If the powers of the court were increased, it could continue to fine the union. Do not forget that the strike was conducted from the Eastern States. A strike was called because Mr. Healy was to be prosecuted. There was a strike of the loco engineers because of a decision of a Federal court, and we had nothing to do with it. Then there was the metal trades strike. In view of these events, the Minister's comment was not justified.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

House adjourned at 4.40 a.m. (Thursday).

Legislative Council

Thursday, 19th November, 1953.

CONTENTS.

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

OBITUARY.

The Late Hon. A. Thomson.

The PRESIDENT: I desire to make a reference to the passing of a former member of this Chamber, the late Hon. A. Thomson, and to express our sympathy with his relatives. Mr. Thomson was a member of this House for many years; and although he had not been associated with us for some time, I thought members would like to stand in silence as a token of respect.

Members stood in silence.

QUESTION.

TRANSPORT.

As to Loading Permitted to Farmers.

Hon. L. C. DIVER asked the Chief Secretary:

Will he obtain a statement from the Minister for Transport setting out fully what a farmer may carry on his own motor vehicle to and from the metroplitan area?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

It is presumed that the question refers to transport operations which may be undertaken under exemption from the licensing provisions of the Transport Act. The answer is as follows:—

(1) Provided he uses his own vehicle, a farmer may carry any of the following produce of his farm from the place where it is produced to any other place:—livestock, poultry, fruit, dairy produce, or any other perishable commodity, wheat, oats barley and rye; and on the return journey he may back-load any requisites for his own domestic or farming use.

(2) He may transport milk or cream to the nearest factory.

(3) An apiarist may carry bees, hives and beekeepers' requisites and appliances in his own vehicle to any part of the State.

(4) Livestock may be carried either to or from the farm without restriction.

(5) In the event of a farm machine breaking down, the farmer may use his own vehicle in carrying the machine to Perth or elsewhere for repairs and returning it after they have been effected.

(6) A farmer may transport firewood produced in the course of developing his property but this loading does not qualify him to return to the property with other goods.

In addition to these statutory exemptions it has been decided, in respect of the season, to allow farmers to carry their own superphosphate in their own vehicles without securing a permit or licence from the Transport Board.

FIREARMS AND GUNS ACT AMENDMENT BILL SELECT COMMITTEE.

Extension of Time.

On motion by Hon. Sir Charles Latham, the time for bringing up the report of the select committee was extended to Tuesday, the 24th November.

BILLS (4)—THIRD READING.

1, Trade Descriptions and False Advertisements Act Amendment (No. 2).

2, Municipal Corporations Act Amendment.
Transmitted to the Assembly.

3, Declarations and Attestations Act Amendment.

4, Returned Servicemen's Badges.
Passed.

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [4.40] in moving the second reading said: This little Bill is designed to simplify the electoral rolls for Legislative Council provinces. The proposal is that each province roll will be divided into what will be termed province-part-rolls. They will correspond to the Legislative Assembly districts within the province. It is considered that this will facilitate the work of candidates for election, and will also be of assistance to the Electoral Office. This follows the example set in Commonwealth rolls, which are printed in subdivisions of divisions. A somewhat similar procedure is adopted in the United Kingdom.

This will be of particular advantage in the Suburban Province, for which 22,000 electors are enrolled, and which contains eight Assembly districts; in the Metropolitan Province, consisting of 14,500 electors and nine districts; and, of course, in the West province, which has 11,000 enrolments. Section 19 of the principal Act already provides for the printing of sub-district rolls, and this has been taken advantage of in respect to the Murchison district, the rolls being divided in two parts, Murchison and Leonora.

The Bill seeks to enlarge the definition of "roll" by including province-part-rolls, sub-district rolls and supplementary rolls. It then goes on to provide that each province-part-roll shall contain the names and addresses of those electors entitled to vote, including those resident in the district and those who, although not living in the province, possess votes by virtue of their property.

Members will agree that the Bill, if passed, will make it simpler for any person engaged in a province election, to check through the roll. Some years ago I advocated that the rolls should be divided in some fashion or other. My suggestion then was that they should be divided in the way of towns. The proposal in the Bill does not go as far as that, but it does go part of the way, and I think that any alteration will be an improvement.

When we have 22,000 or 25,000 names in alphabetical order, a tremendous burden is thrown on a person who wants to do anything with regard to the roll. Once the job is done in the Electoral Office, the department will have no more difficulty in keeping the rolls in those districts than it has now in maintaining them in alphabetical order. I think this will be of great value, and I trust that members will agree with me and pass the Bill. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. H. S. W. PARKER (Suburban) [4.45]: This is an excellent Bill, and I am glad it has been brought forward. It is very difficult to follow the electors when there are 22,000 names in alphabetical order on a roll, as is the case in the Suburban Province, which consists of several electoral districts. I have no doubt that, with respect to other rolls which are not so large, it will also be easier for a candidate in an election to understand the roll when the names are in alphabetical order in their districts. I suport the Bill.

On motion by Hon. A. F. Griffith, debate adjourned.

BILL—MATRIMONIAL CAUSES AND PERSONAL STATUS CODE AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. C. H. HENNING (South-West) [4.46]: I believe we should vote on this Bill purely and simply according to our moral ideas, because it deals essentially with morals. We have been told that what the Bill seeks to achieve was inadvertently omitted from a measure which was passed five years ago. It seems that it has taken a good while for an attempt to be made to rectify that inadvertent omission.

The Bill appears to have no direct bearing on any additional grounds for divorce; yet, if passed, it definitely could increase the number of divorces. Divorce laws, generally are accepted as part and parcel of the life we live. The Bill could have a serious effect on our home life. The home is the centre of family life, and the measure is concerned with family life, inasmuch as it deals with a brother-in-law or sister-in-law. These people, particularly when living in the same dwelling, no doubt at times have big opportunities for temptation that probably would not occur to others who were further apart and living in different houses.

The proposition to give a man or a woman the opportunity to marry his or her opposite in-law as a result of divorce, is not, I think, a good one. Whilst every chance exists to show affection, there is a limit to which that affection will be carried if the parties concerned realise that they can go no further; that there is no future for them as man and wife.

I realise that hardship will be inflicted in certain cases, and specific instances have been mentioned. But if this Bill is passed, it will go on to the statute book and will remain there as the law of the State until repealed. I honestly believe that more harm than good can come of it. A few cases have been cited for which this measure will do some good, but I am certain that over the years there would be scores and scores of wrecked and unhappy lives if it were passed. For that reason I oppose the Bill.

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [4.51]: This Bill proposes to amend Section 58 of the principal Act by adding after the word "nullity" the words "as if the prior marriage had been dissolved by death." If this Bill is carried, the effect of those words will be that a person who obtains a divorce will be able to marry the brother or sister, as the case may be, of the divorced spouse.

It has been claimed that these words, which were contained in the Supreme Court Act, 1935—and they were undoubtedly in that Act—were omitted from the new Act by inadvertence. That may be so, but, on the other hand, it might not be a correct statement. In any case, when Parliament passed the present legislation those words were not included in the appropriate section. It is now proposed to insert them in the existing Act; and if we accede to that proposition, the effect will be as I have stated.

As Mr. Henning pointed out, apparently this Bill has been introduced to cover certain individual people on whom some degree of hardship will be inflicted if a measure such as this is not passed. But there is a saying, which has a good deal of truth in it, that if one legislates to meet hard-luck cases, one invariable gets oneself into trouble. The measure certainly does not appeal to me. The idea of a person who obtains a divorce marrying the brother or sister of the wife or husband who has just been divorced is repugnant, and I think the average person would treat such a proposition in that way.

By virtue of special conditions which exist today, no doubt temptation may be placed before certain persons; and in that way divorce, domestic difficulties, and trouble may be encouraged if a measure such as this is carried. It has raised the hostility of certain influential churches and organisations which, I think we can concede, have no other motive in opposing it than to protect the sanctity of home life, which is so necessary and important today. For those reasons, and for reasons that have been advanced by other members who have opposed the measure, I propose to vote against it.

HON. R. J. BOYLEN (South-East) [4.56]: I intend to oppose this Bill. While it does not actually make further provision for divorce, to an extent it makes allowances for certain types of immorality, particularly because of conditions under which a great many people have to live today. If a man wished to marry his brother's divorced wife, and he had not been the cause of the divorce, I would probably take a different attitude towards the matter. But there would be instances where he would be the cause of the divorce, and where a provision of this nature would probably make it easier for such a set of circumstances to exist.

The conditions under which some people live at present in a great many instances would encourage infidelity between a wife and her husband's brother, or between a husband and his wife's sister. That is one of the reasons why I intend to vote against the Bill. I think it is an anti-Christian measure and the opinions expressed by the Anglican Archbishop of Perth, and an article which appeared in the "Record," which is the official Catholic organisation in this State, would be in keeping with those of the great majority of people. I intend to read the letter and the article because I think they express the opinions of the great majority of the churches of Western Australia.

I am mainly concerned with Western Australia because I do not think that the other States have similar legislation to ours. We have not many grounds for divorce in Western Australia, as can be seen when one compares the legislation with that existing in the other States. But I consider that we have a sufficient number; and although this would not help in that direction, it would be an additional reason why some people would be seeking a divorce.

My intention is to read the letter and the article so that they can be recorded in "Hansard" to let the people of this State know what church leaders think of a provision of this nature. The letter from the Anglican Archbishop of Perth reads—

> As the spokesman of a considerable body of Christian opinion in Western Australia, I wish to record my grave concern about the Bill which is now under your consideration for the amendment of Section 58 of the Matrimonial Causes and Personal Status Code, 1948. Whilst I realise that all our legislators are not necessarily committed to the Church's views of marriage, I would remind you that our civilisation has been built upon Christian foundations, which include the principle that marriage is a life-long union for better or for worse. For that reason, following the recorded teaching of Christ, the Church does not permit divorce.

Secular legislation in regard to divorce has been introduced from time to time, always with the intention of mitigating the evils of matrimonial unhappiness.

In point of fact experience has shown that the result of easy divorce is, by increasing the number of broken homes, to undermine the foundations of Christian society and very often to inflict incalculable injury upon innocent children.

I believe that the effect of the new measure before Parliament, if it becomes law, will aggravate a situation which is already bad enough. At the present moment the law of the land does provide some sort of moral protection for sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law, who by circumstances of proximity may be exposed to special temptation. To make such people eligible for marriage after divorce seems to me a most unnecessary step in the wrong direction, and it might well allow the seeds of suspicion to be sown in a happy family circle which at present is safe-guarded by civil law.

In case it may be thought that by following the rigid line dictated by Christ, the Church is lacking in realism or in sympathy to people in special need, I would add that the Church's leaders have a deep sympathy for the victims of domestic tragedy and do their utmost to help them. Nevertheless, we are not free to change the laws in order to accommodate hard cases, nor do we believe that we should be serving the best interests either of the individual or of society in general if we tried to do so. Indeed, any further relaxation of the law in favour of divorce would tend to increase rather than diminish the unhappiness caused by the breakdown of home life.

