

select committee in this particular, because it will stifle for all times such accusations as these.

Question put and passed.

Ballot taken and a select committee appointed consisting of Messrs. Mullany, Munsie, Taylor, Willmott, and the mover (Mr. George) with power to call for persons, papers and records, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, and to report on this day three weeks.

*House adjourned at 11.4 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Thursday, 2nd September, 1915.*

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

### QUESTION—COLLIE COAL, RAILWAY SUPPLIES.

Mr. ROBINSON asked the Minister for Railways: What was the tonnage of Collie coal supplied to the Government railways—(a) Midland Workshops, (b) Midland Loco. Depôt, (c) West Perth Loco. Depôt, during the year ending 30th June, 1915?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: The following Collie coal was consumed at the depôts mentioned during the year ended 30th June, 1915:—(a) 9,448 tons, (b) 14,530 tons, (c) 39,724 tons.

### QUESTIONS (2)—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE BOARD.

#### *Flat Rate for Farmers.*

Mr. HARRISON asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Is it a fact that the Government have decided that a flat rate shall be charged to farmers securing chaff through the Industries Assistance Board, such rate to include charges for administrative expenses?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: Yes.

#### *Defalcations at Northam.*

Mr. HARRISON asked the Minister for Agriculture: Is it the intention of the Government to treat the defalcations at Northam as a charge to administration?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: No.

### QUESTION—LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL, INTRODUCTION.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON asked the Minister for Lands: In reference to the Land Act Amendment Bill promised last session, and forecasted again in the Governor's Speech for this session, will he indicate how soon this important measure will be submitted for the consideration of the House?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: Within a fortnight or so.

### QUESTION—BRAN IMPORTATION, LOSS ON SALE.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON asked the Minister for Lands: In reference to the bran, etc., imported from the Argentine, which is now being sold at a considerable loss per ton, will he state to whom this loss will be charged—to the assisted farmer or to the general taxpayer?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: Owing to it being necessary, in the interests of the general community, for the Government to import for the

purpose of avoiding a possible famine in consequence of the recent drought, and the subsequent early season causing a big carry-over which had to be marketed in order to clear the space for the storage of wheat, the loss entailed will be charged to General Revenue.

### QUESTION—RAILWAY WEIGH-BRIDGE, NORTHAMPTON.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM asked the Minister for Railways: 1, In view of the fact that the Railway Department promised to place a weighbridge at Northampton, and in pursuance of such promise forwarded a weighbridge to Northampton over 12 months ago, is it a fact that a few months back a start was made to place the weighbridge in position and that the work was stopped, and that the weighbridge has since been removed? 2, If so, why?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes. 2, When preparing the foundations for the weighbridge stone was struck, and another site has to be chosen. The weighbridge at Geraldton had to be moved to a new position consequent on the recent alterations there, and to avoid the inconvenience of having it out of use for some time, the weighbridge from Northampton was transferred to Geraldton and erected on the new site. The Geraldton weighbridge will be put in at Northampton if a suitable position can be found for it.

### QUESTION—RAILWAY SIDING, NORTHAMPTON.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM asked the Minister for Railways: In view of the fact that the Commissioner for Railways promised to consider the request of a deputation that waited on him some time ago at Northampton for the extension of the siding at that station, is it the intention of the department to take action in this direction in time to cope with the traffic of the forthcoming harvest?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: Instructions have been given for this work to be put in hand, and it is hoped to complete it in time for the coming harvest.

### BILL—MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Minister for Mines and read a first time.

### BILL—WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

*In Committee.*

Resumed from 31st August; Mr. Holman in the Chair; Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 5—Definitions:

Hon. J. MITCHELL: In the definition of "public weighing instrument" we might include railway weighing machines. It is advisable that these machines should come under the measure.

The Premier: The same provision is in the New South Wales Act. If you do not want the Bill, why do you not say so?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Sales are effected on Government weighbridge weights, and we know that they are not accurate.

The Premier: Who sells?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The farmers.

The Premier: The farmers have no right to do so. If the new clause which the deputy leader of the Opposition proposes to insert is carried, it will meet the case.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I move an amendment—

*That in the definition of "public weighing instrument," the words "railway weighing machines" be added.*

If the Government are prepared to accept both the new clause and the amendment the point raised will be met.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD: The proposed amendment is not necessary. I am prepared to have a discussion on the question in the right place, which is cer-

tainly not on the definition clause. If we amend the definition and afterwards refuse to insert the proposed new clause, the amendment of the definition will be misleading without being effective. I am prepared to listen to legitimate discussion, but not to discussion put up to waste time.

Mr. THOMSON: If hon. members believe in the amendment they have a perfect right to support it. The weighing machines of the Railway Department are open to public use upon payment of a fee or charge. Unfortunately those machines are not uniform in the results given.

The Premier: What has that to do with the interpretation? In any case the amendment will not be effective without the proposed new clause.

Mr. THOMSON: Well if that is the case it is no use wasting time.

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: The proposed new clause covers the point raised, and as I intend to move the proposed new clause at the end of the Bill it seems to me that that will be the proper time to discuss the question.

The PREMIER: If we accept a discussion on the amendment we will be confined to very close limits, because, after all, we can only discuss the definition of weighing machines. The question of whether railway machines come under the operation of the Bill can only be dealt with in the proposed new clause.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: In the circumstances I will withdraw my amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 6—Commissioner of Police to administer:

Mr. ROBINSON: This clause goes to the root of the administration of the Bill. It proposes that the administration shall be in the hands of the police, whereas under the existing law it is in the hands of the local authorities. In many of our country districts the roads boards are more closely in touch with the spirit of this measure than the police would be, for in many places where roads boards offices are situated the

visits of a police officer are few and far between. Coming closer to town, the Belmont roads board last night passed a resolution in favour of giving power to roads boards to administer this law. It is a matter of administration, and the question is whether this should be in the hands of the police, or, in respect to country districts, in the hands of local authorities. In another Bill recently discussed it is realised that there is a difference between goldfields and country, and country and the metropolitan area, and I suggest that, in respect to this Bill, there is a difference between the municipality of Perth and police administration in a roads board district. In the roads board districts of Cannington, Queen's Park, and Belmont, there is not a large staff of police, and if the police are to do this work efficiently the staff will require to be increased, whereas if the control of the administration in country districts is handed over to local authorities those local authorities may combine in the appointment of an inspector.

The Premier: They will not do it.

Mr. ROBINSON: The Belmont roads board are willing to undertake it themselves or in conjunction with others.

The Premier: Why do they think of doing it only now?

Mr. ROBINSON: They have not previously had the power.

The Minister for Works: If they had they would not obtain the testing machines.

Mr. ROBINSON: This is a matter which the roads boards have very much at heart. It does not matter who is going to purchase the testing machines. The point is that the Bill can be more effectively administered by the board than by the police. I will vote against the clause.

Mr. SMITH: How does the Minister propose to remunerate the police for administering the measure? He said something of the fines, but I see on such provision in the Bill. If it is his intention to give half the fines to the police force it will be a dangerous precedent.

The Minister for Works: It is not a precedent at all.

The Premier: It is a vice-precedent.

Mr. SMITH: At all events, it is a dangerous practice. Under every similar Bill in the future the police will expect half the fines to be added to their fund. If it means giving the police extra work the men ought to be paid, but to give them half the fines is highly undesirable.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD: Let me explain. In moving the second reading I referred to a clause providing that half the fines should be devoted to the police benefit fund. That clause was in the draft, but on looking through the Bill I find that the compositor has forgotten it. Therefore if any member desires this, it will be necessary to insert a new clause. The essence of the measure is that it shall be administered by the police and not by the local authorities. If it were desired that the local authorities should administer it, a short amending Bill would be all that was necessary to extend the present powers of municipalities to roads boards. The police are in the best position to do the work and would do it as part of their duty. If there proved to be too much work in any district, another policeman would have to be appointed.

Mr. THOMAS: I support the retention of the clause. Municipalities have had an opportunity to administer the existing Act and have not made the success of it which they should have. All the arguments against the continued control by municipalities would apply equally to the control by roads boards. An active officer, under local administration, often brings a shower of trouble upon himself and pressure, having votes behind it, is brought to bear on the council so that the officer frequently loses his job. The police, on the other hand, recognise that if they do their duty their action will receive approval and probably lead to promotion. To strike out the clause would materially injure the Bill.

Mr. HARRISON: If a roads board officer undertook these duties, he would want increased remuneration which would have to be paid out of the rates. In the country districts, every penny of the

rates is required for maintenance of the roads. The police would carry greater weight than a local authority's officer.

Mr. GEORGE: While I agree with the member for Bunbury that pressure might be brought to bear on a local officer, the offence would be for using weighing machines which had not been properly tested, and that would be rather a different thing from what has obtained in the past. It would be fair to give the roads boards the necessary power and try them, and if they cannot administer the law, we could fall back on the police.

