

# Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 19th September, 1922.

	PAUSE
Temporary Chairmen of Committees ... ..	796
Question: Government tenders and wages ...	796
Annual Estimates: General debate ... ..	796
Bills: Nurses Registration Act Amendment, 1A. ...	805
Licensing Act Amendment, Com. ... ..	805

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

## TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to inform the House that I have appointed as temporary Chairmen of Committees the member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie) and the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo).

## QUESTION—GOVERNMENT TENDERS, AND WAGES.

Mr. McCALLUM (for Mr. Willcock) asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is it the practice of the Government, when calling tenders for public works, to include a clause to provide that the successful tenderer shall observe the ruling rate of wages and working conditions prevailing in the district? 2, If so, what is the penalty for breach of such clause? 3, If not, will he be prepared to have such a clause included in all future contracts?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Clause 26, Subclause (3), reads as follows:—"All persons employed by the contractor on daily wages in the performance of any of the works herein referred to shall be paid by the contractor at the current rate of wages applicable to the trade at the place where they are so employed." 2 and 3, Answered by No. 1.

## ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1922-3.

### In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the 12th September on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and on the Annual Estimates; Mr. Stubbs in the Chair.

Vote—Legislative Council, £985:

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [4.36]: A Budget debate affords opportunity for a wide survey of the whole field of government activities. One may, if one is inclined, traverse the whole domain of government from great principles down to the smallest detail. Many of the matters, however, which one might comment upon I consider may more properly be dealt with when the separate departments are under consideration. This

Budget Speech contains nothing new. Together with the accompanying figures, it comes in the guise of an old, familiar friend. The Premier estimates a deficit for the year of, roughly, £389,000.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Is not that something new?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I was going to remark that in that particular item there is something new, yet not altogether new, because two years ago we had an estimated deficit of approximately the same figure, though unfortunately—

The Premier: We had a railway strike.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Unfortunately for the State, the Premier's optimistic estimate for that year was not realised.

The Premier: I thought peace had come to the world. That was the mistake I made.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Unfortunately, again, the Premier is always thinking, like Mr. Micawber, that something is going to turn up which does not turn up. Accordingly, the hon. gentleman finds himself at the end of the financial year in practically the same position as he found himself at the end of the preceding year. Let me say at once that in my opinion the Premier's estimate for the current year is hopelessly astray. I trust I shall be able to demonstrate that as I proceed. Turning to last year's results, we find that while the Premier estimated to close the financial year with a shortage of £570,000, the actual result was a deficit of £732,000—I am using round figures—or an increase of £161,000 on his estimate. The deficiency in question was the largest that the State has ever experienced, although we have had some colossal deficits during recent years. Of course the Premier has an explanation, like the explanation he had a moment ago with regard to the railway strike. He has also an explanation for the fact that he did not realise his last year's estimated receipts. The explanation is that the House failed to pass the Licensing Act Amendment Bill, from which the Premier counted upon receiving £110,000, as against £34,000 which he actually received in the form of liquor revenue. In addition, there is the explanation that about £39,000 of taxation was short paid for the year. But let me say that the Premier, when he introduced the Licensing Act Amendment Bill and framed his estimate of £110,000 revenue from that Bill, must have known perfectly well that this Parliament would never pass such a measure.

The Premier: I do not know why Parliament should not.

Hon. P. COLLIER: One is almost forced to the conclusion that the Premier puts up a very high estimate of receipts depending upon the passage of a certain Bill, and then, when the Bill fails to pass, as he must have known it would fail, he says, "I am not responsible for the fact that the year's estimated revenue has not been realised, because the House failed to pass a certain measure." That is not a very sound way of estimating

revenue for the year, to put up inflated figures on the strength of Bills which have not even been considered by the House.

The Premier: But I explained that I must get that revenue.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is so; but for the time being the estimate looked somewhat satisfactory, in that it involved a considerable reduction upon the actual deficit of the previous year. We hear also every year on the Estimates, and indeed on every possible occasion, an elaborate exposition of the condition of the sinking fund. It is only of recent years that the sinking fund has assumed such large proportions in our Financial Statements. But, of course, as is or should be well known to both Parliament and the country, the contributions to the sinking fund are nothing new. They have been made during all the years since the establishment of responsible Government. It has been a responsibility of every Government to contribute to the sinking fund year after year. In fact, during years gone by the payment to the sinking fund was double the amount it has been latterly. I say that because some years ago, during the time when Mr. Frank Wilson was Premier, the contribution was reduced from 1 per cent. to  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.

The Premier: On new loans.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, and since that date there has, of course, been a very large increase in our total indebtedness because of new loans. So that actually the payment to the sinking fund is nothing new, but an obligation which has been undertaken by the State, and which, of course, must be fulfilled. We have to endeavour to finance the State from year to year and to pay our way, including the contribution to the sinking fund. Now to review the figures for the past few years. I make 1915-16 my starting point always in considering this matter, because at the commencement of that financial year, unfortunately for Western Australia, our friends opposite assumed the reins of government. From a deficit for 1915-16 of £348,000, we went on in 1916-17, our friends being in charge of the Treasury during the whole of that year, to a total deficit on the year's operations of £699,000. Hon. members will realise how small the figure of £348,000 for 1915-16 seems in comparison with the large deficits with which we have since become familiarised. For 1917-18 the deficit was £705,000, and for the following year £652,000, next it was £668,000, in the year following that, £686,000, and last year, by way of capping the lot, £732,000. Unfortunately it is a record of deficits which has not been equalled in any other of the Australian States. I am not unmindful of the fact that this State, in conjunction with all the world, has been passing through an exceptional period. We had the war and the after effects of the war. Notwithstanding that, we should have made a more serious endeavour, as they had to do in other countries, to square our financial position, to meet the exigencies of the time. We

have to-day an accumulated deficit of five and a-half million pounds. This is a staggering sum for a community of 330,000 persons. The interest on that sum, if we assume that it has been funded at a rate of, say, five per cent.—a reasonable figure, because in the earlier days of deficits they were funded at much below five per cent., whereas during the last two or three years, on the other hand, the rate has been as high as six per cent.—if we assume an average of five per cent., we are to-day contributing in interest on the funded deficit, £275,000 per annum. And this sum is increasing year by year. On last year's deficit of £732,000, funded at, say, six per cent., the interest will represent £44,000 for the year. That will be added. This current year our interest payments will have increased by £44,000 as the result of last year's deficit. And so we are going on in an endless chain, or vicious circle, until eventually, unless the position be entirely altered, we shall find that the interest payments, taken in conjunction with the maintenance of our Public Service, will absorb the whole of the revenue. These deficits, ranging from £650,000 per annum to £732,000 have been achieved, notwithstanding that during the period covered there has been an enormous increase in taxation. In 1915-16 the total payments under taxation amounted to £407,000. Last year the Treasurer received from the same source, £881,000, and the estimate for the current year is £1,050,000. From £407,000 to £881,000 in six years means that the direct taxation has been more than doubled.

The Premier: Wages, too, have been doubled.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Wages have been increased. In addition to the doubling of taxation, increased charges have been made for services rendered by such departments as Railways, Water Supply, and by all public utilities. A big working system like the Railways is mostly hit when wages are increased. But in order to meet the increased expenditure occasioned by increased wages and cost of material, the Government have increased the rates for services rendered. I am not taking that into account in my figures. I believe that in the big spending departments, such as Railways and Water Supply, and others, the increased expenditure caused by increases in wages has been more than met by increased charges for services rendered.

The Premier: I do not think so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I think so. It is almost impossible to obtain accurate figures from the Railway Department, because that department, shall I say, stretches figures, in order to meet its own case. When, five years ago, the first increase was made in wages, the Railway Department more than covered the increased cost by increased charges.

Mr. A. Thomson: And showed a profit on it.

Hon. P. COLLIER. I believe that is so.

The Premier: I bet they did not.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Railways have followed the practice of commercial houses. When by an increase in wages the cost of an article is increased £10, the manufacturer or proprietor adds to his price an amount to cover, not only the £10, but £20, thus showing a profit of £10 on the transaction. That practice is commonly followed in commercial circles, and I believe the Railway Department has followed it, at all events to some extent. In any case we have more than doubled taxation and have increased charges for services rendered. The financial position of the State has not been due to a falling revenue. Treasurers and Governments have the greatest difficulty in carrying on satisfactorily when faced with a declining revenue; because it is almost impossible to cut down one's expenditure to conform with a declining revenue. But taking the revenue of the State as a whole, it has been most buoyant. There have been enormous increases in revenue during the years I have referred to. For instance, in 1920 the total revenue was £918,650 more than in the preceding year.

The Premier: That is from all sources.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, the total revenue.

The Premier: You know that much of it is not revenue at all.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But I am taking the total revenue. I know that the increase in revenue has been offset by increased expenditure, particularly in the Railways, and perhaps in other departments as well. In 1921 the total revenue was £926,000 more than in 1920, and last year the total revenue was £117,000 more than that of the previous year. So in three years our total revenue has increased by £1,962,862, almost two millions. Last year it was in fact £2,243,542 greater than the total revenue of 1915-16. That is to say, our friends opposite have had £2,243,542 more with which to finance the affairs of the State than had the Government of 1915-16.

