

be productive of a certain amount of good. It is in this direction: The clause as it stands compels the person who signs the statement to the Commissioner to certify of his knowledge that another person is suffering from this disease. This has been a great stumbling-block to the Commissioner, and it might easily be got over by making it read, that the person making the signed statement led the Commissioner to believe that the person named was suffering from the disease. A person may contract a disease and he may know sometimes from whom he got it, but it is a very difficult matter indeed for him to certify on paper that that person is suffering from the disease. He can give to the Commissioner such information as will lead the Commissioner to infer that the person has the disease, and if he signs that statement, it should be a protection against an innocent person who might be wrongfully accused. I propose in Committee to submit that the following words be deleted.

The PRESIDENT: If I were the hon. member, I would wait for the Committee stage before giving details.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: There is another point to which I wish to refer now that we have the Health Bill before us. It will be within the recollection of hon. members that when the Coroners Bill was being considered, I brought forward an amendment giving a coroner on the application of the Commissioner of Health power to make an order to enable a medical man to conduct a post mortem examination on the body of a person who had died or who was suspected of having died from an infectious disease. I submitted certain arguments which convinced the House of the utility of such a provision. Unfortunately, when the measure got back to another place with that amendment in it, the amendment was ruled out of order because it was contended that it was not applicable to a Coroners Bill and should more properly have found a place in a Health Bill. Now that we have the Health Bill before us, I intend to submit this amendment again. I may point out that at the present moment we are in great danger of the dread disease, bubonic plague, being introduced into the State, and to my mind it is necessary that there should be some power for the Commissioner to be able to order post mortem examinations in cases where people die as the result of these serious maladies which may inflict incalculable harm on the community. I support the second reading of the Bill.

The PRESIDENT: While it is quite admissible for hon. members who intend to repair omissions in a Bill to indicate those amendments in general terms, it is not desirable, indeed it is out of order, to anticipate a debate by discussing those amendments before they reach the Committee stage. I mention this in order to save time in the consideration of the second reading of this measure. *Dr. Saw was quite in order in indicating in general terms the amendments he

intends to submit, but hon. members will not be in order in debating those amendments.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East—in reply) [10.6]: I merely rise to ask Dr. Saw to place his amendments to the Health Bill on the Notice Paper. I am entirely in accord with them.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—NORTH FREMANTLE RATES VALIDATION.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [10.7]: This is a very short Bill, its object being to rectify an error which was made by the mayor of North Fremantle. The Act provides that the mayor shall sign every page of the rate book, but instead of signing every page, the mayor merely signed only the last page, thinking by so doing that he was complying with the Act. Without a validating Bill of this kind, the ratepayers may evade their responsibilities. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

House adjourned at 10.10 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 13th December, 1931.

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

QUESTIONS (2)—RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION.

Esperance Northwards.

Hon. T. WALKER asked the Minister for Works: Has any order yet been placed for the supply of rails and other requisites for the construction of the Esperance-Northwards line?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: Ten miles of rails and thirty thousand sleepers are on hand, and steps are being taken in regard to the balance required.

Margaret River.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Premier: Can he give an approximate date for the commencement of the constructional work on the Margaret River railway?

The PREMIER replied: Clearing is almost completed. Steps are being taken to carry out the work without unavoidable delay.

QUESTION—MABLE CASE, COMPENSATION.

Mr. SIMONS asked the Colonial Secretary: Has he considered the claim for compensation made by Thomas Mable, and, if so, what decision has been arrived at?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: Yes. The claim cannot be entertained.

PRIVILEGE—DISTRIBUTION OF CIRCULARS.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I should like to draw attention to the action of some person using the privileges of the House to distribute circulars without any signature. Is it permissible for persons to distribute circulars in Parliament House without either signing those circulars or giving any information as to where they came from?

Mr. LUTY: There is quite a deluge of them.

Mr. SPEAKER: Are the circulars printed on Parliamentary paper?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, and whoever is responsible for them is ashamed to sign his name.

Mr. SPEAKER: Are they in Parliamentary envelopes?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No.

Mr. SPEAKER: Well, I have no knowledge of the origin of those circulars, but I will make inquiries.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: In my opinion any person who distributes circular letters up here ought to sign his name to them so that members might know where the information comes from.

Hon. P. COLLIER: And know who pays the cost of them.

Mr. SPEAKER: A custom has grown up under which circulars are handed to messengers to be put into members' boxes. In future

I will make other arrangements. We must first know what is contained in the circulars.

Mr. Underwood: You cannot know that if they are in envelopes.

Mr. MULLANY: I should like an expression of opinion as to whether letters or circulars should be allowed to be delivered at Parliament House by hand and put into members' boxes. It is becoming somewhat of a nuisance. When people have information which they desire to impart to members, at least they should be called upon to put the ordinary postage stamps on the letters containing the information. I think the system of delivering circulars up here by hand is entirely wrong.

Mr. SPEAKER: For some years past it has been the custom to distribute circulars in this way, but now that attention has been drawn to it, I will make such arrangements as will subject members to as little annoyance as possible in this direction.

MOTION—STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

Close of Session.

Order of the Day read for the resumption from the 8th December of the debate on the following motion by the Premier:—"That for the remainder of the session the Standing Orders be suspended so far as to enable Bills to be passed through all their stages in one day, and messages from the Legislative Council to be taken into consideration on the day on which they are received; also, so far as to admit of the reporting and adopting of the resolutions of the Committee of Supply and Ways and Means on the day on which they shall have passed those Committees."

Question put and passed.

BILL—WORKERS HOMES ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—PERMANENT RESERVES (No. 2).

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [4.41] in moving the second reading said: The Bill is to enable the purposes of certain reserves to be changed. The first is reserve A10705, Pingley lot 135. This was reserved for public buildings, but it is no longer wanted for that purpose, and it is now proposed that it shall be reserved for a soldiers' memorial park. It is a small but centrally situated area, and will make an entirely suitable place for the erection of a memorial to the soldiers, and also a most convenient reserve for the public. The idea of the local people is to plant it with trees, beautify it and make of it a popular rest-

ing place. The Minister for Works and I have inspected the site. The local people have raised a considerable sum of money, and they are anxious that they shall have this reserve for the purpose I have stated. The second reserve dealt with in the Bill, namely, reserve A15677, is situated in the South-West. It was set aside as a reserve for the preservation of the flowering red gum, which is to be found only in the extreme south-western corner of the State. The reserve was not very closely inspected at the time, and it is now found that the flowering red gums on an adjoining area are much finer specimens than those on the area reserved. This tree is now found in an adjacent area to a very much larger extent than was supposed. The land has been closely classified and properly located, and it may be that this new reserve will enable us to preserve this particular tree.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Where is the locality?

The PREMIER: It is between Denmark and the Frankland River. It is the only place in which this tree grows and we think it ought to be preserved. We thought we had preserved it in the past, but now we find that it is contained over a larger area and we propose to endeavour to preserve it for the future by creating this reserve of 1,466 acres instead of 392 acres. Only a small portion of the land which has been set aside contained some of these trees. The Forestry Department agree that this should be done and I have no hesitation in asking the House to agree to the proposal.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You have a similar area adjacent.

The PREMIER: We are adding 1,330 acres, and cutting out 266 acres which is suitable for settlement. I think it was originally located by Sir Newton Moore. He was right in preserving these trees, but the area reserved was not large enough. In the Kimberleys there is a reserve of four million acres for aborigines. It is proposed to eliminate 880,000 acres and to make this land available for pastoral purposes. The northern boundary of the land to be eliminated will be two miles from the Forrest River Mission. The land is desired by returned soldiers who have been in training at Moola Bulla. The Aborigines Department say that they do not need all this land. I cannot understand how four million acres could have been handed in one block to the Aborigines Department. This land is close to Wyndham and ought to be stocked. I could understand a reserve of a fair area being made for aborigines, but not an area of such large extent.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Have you anyone specially in view?

The PREMIER: There are some soldiers who have been trained at Moola Bulla, and we are desirous of settling them on the land.

Mr. O'Loughlen: If the Government guarantee that they will get it, it will be all right.

The PREMIER: If the soldiers apply for it they will get it.

Mr. O'Loughlen: So long as no one else gets it, it will be all right.

The PREMIER: It is entirely for soldiers. We sent up some soldiers to that place to be trained, and this land will be available for them. I think the committee which sat on the question recommended that 250,000 acres would be sufficient for a pastoral lease. This should make good land upon which to settle soldiers, and the House need have no fear about their getting it.

Mr. O'Loughlen: If they apply for it, they will get it?

The PREMIER: It is entirely for them. This is land which ought not to be unoccupied. Then there is a reserve at Bunbury. I am sorry the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) is not present, because this is in his line. The Bunbury municipality have about 28 acres of reserve lying along the south beach. No doubt many members have enjoyed the surfing there. Unlike Point Walter, this foreshore cannot be approached from the water by boat. The beach is very rugged, but it is very much used by visitors to and the people of Bunbury. They want to let up to one acre of this land for the purpose of refreshment rooms. They do not say exactly which part they want to let, and I do not think that is necessary, as the strip is a long one. Probably the land will be let in more than one lot. I am asking the House that they should be allowed to let one acre for this purpose for 21 years. There should be tea-rooms there. Many people come in from Collie and other centres, and when they go to the beach there is no accommodation in this way for them.

Hon. P. Collier: Is the reserve under the control of the Bunbury municipal council?

The PREMIER: It is a class "A" reserve vested in the municipality. I do not know what rental they intend to ask for the 21 years' lease. If these reserves are to be kept in order there should be an endeavour made in each case to get a small revenue from them.

Hon. P. Collier: Is it a somewhat similar case to Point Walter?

The PREMIER: Precisely the same, except that it cannot be approached from the water. The proposed site is on the ocean drive, as indicated on the plan. Perhaps the most important reserve in the Bill is that in connection with the Claremont municipality. This will save the House the necessity for discussing the Bill on the Notice Paper as introduced by the member for Claremont (Mr. J. Thomson). The hon. member has already afforded the House some information on the point. He said quite calmly that it was proposed to make an exchange of municipal land for Government land. Only a Scotchman would make such a proposal. It is a very wise one and has my support. At Claremont there is a considerable area of recreation ground vested in the council. This

land is the same as that mentioned in the Bill moved by the hon. member. On the understanding that that Bill will be withdrawn, I ask the House to agree to about two acres of the reserve being added to the municipal electric light station, which is to be duplicated. It is a good proposition, and I think the House should encourage it. At present they use next door a bit of reserve No. 8002 for municipal stables. If this block is granted to them, the municipal stables will have to be removed to it.

Mr. J. Thomson: We agree to that.

The PREMIER: I hope the House will agree that the Claremont municipality is deserving of this land. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [4.55]: This is the usual class of Bill which comes down every session with the idea of changing the purposes of reserves. The House must be careful before consenting to change the purpose of a reserve to some other purpose. On more than one occasion I have found that the best interests of the district concerned, and the general wish of the people of the district, are against the proposed alteration. I do not say that is so in this case. Sometimes an influential few in a district may engineer a Bill for the purpose of changing the purpose of a reserve, perhaps in a direction which might suit their sporting instincts. This is really a matter which concerns the member for the district. If the member for the district is satisfied, there should be no reason why other members who are not directly interested should raise any objection. I take it the member for Pingelly (Mr. Hickmott) knows about the alteration of the reserve in his district, and likewise the member for Bunbury in regard to the Bunbury municipality. It does seem to me that to grant a lease of the small portion of the reserve along the ocean front in Bunbury for refreshment rooms would be justified. As the Premier has said, it is a rocky beach and is not approachable from the ocean. It is several hundreds of yards from the town, and many people would desire to avail themselves of any accommodation that might be provided there. I agree that to reserve four million acres for aborigines in one block is too much. At the same time it would not be advisable to eliminate any portion of this reserve except for soldier settlement. We should not be justified in allowing it to be leased to any person who already holds enormous areas in that district.

The Premier: It is for soldiers.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I accept the Premier's word. On those grounds no member could have any objection. I hope the soldiers will not fail to make application. If they do not, no doubt those owning station property in that part of the country will readily avail themselves of the opportunity to take it up. I hope the Premier will see that the rights of returned soldiers are safeguarded, and that this land is made available to them.

The Premier: I will do so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: When the member for Claremont introduced his Bill for the purpose of dealing with the reserve in his municipality, I supported the proposal.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: This is a better one.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am not sure of that. I was prepared to support the hon. member in his Bill, but the Premier having secured the adjournment of the debate dwelt upon the matter for many weeks and now comes down with a different proposal.

Mr. J. Thomson: It is quite the same.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If it is the same piece of land and the conditions attached to it are similar, why any need for the alteration? I warn the hon. member that as a new member he should look carefully into this matter and see whether the Premier has not tricked him, and make sure that he is being given the same piece of ground as that which was described in the Bill the hon. member introduced. Is it to be used for the purpose of erecting an electric light plant?

Mr. J. Thomson: That is right.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am not opposing the Bill, I am only speaking in this way in the interests of the hon. member himself. I wish to secure for him the rights which he desired to obtain as expressed in the Bill he submitted, but I am afraid that the Premier has amended the matter in such a way that it will not give the municipality what they desire.

Mr. J. Thomson: Oh, yes, it is all right.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Then I will not offer any further objection.

Mr. J. Thomson: The plan is here in my drawer.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Being in the hon. member's drawer is not of much value to other hon. members. The electric light station is right opposite the Claremont railway station if I mistake not, and in close proximity to the Show ground. We want to be careful that we do not permit unsightly buildings to be erected. Claremont is such an attractive place that it would not be right to permit the building of any structure which would detract from the beauties of the suburb. Moreover, every resident in the State is interested in Claremont by reason of the national playground being situated in that suburb. Therefore, we have additional interest in the way of protecting the district from anything which might tend to destroy its natural beauty and surroundings. If the hon. member can give us an assurance that a tin or iron shed will not be erected anywhere within sight of the people who flock to the Show ground, that it will be well out of the way of the road, and even if it is not out of sight, that the municipality will undertake to see that there are beautifying creepers, flowers and shrubs between it and the road way, I shall support the Bill.

Mr. HICKMOTT (Pingelly) [5.5]: I give hon. members the assurance that the people of Pingelly know all about this matter as

well as the object for which it is intended to use the block of land. It has taken some time to induce the Government to let us have this allotment so that we might make of it a kind of rest place, and erect on it a monument to the memory of fallen soldiers. The Pingelly electorate contributed largely to the number of men who went to the Front, a large proportion of whom unfortunately paid the supreme penalty. The people of Pingelly have collected £300 in aid of this object, and I am sure hon. members will be pleased to assist them in carrying out the desire they have in view.

Mr. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [5.8]: I seek information. Clause 2 sets out the purpose for which it is intended to make use of the Pingelly reserve. The next clause provides that this reserve may be disposed of under the provisions of the Land Act, 1898. The fourth clause gives the Bunbury Municipal Council power to lease portion of the reserve, but the last clause merely describes the reserve; it merely gives the boundaries and does not say for what purpose the land is to be used.

The Premier: We have power to vest the land.

Mr. McCALLUM: But this merely describes the boundaries and does not say what it is intended to do with it.

The Premier: You are asked to exseise it from a Class A reserve.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Bill does not say that.

Hon. P. Collier: The clause does not say what it is intended to do with the reserve, and all the others do.

Mr. McCALLUM: There is no information in it at all. It merely describes the boundaries.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam—in—reply) [5.10]: Class A reserves are controlled only by this House, and in this Bill members are asked to exseise portion of the reserve mentioned in Clause 5, in order that it may be used by the municipalities of Claremont as a site for the electric light station.

Mr. McCallum: The Bill does not say so.

The PREMIER: This is the usual form in which such Bills are submitted, but if anything has been omitted from the clause, I will see that it is put right.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Clauses 1 to 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Portion of A4228 excised and vested in municipality:

Mr. JOHNSTON: I feel a little alarmed in regard to the remarks of the Leader of

the Opposition on the subject of the proposal contained in this clause. With the erection of a huge smoke stack, shall we have it belching out smoke and grime and ashes on the people attending the Claremont Show Ground? We must not forget that at Claremont, adjoining this proposed site, we have the best Show Ground in Australia.

The CHAIRMAN: In the Bill originally introduced by the member for Claremont and dealing with this particular site, it is set out that the land would be excised and vested in the municipality of Claremont.

The PREMIER: I agree that the clause is incomplete. I move an amendment—

That after "acres" in line 13, the words "is excised from the said reserve and may be vested in the Municipality of Claremont" be inserted.

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

That the amendment be amended by striking out the words "and may be vested in the Municipality of Claremont."

The inclusion of the words I refer to are unnecessary, because the Government have already ample power to vest land in a municipality. That being so there is no need for the reference in the amendment. If the Premier's amendment be agreed to, it will mean that the land is vested in the municipality of Claremont, and that the municipality may do whatever they like with it. If the words are deleted, the land will be excised from the reserve and then the Government, exercising the ordinary powers they possess, may vest the land in the municipality of Claremont, and make any provisions they desire regarding the future use of the land. The site of the present power station is a disgrace to the district.

Mr. J. Thomson: What about Subiaco?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Subiaco is no worse.

The PREMIER: I have no objection to the amendment to my amendment. So long as the land is excised from the reserve, the Government can do the rest.

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

Clause as amended put and passed.

Schedules 1 and 2—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment, and report adopted.

BILL—AGRICULTURAL BANK ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [5.25]: There are two amendments to the Agricultural Bank Act provided in the Bill, neither of which, in my opinion, is of serious importance. The first amendment gives power to the trustees of the Agri-

cultural Bank to build offices and quarters for the staff employed by the Bank. Hon. members will realise that this provision does not apply to the metropolitan area, but to country districts, such as at Bruce Rock and Kununoppin, where we have what are really branches of the bank and where inspectors are located. Up to the present time we have rented quarters, and we cannot do that any longer. No quarters are available.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You want to make the Agricultural Bank a State trading concern.

The PREMIER: No, not at all. The Bank is not a State trading concern. We have been able to rent places in the past, and we now desire to give the trustees authority to erect offices to meet the requirements of the business. Members know well what happens in these country districts. The Chief Inspector for the district lives at a centre, and under him there may be six or seven inspectors. Records have to be kept at the centre where the chief inspector is living, and the business of the bank has to be done there. These officers meet clients, and often make payments as well. In these circumstances, it is absolutely necessary that we should have offices in order that the work may be conveniently carried out. It may be argued that we should put these officers up in the ordinary way, but I think the bank should have the power to erect buildings for the officers who live in the back country areas.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is dangerous to give that power to the trustees.

The PREMIER: I know that this amount could be included in the Estimates and I have no objection to the matter being discussed in the ordinary way. If, however, we were going to build costly premises, I could see something in the objection to these powers being given, but we are only asking for power to erect offices where necessary. At Kulinn, for instance, the inspector lives in small and miserable quarters. He is doing good work and carrying out very important duties. He should be housed in an office.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I do not see why the bank should have that power.

Mr. Johnston: In any case, the provision is subject to the approval of the Governor.

The PREMIER: The bank must bear the interest charges on the cost of these buildings.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: No; the farmers who borrow the money will have to pay the cost.

The PREMIER: If the House agrees to the power being given to the trustees of the bank to erect the quarters, the bank will have to collect interest and sinking fund from those who occupy the places for residential purposes.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Do you propose to erect premises in Perth?

The PREMIER: No; I have already explained that these powers are only asked for

regarding country districts such as Kununoppin and Bruce Rock.

Mr. Johnston: Some of these men live in hessian humpies!

Mr. Latham: Why cannot the buildings be erected by the Public Works Department?

The PREMIER: The trustees should have the power to erect the buildings where necessary.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We should have these items on the Loan Estimates.

The PREMIER: I can quite understand that the question could be discussed more fully if a sum were included in the Estimates, but, in the present instance, it would be almost impossible to get over the difficulty unless we had a lump sum. I do not see why the trustees should not have this power; I see every reason why they should have it. I have no objection to the House discussing each year the expenditure of any considerable sum of money, but in the present instance it is a very small matter. These buildings can be erected cheaply by the trustees.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We cannot discuss that matter because there is no item on the Estimates.

The PREMIER: The hon. member can discuss the Agricultural Bank very fully.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Yes, when they do not send in their reports or send them in once in four years.

Hon. P. Collier: They do not send in reports.