Mr. HEITMANN: The previous speaker argued that roads boards should be given a trial.

The Minister for Mines: They have had many trials in various ways.

Mr. HEITMANN: Some years ago a commission under Dr. Black inquired into the matter of health inspection and he found that the influence of local people on the inspectors was a very serious factor. An energetic, conscientious inspector had at times to prosecute members of the local council which placed him in a very awkward position. Naturally there would be a tendency not to inquire too closely into the doings of council members. To overcome that difficulty, the Act was amended to remove from local authorities the power to dismiss a health inspector without the approval of the Minister, and there has been a vast improvement in consequence. The old difficulty of local influence would arise in connection with this measure. It would be much better to place the administration in the hands of the police.

Mr. ROBINSON: To test the question I move an amendment—

*That in line 2 "Commissioner of Police and inspectors" be struck out and the words "local authority, roads board or municipality and its inspectors" inserted in lieu.*

Mr. GRIFFITHS: At a small siding in the outback country I weighed on six scales and each recorded a different weight. I prefer the administration by the police and support the clause.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If the member for Canning had given the

amendment brief consideration he would not have moved it. It is a common practice for roads boards to repudiate anything in regard to health matters. It is difficult to get health boards to carry out the duties. Roads boards have refused to take the responsibility of dismissing officers when that course was necessary and have endeavoured to throw the onus on the Minister. To ask roads boards to administer this measure would be one of the greatest mistakes ever made. A board could not afford to appoint an officer to administer it and the financial position of some of these boards is such that, if they want a road roller, they ask the Government to purchase it for them. Has anyone ever heard, outside the city of Perth, of any action having been taken under the Weights and Measures Act, except in the case of inspectors finding bread of short weight? Even then it has been a Government officer who has taken the action. The local authorities have had the administration placed in their charge but they have not carried out the work. The Bill seeks to introduce a fair and just administration of weights and measures. It is for the purpose of placing it under some person who would have a free hand, who would not be at the beck and call of every member of a roads board, and who would act independently of any person in any district and deal with the matter fairly and justly to all concerned. It would be his one duty to see that the weights and scales were in proper order and that there should be a fair deal for buyer and seller. The hon. member is asking us to bring into existence a system which has proved an entire failure in regard to local officers carrying out local government.

Mr. Robinson: The roads boards have not had an opportunity.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They are the worst of the lot.

Mr. Munsie: There is only one roads board that employs a health inspector.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There is growing up in the State a large Health Department to administer local affairs. That work should be done by the local authorities, but they will not do it. We

are building up a large staff in Western Australia to carry out those local duties for which legislation has been provided. In regard to weights and measures, there is no person who can carry out that Act fairly except policemen. In the counties of England the policemen do this work. The House will make one of the biggest mistakes it has ever made if it places weights and measures under local government control. At one time I fought very hard for control by local authorities, but it has now been proved to me conclusively that a large number of local authorities have failed to carry out the Acts which have been passed for their guidance.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: You are very ungenerous to the roads boards, the members of which are doing a good public work for nothing.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am speaking the truth. This amendment which has been moved will place another Act, possibly more difficult to administer than others, under the control of local authorities. There is not the same difficulty in the metropolitan area, where they are able to administer this class of legislation better than they can in the country districts. I have repeatedly written to roads boards and asked them to take over the control of local health matters. They have refused to do so. We provided that the work should be placed under the Commissioner of Police, who will have inspectors scattered broadcast in every part of Western Australia, and we can then expect to have the Act properly administered. If this provision of the Bill is taken away, to my mind the Bill will become useless, and I am confident it will never be administered in Western Australia.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: While I do not altogether agree with this clause of the Bill, I thoroughly endorse the remarks of the Minister for Works. It is impossible to get officers of local authorities to carry out their duties as officers of public health. There was a lot of trouble under the old Act in this respect. The reason is not far to seek. A man is always amenable to local influences. He

is appointed by the men over whom he has to exercise his powers. While disagreeing with the amendment I think a middle course might be steered. Work of this kind is more or less of a technical nature. In Perth some man has been employed for the last 40 years in administering the Act and the work is great enough for the City Council to employ a man of this description.

The Premier: The Commissioner can employ such a man.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I am coming to that. It is said that it is quite impracticable for the roads boards, or a small municipality, to administer this Act satisfactorily. It has been an open secret that the Act was never administered except by the City Council, and it will not be administered if the amendment is carried. Whilst supporting the clause as it stands, I suggest to the Honorary Minister that instead of the Commissioner of Police being compelled to employ or appoint officers of the police force as inspectors, this provision should be struck out and the whole thing left open. This would give the Commissioner a wider field. There may be an officer of some local board who could well be appointed to the position, and there may be officers of the police force who would not be suitable for such a post. There would be no local influence brought to bear upon such an officer if he were a civilian, for the reason that he would be appointed under the direction of the Commissioner of Police. Generally speaking, of course, the Commissioner would appoint members of the police force. I hope the amendment moved by the hon. member for Canning will not be carried, and that the Honorary Minister will consider my suggested amendment, which is to strike out the words in the next clause, "from the members of the police force." This will then leave the matter quite open.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I agree with the suggestion of the member for Perth (Hon. J. D. Connolly). It is going to be a hard matter to administer this measure so as to deal with the dishonest trader in the back districts. A couple of minutes'

manipulation with a thumb-screw can make a vast deal of alteration in a scale.

Mr. NAIRN: The member for Perth, in my opinion, has solved the question. There is no doubt that the clause must be retained as originally drafted, if effect is to be given to the measure. Roads board secretaries in carrying the measure into effect might be compelled to bring before the court their masters. I know of a roads board officer who in consequence of his diligence in this connection lost his position; That consideration cannot apply to police constables. On the other hand, in certain districts, the timber districts for example, a police officer might not be available; and therefore the Commissioner of Police should be allowed discretion to appoint a roads board officer to an inspectorship under this measure.

Mr. ROBINSON: During the discussion I have been preparing an amendment of the next clause, which I think would meet the case. The same principle runs through both clauses. I am prepared to withdraw my present amendment if the Honorary Minister will agree to the amendment of Clause 7 in the direction suggested by the member for Perth. Sometimes the local authority might be wishful to carry out this measure, and therefore I should like to see a provision empowering the Commissioner of Police to appoint as inspector the officer of such a local authority.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 7—Appointment of inspectors:

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I suggest to the Honorary Minister that it be left open to the Commissioner of Police to appoint inspectors from outside the police force. Perhaps the Honorary Minister will move an amendment to that effect.

Mr. ALLEN: Quite recently, within the past week or two, the Perth City Council appointed a new inspector of weights and measures, who accepted the position on the understanding that it would be permanent. The services of such a man might be utilised if the clause were amended as suggested by the member for Perth.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I move an amendment—

*That in line 2 the words "from the members of the police force" be struck out.*

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD: I would be prepared to accept an amendment which would have the effect desired by the member for Perth, but I am of opinion that his amendment in its present form would weaken the powers of the Commissioner of Police under this measure. I want the measure to be administered by the police wherever that is advisable. At the same time, if there is a good inspector in Perth, as stated, then the Commissioner should have power to appoint him an inspector under this measure. I agree with the member for Swan (Mr. Nairn) that in some isolated localities it may be necessary to appoint a person outside the police force, owing to a constable not being available. Power to do that, however, might be given in the form of a proviso. I wish to retain the direction to the Commissioner to have this measure administered by the police wherever possible.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I support the amendment of the member for Perth, chiefly for the reason that in many of the country districts, especially along newly constructed railway lines, it would be extremely difficult for the police to keep in touch with the administration of this measure in the various centres of population. From personal experience I know that the majority of the country police have more duties than they can possibly attend to. The suggestion that members of local governing bodies should be afforded the opportunity of acting as inspectors in an honorary capacity is an excellent one. At the last conference of roads boards that was one of the main questions discussed. I do not for a moment favour the administration of the measure by local governing bodies, as I agree with the Honorary Minister that their administration of it has proved an absolute failure. Acting in conjunction with the police, however, the members of local governing bodies would be able to extend

protection to the whole community. Reflections have been cast on the local governing bodies, unintentionally no doubt, by Ministers, and especially by the Minister for Works. While some of those bodies have not come up to expectations, I know there are many worthy local governing bodies doing much towards the advancement of this measure. The Honorary Minister said that he wished this measure administered by the police on the score of economy; but efficiency should not be sacrificed to economy; and if the administration is left entirely to the police we shall not obtain the results we expect. I hope, therefore, that the Honorary Minister will accept the amendment. With a view to making it clearer, the words "honorary or otherwise" might be inserted after "inspectors" in line 1. My electorate has been particularly anxious for this measure. Only last session I was doing my utmost, at the instigation of local governing bodies in my district, to obtain an amendment of the law relating to weights and measures. This clause as it stands will not, I fear, effect the desired reform.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD: I am prepared to accept the amendment moved by the member for Perth.