The Premier: But there are Railway earnings which look like revenue, but are not revenue.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It was just the same in 1915-16.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Government have been fortunate in having such an enormous increase in revenue. Had the Government of a few years ago taken hold of the expenditure and sat tight, we should not have been in the financial position we are in to-day. Any Government with an expanding revenue should be able to show better results than are disclosed by the figures before us. The Premier set out with the statement that he is going to end the year with a deficit of £389,000; that is to say £343,000 less than the deficit of last year. If the Treasurer's estimate should be realised, he will have done wonderfully well. If the State can manage to reduce its deficit by so substantial a sum as £343,000 in one year, we need have very little fear for the balancing of the ledger in the years immediately ahead of us. On a

previous occasion in this Chamber I said we should do very well if we were able in a year to reduce the annually recurring deficit by £100,000. I still believe that if we can see the end of these deficits in five or six years we shall do very well indeed and it will not be wise to impose taxation in order to accelerate the reduction of the deficit. Certainly if the Treasurer realises his estimates of revenue and expenditure and so reduces the total deficit by £343,000 for this year, he will have done remarkably well. But I do not think for a moment the Treasurer will achieve the result he expects. According to the Estimates, we are to have a year of wonderful expansion in revenue and a year of quite unusual economy in expenditure; expansion in revenue all along the line, and reduction in expenditure also all along the line. Having regard to the experience of the years which have gone by, to our knowledge of the present situation, and to the probability, almost certainty, of what is ahead of us, I say the Premier has very little chance to realise his estimate, either of revenue or expenditure. Turning to the figures, we find that the Treasurer estimates he is going to receive increased amounts all along the line. Let me quote a few items, using round figures. He anticipates receiving £32,000 more from land tax this year than he received last year, and he estimates that he will receive £59,000 more from income tax than was received last year.

The Premier: Income tax last year was not all collected.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But nothing like £59,000 can be collected, even allowing for the amount due from last year. From stamp duties it is estimated that the increase will be £5,000, from Reimbursements, Fees and Other Services £64,000, and the total we find is £166,687. At the same time, on the other side, and covering the same items, he calculates that the expenditure will be reduced by £105,655.

Mr. Munsie: He has always been noted for his optimism.

Hon. P. COLLIER: This is wildly reckless optimism. I have always admired a measure of sane optimism in any man, but this time the Premier has become so tired of seeing the huge deficit appear year after year—and last year's was the highest of all—that he has become desperate, as it were, and has set out to make an estimate for this year which he thinks will free him from a certain amount of criticism until the end of the year. I believe the Premier said to himself, "Even if I cannot realise my estimates, I will be optimistic in preparing them, and if I can proclaim to the House and to the country that I am going to end the year with a deficit of less than £400,000, at least it will have the effect of stalling off excessive criticism until we reach the end of the year, and then I will be able to do as I have done in past years—make a similar explanation for not having realised my anticipations." The Premier is desperate—

The Minister for Works: Look at the smile he carries. If he were desperate he would not have such a smile.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I admire his cheerfulness and the smile he wears, having regard to those who sit around him. If we take public utilities, we find that the Premier has been equally reckless. For instance, he estimates that he will receive from the aborigines cattle station an amount of £7,000 more than he got last year. Electricity supply is down for an increase of £19,000; Fremantle Harbour Trust, £7,000; Railways, £184,000; Tramways and Electric Light, £12,000; or, covering those items known as Public Utilities, the Treasurer anticipates that he will receive an increase of no less a sum than £186,548. Thus the total increase under the headings of Governmental and Public Utilities is £353,235. Considering the general position, the Premier must be most optimistic if he believes that he is going to get that increase over the revenue of last year, and while at the same time he is going to receive that increase, he expects to have a reduction in the total expenditure of £191,078.

The Premier: That is satisfactory.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It would be most satisfactory and most welcome to the taxpayers if there were any hope of realising it. But I venture to say that anyone who examines the items of expenditure as set out in the Estimates can come to no other conclusion than that the Premier will not be able to effect these expected reductions. Of course, we all hope that he will be able to do so, but remembering the actual position, and the facts as we know them, I am unable to agree with him in this regard. Let us examine some of the items of expenditure. Under the heading of Governmental, we find that in the Premier's department there is to be a reduction of £8,678. That department is a comparatively small one.

Mr. Davies: I thought it had been increased.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It has been increasing, and I should have thought that the reorganisation, or the rearrangement, which has taken place would have resulted in increased expenditure. However, the Treasurer is going to effect a reduction there, so he considers, of £8,678. In the Department of the Treasury there is to be a reduction of £34,687. This is the most satisfactory department of the whole lot from the Treasurer's point of view. On running through the items, or the departments under the control of the Treasury, the Treasury itself, and Compassionate Allowances, Government Savings Bank, Government Stores, Taxation, Workers' Homes, Miscellaneous Services—in all there is to be a decrease in expenditure. Not one is to show an increase. The increase column of the Estimates is clean, while the reduction column shows figures against nearly all the items. Let me show how hopeless of realisation some of these estimates are. Take the item Compassionate Allowances.

The Premier: It is always put in in that way.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am justified in showing that in this item the expenditure last year was £4,964 and that this year the Premier has set down only £764. The latter total covers only what are known as annual payments. Last year the expenditure under the heading of Annual Payments was £583 and the actual expenditure—it mostly arises from payments to dependants of Government employes who die while in the service—was £4,381. Yet the Premier estimates this year that his total expenditure will be £764. Under the heading of Miscellaneous Services he proposes to effect a reduction of £26,653. And so it is right along the line that the Treasurer shows an absolutely clean column on the increase side and a reduction against every item. I am glad to see that in the Department of the Minister for Justice there is to be a reduction of £2,704. It is satisfactory to know that we are still likely to get efficient justice at a reduced cost. In the Health Department there is an estimated reduction of £51,567. This reduction is arrived at by making provision for the half year only. The total cost of maintaining the hospitals for the other half of the year is to be met from revenue as the result of a Bill it is proposed to introduce and the Treasurer is depending upon the passage of that Bill to effect the reduction. Even so, there is a reduction of something like £6,000 on the expenditure for the half year as compared with the previous year's figures. We cannot criticise the item until we have a knowledge of what the proposed Bill contains.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The total should have been provided for at any rate.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, and the Premier would have been in a position to take advantage of it in the event of the House passing the Bill. Under the heading of Education, the Premier estimates an increase for the year of £3,507. Anyone who knows the record of the Education Department will not accept that figure for one moment. Let us just run over the expenditure of that department for the past six years. In 1915-16 the expenditure was £317,656 and in the following year it had increased by £16,476. In 1917-18 the increase over the preceding year was £19,661. Again a year later, the increase was £12,261. In 1919-20 the increase over the previous year was £48,276. In 1920-21 the increase was £75,830, and last year the increase over the previous year was £65,866.

The Premier: There were the salary increases.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The expenditure during the six years rose from £317,000 to £556,026, showing a total increase for the six years of £238,370. The average increase for the whole of the six years was, therefore, £40,000. Notwithstanding this the Premier asks us to accept his estimate that the year, upon which we have just entered, will

result in an increased expenditure over that of last year of only £3,507.

The Premier: There will be no more salary increases.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The salaries have not been the cause of this annual increase.

The Premier: Not altogether.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Premier cannot say that every year for the past six years there have been increases in salaries in the Education Department.

The Premier: For the last two years.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Mainly during last year. I believe the total amount was only about £17,000. We have these huge increases of £65,000, £75,000, and £48,000 in another year and so on, averaging £40,000 for the whole period. Each year brings a different cause for increased expenditure. If we are going to carry on this year, at practically the same expenditure as last year, no new schools will be opened and there will be no increases in the teaching staffs of existing schools. It is ridiculous and absurd to expect a result anything like that. We know the secondary school in course of erection at Bunbury will shortly have to be completely equipped, and that a staff will be required for it.

The Premier: It is open now.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But only recently.

The Premier: It was opened some time ago.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That school will absorb more than the increase set down here. No member who examines the expenditure of the Education Department for the past six years, and has any regard for the facts as we know them, will expect the results estimated by the Premier during the present year. It is too ridiculous to hope for. Under the expenditure for public utilities we find the same under-estimate being made. I need not indicate the figures because members will have an opportunity of dealing with them on the Estimates. The total estimated decrease under the heading of public utilities is £85,423. Whilst the Premier expects to get from the same source an increased revenue of £186,000, he calculates on reducing the expenditure by £85,000. A consideration of these figures impels one to say that the Premier is not only super-optimistic, but is wildly and recklessly optimistic in regard to them. Last year the total loss on our railways was £288,000.

The Premier: And £140,000 for sinking fund.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The sinking fund is never taken into account in dealing with railway figures. The working expenses and interest gave a total loss of £288,000 on the year's operations. This year the Premier estimates he will get through with a loss of only £88,000 and that he is going to be £200,000 better off in the railways this year than he was last year. Does any member believe we are going to wind up the financial year with a loss on the railways of only that amount? I do not think it is possible.

The Premier: They ought to pay.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Perhaps they are going to raise the rates again.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They ought to pay but they do not. In an endeavour to make the railways pay, if we are not careful we may achieve an opposite result; not only failure to make them pay, but a hampering and to a great extent a crippling of the production in the country districts and other parts of the State. I hope the Premier will be fortunate enough to realise his estimate. I am bound to say I do not think he will do so. No doubt he was actuated to some extent in his forecast of railway revenue by the large area of land that is under crop at the present time, the largest we have ever had. It may have been a reasonable and justifiable assumption that the larger area under crop would produce greater activity upon our railway service, and consequently bring about a better financial result. We all hope it will pan out in this way, but the prospects at present are not reassuring. Even allowing for a good season, I do not think the railways will be in a better financial position at the end of this year by £200,000 as compared with last year. I was rather surprised that the Premier dealt so briefly with the Railway Estimates. I assume he has left the matter for the Minister for Railways to deal with. Parliament, however, was entitled to some expression of opinion from the Government upon the investigations of the Royal Commission. I know that Ministers have been busy, but it is some weeks now—

The Premier: Not since we got the final reply.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is some weeks since the papers were completed and since the last word was spoken by the contending parties. It is imperative that the Government should take the matter into consideration, and announce their attitude with regard to it. It will be for the Government to give Parliament a lead in this matter. I hope something will be done before we reach the Railway Estimates. The matter is too important to be dealt with on the present occasion. Having regard to the recommendations made by the Commissioner, and also to the very important part that our railways play in the finances of the State, it is necessary that full consideration should be given by Parliament to the report and investigations of the Royal Commission. I think I have shown that the estimates of Revenue have been greatly inflated and will not be realised, and that the estimates of expenditure have been cut down in a manner which I believe will disappoint the Treasurer when the end of the financial year arrives. We can only hope that this will not be so. Every member of the House and every person in the community would be glad to see the Treasurer's estimate realised. If we can manage to effect a reduction of £342,000 in our deficit for one year, most of our financial troubles will soon be over. I fear we shall have an experience similar to that which we have had in past years when

estimates of this kind have been made. I recognise that the Budget of two years ago was an election Budget. Something may be allowed for a Premier who is going to the country, and who is endeavouring to put the best possible face upon the finances of the year. By sheer hard cutting the Treasurer was able to reduce his estimated deficit to under £400,000 on that occasion. It reminds one of the draper who marks his goods down to 5s. 11d. The customer thinks he is getting a bargain, though he is paying just a fraction under 6s. In going to the country two years ago the Treasurer made his figures more attractive by beginning them with a 3—namely, £390,000—than if he had led off with a 4, for £400,000. Unfortunately it was not matter of £399,000, for the deficit that year was £686,000. We were disappointed that year, and we were again disappointed last year to the extent of £161,000.