The PREMIER: The hon. member gets them now. We are decentralising, and that is another reason why we desire this amendment. I do not know how we shall be able to manage unless we do build. The next proposal is that ex-soldier officials of the bank, who are not permanent, may be allowed to secure advances under the soldier settlement scheme. At the present time, of course, no officer of the bank can secure an advance from the bank. That is quite a proper provision, but there are some ex-soldiers whose positions are not permanent and who may at any time leave the service, and it is desirable that they should have a right to the benefits under the soldier settlement scheme. Of course the inspectors leave from time to time; they do not remain with the bank for a long time unless they happen to be senior inspectors, and it is only right that such men should have the opportunity to come under the soldier settlement scheme. I wish it to be clearly understood that this is to apply only to ex-soldiers who are not on the permanent staff. Clause 4 seeks to invest the board with power to spend money on group settlement operations before the security is registered. The group settlement costs of preparation will be allotted by the general manager of the bank to each of the blocks and, when the blocks are prepared, the mortgages will be taken before the blocks are allotted to the members of the group. The general manager of the bank and his staff are in control of this work. To-day we

can lend an individual money to make improvements, but I ask that where group settlement is concerned, we should have the power to make the improvements before actually allotting the land to the individual. I hope the House will agree to this amendment. The interest on the outlay on such blocks will be capitalised. It may take two years to prepare the blocks, and the interest over the two years will be capitalised, so that a man acquiring one of these blocks will take over the total cost as from the date he takes possession and can bring it into active use. I think I have made it quite clear that this provision will apply only where group settlement is undertaken. At Manjimup we might have 20 men and 20 farms, and when the farms are allotted we shall debit each farm with the money advanced from the Agricultural Bank funds. We want this work to be absolutely under the control of the general manager of the bank, and we want the allotment of the money to be in the hands of the bank, so that each settler will have charged up to him only his proportion of the actual cost of preparing his block in the group. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. P. Collier, debate adjourned.

BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT CONTINUANCE.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [5.35] in moving the second reading said: This is merely a measure to authorise that the Industries Assistance Board be continued for another year. Members are aware that year by year we ask approval for the continuance of the board, and that is all I am seeking under this Bill. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. W. C. Angwin, debate adjourned.

BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [5.37] in moving the second reading said: The little Bill which I am now presenting to the House, I can assure hon. members, is not loaded. It is a simple, plain statement of items which the experience of the last two years has proved are necessary to be dealt with. Section 13 of the principal Act requires to be amended by placing in it such words as appear in the Bill to enable the Minister to deduct from the traffic fees the

cost of repairing and keeping in good order the Perth-Fremantle road from Ferdinand-street—that is the entrance to the Perth park—until North Fremantle bridge is reached. Some years ago the Perth-Fremantle-road was in such bad order that a busy bee was organised to repair it, and the agitation which arose in consequence, during the time of the Seadlan Government, caused the then Minister for Works, Mr. W. D. Johnson, to expend the necessary moneys to place the Perth-Fremantle-road in a trafficable condition. The cost of that work to the Government was about £26,000, and there were several conferences between the Minister and the local authorities with the object of settling the proportion of the burden to be carried by each of the local authorities affected. Though there were a number of conferences and though a great amount of talk was exchanged, no defined conclusion could be arrived at. I do not wish to reflect upon the local authorities more than to say that I do not think they really wished to have a definition of the amount to be charged to each local authority. I can quite understand their reluctance to arrive at a fixed amount because, when some four or five years ago I took a very careful census of the traffic on the Perth-Fremantle road, it was made quite clear that 45 per cent. of the traffic originated and ended in Perth and some 23 per cent. originated and ended in Fremantle, leaving something like 30 per cent. of the traffic which could be fairly attached to the local authorities between Ferdinand-street and the North Fremantle bridge. When I became Minister for Works some five years ago we were giving subsidies to the various municipalities and also to the road boards. When I ascertained what the percentages of traffic really were, I propounded a scheme by which I deducted from the subsidies a fair proportion to be charged to the local authorities for the upkeep of this main thoroughfare. I think it was a year later that the finances of the State became so restricted that it was impossible to grant the subsidies to the municipalities, although the subsidies to the road boards were continued.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Since then a lot of municipalities have changed into road boards.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is true, but not along this particular road. I was able to deduct from the Perth municipality what a calculation had shown to be a fair amount for it to contribute towards the upkeep of the Perth-Fremantle-road and the same applied to Fremantle. Two years ago the House was good enough to accept from me, with very slight alterations, a Traffic Bill which became an Act. That Act has proved to be very satisfactory, but it contains, as do most Acts, some matters which experience has shown could have been better expressed, and it is with the object of remedying the lack of full expression that this

amending Bill is placed before the House. The House, in dealing with the Traffic Bill, was very generous in placing in the hands of the Minister for Works the allocation of the traffic fees, practically without let or hindrance. When I met the 22 local authorities interested in the distribution of these fees in the metropolitan area I, in my youthful innocence and candour, laid all my cards on the table, and one of the municipalities, the City of Perth, refused to go into the pool. Of the 22 municipalities with which I had to deal, I say to their honour that 21 of them have kept absolutely to the agreement they made in my office without any attempt to get away from it. The City of Perth has not abided by what was laid down at the meeting, but has taken up the attitude that it is not bound by the agreement. The feeling of the Government in the matter is this: The Perth-Fremantle-road is the main highway between the chief seaport and the capital. On that road traffic can be carried safely and efficiently only if the road is kept in good order. The local authorities will not keep it in good order; that has been proved. They will simply let it get into such a condition that the Government are compelled to intervene and put the highway in order. When I took on this business some five years ago, I found that fine road, on which a great deal of money had been spent, simply going to the pack. Expostulations with the various local authorities had no effect whatever. The City of Perth made no effort whatever to keep the Mount's Bay-road in order. The only local authority out of the number concerned that kept its share of the road in repair was the Fremantle Municipal Council, as regards the portion right up to the North Fremantle bridge. But the rest of the local authorities concerned, from North Fremantle right up to Perth, I say without the slightest hesitation, were simply waiting for the Government to take the work in hand. After consultation with my then Premier, the late Hon. Frank Wilson, I was given authority to repair the road, and, as I have told the House, I deducted from the subsidies the amount of money necessary to do that work, so far as the subsidies could go.

Mr. Johnston: Did you deduct the cost of maintaining it, too?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I could not do that, because there was not a sufficient amount of subsidy to deduct from. If the money had been there, I should have been delighted to deduct the cost of maintenance as well. But one cannot deduct half-a-crown from a shilling; and that, or something rather worse, represented the position. However, I called a meeting at my office of the local authorities affected. Hon. members may recollect that there was an attempt to pack the meeting, which attempt I resented very strongly.

Hon. P. Collier: Yes; that was the famous meeting when you took a strong stand.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Just so. In allocating the traffic fees, I made certain deductions for the purpose of recouping to the Government the cost of the repairs effected to the Perth-Fremantle-road. The amount due on this account from the Perth City Council was £779 2s.; and if I had held my tongue about my deductions I should never have heard anything more about the matter. But, being perfectly frank, and having the habit of laying my cards on the table, I told the people concerned what I was doing. The result was that the Mayor of Perth and a section of his councillors, a majority of one, I think, served the Government with a writ for recovery of the amount deducted. The Government paid an amount into court.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the case sub judice? If so, it would be better not to discuss the case.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not want to discuss it. I desire merely to make a statement of facts. It has been stated in the Press that the Government have given in. I now wish to state that the Government have not given in so far as I am concerned. The Government have filed a defence, and have paid a certain amount into court in the event of the decision going against them. Now, in order to obviate any annoyance in the future, it is thought advisable to amend Section 13 of the Traffic Act so as to set the matter at rest and put it beyond doubt for all time. I hope the House will be with me on this; I assure hon. members that I am satisfied it is quite fair. The city of Perth and the municipality of Fremantle ought to contribute towards the cost of repairing the Perth-Fremantle-road. Unless the Government put that road in repair, it will revert to its condition of a few years ago—go back to the pack. The traffic on the road will grow to such dimensions that the keeping of the road in order will be beyond the power of the local authorities. Accordingly, the Bill asks Parliament to give me and my successors the power to make the necessary deductions from the various allocations of the traffic fees, to retain from those fees such total sum as may be requisite for maintaining the road in good order. I have said many times, and I mean it, that the only justification for the levying of heavy traffic fees under the Traffic Act is that they should be applied towards repairing the damage done to the roads by persons using them and paying the fees. The man who pays £6 per annum for a motor license, for example, has the right to expect that the £6 shall be used in repairing any damage he may have done to the roads.

Mr. O'Loghlen: The fees are prohibitive, especially the wheel tax.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not know they are quite that; but the matter is one on which there may well be difference of opinion. I have discussed this question of

the Perth-Fremantle-road with the Premier, and he has told me that he is not prepared to find the money to enable the Public Works Department to keep the road in proper repair, unless he can get the money recouped to him from the traffic fees allotted to that particular portion of the metropolitan area. None of this cost will be charged to any one of the local authorities except those from Perth to Fremantle. Hon. members representing outside districts need be under no sort of fear that their districts will be called upon to maintain the Perth-Fremantle-road. Clause 4 of the Bill proposes to amend Section 41 of the principal Act so that the section shall apply to footpaths also. The police find that the section as it stands does not enable them to deal with users of the footpath who disregard the regulation to keep to the left. Hon. members may think it strange that we should desire to change from the very old rule of foot passengers keeping to the right, but I can assure them that the rule to keep to the left has been proved by experience to be the better. It is the same as applies to road traffic—and this constitutes in itself an element of simplification—and, further, people walking on the left of the footpath have a further distance on the footpath before they step off it to cross the road, and thus are less liable to come into collision with passing vehicles. The proposed amendment of the section is necessary to enable the police to deal with footpath traffic. Another small amendment proposed by Section 4 refers to the manner of painting and inscribing the tablets of motor cars, and to the distinguishing colours of such tablets, for the several classes of licenses. The idea of having different coloured tablets for public vehicles and for private vehicles is that in case of offence, it will be possible to decide more quickly and more easily to which character of traffic the supposed or alleged offender belongs. Harking back, for a moment, to the former clause, let me say that the power under which the Minister for Works may construct or repair a road is contained in the Public Works Act of 1902, Section 86 of which provides—

Though the Minister may construct or repair any road within any part of the State, such road shall not by reason of such construction or repair become a Government road if at the time of such construction or repair it is within the limits of a municipality or road board district.

This Bill proposes to give the Minister for Works power to make repairs of roads and to recover the cost of such repairs from those responsible. A further amendment proposed by this Bill has arisen from the handing over of the control of traffic in the municipality of Perth to the police. The police find that in Perth there are several streets so narrow that it is dangerous to let traffic proceed in them both ways simultaneously. Therefore, in order to ease the traffic and obviate dan-

ger, the Commissioner of Police asks for an amendment which will prohibit the use by vehicles of certain specified roads except when proceeding in one specified direction. I think all hon. members know King-street, Perth. It is a narrow street, and a very busy street; and quite a number of serious accidents in that street have been obviated by just a hair's breadth. The risk of those accidents arises from vehicles turning into King-street from St. George's-terrace, or Hay-street, or Murray-street, when another vehicle has been travelling along King-street in the opposite direction, with the consequence that there has been hardly room for the two vehicles to pass each other.

Mr. Mann: There should be a constable on point duty at the intersection of King-street and Hay-street.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That means additional expense.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) objects to that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The member for Perth does not object. It is the Perth City Council who object to any expense. There are several other streets like King-street in Perth. King-street, in particular, is an important business street. It looks a very quiet little alleyway, such as one may see in the Old Country; but a lot of important business is done there, and vehicles of all kinds may be standing there at the kerb, and then there is barely room for anything else to pass. The desire is to make King-street a one-way street, and to keep it a one-way street.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But it is a good distance before vehicles can find a street parallel to King-street, you know.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Another amendment desired is one requiring

the driver of any vehicle licensed for the carriage of passengers or goods to exhibit a prescribed sign to indicate that such vehicle is plying for hire.

Hon. members may have gathered from the Press, and also from the utterances of some public men interested in the matter, that there has been a good deal of controversy between what I may term the taxi-drivers on the ranks and people who let out motors for hire from garages. The taxi men on the ranks say that human nature is such that if a person can ride in a motor which has no distinctive sign to show that it is not a private car, the person will always do that in preference to riding in a motor which does carry such a distinctive sign. In my personal opinion, such discrimination involves a sort of snobbery; let me add, snobbery of a character which I did not think existed in Western Australia, or in Australia at all. I see no reason why one should not be as willing to ride in a car which carries a sign denoting that it is a vehicle for hire, as in what might be termed a spurious private car. But I recognise that human nature is moulded to various patterns, and so

we propose that instead of having the word "hire" marked on the car, each driver shall exhibit while the car is standing some sign which will show that the car is for hire, but which will be removed when the car runs away on a job.

Mr. Johnston: Are not the different-coloured number plates sufficient?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No.

Mr. McCallum: What is the reason for class distinctions at all?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not know.

Mr. McCallum: You are providing for three different classes.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, I am merely trying to provide for an emergency which a Supreme Court jury declared should be provided for.

Mr. Sampson: The word "hire" is obnoxious to many people.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Why should it be?

Mr. Mann: If one class, and not the other, is compelled to use the word, the respective businesses must be affected.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The next clause contains amendments dealing with heavy vehicles. Many heavy vehicles come down the side of the Darling Ranges, to the serious prejudice of the roads. It was hoped to prevent heavy carting in winter time by the imposition of a stiff fee, but the scheme has not worked out in accordance with expectations. In winter time the heavy vehicles make fairly deep ruts in the road, and when the water gets into those ruts it speedily cuts away the road. As I say, difficulties have arisen, and it is to meet those difficulties that the clause is introduced. There may be slight alterations required here and there in the Bill and another paragraph may have to be added; given those, I think the Bill will meet the needs of the State. In certain places in the Act, it is necessary that the word "motor" should be omitted, it having been inserted before the word "vehicle," in many sections the operation of which should not be confined to motors. If the amendment be passed, those sections will in future apply to all vehicles. When in Committee I will readily endeavour to explain anything further which members may desire to know. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [6.5]: The Bill is exclusively one for consideration in Committee. We require to give particular attention to the question of the Perth-Fremantle-road. The license fees are now pooled over the whole district, and, in consequence, the local authorities along that road get only their proportionate share. The Minister has explained that Fremantle maintains nearly a mile of that road in proper repair. That in itself would cost considerably more than the amount of fees which Fremantle receives, in addition to which the municipality has to contribute to-

wards the upkeep of the remainder of the road.

The Minister for Works: In the scheme of allocation Fremantle is credited with what it does.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That, of course, makes it an entirely different question. The Bill proposes that the police shall take charge of go-carts. I suppose it will be desired to register them presently, and charge them a half-crown fee, as in the case of bicycles. We are told that it is no longer necessary to register bicycles; just the same it seems that bicycles have to be numbered, and that a half-crown fee is charged for numbering them. It is the intention of the Government to take charge of vehicles which use the footpath. What vehicles can they be, except go-carts? Our only concern with go-carts should be to see that they are kept full. I was under the impression that the Eastern States had adopted our traffic regulations and were keeping to the left, but I find they are still keeping to the right.

Mr. Mann: In Sydney the people keep to the left.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: So I was told, but when I got there I found them all keeping to the right.

Mr. Sampson: There is no rule in Perth.

Mr. Mann: Yes, there is.

Mr. Sampson: Well, it is not visible to the naked eye.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is real only to the extent that it makes a job for a few policemen.

Hon. P. Collier: Who do not carry out their job.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not see any need for differentiating between the number plates on motor cars, whether private or for hire.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The number is the only thing the authorities have to deal with. All numbers are registered and so can be turned up immediately. No matter what the damage done, if the authorities cannot get the number of the offending vehicle, the colour will never give them the necessary information.

Hon. P. Collier: Why juggle with the colours at all?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I cannot see the necessity for making any differentiation whatever. The Minister says it is necessary to provide for only one-way traffic in certain streets. He referred to King-street, Perth. In the case of King-street, the driver of a vehicle will have to go a considerable distance to get into a parallel street in order to return. If power be given to make such by-laws, it might be used in respect of some roads which are only partially macadamised, the driving surface of which is only 14 or 16 feet; for it must be remembered that, this being a Bill covering the whole State, the power, if given, would not be restricted to Perth. Such by-laws applied to partially macadamised suburban roads might result in

considerable inconvenience to the travelling public. I hope the Minister will not persist with the clause which deals with plying for hire. The clause does not specifically provide for the carrying of a distinctive colour, but if it be passed the police will have power to insist upon every vehicle for hire displaying the sign "for hire." I do not see any real objection to displaying such a sign when the vehicle is standing awaiting hire, but once it is engaged, it is no longer for hire. Public sentiment will prejudicially affect the business of the men applying for hire on the ranks, and will be all in favour of taking a car from a garage. I cannot see any difference between the two classes of hire. Of course, many people have an objection to the sign "for hire." Once a car is engaged it is no longer for hire, and therefore it ought not to be carrying the "for hire" sign. If the clause be passed, the police will be able to make those motor men carry the sign "for hire," even when running under engagement.

The Minister for Works: That is not intended.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Still the power is there. The clause relating to carting on the Darling Ranges is merely of local interest, giving power to make necessary by-laws. Since the Bill applies to all parts of the State, it is advisable that uniformity be observed in its operations, so that the people of one district shall know that they are under exactly the same conditions as those in other districts.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Before ten I claimed that there should be uniformity throughout the State in regard to the regulations made under the Traffic Act. One of the principal objects which Parliament considered at the time would be an advantage when passing the Traffic Act was that it should be administered entirely by the Minister. A person who held a license in one district would then know how he stood in regard to any district in which he was using that license. If local authorities are given certain powers under this Bill possibly this uniformity will be done away with, and we shall be in exactly the same position we were in before the Act was passed. When the Minister introduced the Bill, the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) interjected that pointsmen should be appointed in certain narrow streets for the purpose of directing the traffic. For years past the full charge for pointsmen in the city of Perth was met out of consolidated revenue.

The Minister for Works: That is right.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The salaries of the various policemen stationed in Barrack-street and other streets of the city were paid for by the State and not by the city. At the conference referred to, the Minister pointed out that it was unfair for the State to bear this charge, and he thought it would be quite

fair to keep the cost of these pointsmen out of the traffic fees derived from the metropolitan area.

The Minister for Works: They would not agree to it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Although this would affect every local authority surrounding Perth, seeing that they would have to pay their share of the cost of the pointsmen in the city, not one of them raised any objection, and the only objection came from the city of Perth.

The Minister for Works: That is right.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The city of Perth was the last that should have objected.

Mr. Mann: What does that suggest to you?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That they were rather greedy in the matter.

The Minister for Works: Absolutely greedy.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The State was paying these charges and the city of Perth was collecting the traffic fees. Perth and Fremantle were collecting almost all the fees in the metropolitan area until the Traffic Act was passed.

Mr. Mann: Was it not that Perth wanted the control?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No doubt they wanted the control so long as they got all the traffic fees they were getting before, and so long as the other local authorities had to pay for the maintenance of these pointsmen. Parliament, however, decided otherwise. Parliament said that the local authorities which had to maintain the roads, but had only a small percentage of the license fees, should, after the passing of the Traffic Act, be given a fair amount of these license fees from the traffic using their roads. I think the Minister divided these fees very fairly. I was astonished on that occasion, and could not resist interjecting at the time the question came up, that I thought Perth should be the last local authority to complain against the act of the Minister in deducting the pointsmen's fees out of the license fees. I think the expenses ran into £1,200 or £1,400 a year in 1912, but to-day they probably run into nearly £2,000 a year.

Mr. Mann: Is that going to prevent extra pointsmen being appointed?

The Minister for Works: Who is going to pay for them?

Mr. Mann: That is what I am asking.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The city of Perth object to pay. They would have pointsmen at every corner so long as the State continued to pay. The Minister acted rightly in trying to relieve the State from payment of the salaries of those directors of traffic in the metropolitan area, when the cost of that work should be charged to the license fees collected in the metropolitan area. I do not know whether the Minister had the right to make this arrangement, but if not we should embody a clause in this Bill to prevent other parts of the metropolitan area from being saddled with these pointsmen's

fees and Perth being excluded. I do not object to the metropolitan area as a whole paying these fees, because the whole area derives a certain amount of benefit from these pointsmen, but why should the people of Albany or Geraldton, for instance, contribute towards such expenses? I regret that the city of Perth took such a narrow view of the matter.