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: I think that the roads boards conference, in considering weights and measures legislation, had in view the existing Act. They desired the extension of that Act to roads boards. I believe that conference did not know of the proposal to place weights and measures legislation in the hands of the police for administration. That is a novel proposal, so far as Western Australia is concerned. Speaking from a life-long association with roads boards, I think those bodies would prefer to see this matter in the hands of the police, whereby they would be relieved of the trouble and annoyance occasioned them by their administration of the existing law.

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

Clauses 8 to 16—agreed to.

Clause 17—Contracts and sales to be according to standard weights and measures:

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I have already suggested that the clause goes further than we imagine. It might even be made to apply to the cutting of sleepers.

The Premier: How?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: If a sleeper hewer cuts a sleeper a smaller size than the contract specifies, under this clause he will be liable to be fined.

The Premier: The contract is off; we can do that now.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The clause goes further than the Minister desires. Is it not sufficient to protect the retail purchaser? I thought it advisable to draw attention to the matter.

Mr. GEORGE: The member for Northam does not quite understand the position in regard to sleepers in such a way as to enable him to make his point. If a sleeper is not the right size it is rejected, and the clause under discussion enables that to be done. After it has been rejected it can be taken by the buyer under another agreement. The point is a very simple one. If a sleeper is cut under the stipulated size the buyer is not compelled to take it, but he can take it by making another arrangement.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Bill provides just the reverse. It says that if a contract is not made in accordance with the Bill it shall be void. It is obvious that all work done, all contracts made, all goods carried, all goods sold, and all goods purchased—everything in fact, must be in accordance with the provisions of the measure. We cannot contract ourselves out of that position.

Mr. George: What it says is that the inch shall be the inch of the State.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: All I ask is that the Honorary Minister shall ascertain whether this clause does not go much further than it need go.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD: The member for Northam has mistaken the meaning of the clause. The object of it is to get a standard of weights and measures and anything sold by weight or measure must be according to the stan-

dard. The hon. member might argue that if he contracted with a tailor to cut him a coat and the tailor cut that coat shorter than the measurement given him, the tailor could, under the Bill, be fined. The cutting of a sleeper has no more to do with the Bill than the cutting of a coat. If a sleeper is not up to the size or quality that is expected, the inspector refuses to take it, and that is the end of it, unless, of course, a separate bargain is made.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 18 to 22—agreed to.

Clause 23—False declaration as to measures, weights, etc.:

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Here we get a new element in the inclusion of the word "ordered," the clause referring to the quantity ordered or purchased. Does ordered mean purchased?

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD: It does not necessarily mean purchased. At all events, if hon. members think it ought to come out, there is no objection.

Mr. S. STUBBS: The word should be deleted. If I sent a ton of produce on order and the carter dropped some of it, would it not be unfair to punish me?

The Premier: It would not be a wilful act. Only wilful acts are contemplated.

Mr. GEORGE: I think the clause would be better without the word. I move an amendment—

*That in line 6 the word "ordered" be struck out.*

The PREMIER: The clause provides that the supplying of a quantity less than that ordered must be accompanied by wilful intent to obtain payment for the full quantity; otherwise it will not come within the scope of the Bill. Our chief object is to protect the purchaser. The word proposed to be struck out should remain.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It is the delivery, and not the order, which sets up the debt from the purchaser to the supplier. The clause is carrying legislation too far altogether. Under it if a merchant sent along less than the quantity ordered he would be open to conviction, even though he had no intention of



charging for the full quantity ordered. I will support the amendment.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD: On reconsideration I see that the word is quite necessary to the clause. A man who ordered a cwt. of potatoes declines to take delivery when they arrive, because he finds the weight is short. The seller, who had intended to cheat the buyer, is ready to claim that, as the potatoes have not been taken delivery of, the purchase is not complete. It is to meet a case such as this that "ordered" has been inserted.

Mr. GEORGE: If lines 5 and 6 were struck out altogether we would all be in agreement. Lots of things are ordered which cannot be delivered all at once.

The Attorney General: There would be no false pretence about that.

Mr. GEORGE: It is reasonable to strike out all words which convey no particular meaning.

The Attorney General: These words convey a very big meaning.

Mr. GEORGE: Well I cannot see it.

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

Mr. GEORGE: I ask leave to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Mr. GEORGE: I move an amendment—

*That all the words after "him" in line 5 to the end of the clause be struck out.*

The clause evidently aims at making a person liable for a false declaration. It has to be read in conjunction with Clause 20 which requires an invoice to be supplied with goods. The delivery note would contain a description of the measure, quantity, gauge or weight of the goods, and that is all that is needed. The clause should not be hampered with superfluous words capable of being misconstrued.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The words proposed to be struck out are necessary. Clause 20 deals directly with the delivery invoice when the goods are delivered, but they may be delivered by

a person other than the one who sold them. They may be weighed by a person acting as agent for the seller and it would be a valid excuse for the seller if he pleaded that he had not made up or delivered the goods.

Mr. George: A man is liable for his agent.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: But that would be an excuse, and the object is to allow of no excuse and to prevent all quibbles.

Hon. J. Mitchell. Why "ordered"?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: A man might order a cwt. of potatoes but on delivery, being convinced that there was short weight, refuse to accept them, notwithstanding that an invoice was presented with them. The person delivering them would be guilty of a false declaration and, though the goods were not accepted, would be none the less guilty of an offence.

Hon. J. Mitchell: He is not to deliver unless he can deliver the exact quantity ordered.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: If a person could not deliver the quantity ordered, and presented an invoice showing the exact quantity, there would be no offence, but if the quantity ordered was not delivered, and an invoice was presented alleging that there was full weight, it would constitute an offence.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Then you do not require the word "ordered" because there would be a sale.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The customer might refuse delivery, being convinced that the goods were underweight, but notwithstanding that an offence would have been committed.

Mr. Harrison: The vendor might want proof that the goods had been ordered.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The attempt to effect delivery would be proof that the goods had been ordered.

Mr. Harrison: Both the order and the purchase should be mentioned to ensure equity on both sides.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The clause covers nearly every possible case

but the amendment would allow a means of escape.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Is not it enough to provide that a man gets what he pays for?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This clause will ensure that he does.

Hon. J. Mitchell: If he does not take delivery of the goods, he does not pay for them.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: True; nevertheless, a person presenting a wrong invoice would be guilty of false pretences.

Mr. Wansbrough: There is no mention here of an invoice.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: There is in Clause 20, but it means a false declaration of any description.

Hon. J. Mitchell: The person must send an invoice.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No matter how he attempts to deceive, mislead, or cheat the customer by false weight, this clause will reach him.

Mr. Robinson: Will you add to the clause "with intent to deceive?"

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: There is not much harm in that, but I consider the words are superfluous, and that the clause covers everything required. Taken as a whole, the clause makes it an offence wilfully to mislead. Hon. members are attempting to alter the clause in other directions than proposed by the amendment. The amendment is necessary if the clause is to be complete and cover all possible cases which may arise under it.

Mr. GEORGE: I cannot quite see eye to eye with the Attorney General. The word "order" covers the operation of a person going to a place and having a desire to purchase stuff, ordering, say, a ton of goods. It may not be possible for him to get that ton of material all at once. Therefore, what will happen if the vendor only gives him 18cwt., and an invoice for that amount, promising to send the balance later; If the Attorney General can assure me this case will be met, I am satisfied.

Mr. ROBINSON: The Attorney General only means, apparently, that it is

to be an offence if an act done in connection with weighing has been done for the purpose of deceiving. If the words "with intent to deceive" were included in the clause, that would make it perfectly clear and please everyone.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD: The Attorney General assures me there is no harm in the words. I therefore accept the amendment.

Mr. GEORGE: I ask leave to withdraw my amendment. I accept the amendment of the hon. member for Can-  
ning.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Mr. ROBINSON: I move an amendment—

*That at the end of the clause the following words be added:—"with intent to deceive."*

Amendment passed, the clause as amended agreed to.

Clauses 24, 25—agreed to.

Clause 26—Verification and Stamp-  
ing:

Mr. GEORGE: It will be a difficult matter for farmers and other people in the back blocks to take their weighing machines, etc., every two years to be stamped. This, I think, is more than is necessary. If the weighing machines are properly stamped by Government stamp it will be very easy for a police constable travelling around a district to see whether they have been tampered with in any way. It would be very difficult for anyone to so tamper with the weights or scales that the inspector would not be able to detect the deed. It is too much to expect the farmer to take this responsibility upon himself every two years.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: If the words "for the purposes of this Act travelling inspectors may be appointed" were added to Subclause 2, I think it would meet the case. It is not fair to ask people in country districts to travel 20 miles every two years to have their scales re-verified. If travelling inspectors were appointed it would make matters very much easier. There is already a system throughout the railway service provid-

ing for a systematic supervision or inspection of railway scales, which are registered periodically. What is to prevent the Railway Department working in with their standard weights with the administrators of this Act? I refer particularly to railway sidings.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: The officers there can now be appointed inspectors.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: In my opinion we want travelling adjusters. The Railway Department have already got them, and I see no reason why they should not be utilised.