Mr. Munsie: He was not so optimistic in his Budget last year.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have accounted for his optimism for that year, but he became so dissatisfied and disgusted with his big deficit that he has now made one big smash with his Estimates and says, "I will go for the smallest deficit this year that we have had for many years." So it is we have the estimated deficit of £389,000 before us. For the two months already expired we have gone back to the extent of £380,000. It is foolish, of course, to judge the possible results of a year's operations by the figures for one or two months of the year, but the figures as we have them now show that the Treasurer will have to practically balance his accounts for the remaining 10 months of the year if his figures are to be realised. If he manages to do that he will have done something that has not been done for many years.

The Premier: Reimbursements are getting heavier every month.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, because of the expenditure of loan moneys and other funds. The Premier has allowed a substantial increase for his reimbursements this year.

The Premier: And there are also loans to soldiers.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes. We can only hope the figures will be realised. The expenditure during the past two years from Government Property Sales Fund has been considerable, and it is increasing. I regret that none of the Budget papers contain figures which would enable us to ascertain the exact amounts realised from the sale of Government property, and to discover the original amount expended from revenue or from loan moneys. I believe the amount spent originally from revenue was a very small sum indeed. It is quite possible, in fact, it does so happen, that we are selling Government property, the cost of which was paid from loan funds in the first instance, and using the proceeds year by year for revenue purposes. That is most unsound finance. All will agree on that point. It was in 1904 that the alteration was made in connection with this fund. Prior to that date,

the proceeds were paid into a reserve fund to go towards the liquidation of the loan. Now we are utilising an increased amount each year. At the end of 1921, the balance in the fund was £143,319. The receipts last year were £64,558 and the expenditure £95,811. The estimated expenditure for the present year is £111,776. That estimated amount it is proposed to spend from the Government Property Sales Fund almost entirely upon work that is unproductive and not permanent. In fact, the great proportion of it is expended—

The Premier: In buildings.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, mainly in schools and other public buildings, but it is also spent in connection with repairs and renovations to existing buildings. That money was originally drawn from loan funds and expended on loan works, but it is now paid into revenue and we are using it for repairs and renovations, and such like works of an entirely unproductive character.

The Premier: Revenue can be spent in that way.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It means really that we are using loan funds to meet revenue requirements.

The Premier: It is legitimate to spend loan moneys on buildings.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There was a time when all money spent on roads, bridges and public buildings was taken from loan funds.

The Premier: Not since we came into power.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It has been done for 17 or 18 years past. During that time this expenditure on what may be termed non-reproductive works such as roads, bridges and public buildings, has been continued. We have pursued that policy ever since, with an annually increasing sum involved. To-day we are actually using loan funds for revenue purposes. If, for instance, money had been borrowed to construct a railway, in the course of time the rails would be no longer required. These would be sold and, if the expenditure were to be sound, that money should go to liquidate the debt involved in the construction of that railway, and in the purchase of the rails. Instead of doing that, we are now using the proceeds in the manner I have indicated. The Premier is only following a policy that has been pursued for years past, but it is nevertheless an unsound policy. I comment on this aspect because I see that the expenditure is increasing annually. The proposal to spend £111,776 during the present financial year will practically exhaust the fund, apart from anything paid in during the current financial year. Turning to our indebtedness, we cannot fail to realise that the total loan indebtedness of the State is a huge sum, amounting to 54 millions, or an average per capita of £137. As the Premier has pointed out, the total loan indebtedness is not a matter for serious concern so long as the money has been wisely invested, and so long as that money has been expended

in works and public utilities which assist in opening up and developing the resources of the country, and which, in years to come, will aid the increasing of our population and our production. In so far as the money has been expended in such a direction, it need not concern us. The Government, however, will need to be careful regarding the expenditure of loan moneys in future. That brings me to the question of the immigration and land settlement policy upon which we have just embarked. The Premier amplified, or repeated, the explanation regarding the immigration scheme which he made earlier in the session. Hon. members will agree that it is a good thing to increase our population by so many as it is possible to absorb year by year. It is good that we are able to get financial assistance in carrying out this scheme. It is good if we get 4 per cent. of the total interest bill paid by others and also if the cost of bringing these people to our shores is borne by others, as was the case in days gone by. The Government will require to be careful in handling the whole scheme. If it is to succeed, there will need to be the greatest possible efficiency, and the greatest care must be exercised regarding the expenditure of the money involved. We have had a warning as the result of the Soldier Settlement Scheme in the South-West, and the figures disclosed in the course of the debate last week in connection with that scheme emphasise that necessity.

The Premier: That applied to only a few cases.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am afraid it is not a matter of only a few cases. If it were a matter of only a few, it would not concern us so much. The cost of settling soldiers in the South-West, which is so great, may be taken into consideration with that involved in settling the immigrants in that part of the State, and suggests that it is a question requiring investigation. Under the scheme as it has been placed before us, if £3,000,000 is to be allowed for the settlement of the South-West, that amount will work out at £500 per head of the 6,000 settlers to be placed there.

The Premier: Oh, no.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I know a larger sum will be available. I notice that in the agreement, however, it is stipulated by the British Government that the total capital expenditure shall not exceed £1,000 per settler.

The Premier: That is so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is essential that this aspect should be kept in mind if we are to see that the people settled there are to succeed. We know from the figures quoted recently that quite a large number of soldiers settled in the South-West have to shoulder a capital expenditure of not under £1,000, but an expenditure ranging from £2,000 in many cases to £2,700 each. It is not a matter of exceeding the amount by a few hundreds, but in many cases it is a question of more than double the amount specified

by the Imperial Government. In these circumstances, it behoves us to be very careful in the management of the new scheme. In the cases I have referred to, the capital cost was £2,300, £2,500, or £2,700, as the case may be.

The Premier: For a very few cases.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, quite a great number.

The Premier: I do not think so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, there are quite a number. We know that the soldier settlers have been placed on land partially cleared prior to the property being taken up. We know that a considerable amount of improvements had been effected. Having regard to those facts, the cost of clearing that land and making it fit for cultivation should not be so great as the cost to be faced by the new settlers, who will be placed on virgin land. Then again the land cleared for the soldier settlers was done by Australians who may be presumed to be more efficient, or, at any rate, more accustomed to the work than men who will have to do the clearing under this scheme. It practically means that the clearing on the 6,000 holdings will have to be done by these newcomers from the Old Country, by men who are not accustomed to Australian conditions or the work of clearing. It is only fair to assume that the cost would be greater rather than smaller compared with the work done by our own people. I only hope the scheme will work out all right. It is a big contract to place 75,000 people in the State in five years, 6,000 of them to be settled on the land. It will require the closest possible attention of the Government and all concerned. The Premier says he hopes to bring out married people almost exclusively. If we assume that the 6,000 to be settled on the land will all be married, that will mean a population of 12,000. Assuming further that they will have an average family of two—I think the average family will not exceed that number, because I take it for granted that those selected will be young people—that will bring the total population introduced to 24,000 or, in round figures, 25,000. That leaves us with 50,000 people in addition to be absorbed in the next five years. Further than that, we are justified in saying that the percentage of females in that 50,000 will be very small. There will be a number of domestics, but still the percentage will be very small. We have contracted in addition to settle 6,000 people on the land, to absorb, that is to say to find suitable and profitable employment, for 50,000 men during the next five years.

The Premier: There will be the married people.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If the Premier means that there will be 25,000 men and the other half will be women, that will follow, of course, if they are married; but here comes the difficulty. The Premier says he will endeavour to obtain married people almost exclusively. This will present the difficulty

because we have not the conditions here to provide for married people as we have for single people. It will mean that a very large proportion of these married people will have to separate when they come to Western Australia.

Mr. A. Thomson: Exactly as they are doing to-day.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Although they are doing that to-day—

The Premier: They say it is not very safe.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is very undesirable that any condition should operate which forces a man and his wife to separate, but we know that the lack of accommodation in the country is such that it is impossible to provide for men and women employment in the same district or on the same farm.

The Premier: There are plenty of carpenters in the country.

Hon. P. COLLIER: To build homes?

The Premier: Yes.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I know that in order to meet the position to some degree, the Premier has decided on a policy of building homes in country districts in fairly large numbers, but he will require a great many more homes than he contemplates if he is going to ensure that these people shall not be compelled to separate.