The Minister for Works: Would you not think a fair way would be to charge according to the percentage of traffic?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Minister took the charge out of the whole of the fees first, and no one objected.

The Minister for Works: That is what I wanted, but from most of them I had not deducted a penny.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Minister got the various local authorities together to explain what action he intended to take.

The Minister for Works: I was too open with them.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: He said that the pointsmen should be paid for out of the license fees before any subdivision was made. The attitude of the city of Perth showed that they would never be satisfied with any Traffic Act unless they were given the whole of the fees that were collected in Perth.

The Minister for Works: And the pointsmen were paid for as well.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Perhaps some of the amendments contained in this Bill may be beneficial, while others might just as well be left out.

Mr. SAMPSON (Swan) [7.40]: I congratulate the Minister in regard to what he has done in the matter of distributing motor license fees, but cannot congratulate him in every respect in regard to the various amendments contained in this Bill. The suggestion as to making one-way traffic apply to any streets half a chain or less in width is premature for the city of Perth. I should like to think that the traffic in our narrow streets approximated the traffic of Pitt-street, Sydney, Flinders-lane, Melbourne, and, I think, Rundle-street, Adelaide. There are one or two small streets in Adelaide where one-way traffic is the rule. To give a local authority power to make that provision in Perth is premature, and I hope the power will not be given. There is a factor in the Bill which I think, on further thought, will be considered undesirable; and that is in regard to the varied classes of licenses to be issued for motor drivers on the ranks, and those in the garages. The class of work done by these two types of motor driver is exactly the same, the class of vehicle used is the same, and the cars on the ranks are as up to date as those which come from the garages. I hope when the Bill is in Committee the Minister will vary the clauses concerned, in such a way as to provide that there shall be no discrimination between the two types of drivers. The result of the suggested discrimination would be to make a

marked distinction between the two types of car, which would have a detrimental effect upon a man's business. I refer, of course, to the matter of the suggested varied identification discs. This would mean that in the case of a car from a garage, the owner might have an unfair advantage as compared with the man on the rank.

The Minister for Works: Not if the man on the rank had a flag which when put down would be out of sight.

Mr. SAMPSON: If it were merely to be used as an advertisement when the car was waiting for hire, I do not think there would be any objection.

The Minister for Works: That is the idea.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am pleased to have that assurance. Appreciating though I do, the work of the Minister in distributing the license fees throughout the metropolitan area, I should like to see the area extended. It is a splendid scheme that has been initiated, but it should be enlarged. I want to see some of the local authorities, who are providing roads for pleasure traffic, receive some benefit in the way of license fees. I hope that the Minister will give this matter his consideration, and if that is done we will find that road boards such as Armadale-Kelmscott, Gosnells, and Darling Range, will benefit. Already the Greenmount road board benefits to a slight extent, but it should benefit to the extent of the length of the York-road from the boundary of the Midland Junction municipality to the turn-off to the weir, and even to the weir itself. I can assure members that that is one of the most frequently used roads for motor traffic. Next comes the road from Perth to Armadale and then the road from Perth to Kalamunda and return via Welshpool-road. With regard to the heavy traffic tax, I can assure the Minister he has a difficult work to perform here, and I am quite certain he will never be able to give satisfaction to all concerned. I hope the Minister will agree to make mandatory whatever decision is arrived at. It would not be right to allow the Minister power to exempt certain districts unless there was some special reason for so doing. In regard to the incidence of the heavy traffic tax, the fact that the metropolitan area was recently exempted has caused much disappointment in the surrounding districts. This subject is a burning one in the hills at the present time, but I know the Minister appreciates the difficulties and that he is endeavouring to deal with them in a reasonable and proper way. Everybody knows that the heavy traffic referred to does a great deal of damage to roads, and it is unfair that the ordinary producer should be called upon to repair roads which are damaged by heavy traffic, that class of traffic which carts wood, stone, and other heavy materials.

Mr. O'Loughlen: These chaps have to make a living as well, and don't forget they pay a heavy wheel tax.

Mr. SAMPSON: I have no desire to penalise any section of the community, particularly those engaged in heavy carting, than whom there is no better class of man, but when we realise that the stone carted is for the purpose of making roads in Perth and the surrounding districts, I contend that the price to Perth and other municipalities in the metropolitan area should be such as will return to the heavy carters sufficient to enable them to pay a tax which will help the local authorities in whose districts the stone is collected, to maintain the roads in good repair.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It is only a bread and butter job for those carters now.

Mr. SAMPSON: Whatever position that industry may be in just now, it will not be injured by the addition of this tax. The tax would be unfair if it were not uniform, but at present all those districts in which stone-carting and forwarding to Perth is carried on are subject to the tax, and that being so, I fail to see how the stone carter is unfairly affected. Wood carters may not be in as good a position because, I understand, they have competition. I am firmly convinced that no injustice would be done to the heavy carters if they reckoned their cost, and if, when they put in their estimates, they added sufficient to cover the additional tax. The first question we should ask ourselves is whether it is right and proper that the producers in any district should maintain the roads for that traffic for which those roads were certainly not constructed.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Do the producers not take heavy loads?

Mr. SAMPSON: Not nearly as heavy as the loads of those engaged in heavy traffic. I have no feeling in this matter except a desire that the producers of the outside districts should not be penalised for the benefit of Perth and the surrounding municipalities.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You are penalising the others by driving them out of business.

Mr. SAMPSON: Nothing of the sort. This tax can and should be passed on. Why should Perth receive cheap stone at the cost of the Darling Range or the other boards?

Mr. O'Loughlen: There are other districts.

Mr. SAMPSON: The only districts which supply gravel and gravel lumps come within the area within which the tax is imposed. In all these districts to which reference is made the tax is imposed. I do not say that the carters have yet paid it. Many have not. But the time is coming when the outside districts should no longer be penalised in order to provide Perth with cheap material.

Mr. A. Thomson: This clause causes the boards to differentiate?

Mr. SAMPSON: The local authorities had power under the old Act to frame by-laws and impose this tax, but there is not a member of any road board who would be a party to the imposition of a tax on the rate-payers unless other districts similarly situated, where men were engaged in similar industries, carrying on similar work, imposed

the same tax. The men outside the districts stated would receive an undue advantage. It is this aspect that I commend to the member for Forrest, and I am certain that he appreciates the fact and that after this tax has been made uniform he will give it his support.

Mr. O'Loughlen: A carter at Chidlow's pays £26 a year to the road board.

Mr. SAMPSON: He must have a number of drays.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Every dray at Kalamunda costs £6 a year.

Mr. SAMPSON: The tax is £6 10s. a year; £3 a wheel heavy traffic tax and 5s. per wheel under the Cart and Carriage License Act. Since the roads are an advantage to heavy carters, and since these contracts are let by tender, and since all engaged in heavy traffic have to face the same cost, why should the position be contested? The matter which I regret sincerely, is that the metropolitan area has been exempted from the incidence of the tax. I hope the member for Perth is not in favour of this, because, in my opinion, it is an unfair exemption, and one which works to the detriment of the man outside the city. Too often it is stated that the producer carries the burden in order that the man living in the metropolis may go free.

Mr. O'Loughlen: He is not carrying his share of this burden, so why discriminate?

Mr. SAMPSON: The roads in Perth are better than the roads in the hills district, and this discrimination is not in the best interests of the State as a whole.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You are discriminating in the hills now.

Mr. SAMPSON: We are not. This is a uniform tax with the exception that when a local authority carries a resolution asking the Minister to exempt that district, and the Minister agrees to do so, an unfair position is created. I hope that when the Bill emerges from the Committee stage, it will go forward with the tax definitely set out, and with no power to exempt, excepting those districts say, north of the twenty-fifth parallel, and certain goldfields areas. In those districts the Minister should have that power, but I do say that, in the interests of equity and fairness, as between one section and another, permission to exempt should not be granted to districts which are contiguous to each other.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [7.57]: I will take this opportunity to ask the Minister to get some information about the amount of dues collected by outside road boards and other bodies. I visited a district the other day and no less a person than the local constable informed me that of six or eight members of the road board, only two had taken out licenses for their cars, or in fact any licenses at all. I suggest that the Minister immediately ask that a return be prepared to have a search made at the offices of the different local authorities to find out how many defaulters there are in this respect. Hon. members have a pretty fair idea of my

attitude towards what I have always called bungling bumbles.

Mr. Latham: Who are they?

Mr. LAMBERT: The hon. member is no bumble, but he is no less a bungler.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. H. Smith: Who does more work than the road board members?

Mr. LAMBERT: I know what the hon. member does.

Mr. J. H. Smith: If I had not done more work than the member for Coolgardie, I should never have been elected.

Mr. LAMBERT: Under our present system we allow road boards and councils to collect fees of one sort or another and there is no proper system. It is to be hoped that the outcome of the Traffic Act will be something in the way of a unified system. If there is anything in this young country in connection with which we require a bold and comprehensive policy, it is in the direction of road construction. We cannot allow bungling bumbles or novices, who constitute the greater proportion of our municipal councils and road boards, to spend considerable amounts, each year in an inadequate and unsatisfactory fashion.

The Minister for Works: You would exempt Perth, of course?

Mr. Teesdale: No, he exempts Coolgardie.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not comment on these local authorities with a spirit of disrespect.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: You were a bumble yourself once.

Mr. Teesdale: And they tipped him out.

Mr. LAMBERT: I recognise the good work the councils and road boards are doing throughout the State, but it is the system I am up against. It is the system under which we allow 10 or 15 road boards to be in existence between here and Albany, all with different policies of road construction and without adequate knowledge on that subject at all. This is the system to which I object. It is not time that representative members of Parliament, who are responsible for the codification of the ordinary every day matters of public life, should take action, and create some body such as the Commissions who in America and also on the Continent, have done such great work in providing a unified system of road construction? I am sure that the Minister for Works, with his practical turn of mind, will see the awful nonsense of having so many road boards throughout the State operating in the way I have mentioned.

The Minister for Works: I have cut out over 20 road boards in the last four years.

Mr. LAMBERT: If the Minister cut out 220, he would be doing good service to the State.

The Minister for Works: I cannot do that, as there are only 115 road boards in Western Australia.

Mr. Latham: That does not matter. The member for Coolgardie does not know any better.

Mr. LAMBERT: When the Minister mentions that there are 115 of these road boards in Western Australia, each with its separate jurisdiction and its uneconomical system of road construction, it will surely bring the point home to members.

Mr. Pickering: The road boards are carrying out their duties very capably—

Mr. A. Thomson: Most efficiently—

Mr. Angelo: And in an honorary capacity.

Mr. LAMBERT: If they were carrying out their duties in the most incapable manner, that would be good enough for the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering). If they could get a benevolent Government to spend thousands and thousands of pounds in one particular district, the road board authorities would be extremely satisfied and such an action on the part of the Government would make road construction in their areas very easy. I have no doubt that the members of the road boards in the Sussex electorate point to the Busselton-Yallingup road, which was constructed by the Government, and regard it as a monument to their ability.

The Minister for Works: Who keeps that road in repair?

Mr. LAMBERT: The only work the members of the road boards do regarding that road, is to run their motor cars over it.

Mr. Pickering: Why not—it is a free country?

Mr. LAMBERT: I am not finding fault with the members of the board.

Mr. Pickering: You have your knife into the local governing bodies.

Mr. LAMBERT: I have not. I was a member of a local governing authority before I was 22 years of age, and I agree that within their ability and the scope of their circumscribed powers, the work of the local authorities is good enough, but in a young State like ours we require some efficient system of road construction. I think the present Roads Act and Municipalities Act are obsolete. The obsolescence of such legislation has been recognised in different parts of the world.

Mr. Pickering: Our legislation was revised only 12 months ago.

Mr. LAMBERT: If something had been revised 200 years ago it would have been good enough for the hon. member, and the results would have been sufficiently progressive to keep pace with the hon. member's most advanced ideas.

Mr. Pickering: That is very clever.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know whether the hon. member wishes to go back to the old toll system, but I think the time has arrived when Parliament should take in hand the proper co-ordination of road construction in Western Australia. I hope the Minister for Works will give this matter his attention. As to the tendency to curry favour with local governing authorities, I do not care whether I get their votes at election time or not. I will tell them what I think is right and that is, that they should be immediately done away

with. During the war we had the spectacle of these local governing authorities setting themselves up as second Parliaments and discussing all manner of things. It is a matter for wonderment that they did not lay down the proper peace terms to be adopted by the belligerent nations. I hope that hon. members will not take very much notice of the little local governing bodies, no matter what good work they have been doing. We cannot get proper and efficient expenditure of public funds under this heading unless we have a proper and efficient system of construction.

Mr. Johnston: We have not got that type of road board in the country districts. You may have them on the fields—

Mr. LAMBERT: If the hon. member—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Will the hon. member keep to the Bill and address the Chair. If he does, we will get on better.

Mr. LAMBERT: I was pleased to note the Minister's apparent appreciation of my remarks, and I hope we shall see some practical results to secure a better condition of affairs. I trust that we will not continue in our present slovenly method of road construction, and that steps will be taken to see that the license fees which are collected now are handled by competent men upon a proper system of road construction throughout Western Australia.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [S.9]: I had not intended to speak on the Bill, but, in view of the remarks by the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) I feel bound to say something in defence of the work done by local governing authorities throughout Western Australia. If there is any fault, it is in the administration of the Act which was put through by the Minister some time back. That measure, when passed, was considered to be very up to date and now we find it has become antiquated within a comparatively brief period.

Mr. Lambert: The system is antiquated.

Mr. PICKERING: The system has been eminently satisfactory for the development of a country of the size of Western Australia. I am glad to state that I have an opinion quite the contrary to that expressed by the member for Coolgardie regarding the work of local governing authorities. I know that the members of road boards are very hard working men, who devote a lot of time and experience in carrying out their duties. If there is any fault to be found, it is not with the road boards, but the Act.

Mr. Lambert: That is all I am saying.

Mr. PICKERING: If there is to be an alteration, it should be in the direction of the introduction of a Country Roads Bill, which will take the main roads system out of the control of the local governing authorities.

The Minister for Works: Exactly. I have been trying for the past three or four years to get that.

Mr. PICKERING: The money collected by the local authorities for rates and licenses is entirely needed to deal with feeble roads

and other roads which come within their jurisdiction.

Mr. Lambert: They want the rates, but do not want to pay for their roads.

Mr. PICKERING: Despite what the hon. member for Coolgardie says to the contrary, when a system like that in operation in Victoria is found applicable to Queensland, I think that, with modification, such a measure might be made applicable to Western Australia, and I shall welcome the time when we shall see the introduction of such a measure here. I understand that the Bill is more or less urgent. I regret that when the redistribution or pooling of the licensing fees was under consideration, the course suggested by me in this Chamber some time ago was not adopted.

The Minister for Works: That means, that the Government should collect all the fees.

Mr. PICKERING: Yes, and allocate the fees pro rata. I do not propose to deal with local matters at the present stage, but, regarding the Perth-Fremantle road, I would like to say that until it was taken over by the Government and put into decent condition, it was not a road at all. I regret to hear that the Minister finds it necessary to introduce drastic provisions regarding those local bodies who will not contribute their share towards the upkeep of that road. I will support the Minister in any action he proposes to adopt to make those local authorities relieve the State of this burden. Regarding the heavy traffic provisions, these can be dealt with in Committee.

Mr. LATHAM (York) [S.13]: I regret that the Minister did not recognise the necessity for introducing into the Bill the principle embodied in the resolution carried by Parliament last session dealing with fines under the Traffic Act. When a resolution is carried in Parliament, I regard it as an instruction to Ministers of the Crown, and I regret that the Minister for Works has not taken any notice of that particular direction.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: You can move to amend the Bill.

Mr. LATHAM: I understand that the Standing Orders will not permit me to move in the direction suggested.

The Minister for Works: What is it that I have left out of the Bill?

Mr. LATHAM: Last session Parliament by resolution agreed that the fines imposed under the Traffic Act should go to the local governing bodies.

The Minister for Works: I cannot touch fines under this Bill. You would need to repeal the 1906 Act before that could be done.

Mr. LATHAM: The Bill seeks to amend the Traffic Act and I believe that the matter I refer to comes under that heading. I think it is possible for the Minister to stretch his imagination so as to introduce the amendment I suggest, seeing that it was in the nature of an instruction from this Chamber.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must deal with the Bill now.

Mr. LATHAM: I hope the Minister will see the folly of insisting upon distinguishing colours for hire motor cars. I am going to oppose the proposal. It is wrong to ask any man who has cars plying for hire to display a distinguishing colour, and it is also objectionable. I hope the Minister will give further consideration to the question of allotting fines to the respective districts.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington—in reply [S.16]): To the member for York (Mr. Latham) I would like to say that when a man consults a professional gentleman such as a doctor or a lawyer and goes against the advice tendered him, I for one would regard him as being unwise. If he consulted a doctor and then neglected to follow his advice, I should regard him as a fool. If he consulted a lawyer and was not guided by his advice, I should regard him as an ass. I am neither a fool nor an ass. When my lawyer tells me that the fines cannot be attached in the way suggested by the hon. member, I must follow his advice.

Mr. Latham: Am I to understand that the Crown law officers advise that the fines cannot be collected under the Act?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not here to tell taradiddles, but to make plain statements of fact, and I say on the advice of the Crown Law Department that the fines can only be dealt with under the Act of 1906, which states exactly how they shall be dealt with. No resolution of the House can effect that position unless Parliament first repeals the Act of 1906.

Mr. A. Thomson: Except that it might be a direction to the Government as to what they should do.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Unless that Act is first repealed, the position cannot be altered. The member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) spoke about road boards. I am not going to underrate the work which these voluntary bodies are doing. They are doing very good work right through Western Australia, and without them it would be very difficult indeed for the Government to do the work. I do not say that they have not made mistakes; we all make mistakes, but the good gets which stand to their credit far outweigh any mistakes they have made. The hon. member spoke of the collecting system. I do not think that would apply to the southern part of the State. I know quite a number of road boards which have put on special men and have found that it paid them to go round to every farm and dwelling and make the people pay the fees for vehicles and dogs. As regards putting on police constables to ascertain that road board members are not escaping the payment of fees, that is a little too petty for me to undertake. I think that road board members are as honourable as members of Parliament. I would not suggest that the member for Coolgardie

was evading the payment of rightful taxation any more than that members of road boards are evading the payment of fees for which they are justly liable. The member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) expressed the desire that the metropolitan area should be extended. I do not know whether I may accept it as a compliment regarding the administration of the Traffic Act that people outside wish to be brought under it, or whether it is that they hope to get a bigger share of the fees collected than they are getting at the present time. All I can say is this is not an opportune time to extend the metropolitan area.

Mr. Sampson: They get no share of the fees.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I appreciate the criticism of the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin). I was very glad he was present at the famous or infamous conference at my office, because he can bear witness to what the Public Works Department attempted to do in the interests of fairness to the whole of the State. The hon. member struck the keynote when he spoke of the desirability of uniformity throughout the State with regard to the construction of roads. Next session I intend to bring down a Bill to deal with main roads, and I do not think the measure will disturb the consciences of hon. members at all. They will find that the idea regarding fees will be dealt with in a very simple way if I can only get from those fees what should be got. If we charge fees because damage is caused by those who use the roads, it is only fair to those who pay the fees that the roads should be kept in order. With regard to the pointsmen in Perth, the member for North-East Fremantle was quite correct. I felt then, and I feel to-day, that the money that the pointsmen regulating the traffic in Perth cost should be a direct charge against the fees in the metropolitan area. Traffic it is of no use in any city or town unless it is convenient and safe. The convenience and safety of the people are well looked after by the pointsmen, but the funds of the State pay for the pointsmen and not those of the particular district which gets the benefit. If I could have my way, I would deduct the cost of the pointsmen, I believe £2,000 or £2,500 a year, from the fees of the metropolitan area. But I would deduct them in this way: I know from the census my department took two years ago exactly the incidence of traffic in the metropolitan area. It does not matter which road is taken, in connection with Perth, 45 to 46 per cent. of the traffic has its origin in Perth, and therefore the burden of cost should be born by the city of Perth to that extent. If the House in its wisdom sees fit to alter the Bill so that I can deduct the expenditure incurred for pointsmen from the fees of the metropolitan area, I think it will be doing only justice to the rest of the State by carrying out something like the formula I laid down in connection with the fees a few years ago. I thank the House

for the reception given to the Bill. I believe I am justified in saying that the officers of my department who were responsible for the framing of the Traffic Bill and the Road Districts Bill did good work for the State, such good work in fact that it is recognised throughout Australia that in these respects we have the most up-to-date legislation of the kind. If it should be possible to supplement these Acts with a Main Roads Act and a Municipal Corporations Act thoroughly up to date, the legislation of local government of Western Australia will be such that anyone who has had a part in framing it or assisted to place it on the statute-book need not be ashamed of his work.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT.