The true welfare of society depends upon the security of the home. If we follow the modern trend towards easy divorce, we shall be destroying the security of the home and in consequence we shall deprive our children of one of the most precious privileges in their birthright. Children are the innocent victims of easy divorce; and already the disastrous consequences of our laxity are apparent in the lives of many of them. It is not least on their account that I beg you to reflect most solemnly before you cast your vote in favour of this measure.

The article from "The Record" reads as follows:—

Resist this Bill.

During the week the members of the Legislative Assembly agreed to the passage of a private Bill enabling a man to marry his divorced wife's sister and a woman to be married to her divorced husband's brother. Only one dissentient voice—that of Dame Florence Cardell-Oliver—was heard during the debate on legislation which is a gross affront to the Christian and national conscience.

The sordid business was introduced by Mr. Watts, leader of the Country Party, on the most curious pretext. He is reported as saying that the provisions of the present proposed law were inadvertently omitted from the 1948 legislation. We feel free to doubt this assertion, and to believe that the omission was made so as not to jeopardise the passage of a measure further widening the grounds of divorce.

However, even if Mr. Watts' explanation is entertained, it still remains difficult to see the necessity of the present measure in view of the legal history, quoted from a report of the Solicitor General, by the Minister for Justice and Mr. Watts.

That contention is that the Administration of Justice (Divorce, etc.) Act of 1863 leaves a divorced person free in the same way as if death had dissolved the marriage. An Act of 1876 permitted, for the first time in this State, marriage with a deceased wife's sister. The legal effect of the combination of these measures is, according to the argument, identical with the legislation now before the Legislative Council.

If this contention is legally sound and politically honest, one may enquire why the present measure is necessary at all. If citizens have enjoyed this monstrous right for the past 75 years, why lend it now a confirmatory sanction in law?

When one surveys the development of civil law during the past 400 years in the aspect of its progressive negation of Christian principles one is struck precisely by the gradualism of a process clearly designed to condition people living in the penumbra of the Christian tradition for the pagan assaults yet to come.

The truism is even more startling when contrasted with the English scene where "reform" of this sort is constrained by virtue of the establishment of the English Church and by the political power of the Lords Spiritual.

When the new spiritual establishment was made in England, the "reformed" Church took over the canons of the Old Faith. In this matter of the prohibited degrees in marriage the forbidden categories of affinity were set out in 1563, and are given in the Prayer Book. The English law of 1835 simply adopted these, and up to 1907 it was illegal for a man to marry his deceased wife's sister. Even today a man may not marry his divorced wife's sister.

In Australia, however, the process of moral decay was accelerated. In this State the English law of the deceased wife's sister was anticipated by some 31 years.

The provisions of the present Bill, while not directly providing a new ground for divorce, certainly introduce into family life a species of temptation which past times considered should not even be speculated upon.

Everybody recognises that there is a certain reverence owing to relatives and parents which is opposed to sexual intercourse between them even in marriage.

If near relations are encouraged, as they certainly are by the proposed Bill, to contemplate marriage, the way is made plain for promiscuous immorality of a most hateful kind. In these days of the housing shortage, the issue is very practical and pressing, when very many families have close relations living within their domestic circle.

If the seed of suspicion is planted and the proximity of occasion provided on the family's very hearth, a whole flood of unhappiness may be unloosed. The mutual love, confidence, trust and respect between blood relations and those related in the first degree of affinity will be constrained, weakened and finally broken down.

This abominable Bill is now before the Council, and only prompt and vigorous action can bring about its defeat. In this, as in so many other matters nearly affecting the Christian life, it is at once unphilosophic and a dereliction of duty, to complain after the event. We deem it a responsibility in conscience, and an imperative one at that, for all Catholic organisations and individuals to protest without delay to their parliamentary representatives against this measure which so militates against the family and the home.

I do not think there is much more that can be said about this Bill other than what has been expressed in the opinion I have quoted from the Anglican Archbishop and in the extract from "The Record". In introducing the Bill, Mr. Watts said that there were not many people who would feel the benefit of this provision being added to the Act. Of course numerous people would take advantage of it if it became an Act because it would be easy for people living in close proximity with one another—and this could apply to relations who become attached to one another—to get a divorce and continue to live in sin while under the cloak of respectability provided by this amendment. I oppose the second reading of the Bill.

HON. G. BENNETTS (South-East) [5.7]: I would like to have some information concerning a case I remember some years ago. There were two sisters, one of whom was married to a man we will call Brown. She had two children aged about eight and nine years. That woman—the mother of those children—fell by the wayside and went to the pack, drinking and carrying on, and ultimately a divorce ensued. Her sister was not living in the house; but two or three years after the divorce, the divorced woman's sister married her brother-in-law. The husband decided that his divorced wife's sister would be a suitable mother for the children, and I would like to know what the position is in cases such as that.

HON. L. A. LOGAN (Midland) [5.8]: It has been said that it depends entirely on one's Christian morals as to how one will vote for this Bill. If we are to permit people to live immorally, then we had better throw this Bill out. But if we are to decide the issue on Christian values, then we should support the Bill. I am convinced that if we oppose the Bill people will live immorally. How we can justify our moral attitude by supporting something immoral, I cannot understand. Christian principles have been brought into the argument and letters have been received from the Archbishop of Perth, and articles have been read from papers of other denominations. I am prepared to judge this matter on its merits and on what the future might hold for the people concerned.

I do not admit to knowing all that is in the Bible, but I feel that if we provide for the children of these misguided acts, then we will be doing something Christian-like. Otherwise we would permit these children to live in the shadow of illegitimacy and go through their lives bearing that stigma. Cases have frequently been known of two sisters who are entirely different in nature; a man courts one of them, and believes in all seriousness that he has selected the right partner for life. After a few years of marriage, he finds he has not done so.

Hon. J. McI. Thomson: He takes her for better or worse.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: That is so; but after some years he finds it is for worse. There is nothing to prevent him from divorcing her; and in all probability he will do so, because if he finds that they are incompatible there will be no point in trying to make a go of it. After this, he may consider that he has something in common with the sister of his divorced wife, and he may wish to marry her. If this Bill is not passed he will continue to live with her. There is no argument about that at all—we cannot stop it. What members are trying to do by not passing this Bill is to encourage people to live in sin for the rest of their lives.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Most people who have committed sin, whether by accident or design, have to pay some penalty for it.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: Not necessarily. If everyone could live according to the Christian tenets, then we might be able to say that this is not necessary, but that day has not yet arrived. Why did not these people who are objecting now write to members of Parliament or to the Government prior to 1948 when this provision was in the Act? It was in the Act many years ago, and it was retained for many years. Did any of the churches write to anybody? Did any member receive a letter from the Archbishop or anybody else, asking that the provision be deleted? There was not a word. Now when we have the provision again brought down, there is a hue and cry from the churches and other bodies. Did the churches and those other bodies consider the moral values prior to 1948?

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Who says they did not?

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: They are only worrying about it now.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: I was not in Parliament then, but I would suggest they did.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN: A number of members who are in Parliament today were in Parliament then, and I would say that none of the churches or archbishops even gave the matter a moment's thought. Frankly, I cannot imagine why we should try to make people live in sin. That is what it amounts to. As I said before, members desire to stop a person from marrying his divorced wife's sister because they feel it would be wrong for him to do so. But do those members honestly believe that, when the man concerned loves the woman, he will not continue to live with her, if it is not possible for him to marry her? Of course he will! We should consider the children in this matter, and provide for them the benefits of a happy life; we should remove from them the stigma of illegitimacy. No objection was taken to this provision prior to 1948, and no objection should be taken today. I support the Bill.

HON. J. G. HISLOP (Metropolitan) [5.15]: Judging from the number of letters I have received concerning this Bill, I have found that the real objection is to divorce in general and not to this measure. In my view, the position is very simple. We are asked to restore to the Act words that were inadvertently omitted in 1948. If we fail to pass the Bill, we shall be imposing restrictions on some people, and I do not think that is the way in which we should frame legislation. Therefore, I intend to vote for the second reading.

HON. W. R. HALL (North-East) [5.16]: I support the second reading. Where a sister and the husband of a divorced wife wish to marry, and both parties are happy about the arrangement, why should there be need to worry about it? People have only a short life to live on this planet and, when a couple, after living a cat-and-dog life, have been divorced, the best way out is to give the parties to the new alliance an opportunity to do what is right. I do not say that I would have the same feeling if the divorce resulted from the actions of the husband's brother, but there should not be anything detrimental in permitting remarriage. I knew of a mother that married her son-in-law.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Is that so?

Hon. W. R. HALL: Yes; and although there was a disparity in their ages, they lived very happily. So long as the parties concerned in these marriages are happy about the arrangement and their future happiness seems likely, there should be no reason for not supporting the Bill.

HON. C. H. SIMPSON (Midland) [5.18]: I have listened with a great deal of interest to the views that have been expressed. I had no particular bias one way or the other, but after listening to the discussion, I intend to support the second reading. One point that impresses me greatly is that the Bill represents an attempt to rectify an omission that occurred a few years ago when certain words were dropped out during the consolidation of the Code—words which had formed part of the Act for about 70 years. While those words formed part of the law, there was no criticism and no pressure to have them deleted, but, because an attempt is now made to restore words that were omitted purely through an accident, there is quite a lot of controversy.

It is right that our laws should discourage divorce and protect the sanctity of marriage. Sometimes, when discussing the incidence of divorce, we are inclined to overlook the fact that the great majority of marriages are happy. It is said that happy married lives have no history, and so we hear very little about the great majority of marriages which are happy, though we hear much about the minority of marriages that do not prove to be for the best. So long as there are human beings, there will be divorces and causes for divorce, and there will still be people who would oppose such a measure as this.

The great majority of the people are normal beings, and if there were temptation leading to divorce, it would be on account of some cause other than the presence or absence of these words in the Act. Where cases occur—I have not come across any, but I could imagine some—such as a man or woman going completely off the rails and leaving the partner with a num-

ber of children; if the husband were left with the children, who would be the most natural person to take charge apart from the aunt? There may have been nothing whatever between the father and the sister-in-law previously, but there might well have been a bond of affection between the children and the aunt, and is it not natural that the aunt in those circumstances might be prepared to enter into a contract with the husband to look after the children and that the husband would appreciate having someone of that sort to take charge of the children? All things considered, it is worth while to restore the words to the Act.

HON. H. L. ROCHE (South—in reply) [5.22]: I could understand if moral issues were involved that members would be averse to approving of the broadening of the grounds for divorce, but when moving the second reading, I made it plain that this Bill has nothing to do with increasing the grounds for divorce. It merely provides for the restoration to the Act of certain words to provide legal sanction for people to marry in circumstances where I consider marriage is more desirable than the other state of affairs.

Previous to 1948, there was no agitation against these words being in the Act, and it is incomprehensible to me that there should be such opposition to the measure if the object of it is understood. All that is desired is to restore to the Act words which were inadvertently omitted in 1948 and which had been the law for many years. It is ridiculous for any one to contend that the measure will make divorce easier or that it will open the door to abuse. It is far-fetched to say that all the terrible things forecast will happen if the Bill be passed. Such things did not happen before 1948 when the words formed part of the Act. Surely, had there been abuse in those years, we would have heard from the people who have shown such concern about this measure!