Mr. A. Thomson: We can do with a few more bricklayers and carpenters.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know; but if we set out to erect a thousand homes the demand will be fairly sudden and there might be a shortage of skilled tradesmen for the time being. However, it would not take long to build a thousand homes in different parts of the country. This is an aspect of the case which requires careful and sympathetic handling. If married people, coming to this State under the impression that they are going on the land together, find after arrival that they are compelled to separate and work for wages which certainly will not be sufficient to keep the wife in luxury, then discontent and dissatisfaction will arise which will be voiced in the old country and will greatly damage the whole scheme. I know of no more effective means of damaging any such scheme than to have a considerable number of people, dissatisfied with their conditions, writing to their friends and acquaintances in the old country acquainting them of their dissatisfaction. Apart from our moral obligation there is a written contract with the Home Government that the people we are responsible for bringing to this State shall be provided for and properly looked after. I know there is no desire on the part of the Premier to do other than what is fair or less than the best possible for these people, but there are many obstacles in the way and much care will be required to surmount them. If we are going to get around the corner, we must give attention to production. It is regrettable that the mines which for years past have contributed so much towards the development and prosperity of this State are to-day under a cloud. Fourteen or fifteen

years ago about 16,000 men were employed in the mining industry, whereas to-day the number is 7,000. The reduction during last year has been 1,400, figures which bring home to us the seriousness of the decline. I have no proposal to submit just now, but I hope when we reach the Estimates for the Mines Department, I shall be able to make suggestions which will tend to improve the position. I trust that the Government will treat the industry which has done so much for the State as generously as possible, now that it is in the years when it requires fostering and assisting. This brings me to the question of the cost of production and the development of our primary industries generally, particularly in those portions of the State situated far from the capital or the sea-ports. The railway rates and charges have been increased during recent years to such an extent that they are to-day hindering the development of our industries. Our principal goldfields are situated some 400 miles from the port, and we must realise the enormous burden to an industry whose whole requirements have to be hauled such a long distance at the excessive rates that prevail. The Premier stated that the railways should be made to pay. This opens up a very debatable question.

The Premier: I did not say by increased fares.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But that seems to be the only method which commends itself to the railway authorities. Whenever they find themselves in financial difficulties, they meet the situation by merely increasing freights and fares.

Mr. Davies: Some freights could be increased.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Freights on some essential commodities for the mining industry have been increased greatly, but freights have not been increased in directions where increases could well be made, and where those affected could afford to pay the increase. During recent years comparative prosperity has been enjoyed by people settled in the agricultural areas. Still the Railway Department have been carrying superphosphate at a very great loss. What the actual amount is I do not know; the figures have not been made available to us. But I do know that when wages and maintenance costs were much lower than at present, the actual loss on the carriage of fertilisers was £60,000 a year, and it is safe to say that, having regard to the increased cost of operating the railways, to the increased area under cultivation and the consequent increased tonnage of superphosphates required, the actual loss to the department must be not less than £150,000 a year. At a time when railway rates have been increased to every other industry and when mining is feeling the effects very seriously indeed, is it fair that a section of the community, who have been enjoying good prices and good seasons, should continue to receive a concession which is costing the general taxpayer about £150,000 a year?



Mr. Mann: The railways usually haul superphosphate and wheat on the one journey.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am aware of the explanation that the railways get a full load of superphosphate out and a full load of wheat back, but that is no reason why the payments made for the haulage of fertilisers should not be brought more into keeping with the actual cost to the department. It is bad business to be hauling a certain commodity at a loss of £150,000 a year for a section of the community who can well afford to pay higher rates.

Mr. Mann: Do you think the amount is as great as that?

Hon. P. COLLIER: If it was £50,000 seven years ago, it cannot be very much less than £150,000 to-day. At present we have under cultivation the largest area in the history of the State, and this means the carriage of a largely increased tonnage of the fertilisers.

Mr. Richardson: Is the freight the same?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, there has been no increase at all. Notwithstanding that wages have increased—one increase granted by the court amounted to £256,000 for the year—

Mr. Harrison: The freight has been subject to the surcharge of 1s. per ton.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But that is very small. Having regard to the general position of the farmers and the finances of the State, an increased charge, if not sufficient to cover the whole of the cost, might have been made. At the same time reductions could well be made on many goods. If those engaged in primary industries, who have occasion to utilise the railways so largely, are called upon to pay the whole of the cost of operating the railways, production in some directions must be hampered. Some sections of the community making huge profits never have occasion to use the railways, and they do not contribute one penny to the railway revenue. Those engaged in primary industries and who by reason of their calling have to use the railways very much, have to find considerable sums year by year for the maintenance of the railway system. The system, however, does not exist solely for the benefit of those engaged in primary industries; our railways benefit the whole of the community. As a matter of fact, the greater benefit is derived by those engaged in trade and commerce and these are the people who have no occasion to use the railways. Still they are making more money as the result of the railway extensions into the country and as a result of primary production and development. Therefore, it is questionable whether we should persist in the method of increasing railway rates in order to make the railways pay rather than make those who do not use the railways, but who nevertheless benefit materially from their existence, make up the deficiency.

The Premier: They always pass taxation on.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes. The primary producer is practically the only person in the

State who cannot pass on increased expenditure. To those engaged in business in the city, to the manufacturers and the traders, it matters not if the cost of production does go up; they merely add it to the price of their commodity and thus pass the increase on to the general community.

Mr. Harrison: And with a profit added to it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But the primary producer is one of the few individuals who has not the privilege of fixing for himself the price of the commodity he has to sell. In most walks of life the seller of commodities fixes the selling price for himself, and as his costs increase so it is open to him to increase the price of his articles. To the primary producer, however, the cost of production has no bearing on the price he obtains for his product, which is regulated and fixed by conditions and influences entirely beyond his control. Though this year the cost of producing his wheat or other commodity might show an increase of 20 or 30 per cent., he might receive for it a lower price than in years when the cost of production was not nearly so high.

The Colonial Secretary: And in the case of the fruit industry the grower might not receive sufficient to pay the cost of transporting his product to market.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is so. I mentioned the wheat grower merely as an instance. It applies to all primary producers. Therefore railway rates have a most important bearing upon the whole question of production. We ought to endeavour so scientifically to adjust our railway charges as to promote and assist development of the country districts, rather than retard that development by indiscriminate increase of charges, such as obtains at present. Perhaps it would be too much to ask the Premier for a reduction of the present railway rates, seeing that the railway system has been responsible for so large a proportion of our financial leeway. But if the Premier realises his estimate and nearly balances the railway expenditure and revenue, he might well consider the question of adjusting the rates so as to assist those engaged in the very essential work of producing in the country districts. As has often been pointed out, the number of those engaged in production in this country is surprisingly small as compared with those following what may be termed—I am not speaking offensively at all—parasitical avocations, middlemen, mere handlers of goods that other men produce. In conjunction with the loss involved to the Railway Department in the carriage of fertilisers at unpayable rates, there is the fact that the landowners of this country have not contributed their fair share towards the cost of government in recent years. I hope my friends on the cross benches will not misunderstand me. Unfortunately, whenever the question of land taxation is raised, we find the men who are owners of broad acres up in arms, as it were. They seem at once to imagine that the pro-

posed land taxation is going to apply specially to them, by virtue of their holding comparatively large areas, and that it is not going to apply to other people. But all round us in the metropolitan area, and especially in the city of Perth, we have of late years seen land values increase enormously. In the city itself the value of land has gone up year after year, not as the result of any energy or activity or labour on the part of the owner, but by virtue of the expenditure of public funds in opening up and developing the country. With the increase in the area of cultivation in the country, and with the increased yield of wheat, fruit, wool, and metals, there is an increase in the value of city lands. The amount of taxation contributed by the owners of valuable city blocks is a mere bagatelle beside the increased cost of government during recent years. Every other description of taxpayer has had his burden of taxation increased. There have been increases in income tax, dividend duty, totalisator tax, and license fees. It is safe to say that every form of taxation except land taxation has been increased materially during recent years. That being so, I altogether fail to see why land taxation should not have been increased correspondingly.

The Premier: The landholders pay other taxes and rates.

Hon. P. COLLIER: So does everybody else. As a matter of fact, it is not the land owner who pays the local taxation, but the tenant. If the tenant does not pay it directly, he has it passed on to him in the form of rent. In the city some land owners have increased the rents of their miserable little shops by 50 per cent. and even more during recent months. They are levying toll upon the unfortunate tenants, who have to pay the increased rents or else get out and lose businesses which they have built up during a number of years.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We want a fair rents Bill.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes. I tell the Treasurer that he ought to be getting in this State at least £150,000 annually by way of land taxation. While we refrain from imposing that taxation, we are simply inviting the Commonwealth Government to step in and impose it. In the past we have refrained from levying taxes in certain directions, with the result that the Federal authorities have taken advantage of the situation. When they want increased revenue, they find out from the various States what items are not being taxed; and on those items they then impose taxation. For instance, the Commonwealth Government get three-quarters of a million annually through the amusements tax. I believe that if the States had gone in for an amusement tax, the Federal Government would not have dared to duplicate the tax.

Mr. Davies: I think that tax was duplicated in South Australia.

Hon. P. COLLIER: In the matter of Federal land taxation there is to-day an exemption of £5,000. If we refrain from imposing a proper land tax ourselves, there will be a

tendency to reduce the Federal exemption, and in a very few years we shall find the Commonwealth Government taxing land without any exemption, and so obtaining from that source money which ought to go into the coffers of the State Government.

Mr. Durack: You do not suggest that we should enter into a taxing competition with the Federal Government?

Hon. P. COLLIER: No; but if taxation is to be levied, it is better that the State should do it than that the door should be left open to the Federal Government. The large land owners are unnecessarily timid of land taxation. Half of our small annual land taxation of £60,000 is paid by an area within a radius of 12 miles of the General Post Office, paid by the land owners from Midland Junction to Fremantle.

The Premier: That district contains half the people in the community.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes; but we are taxing not people but area. The land tax on the small area from Midland Junction to Fremantle contributes an amount equal to that which is paid by all the rest of the State. The question of land taxing, therefore, is not one of taxing individuals. If in connection with the income tax it were shown that half the taxation is paid by residents of the area from Fremantle to Midland Junction, that fact would be accounted for by the proportions of population. As regards the land tax, it is not so much holdings that should be taxed, as values. It is always in the capital cities that the values lie, and there they keep on increasing. I hope the figures put forward by the Treasurer for the current year will be realised. Nobody will be more delighted than I shall be if we can manage to end up this year by practically cutting in half the deficit that we have been accustomed to during recent years. I know very well the difficulty of the task which any man has in handling the finances of the State during such a period as we have gone through. I hope we are facing a future that will prove brighter than the past of the recent years; but we must realise that we are facing obstacles and difficulties. It is only by fairly and squarely recognising that those difficulties and obstacles are there, and by adopting means to overcome them, that ultimately we shall succeed.