Message.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending the Bill.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 29th November.

Hon. T. WALKER (Kanowna) [8.25]: I congratulate the Premier on the clear manner in which he placed this matter before the House. I think he gave a faithful outline of the objects and purposes of the measure, but, after all, it was clear to me on hearing his speech and reading it since, that he brought the measure down more because it had been anticipated and expected for some considerable period and in order to redeem various promises that the matter would be dealt with. Having said that, I cannot congratulate the Premier or the Government upon the measure itself. If the Bill passes the second reading stage, which I trust it will not, the matters dealt with will receive consideration of a very critical character in Committee. In certain portions of the measure there is transparently a good deal of carelessness, some of it due to drafting, and some of it I consider due to risky experimental legislation. Take, for instance, Clause 2: In that clause we have power sought to make intoxicating liquor by proclamation; in other words there is to be no scientific definition of intoxicating liquor; there is to be no definition that will make it clear and distinct from now onward what it is illegal to sell without a license and what it is not. We have the power of Ministers sitting in Executive Council to make a proclamation—

Mr. Underwood: The Ministers may know very little about it.

Hon. T. WALKER: I daresay they do know very little about it. Sitting in Executive Council, however, they will be able to declare what is and what is not intoxicating liquor. That is an evidence of an experiment which I would not like to trust, but of course

we can deal with that when we reach the Committee stage.

Mr. Johnston: It might apply to lemonade or soda and milk.

Hon. T. WALKER: It might apply to lemonade or Worcester sauce.

Mr. McCallum: It might even apply to Mundaring water.

Hon. T. WALKER: Yes, even Mundaring water might by proclamation be made intoxicating liquor.

Mr. Johnston: And taxed at 10 per cent.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Is the Minister a connoisseur?

Hon. T. WALKER: I do not know that Ministers or their officers are always correct. We have had some extraordinary opinions given by certain officers in this State with regard to whisky, which opinions have since been tabooed when put to test in other places. Then again we have almost an absurdity in Clause 10 of the Bill. We have it made compulsory that all temporary and occasional licenses shall be granted by a board summoned by the chairman. When we consider what the new board are to be, how they are to cover great districts, the absurdity of a clause of this kind becomes apparent. One will not be able to get a temporary license if a farewell supper is to be given, without calling upon the board.

The Premier: You have to give 48 hours' notice now.

Hon. T. WALKER: Suppose one has. Suppose one does give 48 hours' notice, there may be a little reason in that. But how are we to manage that business under the Bill? We have to get the chairman, and then the chairman has to summon the board, and thereupon the board have to hear evidence—all for a temporary license which may be granted 48 hours later. I say this is evidence of looseness and carelessness and want of consideration of the possibilities and the circumstances. Then there are some, to me, absolute contradictions in the Bill. There are certainly incongruous elements in it. For instance, Division XII. speaks of the fees for transfers—

The fees hereinafter prescribed shall be payable in respect of all licenses granted, renewed, transferred, or removed under this Act.

Let hon. members just think, and read the Bill through, and then they will see that transferences are dealt with particularly, that there is a particular provision referring to transference. Let hon. members look at Clause 19, for instance, and compare it with the clause with which I have been dealing, and they will see that under Clause 19—

The fee for every endorsement, transfer, or removal of a license, or confirmation, shall be the publican's general license fee of £5,

and so forth. There is a special fee for transfers in that instance. Again, under Subclause 11 of Clause 15—

No license shall be transferred or renewed unless the fees due under this sec-

tion at the date of the hearing of the application for such transfer or renewal are paid.

So that the fees are prepayable, and there is the special fee, and it is the license generally that pays the general fee, and this must be paid before one can apply for a transfer, or have any chance of getting a transfer. These absurdities will lead to all kinds of confusion, if not closely watched, because in reference to the other fee there are certain adjustments due to the returns which have been made from the purchasers of liquor during the past 12 months. This would imply that there was to be transference of the license with re-adjustment. The measure itself, in these small particulars, requires some overhauling. However, these are only small matters, and may well be left to the Committee stage. But there are to my mind greater matters. One of them, the chief one to me, is absolutely undemocratic—the taking away of the power of the people to decide this question, and the doing of what is now so common, namely the putting of the power into the hands of a board. Here the proposal is to give to a board practically the full management of the liquor traffic. That to me is absolutely undemocratic. A board, not a local board, not one knowing the immediate surroundings and habits and appetites, so to speak, of the people, but a board that may cover a third of the State, having a jurisdiction from Geraldton to Eucla—I think such was the language used by the Premier in introducing the Bill—

Mr. Underwood: No; from Eucla to Wyndham.

Hon. T. WALKER: Yes; and the board are to deal with the whole question of the liquor traffic, not only as to reduction, but as to increase. It is true that under the old Act of 1911, notwithstanding the restrictions that were placed upon them, the licensing magistrates, by virtue of the local option poll, could within a 15 mile radius, when a district warranted it, grant a new license. But there is no limit to the licenses to be granted under this measure, no limit to what the proposed board can do under the Bill. There may be an hotel in one street, and the board can put up another hotel in the next; or there may be an hotel on one corner of the street, and the board can put up another hotel on the opposite corner, if they so wish. There is no restriction on them. They are practically infallible. The people, therefore, have no real voice. Notwithstanding that the people may vote against the liquor traffic, the board can, if they so desire, or if they conclude it to be necessary, authorise new licenses in the districts which they are considering. That to me is absolutely against the principles of democratic government. To me it seems injurious. It is an illustration of the tendency we have to take away every responsibility from those who represent the people. Day by day we are rendering more immune the representatives of the people, especially the representatives holding port-

folios. Once representatives become Ministers now, all they have to do, practically, is to give their approval to what the bureaux and boards about them have recommended. Their initiative is, in a large measure, gone.

The Premier: We have the licensing court now.

Hon. T. WALKER: I know that; but the power of the court is restricted, and is subject to the will of the people. The licensing court at the present time have to obey the will of the people. They have the right to hear the voice of the people. They carry into effect, or should carry into effect, and if allowed would doubtless carry into effect, whatever the vote at the poll may have shown. But under this Bill it is not to be so. Discretion and initiative are granted to the board, who will be immune from criticism. The board are to be absolutely infallible. Their decisions are to be final. One cannot appeal from the board. No portion can review the board's decisions, or reopen for further inquiry matters considered by the board. The Bill absolutely closes all doors of criticism of the board. This is a new danger that we are asked to introduce, for, although at the present time we have our local boards, so to speak, not one of them if free from review; their decisions can be appealed against. Higher authorities and more trained judgments can traverse their decisions. But not so in the case of the boards under this Bill. Once they have decided, no dog must bark; they are infallible to the last word. If the Premier can defend that as democratic, then I want to know what is undemocratic? If that be a carrying out of the will of the people, then I am at a loss to know the meaning of plain English. There is no will of the people here in this Bill. The Bill is a device to stand between the people and the object of their will. It is to create a buffer; it is a means of evading the direct voice, the direct mandate, of the populace.

Mr. Underwood: And to create a useless board.

Hon. T. WALKER: To a certain extent, yes, a useless board. I fail to see much in the Bill that cannot be carried out without the board. But the principal object is that the board shall be a remedy, an answer, to the question which has been agitating the public mind for so long—how best we are to dispose of the drink traffic without doing any injustice? I for one cannot for the life of me bring my mind to the attitude of believing that an honest man, having undertaken the trade of an hotelkeeper, should summarily be dismissed from that occupation, after he has been encouraged to live in it, to take it up, by the Government themselves, after he has been a buttress and a support of the Government by the taxes he has paid, after possibly he has sunk his little all in that enterprise, that such a man should be told to get out into the cold world penniless. I cannot accept that. I do believe it would pay this country immensely if we

raised a loan to buy out every publican now carrying on business here, and got rid of the trade in that way. More particularly do I say that, whilst we have Ministers and politicians and public men, honestly, I believe, defending the drinking habits of the community—if not calling alcoholic drinks necessities, still terming them something of a necessity. The Premier himself in the course of his second reading speech said that he would not deny to a man who had worked hard all day his honest glass of beer—implying that the beer was in some degree a necessity, and that the man got a sterling benefit from it. Others go further, and would not prevent conviviality, would not think of having a banquet or an entertainment unless there was beer or whisky or wine. There are those who believe that no real human enjoyment can be obtained, meeting in comradeship, unless Bacchus enters amongst the guests. There are those who candidly believe that real genuine happiness consists in the music of popping corks. They have, of course, inherited that idea from the days gone by. True, there was a sort of apologetic strain—

Mr. Underwood: We did not inherit that belief from the Turks, anyhow.

Hon. T. WALKER: No. There is now something of an apologetic tone when these matters are spoken of, even from the Government side. The Premier himself spoke of a wish that the drinking habits of the people shall diminish. But all of us who are old have grown up beholding the general bent of mind of our fathers towards alcoholic indulgence. I can remember my boyhood, when it was considered a sort of disgrace if a man could not take enough to get muddled.

The Minister for Works: Not quite as bad as that!

Hon. T. WALKER: Why! in the old days they would not have glasses with flat bottoms; they had round bottoms so that they could not stand, and one had to drink what was poured into them before he put his glass down. I will tell the hon. member, if he wishes to know, how we got these habits. The hon. member is a great reader, and he ought to know that in the old days the churches, when they got into debt, were supported by drink. They had their Christmas ales, their Witsun ales, their gift ales of all kinds; and the ales were drunk in the church, the festivities took place in the church. I do not wish to be irreverent, but even to-day in the church the most devout Christians are supposed to take their wine as a divine symbol. It comes from those old times when Bacchus was a veritable god, worshipped by everybody. In the old days the Romans themselves were great indulgers; they used to go out and take emetics during the course of a banquet, so that they could find space for more Bacchus alcohol. One man was called Tricongius, the three gallon knight. These things are recorded in history. It is well known that our greatest poets have gloried in

this indulgence. "A blessing on your soul, you brew good ale." That comes down to us from our master mind, our greatest poet. All people, at one time, believed in absolute indulgence. You, Sir, will remember your Norseman ancestors, who pictured the Heaven they were to go to, the Valhalla that they were to inherit, as a place where they drank honey beer all day and all night long. That was their heaven.

The Minister for Works: Not too bad a place, either.

Hon. T. WALKER: The hon. member is still in the back part, as it were, of his inherited memory, the one that has come down from his own ancestors, the memory of that glorious time when drunkenness was a virtue. It is not so now.

The Minister for Works: A man had to carry his wine.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is true; and he did it, even when he fell. A man who could not occasionally get drunk was not a man at all. We have still that belief amongst us, still that idea that we cannot do without it.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Neither we can.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is a mere assertion. There are people who do without it.

Mr. Underwood: They are freaks.

Hon. T. WALKER: They are not freaks. They are becoming more numerous every day. They are capable of doing the work of those who indulge, and capable of keeping their brain power longer in clear activity.

Mr. J. H. Smith: They lose their heads.

Hon. T. WALKER: Talk about losing their heads! The devotees of Bacchus lost head, body, and legs. I might tell hon. members I have seen the process. I have experimented with it. I know what I am speaking about. I challenge any member to show on scientific authority that what I am saying is incorrect. Alcohol is, in itself, poison. It acts directly upon the nervous system, it acts on the blood corpuscles, and upon all other parts of the body, but more particularly on the nerves. Hon. members have witnessed the process of a man getting drunk. We have all seen men take a glass or two of whisky or of wine. I have seen this at the banquets we have been to.

The Minister for Works: Start us on beer, and finish on whisky.

Hon. T. WALKER: You do not need to do that. Let me describe the process, as I have seen it. Let us suppose we are attending a banquet. The wine flows. That banquet, in its opening stages, finds everybody glum, talking to his neighbour in a sort of whisper. There is nothing particularly enlivening anywhere; all seem to be out of place. But when they get a glass, or two glasses, then what do we see? They applaud every speech given after that, and we see all the persons there, with eyes beginning to get bright and glistening, with their features becoming red. There is a blush and a flush on all faces, and if we could see them in nudity they would be blushing all over their bodies.

Mr. Simons: How do you know that?

Hon. T. WALKER: I will tell the hon. member.

Mr. J. H. Smith: No, do not tell him.

Hon. T. WALKER: What has really happened? This has occurred: The alcohol they have already partaken of, even in a small dose, has partially paralysed the nerves. I need not tell students of physiology that along every artery and blood tract runs a thin thread of nerve, which traverses its whole length, to the finger tip, to the toe tip; and that little thread acts almost as a superintendent of the blood. If you injure your body, prick your hand, for instance, you will see a circle of red appear. The red corpuscles have come there to dispel that intruder, whatever it was. The pain has gone along the blood tract, the nerve has informed—to use an unscientific expression—the blood corpuscles that repair is needed. The nerves throughout the blood tract will contract the arteries, when too much blood is flowing, and, when more is needed, will allow the arteries to expand. The alcohol, coming along that tract paralyses the nerve thread, so that it will not control the blood flow. The blood is then left without control. Hence the flush and the flashing eye, hence in every part of the body the blood control is taken away. That is the first start of drunkenness. It is only partial paralysis. You have a little more alcohol, Mr. Speaker, and then what? Why, you have no control over yourself at all. You take still a little more, and then we see how it changes character. The modest man, who can hardly use his tongue at all, to ask even to have the salt passed, becomes an orator and wants to talk on everything. The dull phlegmatic man, who never had emotion in his soul, becomes inspired. He wants to hug his next-door neighbour; he would hug anything, he would love a cow or a donkey, anything he could get his arms around when in that state of mind. The control is gone. Then we go a step or two further, and we find that the man who, a few moments before, was a glib spokesman, begins to have a thick tongue, cannot get his words out clearly. He splutters and says all kinds of things, till one wonders whether he is going to be sick any moment. What has happened? He has got his nerves more paralysed. Sometimes the nerves along the legs are acted upon first. Indeed by watching the results we can actually tell whether a man learnt to talk first or learnt to walk first; because the last developed nerve qualities are the first attacked by alcohol. The higher qualities go first, the intellectual and moral qualities go next, then follow the legs, the locomotive power. And if a man learnt to talk before he learned to walk, he can sit down and talk and you would never believe he had had a glass. But let him stand up, and you soon discover what has happened to him. On the other hand if he learnt to walk first he will be what is called speechlessly drunk—no doubt hon. members have seen their friends in that condition—but able to walk home. Let him continue a little further, and the paralysis becomes more

complete until he cannot either walk or talk. Carry on one stage further, and he is dead to the world, everything is paralysed. That is the action of alcohol. This is no mere theory, no dream. It is a fact that alcohol acts as a paralysing agent, acts as a chill to the body. That has been demonstrated by actual experience. Everybody knows, the scientific men who lead our armies know, the danger of alcohol.

Member: Yet it is administered to the men.

Hon. T. WALKER: Some are given them because some men, abnormally excited, until their nerves are put out of order, have no moral courage. But let them have to do a Russian march in the cold, and then we discover the effect of it. Let me tell my honourable friends of the experiments tried by Dr. Richardson. He took pigeons having no alcohol administered to them, and put them, with other pigeons half intoxicated, so to speak, and still a third lot directly and completely under the influence of alcohol, in a place at freezing point. What happened? Those that had been completely drunk with alcohol died, those that were half intoxicated struggled faintly through, while the others survived in almost perfect condition.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Tell us something about the wowzers.

Mr. Underwood: Put a wowzer in the freezing chamber, and see how he comes out.

Hon. T. WALKER: Let me tell the hon. member about wowzers. There have been in this very city of ours men taken from the streets in a state of intoxication, who have been found dead in their cold cells in the morning. That has repeatedly happened.

Mr. Underwood: So have teetotallers been found dead.

Hon. T. WALKER: No, the men who have been taken from the streets drunk and placed there. Let the hon. member interrupt all he pleases. Will the insurance companies accept a drunken man's policy?

Mr. J. H. Smith: I think so.

Hon. T. WALKER: Will they accept it in the same way that they accept a sober man's policy? Is not the publican at a discount in getting a life policy? Is he not debarred to a certain extent in that respect? Is it not known to those who insure lives that this is so?

Mr. J. H. Smith: Have you insured lives?

Hon. T. WALKER: Let the hon. member take his medicine calmly.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. T. WALKER: What chance has the world of reform when we have these people so narrow and bigoted that they are like the prisoners of Chillon, hugging the chains that bind them? It is known to every medical man that alcohol is an impediment to the cure of sickness. It is an impediment in the case of those who have had an accident and upon whom an operation is to be performed. In all those institutions which come under our notice daily we see—not from the sentimental point of view,

for I would scorn to use sentiment, but from the scientific point of view—the dangers that alcohol constitutes to our physical health and the physical health of the community.

Mr. Mann: Is it not frequently given by medical men?

Hon. T. WALKER: So is arsenic. Poisons are frequently given.

Mr. Mann: Are they not necessary as medicine?

Hon. T. WALKER: I am not so sure that substitutes have not been found in the hospitals of London, where alcohol is not used. Other expedients are used nowadays. It is used as a medicine in the same way as arsenic and sulphuric compounds are used, as well as other poisons of that character. Alcohol chills and starves the individual instead of feeding him and warming him. It is that fact that causes the doctor to prescribe alcohol in cases of high fever in order to reduce the temperature. If the hon. member will give me his assurance that he will never touch alcohol again unless he is raging with fever, I will permit him to have what he requires for that object. It shows you, Sir, what a powerful drug this is that I would give my sanction to its administration to a man suffering intensely from a long bout of intoxication. I have known friends of mine that I respected and admired pass off suddenly because others, who were not teetotallers, refused them a drink as they were passing through the terrible throes of delirium tremens. I will call to your mind, Sir, one whom you will remember well, namely Dr. Lihane. He was a bright genius, and accomplished practitioner, a man standing high in intellectual work, but with a craving for drink. It had so poisoned him that he had completely lost his will power. He could not resist alcohol. His will was paralysed, and none of his friends could keep him from the drink. He was taken up in a state of terrible suffering from the effects of alcohol. Those about him, ignorant of the nature of alcohol, refused him even enough to moisten his lips with. The consequence was he died. If alcohol could have stimulated his heart sufficiently to enable him to overcome his physical disabilities, I should have given him some of it, as I would in cases of sickness, and sometimes as anti-poison to other microbes which enter the system. I am not prejudiced against it. Alcohol has its uses but not as a beverage and not as for the benefit of society in that way. It is in that respect a gross injury to society. Alcohol robs us of a tremendous amount of brain force. No man, if he only takes his nip now and again, can be in possession of his full mental capacity. There is a buzziness and a muddling about his brain which affects it imperceptibly, although the world at large may not suspect it, and he is gradually being deprived of his fully developed faculties, which might have been of so much benefit to himself and his fellow men. I am not speaking of what we lose by people having to give up their small bouts of intemperance; I am

speaking of the man who can carry alcohol and can go along with it, taking not too much for his own satisfaction day after day, but constantly taking it. He is to that extent weakening his mental power, his physical energies, depriving us of the usefulness he might bring to society. Worse than all to me is this fact, that the great body of toilers who indulge in drink have their manhood sapped to a degree that keeps them slaves. I believe the first real step of reform towards the high achievements and ideals of the Labour Party is the complete sobriety of the labouring people. If we had that we should the sooner obtain our ideals and realise those noble aspirations which give such hope and courage to fight against the opprobrium and contumely of the world for the benefit of our fellow men. I am glad to say that the people at large are becoming alive to this. The most enlightened nations of the world are the nations which have begun to treat this matter from the scientific point of view. They realise that it is a genuine evil and should be submitted to the vote of the people. All the people have an interest in deciding this great question. Alcohol puts the State to an enormous expense to maintain its gaols.

Mr. Underwood: No.

Hon. T. WALKER: The gaols are filled with people.

Mr. Underwood: Full of Sunday school teachers and thieves.

Hon. T. WALKER: Drunken ones at that. The testimony of every man capable of giving an opinion, from the Commissioner of Police to the Governor of the Gaols, tells us that drink is the beginning of a criminal career.

