

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 25th September, 1919.

	PAGE
Questions: Public Service appointments ...	641
Indeterminate sentence board ...	641
Venerereal disease patients ...	641
Financial agreement with Commonwealth ...	641
Lakeside-Kamballie Railway ...	641
Railway freights, pyritic ore ...	641
Bills: Health Act Amendment, 2r., Com....	641
Traffic, Com. ...	653

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4:30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION—PUBLIC SERVICE APPOINTMENTS.

Mr. ROCKE asked the Premier: 1, When the question of providing employment within the service of the State for returned soldiers was under consideration, was any attention given to the case of men whose sons went to the war, some of whom were killed? 2, If not, will the Government give the matter consideration, with a view to placing those fathers on a footing equal at least with that of able-bodied returned men?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (for the Premier) replied: 1, No. 2, The inclusion of other classes would break down preference to returned soldiers. Other classes must be treated upon their merits.

QUESTION—INDETERMINATE SENTENCE BOARD.

Mr. ROCKE asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Is it a fact that the Superintendent of the Fremantle prison has been appointed to a seat on the Indeterminate Sentence Board? 2, If so, is it the intention of the Government to retire the superintendent from the administrative staff of the prison? 3, If not, in what way will that member of the Board be able to render efficient service under the indeterminate sentence provisions of the Prisons Act Amendment Act, 1918, in view of the fact that he will be reporting to himself upon his own administration, and making regulations for himself to administer?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes. 2, No. 3, The functions of the Indeterminate Sentence Board are in nowise inconsistent with their performance by the superintendent. The board's duties do not consist in reporting on the administration of the prison, but in assisting the Comptroller General of Prisons in carrying out the provisions of the Act.

QUESTION—VENEREAL DISEASE PATIENTS.

Mr. ROCKE asked the Minister for Mines: How many of the 32 females compulsorily

examined under the provisions of the Health Act Amendment Act, 1918, were found to be infected?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: Twenty-three were found to be infected. One case is still being dealt with. Four persons were found not to be infected, and four cases were lost sight of.

QUESTION—FINANCIAL AGREEMENT WITH COMMONWEALTH.

Mr. GARDINER asked the Premier: Seeing that the financial agreement between the Commonwealth and the States expires on the 30th June next, does he propose to appoint a joint committee of both Houses of Parliament to prepare the case for Western Australia, in order that when such report is presented it may be adopted by both Houses of our Legislature?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (for the Premier) replied: Not at present. The necessary information is being collected by Mr. Owen, Commissioner of Taxation. As soon as this is available the question of the appointment of a committee will be considered.

QUESTION—LAKESIDE-KAMBALLIE RAILWAY.

Mr. MUNSIE asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Have the Government decided to close the Lakeside station and hand over the section between Lakeside and Kamballie to the Lakeside Firewood Company? 2, If so, have any arrangements been made for carrying goods and passengers over the line, and at what cost?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, No. Running rights over this section only have been granted to the firewood company. 2, See reply to No. 1.

QUESTION—RAILWAY FREIGHTS, PYRITIC ORE.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN (for Mr. Green) asked the Minister for Railways: Has any check been kept by the Government officials against the certificates furnished by the superphosphate companies to the Railway Department, as to the mineral value of the pyritic ore carried by the Railway Department, in accordance with page 71 of the Railway Rates Book?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: No.

BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Scaddan—Albany) [4.38.] in moving the second reading said: I shall take the House into my confidence at once by stating that

the Government have decided, so far as the principal clause of this Bill is concerned, to continue the experiment for another twelve months instead of making the matter perpetual. That course will, I take it, avoid any necessity for extensive debate, seeing that the principle of the Act has already been accepted. The only question is whether the period of trial has been sufficiently long to determine whether the measure is effective or not. No harm can arise from giving the Act a further trial. I am asking for an extension of a little more than twelve months, to the 31st December, 1920, so that the date of expiration may not fall in the middle of a session. The other provisions of this Bill call for no debate. One clause is merely to correct a typographical error, and the remaining one is to allow of the reprinting of the principal Act with all amendments. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [440]: I am pleased at the announcement just made by the Minister in charge of the Bill. Before proceeding to discuss the measure it was my intention to ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether the lights were in order, because the last time I spoke on a measure of this kind the lights failed. The Minister, however, has relieved me of the necessity for talking against the Bill until the 30th September, when the Act, if not renewed by Parliament meantime, would have expired. In my opinion a great deal has been claimed as regards the successful administration of the Act during the past twelve months that is not warranted by the facts. After the Minister's announcement I would not have spoken at all to-day, had it not been for the necessity of showing that injury has been caused in other parts of the world by the passing of our Health Amendment Act of last year. When the present Bill was before the Legislative Council it was stated that benefits had accrued in America and elsewhere from the adoption of this legislation in Western Australia. But instead of proving beneficial to the United States, it has proved detrimental, as I have evidence to show. A question which has just been answered here goes to show that the legislation has been detrimental to Western Australia as well. From the answer to that question we learn that what we were told last year was impossible has actually happened. We are informed that four or five young girls have been compulsorily examined and found to be free from disease. Last year we were assured that it was a matter of impossibility for any girl to be subjected to compulsory examination if she was not affected.

Mr. Smith: Was the examination compulsory?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. The question asked was as follows:—

How many of the 32 females compulsorily examined under the provisions of

the Health Act Amendment Act, 1918, were found to be infected?

The answer was that 23 were found to be infected, that four were found not to be infected, and that five had been lost trace of.

The Minister for Mines: And that one is still under examination.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Those figures conclusively show the danger of the Act as it stands to-day. They prove clearly that those who endeavoured to retain the requirement of a signed statement before compulsory examination were right. We have learnt to-day that some girls at least have had to submit to the degradation of compulsory examination while they were free from disease.

Mr. Smith: Of what class were the girls?

Mr. Lutey: They are sure to have been of the poorer classes.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: In discussing this Bill I wish to say a few words about the soldiers of Australia and the soldiers of Great Britain. We have had distributed here a conspicuously coloured book issued by a well known man, Dr. Cumpston. Personally I have not the greatest confidence in Dr. Cumpston, especially in view of his action over the quarantine regulations; so that I may be a little prejudiced. From it I learn that the authorities have been able to ascertain what percentage of persons offering themselves for enlistment in Western Australia were found to be suffering from venereal disease. According to the evidence given before the select committee which dealt with the question last year, no such statistics had been kept, and it was impossible for the military authorities to give the committee any idea whatever as to what number of persons who went up for enlistment had suffered from venereal disease. But from this book we learn that out of 29,820 men who volunteered in Western Australia only 158 were suffering from venereal disease. That figure is a very long way from the ten per cent. of the population of Western Australia claimed last year to be suffering from venereal disease. Only 158 out of 29,820. Where Dr. Cumpston got his figures, I do not know. We also find that the total number of Australian soldiers supposed to be suffering from the disease was 55,000, or approximately 14 per cent. of the Australian army. That is according to Dr. Cumpston. I do not think the Australian army is any more liable to this disease than is the English army.