Progress reported.

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

#### BILL—NURSES REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Council and read a first time.

#### BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

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

Clauses 1 to 9—agreed to.

Clause 10—Amendment of Section 5 of Act 1 of 1917:

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is provided that there shall be no partitions in the bar-room or saloon. What is the interpretation of "bar room or saloon"? If it means the room where drink is stored or sold, I do not think the object of the provision will be achieved, because the partitions can be taken out of the bar room or saloon and re-erected in an adjoining room, of which there may be several. What then will be achieved by prohibiting partitions in the bar room or saloon? I should like some member of the Royal Commission to explain.

Mr. MANN: The intention is to prevent the erection of partitions in wine saloons. At present a person entering such a place cannot see who the other customers are. We want to do away with the existing cubicles, whether curtained or partitioned. In High-street, Fremantle, is a particularly well conducted wine saloon where one entering can see everything which may be going on in the saloon. The Commission recommended the abolition of the partitions and cubicles commonly to be found in wine saloons.

Hon. P. COLLIER: As I say, the provision will achieve but little. The object of the trader is to secure privacy for his customers. Despite the provision, this can be done by dividing up into cubicles some room or rooms adjoining the bar.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 11, 12—agreed to.

Clause 13—Amendment of Section 36:

Hon. T. WALKER: Under this provision a spirit merchant's license entitles him to sell two gallons, which shall be delivered and taken away from the premises at one time, and not by instalments. I should like an explanation of what is meant by "delivered and taken away from the premises at one time."

The PREMIER: It means that the liquor must be delivered to the purchaser and taken away in two-gallon lots, not a gallon at a time.

Hon. T. WALKER: The point is that they have to deliver to somebody, and the liquor must be delivered on the premises, and it must be taken by the person to whom it is delivered. The clause is a little ambiguous.

The PREMIER: I will make a note of it.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 14 to 17—agreed to.

Clause 18—Amendment of Section 45:

Mr. UNDERWOOD: This clause should be considered in connection with Clause 40. It deals with the appointment of a licensing bench and there is no necessity for that court unless we are having a licenses reduction board. I ask the Premier to point out the necessity for this expenditure. What

are the faults of the existing court which costs us practically nothing?

Hon. P. COLLIER: They are worth all they cost us, too.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: If we are to have a reduction board we should consider Clause 18 in conjunction with the clause dealing with that board.

Hon. T. WALKER: There is merit in what the hon. member has said. This clause deals really with the functions of the court. We might easily postpone the consideration of it.

Mr. McCALLUM: The House has already affirmed the appointment of the court by passing Clause 7. This clause deals with the granting of new licenses; it has nothing to do with the establishment of the court, and nothing can be gained by postponing its consideration.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Something can be gained by postponing it. If we are not to have the reduction board, we shall not require these conditions for the licensing magistrates.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We have already decided that.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Under the assumption that we are going to pass Clause 40.

The PREMIER: I have no objection to the consideration of the clause being postponed. I move—

That the consideration of the clause be postponed.

Motion put and passed.

Clause 19—agreed to.

Clause 20—Amendment of Section 48:

Capt. CARTER: I move an amendment—

That the following be added to the clause:—"No license shall be granted, renewed or transferred to any person who has at any time theretofore been convicted as a licensee and whose license has been declared forfeited under Section 139 or Section 141; nor shall any license be granted, renewed or removed to any premises, or in the business carried on or to be carried on upon which such person is at the date of any such granting, renewal or removal, the owner, landlord, lessee, or proprietor, or in which premises any business, or in the business carried on, or to be carried on, upon which premises he has any legal or equitable share or interest whatsoever."

The object of the amendment is to prevent dummying. I have not spoken on the Bill this session, but last session hon. members will find that one of the chief features I made was the fact that by dummying men could be convicted of an offence against the Act, and yet in a measure, under the law, could still carry on this trade and use what influence and experience they had in any nefarious manner they desired. Such conduct meriting the forfeiture of a license should practically, if not totally oust the offender from the trade.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It appears to me that again we are premature in discussing this clause. The people have not voted for increases though in some cases they voted reduction.

Hon. T. WALKER: I scarcely think it has the same application.

The Premier: It has not.

Hon. T. WALKER: This deals with the character and qualifications of an applicant for a license. I think the member for Leederville is in order.

The PREMIER: The clause as it stands will fully cover the objections of the hon. member. It will make it impossible for such a person as has been indicated to receive a renewal of his license. The proposed amendment will, however, disqualify any premises, owned or partly owned by a person who has lost his license in the past. I do not think the amendment is necessary.

Mr. McCALLUM: I hope the amendment will be passed. It deals with a different set of persons from those dealt with in the clause. It covers people who may have no connection with premises, and who are not necessarily licensees. The clause itself does not deal with the man behind the scenes. Numerous instances could be quoted of persons who have obtained licenses through the medium of dummies.

The Minister for Works: Do you want the premises to be properly conducted?

Mr. McCALLUM: The aim is to debar certain undesirable people from having anything to do with licensed premises.

The Minister for Works: How are they to get a living?

Mr. McCALLUM: They should get out of the trade. There is a notorious hotel in the city. On one occasion a renewal of a license was strongly opposed. Eventually the licensee had to get out, and he went to another part of the State where his barman acted as dummy for him. I understand he has now come out openly as the licensee of the premises.

Capt. CARTER: The Premier has admitted he desires to see this class of person eliminated from the trade.

The Premier: Yes.

Capt. CARTER: My amendment will bring that about.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I oppose the amendment.

The Premier: I have no desire to protect transgressors.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Nor have I, but I have no desire to see persons tyrannising over others. This amendment is only a demonstration of tyranny.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Who are the tyrants?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: There is the same spirit in a number of Bourke-street larrikins as there is in the Christian Temperance Union. The Union has only a few votes. But there are many people who do not care which way they vote, and there are some members of this Chamber who think the Christian Temperance Union possesses more votes than

the publicans, and that the rest of the votes are even.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: What has that to do with the clause?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Nothing at all, but it is the truth. A member should be allowed to speak the truth occasionally. Under the clause as printed everything can be done in regard to an applicant that it is necessary to do. Surely we do not want anything more.

Mr. Mann: Except to clean up the trade.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The hon. member suggests that the trade is dirty. Anyone who tries to add to this clause is assuming the trade is unclean.

Hon. T. WALKER: We are endeavouring to make this evil less of an evil.

Mr. Underwood: Which evil?

Hon. T. WALKER: Drink.

Mr. Underwood: Demonstrate it.

Hon. T. WALKER: The amendment emphasises what the old Act provided for. The old Act provides penalties for various offences rendering the licensees liable to forfeiture. The amendment seeks to provide that in a case where offences have been committed and a conviction has been obtained the second time, the licensee shall be subject to the penalty set out therein.

Mr. O'Loughlin: You fight every day for men who have fallen six times or more. You never turn one down.

Hon. T. WALKER: Why do I not turn them down? Because it is an absolute mercy to keep those men out. It is their only chance. I do not want to cure a man of drunkenness by sticking his head into a wine vat.

The Minister for Works: Do you not think that the court will have some discretion in the matter?

Hon. T. WALKER: I admit that the court have that discretion but we should not give them discretion to grant a license to a man who has been more than once convicted of offences of such gravity as to render a license liable to forfeiture.

Mr. O'Loughlin: It is easy to get a conviction.

Hon. T. WALKER: It is not easy for the bench to be convinced to the point of forfeiture. The bench are rather easy-going in that way. It is only when the grave character of the offence is so emphasised that forfeiture seems to be the only way out of it, that the bench agree to that forfeiture.

The Minister for Mines: It may mean a very heavy fine. The man may have paid £5,000 or £6,000 for ingoing. You have to consider that aspect.

Hon. T. WALKER: The Minister for Mines should remember that the clause only deals with applications for licenses. If an applicant comes along whose character is such that in ordinary circumstances one would not trust him with handling drink, he should be prevented from getting a license. I trust the Premier will accept the amendment because it only renders more definite the very thing he asks us to pass. It is only more definite by way of interpretation. We define the matter more specifically, so that no

mistake can be made. The Committee should be definite in these matters. The Minister for Works will admit that a man who is a licensee and runs what is practically a brothel in his hotel, and has been convicted more than once, should not be permitted to have a license.

The Minister for Mines: Do you think such a man would get a license to-day?

Mr. McCallum: But the trouble is they dummy the licenses.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is the difficulty.

Mr. Mann: And such men have got licenses.

The Premier: I want to accomplish all that the amendment proposes. I thought I had done so.

Hon. T. WALKER: The amendment makes the position clearer. It makes it more specific for the bench and the bench will never suffer by having the law placed too definitely before them.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: With the views expressed by the member for Kanowna, I think every member will agree but the point that strikes me is that if conditions so drastic as are set out in the clause and the amendment are necessary to keep the trade decent, it does not say much for the trade, and the attention of the House could be given with advantage to the question of abolishing such a trade.

Hon. P. Collier: There are black sheep in every trade.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am aware of that, but I have been in a good many hotels in Western Australia during the past 32 years and I can only recollect two houses into which I would not take my wife.

Capt. Carter: Why not legislate for those two?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Clause 20 deals with the matter very clearly. We know it is easy to get testimonials for people who are unworthy, but there is protection in the clause inasmuch as it is the duty of an inspector of licensed premises to make a searching investigation as to the applicant's character and suitability.