This is a legal matter and I do not pretend to have legal knowledge. Of course, the lawyers sometimes disagree. Mr. Bennetts mentioned a case where, failing the passing of this measure, the parties could not marry and the children would not have the benefit of legal status. When the measure was before another place, it was clearly recognised that the words had been omitted from the Act by inadvertence, and my only purpose in sponsoring the Bill here is to endeavour to get that error rectified.

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

Ayes	19
Noes	6
Majority for	13

Ayes.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. A. L. Loton
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. Sir Frank Gibson	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. F. R. Welsh
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	*(Teller.)*

Noes.

Hon. R. J. Boylen	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. J. McI. Thomson
Hon. C. H. Henning	Hon. E. M. Heenan
	(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West—in reply) [5.32]: I want to make it clear to members that this Bill was introduced not as a political measure but to meet the requirements of the general public. I am assured that for some considerable time the State Government Insurance Office has been inundated with telephone requests and written requests to accept fire and householders' comprehensive insurance business, and that keen disappointment is expressed when the applicants are advised that the State office has not the statutory right to accept such business.

Some years ago pressure was brought to bear by the Local Government Authorities' Association for the State office to accept all classes of insurance for local authorities. It was as a result of this that this House saw fit to agree to the late Hon. C. F. Baxter's proposal to amend the State Government Insurance Office Act in 1945 in order to give the State office the right to handle such insurance by way of a pool. Of 148 local authorities in the State, 120 have voluntarily transferred the whole of their insurance business to the State office.

Many letters of appreciation have been received by the office in respect of the manner in which the pool is conducted. The benefit derived by the local authorities and, indirectly, by the individual ratepayer, has been quite substantial, as the initial premium is lower than that which was charged by the companies at the time the insurance was transferred. Notwithstanding this, cash rebates totalling £7,465 have been made to the local authorities.

I was surprised to hear Mr. Simpson's assertion that no single office underwrites all types of insurance business including life assurance. I would refer the hon. member to the Australian Insurance and Banking Record and the Insurance Directory and Year Book for 1952-53, which make it very clear that practically all the large companies handle all types of insurance, including life. In fact, I have some cuttings here that prove this. The hon. member's statement that large capital is necessary to commence such business is not correct, as most of the larger companies commenced with very small capital.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: That would not apply to life assurance.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They seem to think so. In more recent years, the State Government Insurance Offices of Queensland and New South Wales were established to handle every type of insurance. They received no financial assistance from the respective Government concerned, but they have built up very substantial and profitable businesses without any initial capital reserves. However, as I have already stated, the main reason for introducing this Bill is to meet the public demand for all types of general insurance. I would be quite willing to consider seriously an amendment dealing with life assurance.

One of the most irresponsible and nonfactual statements that I have heard in this House was that if this measure were passed, the result could be a Government monoply, as any socialistically inclined Government could equip the office to undertake all classes to business and declare that all other companies should be wiped out. I cannot accept this strange statement, as to bring about such a state of affairs it would be necessary to further amend the principal Act, and I very much doubt whether this Chamber would accept such a proposal.

The Bill will not bring about any competition between the State Government Insurance Office and the private companies, because there is specific provision in the Bill to place the office on a thoroughly competitive basis. If the Opposition feels that the proposals contained in the Bill are not adequate to place the State office on a competitive basis, I would be quite prepared to very seriously consider any amendment designed to further this end.

At the present time it is a fact that the State office is paying to the State Treasurer the equivalent of the taxation which it would be required to pay if it were a private company. Notwithstanding this, it has been able to compete successfully with the companies and to establish very substantial reserves.

In the State offices of New South Wales and Queensland, tariff rates are charged, but they reserve the right to distribute a share of the profits to the policy-holders. For the year ended the 30th June, 1952, the sum of £95,148 was distributed by the State office of New South Wales in respect of its fire business only. Furthermore, over the years it has been able to create a bonus equalisation reserve account which at the 30th June, 1952, had a credit balance of £370,111.

There is no doubt that insurance is a form of social service, as it is absolutely essential that the average householder should insure his home and his furniture in order to protect what very often is his life savings. Surely no serious opposition could be raised to the idea of such policyholders receiving a share of any profits made by the State office!

Much was said regarding the method adopted by the State office in reinsuring risks which are beyond the amount the office could safely retain. Unfortunately, the State office, unlike private companies, has no statutory right to accept reinsurance business from the companies, and as such reinsurances are always arranged between the companies on a reciprocal basis, it is more convenient for the State office to arrange its reinsurance through insurance brokers. Such reinsurance is arranged through a local firm and is not done direct with London, so that some proportion of the premiums paid is still retained in Western Australia. It is not correct to say that the whole of the reinsurance business of the companies is restricted to the local companies, and it is a fact that even the companies arrange a substantial proportion of their business with London underwriters.

Reference was made to the generosity of the companies in contributing to Commonwealth loans, and it was suggested that if the State office has any surplus it should invest such surplus in Commonwealth loans rather than use it in extending the activities of the office. As a matter of fact, out of the total reserves of £1,667,114 held by the State office, £1,309,994 is invested in Commonwealth loans.

The suggestion to allow clerks of courts to act as agents for the State office is not new. Such a provision has operated in Queensland since about 1916. The clerks of courts are paid commission by the Queensland State office, so that there is no unfair competition in that respect. The arrangement has worked most satisfactorily in Queensland, and would no doubt work equally satisfactorily here. However, in this case too I would be prepared to seriously consider an amendment to this proposal.

The Bill has been strongly opposed because of the additional cost to industry. There is no doubt that, if it became law, industry would benefit substantially by sharing in any profit distribution made by the State office and, for that reason alone, it is somewhat difficult to understand the opposition to the Bill.

The main point made by Mr. Craig which I feel calls for comment was that the Commonwealth Government would be mulcted of taxation to the extent that payments were made by the State office to the Treasurer. This is quite wrong, as the extent to which Consolidated Revenue would benefit by payments to the Treasurer of an amount equivalent to taxation paid by a company, would be taken into consideration by the Grants Commission when submitting its recommendation to the Commonwealth Government. In other words, the charge to Commonwealth revenue would be reduced proportionately to the increase in State revenue brought about by such transfer.

In view of the public demand for an extension of the activities of the State Government Insurance Office, I consider that it would be most undesirable to reject the Bill at the second reading. It should certainly reach the Committee stage, where members would have an opportunity of introducing any amendment felt desirable and the public would know that the measure had at least received proper consideration.

I repeat that I am prepared to seriously consider any reasonable amendment. I would endeavour to impress upon members that, while they may have examined the Bill, I do not think full consideration can be given to it unless we take it into Committee, where the various points can be dealt with and, possibly, a number of modifications made. This measure is an attempt to improve the conditions of insurance business in Western Australia. Some members may wish to delete certain of its provisions, but I am convinced that it contains many points well worthy of consideration. I feel that there is every justification for this legislation and I know there has been a considerable public demand for the State Government Insurance Office to handle the business that is dealt with in the measure. I again appeal to members to agree to the second reading and assure them that I will give serious consideration to any amendment put forward with the idea of improving the Bill.

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

Ayes	16
Noes	9
Majority for	7

Ayes.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker	Hon. C. H. Henning
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. A. R. Jones
Hon. R. J. Boylen	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. A. L. Loton
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. J. McI. Thomson
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. Sir Frank Gibson
	(Teller.)

Noes.

Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. F. R. Welsh
Hon. J. Murray	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. H. S. W. Parker	*(Teller.)*

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—RURAL AND INDUSTRIES BANK ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. H. L. ROCHE (South) [5.48]: Whatever purpose the Government has in introducing the Bill, it does not seem to me that the legislation is in the best interests of the institution. I remember that when the original Bill was introduced in this House, in effect it converted the old Agricultural Bank into the present Rural and Industries Bank. I was one of those who bitterly opposed it. That opposition stemmed from the fact that I, with many others, had had considerable experience of the operations of the Agricultural Bank. Since the Rural and Industries Bank has been established and has functioned so well I am quite ready to admit that I was wrong, and that it has fulfilled all that its sponsors said it would at that time. However, in view of the fact that experience is one of the best guides to what should be done in the future, I think that I, together with others, was quite justified in my opposition.

The success of the Rural and Industries Bank, as we know it today, has been due largely, to the extremely wise choice that was made in the appointment of the chairman of commissioners. What assisted the institution also was that the man who was appointed entered the bank with a knowledge of ordinary banking and experience in business that is not enjoyed in the general nature of things, by the average civil servant. Such knowledge, no doubt, has to be acquired. Mr. Bosisto who was the man appointed to that position, was associated with Mr. Abey and Mr. Brownlie. Mr. Abey was also a man with private banking experience. Mr. Brownlie entered the institution with experience gained up to that time outside the administration of the Agricultural Bank.

The one thing which destroyed the confidence of the people in the old Agricultural Bank and which militated against any possibility of its success, was that it grew old in the tradition of the Civil Service. Although in its early years it did some excellent work in developing this State, it gradually drifted into a branch of the Government service in which promotion was automatically granted, and where all responsibility was passed on to those on the top level, which is inescapable in the Civil Service. In consequence, it was not run efficiently. No Government

can conduct a business with any great efficiency. As a result, the whole concern drifted until it became vitally necessary to reorganise the institution.

The Bill provides for the appointment of five commissioners, or, in effect, five directors. Admittedly, it is also proposed that the commissioners shall carry some administrative responsibility. But I wonder what increased business the bank has acquired to warrant such an increase in the managing personnel. For instance, if we set out to make a comparison, I wonder how many directors the Bank of New South Wales would need. How many commissioners or directors would the Commonwealth Bank need if it is considered that this State bank requires five? I believe that three commissioners are ample.

I also consider that if, as I have heard it rumoured, the Bill is to provide that, in the main, bank officers may be elevated to commissionerships, it will not be in the best interests of the institution. I believe that the framework of the top personnel of this bank should be, as near as possible, related to the framework of other major financial institutions and business organisations in this State. No private financial institution provides that, over a number of years, its faithful servants are automatically elevated to a directorship. Such institutions certainly give their officers every opportunity for promotion, and there is no reason why the Rural and Industries Bank should not do the same. Mr. A. C. Davidson, who is well known in Western Australia, and who has made his mark in banking circles, was not made a director of the Bank of New South Wales until he had finished his term as an ordinary bank officer.

It would be, I believe, in the interests of the State, in an effort to keep this institution on the high-efficiency plane that it has attained, that the Bill should not be passed by this House and that a clear direction should be given to the Government that we do not think five commissioners are necessary but that, judging from past experience of the work done by the original commissioners, the prestige of the bank is more likely to be enhanced by obtaining three commissioners or directors from the ranks of private industry who have a better grasp of business and a far wider knowledge of everyday affairs than it is possible for a civil servant, working in a Government institution, to obtain.