The Minister for Mines: I think they both broke the tape at the same time.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yet we find that in the English army there was only 4½ per cent. of sufferers as against Dr. Cumpston's 14 per cent. It is unfortunate that he considers that out of this 55,000 he could estimate only 1,000 of our soldiers who went to Egypt. In the House of Commons, on the 27th February, Mr. King asked the Secretary of State for War whether, in order to facilitate proposals for legislation then before the House, he could give any figures

of cases of venereal disease in the army, and whether those figures would show any increase on the figures last published. The reply given by the Minister was, "The present admission ratio for troops in the United Kingdom is 43.45 per 1,000 per annum. This figure is a reduction on that last published." I do not believe that 55,000 out of our 400,000 troops suffered from venereal disease; I do not believe they are any worse than the British army, and I regret that they should be scandalised at the hands of Dr. Cumpston. There is not the slightest doubt some members of the medical profession are endeavouring to boost this question of venereal disease for the purpose of securing certain powers which they could not otherwise get, which no Parliament would grant them unless they managed by exaggeration to induce Parliament to do so. I propose to read a letter received by the Commissioner of Public Health in Western Australia from the president of the Chicago Medical Society, as follows—

I received a few days ago a copy of your annual report for 1917 for which I am writing to thank you. I have read with much interest your comments on your Western Australian Venereal Act. I have been greatly interested in that legislation since it first came to my knowledge. I became acquainted with it upon looking up the literature of legislation in regard to venereal disease a few years ago, and I gave an editorial to it in the "Journal of the Medical Association," in which I wrote a series of editorials on activities throughout the world in regard to the control of venereal diseases. At that time I expressed the feeling that it would probably be a long time before any American Commonwealth would have the enlightenment to adopt such legislation. Much to my surprise, however, within a year I was able, at the invitation of the Health Commissioner of Chicago, to suggest your Western Australian Act, with slight modifications, for Chicago, and practically without a dissenting vote it was adopted. This was the first time of its adoption, I believe, in the United States. Since that time it has been adopted in a modified form in the State of Illinois and has become well known as the Western Australian Act. It seems to me to be far and away the most intelligent application of law to the venereal problem that we have had, and I am glad to have this opportunity to congratulate its author.

That appears all very nice. It comes as praise of the Act passed by the Western Australian Parliament. I hope none of our members will get swelled head on account of it, and I hope the Commissioner of Public Health will manage to retain his balance. But has the effect of that legislation been so beneficial as the author of that letter tried to convey? I have here also a copy of a paper published in America under date 1st May, 1919. The other letter, I forgot to

say, is dated 15th April. An article in this paper states—

There may have been a certain reason in the anxiety felt by America to prepare a safe abiding place in Europe for democracy, but the feeling was doubtless exaggerated and probably due in part to nerves. Democracy is like a mother-in-law; it is always for our own good that she is entreated to try another climate. Unwilling hosts are wonderfully urbane and polite, but their self-control conceals both desperate hopes and craven fears. America was surely fearing without just cause. Some indication there may have been before the war that democracy favoured that fair land and hankered for it as a place of residence, but not enough at any time to make the inhabitants feel jumpy. For the student of politics no more surprising revelation has come out of the world's upheaval than the comparison between what the oppressed and badgered subjects of central Europe can do without dying for it and what the free citizens of England and America cannot do without dying for it. It is in the loudly vaunted democracy that dumb driven cattle may not turn their heads to look inquiringly at their drovers, as cattle do, without being shot.

This article was written by Dr. Catherine Bushnell. It continues—

So we were more ashamed and startled when lately there came the news that America, too, has instituted compulsory examination for venereal disease. The Secretary of State for War has received from Congress permission to do whatever he deems necessary to protect the troops from the evils of prostitution. This is giving him unlimited powers, powers not even defined as they are defined in the Defence of the Realm Act. So we have been told that the police have been instructed to arrest any woman or girl whom they have reason to believe is a menace to the troops. The universal panic that possesses Governments and people of every land at this time, a panic based on sheer illusion and deliberate ignorance of past conditions—because never in all history has the amount of venereal disease in the armies been so low—has taken the peculiar form of a most vicious outburst against young girls. Whether there is any foundation in fact for this could not be proved for a very long time, and in this latter state of the official minds could not be proved at all, but it has been indulged in by everybody with just as much thoughtlessness and as little humanity as any of the other parrot cries of the past five years; except that unlike most of them it has led to action of the most disastrous and disgraceful kind. Unprotected girls are given over to the mercies of a man whose very profession is suspecting, and who one can easily imagine, would be quite likely to consider the

fact that a girl is a girl and 17 sufficient to prove her a menace to young soldiers. In saying that, we intend no discredit to the policeman, for, indeed, he has so often been a Heaven-sent friend to the friendless girl, saving her by his kindly wisdom from many a threatened danger. But no such power as this is ever given or should ever be given to him.

Yet this legislation was introduced into America from Western Australia. We have that testimony sent to the Commissioner of Public Health in Western Australia from the President of the Chicago Medical Society. The article continues—

The figures from America already have proved that conclusively, for under this, the latest and worst form of human oppression ever instituted, 5,280 girls were arrested apparently on trumped up charges of vagrancy, etc., and forcibly examined. Out of this number 4,162 were innocent of the real charge against them, namely, that of being diseased.

That is how this legislation applies in America. I am pleased that the Minister has adopted the suggestion made to him that we are rushing into dangerous places and should be very careful. We have had nothing before the Chamber to ask members to extend the time. Of course it might be said that since the passing of the Act, since the medical authorities have had time to deal with the matter they have been unable to supply us with any information in regard to it. It is strange that at the end of September we have not the medical report for 1919. We have no information whatever, but are merely told that the administration of the Act has been beneficial to Western Australia. I notice that Dr. Saw in dealing with this question passed the provision merely because he had been told that it had proved beneficial. He only heard it from the Commissioner of Public Health or somebody else. He could not say from his own knowledge. I think we should be extremely careful when we have evidence that over 4,000 girls in America have been compulsorily examined and found to be clear of disease, and when, although the Act has been in operation only a few months, we have evidence that in Western Australia out of 32 girls examined only 23 were found to be infected. Clearly this legislation requires very careful watching. I regret that, last year, members decided to strike out the provision for the signed statement. The Minister holds that an extension of time should be granted in order to see how the Act will work. But the National Council of Women, the president of which claims to represent 25 societies in Western Australia, although they were strong supporters of the Bill 12 months ago, they have now turned completely round. If hon. members will read the communication placed before them by that organisation, they will see that it asks clearly that the statements made before the Commissioner of Public Health should be made on oath. If they are taken on oath, there is no necessity

for a signed statement. Last year they were quite satisfied; this year they are not. This shows that the 25 societies represented by the National Council of Women realise there is some danger in passing legislation of this kind. Seeing that the Minister has agreed to give the Bill a trial for another 12 months, I do not intend to oppose it, but I felt it my duty to point out what has occurred in America in consequence of similar action.

Mr. PILKINGTON (Perth) [5.0]: I am very pleased with the attitude taken up by the Minister. I think it is a wise one in the circumstances. It is most vitally important that legislation of this kind should be watched carefully, and the least the Government could do is that which they have done, namely, to provide that the matter shall come up again for reconsideration at an early date. In view of the attitude taken by the Minister, I do not propose to occupy the time of the House at any length, but I confess that I am disappointed that the Minister, in moving the second reading, did not give some facts and figures to enable us to judge whether the legislation now in force is of a satisfactory kind. I am well aware of the difficulty of giving such facts and figures, because the figures required are necessarily not exact. We are all of the same opinion regarding the object to be attained—the cutting out of this disease from society—and the only question on which we differ is whether the means we are now employing are the best means. In order to test that question, one would like to know how far the means we are now using are getting at the diseased persons. We would like to know exactly—if it were possible to get the information—the number of cases which actually exist in the community, and the number of cases which are being dealt with by this class of legislation. I hope that, before this matter again comes before the House, some evidence of that description will be supplied. I am well aware that any figures indicating the number of cases which exist in the community must be largely a matter of estimate, but such figures are provided in other parts of the world, and similar information would be most useful to us. The great question to consider is what are the means whereby most cases can be treated, or by what means can we get at most of the diseased persons and enable them to be treated. I have previously expressed the opinion that I believe we will get at most cases by making available to the whole of the community curative or preventive treatment. Under the system we have at present, I believe that persons suffering from the disease are desirous of concealing it, because they dread a Government department getting its hand upon them. For that reason, it is most important that we should have the facts and figures before us. I have not the slightest doubt that the Health Department and the chief officer of that department desire to do everything possible and are acting with the utmost anxiety to eradicate the evil. We

are all agreed upon the end we are seeking, but we differ as to the best means to adopt, and it would be most useful if the department kept exact statistics and were able to give us information, not only of those whom they have treated, but some sort of estimate of, I am afraid, that large number of persons who are suffering and are not reached by the department. When the matter again comes before us, I hope we shall have such information to enable us to judge the efficacy of the methods we have adopted.