Hon. T. Walker: But that officer may be the local policeman.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The officer has to make inquiries as to the genuineness and value of testimonials. Then he has to report in writing to the court and the court in dealing with any such application must take into consideration the testimonials and the report. The court will not deal with the application until those reports are received. Clause 7 seems to indicate that the members of the court will be men capable of dealing with such matters. Is it to be supposed for a single moment that the Governor-in-Council is likely to appoint as members of the licensing court, men who are not fitted by their characters and their careers to deal with such cases?

Hon. T. Walker: They may be the best men in the world but they may still be misled.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I agree with what the member for Kanowna has said,

but Clause 20, read in conjunction with Clause 7, gives all the protection that is needed in this matter. If that is not so, there is something bigger at the bottom of this question than is not touched by the Bill. Mention was made of the fact that a man might have paid £5,000 or £6,000 ingoing. I would not take that matter into consideration for a moment. If a man has a licensed house to keep clean, and men and women are permitted to use it for the purposes referred to, no penalty would be too much to deprive such a man of his license. I am of opinion that Clause 20 affords sufficient protection for all that we require.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: The Minister for Works has overlooked an important point in the proviso. The point I refer to is that dealing with owners of the freehold of hotel premises.

The Premier: That is where it goes too far.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: No; we know of many instances in the suburbs and in country districts where the freehold of hotels is owned by the people who are running them.

Hon. T. Walker: They are the licensees, as well as the owners.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: That is so. The time comes when such men are convicted and their licenses are cancelled. Such men do not deprive themselves of the profits derived from the hotel, but they employ dummies who take their places as licensees. These dummies may be barmen or some other employees. In such cases, the owner of the freehold still continues to run the hotel, as the member for South Fremantle has already indicated. Such a man will conduct his hotel in exactly the same disreputable way as previously. The proviso means that if an individual has been convicted twice, and has been deprived of his license—it is a difficult matter to convict a publican twice and take his license away from him—it will then prevent such a man conducting an hotel and owning the freehold. It will also prevent him from putting a dummy in charge of his premises.

The Minister for Mines: If you printed a libel in the "Sunday Times" how would you like to lose your property?

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: The comparison is not on all-fours at all. The holder of a license has a valuable property from the State. He is given a monopoly to sell liquor, which is a very valuable concession.

Mr. Marshall: For which he pays dearly.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: He makes a handsome profit from it. Rarely does a hotel-keeper become bankrupt. I hope the amendment will be passed. Men who are granted these licenses at the hands of the State should be compelled to run their houses in a proper way. If they fail to do this, they should lose their licenses and be prevented from holding licenses in future. Neither should their property be licensed. On the turf we hear of horses and owners being disqualified for life.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Would you make that a test of character for any other calling?

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: The property is only penalised so long as the person guilty of the offences holds the property.

The Minister for Works: Off with his head right away!

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: The Minister overlooks the fact that there must be two convictions.

Mr. LAMBERT: It is very unfair to spring on the Committee amendments of such a far-reaching nature. If members do not put their amendments on the Notice Paper and thus give an opportunity to fairly consider them, the Committee should show their disapproval by voting such amendments out.

Capt. Carter: It has been read twice.

Mr. LAMBERT: The mere fact of reading it is not sufficient. I shall refuse to support any important amendment unless it appears on the Notice Paper.

The PREMIER: I agree that an offender should not be granted another license, but this is retrospective legislation applying to property. There might be an owner of property having no connection with the sale of liquor who had offended perhaps 20 years ago, and had lost his license. What would the hon. member do with such a man? The owner of the hotel might live 100 miles from a centre where his premises are disqualified and the residents might be deprived of the hotel until a new one could be erected. Legislation should not be made retrospective as regards the property.

Capt. Carter: The property is included to draw in the owner as licensee.

Hon. T. Walker: As an applicant in future and it is the future we are dealing with.

The PREMIER: A license cannot be renewed for any premises in which a disqualified person is a part owner. If such a person were a shareholder in the Swan Brewery the license could not be renewed. The amendment would penalise the man and the property.

Mr. CHESSON: I oppose the amendment. All necessary power is given in Clause 20. If the Act were properly administered all such offences could be brought under the notice of the licensing bench, because offences are endorsed on the license. The fact of a man having committed an offence is no reason why we should impose a life sentence on him.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Something in the nature of the amendment of the member for Leederville is needed, but I think his amendment goes too far. I suggest that he ask leave to withdraw it, and then submit it in altered form. There is no position which calls for high character more than the position of an hotelkeeper. The amendment proposes a very heavy disability in respect of the property.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If the amendment affected the property, I am not sure that I would not vote for it. I find, however, that it affects the individual.

The Premier: And the property, too.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is always the possibility of a person reforming. A man might be convicted twice within 12 months of selling liquor after hours without personally being guilty of the offence. Is that man to be for ever debarred from holding a license?

The Minister for Mines: Moreover, he must get rid of the premises, too.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have known a case in which the holder of the license was forced by the owner of the property, where probably offences would not have been committed but for the owner. The matter of forfeiture should be left to the discretion of the court. Some of the offences are comparatively trivial. Let us give a man a chance.

Hon. T. WALKER: It is precisely because I want to give a man a chance to reform that I will not put him in a place where his temptation will be greatest. I would not give such a man a chance again of misusing an hotel. A point which has been forgotten by hon. members is that we must give the public a chance. The public are in hundreds, and this hotelkeeper is one man. What chance do we give the public frequenting hotels if we put in charge of an hotel a man of this known character, a man who twice within 12 months has turned his hotel into a gambling den, or into a brothel, or has violated the law twice in any sense?

Mr. J. H. Smith: Some of the offences are trivial.

Hon. T. WALKER: A licensee does not lose his hotel license for a trivial offence. He is liable to lose it, but does not lose it, for merely trivial offences. But if he is found guilty of serious offences, and the bench think it necessary to forfeit his license, they can do it. It is the protection of the public that is sought for by this Bill, and by the amendment of the member for Leederville.

Mr. Lutey: If a particular publican happens to be set by the police, and they want to have him, they can have him.

Hon. T. WALKER: I admit that the police are not always honest, and not always truthful, and not always just; but when it comes to the hotel business I have not found them excessively severe. I think they have tried to do their duty in most cases. If the police received instructions from those in charge of them to carry out literally the law of 1911, there is not a publican in the State who would survive.

Mr. O'Loughlen: And if the police enforced every other Act similarly, there would be civil war.

Hon. T. WALKER: Probably. The amendment means that a man convicted of such offences that the bench, who are generally lenient and just, consider that he is not a man who should be connected with the liquor traffic in future, either through his person or through his property, shall be debarred accordingly. It means that if at the date of the application he is owner, landlord, lessee, or proprietor he is put out of the trade; that he is tabooed from being associated with the

liquor trade. His property is there, and he can sell it.

The Colonial Secretary: There is a very poor demand for hotels at present.

Hon. T. WALKER: What nonsense! The property will remain of value, and he can sell it, but he cannot be in any way associated with the liquor traffic.

The Premier: I do not mind that as applied to the future, but I do not think it ought to be applied to the past.

Hon. T. WALKER: But the whole clause applies to the past, has a bearing on the past. For instance, it is prescribed that the inspector shall make a searching investigation as to the applicant's character and suitability.

The Minister for Mines: There is no disagreement on the point that he should not be permitted to have anything to do with the trade.

Hon. T. WALKER: The Premier's point, which I am answering, is that it is retrospective. I say the whole clause is retrospective.

The Premier: Not in the same sense.

Hon. T. WALKER: Yes, in every sense. The Premier's objection is, not to the retrospective quality of the legislation when it deals with a man's character, but that when it affects a man's property it is wrong.

The Premier: When you are inquiring into his character you must inquire into the past.

The Minister for Mines: It is right enough to keep him out of the trade, but why force him to part with his property?

Hon. T. WALKER: Why should we not? What is the difference? The chief thing the amendment touches is the prevention of the possibility of a man whose character would disqualify him under the clause, being able to run the same public house by means of a dummy. I want to prevent that. The amendment touches that point.

Mr. MANN: By the amendment it is intended to have a better conduct of hotels, and to prevent the offences referred to.

Mr. Underwood: What are they?

Mr. MANN: One is permitting drunkenness, disorderly conduct, and prostitutes and thieves to remain on licensed premises. A good deal of the difficulty would be overcome if Section 141 were deleted from the amendment, thus leaving it confined to Section 139. I suggest that the mover of the amendment recast it to include only Section 139.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I suggest the hon. member withdraw the amendment on the understanding that, if necessary, the clause will be recommitted.

Capt. CARTER: There is a false impression abroad as to the meaning of the amendment. I will withdraw it, redraft it, and resubmit it on recommitment.

Mr. McCALLUM: Clause 20 gives the court no power to deal with dummies, and so it will be entirely ineffective unless the pro-

vision be made applicable to dummies. We all agree that the licensee shall be a man of clean character. But of what use is that if the licensee is merely a wages man in the employ of the owner? It will be a fatal error if, in the redrafting of the amendment, power is not given to the court to effectively deal with dummies.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it the pleasure of the Committee that the amendment be withdrawn?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I object to the withdrawal of the amendment. The reason why we get these stringent clauses is that we have in human nature a tyrannical streak. Those who do not touch alcohol desire to tyrannise over their fellow creatures. Even those who take a little want to tyrannise. The whole motive behind the amendment is tyranny.

Capt. Carter: Oh, rats!

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Well I will not say it is all tyranny, but will say that some of it is a desire to catch votes.

Capt. Carter: Is the hon. member in order in casting aspersions of that nature on me?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not in order if he refers to the member for Leederville.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I did not refer to him particularly, but I say that about 60 per cent. of the people have no definite opinion whatever on this question, but are ready to vote for the candidate who has the most decided convictions. Because of this, some members are anxious to show the electors that they are looking after the drunks. I wish to refer to the member for Kanowna.

The Minister for Mines: Not as one of the drunks!

Mr. UNDERWOOD: No, not now. It has become quite usual for members to get up and tell me I am too drunk to speak or to think.