Mr. GEORGE: With regard to sub-clause 1, I think if we had a travelling van brought up to the different railway sidings, there would not be much difficulty in respect to farmers bringing their weights along to be verified, even every two years. It is a difficult proposition for farmers living along the Darling Ranges, down as far as Bunbury and Bridgetown, to cart their weights and scales over bad roads for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this clause.

Mr. O'Loughlen: A settler has to go in for his supplies periodically.

Mr. GEORGE: As a rule his supplies are brought from the nearest town and are sent by rail to the nearest point to his home. If farmers do go down for the purpose of getting supplies they generally go on some special day, but it might not be at the time when the inspector was paying his visit. If the suggestion made by the hon. member for Beverley is adopted—and I think it is feasible—then the two years can stand. If not I would like to see the two years altered to four years. If it was known that an adjusting van was to go to a siding on a special day it would be little trouble for the farmers in the district to journey to the siding and have their weights and measures verified.

The Premier: That could be arranged by the officer on the railway van being made an inspector.

Mr. GEORGE: That, too, might be done.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD: It is the intention to appoint officers where it is most convenient for the people.

Mr. GEORGE: A travelling van for this purpose would set the matter right.

The PREMIER: The Government propose later, if it is acceptable to the Committee, to introduce a clause providing that the Commissioner of Police may, by arrangement with the Commissioner of Railways, examine and test all weighing machines used by the Railway Department. For that purpose it would be necessary that a police inspector travel with the Railway Department's inspector in a van, and that van could be declared an office for the purpose of this measure. Weighing appliances in the country districts could be tested on that van.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 27 to 31—agreed to.

Clause 32—Application of last two preceding sections:

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: This clause, in its present form, will inflict hardship on the proprietors of small woodyards. It is already provided that all wood must be sold by weight. That is a very good principle, but this clause says that "the last two preceding sections, so far as they relate to firewood, shall apply. . . . to the metropolitan police district," but that their operation may be extended to other places by proclamation. A wood-yard at Highgate Hill, for example, where there is no weighbridge, would require to send its wood into Perth for the purpose of weighing, since weighing by basket-loads is unpayable. The proprietors of small woodyards contend that the effect of this clause would be to throw the whole of the trade into the hands of vendors of firewood obtained from the sawmills. These provisions are taken from the New South Wales Act, and in Sydney they are workable because all the woodyards in the Sydney metropolitan area are, I understand, situated in railway yards. I move an amendment—

*That in lines 3 and 4 the words "the metropolitan police district, but may be extended to" be struck out, and that in line 3 the word "other" be struck out, and "districts or" inserted in lieu.*

Mr. HARDWICK: If the amendment is accepted by the Government, it will overcome the disabilities which will other-

wise be entailed upon small woodyards, as I pointed out in my speech on the second reading.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD: I accept the amendment, which in my opinion represents even an improvement on the original wording of the clause. Probably the clause, as it stands, might create difficulties, especially as regards the sale of wood. I myself have had letters on the subject. The working of the measure can be tested in one district first.

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

#### Clause 33—Fraudulent sales:

Mr. GEORGE: Subclause (b) prohibits the sale of wet coal or firewood, though I observe the limitation, "with intent to defraud." How will this apply in the case of wet firewood during the winter months?

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD: The intent to defraud will have to be proved to the satisfaction of the magistrate or justices before whom the case is heard. It is possible even in summer time when there is no rain, that a man may deliberately pour water on the wood. If the fraudulent intent can be proved the man will be punished.

Mr. George: You throw the onus on him of proving that it was wet by natural means.

The Premier: We have to prove that it did not get wet by natural means.

Clause put and passed.

#### Clause 34—Regulations:

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: It has been customary in the past to sell wheat and flour and all grain by gross weight in bags or sacks. It appears to me that under the Bill the farmer will only be allowed to sell by net weight. That ought to be remedied. I move an amendment—

*That the following paragraph be inserted to stand as (f). "the sale of grain and mill products of such, delivered in bags or sacks at the gross weight according to trade custom."*

Mr. George: What are you going to do about wool?

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: The custom is to take the tare off. There is nothing allowed for tare in dealing with grain.

Mr. HARRISON: It would be a great saving to the State and farmers if our jutes were sold separately. For that reason I would much rather not see the amendment inserted.

The Attorney General: Whichever way it is sold the amendment will only give the Government power to make regulations. It does not say "You must do it."

Mr. HARRISON: You are still continuing the practice.

The Premier: Not necessarily.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: This Bill does not prevent the seller getting payment for the sack.

The Premier: The Bill provides that when you are declaring the weight you shall declare the net weight. It prevents the farmer selling the bag as wheat.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I have no objection to the amendment, but there is nothing in the Bill that makes it possible for us to get value.

Mr. THOMSON: The amendment should be carried. It simply gives the Government the right to declare, if it is deemed necessary, that the established custom shall be carried into effect. As the law stands at present, buyers this year may say "We will not pay you for the bags." I would certainly like to see the farming community paid for the bags. If the amendment is inserted they will have the advantage of being paid for the bags.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD: It will be advantageous to add the amendment to give the Government power to make regulations if they are considered necessary. On the general question I am of opinion that it will not make much difference whichever way we do it.

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

Clauses 35, 36, 37—agreed to.

Clause 38—Forged Stamp:

Mr. ROBINSON: Is there any clause prior to this one that deals with the sale by net weight. I am merely asking for information.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Clause 21 does.

Clause passed.

Clauses 39 to 49—agreed to.

Clause 50—Fees:

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Will the Minister state whether it is intended to reward policemen for acting as watch-dogs in the public interests? It has been stated that the police will get their ordinary salary, but few people know how arduous are the duties of the police in the country, and some inducement should be given them to discharge the extra duties.

The Premier: The inducement will be the instructions they receive from the Commissioner.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD: The policeman will have the inducement of promotion. If he is diligent in his labours he may eventually become Commissioner of Police.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 51—Regulations:

Mr. MUNSIE: I move an amendment—

*That after "used" in line 5 of paragraph (g) the following be inserted:—  
"or shall not be used either generally or."*

I am moving this at the request of the member for Leonora (Mr. Foley). The reason given by the hon. member for this amendment is that, as the paragraph empowers the Minister, or those controlling the administration of the measure, to say what scales shall be used, the power should also be given to say what scales shall not be used.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD: The amendment is not at all necessary. The clause as it stands meets the case. Every machine has to be verified as to standard, and if the officer decides that certain machines shall not be used, he will refuse to stamp those machines.

Mr. NAIRN: I do not know what was in the mind of the originator of the amendment, but certainly to give the Minister power to say what machines shall not be used is altogether different from giving him power to say what shall be used. The hon. member must have had some good purpose in his mind, because he has given the subject a great deal of thought. The Minister ought to have the right to prohibit the use of any machine.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I think the idea the hon. member must have had was that as many of these platform machines are easily manipulated, it is desirable to forbid the use of those particular machines.

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

New clause:

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: I move—

*That the following new clause be added:—This Act shall apply to all weights and measures and weighing and measuring instruments in use at or upon any railways or tramways, or upon any station, pier, wharf, jetty, or other premises in connection therewith.*

This is provided for in the New South Wales Act, from which the Bill is taken. I notice that in the New South Wales Parliament great stress was laid on the fact that the measure was applicable to the Railways, and members generally seemed gratified at that fact. Even the Minister in New South Wales, in introducing the Bill, remarked that there was then no power over those in charge of railway weighing machines, a condition of affairs that would be rectified by the Bill. The same position obtains here, and the words used by the Minister in New South Wales could be used in Western Australia to-night. This was the only clause to which special prominence was given, as well by the Minister as by some of the members, one of whom said he had sat at a railway station all day and watched dogs being weighed in with the wheat. Other members remarked that, while certain weights were given at the railway siding where the wheat was despatched, the same wheat on arrival at its destination disclosed a marked shrinkage in weight. That is exactly what takes place here. I have left out the words "Commissioner of Railways" because I want the clause to apply to the Midland Railway.

The Premier: Then you will have to make it apply specially, because they are under a special Act.

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: Then we can overcome that difficulty by inserting the

words "State railways or other railways." I simply ask that farmers should have a guarantee that the railway weights and measures are inspected the same as those of private individuals.