Mr. TEESDALE (Roebourne) [5.5]: I am glad to support the second reading of this Bill and to think that, after 12 months' experience, it has been found so successful as we are led to believe.

Mr. Johnston: It has proved unsuccessful.

Mr. TEESDALE: I could not help feeling surprised at the action of the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin), who last year enthused to such an extent and worked himself up to such a pitch that out went every light in the House. While he was speaking, we had a realistic depiction of girls being dragged off the streets. Listening to the hon. member, one could almost hear the agonised shrieks of those unfortunate girls.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There are nine now.

Mr. TEESDALE: There appear to have been some cases which have not been thoroughly sheeted home.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Nine out of 32.

Mr. TEESDALE: But the feelings of those unfortunate girls have been studied to such an extent that no mention is made of the place they were taken from. If they were taken from a brothel, the department were justified in their action, and if one of them was found to be infected every possible ground existed for the action of the department.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We have no information; that is the worst of it.

Mr. TEESDALE: It is quite on the cards that those girls were in surroundings that justified the department in taking action. If those girls were consorting with Chinamen, I say the department were justified in taking action. If they were girls of tender years and about the streets all hours of the night, again I say the department were justified in the action they took.

Hon. P. Collier: If!

Mr. TEESDALE: We might reasonably have expected some very strong proof from the member for North-East Fremantle as to what has occurred in Western Australia, but he was so hard put to it for excuses to kill the Bill this time that he had to go to America and take the evidence of lady doctors. I have no time for lady doctors in connection with this matter. Lady doctors have got kinks on this question. I am referring to the lady doctors opposed to such a Bill as this; not to those fine, well-informed women who are prepared to strike at this disease and clear humanity of this blot. I am talking about those fanatics who are always trying to put things straight.

Hon. P. Collier: They are not lady doctors, though.

Mr. TEESDALE: I am speaking under great disadvantages, having no notes, but my hearing is good, and as the hon. member was speaking I expected every moment to hear him quote a case in support of his attitude. It would be a fine thing to have one local case and how the hon. member could have worked it up, but he was so pushed for argument that he had to go to America.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There are nine cases in Western Australia.

Mr. TEESDALE: This is the most fearful farce which has been perpetrated in this House, and it must be particularly galling to my friends of the Opposition that they cannot, in their hearts, say that this legislation has been a bane. They say it has not been quite perfect. Did they ever put anything perfect on the statute-book?

Hon. P. Collier: Yes.

Mr. TEESDALE: Payment of members, perhaps. I am surprised that broad-minded men like hon. members should, for party purposes, take such a stand against a measure which must be in the interests of the community. I was surprised to hear the member for Brown Hill-Ivanhoe (Mr. Lutey) throw out that altogether superfluous remark that the girls referred to were no doubt children of the poorer class. That sort of talk can do no good. There is no proof of what class they belonged to.

Hon. P. Collier: You have assumed they were the consorts of Chinamen.

Mr. TEESDALE: That sort of thing is not confined to children of the poorer class. We have known girls of first class families to go wrong. If those ladies put in the whole of their time looking after the poor unfortunate kiddies and girls of tender age, instead of coming to the gallery of this House to hear what is being done to rectify the mischief already done, it would be far better. I would like to place on record my disapprobation of their action in sending this flood of literature into this Chamber—reams of it.

Hon. P. Collier: And paper so dear, too!

Mr. TEESDALE: They ought not be allowed to put such stuff into this House. Some of the questions read by the hon. member are positively indecent. They practically ask at what stage was this disease when the girls came up for their second examination. Is that a question for these straight, fair-minded, clean, married women? Is this the sex we hear spoken of as being clean and doing all in their power to help the fallen sister—gloating over such wretched details, positively swimming in all those wretched queries as to the girls' condition? If this sort of question is allowed, there is no bar to what might be asked. They ask what condition those unfortunate girls were in and, at the same time, talk about shielding their fallen sisters. Is that the way to shield them? It is positively dragging the fallen girl and the girl of tender age into a publicity far worse than the disease.

The Minister for Works: They ought to be ashamed of themselves.

Mr. TEESDALE: I am surprised at the member for North-East Fremantle sneering because the principal medical officer wants power—a man who has this thing at heart and who is actuated by the highest and noblest principles. What power does he want?

Hon. P. Collier: You were sneering at medical ladies.

Mr. TEESDALE: He is asking for no Prussianism and no autocracy, but simply to be able to carry on his department. He and his officials do not want to be hampered by a lot of amateurs, or by the public who are influenced by all sorts of sentiment. They wish to be able to use their medical skill for the benefit of those they are treating. It is a shame that our experts, the men that we import here at high salaries to carry out their duties and conduct their departments, should be continually made the butt of laymen and laywomen, who know little or nothing about the question. It would be far better if these laymen and laywomen were to feel thankful that we had men here with the pluck and determination to go through with this work that they are doing, and far better, too, if they were to appreciate their efforts instead of doing all they could in opposition to them.

Mr. MUNSIE (Hannans) [5.16]: With the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin) and others I am pleased that the Minister in charge of the Bill has decided to limit its operation to another 12 months only. I am rather surprised at the heat shown by the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale). If it is possible by my vote to wipe out the Bill altogether unless it provides for the signed statement, I will do it. I am justified in that action on the evidence submitted by the Minister this afternoon. The member for Roebourne asks what evidence we have. There are nine cases. If one of these unfortunate nine happened to be my daughter, I would shoot the man who gave the information.

Mr. Teesdale: What if one of those infected was your daughter?

Mr. MUNSIE: This Bill has been on the statute-book for 12 months with a limitation. If the Government had their way, and the Bill had been made a permanent piece of legislation, we would have probably 50 cases of persons brought up for examination and found to be innocent. I am as much in favour as any other member of stamping out the disease. If any man or woman has the misfortune to get this disease, and is prepared to give information to a medical man as to where he or she got it, each person should be prepared to put his or her name to that information. There are persons in the community who are bad enough to give information about innocent people out of pure spite, with the object of compelling them to be examined.

Mr. Underwood: There are some persons who, for pure spite, would spread the disease.

Mr. MUNSIE: I admit that probably there are some fiends in the community who would do that. I was rather surprised at the reply given by the Minister to-day to the question asked by the member for South Fremantle (Mr. Rooke) and to find that we have these nine cases out of 32.

The Minister for Mines: There are four cases, and four have been lost sight of, and there is one under treatment.

Mr. MUNSIE: That makes nine. Four cases have proved to be innocent and four have been lost sight of. I believe these four have never been examined. I am of opinion that, although information has been given about them, and they have been called upon to come up for examination, sooner than do so, because they are innocent, they have gone away and been lost sight of. The indignity, at all events, has been cast upon them.

The Minister for Mines: It might have been the reverse.

Mr. MUNSIE: That might be the case, but I am justified in putting up this argument. The Government, I suppose, intend to put this Bill through, and allow any Tom, Dick, or Harry to give information to the medical fraternity that they have contracted a disease from a certain source, and have those persons publicly examined without their being given an opportunity of knowing who has laid the information concerning them. As long as I am a member of Parliament, I will not permit anyone to have the right to take such drastic action against another individual without doing my best to insure that they shall sign the charge that they make.