HON. C. H. SIMPSON (Midland) [5.56]: My opinion differs from that of Mr. Roche, and I intend to support the Bill. The difficulty that has brought about the need for this change was something which was not foreseen, and which I do not think could have been foreseen when the bank was established in 1945. Mr. Roche has referred to the fact that this bank succeeded the Agricultural Bank which had been in operation for about 50 years up till that time. The Rural and Industries Bank took over the duties of the old bank, but under the extended charter which was granted to it, was able to embrace other forms of banking business besides that which the Agricultural Bank had transacted.

It is true that, when the original Bill was passed in 1945, authorising the establishment of the Rural and Industries Bank, provision was made for the appointment of three commissioners—a chief commissioner and two assistants. At the time, it was envisaged that those three commissioners would be full-time banking men, one of them being entrusted with the job of making valuations, and generally looking after the bank's interests in the field, which was a very necessary activity in a bank interesting itself primarily in rural development and expansion.

Recently, one of the commissioners retired and the Government filled that vacancy, not with a bank officer who would be full-time, but with the Assistant Under Treasurer, Mr. H. W. Byfield. There were good reasons for that appointment, because part of the bank's duties was concerned in certain branches of business which were essentially of a Government nature. It was desirable that a Treasury nominee, the Under Treasurer himself or his assistant, should be appointed to form that necessary liaison. That system has worked very well. There were two full-time commissioners, who were trained in banking practices, and one part-time commissioner, who was nominated by the Treasury. Later, Mr. Austin, who was a very capable member, died; and since then there has only been one fully-trained banking officer and the nominee of the Treasury.

I agree with Mr. Roche when he says the present chairman is a capable man; it is probably due to his lifelong training as a bank officer, and to his business acumen, that the bank has shown such good results. Both commissioners recommend that the number should be increased from three to five. This would allow for three fully-trained banking men to be on hand for consultation; the Treasury nominee, who is a part-time commissioner and not a fully trained bank officer; and one commissioner to keep contact with the interests in the country. This arrangement would allow long-service leave to be taken, and absence on account of sickness or for other reasons.

The bank has had an extraordinarily good record since it was established. In part, that was due to the recent prosperous years. It has increased its business; and I have figures which show that, starting from practically nothing, the bank now has a turnover of £100,000,000 a year. The total deposits and advances at present is in the region of £20,000,000.

It was said that the Bank of New South Wales in this State does not require a board of five commissioners. Although that bank does a tremendous amount of business in this State, most of the decisions are sent from the Eastern States where high banking officials conduct its business. The decisions left to the local directorate are comparatively minor ones. I would point out that it is quite common to have a board of directors in business comprising a number of persons, but those directors are not full-time workers.

In this instance, the commissioners proposed to be appointed will be full-time commissioners of the bank. The extra cost would be £270 a year, which is infinitesimal considering the bank has a turnover of £100,000,000 a year. Taking all those factors into account, I am of the opinion that a good case has been made out for the appointment of five commissioners. This would allow three qualified banking officers to take part in decisions and discussions on a high level, and they would be appointed with the reasonable assurance that in due course they would succeed to the top position.

However, that is not certain, because the Government has the right to make an appointment from outside the bank. But it can be safely assumed that where local knowledge and experience is so vital, in the majority of cases the line of succession would result in the next in line being promoted. Despite all that has been said about bringing new blood into an institution or an industry, in actual practice the No. 2 in a concern generally succeeds to the No. 1 position when it falls vacant. Having regard to the phenomenal growth of the bank's business, a good case has been made out for the appointment of five commissioners instead of three.

HON. A. L. LOTON (South) [6.5]: I do not support the proposal to increase the commissioners from three to five. I cannot see why a commissioner is needed at all. I would sooner see a general manager appointed, with two or three inspectors to be responsible to him. This is an easy way out for the Government. At present there is one full-time commissioner and a nominee from the Treasury. The appointment of three others is proposed because the turnover last year increased to £100,000,000. If the same rate of increase is maintained we can expect the appointment of 10 commissioners when £200,000,000 is reached.

Since the Rural and Industries Bank succeeded its predecessor—the Agricultural Bank—in 1944, it has made rapid progress. Much of the turnover shown in the bank business was brought about by the business of the Government. The bank was charged by the Government with the responsibility for making advances, and guaranteeing payment of other accounts. Much of its business is not the ordinary business of a trading bank, and I feel sure some of it cannot be looked upon as good banking practice. The provision has the support of the Government, which means the taxpayer. The bank will not lose, but the people may lose in the long run.

I would refer to other Government ventures. The trawling industry was backed by the Government, and the loss was colossal for such a small concern. Chamberlain Industries was also backed by the Government for very large amounts. Now that the firm has got away from manufacturing tractors solely, it is doing some service to the community by manufacturing other machinery. It was too late in the field when it decided to manufacture tractors. It produced an unorthodox type which was difficult to sell in the early days.

I cannot see how five commissioners would fit in. I suggest a general manager, with two district inspectors under him, one for the south and one for the north. With five commissioners, there would always be a majority decision. I do not know if that would be in the best interests of all concerned. At present there are two commissioners, and there must be a majority, because one is a Treasury official.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That was because of the recent death of one of the commissioners.

Hon. A. L. LOTON: I am discussing the present position. For the reasons I stated, I oppose the second reading.

HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban) [6.13]: Because of the way in which the Act is framed, the bank is being temporarily managed by two commissioners, one of whom had administrative and practical experience in a trading bank, the other being the Treasury nominee. The question is posed as to why there should be five commissioners to carry out the duties at present being done by three. We are obliged to consider the circumstances which exist in the Rural and Industries Bank today. The Minister told us that the present chairman is to retire, in approximately two years' time, and the Treasury nominee, Mr. Byfield, is not long off retirement. The Government would nominate another representative, but he would hardly have experience of the Rural Bank board.

Perhaps we could compare the Legislative Council with the Rural Bank. Our constitution provides for one-third of the members to retire every two years. It also provides that to ensure the safe and well-considered passage of legislation, the remaining two-thirds of the members, being experienced in the affairs of State, shall be there to give the legislation proper consideration. That differs

from the position in the Legislative Assembly, inasmuch as every member in that House could be defeated, and 50 new members could fill their places. There is a similarity with the circumstances surrounding the Rural and Industries Bank; in four years' time the bank will be without Mr. Bosisto, and Mr. Byfield will also go on retirement.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I was pointing out the similarity between the two cases, in that under the Constitution of the Legislative Council, one-third of the members retire every two years. In the circumstances prevailing at the Rural and Industries Bank, it appears that a state of affairs will arise in four years in which there will be left on the board only one commissioner who has had experience in that capacity. I said that the Minister, in moving the second reading speech, had mentioned that Mr. Bosisto would retire from the chairmanship of the bank in two years' time. On referring to his speech again, I found that it was not he who had mentioned the fact, but I did know that Mr. Bosisto would be due to retire at that time.

The measure proposes to amend Section 9 of the principal Act, and to increase the number of commissioners from three to five. According to the Minister, the commission would then consist of the chairman, a representative of the Treasury, and three commissioners who would act as administrative officers and perform such departmental duties as might be allotted to them by the chairman. I intend to support the Bill, not because I believe in the principle of having five commissioners to administer the bank, but because of the circumstances that I have explained.

The Bill contains a provision to deal with the filling of a vacancy. When a vacancy occurs, it is to be filled by an appointment made by the Governor, after receiving and considering the recommendation of the commissioners then in office. While I appreciate that it would be inadvisable to make mandatory the filling of a vacancy on the sole recommendation of the commissioners, I am pleased that the recommendation of the existing commissioners will receive full consideration and that, as far as possible, their recommendation will be adopted.

Objection has been raised to the appointment of the additional commissioners on the score of overloading the administrative authority, but I do not think we can reasonably compare the Rural and Industries Bank with a private bank. A private bank has a managing director and a board or directors, and I venture to say that with the Rural Bank, the chairman would occupy a position equivalent to that of the managing director of a private bank, and the other commissioners would be the equivalent of the directors of the private bank. In principle I see nothing wrong with that. According to the information supplied by the Minister, the cost to the bank of salaries to be paid to the additional commissioners will be small and is not worthy of much consideration.

The value of the part played by the bank is undoubted. True, it is a State instrumentality, and I am not in favour of State instrumentalities generally. I share the view expressed by other members that the Government is there to govern, and not to take part in industry or commerce, which is best left to private enterprise. The fact remains that we have a Rural and Industries Bank and must do our best for it. If the Bill were defeated, there would be a great risk of rendering the future of the institution unstable, and I consider that we owe a duty to the people who have seen fit to invest their money in the bank to protect those investments in the best possible way.

THE MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST (Hon. C. H. Strickland—North—in reply) [7.38]: I am pleased with the reception that has been accorded the Bill. Mr. Roche inquired the purpose of the Government in bringing down a measure to increase the number of commissioners. This has been done to meet the desires of the present commissioners. The chairman and the representative of the Treasury made a report to the Minister in which it was stated that, in their considered opinion, the time had arrived for the appointment of two additional commissioners to the board of the bank. They added—

> In this, we acknowledge that the Government desires to continue the practice of having on the board a commissioner experienced in land settlement work.

They also drew attention to the fact that the bank's business had increased considerably, and was placing a tremendous burden on the chairman of the commission; because, since the death of Mr. Austin, he has been solely responsible for all bank policy. He has been virtually tied to his desk. He is not unwilling to be tied to his desk; but he feels, and rightly so, that anyone in the banking business must, in order to do his job thoroughly, do more than just go to a desk each day. The chairman of the commission must associate himself with the business people in the town at various times. It is also necessary for him to make trips into the country to visit branches, agencies, and clients. I doubt very much whether in the past 12 months the chairman has been able to make one trip away from the city. The report goes on to say—

> Thus the bank has outgrown the phase in which its affairs could be properly administered by a board of

three of whom one is the part-time Treasury representative, another represents the valuation and field side, which with loan money support should become a very full-time job, without overburdening the chairman. There is, however, the inexpensive solution of the practice now so frequently followed in commerce, of calling upon senior executives to serve also on the board.

In their desire to increase the commission by adding to it banking officials from within the bank, the commissioners are simply adopting the procedure of ordinary business concerns. There is not the slightest doubt that by giving these executive officers a place on the commission, and vesting them with authority, many problems which now devolve upon the commission can be dispersed and so receive better attention and be dealt with in a more businesslike manner. The cost will be very little. It is known that it will be in the vicinity of £270 a year. Mr. Roche would like to make a comparison with the Bank of New South Wales. Mr. Simpson, however, rightly pointed out that no such comparison could be made. The Rural and Industries Bank has its headquarters in this State, whereas the Bank of New South Wales is spread throughout the Commonwealth.

Again, the two banks deal with vastly different functions in some respects. The Rural Bank will assist industry and commerce by taking risks which the private banks would not consider. A private bank might consider a certain security inadequate; but the Rural and Industries Bank, as did the old Agricultural Bank, assists industry by allowing larger advances on smaller securities.