Mr. Marshall: That would be impossible.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Quite so. I can drink more than they can, and still be sober enough to do my work. I will not proceed with the member for Kanowna, beyond saying I do not want such remarks repeated lest I make personal remarks in turn.

Mr. Money: Quite right.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The amendment is an attempt on the part of the member for Leederville to put in the boot. That is the sole purpose of it. The clause as printed in the Bill covers everything one can imagine in regard to a man holding a license, but it is not enough for the tyrants of Leederville, whose desire is, as I have said, to put in the boot.

The Minister for Mines: You ought to be able to speak with feeling; you put in the boot whenever you get the chance.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I do not.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Leederville desires to withdraw the amendment; he is not pressing it, and you are setting up arguments in favour of throwing it out.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I desire to advance such arguments which will compel the hon. member to withdraw it.

The Premier: Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Well, we have had enough of the amendment; we will let him withdraw it.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I wish to say a few words about the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: Is the hon. member opposing the withdrawal?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes. The hon. member proposes to re-submit the amendment in an altered form. I wish to prevent that by throwing out the amendment now. I want the Committee to reject it. The temper of the House is against it.

Capt. Carter: The temper of the House is to give me a fair deal.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: We are giving the hon. member a fair deal. He expects to get a certain amount of kudos from this amendment. Are we going to condemn a man who has run an hotel for 20 years and who, because of officious police, has been convicted a couple of times for offences which are being committed almost every day? What is proposed will create a hardship and the House should not permit it to be done.

Mr. O'Loughlin: The temper of the House is in the direction of dropping the amendment.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am opposed to it because it will act too harshly on the individual. I want to see the amendment voted out to-night. I guarantee that 75 per cent. of the members of this House have broken the law so far as hotels are concerned. I will guarantee too that they have gone into my hotel, and that I have served them after hours. If it had been known that I had done this twice, under the proposed amendment I would have lost my license.

Mr. LAMBERT: We should approach the proposed disqualification with a good deal of caution. Hon. members, I am sure, do not feel that they should impose a sort of sentence of death on publicans because, after all, some of the offences for which the sentence would be imposed are more or less trivial. The member for Nelson has told us that he has gone into licensed premises and taken liquor after hours. I quite believe it. I know of a place not far from here—certainly not private premises—where a considerable amount of gambling goes on. We know that the public are ever ready to commit breaches of the Licensing Act, and we should stay our hand because under the amendment we would be disqualifying a man for life. The amendment is altogether too harsh and will put in the hands of the bench a dangerous weapon. If the penalty in the Bill is not sufficiently severe let us make it more severe, but let us not impose what amounts to a death penalty.

Mr. SIMONS: I am opposed to the amendment because it seems to me to be more in the nature of vengeance than reform. Most

hon. members are out to reform the trade, but measures or proposals of this kind are so extreme that they are going to re-act against the desire for reform. It is not the function of the House to look for vengeance. I am opposing the amendment, but not because of the suggestions made that some convictions are brought about through the police having individuals set. The community, generally speaking, is very well served by the police force and when we hear men loudly talking about being set by the police, we can generally judge the depth of their offence by the noise they are making against the guardians of the law. It should be our object to frame punishment which will fit the crime. In this case the proposed punishment is altogether out of proportion to the offence contemplated by the amendment. I shall, therefore, register an emphatic protest against a proposal of such an extreme nature being submitted to this House.

Hon. T. WALKER: Stress has been laid on two points, one of which is that a man may lose his license for a trivial offence such as being caught twice serving a glass of liquor after 9 o'clock. That is trivial in a way.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Did anyone ever lose his license for it?

Hon. T. WALKER: No.

Mr. Chesson: Yes.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I know of a case where a man lost his license in this way.

Hon. T. WALKER: If the amendment were to be re-drafted, that offence could be eliminated. Is there anyone in this House who will say that a man who has offended against Section 132 twice in one year should again be permitted to hold a license? The member for Leederville wants to redraft his amendment to meet some of the objections that have been made. The House should be unprejudiced because it is the public we have to consider and not the landlord. It is in the interests of the public who attend these hotels and make use of them, and for whom these hotels are supposed to be established. All this talk about disqualifying men for life is beside the mark. We wish to make the trade as clean as possible, and give the public as much protection as we can in the wording of the Act.

Mr. LAMBERT: If the member for Kanowna will look at Section 132 of the present Act he will see that the onus of proof is upon the licensee that he does not permit a drunken person to go upon his premises. From the moment when he is charged with an offence, he is guilty until he proves himself otherwise. The clause as it stands is already sufficiently stringent.

The Minister for Mines: The licensee must have lost his license through a repetition of certain offences.

Mr. LAMBERT: If the amendment is withdrawn and re-cast to suit the fancies of various members, and this principle is followed right through, we shall never finish the Bill.



Hon. P. COLLIER: I regret that leave to withdraw the amendment has been refused to the member for Leederville. If members adopt this attitude they will find as the session goes on they have created an obstacle that will rebound upon them. It is rare indeed for the Committee to refuse any member the right to withdraw his own amendment. It is an act of discourtesy to do so. If the amendment is forced to a division the result will be unsatisfactory either way. Something along the lines of the amendment is most essential. If it is carried we may be going further than is necessary to achieve the purpose the hon. member has in view, but, if it is defeated, the clause will be incomplete and will not tighten up the law in the way desired. Surely members are not afraid to permit the mover of the amendment to re-cast it for submission to the Committee at a later stage. If the amendment is rejected, the substance of it cannot again be considered. With the object of ensuring further consideration, I will vote for it.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: When a member puts forward an amendment he should allow the decision of the Committee to prevail regarding it. After further consideration, however, and provided the amendment again comes before us in its redrafted form, I am prepared to withdraw my opposition to the withdrawal of the amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Mrs. COWAN: I move an amendment—

That the following words be added:—  
“The written report above mentioned shall be open to inspection by the applicant.”

I think this point has been overlooked, and that the applicant is fully entitled to see the report.

Mr. LAMBERT: There ought to be a stipulation that a copy of the report shall be handed to the applicant not less than 48 hours prior to the hearing of the application.

Mrs. COWAN: I am perfectly willing to accept the hon. member's suggestion, and I ask leave to add to my amendment the words—

“Not less than 48 hours prior to the hearing of the application.”

Leave given; the amendment amended accordingly.

Mr. CHESSON: The suggested notice of 48 hours is too short to allow of rebutting evidence to be brought.

Mr. CORBOY: I move an amendment on the amendment:—

That “48 hours” be struck out, and “three days” inserted in lieu.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not think either 48 hours or three days would be any use, seeing that the licensing bench sit on fixed dates. The point might be dealt with in a new clause, which would provide that

the clerk of courts shall furnish the applicant with a copy of the report.

Mr. MONEY: In practice, 48 hours is found long enough. At one time these reports were not produced until the hearing of the application; therefore the amendment of the member for West Perth represents an improvement.

Amendment on the amendment put and negatived.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 21—Amendment of Section 49, Accommodation required for licensed premises:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The matters referred to in paragraphs (a) to (c) of Subclause 1, and in paragraphs (a) and (b) of Subclause 2, are matters which should be left entirely to the discretion of the licensing bench. Perth is becoming a large place. An hotel at Victoria Park would not need to have 14 rooms in addition to those required for the family of the licensee and the staff, though in the centre of the city so much accommodation might be necessary.

Mr. Mann: Do you think an hotel is required at all if it does not need to have 12 bedrooms?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It might be. In any case, the matter should be left to the magistrates. I move an amendment—

That all the words in Subsection 1 of proposed Section 49 after “premises,” in line 2, be struck out.

I will later on move an amendment to Subclause 4 to deal with these aspects.

The PREMIER: I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment. The clause provides that hotels shall be properly constructed and properly equipped with adequate accommodation. The clause is necessary, and I do not see how the position can be dealt with by an amendment to Subclause 4. We have in Perth hotels which have actually refused to supply meals.

Mr. O’Loughlen: That is so.

The PREMIER: Other hotels only have a limited number of bedrooms. Hotels should provide for travellers, otherwise they should not be licensed at all. The hotels must be decently kept.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You can deal with that under Subclause 4.

The PREMIER: I do not think so. If it is thought that the provision for 12 bedrooms is too much, an effort can be made to reduce the number.

Mr. PICKERING: I hope the Committee will agree to the clause as it stands. It should be widened, rather than be limited in scope. It is necessary that all applicants shall know what must be provided for in an hotel. There has been too much ambiguity about these matters in the past and the object is to get rid of that difficulty. Surely the Committee will not agree to an amendment that would make it possible for the hotels to be converted into drinking shops in

Perth and in the country districts. As it is, the number of rooms specified is too few in the case of many country hotels.

The Premier: The number mentioned only represents the minimum.

Mr. PICKERING: The clause is very necessary. I think it might be amended, however, by substituting "apartment" for "entrance" in paragraph (a) because I think this should refer to apartments for the sale of liquors not to be drunk on the premises rather than to an entrance.

Mr. SIMONS: I oppose the amendment. It should be the function of Parliament to lay down the standard of hotels in the metropolitan area. It is because we have left it to the Licensing Bench that we have rabbit warrens carrying licenses, and that we have hotels conducted as we find them in different parts of the city. I would like to see the clause amended in one particular, however, for I do not think that the provision suggested by paragraph (e) of one bath for every ten lodgers is sufficient. He must have been a very dirty man who inserted that provision. If we were a civilised community, we would see that there was a bath attached to each bedroom.

The Minister for Mines: I would object to a bath in my bedroom.

Mr. SIMONS: Some people object to water in any case. We can measure the degree of civilisation by the extent to which people wash themselves, and I do not think this provision is adequate. I intend to move an amendment to provide for one bath for every five lodgers.

The CHAIRMAN: I warn the member for East Perth that if the amendment before the Chair be defeated he will not be able to move his amendment.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not wish to prevent anyone from moving an amendment. I will withdraw my amendment, but I am afraid I will place myself in a worse position.

The CHAIRMAN: If the amendment be defeated, all the words included in the clause must necessarily stand down to the end of paragraph (e).