Mr. ROBINSON (Canning) [5.20]: The Health Bill is probably one of the greatest pieces of social legislation that we have ever had before any Legislature in modern years. If it is eventually successful, surely all sections of the community will be thoroughly pleased. At present we are in the experimental stage. I do not think either side is thoroughly satisfied that the procedure adopted by the Bill fulfils all the expectations that are held concerning it. That the Minister has agreed to extend this experiment for another 12 months is a matter upon which hon. members may congratulate themselves. It may even be necessary to extend it for another year, or even a further period of 12 months. I hope the experiments which are being made will receive that amount of publicity that will ensure those who are giving their special attention to this type of legislation—I refer to both men and women—being absolutely satisfied either that the Bill is a good one, and that the treatment is correct, or that it should be removed altogether from the statute-book?

Mr. Munsie: I agree with the treatment, but I do not agree with the method of securing that treatment.

Mr. ROBINSON: We should not in this House be in the position of placing, amongst our legislation, enactments, the result of which we do not positively know. I fancy that during the next 12 months we shall receive evidence, both for and against the principle, which will enable members, as well as the general public, to come to a ripper conclusion concerning this Bill than we possess at present.

Mr. ROCKE (South, Fremantle) [5.22]: The attack made upon me by the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) because, exercising my right as a member of this House, I sought for certain information, I have allowed to pass without any further notice than this little remark. This attack has come from a man who is absolutely ignorant of the subject that is before the House, and also ignorant of the essentials which one expects to find in a man posing as a gentleman.

Mr. Teesdale: I have seen more than you have ever seen in your life.

Mr. ROCKE: That deliberate attack upon the women of this town, and especially upon those who are at this moment in the gallery of this Chamber, proves the character and nature, and the possession of a cess-pit mind, on the part of the man who made the remark. The remark is only worthy of one who has spent his time amongst the gins at Roebourne. By means of the unsigned statement, the character of any respectable woman or girl in the State can be blackened, and every right-thinking person must deplore such a state of things. Such a principle is devoid of every particle of justice, upon which all our legislation should be based. It is strange to me that effects are always considered before the causes. Had the Minister not taken the step he has taken, it would have been necessary to debate the subject at length. In that event I had intended to place before the House the cause which is most responsible for the spread of the disease, and that undoubtedly is alcoholic liquor. The man who speaks against the liquor trade is usually supposed to possess a kink. I do not mind that imputation in the least. I have been looking through the report of the Commission appointed by the New South Wales Parliament to inquire into the prevalence of venereal disease. I find there evidence given by Dr. Corlette, Dr. Worrall, Dr. Bray, and Dr. Johnson, all tending to prove that the main cause of the spread of this disease is indulgence in alcoholic liquor. The information we have been given this afternoon has probably surprised most hon. members, and that is part of the information which I have been able to obtain, and for getting which I have been condemned. If 28 per cent. of the women who have been called up for compulsory examination have been found to be clean and innocent, what would the percentage be if this Bill was made permanent, without the small safeguard we have in the possession by the Commissioner of the knowledge that

it is only a temporary measure, and will be judged according to the results shown during the time it is in operation?

Mr. Davies: It does not mean that another Parliament can alter it.

Mr. ROCKE: Parliament in its wisdom may say that the time is not opportune to alter such legislation. It is far better to proceed along the safe lines suggested this afternoon and have this further trial. The member for Roebourne asks where these nine girls were taken from, and suggested that they probably had to do with Chinamen. Possibly they were taken from respectable homes.

Mr. Underwood: Have you evidence that they were girls?

Mr. ROCKE: They were, at all events, females and citizens of the State, and as such they have the right to the protection of this House. I feel very strongly on this subject. The principle has been condemned in countries where it has been in force for some time. We have the testimony of no less an authority than the "Lancet," which is recognised as a medical paper of very high repute. Speaking of the Australian legislation this paper makes use of these remarks—

The Act bristles with penalties, and from the time a patient goes to his first doctor for advice to the time a certificate of cure is issued, he has to run the gauntlet of potential fines and imprisonment. There is a risk lest a certain proportion may so dread this compulsory pilgrimage to health that they will refuse to seek medical help, or seek it at too late a stage of the disease. This is a risk which it is absolutely necessary should be avoided in the working of the new legislation in this country.

That is the opinion of a paper which is classed as conservative, and yet it gives this as its opinion. This opinion should have the endorsement of every right-thinking man and woman. I think such an endorsement would be given to it by the majority of men and women in the State, if they had the opportunity of doing so. I welcome the attitude adopted by the Minister in charge of the Bill, and hope that further information will be given before any attempt is made to make this Bill permanent. The operation of this measure has been conducted in camera. The public have known nothing at all except what they have learned from information supplied in response to the questions that have been asked in this Chamber during the last week or two. It is necessary that the country should know exactly how the Act is operating so that the representatives in Parliament of the people in the State may be able to legislate with the view of preventing an injustice being done to anyone. If an injustice is done to anybody then that person should be able to seek redress through the courts of the State. At the present time, however, there is no opportunity to do this. We find that a number of women or girls have been subjected to the indignity of hav-

ing to undergo a clinical examination, and the result is that they have been found innocent.

The Minister for Mines: You are wrong.

Mr. Underwood: How many?

Mr. ROCKE: Nine.

The Minister for Mines: You are quite wrong.

Mr. ROCKE: Twenty-three were found to be suffering.

The Minister for Mines: Out of 32.

Mr. ROCKE: That means nine were innocent.

The Minister for Mines: It does not.

Mr. ROCKE: Then my arithmetic is at fault.

The Minister for Mines: I do not suggest that it was ever good.

Mr. ROCKE: Can you tell me then how many?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair.

Mr. ROCKE: Then you, Mr. Speaker, may be able to tell me how many are left if 23 are taken from 32.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. ROCKE: I am only seeking for information. May I then ask the Minister through you, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Underwood: It leaves nine, but four of them could not be found.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: How could they be compulsorily examined if they could not be found?

The Minister for Mines: They were called up, but they did not respond.

Mr. ROCKE: Four were found innocent.

The Minister for Mines: Not proven.

Mr. ROCKE: The Minister may be able to shuffle and bluff, but I cannot follow his reasoning. At any rate I am going to support the second reading of the Bill because it is going to be amended in Committee.

Mr. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [5.35]: Like the last speaker, I regret the remarks which have fallen from the lips of the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale).

Mr. Teesdale: You always did, so it does not matter.

Mr. ANGELO: Until the women of the State are given an opportunity of being represented in this House I will welcome any suggestion they may have to make, either for or against any Bill brought before this Chamber. There are women in the State who are in favour of the Bill as it now stands, just as there are women who are opposed to it. Those women who are in favour of it recognise that it is very necessary that venereal disease should be stamped out, and they are willing to run the risk in the same way as thousands of their sisters have risked their honour and lives during the late war in helping to bring about a healthy condition of things throughout the Empire. I ask the member for Roebourne what would have been the result if some of our women folk had thought it an outrage against their feelings to go and nurse thousands of our

brave soldiers and civilians, not only during the war but at all times, who happened to be suffering from this disease. However, I think the right course is to be adopted when the Bill reaches the Committee stage. Therefore, I shall support the second reading.