The total deposits of the Bank of New South Wales are considerably more than those of the Rural and Industries Bank; but deposits involve very little administration. On the other hand, the loan totals of each institution are very similar. Whereas, however, the Bank of New South Wales has the benefit of standardisation of its loan business, by way of normal bank overdraft, the Rural Bank has, in addition to its overdraft accounts, long-term loans for soldier and civilian land settlement, housing and instalment credit; and various other activities associated with the bank's agency department.

Only recently in the North, the bank extended credit to banana plantations as a result of cyclone damage. Two years prior to that, following a damaging flood, it made credit available easily to some of the planters. Those settlers would not have gone to the Rural and Industries Bank, perhaps, had they been able to secure advances from the trading banks in Carnarvon. Those are instances where the bank has functioned to assist settlers on the land.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: Did it not assist in the case of bush fires in the South-West?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: Yes. It assists throughout the State wherever it finds that lenient conditions should be extended to industry or settlers.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: It takes the place of the Industries Assistance Board.

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST: It lends money under the Industries Assistance Act. Actually no comparison between the two banks is possible, or between the duties and responsibilities of the commissioners of the Rural and Industries Bank, and those of the local executive of the Bank of New South Wales, for the reason that the latter does not form part of the top management of the Bank of New South Wales. The special fields of top management in banking are policy-making, the bank's investments, and the maintenance of liquidity. The commissioners are charged with responsibility for these matters; but in the case of the Bank of New South Wales, they are the responsibility of the bank's head office management in Sydney. There is no doubt that the bank has done a very good job which has been due to the management within the bank.

It has been said that it might be better to substitute a management rather than a commission, but it amounts to exactly the same thing. The commission is the management, and the chairman is the general manager. If two commissioners are appointed, in addition to the present commission, the set-up will be a chairman of commissioners; the Treasury representative; a field officer who will concentrate on the valuation department; and the other two, who will be in charge of the general banking business, one attending to the city and the other to country business. There appears to be a very sound motive on the part of the commissioners for increasing the size of the commission. They are satisfied that the activities of the bank will expand; and, of course, that will mean a tremendous amount of detailed work to be attended to, especially with the expected expansion of our agricultural areas.

It has been said in another place that the intention of the Bill is to cover up some decisions of the Government, but I can assure this Chamber that that is not the case. For some considerable time past the chairman and his fellow commissioners have been toying with the idea of extending the commission in this manner. The death of one of the commissioners brought the matter to a head, and this measure is the result of conferences and discussions which arose from that unfortunate incident.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—ADMINISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1).

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—NURSES REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 10th November.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West—in reply) [8.55]: I have given a lot of attention to the objections raised to this Bill, and have discussed them with the Commissioner of Public Health and the Superintendent of the Dental Hospital. Those two gentlemen both suggest that the critics of the measure are singularly ill-informed.

It is apparent that a considerable amount of misunderstanding has occurred. For instance, Mr. Parker stated the Dental Board had not been approached in regard to the matter. That is wrong. The proposals in the Bill have been under consideration for quite a time; and on the 12th December, 1951, the registrar of the Dental Board wrote to the secretary of the Nurses Registration Board in these words—

> I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 29th ultimo relative to the application of the Board of Management of the Perth Dental Hospital to consider registration, under the Nurses Registration Act, of dental nurses who have completed the course of training at the Dental Hospital, and asking for this Board's view on the application.
>
> The correspondence was placed before the last meeting of my Board and I was instructed to advise you that whilst this Board has no jurisdiction over the matter, it approves of the principle of recognition.

It will be noted that the dental board, while admitting that the matter was outside its jurisdiction, approved of the proposal.

On the 22nd April, 1952, the W.A. branch of the Australian Dental Association, which in dental circles is the equivalent of the B.M.A., also wrote to the Nurses' Registration Board and indicated its agreement to the proposals in the Bill.

I will now read a letter received by me from Professor Sutherland, the Dean of the Faculty of Dental Science of the University of Western Australia. I might add that Professor Sutherland is both a dental and a medical graduate. The letter is as follows:—

> Curriculum of the Dental Nurses' Training Course conducted within the Perth Dental Hospital:
>
> In support of the Nurses Registration Act Amendment Bill now before the House, I would like to state that I have examined the curriculum of the above course as determined by my predecessor, Professor H. G. Radden, and his Advisory Board, and find it excellent in every detail. The practical results of this training are quite obvious to me, having now worked with both students and graduates of the course since I have been connected with the Perth Dental Hospital.
>
> Modern dental science is highly specialised in itself. Even now in every large capital city of the world will be found specialists in at least eight branches of the profession. To become a specialist one must of necessity have had a general background training, and this is equally applicable to dental nursing. To be an efficient assistant in a specialty a nurse must be familiar with all aspects of the profession and, in my opinion, this requires a full three years as set out in the curriculum.
>
> In our dental nurses' course we cover the syllabus for general training as well as the specialties, and, consequently, on completion of her training the dental nurse is well equipped to assist the general practitioner who, in a modified way, may practise several of the specialties, or assist a full-time specialist in one of the many branches.
>
> By comparison, a general trained nurse takes three years to complete her course of training, but further periods are required for specialising in such branches of medicine as midwifery, pediatrics, child welfare, mothercraft, psychiatrics and tuberculosis. In the same way such a nurse would require further specialised training in dental nursing before she would be competent to efficiently assist a general dental practitioner or a dental specialist.
>
> I might add, in conclusion, that, as a graduate of both medicine and dentistry in the University of Melbourne, and having been closely associated with various Melbourne public hospitals both medical and dental for a number of years, I have had an opportunity of familiarising myself with courses of training for nurses in both professions, and feel somewhat competent to express an opinion on these matters.

The criticism of the Bill fell mainly into two approaches: firstly, criticism of the curriculum, the length of the course, and the necessity for these nurses; and, secondly, criticism related to the possibility

of these girls obtaining employment outside the Dental Hospital, their rates of pay, their effect upon dental fees and the position of the dental board.

The first approach embodied in the main a critical commentary by Dr. Hislop, which was constructive and interesting in its relationship to general nursing. I am told that such criticism is the normal expectation from a medical practitioner whose sole knowledge of the dental profession is from his professional contacts. If these contacts do not include very recent knowledge of modern dental schools and the requirements of recent graduates from those schools, then he is not well informed on the matter.

It is interesting to contrast his conception as a medical man of the nursing attendance required by a dentist with that of Professor K. Sutherland, the Dean of the Faculty of Dental Science, Perth, who is a graduate both in medicine and dentistry and has seen nurses trained in both dental and medical schools. Professor Sutherland gives full approval to the course, its curriculum, and its period of training. It must be stated that Dr. Hislop's difficulty is understandable on account of his possibly not being aware of the altered standards in dentistry in this State, dating from the formation of the Faculty of Dental Science at the University of Western Australia.

The then Dean, Professor Radden, now Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry at Manchester University, was quick to learn that if he wanted adequate nursing staff he would have to train them in his own hospital, as none were available locally. His graduates were also quick to learn the value of these girls and now take them from the hospital quicker than they can be trained. The largest proportion of the work given these girls is of use to them in a modern dental practice, and any teacher of professional personnel is well aware of the principle of seeking academic standards higher in a teaching school than might be necessary in the final practical application.

Much criticism was voiced concerning the extent of the business training set down in the curriculum. Mr. Parker, I think, went out of his way to try to ridicule the curriculum set down. This subject is handled by the hospital accountant and does look fearsome in print. However, the training covers only two weeks and four lectures in the three years' training period, and is obtained by the trainee in the hospital general office. The items dealing with arbitration awards and wages scales are for the girls' own protection, as exploitation of professional attendants is not unknown in this State, and the award in question is that already in existence dealing with these workers.

During his speech Dr. Hislop said that such specialised nursing attendance as a dental surgeon might need is provided by the private hospital with its general nursing staff. Today, this is not the case, as an increasing amount of dental and oral surgery is being done under local anaesthesia in the dental surgery rather than under general anaesthesia in a hospital. It is interesting to note that the experience of general nurses on the staff of the dental hospital has been that they were initially "at sea" when they changed over to dental work and that the practice at the Fremantle Dental Clinic, an annexe of the Perth Dental Hospital, is for the dental surgeon to take his dental staff nurse with him when he does his regular visit to the Fremantle Public Hospital, for general anaesthetic sessions.

The second type of criticism was not constructive, often irrelevant, and invariably without foundation. Mr. Parker feared that the Arbitration Court would have to make an award for these girls and allow margins for skill. He did not know that such an agreement has been in operation since 1949. Mr. Parker is probably not aware that there is also an award covering dental attendants outside this particular group. I will give a comparison of the two agreements—

Agreement No. 23 of 1949, dated 9th August, 1949, between: Western Australian Nurses Association and Perth Dental Hospital Board.

Rates of pay: Trainee dental nurses:

	£ s. d.	per cent.
1st year	5 15 5	(72)
2nd year	6 5 10	(78½)
3rd year	7 5 10	(91)

Rates of pay: Trained dental nurses:

	£ s. d.
1st year	9 3 3
2nd year	9 8 3
3rd year	9 13 3
Thereafter	9 13 3

Award No. 29 of 1948, dated 23 December, between: W.A. Dental Technicians and Employees' Union of Workers and Continental Dental Company and others.

Rates of pay: Dental attendant-receptionist:

	£ s. d.
Between 15 and 16 years of age	3 9 9
Between 16 and 17 years of age	4 10 7
Between 17 and 18 years of age	5 11 6
Between 18 and 19 years of age	6 12 5

Rates of pay: Dental attendant-receptionist:

Over 19 years of age and with at least 2 years experience.

	£ s. d.
During 1st year of service	8 0 4
During 2nd year of service	8 5 4
During 3rd year of service and thereafter	8 7 10

Over 19 years of age and with less than 2 years experience:

	£ s. d.
During 1st six months	7 2 4
During 2nd six months	7 8 4
During 2nd year of service	7 14 4

It will be seen from this that trainees under this Bill become fully qualified workers one to two years before those gaining experience outside. The average commencing age in the training school is 16.

During the debate Mr. Baxter and others made a point of the possible rise in cost of dental work as a result of these nurses. This is irrelevant to the Bill. In any case, most senior dentists have long since been paying rates equal to or above those laid down in the award for these workers. One does not have to be an accountant to realise that any small variation in cost of an attendant would make no impression on overall costs. Finally might I say that—

1. The school and course is in line with what is current practice in the Melbourne Dental School, and throughout Great Britain, and the United States of America.
2. The most advanced country dentally in Europe is Sweden and the curriculum from the University of Stockholm shows the course to be identical even to the business training.
3. The period in Melbourne is also three years, and at least one European dental school the nurses training course is longer than three years.

The Commissioner of Public Health has informed me that in oral surgery and the dentistry of children, there have been so many recent advances that the general trained nurse is quite unfitted to act as an assistant to the modern dentist. The commissioner states that assistance rendered by a specially trained dental nurse can greatly aid the dentist in his work, by anticipating his needs and by ensuring adequate and sure preparation of his materials and instruments. An example of this has been shown recently in a study made of the rate of work of a school dental officer employed by the State Public Health Department. Without the assistance of a trained dental nurse, this dentist performed an average of 3.2 fillings per day and 6.9 extractions.