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I wish to be assured that I will have an opportunity to move my further amendment.

The Minister for Mines: You could strike out the whole lot when the clause is put as amended.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I move an amendment—

That in proposed new Section 49, all the words after "premises" to the end of paragraph (b) be struck out.

In some places dining rooms are necessary in hotels. That, however, is provided for later on. It is not necessary on the outskirts of the city that it shall be compulsory to have 12 bedrooms. It all depends in what part of the city the hotel is to be erected. That is a matter that can be left in the hands of the Licensing Bench, who will be in a better

position to judge of the requirements by reason of the locality where the hotel is to be erected.

Mr. Mann: The clause is confined to the city of Perth and Fremantle.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But the city is becoming so scattered! The majority of hotels built last year in the city were very fair buildings.

Mr. Mann: They have more than 12 bedrooms.

The Minister for Works: Long ago people were compelled to provide a large number of bedrooms in different parts about Melbourne and those rooms were never occupied.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I want the Committee to decide whether or not the Licensing Bench should have discretion in these matters.

The Minister for Mines: In those circumstances, you would not require a clause at all.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier contends I have struck out too much.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I hope the amendment will be defeated. The Commission went very thoroughly into this matter.

Mr. O'Loghlen: They did, regarding paragraph (a).

Mr. RICHARDSON: They went thoroughly into the whole matter.

Mr. O'Loghlen: You are wrong. We did not do so.

Mr. RICHARDSON: We are not inflicting any injustice on any one desiring a new license by asking that if it is to be in Perth or Fremantle the hotel shall have 12 bedrooms. The member for North-East Fremantle mentioned that a hotel might require a dining room, but not bedrooms. That may be so, but if people take their meals in any particular hotel, in all probability they will want to reside there, and in consequence will want bedrooms. Therefore it is reasonable to ask that at least 12 bedrooms should be provided in all hotels in Perth and Fremantle.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Why not in Subiaco?

Mr. RICHARDSON: I would assent to that.

The Minister for Mines: What about Claremont?

Mr. RICHARDSON: I am prepared to include Claremont also. If an hotel is required anywhere from Perth to Fremantle, it is required for residential purposes, and, therefore should provide at least 12 bedrooms.

Mr. Underwood: How would you demonstrate that 12 bedrooms are necessary?

Mr. RICHARDSON: Other members, I think, have understood me; why the member for Pilbara cannot, is for him to say. In recommending paragraph (a), the Commission's idea was that those who go to an hotel to purchase a bottle of liquor do not wish to go into the bar. I hope the clause will be carried in its entirety.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: We have had no facts in respect of paragraph (a). One of the best conducted hotels in Western Australia

lia—I refer to McCarthy's hotel, Barrack street—

Mr. J. Thomson: A mere drinking place!

Mr. O'Loughlin: There are seven permanent lodgers at that hotel. That is better than the wine saloon you retained at Cottesloe.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: One can go to McCarthy's hotel and get a bottle, and it is always the best of liquor.

The Minister for Works: Hear, hear!

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yet that hotel does not run a special bottle department. Why then, should we agree to paragraph (a)? It is inserted because the member for Perth and others think they must do something to justify their existence. But in doing that, they may do some injury. Why compel licensees to have an extra door for the sale of bottles? The best policy for Western Australia is to reduce costs in every way; the essence of administration should be to reduce costs.

The Minister for Mines: Let us start right at home with saving a little lighting and keeping down the bulk of "Hausard."

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes, and saving the cost of that elephant you brought here.

The CHAIRMAN: The elephant is not under discussion at present.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Every restriction in the Bill means increased cost. Is there any justification for this restriction? It is only the same old spirit of tyranny—the W.C.T.U. comes along with requests.

Mrs. Cowan: No, we want to see this abolished.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Unless the Premier can tell us why we should have paragraph (a), it ought to go out. I have no objection to paragraph (b), for I hold that hotels should provide reasonable accommodation for the travelling public.

Mr. MANN: Paragraph (a) is to provide for a place where bottles may be purchased without the purchaser having to go into the bar and mix with those drinking there. It is a very necessary provision.

The Minister for Mines: Why more necessary in Perth than in Subiaco?

Mr. MANN: It is dealing with new hotels.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I fail to see the necessity for paragraph (a). This deals with new licenses in the city of Perth. Frontages in the city are very valuable, and why should we put a licensee to the expense of making provision for the sale of bottled liquor if his hotel is situated in a locality where there is very little bottle trade? We might well allow the licensee to be the judge as to making provision to meet the demands in his particular locality. Many hotels have bottle departments, presumably because there is a demand for that kind of trade, but why make it obligatory to provide a bottle department if there is no demand for bottled liquor?—I move—

That the amendment be amended by deleting from it paragraph (b.)

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The member for North-East Fremantle has moved to delete all the words after "premises" and if the amendment is amended as desired by the member for Boulder, the clause will read, "No new publican's general license or hotel license shall be granted for any premises unless such house contains not less than 12 bedrooms and two sitting rooms," etc. I think it is desired that paragraph (b) be retained as pertaining to hotels in the metropolitan area. Unfortunately, the clause refers to the City of Perth and the town of Fremantle. The city boundaries include Leederville, North Perth and Victoria Park but do not include Mt. Lawley, Maylands, Subiaco or Claremont. I see no reason for discriminating between the accommodation required at Fremantle and at Midland Junction.

Hon. P. Collier: Or Subiaco and Leederville.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Quite so.

Mr. Mann: This applies only to new licenses.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It applies to all licenses after the year 1927.

Mr. Mann: It gives five years in which to put the houses in order.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: And would encourage one of the most objectionable features of the liquor trade, namely separate premises for selling bottled beer. A great number of the best hotelkeepers are being accused of harbouring drunken men about their premises, though many of these men become drunk through taking bottles of beer away. The same applies to many of the drunken men dealt with in the court. If a man wants liquor, he should go to a public place for it and should not be ashamed of his action. We ought not to encourage him to take away bottles after he is well on the way to intoxication.

Mr. Mann: He would not be prevented from buying a bottle of beer in the bar.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No, but there is not the same encouragement to buy bottles in the bar. I wish to help to clean up the trade a little, but the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) is going the other way.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I want to leave the whole matter to the discretion of the court. The court would be in a better position than this Committee to say what number of rooms there should be in any hotel. My object is to move an amendment along these lines later on in the clause. The experience of the past has been that the licensing court has caused hotel owners to spend thousands of pounds where only a few hundreds would have sufficed.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I suggest the hon. member should withdraw his amendment and move to strike out the words "Within the city of Perth or town of Fremantle." The position could then be tested as to whether the matter should be left to the discretion of the court or not.

Mr. LAMBERT: The matter should be left to the discretion of the court.

The Premier: It is left to their discretion.

Mr. LAMBERT: It will also be necessary to define what the metropolitan area is. Surely the court can be counted upon to deal with a question of this sort.

The PREMIER: The provisions of this clause are necessary and should be included. There is nothing here that would not have to be set up in the case of the city of Perth or the town of Fremantle if the administering authority did its duty. I do not know why the member for North-East Fremantle wants the paragraphs deleted. Would he have less than these provisions? I hope the amendment will not be carried.

Mr. LAMBERT: In countries where liquor is certainly controlled better than it is here, they have what is called an hotel, the licensee of which is permitted to dispense liquor but must have what is called an hotel attachment, which must be at least 100 feet away from the place where liquor is sold. I am speaking of South America, where a sine qua non of a liquor license is that the living and sleeping accommodation must be a certain distance away from the licensed premises. South America has the most advanced liquor legislation in the world. In order to approach the ideal, let us provide that the sale of liquor here shall be kept away from the living and sleeping accommodation. I agree with the member for North-East Fremantle that it is a mistaken idea to penalise the man who intends to build premises by saying to him, "The test as to whether you shall have a license is whether you are prepared to build 12 bedrooms." If the man builds only two rooms, then, so long as these are all that is needed for the public requirements, he should get his license. The bar should not be poked in front of the nose of a lodger at an hotel.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 10.59 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Wednesday, 20th September, 1922.*

	PAGE
Questions: War news ... ..	815
State Saw Mills ... ..	815
Licensing Act, Cue offences ... ..	815
Locomotive spark arresters ... ..	815
Newdegate, clearing ... ..	815
Bills: Light and Air, report ... ..	815
State Trading Concerns Act Amendment, 2a., Com. report ... ..	831
Motions: Water Supply Department, by-laws, to disallow ... ..	816
Immigration, State-wide scheme ... ..	820
Adjournment, Special ... ..	830

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

### QUESTION—WAR NEWS.

Hon. J. EWING: At your request and on your behalf, Mr. President, I desire to ask the Minister for Education the following question: Whether the Premier has received any reliable news in connection with the present war movement, and if so, will he give the House as much information as he can?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: We have received nothing beyond what has been published.

### QUESTION—STATE SAWMILLS.

Hon. A. BURVILL asked the Minister for Education: 1, How many loads of timber have been milled at the State Sawmills since the works started, including that used for public works? 2, What is the percentage of waste between timber treated in the round, milled, and the finished product? 3, What royalty would have been paid by a permit holder in respect of the timber referred to in answer to question No. 1? 4, Has any royalty or railway freight been charged against the State Sawmills? 5, What amount of railway freight would have been payable in respect to timber milled at the State Sawmills, and carried over the State railways, including the 17 miles used for shunting? 6, Is the forest cut by the State Sawmills taken on a face or are only the best patches cut out? 7, Can the Minister explain why the State Sawmills charge 1s. per dozen more for fruit cases than the privately-owned mills?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: I think this question should take the form of a motion for a return, as it will take some time to get out the information. However, if the hon. member will allow it to stand over, I will answer it later on.

### QUESTION—LICENSING ACT, CUE OFFENCES.

Hon. T. MOORE (for Hon. J. W. Hickey) asked the Minister for Education: 1, Has his attention been drawn to a leading article in