Mr. MULLANY (Menzies) [5.38]: Like other members I am pleased that this piece of experimental legislation is about to be given a trial for another twelve months. I, too, like the members for North-East Fremantle and South Fremantle, cannot help regretting the fact that any unfortunate girl should be compelled to undergo a compulsory examination and then be found to be wholly free from the disease. From the viewpoint of the opponents of the Bill it is perhaps justifiable that they should take the stand they have adopted. But at the same time the figures supplied to the member for South Fremantle to-day show that through the existence of the compulsory clause, 23 of the unfortunate females who had refused to submit themselves for examination and were forced to do so, were found to be suffering from the disease. That aspect of the matter is worthy of close consideration. It is unfortunate that an innocent girl should be subjected to the humiliation of having to be compulsorily examined. That perhaps may have occurred, but I want to remark that without the shadow of a doubt, the fact that 23 menaces to the health and welfare of the young people of this State have been removed from the streets and have been compelled to undergo medical treatment—the benefit that will be derived from the action taken in all those cases will far outweigh the humiliation which may result in a few isolated cases. I have no desire to speak at length on this question, except to say that one point stands out, that through the passing of the compulsory clause twelve months ago, 23 unfortunate females were forced to undergo medical treatment so that they might be cured and thus prevented from communicating the disease to others. That has proved that the Bill is well worthy of the attention of hon. members.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara) [5.40]: Naturally I intend to support the Bill, and my regret is that the Minister proposes to limit its operation for a year. Like other legislation, if the measure does not work satisfactorily it can be repealed, but to go on as it is proposed to do year after year is, in my opinion, no good. The member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie) makes it a practice of saying "If it were my daughter or my wife"—I hope I will be excused if I use personalities—"who were compulsorily examined, I would shoot whoever came there."

Mr. Rocke: He would be justified in doing so, too.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: But the hon. member's daughter is only human. What would the hon. member do if his daughter was

guilty and was found to have the disease? It would be infinitely worse than to be compulsorily examined. It amounts to this, that if a person has the disease we want to cure that person of it, not to punish him or her. It has been stated over and over again that we should provide a trial before extending punishment, but under the Bill there is no desire to punish anyone. The desire is to effect a cure. Why go into hysterics and talk about shooting people?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You do nothing else but go into hysterics.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: We hear hon. members talk about the indignity of compulsory examination, but what is that compared to the disease if they happen to have it?

Mr. Munsie: The person who gets it should be man enough to put his name to the statement when making the charge.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: It might be a woman.

Mr. Munsie: A woman also.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The position is that if we have to rely on signed statements we are not going to get the evidence, and the hon. member knows that as well as I do. The member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) made a statement in regard to women doctors. So far as I know almost every woman doctor in this State is in favour of the Bill as it was originally proposed and as it stands to-day. In America the women doctors view the position in the same way as is done here. I might go so far as to say that in drafting the original Bill I had the assistance—and very valuable assistance, too—of one of the women doctors of this State. I do not know that there is much more to be said in regard to the Bill. We have argued the matter for about three years, and I am of opinion now that we should finish it. I am absolutely certain that when we pass the measure there will be no injustice done; the Bill will do an immense amount of good. It may not stamp out venereal disease, but I think it will go a long way towards doing so. Those who have studied the question and have any knowledge of the awful results of the disease will agree with me that it is a good work to endeavour to stamp it out. The member for South Fremantle says that we can wipe it out by having prohibition.

Mr. Rocke: I did not; I said that alcohol was the principal cause of the spread of the disease.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I do not mind telling the hon. member that the disease is rampant in Turkey, where alcohol is not consumed, and it is also rampant among the Mahomedans. In Cairo, which is one of the worst places in the world, the disease also exists, and most of them there do not touch alcohol.

Mr. O'Loughlen: There is plenty of alcohol there.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Those who spread the disease do not touch it.

Hon. T. Walker: The whole of civilisation meets there.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I do not want to tell the member for Kanowna anything, because he knows everything, but I do not mind telling the member for South Fremantle that this disease has spread amongst all the aborigines of Australia.

Hon. T. Walker: The whites have taken it there.

Hon. P. Collier: The hon. member did not claim that prohibition would cure it.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I would like to ask you, Mr. Speaker, what the member for South Fremantle has claimed?

Mr. Rocke: Ask me through the Speaker and I will tell you what I said.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I am sorry that this Bill is coming up again. We should deal with it as we have dealt with all other legislation that in our wisdom we think will do some good. Otherwise we should repeal it altogether. The question is not one that should come before Parliament year after year. A small minority of the citizens of this State want to discuss this question continually. I regret that the Minister has intimated that we are to have another Bill like this next session. It will mean having the same controversy in the newspapers once again. We do know this, that the Act has had a great influence in decreasing venereal disease. That being so, the Act is the best we have had for a long time, for there is no more dangerous disease afflicting humanity than venereal disease. One word more. It has been said that all dealings under this Act have been in camera. But we cannot bring a venereal case up and stand it in the open street to be gazed at by all the morbid minded people.

The Minister for Works: Filthy minded, too.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You would be one of those who would go to sea.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: How on earth would we deal with such cases except in camera? Would the member for North-East Fremantle like to be an inspector under the Act?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I have made no reference to the proceedings being in camera.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Would the hon. member like to be an inspector under the Act?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: No; but I expect you would be an inspector if you had the chance.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I can tell the hon. member I have seen enough of this disease to make me shudder and turn my head away. I absolutely abhor even hearing about the disease. But those morbid minded people who want to examine everybody with the microscope—

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Who are they?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I do not know. There is the statement of the member for South Fremantle about everything being done in camera. Why should it not be done in camera? Where else does he want it done?

Mr. Roche: If this House cannot get information as to the operation of the Act, how can we rectify evils?

The Minister for Mines: You can get from the Health Department all information except such information as you are not entitled to obtain.

Mr. Roche: I want the information through this House.

The Honorary Minister: You can have everything except the names.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Nobody wants the names.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The information given in reply to the question asked by the member for South Fremantle to-day was absolutely complete. The Medical Department have not at any time attempted to withhold any information except such as they ought to withhold, information regarding individuals. I trust the House contains only a small minority of members who want to examine into individual cases of this description.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: No one has ever suggested that. It is only your vile mind that suggests it.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: My vile mind?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Mr. Speaker, I think it is entirely wrong that statements should be cast about in this way.

Mr. Roche: The mind of the member for Pilbara is a cesspool.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The member for South Fremantle will withdraw that remark.

Mr. Roche: I withdraw it.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: There has been some complaint about the compulsory treatment. I put it to the House that a man suffering from this disease who will not be voluntarily treated, must have a peculiar mind; but, unfortunately, experience shows that there are persons suffering from the disease who will not submit to treatment voluntarily; and are we not right, as men, in saying that such persons must be forcibly treated? I cannot make out why hon. members complain about compulsory treatment in such cases. We offer every inducement to voluntary treatment, providing doctors and conveniences; and yet we find—I know this of my own knowledge—persons who will avoid treatment. It is our place as citizens to compel treatment and endeavour to wipe out this disease.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Scaddan—Albany—in reply) [5.52]: I am afraid that I owe something in the nature of an apology to hon. members for not having supplied them with information which I had at my hand when moving the second reading. However, my failure to furnish the information was quite innocent, being due to a hope that this rather distasteful subject might pass by without a lengthy debate. I understand that the matter has been discussed from all points of view in previous sessions, discussed until it has become almost obnoxious even to hear the subject mentioned either in this Chamber or outside. Moreover, I thought I had met the wishes of those who are to some extent opposed to this

Bill. I believe I am entitled to say that the great majority of those who expressed themselves as in some degree opposed to the measure as introduced, were nevertheless disposed, as the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) mentioned, to assist in wiping out the disease if possible. The differences of opinion have been only as to the methods to be employed. In the circumstances I agreed that the Act of last session should be extended for another 12 months by way of trial, and I thought that by this means we might avoid a discussion which is not very elevating either to members or the public. I still think the matter can easily be discussed, and a decision arrived at, without the introduction of such language as, unfortunately, has sometimes been used in the discussion of this subject. But, the experience of the past 12 months having been referred to, I think I am entitled to say one or two things with the object of clearing the atmosphere, and to dispose of what may be regarded as charges levelled at the Commissioner of Public Health, and possibly also at the Minister controlling the Health Department, in respect of the administration of the Act. As members know, Mr. Colebatch is the Minister in charge of this legislation; but let me tell the member for South Fremantle (Mr. Roche) that if I were the Minister controlling the Act I would decline as Minister to ask for certain information. I consider the Commissioner of Public Health should retain certain matters of information within his own keeping even more than the Commissioner of Taxation should retain within his own keeping information as to the incomes of persons and companies. The whole point, to my way of thinking, is whether there has been complaint in any quarter in respect of persons supposed to have been dragged up for medical examination and then found to be not infected. On that score there has not been one complaint—not a single one. I may inform the House that the Commissioner of Public Health states that the number of cases of compulsory examination of females, 32—I am not speaking of the number of men compulsorily examined, because no question has been asked in regard to them—represents only about one-fourth of the cases actually brought under his notice. Moreover, action was taken in those 32 cases only because in each case he was satisfied, upon inquiry, that the person concerned had been found in such circumstances as gave good ground for the belief that she might be infected. I repeat, nobody has complained.