With the assistance of a trained dental nurse, his output of work was increased to 6.3 fillings and 15.9 extractions per day. That is approximately a 100 per cent. increase in the number of fillings and about 2½ times the number of extractions.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: He was getting short of money that day.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Of course, I would anticipate that the hon. member would think along those lines.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I know them.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The daily average was therefore slightly more than doubled. I understand that the Public Health Department plans to utilise the services of these nurses when they become available, and thus effect an economy in their dentists' time by enabling them to do a greater volume of this very necessary public health work. In private practice this increase in the speed of work might well result in a reduction of costs and therefore of fees charged, and not an increase as forecast by some members. One could anticipate that that possibly would be the result after the Bill is passed and the nurses are trained.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Do not anticipate.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: One has often got to do that.

Hon. H. L. Roche: You are over your head.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You are an optimist and always have been.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I would rather be an optimist than a pessimist, and if ever there has been a pessimist in this House it was the hon. member when he spoke on the second reading of the Bill. I was surprised at the remarks he made and many of the ideas that he put forward. I well remember them. One statement he made was that these girls would be better home in the kitchen.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: And so they would.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That idea was out of date in my boyhood days—the idea that the only place for a girl is in the kitchen—and I was not born yesterday.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: I was going to vote for the Bill, but you are talking me out of it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I would not like to do that. I think I have answered all the points raised by members during the debate. However, I could not help reminding Sir Charles that his ideas were a little out of date.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: The Chief Secretary has suggested in his speech that the ability of a dentist is dependent on the ability of the nurse to do his work.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I did not suggest that at all. What I did suggest is what I am about to suggest to the hon. member; and that is, that if he had a capable assistant he would do much better work than he has done to date. That is what I was implying. With the assistance of a trained dental nurse, the dentist would be able to double his output, and that would tend to reduce costs. However, I know that members have made up their minds on the Bill, and I will not delay the House any longer.

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

Ayes	17
Noes	5
Majority for	12

Ayes.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. C. H. Henning
Hon. R. J. Boylen	Hon. J. G. Hislop
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. Sir Frank Gibson	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. A. F. Griffith	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. W. R. Hall	*(Teller.)*

Noes.

Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. J. McI. Thomson
Hon. A. L. Loton	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. H. L. Roche	*(Teller.)*

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

W. R. Hall in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Section 5 amended:

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Before moving the amendments I have on the notice paper, I wish to point out that I am accepting this term of three years' training purely on the ground of reciprocity for the dental nurses, because it would take a lot to convince me that three years is necessary to train a girl for such work. However, in view of the fact that it is not fair to train a nurse in this State and deprive her of reciprocity rights in other States, I am prepared to agree that the training period should be three years. I move an amendment—

> That in line 1 of paragraph (iv) of proposed new Subsection (5f) the word "the" be struck out with a view to inserting the word "any" in lieu.

What the amendment would achieve is that the only person who would receive any recognition for training done, apart from dental nurses is a nurse who is registered under paragraph (a) of Subsection (1) of Section 3 of the Act or, in other words, a nurse who is generally trained. It eliminates any nurse who has trained at Princess Margaret Hospital from obtaining any recognition of that training if she desires to continue training as a dental nurse. This would make it possible for the Nurses' Registration Board to prescribe by regulation the time that will be served by a nurse who has completed her training under any of the other eight sections.

So if a nurse is registered as a tuberculosis nurse, she will only have to do what is a generally accepted period—namely, 18 months—at a dental hospital to receive her dental registration. A general trained nurse will have to do six months; a children's trained nurse six months; and so on down the various grades of registration in this State. I do not think it is advisable for the dental hospital to limit itself so severely.

Amendment (to strike out word) put and passed.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I move an amendment—

> That the word "any" be inserted in lieu of the word struck out.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I want to make it quite clear that I do not intend to oppose any of the amendments on the notice paper. Dr. Hislop has met us in this matter and has helped us with his advice. It is very refreshing to find people doing that.

Hon. C. H. Simpson: I always do that myself.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am sure the hon. member does. I just wanted to mention that I did not intend to oppose any of the amendments on the notice paper.

Amendment (to insert word) put and passed.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I am afraid I cannot move the amendment as it appears on the notice paper, because it would not fit in with the rest of the Bill. I move an amendment—

> That in line 3 of paragraph (iv) of proposed new Subsection (5f) the words "which relates to the nurses" be struck out.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I move an amendment—

> That in line 4 of paragraph (iv) of proposed new Subsection (5f) the words "paragraph (a) of Subsection (1) of" be struck out.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Will that have application to all nurses under the Act? It will apply also to the nursing aides and the others, will it?

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Yes.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I agree with that, because that is what I propose myself.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: It would afford these nurses an opportunity to go on with dental nursing, and give them a return. The nursing aide has not yet got any return from the Nurses' Registration Board for her training if she continues with general nursing. She does 12 months, but up to date she has had no recognition. Although she is included, she would not be one that would get any benefit.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I move an amendment—

> That in Subparagraph (v) of proposed new Subsection (5f) the words "of not less than one year" be struck out and the words "for the period prescribed for nurses registered in that division of the Register in which the person is entitled to be registered" inserted in lieu.

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

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Second Reading.

HON. R. J. BOYLEN (South-East) [8.32] in moving the second reading said: This is a very small amending Bill. The object is to insert in the Licensing Act the provisions, which were inadvertently omitted from the 1951 amendments. The Act makes provision for bona fide travellers; but, as it stands, it is not operative. The first clause of the Bill seeks to make that provision operative so that bona fide travellers can come within the scope of the Act. The words "and are not within the Goldfields district" are to be deleted and it is proposed to reinsert them further on because the licensing hours on the Goldfields are different from those in the metropolitan area or country districts.

There is a clause defining the hours of Sunday trading for the Goldfields. The reason why it does not appear in the parent Act is that when the amendments were passed in 1951 the Goldfields were excluded, as inquiries were being made by the Licensing Court on Sunday hours of trading applicable to the Goldfields. The hours were inserted for areas outside a radius of 20 miles of the Perth Town Hall, but the Goldfields hours were not defined, and were left out. An inquiry was made early in 1952 and the hours for Sunday trading on the Goldfields were fixed by proclamation at 10.30 a.m. to 12.30. p.m., and between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. There are many reasons why the hours for the Goldfields are so much more liberal than those for the country areas. Other members representing Goldfields constituencies will elaborate on the reasons.

The last clause of the Bill is very important to Goldfields residents. There is a section in the parent Act defining "Goldfields District" which gives the court power to recommend to the Governor in Council to determine licensing hours of trading in these areas. They may be lengthened or shortened and made operative by proclamation. For very many years there were liberal licensing hours. Unfortunately they were not legal, but they had been condoned for 50 years. In 1951, it was thought that the Goldfields should be brought into line with the other areas under the Licensing Act, and the morning hours were defined by the court as between 10.30 a.m. and 12.30 p.m..

This clause concerns the sale of bottled beer on Sunday. People on the Goldfields have not been able to purchase bottled beer between 10.30 a.m. and 12.30 p.m. Neither the publicans nor the consumers desire that liquor should be sold after 12.30 p.m. If bottled beer were sold between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., people would probably go home with bottles but this is not desirable. For many years people could purchase two bottles of beer until 1 p.m., but it became a habit for publicans not to supply them after 1 p.m. The request was made that bottled beer be sold in quantities of two bottles only between 10.30 a.m. and 12.30 p.m. This was sought because of the climatic conditions on the Goldfields, and because many Goldfields residents do not possess refrigerators.

Hon. A. L. Loton: Does the licence cover the taking of bottled beer to the two-up school?

Hon. R. J. BOYLEN: At present, there is no two-up school to take beer to. At least 40 per cent. of the householders on the Goldfields are without refrigerators, and those people are entitled to some consideration. A man may be working in his yard on Sunday morning and may decide to have a drink. If he has not the facilities at home for keeping drinks cold, he should be permitted to purchase one or two bottles of cold beer and take them home. I shall not proceed further. Other Goldfields members will convince the House that these facilities should be granted to people who have to live in such trying conditions as those on the goldfields.

HON. W. R. HALL (North-East) [8.40]: I support the second reading. Last session I brought up the vexatious question of the supply of bottled beer in the Goldfields district on Sunday. There is a vast difference between the conditions prevailing in Goldfields towns, with their hot climate, and those in the metropolitan area. In Kalgoorlie and the towns to the north—Leonora, Gwalia, Wiluna, Meekatharra, Cue and Big Bell—there is a lack of amenities available to people elsewhere, and so there is no recourse for the people but to go to the hotel and have a few drinks. It was a recognition of this fact that led to specific hours being stipulated for hotels on the Goldfields on Sundays.

Although hotels in the Goldfields district may open during those hours, it is not permissible for people to purchase and take away a bottle of beer. Though the purchase of bottled beer had been permitted on the Goldfields, to my knowledge, for 30 or 40 years, this practice was stopped a little while ago. Certain hours were then prescribed for Sunday trading, but residents were prohibited from buying bottled beer. When I mentioned this matter last year, I told the House how hostile and indignant the residents were at no longer being permitted to purchase a bottle or two of beer on Sunday—and this in a part of the State where the temperature rises to 110 degrees in the water bag. To my way of thinking, that was an instance of sectional legislation.

Whereas a married man could go to the hotel during the morning session and have a few drinks, the same opportunity was not open to his wife, who had to remain home to cook the dinner. Some women like to go to a hotel in their leisure hours and have a drink, and I see nothing wrong with that, but under the restricted hours for Sunday trading they are inconvenienced by having to go to a hotel to have a drink. An additional restriction is that the husband is now denied the right to buy a bottle of cold beer and take it home for lunch.

Under this measure, a person would be permitted to purchase two bottles of beer on Sunday. I see nothing wrong with that proposal. If a man desired to buy half a dozen or a dozen bottles on Sunday, it would be a different matter, but he should not be precluded from taking home a bottle or two in order to share it with his wife and family or extend hospitality to a visitor. In towns like Gwalia and Leonora, the climatic conditions are very bad.

Hon. L. A. Logan: What about Mullewa?

Hon. W. R. HALL: If Mullewa is in the hon. member's province, he should support the Bill.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I will support it if you extend its operations to the wheatbelt.

Hon. W. R. HALL: I should like its operation to be made State-wide. Our licensing laws are well out of date. Why continue sectional legislation which permits of a man going to a hotel for a drink on a Sunday and precludes him from taking a bottle or two home? A large number of residents of the Goldfields would like a drink of ale on Sunday morning, especially those who have been accustomed to having a drink during the week. It is nonsensical to prevent a man from taking home one or two bottles of beer to drink with his family at lunch time, and I consider it stupid to hold views to the contrary. A large number of men and women who enjoy a glass of ale should not be denied this right through our out-of-date licensing laws.