The PREMIER: The hon. member has not followed the exact wording of the New South Wales Act, but has included the Midland railway, which otherwise would have been excluded. Considering our climatic conditions, it is not a serious reflection on the Commissioner of Railways that complaints are occasionally heard about the weights handed in at the various weighbridges. The turnover of the railways amounts to four millions per annum and the revenue earned is over two millions, and it is practically all earned from freights. Therefore, occasional complaints must be expected. The desire of members that our railway machines should be correct is shared by Ministers. So far as is possible, railway weighing machines are kept correct by the men employed for that purpose. There could be no object in having crook machines either from the point of view of the Commissioner or the employees charged with the responsibility of making the tests. They would gain nothing unless they acted for a consideration in collusion with a person forwarding goods for sale. If that happened, it would happen infrequently, because the penalty would be so severe that a man would hesitate to take the risk, and an Act of this description would not prevent it. The new clause would necessitate a continuous, not periodical, reviewing of the tare of our trucks. We have 10,000 wagons and fully 50 per cent. of them would vary in weight week by week. A wagon loaded with wheat at Dumbleyung on a hot summer's day, destined for Fremantle, might pass through one of our noted thunderstorms, and that would cause the tare to vary considerably. If the Commissioner were brought under this measure, and such a truck were tested at Fremantle, the inspector might suspect fraud on the part of the Commissioner in fixing the tare.

Mr. George: From Collie coal coming wet out of the pits, a truck would absorb 2cwt. or 3cwt. of water.

The PREMIER: Yes; it would be useless to make such a provision apply to the tare of trucks. The section in the New South Wales Act is a dead letter and will ever remain so.

Mr. George: And has never been anything else.

The PREMIER: That there are complaints in New South Wales demonstrates the difficulties of freighting on the railways. Though farmers probably accept the Commissioner's weights, they are intended not for selling purposes but to adjust freight charges. As the Commissioner has pointed out to me, he might lose two cwt. one day, but the adjustment generally works out evenly between clients and Commissioner. Under the Government Railways Act, the railways are vested in the Commissioner, and a provision to bring him under this measure would not stand at law if an endeavour were made to bring him to book for some supposed offence.

Hon. J. Mitchell: He is subject to all the laws.

The PREMIER: He is subject to the Government Railways Act.

Mr. Heitmann: He is subject to various trading Acts.

The PREMIER: The Commissioner of Police could not sue the Commissioner of Railways.

The Minister for Works: The Crown cannot sue itself.

Hon. H. B. Lefroy: That applies in New South Wales.

The PREMIER: Probably the Minister there appreciated the point and did not care whether the provision was inserted or not. The new clause would have no value. When the matter was first brought under my notice, I submitted a minute to the Commissioner stating that I considered railway weighing machines should be tested and kept up to standard the same as other machines. The Commissioner pointed out that men are engaged in regularly testing the weighing appliances.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Why not let it go that far?

The PREMIER: Then there can be no objection to an arrangement between the Commissioner of Police who will administer the Act to allow his inspector to accompany a railway inspector for testing railway machines.

Mr. George: To see if the work is done properly?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Duplicating the work; two men doing one man's work.

The PREMIER: No, I can see a possible value. Owners of other weighing machines might be able to make use of a railway van every two years to have their machines tested. Thus a saving would be effected to the community. When the Commissioner of Police found it necessary to send a testing officer along the Great Southern, he could arrange with the Commissioner of Railways to inspect the railway machines.

Mr. S. Stubbs: That is a capital idea and I do not think any member will object to it.

The PREMIER: I suggest that the new clause be withdrawn and the following substituted—"The Commissioner of Police, by arrangement with the Commissioner of Railways, may from time to time examine and test any weighing instrument used by the Railways." By using the words "weighing instrument" we shall exclude trucks, because it is impracticable to continually test the tare of trucks. There is one disadvantage that my proposal does not embrace the Midland Railway Co. as it should do. Of course the Midland Railway Co. could not guarantee the correctness of the tare of their trucks any more than we could. Complaints are frequently made regarding freight shortages which, when boiled down, are found to be unjustified. Chaff might be loaded during wet weather, and might absorb a fair amount of moisture which in weight is fairly heavy.

Mr. S. Stubbs: It is always covered with a tarpaulin.

Mr. George: Not always.

The PREMIER: It might be loaded wet and before arriving at the goldfields, perhaps a week later, might become dry and show a considerable loss of weight, and then the accuracy of the railway weighbridges would be questioned.

Mr. George: A lot of chaff is steamed before it is cut.

The PREMIER: We desire that the railway machines shall be correct and, if they can be examined as I have indicated, it will meet the case.

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: In view of the Premier's proposal, which I think will meet the objection, I ask leave to withdraw the proposed new clause.

The PREMIER: I do not know whether the Minister in charge intends to recommit the Bill. It would be desirable to get the Parliamentary draftsman to frame a clause to include the Midland Railway Company. If the Bill is not to be recommitted, we can give an undertaking that the provision will be inserted in another place.

The CHAIRMAN: It would be advisable if members having new clauses or amendments to propose, placed them on the Notice Paper, because, by merely reading out a proposed amendment, members are not given a fair opportunity to consider it. An amendment, too, might be sprung upon members and the Chairman of Committees has no opportunity to consider whether it is in order. For the sake of the proper conduct of business, I ask members to place any proposed amendments or new clauses on the Notice Paper so that they may be fairly considered.

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: I am prepared to accept the Premier's assurance that the provision will be moved in another place.

Mr. George: What if it is not included?

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD: I see no reason to recommit the Bill and it is necessary to get some measures through for consideration in another place. I will give an assurance that the proposed clause will be moved as promised.

Proposed new clause by leave withdrawn.

Schedules (a), (b), (c) and (d) agreed to.  
Title—agreed to.  
Bill reported with amendments.

# BILL—SALE OF LIQUOR REGULATION.

*In Committee.*

Resumed from the 31st August. Mr. McDowall in the Chair, the Attorney General in charge of the Bill.

Clause 4—Referendum as to closing time:

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: In pursuance of the amendments already made to Clause 3 and of the notice of which I gave on the Notice Paper, I move an amendment—

*That after the word "district" at the words be added, "the rolls under the Commonwealth Electoral Act, 1902-11, end of the first paragraph the following may be used in taking the vote."*

Amendment passed.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The proposal in the last paragraph of this clause to provide that the question shall be submitted again to the electors on a resolution of both Houses of Parliament is unusual, and grave objections can be raised to it. This is a Bill to regulate the sale of liquor during war time and it covers that period. Yet by resolution of both Houses of Parliament a part of the whole Act may be applied to the whole State or a district. That is a very objectionable feature.

The Minister for Mines: Parliament takes the responsibility; it cannot be done without resolution.

Hon. J. A. CONNOLLY: We are to re-enact by a simple resolution. If it is to continue the Act can be renewed in the ordinary way.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: It is not a re-enactment. Take the poll while the Act is in force, under the Act.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: It is a re-enactment. I move an amendment—

*That the following words be struck out:—"If at any time during the continuance of this Act, a resolution is passed by both Houses of Parliament to the effect that the question be again submitted to the electors, either gener-*

*ally or in any particular district, the question shall be submitted again accordingly."*

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I trust the hon. member will not persist in his amendment. I admit that it is something new to provide for the operation of the Act by again putting it before the people by means of a resolution of the two Chambers. It is nothing extraordinary that the Houses should have that power. It would not have struck the hon. member at all if he had provided that it could be resubmitted by proclamation of His Excellency the Governor.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: A proclamation is not an Act of Parliament.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Neither do the votes of the two Houses constitute an Act of Parliament.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: You are making the resolution equivalent to an Act.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Not in the slightest. This Act, unless otherwise provided, dies a natural death in December, 1916. If before that time there should be any public doubts or any doubts in Parliament as to the wisdom of killing it before that time a resolution of the two Houses of Parliament enables us to submit it again to the people for their decision.

Mr. George: Then it should go to the whole State and not to a single district.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: We can apply it to any district or to the whole State.

Mr. George: You can pick out whichever district you like.

Mr. Heitmann: What is the idea?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The idea is if any doubt arises before the Act dies naturally that it can be submitted again to the people. Suppose we get this Act in operation next January, and peace is declared in February, and the Act is running on until the end of 1916, it might be said that we were using the Act under false pretences, and both Houses may say, "Let us again refer the matter to the people."

Mr. Robinson: Then shorten the date to March.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I do not propose to do that. Lord Kitchener



and others have pretty well told us that the war will last another 12 months.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: If you make this run on to the end of the war and the war lasts two years it will still be in force.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: In a later clause we provide for this continuance by the same means, namely, by a resolution of the two Houses.

Mr. Heitmann: Why not allow both Houses to say whether we shall discontinue the operation of the Act?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The whole principle of the Bill is based upon the referendum. It is the body and soul of it.

Mr. GEORGE: I do not like the clause at all. Assuming that under the referendum any particular district declares for, say, 11 o'clock, under these provisions after whatever interval may be deemed advisable, the question can again be submitted to the electors with a view of getting the time altered.

The Attorney General: It must first be submitted to Parliament.