Mr. Mann: Not always.

Hon. T. WALKER: The statistics tell us that.

Mr. Underwood: Statistics!

Hon. T. WALKER: There is no question about that. Not only does it cause that injury to those starting level in life, but it brings many creatures into this world who have not a real chance in the battle of life. Women about to become mothers, who poison their systems by intoxication, bring into the world a life which is born under a handicap. The children are put behind in the starting mark of life. What is more, they are born without that vim and energy which place them on a level that permits them to start off on even terms with their fellow men. We have hundreds of people who are daily put into our gaols as vagabonds for being unable to work and being incapable of comingling harmoniously with society. This may be due to their own intemperance or to the intemperance of their fathers and mothers, or both. They are born with a vitiated framework and a foundation of intemperance, and can never make good again in life. The general community has to pay the expense of all this, not only of our extensive police force but of all the machinery required—

Mr. Underwood: You take good care you do not pay it. What do you want to tax us for? So that you can dodge it?

Hon. T. WALKER: I do not want this tax. I do not drink at all myself. Why should I want to dodge this tax? The hon. member is probably suffering from the remnants of the last little dose he had. Not only there but in our hospitals do we suffer from this evil. Our lunatic asylums are more full in consequence. There are many men who lose their mental balance in the first instance through drink, and who in consequence become a charge upon the community. The tax proposed here will not cover the expenses that drink has cost us. The tax we raise from these proposals will not pay the doctors' bills, and for the sufferings that this poison involves upon our people. The Premier tells us that this is a measure chiefly to raise money to help to reduce the deficit.

Mr. Underwood: And the teetotaler will not pay.

Hon. T. WALKER: Why should he? He has to pay as it is for protecting the traffic, and for curing the evils and dealing with the results of the traffic. Surely he should not be called upon to do more! What kind of reform is this? A reform for taxation purposes, to fill the coffers or to help fill them; and how enormous this tax is and still may be, we get from the figures the Premier himself quoted during his speech. The Excise Department, I think, derives about £140,000 a year from this source for the Commonwealth alone. We are coming in now with this in the hope that we may get something out of it.

The Premier: It was £600,000 the Commonwealth got.

Hon. T. WALKER: Not from excise, but the bulk of the £600,000 is excise and we are now trying to follow in the footsteps of the Commonwealth. Is that reform? How can we ask for reduced licenses when the Government are living on the licenses, when they are going into partnership with the licensees, when they are asking blood money for continuance, so to speak? Is that reform? Is that working in a moral direction? It seems to me to be a partnership with an evil, the Government recognising it, sanctioning it, licensing it and living upon it. You cannot blame the people therefore for having backward ideas of temperance reform, when the Government directly enter into partnership with the trade. The more you increase it, the more security you give the landlords. You cannot attack them when you are taking their money. This Bill to a large extent protects them; it gives them greater security of tenure; it gives them special life so to speak. It gives them a monopoly and the very reduction of licenses would only hand over to other hotels a more complete monopoly. You are making competition less, but not the traffic less.

Mr. Mann: The hotels will be better controlled.

Hon. T. WALKER: Not necessarily. I will admit a closer watch may be made on them, but even here there is no sincerity. There is control under the various Licensing Acts over the publicans. The police can go in and demand the right to inspect. But can they go into the clubs?

Mr. Mann: Yes, under this Bill.

Hon. T. WALKER: No. The hon. member is confusing the provisions of this Bill with the local option part of the measure.

Mr. Mann: The clubs must close at the same hour as hotels.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is to say, the hours of clubs will be shortened. I approve of that, but you cannot get your police admission to clubs after 9 o'clock. A club is a private house after 9 o'clock, and it can continue all night without anyone knowing.

Mr. Underwood: They might even be drinking there.

Hon. T. WALKER: They certainly would be if the hon. member was staying there. Where is the consistency? True we make clubs close at 9 o'clock but we allow the hotels to be visited by the police at any hour. Not so the clubs. They are not to be put upon the same category. The man who has a little money and can afford to pay a subscription to a club can drink all night long if he chooses. But the man who is an ordinary toiler and has to go to his hotel for his drink, he must not stop at the hotel after the tick of nine. He is a criminal if he does. That is not consistent, and more than that, it is not democratic. It is not an advance on the old measure to continue the three-fifths majority. How can we make that a popular decision? So many voters on the rolls record their votes in their constituencies and there must be a three-fifths majority. Is that democratic Government? Would hon. members of this House submit to the same kind of voting on going before their electors? Do they insist upon a certain number going to the poll or declaring the election null and void? Do they insist that the winning man must have three-fifths of the votes polled before he can be elected? If for this deliberative Chamber, the highest Chamber of realm, we allow a clear majority to decide the issue, why cannot the people be trusted with a clear majority to decide the issue as to whether there shall or shall not be traffic in licenses for the vending of intoxicants. There is no consistency there. You must not touch vested interests. That is why it is not done. It is the vested interests, not alcohol, nor the people, that are protected. Money counts more than human hearts or human lives in the making of the laws of the country. This is evidence of it. Human beings are not counted when vested interests come in the way. I say, therefore, viewing all these facts, the measure does not deserve support. It does not only authorise continuance of alcoholic indulgence, but it makes it a more deeply vested interest by claiming a heavier tax and making the Government and the revenue of

the country more dependent upon it. It strengthens the life of this organisation, and as therefore it is to me the very antithesis of a reform measure, I trust the second reading will not be passed.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [9.24]: I do not propose to treat this measure as did the previous speaker, who dealt with it as one of prohibition, nor do I propose to be an advocate of anything in the shape of extreme action. What I propose to do is to give a reasonable criticism of what the Bill sets out to do and in what direction I think it should be amended. It sets out: 1, to widen the sphere of the operations of the Licensing Courts; 2, the amendment of the local option provisions; 3, the change in the manner of the assessment of license fees, with considerable increase in taxation; 4, the restriction of the local option vote to two issues; 5, the adoption of the Victorian principle of licenses reduction with provision for increases in licenses; 6, the making of the hours of trading from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. permanent, and common to the State; 7, the excision of the bona-fide traveller; 8, the registration of bar attendants; 9, the closing of billiard rooms other than saloons for other than boarders, coincident with hotels; 10, the adoption of South African sections dealing with the closing of licensed premises in case of riots, and 11, restriction in club licenses. The principles which I take it actuates the Government in introducing the Bill, were briefly to effect certain reforms in the trade. Certain abuses crept into the trade and I think the idea of the Government is to improve the conditions under which the trade is conducted. There are certain clauses in the Bill which will have that effect. This is one of the most difficult questions the House has to deal with. It is certainly one of the most complex questions affecting the welfare of the community. My experience of hotels is mainly the result of having been engaged in designing as an architect and living in them as a boarder, and from my experience I can honestly say that the hotels in Western Australia compare most favourably with hotels in any other part of the Commonwealth. I have travelled widely over the various States, and I candidly admit that so far as the conduct of the hotels, as well as the buildings are concerned, there are few exceptions that can be taken. The main object is, I take it, as far as possible, to bring the business within reasonable lines, and if we take into consideration the various clauses we find that they set out to attain that object in reasonable directions. The main principle which underlies the Bill is one that will have my support. One of the objects is to increase the revenue which will accrue to the Treasury from this source, and I think we shall find that not only the people generally, but the trade as well, will not begrudge the

Government the increase that will come from the trade. That aspect of the question will be dealt with mainly under Clause 15. The first difficulty I find in connection with this measure is the declaration of what is intoxicating liquor. The only scientific way of determining that is the basis of the percentage of alcohol, and I think if it were set out in the Act that the percentage of alcohol was 22½ or 3 per cent., that would meet the position.

The Minister for Works: Are you quite sure of that percentage?

Mr. PICKERING: The question could easily be settled, but I think that is the only scientific way in which it could be adjusted. It is ridiculous to think that anyone can say by legislation what is intoxicating liquor. The Bill sets out to widen the jurisdiction of the Licensing Court. Although, I have no objection to that, I do object to the clause which seeks to extend the operation of the temporary license. The section, as it stands in the Act, provides that only those licenses in the districts to which they belong shall be entitled to the extension. The clause as it stands in the Bill is unnecessary and I will support an amendment to strike it out. I also disagree with that clause which makes it compulsory that the Chairman of the Court must bring the board together to decide the granting of a temporary license. Under the Act it has been possible to control temporary licenses satisfactorily. It is only a matter of issuing a judicial notice and two justices of the peace should be competent to do that. Clause 15 is, in my opinion, the contentious clause of this Bill, and that is the clause which seeks to increase the amount of revenue to be derived from the trade. I do not think it would be fair or right to take a period of 12 months as a basis for assessment. Especially in a business such as that connected with the liquor trade, it very often happens that one 12 months will provide very heavy returns compared with another period of 12 months. I do not think it is the desire of the Government that fictitious returns should be furnished. I believe that instead of an annual assessment, a quarterly one should be substituted. There may be some attempts at avoiding the provisions of the Bill by laying in large stocks in anticipation of the passing of the measure, but if the clause were made retrospective to the date of the passing of the measure, it would be better. From that period forward, if the bases were quarterly and the payments made per quarter, it would not only mean a more accurate assessment of the money expended, but money would be received more frequently by the Government. There is another provision which refers to the computation of returns on the gross amount. That is scarcely a fair provision, because the gross amount is not that which is actually paid. Large amounts are chargeable against the publican, but they are more or

less subject to discount and commission. I think the actual amount paid should be that upon which the assessment should be made. The clause goes on to provide that 8 per cent. shall be collected upon the amount involved, inclusive of duty. Seeing that the Customs and Excise duties have already been paid, it seems inequitable to impose a further tax on taxation already collected. I think the taxation should be paid on the actual cost of the liquor, and not plus the Excise and Customs duties. I shall support any amendment which aims at striking out the word "inclusive" and replacing it by "exclusive." I find no fault with the percentage, which is fixed at 8. If the Government agree to the insertion of the amendment I refer to in that connection, I think there will be nothing to complain about regarding that portion of the Bill. Such an amendment will entail certain consequential alterations in other parts of the measure. To-day the price of liquor is almost prohibitive. It is quite possible that the duty on liquor will be increased. I do not think it is desirable that we should bring about prohibition by means of excessive taxation and demands upon the trade. Rather than that, we should bring prohibition about, if it is so desired, by legitimate means, which, I consider, are already provided. Coming to the question of local option, I quite agree with the alterations in that direction, which seek to confine the issue to two points—no license or continuance. We have already held a local option poll and the country has given its fiat on that particular question. The instructions conveyed by the electors to the Government have, so far as I know, been given effect to. Where it has been decided that there should be continuance, that has been attended to; where reduction has been carried, the necessary reductions have been carried out. Having agreed to that provision operating for the next three years, it would not be right to say that now we shall set up a new form of reduction. Such a proposal would amount to a breach of contract and the House should not agree to any such step. In my opinion, a fresh vote, if necessary—and I admit it would be necessary—should be taken at the expiration of the period regarding the license reduction board. I see no mention in the Bill of provisions governing State hotels. There is an amendment on the Notice Paper, however, which seeks to bring State hotels within the scope of the Act. I think it would be only fair, if we are to continue the State hotel system, that those concerns should contribute their fair share under the measure.

Mr. Underwood: You get all the profits now.

Mr. PICKERING: If the State hotels were brought within the scope of the measure, they would have to show returns similar to those of private hotels. I know

of no argument in favour of excluding the State hotels from the provisions of the Bill.

The Minister for Works: You get everything from the State hotels now; how can you get any more?

Mr. PICKERING: Under the present arrangements, people are misled as to the true position of State hotels. They should be made to show the extent of their trade operations on the same lines as other hotels, and should contribute towards the compensation fund.

Mr. Johnston: And pay rates too.

Mr. PICKERING: That is so, but I hope some provision will be made to prevent the local authorities from taking undue advantage in connection with the rating of hotels, a course which could easily follow as the result of the adoption of various provisions in the Bill. No other business will be compelled to disclose its true trade, as will be the case with the hotels. The tendency on the part of road boards is to get as much in rates as possible from these businesses. It may be that a softgoods shop may be making profits as large as those of a hotel, but those profits are not disclosed to the public.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The local authorities do not rate on profits.

Mr. PICKERING: Don't they?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They rate on the value of the house—on the fair annual value.

Mr. PICKERING: And they place an apparently enhanced value on different businesses. Regarding compensation, if provision is made to collect the revenue on the basis I have suggested, namely, 8 per cent. on the actual revenue and not on the revenue plus Excise and Customs duties, it may be necessary to increase the amount to 2 per cent. I think the question of compensation should not be confined to cases where the number of hotels are reduced by the reduction board only. That board provides for necessary compensation on a certain basis, but if, as the result of a local option vote, a license is cut out, that compensation will be lost to that particular hotel, although the licensee concerned may have been contributing towards the compensation fund for years. Through no fault of his own, by being brought under a certain section of the Act, the rights to compensation are taken away from that individual.

The Minister for Works: If he has had ten years within which to get rid of his business, is that not enough?

Mr. MacCallum Smith: You want to give him the ten years in, as well as compensation?

Mr. PICKERING: The people, who will be affected by the reduction board get the ten years in as well. Compensation should apply to both sides.

The Minister for Works: You would claim compensation for the payment of extra taxation.

Mr. PICKERING: When this matter is discussed in Committee, I think members will agree that it is only just that if compensation is granted in the case of reduction by the board, it should also apply in the case of closure as the result of a local option poll. There is provision for enabling an increase in the number of licenses by means of a petition. To make that more fair, there should be provision to compel the publication of the petition on the date of the publication of the application for the additional license. I do not agree with the finalisation and determination clause by which the board has supreme power. I do not want to interfere with the powers of the licensing board at all, but when it comes to a question regarding reduction, and there are legal technicalities involved, then there should be provision for an appeal to the Supreme Court. Arising out of the last few cases dealt with in the metropolitan area, including the Brighton Hotel and other cases, the necessity for such an appeal will be realised. Regarding the question of bona-fide travellers, generally speaking, most people will welcome some move which will remedy the present troubles which affect the trade from that standpoint. Throughout the country districts, however, the proposals may operate harshly. People may have to go from 20 to 30 miles on some trip. It should be their right to secure a drink if they felt they required it. It should be possible to amend that provision so that it would be more on the lines of that applying to clubs. If that were done, a man would be able to procure a drink if he had a meal at the hotel. The misuse of the bona-fide traveller privilege is more confined to the metropolitan area than to the country districts, and I think if it were made to apply to within a radius of 25 miles of the General Post Office, it would meet the present requirements.

The Minister for Works: Would you call a counter lunch a meal?

Mr. PICKERING: No, I refer to a proper meal.

Mr. Underwood: Is not a counter lunch a meal?

Mr. PICKERING: That question has been decided in the negative. There is also the question of the registration of bar attendants. While I agree with that provision, I think it should be made variable. There are many hotels in the country where little or no assistance is employed and members of the family do relieving duty in the bar. Where members of the family are so employed, they should not be compelled to register.

Mr. Angelo: It will not be expensive.

Mr. PICKERING: It should not apply to them. There is also the question of occasional licenses. It is ridiculous to provide that when an occasional license, which is really an extension of the hours of business, has been granted, the business under that license cannot be transacted in the bar. Why should not the bar be opened, when an occasional license is granted? Liquor served

under the privileges of such a license should be served in the proper place and in the proper way.

The Minister for Works: Have you seen much bad behaviour in bars?

Mr. PICKERING: Regarding the license reduction board, this is one aspect of the Bill which has my most sincere support. Despite what the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) said, I believe this is the best form of dealing with such a question. I can point to several places where reductions would be well merited; not in Busseton, because in that town during the summer months we are unable to find sufficient accommodation for visitors. I have had experience of visiting districts where there were no hotels, and I have been compelled to leave some of the filthy boarding-houses and sleep on wheat stacks, to escape from the vermin and other objections pertaining to them. Wherever we go in this State and there are hotels decently run, one can be sure of getting a clean bed and a good meal; but where there is not a good hotel, it is often impossible to get either. The reduction board has been demonstrated to work well in Victoria and different from the local option business, which gives the opposite effect to that desired. Under local option, where there are most hotels there is no reduction, and where there are few they go for reduction. For instance, at Albany a fine hotel was recently closed under local option, and during the coming summer this hotel will be very much needed. It is ridiculous to cut out licenses of this kind where they are really wanted and leave a multiplicity of licenses where some of them could well be dispensed with. Under the Licenses Reduction Act in Victoria, reductions have been made where it was most necessary and on just lines—where the houses were poor in design, poor in accommodation, and poorly conducted. In my opinion that is where this board will serve its purpose. While I agree with that, I do not think the board should come into operation until the expiration of the period for which the last local option vote is supposed to continue, that is to say for three years. A slight amendment is required in that particular clause. We also require to provide a new clause governing a special license very necessary for this State for wine and spirit merchants. I understand that the licenses under which they operate at present will, under this measure, be liable to forfeiture. I do not think that is the intention. It is necessary that a clause be introduced providing for a license under which wine and spirit merchants can trade, and I believe it is intended to submit an amendment on those lines. Now I come to the question of clubs. I think the legislation proposed to be enacted by this measure is too drastic as regards clubs. I have had a good deal of experience of residential clubs, and of some of the leading sporting clubs. When I refer to sporting clubs,

I mean bowling, cricket, golf, tennis and yachting clubs. As regards residential clubs, it would not be fair to make the hours nine to nine. It must be borne in mind that a residential club provides accommodation for members and regular meals, and is more or less a home to most members, whether they reside there or not. If there is to be any change of hours, it is only reasonable that they should be made a little more liberal than those outlined in this measure. I suggest that the hours should be on week days from 9 a.m. till 11.30 p.m. and on Sundays from 9 a.m. till 10 p.m.

The Minister for Works: Would you apply that to working men's clubs, too?