There is no reason to believe that this concession would result in increased intoxication. The purchase of a couple of bottles of beer would not make the difference of a button off a man's shirt so far as intoxication was concerned. After having heard the views of the Goldfields people, I feel fully justified in appealing to members to support the Bill. At Gwalia and Big Bell, a lot of single men live in camps. They are located a mile or more from the township and, under the Act, if they desire to have a bottle of beer on Sunday, they have to purchase it on Saturday night. These camps are not equipped with refrigerators. Only a small proportion of the population in the northern country have refrigerators—kerosene-operated machines. Nobody can drink hot beer—I have tried it—unless he is prepared to be ill afterwards. Some people without refrigerators cannot get ice, and, in most instances, to keep the beer cold, the bottles would have to be wrapped in wet sacks and stored under the house.

If it is good enough to open hotels from 10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m., surely it is good enough to allow bottled beer to be sold during those hours. I agree there should be a limit on the number of bottles sold to each person, but I can see no objection to a man's purchasing one or two bottles to take home. I want those members who belong to the Country Party, and who interjected, to realise that I agree that the people in the country districts should be on the same footing as those in the Goldfields areas, because I believe that country towns such as Kellerberrin, Merredin, and Mullewa are possibly just as hot as places like Marble Bar in the North-West. I do not want to see sectional legislation. What is good for one person is good for another. The camps in which men live at Gwalia and Big Bell are only about 8 ft. by 10 ft., and they are hothouses in themselves.

Under the Act, if a person leaves Kalgoorlie by car to come to Perth on a Sunday, it is necessary, if he wishes to take bottled beer with him, to purchase it on the Saturday night; and then he would need an ice box to keep it cool. Our licensing laws are, I consider, out of date. The Bill will do something for the people I have mentioned. They should be allowed to purchase a couple of bottles of ale on a Sunday morning, and not have to stop home and see the day out without being able to get the necessary liquor that they want. I hope the House will support the Bill.

HON. G. BENNETTS (South-East) [8.45] I support the Bill. As members know, I am a wowser, so I am not personally concerned with the subject matter of the measure, but I represent a district where the people live on it. Had it not been for the Hannans beverage in the early days of the Goldfields, we would have had twice as many silicotic miners as we did have. It was recognised as the clearer of the lungs. Bottled beer can be obtained on Sundays at certain places. Travellers on the Trans-train are, I think, allowed to take two bottles each.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I do not think they are restricted to two bottles.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I think they are, but one chap might get half a dozen others to get beer for him so that he finishes up with a dozen. I am not a drinker—

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: That is why you never grew.

Hon. G. BENNETTS: I know; but I am not going to bar the wives of other people if they wish to have a drink on Sundays. The woman is a slave worker, with her back bowed down, looking after the male of the house, and the family. She gets very little consideration. If Dad can bring her home a bottle of ale, she is very pleased; and Dad can go back to the pub again if he wishes, so long as Mum gets something.

I heard members say that people could not drink warm beer. Some of the men going home with a bottle of beer might be a little late arriving, and the beer would be warm, but they would be able to drink it. I would not like to see a lot of bottled beer going from hotels on Sundays, but I think that a man would not worry about taking too much home. He would have his cut at the pub, and he would probably limit himself to one bottle. I support the Bill.

HON. L. C. DIVER (Central) [8.57]: I support the second reading, but only because of the clause relating to the bona fide traveller. I think the rest of the Bill should be eliminated. No one could have condemned the other parts more than Mr. Hall when he said there were many women on the Goldfields without refrigeration; or Mr. Bennetts, who told us that beer was the main diet of his constituents. Their remarks show how much money must be spent on beer by the menfolk before they look after the meat and butter that has to be purchased during the week.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That is all hooey.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. L. C. DIVER: It is not hooey at all. I claim to have had as much experience as any man in the House of the hot districts of the State.

Hon. W. R. Hall: How many refrigerators do you think there would be at Kalgoorlie?

Hon. L. C. DIVER: The aspect I am dealing with is that concerning refrigeration and keeping the beer cold. How is it that many people in the wheatbelt who are 12 and up to 25 miles away from a hotel, can live over the weekends?

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: They have a full case of beer in the refrigerator.

Hon. W. R. Hall: I bet you have a refrigerator!

Hon. L. C. DIVER: Yes, I have, and I think the refrigerator should come first. That is the point I am making. The people on the Goldfields spend their few shillings a week on bottles of beer.

Hon. W. R. Hall: How far would that money go towards purchasing a refrigerator costing between £180 and £200?

Hon. L. C. DIVER: A bottle of beer costs about 4s.—it is 3s. 2d. in my district, and 3s. 6d. in some other places.

Hon. W. R. Hall: How many working men have £200 to put down on a refrigerator?

Hon. L. C. DIVER: That much is not required to be put down on a refrigerator. My home is furnished with kerosene refrigerators, and there are plenty of such refrigerators that can be purchased second-hand.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Who wants to buy a second-hand article?

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. L. C. DIVER: The hon. member has no qualms about a secondhand bottle. I have no doubt that if such people, for a period of 18 months, put aside 10s. per week, which would not represent many bottles of beer, they would save sufficient to furnish their homes with refrigerators.

Hon. W. R. Hall: How many people could bank 10s. per week?

Hon. L. C. DIVER: They could not do that and purchase beer as well; but I would remind members that, in the past, people have denied themselves many things in order to obtain necessities for the home; and I think that in these days a refrigerator is an essential. However, one cannot have one's cake and eat it at the same time, and no section of the community can expect someone else to take the responsibility of providing everything that is required in the home.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: What harm is there in getting a few bottles of beer on Sunday?

Hon. L. C. DIVER: It is only a habit. People can get all their requirements on a Saturday. I can recall the time when we used to keep our bottles—probably cool drinks—cool by wrapping them in wet bags and covering them with some scrub.

Hon. C. W. D. Barker: What objection have you to the selling of bottles of beer on Sundays?

Hon. L. C. DIVER: As long as we continue to allow them to purchase beer on Sundays these people will not have refrigerators. I would like to see every home fitted with a refrigerator.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Yes, with a couple of bottles of beer in it!

Hon. L. C. DIVER: People will never get refrigerators if we give them facilities to spend their cash in other ways. I will support the second reading but intend to vote against the provision which seeks to enable people to buy bottled beer on Sundays. I think we should induce them to save their money and buy refrigerators. Having done that, a man will be able to buy bottled beer on Saturday and put it in the refrigerator, and then mother will be able to have a drink at any time she so desires.

HON. SIR CHARLES LATHAM (Central) [9.4]: I will support the second reading on the condition that the measure is given application not only to the Goldfields but also the wheatbelt, as I do not like sectional legislation.

Hon. W. R. Hall: We must make a start.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I would agree to the measure if it covered all the country districts. From what members have said, one would think people on the Goldfields were different from those elsewhere in the State. This is a Bill to provide a facility—necessary or otherwise—for thirsty people on Sundays, and those living in any part of the State are likely to become thirsty. Why not supply cool drinks such as cordials on a Sunday also?

Hon. W. R. Hall: They are not so hard to get as beer is.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: No.

Hon. H. L. Roche: There is not so much demand for them.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I understand that legislation is being introduced in another place to prevent people obtaining petrol on Sundays.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: That measure is not yet before the House.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: But it will be and the hon. member will support it. The inconsistency of members!

Hon. W. R. Hall: Are you anticipating things?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Yes. I am surprised at the hon. member, who occupies the position of Chairman of Committees, continually interjecting instead of setting a good example. I support the second reading, conditional on members giving the measure general application.

The Chief Secretary: Try it on.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I think it was intended to make provision for bona fide travellers, but that was omitted by accident last time the Act was amended. I hope the sponsor of the Bill will agree to its being amended in the direction I have indicated.

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [9.7]: I support the Bill and congratulate Mr. Boylen on its introduction. I hope members will not endanger the passage of the measure by adopting the attitude of Sir Charles Latham. None of us like sectional legislation; but I would point out to Sir Charles and Mr. Diver that the law of this State has for many years recognised that special considerations apply to the Goldfields in licensing matters. Fortunately we have in this Chamber a number of Goldfields representatives who have lived there in recent years, and others who know what the conditions were in those areas many years ago and can speak with experience of conditions as they apply. For the past 50 years the licensing laws of this State have recognised that there are unusual conditions on the Goldfields, with the result that special trading hours were allotted to those areas. The trading hours were up till 11 o'clock at night, a period of two hours longer than the time that applied in other parts of the State.

Hon. G. Bennetts: And with less drunks.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: About 20 or 30 years ago an unwritten law was adopted whereby Sunday trading was allowed on the Goldfields. That unwritten law existed for a period of at least 30 years, and was varied only by the amendment to the Act of two years ago. So in matters relating to the Licensing Act there has always been sectional legislation. I want Sir Charles Latham and Mr. Diver to understand full well that I appreciate the argument they put forward for the farming districts, but this measure has been introduced by a Goldfields member and there is a big demand for it. Apparently no member from the farming areas has been asked to sponsor such a Bill, and one can draw the deduction that there is no demand for its provisions in the farming districts. I hope that the success, or the possible success, of this measure will not be defeated because some other members say, "You are asking for something and if you want it, we want it." It frequently happens that if everyone wants something no one gets it.

The Chief Secretary: They have their refrigerators and can store their bottles. They do not need this legislation.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I would also point out to Mr. Diver that in recent years conditions in the farming areas have vastly improved; they have been absolutely transformed. Life for the average farmer and his wife and children is utterly different to what it was only a few years ago.

Hon. L. C. Diver: They did not clamour for these conditions prior to that.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: At present farmers are enjoying excellent conditions—and I am very glad about it, too. The average farmer has been able to improve his house and purchase modern conveniences that make life pleasant. Some of the modern amenities are the refrigerator, electric light, and the washing machine, and most farmers have them. Therefore the need for a farmer to buy a couple of bottles of beer on a Sunday is in no way commensurate with the need of a person living on the Goldfields. I ask members representing farming areas to bear that in mind. Their people have had good times and I hope that those good times will continue. I am only sorry that the unfortunate people on the Goldfields have not been having good times in recent years.

Hon. L. C. Diver: But they have refrigerators there.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Undoubtedly some of them have, but the great majority of them have not. I know what I am talking about, because I represent a big portion of the Goldfields. I have lived there for the past 30 years, and I tour the district at frequent intervals. The need for a measure such as this for the people in the farming areas is almost non-existent. Members do not require me to tell them that conditions on the Goldfields in recent years have not been good. They have been getting tougher and tougher every month; rising costs have made the callings of goldmining and prospecting harder and harder all the time.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Members mentioned that when speaking to the Workers' Compensation Bill the other night.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Railway freights have gone up and up, and the cost of commodities has been increasing. Unfortunately, the price of gold has remained static. Big financial interests are not worrying about goldmining these days, and therefore conditions are far from good. That is not an exaggeration. The State Housing Commission has built few new homes on the Goldfields; and, in fact, over recent years, there has been little building in the Goldfields areas. When one sees such places as Mt. Monger, Kanowna, Broad Arrow, Menzies, Leonora, Laverton, Morgans, Wiluna and so on, one realises that the people living in those places are battling hard. In the majority of cases they are people who have been living there for many years, and who are unable to get away. They have their little homes, and they live there in the hope that mining will pick up. They stick to their show, and they battle on in the time-honoured fashion of the Goldfields pioneers whose names are known all over the world, and to whom this State of Western Australia owes such a great deal.