Mr. O'Loughlin: You would not suggest that a person would be likely to complain?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: In my opinion there is no respectable person in this State who need have the slightest anxiety on the score of this provision being on our Statute-book. No respectable woman is going to be arrested in the street and placed between two policemen and taken away for compulsory treatment. Compulsory examination has been and will be resorted to only in

circumstances giving good ground for belief in the need for examination. I am not going to concern myself any more about those 32 cases for the present. I want to give the House some information which has been furnished me by the Commissioner of Public Health regarding conditions that, unfortunately, sometimes obtain in our midst.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would like to remind the Minister that if he is going to read from a file, then, if an hon. member asks for that file—

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am just attaching a memorandum to the file for this particular purpose.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: If you read the memorandum, the file will have to go on the Table of the House.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I will quote just one example to show the value of the provision as to compulsory examination. The Commissioner of Public Health writes—

A man visited me and stated that he was not quite cured of gonorrhoea, and feared that his wife was also affected, but she would not see a doctor. He also thought his two little girls had something wrong with them. Pressure was brought to bear upon the mother, and it was found that not only was she affected but both the little girls, whilst the baby developed gonorrhoeal ophthalmia. All were immediately placed under treatment.

In view of that case will any hon. member suggest that that section is not of value? If that had been the only case in twelve months, it would have sufficed to demonstrate the value of the provision. I am not modest, not in the slightest degree; and this is a subject which, as everybody knows, we have not faced in the way we should do. We talk about other diseases with the object of compelling people to leave their homes and be isolated for treatment. We deprive a family of the husband and father and send him to a sanatorium because he is suffering from consumption. On the same ground we tear the wife from the arms of her husband. And yet this other disease which we have in our social system must not be spoken of. Because of our attitude, persons who suffer from the disease hide the fact as far as possible, with the result that they move about amongst the community and spread the disease further.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The case you quoted is no argument in favour of the new Act. That case could have been dealt with under the old Act.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No husband is going to sign a statement against his wife. No wife is going to sign a statement against her husband. No father is going to sign a statement against his child.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That was not necessary under the old legislation.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Those are not the cases we have to keep in mind. But in the circumstances I do not think even the

member for South Fremantle will suggest that a person holding the important position of Commissioner of Public Health in a community having adult franchise, where he can be called to account by the Minister and by Parliament for abuse of his powers, is going to drag away respectable women and girls for the purpose of compulsory examination. No one would suggest that. In different parts of the world different methods have been tried for combating venereal disease. Here in Perth I am advised that the Public Hospital last year treated about 1,000 cases. We do not underrate the fact. It is not desirable that we should. But it is evident that the disease exists in our midst, and that we must do something. Unfortunately it is necessary that part of what we do shall be confidential. I hold the view that even people opposed to me are entitled to express their opinion. I do not think there is any occasion for the warmth displayed. I do not hold with the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) that the women in the community who have expressed opinions in opposition to the Bill are not entitled to express their opinions.

Mr. Teesdale: There is too much detail in it for women.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is pure fudge. We have suffered too much from that sort of thing. I believe the criticism levelled against the Bill is just as sincere as is the attitude of the hon. member in supporting it. These women are entitled to their opinions, and so too are others in the community. In respect of the study of venereal disease the past four or five years have been equal to the previous century. We have learned much. Those engaged in Red Cross work in France during the war saw things that we have been unable to see. It is now generally agreed that legislation is required to combat the disease. Here are two proposals that the Red Cross people in France have resolved upon: (1) Measures for the elimination of conditions favouring the disease. (2) Methods of discovery, control, and treatment of the disease. Think of that, "methods of discovery"!

Hon. P. Collier: Who is that by?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: This is from the Red Cross conference held at Cannes during 1919. A good deal has been made of the fact that a Royal Commission appointed in Great Britain in 1918 or earlier recommended that the treatment should not be made compulsory at present. But, arising out of that commission, a society was formed to carry on the work of that commission, to discover ways and means of combating the disease. I have had sent to me by a professor of our own University, a brief copy of the report which that society proposes to submit, from which I take the following recommendation—

That it should be made a statutory obligation on every individual suffering from venereal disease to obtain and continue treatment until cured.

And again—

That the Local Government Board should be asked to consider immediately whether some modified form of confidential notification of infective cases could be adopted under existing powers and whether at a later date further powers could be obtained from Parliament.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: No one has objected to that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The whole question seems to centre on the point as to whether it is desirable we should get further experience of the operations of the provision. I am not satisfied that even after the next 12 months shall have expired a great number of the community will have changed their views, unless we can find some means of scrutinising from day to day the operation of the provision during that period. If we could discover some method under which two or three members might have opportunity for conferring with the Commissioner of Health from time to time, those members would probably get sufficient information to be able to come to the House and report that the Bill was being administered wisely and with some advantage to the community. We shall probably have a number of innocent people brought up for examination. That is unavoidable. It must be remembered that innocent men sometimes have to stand trial for their lives. Men have been taken from the streets, cast into prison and held there until tried, only to be found innocent. There is no redress for those men.

Mr. Roche: But the humiliation for a man is not to be compared with the humiliation for a woman.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: But my illustration applies also to women. Women are responsible to the law, just as are men. A woman may be arrested for some serious offence and proved to be innocent; yet she has no redress. And it is better that that sort of thing should happen than that guilty persons should go unpunished. Even though those four girls referred to in the answer to the hon. member's question this afternoon were innocent—I think we are entitled to accept the view of the Commissioner that he had good grounds to believe they were likely to be infected—it is better that those four girls should be examined rather than 23 infected girls be allowed to go about the streets of Perth spreading the disease. That is the main point in the whole discussion, and I hope members will realise it. This is a terrible disease in our social system, and we have to get it out. Someone has to take the responsibility, and I believe that the Commissioner of Public Health, who is responsible to Parliament, is the most fitting officer for that responsibility. I should have had no hesitation in asking Parliament to make this provision permanent—because after all, no law is really permanent, for all are open to repeal—but that there seemed to be a feeling that it might be difficult to get the provision off the statute-book if it were

once made permanent. Therefore, I have no objection to a mere extension of the period of operation. In the meantime I hope hon. members will not wait until the next Bill comes down, as did the member for South Fremantle in this instance, but will take a live interest in the question and will go to the Public Health Commissioner for necessary information.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is all right, but I have been behind the doors, and I know what information an hon. member is likely to get if the Minister does not want him to get it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not believe the hon. member would go behind any door in the manner he suggests.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I have been refused file after file.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I give the hon. member an undertaking that in connection with this question he shall get all the information that is possible to give during the next 12 months, other than that which under the law the Commissioner is not entitled to give. We cannot go on indefinitely handling this trouble in the way we have done. The disease is in our midst, we have to get rid of it, and somebody has to take the responsibility.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; the Minister for Mines in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Repeal of Section 54 of the Health Act Amendment Act, 1918. Section 41 made perpetual.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: To conform to the statement I have already made, I ask the Committee to delete the clause. At the proper time I will move to insert a new clause.