Mr. GEORGE: We know that. While I believe every member of the House is in favour of temperance, I do not think we want to embarrass a trade which has been established for some years.

The Minister for Mines: That means that Parliament may do something to harass the trade.

Mr. GEORGE: If Parliament decides to abolish the licensing system to-morrow it can be done. If this provision is included, it will to some extent interfere with people who have paid for their licenses and have set up their businesses, by hanging over them the possibility of another interference within comparatively a few months.

The Attorney General: No action can be taken until next year. The Federal referenda will be taken in December, and then this matter must remain in abeyance until the meeting of this Parliament.

Mr. GEORGE: The Attorney General's statement shows clearly that the provision is not needed. Really, the provision represents an attempt to push the

temperance movement a little further than is justified by the other arguments used for the Bill. If it is found necessary next year to bring in further temperance legislation, let the whole question be discussed then. I may point out that country hotel keepers now report that their trade is practically a losing one.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: If the operation of this measure is not extended, the provision now under discussion seems unnecessary. Parliament is not likely to carry a resolution which will have the effect of causing more than one referendum to be taken on the same question within the space of twelve months. If the operation of the measure is extended, this provision is likely to cause a lot of trouble. It would be desirable to insert a provision that the people themselves may at stated periods ask for a referendum. We might provide that a certain percentage of the electors in each district could require a referendum to be taken.

Member: You want to make this a permanent measure.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: I would like the Attorney General to inform the Committee whether, if this measure is made permanent, a poll will be taken by proclamation.

The Attorney General: No.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: A provision such as I have suggested is necessary, because at present there is nothing to guide those administering the measure as to when they shall take another poll.

Mr. CARPENTER: It seems farcical to take a poll to decide a question for 12 months, and then during the 12 months do one of two things—carry a resolution to extend the decision arrived at by referendum, or take another referendum to revoke that decision. This provision overloads the Bill altogether, and holds up the entire subject to ridicule.

The Attorney General: Nonsense!

Mr. CARPENTER: Other members may be allowed to hold an opinion, as well as the Attorney General. If the referendum should result in a close contest in any one district, then the defeated side will get to work very quickly amongst members of Parliament, threat-

ening them, "Undo that, or out you go next election." As a matter of fact, that very course is being taken in South Australia to-day. We heard this, from the member for Forrest (Mr. O'Loghlen). The State of South Australia had declared for 6 o'clock closing, but the City and suburbs of Adelaide had declared for 11 o'clock; and as a result Adelaide members were being asked by their constituents, "What are you going to do about it? Are you going to pass a Bill to force us to close at 6 o'clock, when we do not want to close before 11?"

Mr. O'Loghlen: But the members approached are not a majority of the House.

Mr. CARPENTER: I am sure the members for Adelaide and suburbs are Government supporters to-day. The matter is causing them very much tribulation and we shall have the same experience here if we leave the door open as suggested by this provision. I stand by the Government, but it seems to me the Bill is being overloaded and I hope the Government will cut this provision out.

Mr. ROBINSON: We must not forget that Parliament is supreme, and that if we insert a provision of this nature in a statute the effect is to create what I may call factious opposition in the country. Parliament when dealing with laws should take upon itself to place them on such a stable foundation as not to upset at a later time some social or economic conditions of the country. In this particular matter we are legislating for a period ending in December, 1916. We are going to try an experiment. Let us try it.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am a little astonished that the amendment is supported by members who take diametrically opposite views on the temperance question. What is the object of the Bill? It is to make sure at all times that we are carrying out the will of the people.

Mr. Taylor: During war time.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It may happen, as has been said by the member for Perth, that a vote may not correctly reflect the views of the people, or it may not do justice to those who want some security, as it is alleged, in their trade, or it may not be doing absolutely right

from the point of view of the publicans. I am taking the view that the time is coming when we should not hem ourselves in from the public with impassable walls. We are trying to make it impossible to reach the public, and the assumption is that we should take the responsibility and not ask the people. I am taking the diametrically opposite view, that the more we can be in touch with the people, the safer will be our resultant laws. Therefore, I am making provision here to rectify any possible error that may have been made either against the publicans or the temperance party.

Hon. J. Mitchell: There is no need to put it in here.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I want to put it where it will be of service. If under the pretence of bringing in legislation to regulate the closing hours of licensed premises during war time, our actual intention and purpose is to get a permanent measure on the statute-book that the people cannot touch or alter, then I say we are hypocritical, and we are getting a permanent measure under false pretences. I am not going to be a party to that. It is absolutely and positively absurd to try by compulsion to make the people sober.

Mr. Carpenter: Who is trying to do that?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member wants a permanent Bill.

Mr. Carpenter: The Attorney General is misrepresenting me altogether. I said that what I wanted was the referendum taken once every three years.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member wants the referendum every three years whether it is needed or not. Is it not a matter that will appeal to the intelligence of those who represent the constituencies as to whether it ought, or ought not to go to the constituencies again for a further appeal, and are we to have no means, if necessary, of again appealing to the people? We do not know what may happen during the next 12 months. We do not know the state of public excitement that may come about in this city of Perth. If we are going to have

a Local Option Bill regulated by Part 5 of the Act of 1911, I am with hon. members, but I would have no excuse at this stage for introducing it. There is, however, reasonable excuse for the introduction of the Bill now before the Committee. I am anxious that we should be fair and not, under false colours, introduce a permanent Bill. The Bill would have been couched in these words, "It shall cease on the declaration of peace," and then the people could express their opinion. Unfortunately, however, by the Standing Orders of another place we could not so frame the clause, because the Bill would then have been defeated in the Legislative Council. We were obliged to fix a definite date for the determination of the measure, and we fixed December, 1916. If the war comes to an end before that time, provision is made for asking whether the continuance of the Bill is desired.

Mr. TAYLOR: The Attorney General has failed to convince me that the sub-clause is necessary. We cannot possibly take a referendum until December of this year, and it will not be possible to act on that until January. The Bill will last until December, 1916, unless by a resolution of both Houses it is determined before then. Does the Attorney General, or any other member, believe that when we meet next session we are going to pass a resolution to provide for the taking of another referendum next year? Are we going to continue taking a referendum each year? The measure is one for war time: that is the title of it, and that makes the measure more acceptable to this Chamber, and I believe to the country generally. If the war be over early next year, the Bill of itself should really cease, because it is a Bill for war time. The Attorney General, however, has pointed out that he cannot make it cease on the termination of the war because of the Standing Orders of another place. He has to stipulate a date, and he fixed the date doubtless on the information of the highest authorities that the war will last perhaps another year. The referendum

is to be taken in December because of the facilities afforded by the Federal Government in connection with their referendum. If we take a referendum on our own account it will be very costly and the condition of our finances will prevent us from doing that for the next four or five years.

Mr. HUDSON: We are going to spend £5,000 on the referendum and there is a notice on the wall of one of the public buildings that 800 children are in want of food.

Mr. TAYLOR: If that be true, and the statements made by the temperance people be true, it is overwhelming testimony in favour of the necessity for this Bill. If those children are starving, and that starvation is caused by over-indulgence in alcohol on the part of the parents, there is need for this Bill, not in war time only but for all time. We are only overloading the measure with a clause that will not be availed of. We can strike out this clause without injuring the measure, and so preclude a lot of people, who may be defeated at the first referendum, from agitating for another merely because there is provision in the Bill for a second.

Mr. THOMAS: I am surprised at the opposition of hon. members on this side to giving the people an opportunity of holding the second referendum should Parliament deem it necessary. I could understand this on the part of Opposition members, because a referendum is against their political principles.

Mr. GILCHRIST. Where did you get that idea from?

Mr. THOMAS: I am at a loss to understand how hon. members who advocate the referendum as a general principle can now declare it to be dangerous.

Mr. TAYLOR: Nobody has said that. Be fair.