It would be a tragedy if those places went out of existence because many of the folk who live there are pensioners. Those people do not own refrigerators. They are the people I have in mind and they are a big section of the community on the Goldfields. I hope the Bill will be passed, and I applaud Mr. Boylen for its introduction. In a place like Kalgoorlie, of course, there are amenities, and conditions are not so bad; but there again the majority of the men work on the mines; and with the cost of living as it is, and with families to support, they have little left. I wish to dispel the impression that some people have that drinking is rife on the Goldfields. It is not. People there do not drink any more per head than people in other parts of the State.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Seeing is believing, too.

Hon. H. L. Roche: I have always heard they could carry it.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: They have a reputation for hospitality and good fellowship, and people from the Eastern States and other parts of the world frequently comment on it. No one can tell me that people on the Goldfields drink more per head than those in the metropolitan area, or in many country towns I have visited. Goldfields residents do not waste their money on beer, as some people seem to believe.

There is a strong demand for the proposals in the measure. If any member would take a trip from Kalgoorlie to Laverton, passing through the various towns en route, and discuss the matter with the residents in those parts, he would find them unanimous in their request for a measure such as this. Those people have not the same amenities as those that are enjoyed by residents in the metropolitan area or in other parts of the State. There are no rivers, beaches, or pleasant beauty spots for them to visit. Their homes are modest, and it is not of much use any of them buying a couple of bottles of beer on Saturday and taking them to a camp in which the temperature is about 110 degrees in the shade as will be the case for the next six months.

If this privilege is granted, it will not be abused. The unions on the Goldfields, through the A.L.P. council at Kalgoorlie, are unanimous in their support of the legislation, and the people for whom I can confidently speak are whole-heartedly in favour of it. I do not ask for special favours for any section of the community, but it must be remembered that special consideration has always been granted to the Goldfields, and such consideration is warranted. Mining and prospecting in the dry, arid belts in which these people reside is a great deal different from working in the wheatbelt areas.

If we can enable these people to obtain a couple of bottles of cold beer on Sunday, I think we will be doing something for them of which we can feel proud, and certainly we will be doing no harm. I would willingly support a measure that would embrace the whole of the State; but I have enough political experience to realise that such a proposal would not meet with full public support. There might be some merit in the argument that in farming areas there is probably no need for the provisions contained in the Bill. Country members would know more about that than I would. No money will be wasted if the Bill is passed, and I hope it will be supported by all members.

On motion by Hon. C. H. Simpson, debate adjourned.

BILL—ELECTRICITY ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban) [9.45]: Earlier this evening, the Minister for the North-West was dealing with another measure which he said had been introduced at the request of the commissioners of the Rural and Industries Bank. At the outset, I ask the Chief Secretary whether the motive behind the introduction of this Bill comes not from the same source but a similar one, namely, the State Electricity Commission; or is it part of Government policy to introduce legislation such as this? I have learned to respect the Chief Secretary because, whenever I put a question to him that he does not want to answer for fear it might be embarrassing to him, he remains very quiet; and I think that on this question he is adopting the same attitude. I am not going to worry whether the Bill will cause the Chief Secretary any embarrassment but, if it is passed in its present form, it will cause many people in this State a great deal more embarrassment in the future.

When the Minister for Works introduced the Bill in another place, he made certain statements which I would like to quote to the House. The Minister said—

> This Bill is introduced for the purpose of amending the Electricity Act, 1945, and is designed to give the State Electricity Commission the necessary power to inspect electrical apparatus, and to pass or reject such apparatus upon inspection, as the case may be.

He also said—

> If this amending Bill is passed and the Act is amended accordingly, we will take power under its provisions to introduce regulations which will have precisely the same fundamental basis as the regulations existing elsewhere.

The Chief Secretary: Are you reading that from the current "Hansard"?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Yes. Having looked at the Standing Orders on the question, I think there is a Standing Order which permits me to do that. I have it written out for the benefit of the Minister. Is the Minister happy now?

The Chief Secretary: I have been happy all the time.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am delighted to know that the Chief Secretary can be happy in all circumstances. In a few moments I will deal further with that statement. The Minister also said this—

> The requisite legislation already exists in the other States, and this is to bring us into line. So the Bill will have the same fundamental basis as the legislation of the other States of the Commonwealth.

I am not violently opposed to the principle of the Bill, but I can see it constitutes a great danger. It passed the second reading. The Minister introduced it knowing that certain amendments were proposed when the Bill reached the Committee stage, but the Government declined to accept any of the amendments. In my opinion, to pass the Bill in its present form does exactly what the Minister for Works when introducing the measure said it did; it gives power to the State Electricity Commission to do certain things.

The Chief Secretary: To whom else would you give that power?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I will deal with that presently; but I certainly do not want to give it to the State Electricity Commission in this form. I know the Minister has been very busy; but had he had time to follow this Bill in another place, he would have seen that there was a suggestion that the board be divided and given power—

The Chief Secretary: Another board.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Chief Secretary must have been reading "Hansard", because that was the expression used in another place.

The Chief Secretary: I am merely repeating the remarks I have heard here about boards.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not believe in boards; but sometimes I would rather have them than have a bureaucracy which will be able to have absolute control such as this State Electricity Commission would have in saying yea or nay in matters of this description as they affect the producers and manufactureres of electrical apparatus, with the power to tell them whether they can sell their merchandise in Western Australia or not. For the commission to be able to do that without any comeback at all is not a good thing. I do not disapprove of the principle in the Bill, because it has been introduced to protect the public. But I believe it would be far more beneficial to have an authority which was representative of trade and commerce in this State.

For the Minister for Works to say that this legislation is on the same basis as legislation in other States of the Commonwealth is not quite right. The basis might be the same, but its application is not the same, by any manner of means, as that in the other States—at least as far as I can ascertain. I would like to refer the Minister to the fact that the State of Victoria has an electrical approvals board. It is not a Government-controlled board but it has manufacturing representatives on it. I think it comprises nine people; not that I am suggesting that the board here should have as many as that.

I should also like to inform the Minister that the State of New South Wales has an advisory committee to deal with the same principle as is envisaged by this measure; but on such a basis that the representatives of trade and commerce have some administrative dealing, and give assistance to the State while on that committee. After all, we are going to have a board—the State Electricity Commission is the board—so surely it is not undesirable to offer to those people the assistance of men trained and skilled in the manufacture of electrical appliances. In making that statement I do not desire in any way to cast any aspersion on the employees of the State Electricity Commission. On the other hand I consider it highly desirable that we should have a representation of these people who are trained and experienced in the manufacture of electrical appliances.

Obviously the Minister does not agree with those sentiments, because he suggests the word "board." He says, "We want another board." If the Minister reads in "Hansard" the debate which took place on this measure, when it was introduced in another place, he will see that the Minister for Works said that he gave very grave consideration, or words to that effect, to appointing a board such as the one that is now envisaged, and he declared that perhaps it would not be desirable, and that it would not operate in the best interests of the State. He decided that, mind you! Having done so, he now puts forward legislation in this House—after he decided it would be all right—and suggests that the members of this House should pass that legislation.

Hon. L. A. Logan: He wants us to follow him like lambs.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not propose to follow him like a lamb. I think the Chief Secretary knows that, unlike some of his supporters, I do not vote for every Bill like a lamb.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: What about leaving the Chief Secretary's supporters out of it and keeping to the Bill?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If the hon. member has anything to say on the Bill, he may do so when I have sat down.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: I will, do not worry! Why are you so concerned about members on this side of the House?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If the hon. member persists in interjecting, then he must expect to receive what he hands out

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: You suggested that the members on this side of the House have ulterior motives.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I said nothing of the kind; and I was certainly not looking at the hon. member. I am sorry, therefore, if he has a guilty conscience. However, I do not desire to waste time on interjections that do not relate to the Bill. In the Committee stage I propose to move certain amendments which I hope will have the effect of removing the absolute power from the State Electricity Commission envisaged by the Minister in another place and placing it in a committee or a board—I think the word "board" would be better because I understand a committee has not very much power. It will be placed in a board duly constituted to act in the best interests not only of the consumers of the manufactured goods and electrical appliances, but also in the interests of those people who manufacture them. This is a very important measure and I would ask members, if they have not already done so, to have a good look at it in order to see whether the ideas I have meet with their views. If they do not, I expect to be told. I support the second reading, but I intend in Committee to introduce certain amendments.

HON. E. M. DAVIES (West) [9.40]: I am rather surprised at the remarks made in connection with the Bill. It has been introduced to protect the general public from dangerous electrical appliances being put on the market.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: I agree with that.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: I agree that a board is necessary so that it can police the type of electrical appliances that are sent to this State for sale. What is the difference between a board or any other authority? What is the difference in giving authority to the State Electricity Commission to police these appliances? I understand that the State Electricity Commission works on a set of regulations which have been adopted by most States of the Commonwealth. It is apparent that, if faulty electrical appliances are being forwarded to Western Australia because they cannot be sold in the Eastern States, the public of Western Australia should be protected against injury or fatality.

We ask that an authority be created to see that approved electrical appliances are offered for sale, that authority being the State Electricity Commission. That is the whole purpose of the Bill. All sorts of red herrings have been drawn across the trail, particularly in referring to the State Electricity Commission as bureaucratic. Was not the previous Government responsible for allowing the State Electricity Commission to take over the electricity supply in the Fremantle district which previously belonged to the Fremantle and East Fremantle residents?

Hon. A. F. Griffith: I did not refer to the State Electricity Commission as being bureaucratic. On the interjection of the Chief Secretary I said that it was better to have a board in this instance than to have bureaucratic control.

Hon. E. M. DAVIES: The hon. member used the word "bureaucratic". He could have referred to no other body than the State Electricity Commission, because that commission was empowered to deal with the regulations. Red herrings across the trail do not get members anywhere. The Bill has been introduced to protect the public. I emphasise that these appliances are being sent over to Western Australia because they cannot be disposed of in the Eastern States, and it is necessary that some regulations be introduced to control their sale. As the State Electricity Commission is the controlling body for the supply of electric current in this city, and as they are the people who know the potential danger of such appliances because they were not approved throughout the Commonwealth, then the regulations are necessary. I trust that members will look at this measure from a reasonable angle, bearing in mind that it is for the protection of the general public.

On motion by Hon. L. A. Logan, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.45 p.m.

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 19th November, 1953.

CONTENTS.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.

EDUCATION.

As to Provision of School, Innaloo.

Mr. NIMMO asked the Minister for Education:

In view of the large number of rental and war service homes being erected, or already erected, in Innaloo, can he say whether the erection of a new school is likely to be commenced on the new school site in that district?