Clause put and negatived.

Clauses 3 and 4—Agreed to.

New clause—

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I move—

That the following be added to stand as Clause 2:—"The amendments of the Health Act, 1911-15, made by Section 41 of the Health Act Amendment Act, 1918, shall continue in force until 31st December, 1920, and no longer, after which date Section 242j of the Health Act, 1911-15, as originally enacted shall again come into operation."

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Minister was quite wrong when he said the Commissioner did not have power to deal with cases such as he mentioned under the Act of 1915. Under that Act, if the Commissioner were notified that a certain person was suffering

from the disease, he would have reason to believe the statement and could take the same action as is provided for in the present measure. The objection is that if a person were wrongly notified, he or she had no power to demand the name of the person who supplied the information to the Commissioner.

Mr. Underwood: That is only one point; the objection to the Bill is general.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is not worth taking up time to deal with the remarks of the members for Rosbourn and Pilbara. Any objection from this side of the House was not raised for party purposes.

Mr. Underwood: It was, absolutely.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Five members on this side of the House voted in favour of the signed statement and four against it. There was no party voting in the division. The question asked to-day read—

How many of the 32 females compulsorily examined under the provisions of the Health Act Amendment Act, 1918, were found to be infected?

The reply was that 23 were found to be infected. This implies that 32 were examined. One case is still being dealt with; four were found to be not infected, and four cases were lost sight of. When were they lost sight of, after they had been examined?

The Minister for Mines: That is not correct.

The Minister for Works: They cleared out and could not be found.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The question distinctly asked how many were examined.

Mr. Underwood: What about the 23 who were infected?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We are not in a position to know how many compulsory examinations took place. Any female who had been compulsorily examined would not advertise the fact to the world. Those persons might have been wrongfully reported. The new clause will meet requirements for the present, as it will be a check against anything being done which might be detrimental to the community. In 12 months' time, further information should be available and, if it is then proved that such legislation is warranted, no doubt the Government will again bring it forward.

New clause put and passed.

Title:

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I move an amendment—

That in line 1, the words "repeal Section fifty-four" be struck out and the words "continue the operation of Section forty-one" be inserted in lieu; and in lines 2 and 3, the words "and to make Section forty-one of that Act perpetual" be struck out.

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

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Bill reported with an amendment, and an amendment to the Title.

BILL—TRAFFIC.

In Committee.

Resumed from 23rd September; Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clause 35—Weight of vehicle to be displayed:

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I move an amendment—

That in line 7 the words "daily penalty: ten pounds" be struck out, and "penalty: five pounds" inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I move a further amendment—

That a subclause be added as follows:—2, As from a date to be fixed by proclamation, no person shall sell or offer or exhibit for sale or import any new vehicle of the kind specified in Subsection 1 hereof unless the correct weight of the vehicle is painted in some conspicuous part on the off-side thereof, in white letters of the prescribed size on a black ground.

Penalty: Five pounds.

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

Clauses 36 to 39—agreed to.

Clause 40—Regulations:

Mr. ROBINSON: I move an amendment, which will be found on the Notice Paper under the name of the member for Swan (Mr. Nairn)—

That the words "subject to this Act, the Governor may by regulations" be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu:—"For the purposes of this Act a Board shall be appointed by the Governor. Such Board shall consist of:—(1) a nominee of the Government, (2) a representative of the municipalities, (3) a representative of the road boards, (4) a representative of the Automobile Club of W.A. (Incorporated), and (5) a representative of the owners of vehicles licensed for the carrying of passengers and/or goods for reward. The conduct of, time and place of meetings of the Board shall be under such regulations as the Minister by proclamation may make. Subject to this Act the Board may by regulations."

As this Bill is one for the regulation of traffic in certain directions it would be wise that power to make these regulations should be vested in a board comprised of persons thoroughly understanding the subject. At present municipalities and road boards make by-laws. I suggest that the Government should be represented on this board, and there is no question about municipalities and road boards being entitled to representation. Then we come to two innovations, namely, representation of the automobile club, and of owners of vehicles licensed for the carrying of passengers or of goods for reward. Under such a pro-

posal, therefore, all sections of the community interested would be represented. I was led to this view by facts which were brought under my personal notice. When the Labour Government were in power Mr. W. D. Johnson was Minister for Works. He presided over a conference of local authorities, municipal and road board, which was convened for the purpose of considering the Traffic Bill and the regulations made thereunder. The Minister could not sit as president, and I was elected to the position. I found there was no difficulty in harmonising the regulations and preparing a set which has now become the standard set of regulations for the State. The idea occurred to me that if a body such as that, consisting of a mixed lot of municipal and road board delegates, could frame regulations of this character, surely the purpose of the Bill would be served if we adopted the same principle again. I hope, therefore, this amendment will be agreed to.

Sitting suspended (owing to the failure of the electric light) from 8 to 8.45 p.m.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I appreciate the principle underlying the hon. member's amendment but I regret I cannot see my way clear to accept it. The essence of the Bill is to allow the Governor in Council to make by-laws which shall be general throughout the State. It is not proposed that an official shall, at his own sweet will, prepare by-laws which he may think will suit. It is intended, out of the quantity of matter which will be collated from time to time, to draft regulations which can be regarded as being suitable for the whole of the State, and then before they are approved by the Governor in Council the local authorities will be consulted to see whether any alterations are required. I admit that a board such as that suggested by the hon. member would have a certain amount of power and would be regarded as being representative of the different districts, being able to give advice which would command respect. I do not say that a representative of the automobile club or a representative of the owners of vehicles might not be able to make suggestions which would be worthy of respect, but they would be representatives of only a comparatively small section of the community, and they would therefore not be so apt to deal with the subject as broadly as we would have a right to expect from road boards and municipalities. A board such as that suggested must also necessarily mean the appointment of someone as secretary, and there will also be a certain amount of expense which will hardly be justified. We may fairly decide that in the interests of the State it is better that the final authority to deal with these regulations should be the Governor in Council. There is no desire to in any way belittle the representative bodies to whom I have referred; they will be consulted and every consideration will be given to the views they put forward.

Hon. T. WALKER: I desire to support the Minister in his opposition to the amendment. What will the suggested board have to do once the regulations are drafted and adopted? We should want to keep the board permanently for the purpose of altering and amending the regulations from time to time. The amendment proposes that we shall create machinery, more or less expensive, for the drafting of regulations. As the clause stands, every person who is capable of throwing out a suggestion or making an improvement will be consulted before the regulations are finally approved. Moreover, the Bill is to govern not the metropolis alone but the whole State, and a board selected in the city might not give that consideration which the vastly different interests would require. We should have cries of discontent coming from all parts of the State and we should find ourselves in a fix. Local bodies would object to regulations being imposed upon them which would be unworkable in their particular districts. The result would be confusion, dissatisfaction, annoyance, interference, and sometimes loss in more ways than one.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Increased cost also.

Hon. T. WALKER: The hon. member's amendment belittles the whole measure. The administration of the Bill will depend chiefly on the regulations, and if those regulations are in the hands of a clique, a little body of men isolated from all responsibility, then government is at an end. I trust the hon. member will see that the only possible course will be to make national what is of national concern, that is to say, to make the Government of the country responsible for the by-laws to control the traffic of the State.

Mr. NAIRN: I hope the amendment moved by the member for Canning will be carried. I take it the intention is to see that those who are chiefly affected by the regulations are represented on the board.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: What about pedestrian traffic?