Mr. PICKERING: To any club, but I am dealing more particularly with residential clubs. The great difficulty in controlling the other clubs which are non-residential clubs is the visitor. The visitor's room of a residential club is open only from 9 a.m. till 9 p.m., and visitors cannot get a drink after those hours and then only when introduced by a member from the club. On Sundays, visitors are not allowed to have drink on the premises at all. Any self-respecting club would be prepared to agree to legislation which would prevent visitors obtaining liquor on the club premises except only between the hours I have mentioned. If the measure were framed on these lines, I think sufficient reformation would be brought into all the clubs and sufficient restriction would be placed upon them. Another small amendment is necessary in the provision relating to clubs and I think the Premier will agree to it. The hour at which one is allowed to invite a guest for dinner is stipulated as 7 p.m., but most clubs dine from 6 to 6.30 p.m., and it is ridiculous to provide 7 p.m. for a guest. These, briefly, are my views on the measure. I welcome anything which will have a tendency to improve the liquor business. It is one that is outstanding in the need for information, and I think a great deal of reformation could be brought about by a more strict enforcement of existing legislation. When that legislation is so far emphasised by the amendments contained in this Bill, I think the conduct of hotels and clubs will be so much improved that they will cease to be objectionable to the great majority of people. I am not one of those who believe in the effecting of moral reform by legislation. If we legislate in a reasonable way and do not take extreme measures such as were suggested by a former speaker, more good will result from our legislation. I am not an advocate for the publican in any way, but I wish to see in the passing of any such measure that no injustice is done to any section of the community. It must be borne in mind that people who occupy public houses are more or less in the capacity of servants of the general travelling public. So long as they carry on their business in a reasonable way—and I contend that, generally speaking, a large majority of hotels in Western Australia are carried on well and reas-

onably—so long will they meet with the favour of the general public. It is not the moderate drinkers who do any harm. It is the abuse which causes the harm, and by bringing bar attendants under registration and making them responsible for their action in serving intoxicated people, we will be going a long way towards wiping out the abuse. I believe it is the desire of people who run hotels to run them on decent lines, and it should be the desire of the House to frame its legislation on such lines as will assist them in the proper conduct of their premises. I believe this measure will go a long way in this direction and, if the Premier will only accept the amendments indicated which will bring him in a fair increase of revenue to which I believe he is entitled, it will place the trade on a better footing and lead to great improvements. Of the fact that the Government are entitled to a larger share of the profits from this business, there can be no doubt, and on these grounds I support the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara) [9.54]: I agree with the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) that this Bill is to a large extent ill-considered. Not only in the clause mentioned by him, but in many other clauses, due consideration for the general public has not been given in the drafting of the Bill. The member for Kanowna might have gone further with regard to one or two matters to which he referred, how the conviviality of drink brings a flush to the face and makes one start talking, but I have found otherwise. I, as an amateur fisherman, have found that a little drop of lotion relieves the monotony between bites. The hon. member spoke of what happens after one has had two glasses. If he were travelling on the North-West coast he would know what happens after two gin slings, but he does not travel on that coast. Then again he spoke about the effect that alcohol has on one's legs; the eye, the mind, the corpulence; but one other effect he has not mentioned, which was illustrated by the mouse. A mouse in its wanderings came across a little drop of rum which had been spilt, and, after lapping up, stood on his hind legs and exclaimed, "Now trot out your cat." These are some of the effects which the hon. gentleman did not notice. Possibly he has not gone so deeply into the question as some other members of the House. As regards the Bill, there is no shadow of doubt that its object is to collect some revenue. Until the Government show that they are going to deal more economically with the money we are providing at present, we should be reluctant to provide them with any more. However, I may speak further on that subject later. We have been told that the trade and the alliance have agreed to several things. I wish to enter a protest against the assumption that the trade and the alliance comprise the whole of Western Australia. It is true that they make a tremendous noise. Talk about a motor bicycle with a broken silencer, and the ex-

haust cracked near the engine, it is nothing to the noise that these people make and, in the midst of this noise, the general public cannot get a word in edgeways. To-night, being a calm night, since the hon. member for Kanowna has gone home, I desire to endeavour to get in a few remarks on behalf of the general public. The trade is no consideration to me. As regards the consumption of alcohol, my experience is that there are various kinds of non-drinkers. There are those so physically constituted that they do not care about alcohol; they simply do not like it. Among such men are to be found some of the broadest-minded in the world. May I instance the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) and the Minister for Mines. There are others who are not drinkers, because they cannot take alcohol in moderation. If they take any at all they go right out. There is one other class who do not drink, for the reason that they are too mean to buy it, but they get some cheap excitement by poking their noses into other people's business. Looking back on the world's history, we find that alcohol in some form has been drunk by humans as far back as history goes. The member for Kanowna was right when he said that we inherit this habit of drinking from our forebears. We inherit it right back from the Garden of Eden; I have no doubt that Adam and Eve made cider out of the apples which they should not have picked. But, taking the world's history for our guidance, what has become of the people who did not drink alcohol, because their religion forbade it? What has become of the Turks? Six or seven hundred years ago Turkey was the dominating power of the world. It was the first great power to come through and use artillery. It swept through Asia, and almost through Europe. If non-drinking is good, the Turks, being non-drinkers, should absolutely rule the world to-day. But where are they? We drinkers are just now wiping them off the map.

Mr. J. Thomson: Hear, hear! And they should be wiped off, too.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes.

Mr. J. Thomson: All non-drinkers should.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: No doubt our forefathers were hard drinkers. The old vikings, from whom we are alleged to have sprung—

Mr. J. Thomson: And the Scotch.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes, the Scotch; and also the English with their beer and wine, the Scotch with their whisky, and the Irish with their potheen have formed the British Empire, which has spread over the wide world. Do hon. members say that alcohol is what is the matter with us? If alcohol is what is the matter with us, then we want some more of it. Before going further on that point, let me say that Nature has produced alcohol most prolifically. Scarcely a vegetable that grows but contains alcohol. And shall we say that Nature is wrong? Each prepared vegetable that we eat contains alcohol, and in the course of digestion

we distil that alcohol out. Moreover, those who do not take whisky eat a lot of lollies and of sugar in other forms. In my opinion it would be a genuine reform if we Australians were dissuaded from taking drink that is too strong. Australia, and Western Australia in particular, contain some of the finest grape-growing country in the world. We could produce sufficient wine for the whole of the world. Instead of having this restrictive, annoying legislation, let us devote our time to inducing our people to cultivate a taste for Australian light wines.

Mr. O'Loughlen: And light beers.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes; light wines and light beers in place of whisky. That would be a genuine reform. But, unfortunately, our wine seems to be a sort of outcast. Wine can be sold in any shack or hovel. When it comes to whisky or beer, they have to be sold in a palatial structure. My opinion is that we should endeavour to promote the consumption of Australian wines to the utmost. In the memorandum prefacing this Bill we are told that two or three clauses follow the Victorian Act. Let me repeat an axiom of the late Mr. Daglish, that one cannot compare those things which are not comparable. Victoria's area is 56,000 square miles; Western Australia's is 975,000 square miles, or almost twelve times as much as Victoria's. There is no part of Victoria that cannot be reached in a good motor car from Melbourne in a day. There are parts of Western Australia that one cannot reach from Perth in less than a fortnight. Then why attempt to follow Victorian legislation here? Again, on the same point, we are following Victoria's legislation as regards reduction of licenses. In 1885 Victoria, with its small area, had 4,339 licenses; in 1906, when its Act came into operation, it had 3,520. That number has since been reduced to 2,155. In Western Australia how many licenses have we? Not 500 yet. As a matter of fact, instead of talking of following Victoria in license reduction, this country, if it is ever going to be a country, must have more licenses—and not fewer. I said that the Bill had some good points. These, I feel sure, it would be better to leave over until next session. We are now within eight days of closing; and a big reform measure requires more than eight days for its consideration. I would advise the Premier to get the second reading through, possibly, and then let the Bill stand over until members have had full time to study it and are thus in a position to try to bring about the reforms which they think necessary in the liquor traffic. The Bill says that there shall be one licensing bench. I do not desire to go into the clauses of the Bill, but the idea of one licensing Bill in a country of 975,000 square miles is positively absurd. I am sure that those who drafted the Bill could never have

thought of such places as, say, Hall's Creek or Nullagine. Furthermore, an hotel is now wanted at Mundawindi. How can one licensing bench look after all those far-distant places? I repeat that the object of the Bill is taxation. The Premier has declared that the reason why he wants to get the measure through this session is that he may get more taxation. Let me remind the House that the Minister for Education has told the Legislative Council that if he gets more taxation, he intends to spend it on education. He has said that distinctly. Allowing that the taxation to be raised under this Bill is not going to be squandered on that snare and delusion, the State school commercial clauses—anybody who sends a boy to attend them is hindering the boy's chances in life—allowing that the money is not to be squandered on that kind of thing, I desire, nevertheless, to point out the unfairness of the proposed tax. Why tax one section of the community and let another go free? Is this a tax of punishment, or a tax to teach better manners? It is utterly unfair to tax one section only of the community. We have stood this for a long time, while hearing the member for Kanowna speaking about all the troubles caused by alcohol. Quite right. But there are more murders and all sorts of bad things being done in America now than before America had prohibition.

Mrs. Cowan: No!

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes. What about Tom Slaughter, and many more of them? They are murdering one another for want of a drink. The member for Kanowna speaks enthusiastically, one might say, and he supports this taxation.

Mr. O'Loghlen: No, he does not.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The member for Kanowna speaks as a teetotaler, for the good of his fellowman; but in the meantime he is dodging a bit of taxation—there is no shadow of doubt about that. If we have prohibition, those who are asking so loudly for it will find they will have to pay a good bit more in taxation than they are paying to-day. When it comes to the third class of teetotalers that I mentioned, it will hurt. Again, this tax comes not as an ordinary tax, but as a tax on a tax. We are paying at least 50 per cent. taxation on everything that the publican sells to-day. The proposal of the Government is to put 8 per cent. on that tax. The greatest thinkers of the British Empire have lately been uttering warnings that we have come to the limit of our taxing powers. Every morning one may read in the newspaper a warning of this nature addressed by some able man to the people of the British Empire. When we put a tax on a tax, we are coming to the end of the tax-collector's perfect day. For the last six years have we been living on loan money, hundreds of millions of loan money, and we have been taxing loan money. In other words, we have been living by doing

our neighbours' washing, but we have come to the time when the garments are worn out, and we have no more soap, and so we have to start to produce something genuine. A Government that can only go on taxing are going to fail. It has been said in regard to this tax that the Federal Government take the whole of it. But the Federal Government are maintaining the crippled and maimed soldiers, and are entitled to some money for that purpose.

Mr. Mann: Are not the State Government doing the same?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: No.

Mr. Mann: Certainly they are.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Federal Government are not doing much for the widows and families of those killed.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: They are doing all that is being done. To come to this licenses reduction board: The vote recently carried was for continuance. We should take some notice of the vote of the people. In face of that vote, why should the Government appoint a board to reduce licenses? Where do they get the demand from? Why, if we take a vote, should we not pay some attention to it? If the people of Western Australia, in the bulk, say that they do not desire a reduction of licenses, where is the demand for a licenses reduction board?

Mr. Johnston: Where the people voted reduction it has been carried out.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Of course it has. We know that where there are too many licensed houses in a town, some of them close of their own volition without any licensing reduction board. Take the instance of Menzies: There were in Menzies 12 hotels. They were reduced to nine. Then, of the nine hotelkeepers, three bought out the other six and closed the six hotels. So out of 12 they have come down to three, of their own volition. Why should we appoint a board to do something which is being accomplished without that board?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: This one per cent. will only pay the cost of the board.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That is so. If you want to know a town where there are too many licensed houses, you will find a town where some hotel has been burnt down.

Hon. P. Collier: But that is reduction with compensation.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Where there are too many hotels they close themselves. We should not attempt to tax people to pay for a board, nor should we force those other men out of useful production. Because, with every board appointed, with every man sent around inspecting engines or sewing machines, we are compelling men out of production, preventing them from producing. We should not multiply these boards. Only the other day I remarked that we were then appointing the 47th board for the session. This one will be the 48th. I have always had an ambition to do something that nobody else has done. I have never been able to see my way clear to do it. Still, if we are to go on appointing boards, the day will

come, perhaps, when I shall go down to posterity as the only Western Australian of my time and generation who was not a member of a board. Nobody who inquires or observes closely, will admit that there are too many licensed houses in the metropolitan area. When we come to the country districts, I do not think any hon. member will say that there is one hotel too many, at all events not in districts along the railway line. If we appoint a licenses reduction board, that board will not stultify itself, but will endeavour to earn its pay. Where is it going to reduce hotels? It will only reduce them in those places where, if let alone, the hotels will reduce themselves. I agree that our hotels compare most favourably with any in the Commonwealth. I have travelled over a good deal of Western Australia. I have come to sidings where there are not hotels. There is perhaps a ramshackle boarding-house, and a bit of a bough shed where you cannot take a spoonful of food without getting three flies. A man requires to have an appetite like a rhinoceros to take his food at all in such circumstances. I have slept in an open railway truck, slept on a quartz blow, because there was no hotel in the locality. As soon as a hotel is erected, a man can go along with a shilling or two and be catered for, provided with a bed, and even be awakened when his train is going. Most certainly a hotel at a country station serves a good purpose. Those who talk about closing hotels should have some experience of sidings where no hotels exist. Then they would not talk so much about the closing of hotels.

Mr. J. Thomson: They know nothing about it.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That is so. As to the hours of opening and closing, nine to nine—

Hon. P. Collier: That is a geographical question also.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: It is, yes. I have looked through the figures and I find that in Western Australia the consumption has not decreased with the decrease in hours. That is absolutely correct. I find from the figures that the consumption in Victoria, where the hotels close at six, has not been reduced. That is to say, the people are consuming just as much on the nine to nine scheme and the nine to six scheme as they were consuming on the plan of 6 a.m. to 11.0 p.m. Therefore all that the restriction of hours does is to inconvenience some people. It has also an influence in the direction of inducing people to take alcoholic liquors into their homes. Still it has not decreased consumption, and if it has not done that, why inconvenience people for a mere fad?

Mr. MacCallum Smith: It has decreased the number of cases in the police court.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I do not think that is correct.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: The Commissioner of Police says so.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: No matter. In regard to the nine to nine, we find in the

Bill a clause which provides that only bona-fide lodgers may consume liquor in a hotel after hours. We also discover an extraordinary provision that if any person is found on licensed premises during prohibited hours, it will be conclusive evidence against the licensee of a breach of the Act. O may put this up: We do not go to sleep at 9 p.m., we do not go to bed at that hour—

Mr. J. Thomson: Teetotallers do.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Teetotallers do not. Suppose I were to go to Marble Bar. I have to stay at the hotel there. A number of people want to speak to me. After 9 o'clock, or on a Sunday, I have to go and sit on the kerbstone and have a yarn with them. Is there any sense in that? Take those people living resident in some of the hotels. After 9 o'clock are they not to be allowed to have a friend to talk to?

Mr. Johnston: Or a visitor?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Could not a friend come into their hotel? If a friend of some resident of the Savoy Hotel were found in the top storey of that house after 9 o'clock, it would be conclusive evidence against the licensee.

Mrs. Cowan: Oh no!

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Oh, yes. There is the Bill. This is a truly extraordinary clause. May I ask why is this put in? What are we afraid of? We put in this clause in the fear that some evil citizen will get a nip of whisky or a pot of beer. I know it would be awful if he did! Of course the Premier will advance the argument that we must have stringent conditions, or we cannot administer the Act. The answer to that is that the legislation is opposed by at least a very large minority of the people. To be obeyed, an Act must be in accordance with the views of a big majority of the people. This measure is not in accordance with the views of a big majority. There is the difficulty in administering it. If, however, we find an Act difficult to administer we find an Act opposed by at least a very large minority of the community.

Hon. P. Collier: That is why they do not put their gambling laws into operation.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That is so. There is in the Bill a clause which says that unlawful games shall not be played on licensed premises. Of course they are not allowed to be played anywhere.

Hon. P. Collier: No, because they are unlawful, they are proscribed. It is in the Code.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Unlawful games are not allowed to be played. I should say not. In regard to local option, it would be better to strike it out. If we want a vote, let us take a vote on "drink or no drink," over the whole State. Local option does not work out evenly. It is all a question of what is local. Many people living in the vicinity of hotels vote continuance, while others who live remote from any hotel vote for reduction.

Hon. P. Collier: There again you are running counter to your argument respecting

the remote parts of the State. Why should not Perth vote Marble Bar dry?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Marble Bar will take the risk. In regard to bona-fide travellers, because ten or twelve or perhaps 100 people travel from Perth to Claremont, or from Fremantle to Claremont, on Sundays to get a few pots of beer—

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The railways require revenue, do they not?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Because of those few people, many genuine travellers are to be denied.

Mr. J. Thomson: Oh, no.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: But oh, yes. If the hon member thinks that, let us strike it out.

Hon. P. Collier: In any case, that is what the Bill states.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Generally speaking, we are told this has the support of the hotel-keepers. The Premier says that that is the position, but that is the voice of the hotel-keepers of Perth who do no trade. Leave them out of it altogether, and I, as a man who has travelled to a very considerable extent, can say that it has often happened that I have come to places where I honestly desired to legitimately get a drink. I think provision should be made whereby I could get the drink which I so much desired.

Mr. J. Thomson: You cannot get it at Claremont.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I would not have one at Claremont if I could.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: What about trying the water tap?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Coming to the question of clubs, I have always believed in co-operation and I regard a club as a sample of co-operation. In clubs, we cut out the middleman and we provide for what really amounts to our own private house. It has been suggested that the police are not allowed into clubs. I think that is a good point. They are not allowed in, but it is not necessary for them to get in. Clubs will not retain members who do not know how to behave themselves. It is a question of relieving the police rather than a question of them entering clubs. There is one other point regarding billiard tables. We are told that we must not play billiards in a licensed place after 9 o'clock, but we can play billiards on other licensed premises until 11 o'clock. People do not go to bed at 9 o'clock. We find occupations of one description or another to employ us after 9 o'clock. That being so why should we not be able to have a game of billiards? I hope the member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan) will tell us why young men should not be allowed to have a game of billiards after 9 o'clock.

Mrs. Cowan: That is not prevented under the Bill.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: They are not allowed to play in billiard rooms attached to licensed premises after 9 o'clock. The only places in many country districts where there are billiard tables are the local hotels. We have been told by various people that we

must not drink after 9 o'clock. We must not be on the streets, for that is bad; we must not go to the picture shows, for that, too, is bad. Judge Burnside said we must not mess about with women. The Minister for Education has endorsed that remark and I hope that someone, who is going to clear all this up, will tell us what we can do after 9 o'clock.

Capt. CARTER (Leederville) [10.34]: After hearing the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) and the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) I am reminded that we are not discussing a new problem but one which is age-long. As an illustration of that, and of the widely differing opinions which have obtained through the centuries on this great subject, which I believe is one of the great problems of the Empire to-day I would quote two of the greatest authorities—one the greatest and the other very near to him—in English literature. We can well liken them to the two opposing champions in this House. Samuel Johnson said, "Claret is the liquor for boys, port for men, but he who aspires to be a hero must drink brandy." I will liken Samuel Johnson to the member for Pilbara. Shakespeare said, "For in my youth, I never did apply hot and rebellious liquors in my blood." I liken Shakespeare to the member for Kanowna. Each champion has given us a totally different view of the one subject. We must realise that the Government have brought down at least some measure of answer to what the people have been requesting during the past few years.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The people did not ask for the imposition of 8 per cent.

Mr. McCALLUM: They asked for State control of hotels. What about that?

Capt. CARTER: If hon. members are going to quibble on points and take me up on clauses, which we have not yet reached, it will be wiser for me to sit down. We are at the second reading stage of the Bill and I intend to hold the floor while I am up. I do not want to be drawn off to a subject I am not ready to discuss at present. My opinion on the whole subject is that until we get proper administration of measures on the Statute-book, we will never have any direct reform. The present Act has not been properly administered. We have repeated evidence throughout the State that the Police Department or the Government have not administered the Act in the way it should have been administered. In the measure before the House, we have a distinct advance in legislative powers regarding this problem. On the hustings, I said I was out for reform and I laid down certain measures to be adopted which, I believe, would prove beneficial. One was the introduction of the Victorian system of a licensing board. I am glad to see that the Government have embraced, to some extent at least, the Victorian principle which has been so long in operation in that State and the

results of which have been excellent. The actual machinery set up, as disclosed in the handling of problems there, show that there has been a considerable improvement on what we have had in past years.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: What better could you have than the voice of the people?

Capt. CARTER: The working of the Victorian board has appealed to me and its application should appeal to every member of the House. I am not giving my opinion, but I will read the opinion expressed by Sir John Quick in his history of the "Victorian Liquor and Local Option Hours Consolidated." He says:

It must be admitted that in their full extent and when brought together and presented in a readable and rational form, the Victorian liquor laws are remarkable for their comprehensiveness; their searching and far reaching character; the severity of penalties for contraventions of the Act; their design to maintain order and responsibility on licensed premises; their determination to suppress drunkenness; to prevent trading in liquor during unauthorised hours and on Sundays; the reduction of hours of trading on week days from 11.30 o'clock at night to 6 p.m. and from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m.; their provision for the abolition of unnecessary licenses and the closing of disorderly houses through the supervision of a competent Board. In all these matters, the Victorian liquor laws are, in some respects novel, thoroughly up-to-date, and equal, if not superior, in efficiency, to those of any other British community.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Are those provisions enforced there?

Capt. CARTER: Yes. I trust we will hear a lot more about that licensing board during the discussion on the Bill, because if we go into that matter further, members will realise what beneficial results have accrued from its operations. This board was in sole control from 1906 to 1916. In those 10 years it did work which proved its value.

Mr. Munsie: Can that board reduce licences where the vote has been for continuance?

Capt. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, I will not be cross-examined on the Victorian Act. I am taking a legal opinion in the broader general sense, an opinion which has more weight than many of those expressed in this Chamber. In discussing the measure before us, however, I think I am justified in pointing out that the Victorian board has been so successful that it was constituted the sole reduction machinery from 1906 to 1916. The same authority further stated:—

It was eventually decided to suspend the operation of the local option reduction clauses of the Act, preserving the local option increase clauses for a period of 10 years, and in the meantime to vest

the task of closing hotels in a board to be known as the licenses reduction board, consisting of three members. . . . The work of reduction was to be carried on from year to year, and the annual reduction was limited to the amount available for compensation. This work of the board was to continue until the end of the year 1916, when a new scheme of local option was to come into operation without petitions, by automatic procedure in every licensing district on the occasion of each succeeding general election. . . . The licenses reduction board performed its duties with judgment and success. In pursuance of the mandate imposed by the legislature it proceeded with its business, and in each year of its career hotels were closed to the full extent of the funds available and within the limits of the law.