Mr. THOMAS: The clause simply provides that Parliament shall have power to say that if another referendum is desirable it shall be held. What possible objection can there be to that? Why all this fear and trembling lest the people should once more have a chance

of expressing their opinions? The first referendum is to be submitted to the people in December. Certain conditions now prevailing may have a powerful influence on the minds of the people at the first referendum. They may give a verdict in favour of six o'clock closing, yet, during the succeeding twelve months circumstances may so change as to bring about a new condition of mind in the people, who may then desire a further opportunity of expressing their opinions. While I am a supporter of six o'clock closing as a permanent institution, at the same time I do not wish to take an unfair advantage of the people. At the end of the succeeding 12 months representations may be made to the House that there are reasonable grounds for assuming that the people have changed their opinion. Why, then, should we take away the instrument which gives Parliament the power to say in such circumstances "Very well, once again you shall decide what the conditions in Western Australia are to be"? Who has a better right than the people themselves to say what those conditions shall be? No measure passed through Parliament can be thoroughly effective if it goes beyond the wishes of the people. Why all this fear of the referendum, this hesitation to trust the people? It seems to me there are underlying influences at work, and consequently one may be disposed to try to get in what one desires under false appearances. To my thinking the clause is one of the most important in the Bill. I repeat that I do not wish to take any advantage of the people. I wish the Bill to be administered effectively, so long as the people are content that it should remain in operation. It is astonishing that those who have advocated the principle of the referendum should at a time like this call into question its justice. In a democratic country the people are supreme in the last analysis, and they should be supreme. I am sticking up for a hard and fast principle which is a great safeguard to the people. One hon. member, who by his interjections appears to be an opponent of this measure, has re-

marked that we are going to spend £5,000 on a referendum while some thousands of children are starving in this State. The sum mentioned represents a very low cost if it is going to improve the prevailing conditions. If its expenditure should bring us six o'clock closing there will be no starving children in this State. The carrying of the referendum will save a great deal of money now being wasted in other channels, and which will then be used to feed and clothe the children of Western Australia.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Even if the clause be deleted Parliament has absolute power over the matter, for Parliament can either amend or repeal any existing Act, or order that a further referendum be taken at any time. It is true that the clause will save the trouble of introducing an amending Bill. The member who has just sat down would have it appear to the people that this House objects to a second referendum. All we say is that there should not be too many referendums.

Mr. Munsie: The clause only gives power to say whether the referendum should be taken.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: We always have the right to say what shall be done. That power cannot be taken from us.

The Attorney General: It will provide simple machinery for doing what you say we can do.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: That is an admission, but I do not know that it would be more simple. We have been accused of all sorts of ulterior motives, but we have dealt fairly with the measure in an endeavour to make it representative of our views obtained honestly and not as the result of influence from outside people.

The CHAIRMAN: We are not dealing with the whole of the measure, but with the amendment.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: So am I. I regret that in this non-party matter, more respect is not shown for the views of those who differ from details of the Bill. This is a most unusual provision.

The Attorney General: None the worse for that.

Mr. Robinson: A very good reason why it should be criticised.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The clause will not increase or decrease the power of Parliament.

The Attorney General: It will provide more simple machinery.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Minister endeavoured to justify it by other argument than that.

The Attorney General: That is one argument I used.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am surprised at the hostility towards this innocent and inoffensive clause.

Hon. J. Mitchell: There is no hostility.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Why has the very word "referendum" aroused opposition?

Hon. J. Mitchell: On a point of order, is the Minister in order in discussing the referendum?

The CHAIRMAN: The proposed amendment deals with a referendum.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is a cool point of order indeed, when members have been speaking of the referendum for an hour past. I can understand some members being opposed to a referendum. In agreeing to the second reading of the Bill, they swallowed a small dose of the medicine and have evidently agreed to take no more of it. The only principle in the Bill is that of a referendum.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Well, you have got it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If that were not so, why did not Parliament take the responsibility of deciding this question in the first place instead of submitting it to the people?

Mr. Robinson: Why did not the Ministry?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If the principle is a good one now, why not in two years time if it is then desired to take a vote again? The member for Fremantle is horrified at the prospect of another referendum in six months. There is nothing in the Bill stating that a referendum must be taken in six or 12 months time.

Mr. Carpenter: It might be taken.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member seems to think a reduction to six o'clock closing might be obtained, and if so, he does not want another referendum.

Mr. Carpenter: I do not even favour six o'clock closing.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I rather think he does.

Hon. J. Mitchell: What will the Minister do if Kalgoorlie votes for six o'clock closing?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Agree to whatever is decided.

Mr. Munsie: And Kalgoorlie will, too.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Members know that another referendum can take place only by the will and vote of both Houses. There seems to be an assumption that the war will be over in six or 12 months. I am not so optimistic as to think that the war and this measure will be out of existence in December of next year, but if, at the expiration, Parliament decided that the Act should continue in operation for another 12 months and the war was still raging in two years' time, Parliament might not feel justified in taking the responsibility for extending it, contending that, two years having elapsed, it was reasonable to again remit the question to the people at the succeeding general election.

Hon. J. Mitchell: You could put another Bill through.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Of course, but Parliament is master of its own actions.

Mr. Robinson: The member for Bunbury says not.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Why not provide the necessary machinery now? The principle of the referendum was swallowed grudgingly by some, but I do not understand the attitude of members, who believe in it, when they say they are prepared to trust the people once and never again.

Mr. Taylor: There is no principle involved.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There is a principle involved. The member for Fremantle is prepared to submit the ques-

tion to the people as a principle now, but not in two years' time.

Mr. Carpenter: What nonsense!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If a vote of the people is justifiable to-day, it will be equally justifiable 12 months or two years hence, and anyone who honestly believes in the referendum can adopt no other attitude.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: The attitude of several members has been misunderstood, and it has been inferred that those who hold certain ideas on temperance reform desire an undue privilege by taking a vote once and refusing it again. They have been accused of parting with the principle of the referendum. I intend to move an amendment to find out who are anxious to trust the people and who are not. I wish to make the second paragraph of the clause read—"At any time during the continuance of this Act a demand that the question be again submitted to the electors in any particular district may be made by 15 per cent. of the electors in that district signing a petition to that effect, and presenting same to the Minister administering the Act, and thereupon the question shall again be submitted."

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Perth at present has an amendment before the Chair.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: Perhaps the hon. member will withdraw the amendment.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I do not agree with the suggested amendment and I will not consent to withdraw my amendment. If the words are struck out the hon. member can then submit his amendment.

Mr. HEITMANN: It seems to me that Ministers have a strong objection to members criticising the clause at all.

The Minister for Mines: No, there is no objection.

Mr. HEITMANN: The Minister himself waxed very eloquent on the question. I have come to the conclusion that members have no right to criticise.

The Minister for Mines: I was only expressing my views.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HEITMANN: The contention has been put forward by several speakers that there is no necessity for the clause. The hon. member for Bunbury for instance did not recognise that it was not giving the people the right to say what was to be done and that it was giving them no initiative at all. It is giving Parliament the initiative. Take first the referendum in December next. It will probably be February before this is given effect to. At all events Parliament will not be in session, in ordinary circumstances, until June or July. Then Parliament will have an opportunity of passing a resolution to again refer this to the people, and by the time it is referred to them the Act will not be in existence. It is not a question of what harm the provision will do. Surely we can expect a Bill of this sort to be drafted without unnecessary verbiage. The Minister has endeavoured several times to show that this is necessary. I have come to the conclusion that the clause is a pure accident. He has failed to show any set of circumstances which might arise which would call for this again being referred to the people.

Mr. Hudson: The principle of the referendum is not in question.

Mr. HEITMANN: If we had the power it could not be used so far as I can see during the next 12 months. I disagree with the idea of some speakers who are objecting to the clause and yet who say that they would prefer it to be a permanent measure. The hon. member for Fremantle is amongst the number.

Mr. Carpenter: I prefer fixed times.

Mr. HEITMANN: The hon. member does not then look upon the measure as a war measure. I do not. It is just as well that we dropped it entirely. No one in this Chamber looks upon it as a war measure.

The Minister for Works: I do.

Mr. HEITMANN: I do not think the war was the reason for the measure, but I am supporting it because I believe in it and will be glad to see a reduction made. I do not see why members should be asked to pass the clause simply because there is no harm in it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I was rather amused to hear hon. members on this question. About 12 months ago I was strongly attacked because I opposed the referendum on local option and a ten years' time compensation. It shows that it all depends on how it suits members in regard to a question of this kind. Some hon. members think the clause is not necessary. To my mind it is one of the best in the Bill. It is only just if Parliament decides to extend the measure for any particular period that it should also be in a position by another special Act to have the right to say whether it should again be submitted to the people or not. The position is that a vote taken about this time is not taken under normal conditions. There is a possibility that the member for Subiaco will come here next session and say "Look at the large majority which carried the early closing. Is not Parliament justified in extending the provisions of the Bill on account of this majority vote?" I know many people who would not vote for the early hours of closing under normal conditions who at the present time would do so. I believe that the early closing will be carried by a large majority and a considerably larger one than would exist under normal conditions. For that reason I think the people should be given an opportunity of expressing an opinion.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Within the year?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Act does not say within the year.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: The Act only runs to the end of 1916.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Parliament can before December, 1916, extend it for any period desired.

Mr. Carpenter: Then where is the emergency?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The emergency does not come into the question, neither does the title of the Bill, so far as a war measure is concerned. The Attorney General has said that under the Standing Orders of another place a certain date has to be specified in the Bill. We could not have it for any indefinite period.

Mr. Griffiths: That does not affect the question as to repeal.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The proviso does affect it. Parliament can say by motion that it shall remain in effect for two years or longer if it is the wish of Parliament, but I would object to the measure being extended for any unduly lengthy period without the people again having an opportunity of deciding on the question. I support the clause as it stands, and consider it is a necessary safeguard, not only for the temperance people but for those who may not follow the temperance party. It is one of the best clauses in the Bill.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The question to my mind is this. Is it a war emergency Bill; does it cease when peace is declared; if so and a referendum is being provided to cover the war time where does the necessity for another referendum come in?

