of pounds for that institution. In addition, the late honorable member was on the Board of Management of the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind.

It was not my good fortune to be intimately associated with Mr. Crofts, but there is ample evidence of the fact that he was an excellent type of citizen, a good sportsman, and, above all, a champion of the financial needs of various public institutions—with special reference to charitable organizations. Mr. Crofts' record is one of which any citizen should be proud. The late honorable member was of an unassuming disposition, and although we heard him speak in this House only on rare occasions, he thoroughly merited the esteem in which he was held here. His many benefactions, together with the earnest manner in which he applied himself to his activities, earned for him the deep respect of his constituents in particular, and of the people of the State as a whole. I believe that the members of his family will gain some consolation from the knowledge that the members of this House feel keenly the loss of so valuable a man.

The Hon. C. H. A. EAGER (*East Yarra Province*).—I support the proposed expression by this House of regret at the death of the Honorable Archibald Crofts. From the statement made by the Leader of the House it appears that the late honorable member devoted his attention largely to those interests of his constituency that were outside Parliament, where he engaged actively in public affairs. Following his outstanding success in the large business that he had built up by his industry and ability, he became a member of this Chamber and he brought to bear on his parliamentary duties those same attributes. Mr. Crofts was so public-spirited that he devoted to charitable and other public purposes a good deal of the large fortune he had accumulated in his business.

Not because it was one of the latest of his activities, but because it was one of the most important, we shall probably remember best the great work he accomplished in the interests of sailors, soldiers, and airmen in His Majesty's Forces during the present war. At substantial pecuniary expense to himself, and with considerable exercise of his own ability, he organized a series of entertainments for our fighting men when on leave, and in that way did much to uphold the morale of the men. It may be said that he induced them to spend their leisure hours with profit to themselves. For his efforts in that direction alone in the last year or two, Mr. Crofts will be remembered by the citizens of Melbourne and also by those members of our fighting forces who shared the entertainment thus provided.

In addition, the late honorable member engaged in many public activities, first in the Melbourne South Province and later in the Monash Province, and he was an assiduous representative of his constituents. He was one of those who regard their parliamentary duties as consisting largely of attending to the public interests of their constituents and also to the needs of public bodies. He will be gratefully remembered by his constituents for his support of the various charitable, patriotic, and sporting institutions throughout the State in which he was so keenly interested. I join in the expression of sympathy with the widow and children of the late honorable member.

The Hon. W. J. BECKETT (*Melbourne Province*).—I became personally acquainted with our late friend, the Honorable Archibald Crofts, in the first year of his municipal life. I was introduced to him by a former member of this House—the late Honorable Robert Williams—and I agree with Mr. Eager that a striking monument to the memory of Mr. Crofts is the fact that he realized—as we all must realize in these serious times—that each one must, to the best of his ability, work in assisting the common cause. Although a particularly active business man, Mr. Crofts appreciated the necessity of advancing the welfare of those men who are prepared to sacrifice so much to defend Australia. For a period of at least fifteen months prior to his death, Mr. Crofts—at his own expense

—entertained 500 or 600 members of the fighting forces every week, and his name will long be remembered in that regard. The best kind of monument takes the form of a record of good deeds performed. I was associated with our late friend in other walks of life and I know that there, and more especially in racing circles, he was held in high esteem. He was regarded as a good sport and a white man in every sense of the term. What more could be said about the character of a person who comes under the public eye?

While, as members of this House, we feel keenly the death of Mr. Crofts, the sense of loss must necessarily be deeper in those who were near and dear to him. As his family and mine have been linked by a close friendship, we consider that their loss is ours. We all realize what a gap is caused in any family when the father is taken and becomes merely a memory. I sorrow with the widow and the two daughters of the late honorable member, and, on behalf of the party which I represent, I associate myself with the proposal to send to them an expression of sympathy and regret.

The Hon. W. H. EDGAR (*East Yarra Province*).—There was a side to Mr. Crofts' character that may not be known to all honorable members. He and I often travelled home together after leaving Parliament, for he was a neighbour of mine. In our conversations he displayed a wonderful grasp of the questions that had come before the House and he showed great ability in summing up in a practical way what had been done and should have been done. He confessed that he was not gifted in standing up and expressing his views. Honorable members realize that he was a man of few words, but of prompt action. Although he was fond of a fleet horse, he told me that he never gambled—a fact that made a strong appeal to me. He was devoted to his family. He has left a great record as a business man. He was quiet and unassuming, and, when one came to know him, he was found to be a man to be trusted. Whatever his word was, it was his bond. To his family we convey our sympathy, and pray that they may be consoled by that divine power which alone can bring consolation in the hour of loneliness and sorrow.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Frank Clarke).—Before the motion is put I should like to add my tribute. The Honorable Mr. Crofts was my colleague in the old South Melbourne Province and in the new Monash Province, so I perhaps saw more of him politically than was seen by most honorable members. He was extremely helpful, and everywhere in the province I found a deep appreciation of all he had done for it and, as his wealth developed, for the State of Victoria. He was a good sportsman; he was very proud of the fact that as chairman of the South Melbourne Football Club he succeeded largely through his own endeavours in carrying the club to the premiership in one year. He took up racing, but he raced only for sport. He was a kindly and generous man, who made good use of his wealth. I deeply regret his loss. The terms of the motion and the remarks of honorable members will be conveyed to his widow.

The motion was agreed to in silence, honorable members standing in their places.

The sitting was suspended at 1.23 p.m. until 2.34 p.m.

ARCHITECTS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Hon. W. J. BECKETT (*Melbourne Province*), by leave, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Architects Act 1939.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was brought in and read a first time.

MARRIAGE (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Hon. W. J. BECKETT (*Melbourne Province*).—I move—

That I have leave to bring in a Bill entitled "A Bill to amend the Marriage Act 1928."

The Hon. D. L. McNAMARA.—I object.

The PRESIDENT (Sir Frank Clarke).—Mr. Beckett cannot bring in his Bill now as Mr. McNamara objects to leave being granted to him to do so.

The Hon. W. J. BECKETT (*Melbourne Province*).—I regret that my respected and esteemed colleague should object to