That to me sounds like a very high compliment to the system contained in the Bill before us to-night. It went a great deal further with its accompanying powers than did any other similar legislation in the history of Victoria.

The Licensing Act of 1916 introduced important changes in matters of administration and jurisdiction. The whole of the licensing work was centralised under one control. . . . It increased the penalties for violating licensing liquor laws. It made it an offence either to drink liquor or to allow liquor to be drunk on certain unlicensed premises such as cafes, restaurants and oyster saloons on Sunday or during prohibited hours. It regulated the conditions under which liquor might be served with meals on licensed premises or in clubs during Sundays or within prohibited hours. It provided for the registration of persons previously employed as barmaids, and prohibited the employment of new barmaids after a certain time limit.

The method of the distribution of taxation received under its measures was:—

The total receipts for the year ended 30th June, 1919, were £164,134, exclusive of the sum of £10,207 in hand from the previous year. This made the total in the fund £174,341. This fund is subject to the following permanent charges:—(1) Cost and expenses of administration; (2) Annual payments to municipalities amounting to about £69,321;—

I emphasise that these payments were made to municipalities and not to the Government. It was not a revenue measure from the Government point of view—

(3) Annual payments to the police superannuation fund amounting to about £23,000 per year; and (4) Compensation to owners and licensees of closed hotels.

It will be seen that this was not a revenue Bill from the point of view of the Government in any sense of the word, although the local governing bodies in whose dis-

tricts it operated took certain benefits to the tune of £69,000. That is fairly solid proof of the value of the system upon which the Bill now before us is modelled, and I congratulate the Premier on having put forward an honest attempt at reform. The Bill is an answer to the voice of public opinion. There are only one or two features of the Bill which I intend to discuss. They are the vote and its scope, the application of the hours to the whole of the State, the bona fide traveller, the registration of bar attendants, the sale of liquor in clubs and the penalties for violation of the Act. In the first place the vote is a question peculiarly belonging to the people. I said I favoured the handling of this question by the whole of the people, and I stand to-day by what I said on the hustings. This question should be handled by the whole of the people. We have compulsory enrolment to-day and I think our Electoral Act is incomplete until we amend it by adding compulsory voting. With the compulsory vote forcing the people to take an interest in this question—this is a people's question, a question which widely affects the whole of the people and not a part of the people—the people would be brought face to face with the question and, with the compulsory vote, I am in favour of the simple majority. I believe that the whole of the people deciding the question in this way would give us, as legislators for the people, a much better and sounder idea of what is required in the way of reformation. I do not believe that either side, extreme in their views, should handle this question. One member said he spoke on behalf of the general community, and he accused the trade on the one hand and the Temperance Alliance on the other hand of making all the noise. This might be true to a certain extent, but I believe every member of the House will agree with me that the people of the State and the Empire realise to-day that something definite should be done in the way of reformation. I am not a prohibitionist. I do not stand for a complete wiping out of this evil which is so much a part of our Empire. Even as it is—and one illustration was given in this House to-night—it is of such a nature that we cannot cut it off root and branch without doing some damage and leaving some great scar in its place. I believe it would be more equitable and fairer to everybody if the question were handled by the whole of the people and the legislation of reformation were brought in along the lines of this Bill, either more definite or less definite as this House will decide, and so the goal of finality would be reached. The application of the vote to all licenses is a big step in the right direction. I was strongly criticised for my attitude as regards the selling of wine in the wine saloons in this city. I made the statement and I repeat it to-night, advisedly, too, because I know it is true, that one can go into practically any part of the more populous streets of our city

and find there little holes of places—where one would probably be refused a license to sell tea and cakes—dealing in strong drink and handling wines over the counter. In many cases it is not legitimate wine which is sold, but a form of pinky which is highly dangerous to those who drink it. The unfortunate part of it is that the principal devotees of such places generally seems to be a woman who is ashamed to go to a hotel. It is remarkable what a number of women frequent these places. The people should have a vote in the handling of wine licenses in the same manner as they have in the handling of hotel licenses and this should apply to every form of license mentioned in the statute-book. This is a big step in the right direction, and I hope that the law as it eventually reaches the statute-book will show that special attention has been paid to the housing of wine licenses and to their reduction, and to dealing with what I call the beer shop, places which are nothing more or less than an avenue of beer, where no accommodation may be obtained, where one could not get a bed for the night if he paid £5—there are places of this kind in the city not many miles from Parliament House—and where the licensee is not carrying out the obligations of the Act. The people should decide on every license in every district. There is another matter which has been discussed a great deal by all of us no doubt; in trams and trains, and that is the inclusion of the club. I am a club man myself and belong to a club which is made up of returned men, and which consumes by many times less liquor than any other club in the city. I have been told by the secretary of the club that to include that institution in this Bill will mean its extinction. I have formed my own opinion of this matter. If that club is going to make its bulwark the sale of liquor, and the one foundation on which it stands also the sale of liquor, this club must take with its bulwark and foundation the responsibility of a license. Clubs should be included within the taxation proposals whatever they are, and should be placed on the same basis as hotels. We should try and balance equity with our judgment. That particular case is one which we should give consideration to all parties. Take St. George's-terrace and the hotel at the corner of William-street and the terrace. The club to which I belong is in St. George's House. There is another club in Viking House and another a few yards along the terrace. There are clubs all around us. At 9 o'clock, the law says, the hotel on the corner must close. The Act, however, says that clubs may remain open until 11 o'clock. Many clubs remain open much longer. The fact that they do not openly remain open does not alter the position that drinking goes on there. In many cases these clubs are paying, in comparison with the man at the corner, a peppercorn rental, and yet after hours are taking from his avenues of revenue. That is an argument which un-

answerable from the point of view of him who says that clubs should be exempt from this particular clause. I do not say that one license, or one form of license, should have special benefits over another. Take the case of a district voting reduction, a district in which the only hotel is closed. That hotel with its buildings might be worth £3,000, and with the license worth £5,000. Directly the hotel is closed and de-licensed an application comes in from a club, which has suddenly sprung up, and it duly receives a license. Because of the vote in that district this license immediately becomes more valuable than it ever was before, and the property becomes worth £6,000 or £7,000. It is unfair that a club should be given any loophole into which it may place its feet to rise by unfair means above any other form of license. With regard to hours, I believe that the levelling of the application of hours all over the State is a good thing, and is a step in the right direction. Goldfields members will probably urge that their people work hard, and in a harder climate. We have to look at the question broadly and from the point of view of equity. We are legislating for the State, and must regard the framing of laws in a broad sense. We have been told that the Act will bring ruin to many men in the trade. It is unfair that men operating in one district should have either longer hours or a lower tax than others. We must not discriminate in the application of this Bill to individuals or individual districts. One of the most pleasing features of the Bill is the passing out of the bona-fide traveller. That is the individual with a thirst as deep as a spring and a conscience as void of fairness, honour, and respectability as one could possibly have. I am referring to the man who is not a bona-fide traveller but an illicit bona-fide traveller. He has been on the scene too long and must go. I believe the voice of the people is loud against him. The public do not want him and our women do not want him. Our police magistrates and our courts do not want him, neither does the honest trader. I am pleased that the Premier has put this person in his place. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) says that "a hundred or two" men go from Perth to Claremont on Sundays for their drinks. I should like to know how many actually do go. We have seen what has happened at Cottesloe, and what operated against the Brighton Hotel on the Perth-Fremantle-road, namely the disgusting behaviour of those people who journeyed from Perth in order to get their skin full of beer. The man who deliberately set himself out to break the law for the sake of beer has a vision no wider or deeper than the pot from which he drinks. He should be looked after by Statute if he cannot take care of himself. The question of the registration of bar attendants is a serious one. This is a reform which most people want. There has been a great deal too much laxity in the past in regard to it. There are many evils attending

the sale of liquor which have come about through the personality of the bar attendants. We have many proofs of that statement in the police court, and we should have very little difficulty about making up our minds on this point.

Mr. McCallum: Will the registration of bar attendants alter the position?

Capt. CARTER: Where there has once been a conviction no second opportunity should be afforded of doing wrong. The bar attendants who break the laws should be de-licensed at once.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: For carrying out the instructions of their employers?

Capt. CARTER: It is a serious question and threatens the livelihood of many decent women. I cannot see why women should be asked to handle this trade. Another reason for objecting to their employment in this regard is that their presence leads many a young drinker upon the downward path where ultimately he may strike a reef and become a wreck. I am not speaking as a wowzer or a kill-joy. Hotel bars can be run much better under decent men than they can be under women. I do not think that is the proper place for women. I hold strong ideals with regard to penalties for the violation of the law. I want to see the Act administered. On the Notice Paper I have the following amendment: "12. Section 64 of the principal Act is amended by adding thereto the following paragraph: '(a) No license shall be granted or renewed or transferred to any person who has at any time theretofore been convicted as a licensee, and whose license has been declared forfeited under Section 139 or Section 141, nor shall any license be granted or renewed for any premises of which such person is or may become the owner, landlord, lessee, or proprietor, or in which, or in the business carried on or to be carried on upon which he has or may have any legal or equitable share or interest whatsoever.'" That clause is worded as tightly as I can have it worded, for this reason, that too often nowadays men who have lost their license, have forfeited it for some possibly flagrant misdemeanour, are again in possession of a license, or even of licenses. There are to-day men holding more than one license. I want to get at the taxation returns of men in charge of hotels, so that we can find out whether the dummy who runs the hotel as George Brown is putting in income tax returns as "George Brown, hotel proprietor." I want to know exactly what people are holding licenses in this State. The trade itself will greatly benefit if persons of the class I have in mind are eliminated from it. Further, I would make a similar provision apply to owners of hotels, to licensed managers, and attendants, as well as dummies. The penalties right through the principal Act are, at least in my opinion, somewhat inadequate. The penalty or re-

fusing entertainment is one which the board would no doubt be quick to take action for. One of the most striking features of the book which I have before me is the statement that all over Victoria, despite what has been said here to-night, there is a marked and solid improvement in the accommodation houses. Buildings have been greatly improved. The proprietors of many hotels were informed that unless they were prepared by a certain date to spend certain amounts in improving their premises, in accordance with plans to be submitted to the board, they would be delicensed. That is a step in the right direction. We have no time for the hotel with ten barmen, but no bedrooms for the travelling public. An hotel in future must be an hotel in the best sense of the term. Under the existing Act the penalty for refusing accommodation to travellers is £20, which seems to me a mere playing with the question. A failure to comply with the Act in that respect should be a matter for forfeiture of the license. Not much toleration should be shown to the hotel-keeper who trades after hours. The existing penalties are £50 for a first offence, and £100 for subsequent offences. There is no excuse whatever for trading after hours, which is a symptom of the grab-all spirit that has permeated a section of the liquor trade, to the detriment of the trade as a whole, and to the disgust of the community. Selling liquor on Sundays is another matter in respect of which the penalties require revision. At present they are £50 for a first offence, and £100 for subsequent offences. No doubt the Bill will be altered in these respects during the Committee stage. I desire to touch on one aspect which has already been mentioned, by, I think, the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker). The watching of law-breaking hotels involves the maintenance of a staff of plain clothes constables at considerable cost. They are to be seen all day Sunday riding around the suburbs of Perth in couples on their bicycles, looking for law-breakers. I would make the penalty of such a nature that the law-breaker would not desire to be caught a second time. At present the selling of liquor to persons under age involves a penalty of £20. That is altogether too low. The obtaining of liquor by young persons is notoriously an avenue of drunkenness. The Children's Court tells a sorry tale of what evil is being wrought in this State to-day by liquor in the home and by liquor purchased by juveniles. I congratulate the Premier on the introduction of the Bill, which I consider represents many steps in the right direction. Not even the extremists on either side can fairly cavil at the Bill as a Bill. Accordingly I support the second reading.

Mr. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [11.6]: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	15
Noes	25

Majority against .. 10

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Munroe
Mr. Cheeson	Mr. Simons
Mr. Collier	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Heron	Mr. J. Thomson
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Latham	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Lutey	Mr. O'Loughlin
Mr. McCallum	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. H. K. Maley
Mr. Boyland	Mr. Mann
Mr. Brown	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Carter	Mr. Money
Mrs. Cowan	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Davies	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Denton	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Durack	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. George	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Gibson	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Harrison	Mr. A. Thomson
Mr. Hickmott	Mr. Mullaney
Mr. Johnston	(Teller.)

Motion thus negatived.

Mr. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [11.10]: So contentious a Bill as this ought not to be discussed at so late a stage in the session. Nevertheless, I am prepared to speak to it until 6 o'clock to-morrow morning if necessary. I am the only licensed victualler in the Chamber, so far as I know.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: What about Mr. Johnston?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am no longer a licensed victualler, but I am the only member who knows the Licensing Act from A to Z. It is wrong to bring down such a Bill as this at so late a stage in the session. I have been told that one part of the Bill has emanated from the licensed victuallers and another part from the wowser element, and that in consequence the Premier is between the devil and the deep sea. I will support the second reading, but I hope to have a great deal to say in Committee. I want the light of day to be shed upon the liquor trade, with which I have been actively connected for 15 years. I have done more for various struggling sections of the community than have all the often termed wowsers in Western Australia. Why the Premier should endeavour to place on the shoulders of one section such heavy taxation, passes my understanding. The trade is paying £37,000 per annum in license fees. I sympathise with the Premier, but why does he not take the direct course and belt into the Federal Government? Why increase the taxation on the liquor trade from £37,000 to £140,000 in one year? The trade

cannot stand it. The men in the business, big-hearted men, cannot possibly pay. Nevertheless, a majority of the House just now voted against the adjournment of the debate. I wanted to get the adjournment as a protest against the Bill being brought down so late in the session. If the Bill should pass this Chamber, I am sure, and the Premier is sure, that another place will scrap it. It is farcical to be debating such a Bill so late in the session. If the Premier wants to derive more from license fees, why does he not license everybody, in the community? Why should some people be allowed to sell lollies and spot lager without a license? Why allow Boan's, Foy's, and other big firms to sell Sedna—we have put a stop to that now—why does not the Premier license all those people? Foy's, Bon Marché and other places are selling silk stockings, silk skirts, silk blouses, silk camisoles, and the like at a profit of more than 100 per cent. Why does not the Premier say, "We are going to license you to sell those luxuries, and charge you a stiff licensing fee"? Although the licensed victuallers profess to be up against the Bill, we must have consideration for all those men who belong to clubs. Clubs in the first instance are co-operative institutions conducted for the convenience of their members, who are supplied with liquor at a minimum cost. Why should the Premier try to close clubs at 9 o'clock, which would be their death knell?

Mr. Teesdale: Did you support the clubs when you had a license?

Mr. SMITH: Of course.

Mr. Teesdale: That is rather peculiar.

Mr. SMITH: Not for me, I am a broad-minded democrat.

Mr. Mann: What about the man who cannot afford to belong to a club?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If one consumes but a small quantity of liquor in 12 months, it will pay him to belong to a club, where he will get good liquor at a minimum cost. That is why I support clubs. I will vote for the second reading.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Why?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Because I believe that if we get the Bill into Committee, we shall be able to expose its defects, and make the Premier so disgusted with it, that he will be prepared to drop it. I regret exceedingly that the Premier has seen fit to bring in a measure of this description, when he must be aware that there is no possibility of it being passed by another place.

Mr. A. Thomson: Have you counted heads?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: No. The member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan) is always quoting the Bible in this Chamber. She has referred to that part in which it is stated it is not right for man to be alone. If she had proceeded a little further, she would have found another passage which refers to tak-

ing a little wine for the stomach's sake. Beer, Mr. Speaker, has resulted in much of the development of the brawn and muscle of Australia. Whisky and spirits, I claim, are absolutely the elixir of life. One has only to look around the Chamber and see hon. members, to know that this is so. It passes my understanding why the Premier should attempt to pass such a measure a few days before Christmas.

The Premier: It is a very simple Bill.

Mr. Lambert: So are some of your supporters!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: At this period of the year we hear expressions of goodwill between men and women. Why should the Premier try to separate us by bringing forward a question like this. Why attempt to impose taxation on a section of the community whose largeness of heart is recognised by all. These men pay large amounts in income tax and are always putting their hands in their pockets in support of charitable efforts. Appeals come forward for Christmas cheer. Who is it gives to these appeals? Is it the individual whose stomach does not protrude? These men who have an interest in this trade and who enjoy their liquor are the men who have built up Australia. I was sorry I interjected when the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) was speaking and I appreciate the fact that by my interjection, I did not bolster up my case.

Mr. Lambert: You are not bolstering it up by speaking.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: In any case, I am bolstering up more than can the member for Coolgardie. I was elected as a licensed victualler and I feel very jealous of their interests at the present time.

Mr. Teesdale: You got out in time.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I protest against this particular section of the community being taxed to the enormous extent proposed. It is interesting to note what the Commonwealth Government get from Western Australia in connection with the liquor trade. I think it is the fault of Parliament and of the Government that we have not sought to remedy that position. The Premier started to fight the Commonwealth Government over another matter a little while ago, but he dropped his bundle and he let the Federal authorities go on with the business. If the Premier likes to stand up and fight, he will have every member with him. I have some figures regarding the Federal collections from Western Australia dealing with the year ended 30th June, 1921. These show that the Customs collections from beer amounted to £3,804, from wine £4,405, and from spirits £138,042. Regarding excise duty for the same period, the collections totalled £448,863 in connection with beer, which, it should be remembered was made in Western Australia, and on spirits £51,964 was collected. Dealing

with wine, this is an industry that requires assistance in Western Australia. For every six acres under vines, the services of one man are required. Towards the world's wine supplies, Australia produces about 10 million gallons of wine per year; France produces some 1,300 million gallons; Italy 950 million gallons and Spain 650 million gallons. It must have been some outlandish theorist who advised the Premier to go on with these proposals. The spirits which have to be used to fortify our wines are to be further taxed. This proposal is extremely ill-advised. I could go on quoting various clauses and showing that it would not be in the best interests of the State to adopt them. It is only a little time since a vote of the people was taken on the question of the reduction of licenses. Wherever reduction was carried, the board have sat and the reductions have been made. Yet, on top of that, the Government now seek to ignore the people's voice by placing this Bill on the statute-book. I do not believe it is the wish of the Premier to have the measure passed in its present form. I believe his advisers were in the wrong—

Mr. Lambert: Why not let the Premier take the blame?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not think he understood the position. He proposes that the licenses reduction board should come into operation from the 1st January next, notwithstanding the vote which was recently taken and given effect to. I trust the Premier will reconsider this point. If the trade desired the introduction of such a measure as this, the fact is unknown to me. I am a free lance in other walks of life just as I am in Parliament. I can say and do exactly whatever I think is best in the interests of the country. I support the second reading of the Bill. I deplore the fact that my motion for the adjournment of the debate was not carried. If necessary I could speak on this subject for another three hours. The Leader of the Opposition has only to give me the wink and I will do so.

Hon. P. Collier: It is quite unnecessary.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If necessary, I could start from the point where a pint of beer costs 4d. and trace it to the point where it is sold at 6d.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Save the time of the Committee and vote against the second reading.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not wish to do that. I am not in the least ashamed of my late calling; I am proud of it for it has been legalised by Parliament. If I voted against the second reading, however, some of our wowsersish critics would contend that I did so in order to prevent the detailed consideration of the different clauses of the Bill in Committee. However, I hope that when the Bill reaches the Committee stage various amendments which have been outlined will receive the support

of members. The proposed impost of 8 per cent. on the Excise and Customs is absolutely iniquitous.

Mr. A. Thomson: Is not that charged in Victoria?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not know anything about Victoria. It seems to me that brewers' licenses are protected and that even if a district is closed down, brewers will still be able to manufacture there and send the liquor to other districts. There are numerous clauses in the Bill with which I disagree, but if every member spoke on each and every one of his objections to this measure, we would be here not till next Christmas but till the Christmas after that. I shall not vote against the second reading, because it might be said that I was afraid of the light of day being thrown on the liquor business in Western Australia. In Committee, however, I shall endeavour to get the Bill amended considerably.

Mrs. COWAN (West Perth) [11.37]: I rise to support the second reading of the Bill, because I was returned to the House to support local option by a bare majority vote and also to do my utmost to help in any way to eliminate by degrees the evils of this traffic from our midst. I am one of those who believe that straight-out prohibition is an impossibility here at the present time, and that we have to go gradually, step by step, and the public must go with us.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It must be done throughout Australia. You cannot do it in this State alone.