Mr. MUNSIE: I should like some information from the Attorney General before the clause is definitely passed on the statement made by the member for Mt. Margaret. Is it the case as set out by that hon. member that the Bill must end if peace is declared before December, 1916? If I had any idea that there was not the possibility of a great extension of time, irrespective of a declaration of peace, I would certainly not care whether the subclause was deleted or retained. But I do really fear and believe that the measure, if it once gets on the statute-book, will continue in operation, irrespective of peace or war; and therefore I want this provision retained. In normal times I am quite prepared to trust my own judgment—and I believe every hon. member should be prepared to trust his own judgment—as to whether we should vote to submit this matter to the people again or not. I am doubtful whether either the Minister who will control this measure, or any other Minister of the present Government, will in times of peace be able to carry through Parliament a measure embodying the principle of the referendum. Therefore I support the clause as it stands.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: When the Liberals were in power in 1911, they placed on the statute-book referendum legislation. The member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie) is not justified in saying that there would be no chance of getting Parliament to agree to submit to a referendum a question affecting liquor or any other matter.

Mr. GILCHRIST: When the people vote on this question it will be understood by all of them that the operation of the measure is to cease at the end of 1916. The decision of the people, once the referendum has been taken, should not be interfered with until that date. But if Parliament, taking advantage of Clause 18, extends the operation of the measure beyond 1916, then I think it should be open for Parliament, if it deems that course wise, to submit the question again to the people. The Government would, I think, be meeting the wishes of many who have objected to Subclause 2 of Clause 4 if they would alter the words "If at any time during the continuance of this Act" to read "If the operation of the Act is extended beyond December, 1916."

Hon. J. D. Connolly: That should be tacked on to Clause 18.

Mr. GILCHRIST: I merely suggest this with a view to meeting the objections which have been raised by various members during the discussion on the present clause.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The proper course would be to insert that provision here. This clause provides the machinery which makes it possible to refer to the people. If the member for Perth (Hon. J. D. Connolly) would withdraw his amendment—

Hon. J. D. Connolly: That matter can be dealt with on Clause 18.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Clause 18 is merely the clause which gives power by resolution to continue. If the suggestion of the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Gilchrist) is rejected here now, it cannot be revived on Clause 18. It is a perfectly just supposition that there might be a change of views, either in the direction

of further shortening hours or of extending them, if this measure were to run for three years. An Act of Parliament to make such alterations, however, would be too cumbersome. I will accept the suggested amendment of the member for Gascoyne, if he has power to move it; that is to say, if the member for Perth will withdraw his amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot accept the suggested amendment unless the member for Perth withdraws his amendment.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	12
Noes	..	..	..	17

Majority against .. 5

#### AYES.

Mr. Connolly	Mr. Nairn
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Robinson
Mr. George	Mr. B. J. Stubbs
Mr. Heltmann	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Hickmott	Mr. Carpenter
Mr. Lefroy	(Teller).
Mr. Mitchell	

#### NOES.

Mr. Adgwin	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Collier	Mr. O'Loghlen
Mr. Gilchrist	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Green	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Walker
Mr. Harrison	Mr. Bolton
Mr. Johnson	(Teller)

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. GILCHRIST: I move a further amendment—

*That the following proviso be added to the clause:—"Provided that a second vote be not taken before 31st December, 1916."*

The objection was that votes would be taken frequently, and it is in order to protect members of Parliament against undue influence from constituents that I move the amendment. It is far more democratic to provide that the will of the people shall prevail after it has been clearly expressed by a popular vote than to provide that at any time Parliament may, by resolution, override that freely expressed opinion.



Mr. CARPENTER: I am going to ask the Attorney General to accept the proviso. It meets my objection exactly, that once we have a decision from the electors that decision shall stand for at least twelve months.

Mr. THOMAS: We are reaching a somewhat illogical position. We are trying to decide on the spur of the moment what is to be done in 12 months' time. Will not Parliament be in a much sounder position when it has had 12 months to think the matter over, and has acquired the knowledge that will come to us during the intervening months? At that time we will certainly be in a better position to judge what is required than we are now. But the hon. member is asking us to decide on the spur of the moment and with a minimum of knowledge what we will be much better able to decide 12 months hence. It is a most illogical position.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I have only to say that I accept the amendment as a compromise. We do not wish to press our own opinions too much on this question. We have no desire to influence the House.

Amendment put and declared passed.

Mr. Thomas: Divide!

Clause as amended put and declared passed.

Mr. THOMAS: I called for a division.

The CHAIRMAN: If hon. members will laugh and chatter and obstruct the business, I cannot help it. I put the amendment and the clause, and I am not now going to give a division. I am about tired of this flippancy.

Mr. THOMAS: I called for a division in all seriousness, and I called loudly.

The CHAIRMAN: There was only one voice.

The Minister for Mines: There were several.

Mr. TAYLOR: The hon. member called for a division as soon as you gave a decision in favour of the ayes.

The CHAIRMAN: Well, you know the course to pursue; I am not going back. I am now on Clause 5.

Clause 5—Voting papers:

Mr. ROBINSON: I agree with the clause as it stands, but there is no provision dealing with the opening of hotels in the morning. I have given notice that I intend to move a new clause making provision for the opening of hotels not earlier than 8 o'clock in the morning. If we decide to refer to the people the morning part of the question, it will mean a dozen or more queries which will be confusing.

The CHAIRMAN: I think it should be moved as a new clause.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 6 to 12—agreed to.

Clause 13—Licensed premises not to be open after the closing hour:

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Paragraph (b) is impracticable because it not only prohibits a licensee from selling any liquor, but makes him liable to a penalty of £100 if he permits any liquor to be drunk in or upon his premises. It would be impossible for a licensee to prevent a boarder who purchased a bottle of whisky during trading hours from consuming it at dinner. I move an amendment—

*That in paragraph (b) the words "or permit any liquor to be drunk or consumed" be struck out.*

The licensee would still be liable for selling liquor after the closing hour.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: Why not insert "knowingly"?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: That would not be any improvement.

Progress reported.

## BILL—ROADS ACT AMENDMENT AND CONTINUANCE.

### *Second Reading.*

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [11.8] in moving the second reading said: It is not necessary to occupy the time of the House for more than a few moments. As members are aware, the present Roads Act will expire at the end of December and this Bill is introduced principally to re-enact that statute until the 31st December, 1916. When this Bill

was under consideration, the officers of the Crown Law Department pointed out that when new districts were formed or a subdivision was made in regard to roads districts, some difficulty was experienced because where boards had borrowed money and struck rates there was a difference of opinion as regarded the allotment of the unexpended money in the reconstructed districts. A good deal of annoyance has been caused in the administration of the Act not only to the department but also to ratepayers. When a district is so formed there is almost invariably an amount of arrears of rates outstanding and under existing conditions the roads board that struck the rate can claim the amount of the rate then due. These alterations to the various clauses have been made—they are really only slight alterations to the principal Act—for the express purpose of giving the Minister power to decide questions when they are referred to him. At the present time some doubt exists as to who should be the arbitrator, and whether the arbitration is valid or not. During the coming year we expect one or two new roads board districts to be formed. There is also an application in regard to the alteration of some of the wards, and a difference of opinion already exists in regard to the allocation of funds and loan moneys which have been raised in new districts. These clauses are put in at the express desire of the Crown Law Department, owing to the doubt which now exists in regard to the settlement of the questions I have just referred to. The Bill is only being introduced in order to re-enact the Roads Act until 1916. I think I have given hon. members a fairly clear idea of the principles of this small measure. I move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

Hon. H. B. LEFROY (Moore) [11.11]: I have gone carefully into this Bill and compared it with the principal Act. It is purely a machinery measure which is to provide for the procedure to be adopted in the case of the union of certain districts, or subdivisions of certain districts. From my knowledge of the

Act I cannot see that there is anything in the Bill that is likely to cause any discussion, and I am prepared to let it pass the second reading. I am quite sure that hon. members, if they go through the Bill carefully, will find there is nothing in it that they can object to.

The Minister for Works: I promised the leader of the Opposition I would not pass the second reading of the Bill tonight. I trust someone will move the adjournment of the debate.

On motion by Mr. Robinson debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 11.13 p.m.*

## Legislative Council.

*Tuesday, 7th September, 1915.*

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

### SELECT COMMITTEE, RETIREMENT OF C. F. GALE.

*Attendance of Member of Assembly.*

On motion by Hon. J. J. HOLMES (North) ordered: "That a Message be sent to the Legislative Assembly asking that House to authorise the Hon. R. H. Underwood to attend and give evidence before the select committee on the retirement of Mr. C. F. Gale."