Mr. NAIRN: My opinion is that it is not possible for any one representative body to encompass the whole of the State and interpret what is required to meet local conditions. I want to see road boards represented. It is useless to say that whoever may be appointed by the Government in Perth will be capable of understanding thoroughly the requirements of all the local authorities in the State. That is one of the reasons why the road boards should be represented. For a similar reason the Automobile Club should be considered because they represent a body of people who pay more taxation than any other class. It is only reasonable that there should be representation where there is taxation. But the opinions of these people will be available too, and their opinions should be more valuable than those of any Government officer, however capable he may be. It is well that the various local bodies should have some responsibility in this matter. There will be great differences of opinion in connection with this measure between the various municipalities and road boards, and these

bodies should come together for that very reason. The results of their deliberations could go before the Minister as recommendations.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The member for Swan can hardly have taken into full consideration the scope of the regulations to be made under this Bill. It is because we know there are differences of opinion between the various local bodies that we wish to retain power in the hands of the Minister. Does the hon. member think that a board rendering unpaid service is likely to give the necessary attention to a subject requiring long and continuous consideration? How could such a board as that suggested give such attention? Is the member for Canning, as a member of the Automobile Club, prepared to go on day after day and month after month giving attention to the drafting of regulations?

Mr. Robinson: Yes. I am responsible for drafting the existing regulations.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is as regards motor traffic.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The regulations to be drafted under this measure will cover a multiplicity of subjects. For instance, what do the members of the Automobile Club know about travelling stock?

Mr. Robinson: What do the Government auditors know about it?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Government officers have done fairly well so far. It is the business of those framing the regulations to discover what may reasonably be expected of the people who use the roads. What would the proposed board know about driving camels?

Mr. Robinson: What would the Government auditors know about driving camels?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Government have officers who not only drive camels, but also breed them. How could the Minister allow his officers to be at the beck and call of an irresponsible board? The Minister must have control of his officers. I hope the amendment will be rejected.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I am glad the Minister has shown some backbone. If he wanted to weaken his case, however, he could not do better than refer to auditors. The officers of the department who will control this measure are in daily communication with the various local authorities throughout the State, and the advice which the Government will get from the local authorities will be a thousand times more useful than that to be obtained from any club. The members of the Automobile Club have never given an hour's consideration to the subject of local government in their lives. The idea of the amendment is absurd. No doubt the regulations of the proposed board would be pretty hard on drivers of carts or camels or sheep or pigs. The amendment represents a move to introduce more particularly the influence of the Perth City Council into the making of the regulations. The members of the suggested board would be city residents, and

would make regulations suitable for the city, but not for the State as a whole. By far the better course is to leave the framing of the regulations entirely in the hands of the Government, who are subject to the control of the members representing the various districts of the State. If a regulation is objectionable, action can be taken in Parliament to have that regulation disagreed to, or referred back for amendment. I have more confidence even in the present Government than I have in the members of a board not yet constituted. In the interests of the measure, particularly seeing that the police are to administer it, let us leave the Government to frame regulations, which will have to be approved by Parliament.

Mr. THOMSON: I will oppose the amendment. I do not think it would be in the interests of the country districts to have the power vested in a board. It would mean further centralisation. The larger number of vehicles are licensed in the metropolitan area. And as the Automobile Club has its headquarters also in the metropolitan area, at least three of the four members will be representatives of the metropolitan area. From my experience of road boards conferences, I can say that the ignorance of metropolitan representatives of the requirements of country districts is really appalling. Moreover, it will mean the handing over to an irresponsible board the regulation of the whole of the traffic. I prefer to leave it with the "Governor," who, after all, will be the Minister in charge. As for the auditors, I am convinced that they are in a position to advise the department of the requirements of the local authority.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. ANGELO: Paragraph (g) provides for prohibiting or restricting driving on dangerous roads. In some parts of my district there are no main roads, the heavy traffic passing over what are merely tracks cut through the bush. Alongside of those tracks are parallel tracks intended for the use of motor-cars. Some of the drivers of heavy vehicles have gone over those motor tracks and cut them up. In an attempt to prevent this, the road board has had the special tracks gazetted for the exclusive use of motor-cars, but has now been advised by its solicitor that the regulation is ultra vires. Can the difficulty be met by paragraph (g), or would it be necessary to add to the paragraph the words "or on any road gazetted for motor traffic only?"

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The difficulty expounded by the hon. member could be dealt with under this paragraph. However, in the Road Districts Bill, to be introduced next week, there is a special clause providing for motor tracks, and prohibiting the use of such tracks by other than motor vehicles.

Mr. SMITH: Paragraph (j) provides for regulating the manner in which horses or other teams shall be driven, yoked or har-

nessed. Why should the Bill be loaded up with such paltry regulations? I move an amendment—

That paragraph (j) be struck out.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Objection to this paragraph and to paragraph (1) has been raised by the carters' union, who want it deleted, and who claim that the owners of the teams best know how yoking should be done. But is it likely that any interference would be attempted with the common-sense way of yoking horses? However, on country roads one sometimes meets a dozen or more small ponies yoked in a long string, while at other times horses will be found yoked abreast in such numbers that the road will scarcely accommodate them. The provision is a perfectly sensible one and will not interfere with any man of experience among teams.

Mr. TEESDALE: I am opposed to the provision. My electors will be very much dissatisfied with it and will take an early opportunity of letting me know of their dissatisfaction. It is sheer impudence to dictate yoking methods to a wool teamster, with a team of 30 horses or 50 donkeys.

Hon. P. Collier: There are more than 50 on your roll.

Mr. TEESDALE: The men who yoke those big teams of horses or of donkeys know exactly what is best for their animals. This provision will be accounted a very serious one by my electors, some of whom have to travel 260 miles with their teams. Our roads cost the Government very little. We construct them mostly ourselves, and, when they become too bad to work on, we cut out another. Seeing that we have to provide roads for ourselves, we want to have a small say in their management, and not to be bossed about by a gentleman in the Minister's department as to how we shall yoke our teams.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: This clause merely gives power to make by-laws.

Mr. Smith: It is too late when the by-law is made.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, the by-law must be submitted to Parliament, and there is always an opportunity to object to it. Under this measure, the Government may give road boards power to make regulations. I do not think any harm will come from passing the clause.

The Honorary Minister: It is absolutely necessary.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Minister will be able to confine the application of the clause to certain parts of the State. The Government should have the power, to be exercised if necessary.

Clause put and declared passed.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I think the member for North Perth moved an amendment that paragraph (j) be deleted.

The CHAIRMAN: No, he did not.

Mr. Smith: Yes, I did.

The Minister for Mines: I object to going back.

The CHAIRMAN: There seems to be a misunderstanding. I did not hear the member for North Perth move that paragraph (j) be deleted. As he says he moved it, I will put it.

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

Ayes	11
Noes	19

Majority against .. 8

AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Locke
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Smith
Mr. Collier	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Duff	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Durack	Mr. Hardwick
Mr. O'Loghlen	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Nairn
Mr. Broun	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Brown	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Davies	Mr. Pilkington
Mr. Draper	Mr. Roblason
Mr. George	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Willmott
Mr. Lutey	Mr. Harrison
Mr. Mullany	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

The electric light having again failed,

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 9.40 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 30th September, 1919.

	PAGE.
Assent to Bill	656
Motions: Trade with Straits Settlement and Java	657
Explosives Act, amended regulations, to disallow	660
Bills: Dog Act Amendment, 1r.	657
Health Act Amendment, Assembly's Amend.	660
Justice Act Amendment, 3r.	663
Droving, 2r.	663
Fruit Cases, 2r., Select Committee appointed	664
Kidnaping Friendly Societies Investment Valuation, 2r.	673

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

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read, notifying assent to the Crown Suits Act Amendment Bill.