Mrs. COWAN: The hon. member may be right. Perhaps members do not think sufficiently of the fact that alcohol is a racial poison and that it is very important that they should think deeply on this point when dealing with the subject, because of the effect it must have on the race. I remember what an illumination it was to me the first time I heard the subject discussed from that point of view. It was by Dr. Saleeby in London in 1913. I never realised before that there were three racial poisons that could absolutely poison the very germ that laid the foundation of life of the coming child. When we remember this, we should think very seriously, and deliberate well on what we are doing when we encourage a traffic which we know is so unsatisfactory and deadly in its results to the race.

Mr. Lambert: What are the other two poisons?

Mrs. COWAN: White lead and syphilis. If this traffic were so remarkably good as some members would have us believe, is it not strange that licensees nearly always endeavour to secure employees who are abstainers? Again, many publicans do not drink at all because they realise the evils arising from liquor, the hold it might get upon them, and the detriment it would be

to their business and to their surroundings generally. That is one of the points which always appeals strongly to thinking people. I have heard great fault found with the Premier to-night. I think, with the pressure that has been brought to bear upon him from both sides, he has done even better than we might have expected, although I do not agree with everything that is contained in the Bill. He is right in regard to his taxation proposals, and will get any support I can give him in that respect. If we can afford to spend enormous amounts yearly in drink, and only a moderate amount on education, there is something wrong with our point of view, and we are not particularly balanced people as to what is best for the community. Even with this tax we are not going to pay the cost of everything that drink brings upon the State. We have only to look at the cost to the community for the upkeep of our gaols and our hospitals. Our gaols are full of people who have got there, many of them, as a result of drink. Our police have to be paid and kept largely because of the numbers of people who drink; as have also our judges and our stipendiary magistrates. Our Old Men's Home and our asylums are all affected. Venereal disease is brought about probably more as a result of people drinking than anything else. We have to spend something like £82,000 a year on State children, very largely because of the drinking habits of their parents. If we go into the proportions we should probably be amazed, just as we are amazed at the results of drink as we see them in the Children's Court.

Hon. P. Collier: Venereal disease has swept over countries where the people have been non-drinkers.

Mrs. COWAN: Quite so, and that always will be. The greater proportion of the people is affected as a consequence of drink than of anything else. Then we have our orphanages full mainly for the same reason. One of the saddest things is to see the results of our wine shops. I support every word the member for Leederville (Capt. Carter) said on that subject. It is heartbreaking to see what is going on, and realise what these wine shops are doing. It is all very well to talk about making wine the drink of the people. We cannot do that unless we break it down very considerably. I have spent a great deal of time in continental countries and know something about what people get there in the way of wine. They certainly do not get anything like Australian wine. The wine they do get would in this country be regarded as a temperance beverage.

Hon. P. Collier: Wine-drinking countries in Europe are the most sober of the countries.

Mrs. COWAN: Because the wine they drink there would come under the heading of a temperance drink if it were used in Australia.

People can, of course, get strong drink if they want it. The wine that is usually drunk on the continent is practically non-alcoholic. It is rather sour and has no strength in it, and would not affect a man's brain in the least.

Mr. Lambert: It would give you a pain.

Mrs. COWAN: If hotels are the wonderful places they are said to be, and are such a boon to the community, why is it that screens are needed across the bar doors? It has always puzzled me, as a woman, why, if people want a harmless glass of liquor, they have to go behind a screen to drink it. I have only once been in a public bar, and that was during the war. There were some young soldiers in the bar, and some of us went in and persuaded them to go quietly back to Blackboy and get away from any further temptation. I can see no objection to a person going into a bar, if he desires to do so, but cannot understand the reason for the screen.

Mr. Teesdale: It is to keep the dust out.

Mrs. COWAN: There should be no need for a screen for that purpose. I should like to have seen the Bill provide for the taking of a poll on election day. If we can save the country £3,577 on the next occasion we ought to do so. It may not sound a very startling sum when we realise the amount of the deficit, but it ought to be possible to save that amount. I understand that was the cost of the last poll. I am in favour of the registration of bar attendants, but regret that nothing has been embodied in the Bill to abolish barmaids. I have the greatest respect for many women who are married well, and whom one meets in ordinary society all the world over, but who have been barmaids. I have nothing to say against them. It is not a suitable employment for women. By making the bar attractive by the employment of barmaids our sons are the more likely to be tempted and led astray. I should like to see men do their own dirty work, if they must have hotels and bars, and run the bars themselves. Clause 2 of the Bill requires amendment and the words "alcohol drink" defined. As it is, an extraordinary position may arise if no better definition is put in than at present exists. I cannot say I think the clause dealing with temporary licenses is a good one. I am opposed to the three-fifths majority. My electors were strongly in favour of the bare majority vote. I do not think compensation should be given. Ten years' notice was given, and everyone knew that there was this period in which to get ready for the altered conditions. If the House decides by a majority to give compensation, it should certainly be made to apply to the reduction houses as well as the others. I do not see why it should be made to apply to any in the circumstances. People who have been referred to as bona fide travellers have been a curse, and I am glad the Premier is going to do his best to abolish the type. I hope the House will assist him

in that direction. The general public have given evidence of their desire to lessen the evil. Even though they were in the minority, I am going to argue on the lines of the members for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood). He said that the minority who wanted a drink should be considered more than the majority who did not. I claim that the minority of those who voted for non-license deserve as much consideration as the majority who voted for reduction. The thing cuts both ways. We had better use our logic and realise that. It was stated that we had no right to have reduction at all. I am sorry that this has not been provided for in the Bill. We should have the right to vote reduction as well as no license. I do not agree that we should necessarily copy the State of Victoria. If we have 500 hotels for a population of 330,000 people, we are altogether out of proportion. In Victoria their is a population of one and a half million.

The Premier: The proportion in the two States is about the same.

Mrs. COWAN: We have more hotels than we want, and Victoria also must have more than she wants. The member for Pilbara spoke of non-productiveness which the tax would bring about. The non-productive effect of a public house is greater than will be brought about by any form of tax. He argued that the taxation would mean non-productiveness in many directions, and that we should lose by it. We lose far more from the effect of alcohol on the people who have become hopeless and helpless, and whom we have to keep out of our own pockets because they are unable to contribute to any taxation themselves. I agree that to take a vote of the whole State might be the best means of settling the question. It would probably give us a very good idea of what the whole community want. But I do not think that we shall be permitted to do this, either by the licensed victuallers or by anyone else. Possibly "no license" would be carried throughout the State. Therefore that means of finding out has been carefully avoided. As regards clubs, I certainly think they should be on the same footing as hotels. The trading hours I would like to see made from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Why should a public house have a right to longer hours of trading than ordinary business places have? Throughout the rest of the Commonwealth the hours are now from nine to six.

Mr. Johnston: The hours are from six to six in some States.

Mrs. COWAN: I see no reason why drink should be sold after hours. It would be a good idea if the sale of drink in hotels were prohibited after 6 p.m., and if then they were only permitted to supply meals. I know that travelling to Moora and elsewhere with my husband I found that after 8 p.m., the only thing obtainable in hotels was liquor. Nothing to eat was obtainable,

except it was a biscuit. These experiences refer to some years back; but if that condition of affairs still exists, it should be remedied. One should be able to get a dinner at an hotel in the evening.

Mr. Simons: They would put the dogs on you if you asked for a meal after 6 o'clock.

Mrs. COWAN: The hours of hotels should be from nine to six, seeing that the sale of drink is a business transaction, and especially seeing that the traffic is one that is detrimental to the community, and not beneficial. Publicans themselves, in fact all people connected with the trade, admit it. On the other hand, I acknowledge that temperance people are not doing what they should in the way of providing substitutes for liquor. As to the remark of the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) about taking wine for one's stomach's sake, the text simply shows that alcoholic liquor should be taken medicinally, and not as a beverage. I support the second reading, believing that with various amendments the Bill may be made a satisfactory measure.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [11-55]: I oppose the second reading of the Bill. On my part there is neither friendship for the liquor trade nor fear of the temperance party. No such considerations affect me in the slightest degree in speaking or voting in support of proposals which I believe will tend towards reform. I would vote for this measure if it were a real reform Bill. Again, I would vote for the measure if it were simply a taxation Bill.

The Premier: In that case you can vote for the Bill.

Mr. LAMBERT: It is a taxation Bill, and nowise a reform Bill.

The Premier: It is reform and taxation too.

Mr. LAMBERT: It represents an attempt to meet, by some subterfuge, in the dress of temperance reform, the day by day accumulating deficit. At this late stage of the session, if for no other reason than lack of time, members would be justified in opposing any amendment of the liquor laws. I am sorry that I have not the opportunity to speak at a more propitious stage more lengthily on liquor reform. There is much in what was said by the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) and by the member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan). However, the measure asks the temperance party to be satisfied with certain apparent reforms, while on the other hand it proposes to give the Government another £100,000 of revenue. That £100,000 of taxation will be immediately passed on to the consuming public by the liquor trade. Therefore I cannot support the second reading of this Bill. There are equitable means of taxation available to the Government in place of imposing further taxation on liquor. We should not for the sake of a contribution to the exchequer close our eyes to what is needed in the way of liquor reform. That would be merely humbugging with the question. There is no use in adopting the uncompromising attitude of demanding prohibition in a day. The member for West Perth

herself admitted this. We should so remodel our licensing legislation that it will be headed in the direction of reform, towards the minimisation of the consumption of alcoholic drinks in what can be considered the wrong way. If the Government would bring down a clear reform measure—

The Premier: In this Bill you have got reform and you have got taxation. Surely you do not want any more.

12 o'clock midnight.

Mr. LAMBERT: The Premier has made a mix-up of reform and taxation. What is really in the mind of the Government is increased taxation. I am not going to condone measures which will not lead to reform as properly understood, just because the Government want an additional £100,000 a year from the liquor trade, and the liquor trade passes it on to the people I represent. That is why I feel we would not be justified in voting for the second reading.

Mr. Teesdale: You would object to their getting it from anywhere.

Mr. LAMBERT: I would not object to their getting it from the hon. member. If the hon. member were so self sacrificing as to go into the centre of Australia and lose himself for ever, and if by that the Government could get revenue, I would condone the action. The Labour Party has never side-stepped the question of liquor control. We have had so-called liquor reformers up against us, but we have stood shoulder to shoulder, actuated by a desire to secure a reform of the traffic. I have seen, and I can picture, some shocking examples of people who drink excessively.

Mr. Teesdale: Don't look over here.

Mr. LAMBERT: And I can picture some shocking examples of over-eating.

The Premier: Don't look at me. Look at the member for Gascoyne.

Mr. LAMBERT: At all events, any attempt to point to examples of intemperance gets us but very little further ahead. The use of liquor has been going on for centuries and, I suppose, will continue for centuries to come. A wonderful experiment in prohibition is being tried by the Americans to-day, and it is to be hoped that the experiment will succeed.

The Premier: I had yesterday a report from San Francisco which is not very cheering.

Mr. LAMBERT: I expect the Premier is now speaking in his capacity as Treasurer, and that the report he has received is not cheering because it shows greatly decreased taxation. It would pay the people of this State to induce us to devote a whole session of Parliament to this question.

Mr. Simons: We should be lobbied to death.

Mr. LAMBERT: All the lobbying in the world could not shift me from my uncompromising desire for liquor reform. I will stand or fall, live or die by that attitude, which I think tends to the welfare of the country.

Mr. Teesdale: Hear, hear!

Mr. LAMBERT: On this question we should get down to the fact.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There is only one thing—State hotels,

Mr. LAMBERT: I know the esteem the hon. member has for a good hotel, but there are disadvantages even in that respect. When, as a party, we initiated State hotels, we were treading the path of reform. Although it resulted in the provision of good houses of accommodation, I do not know whether they have fulfilled those functions which the original framers of that plank of our platform desired.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I was dealing with the mandate of the people.

Mr. LAMBERT: There is nothing in the Bill about accepting the mandate of the people.

Mr. Munsie: The Bill flouts it.

Mr. LAMBERT: Apparently the mandate of one section of the people has been accepted and is made to stand for one part of the Bill, while another part has been supplied by the opposite extremists. Thus have the Government compromised between the two. Apparently the Premier has prominent in his mind the idea of taxation. Regarding the matter superficially, one would say that liquor is a luxury that can stand taxation. But who is the person who is to be taxed? Much has been said of the misery resulting from the misuse of alcoholic liquors. Who is it that suffers that misery? The member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) drew a painful picture of the state of things obtaining, and the member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan) intensified its gloom. But let me point out that to increase the cost of a pint of beer will mean additional hardship for the woman who wants to buy food and clothing for her children. Under no circumstances can I see merit in the Bill.

The Premier: If you cannot see any merit in it, we cannot make you. Let us take it at that.

Mr. LAMBERT: To take the attitude of asking for prohibition in a day is stupid. A nation of 100 million souls is to-day trying the experiment of prohibition. There is no need for us to rush in and make a similar experiment under almost precisely similar conditions. If prohibition fails in the United States, it will unquestionably fail in Australia. Our legislation should be shaped to the bettering of the trade, to the cutting out of the objectionable features. As an illustration: I do not believe in the ordinary bar. I believe in the up-to-date Continental system, whereby, if a man wants a drink, he gets it in a room into which he can take his wife or his sister.

Mr. Pickering: There is also the beer garden.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes. This objectionable system of "breasting the bar" is what I object to.

The Premier: You are not obliged to breast the bar, you know.

Mr. LAMBERT: Where else can one go? In nine-tenths of the hotels of Western Australia, the man who went into a sitting-room to get a drink would be left to knock and kick for a long time before he succeeded in attracting attention; and then the landlord or barman would fancy they had a lunatic to deal with. The adoption of the Continental system, with the consequent abolition of the bar, would not affect the revenues of the publican, while it would delete the most objectionable feature of our system of hotel trading. To speak upon reform in club life is unnecessary. Whether clubs should continue to have granted to them an exclusive privilege

of drinking at all times, is a matter for the House to decide. Personally, I rarely frequent clubs, and the matter does not affect me.

The Minister for Agriculture: You are a member of the most select club in the State.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, by virtue of the people's recognition of merit. The proper course at this late stage of the session is to endeavour, firstly, to defeat the second reading of the Bill. If the measure does emerge from Committee, it will do so in such an emasculated condition that the Premier will hardly know it. Certainly it will never pass another place. Therefore it is futile to discuss the provisions of the measure even tentatively. If the Premier wants more revenue from the liquor trade let him come to the House and say, "I have no other avenue of taxation open to me."

The Premier: Will it not spoil a good speech if you go on much longer?

Mr. LAMBERT: The Premier is the only member who thinks this is a good speech. I have not yet attempted to make a speech; this is only an introduction. We have a right to grant the Government another £100,000 per annum of revenue from the liquor trade, if we wish to do so. But let us not confound that sort of thing with liquor reform. It is not liquor reform; it is the most stupid compromise conceivable. The liquor trade must be reminded that its members were granted an immunity of 10 years. That promise of immunity the people of this country have faithfully observed.

Mr. Teesdale: I wish we could get immunity from you.

Mr. LAMBERT: If I were to be truthful and just, I would make the member for Roebourne squirm. However, the member for North-East Fremantle asks me to be charitable, and I will follow that advice from my Deputy Leader. In the first place, we have a right to express our opinion regarding the taxation-garnering clauses of the Bill.

The Premier: You said that before.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am against those clauses. I believe this Bill represents a half-hearted attempt to compromise over the stunning results of the recent local option polls, and for this reason I am opposed to the Bill. I do not think anything fruitful will result from the passage of the measure. If the Bill does pass the second reading stage and is carried through Committee, it will be cut to pieces as a result of the varied opinions prevailing in this House. I hope the Government will realise from the opinions expressed to-night that liquor reform is desired in Western Australia, and that we will not accept any reform in such guise as this, merely to hand over to the Government an additional £100,000 of revenue every year.

On motion by Mr. A. Thomson, debate adjourned.

BILL—LAND AGENTS.

In Committee.

Resumed from 9th December; Mr. Stubbs in the Chair, the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Postponed Clause 4—Application for license:

Mr. MacCallum Smith had moved an amendment—"That in line 4 of subclause 3 the word

'five' be struck out and the word 'two' inserted in lieu."]

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: This will make the amount of the fidelity bond £200 instead of £500.

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

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments and the report adopted.

BILL—CLOSER SETTLEMENT.

In Committee.

Resumed from 9th December; Mr. Stubbs in the Chair, the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Postponed Clause 7—Acquisition of land:

The PREMIER: When this clause was previously under consideration, the view was expressed on both sides of the Chamber that the compensation to be paid for the land should be based on the unimproved value of the land as returned for taxation purposes, and that the value of the improvements should be the added value given to the land by reason of such improvements. I think there can hardly be any objection to this. It would not be fair to take at £500 a house which had cost that amount originally when it might now cost the owner £800 to build a similar house elsewhere.

Mr. Munsie: If you are going to resume the improvements, the proper value should be put upon them.

The PREMIER: Quite so. I have decided to accept the suggestion and I move an amendment:—

That the first paragraph of Subclause 3 be struck out and the following be inserted in lieu:—"The compensation shall be based (a) on the unimproved value of the land which shall be deemed to be the amount at which the unimproved value is assessed for the time being under the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act 1907 with ten per centum added thereto, and (b) on the fair value of the improvements assessed at the added value given to the land for the time being by reason of such improvements to be agreed upon between the owner and any mortgagee or other person having any interest in the land and the board, or determined by arbitration under the Arbitration Act 1905."

The clause says that the unimproved value to be placed on the land is the amount shown for taxation. Improvements usually represent the added value given to the land by reason of the improvements as they exist at the time the land is resumed.

Mr. McCallum: What do you mean by the added value of the land?

The PREMIER: The unimproved value of the land is the land without improvements. The added value by reason of the improvements is the additional value given to the land by the improvements.

Mr. McCallum: That is the value of the improvements.

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. A. THOMSON: This is a vital question and I suggest that the Premier's amendment be placed on the Notice Paper so that members may have an opportunity of grasping it.

The Premier: It has already been agreed to by all of you.

Mr. A. THOMSON: Progress should be reported.

Progress reported.

BILL—STAMP.

Council's pressed request.

Message received from the Council notifying the Assembly that it did not press its request for amendments Nos. 4, 5, and 13, but pressed its request for amendment No. 12.

House adjourned at 12.39 a.m. (Wednesday).

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 14th December, 1921.

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

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT.

Difference between experts.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS asked the Minister for Education: 1, Has the Minister's attention been drawn to a paragraph appearing in the "West Australian" of the 10th instant, wherein it is stated that a serious difference has arisen between the Director of Agriculture and the Agricultural Chemist? 2, If so, is it the intention of the Government to hold an inquiry into this matter? 3, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, Yes. 2, The departmental procedure usual in such cases will be followed. 3, See reply to No. 2.

QUESTION—WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

Hon. A. H. PANTON asked the Minister for Education: 1, In the event of the Worker's Educational Association agreeing to establish tutorial classes throughout the State, will the Government agree to subsidise the association to the extent asked for, viz., £2,000 per year? 2, If not prepared to assist to this extent, will the Government agree to any measure of financial support to the association?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: When funds are available the matter will receive consideration.

QUESTION—SCHOOL TEACHERS' MISDEMEANOURS.

Hon. A. H. PANTON asked the Minister for Education: 1, In the event of a school teacher committing a misdemeanour and not being dismissed from the service, is the teacher given a clean sheet after two years? 2, If not, will the Minister give instructions for this to be done in the future?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, No. 2, No.

BILL—EDUCATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Leave to introduce refused.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [4.34]: I move—

That leave be given to introduce a Bill for an Act to further amend the law relating to public elementary education.

Hon. J. DUFFELL (Metropolitan-Suburban) [4.35]: It is somewhat unusual to offer any opposition to a motion of this nature. However, at the beginning of the present sitting, the Leader of the House gave notice of his intention to move that during the remainder of the session the House should meet at 3 p.m. instead of 4.30 p.m. daily, and it appears to me that it is not in keeping with the spirit we expect the Leader of the House to display towards the close of the session and after Standing Orders have been suspended for the purpose of cleaning up the Notice Paper, that new Bills should be introduced. It might be contended that this is a non-contentious measure. The fact remains that for a considerable time past, this House has been devoting a lot of time to other Bills which could possibly have been got through much earlier if we had had a reasonable amount