

Item—Departmental advertising except Railways and State steamship service, £2,000.

Mr. WILLMOTT: Will the Minister give some explanation of this new item?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We are bringing all our advertising, other than in connection with the departments mentioned, under one heading, and under one vote. At present there are various votes and the book-keeping involved is enormous. In order to concentrate this expenditure and reduce the cost of book-keeping, the items have been put into one total. Incidentals are also largely concentrated instead of being distributed amongst various departments.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What was the expenditure last year?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The amount provided this year is less than the total expenditure for last year.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Could not we do without it?

Item—Grant to Yalgoo Roads Board, clearing street at Warriedar, £25.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I thought these votes always appeared under the Works Department? That is where they should appear.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This matter was settled between the Under Secretary for Works and the Under Treasurer.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Why?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not know, but it is being paid from my vote.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: This will empower two departments to make these grants. The Minister for Works should control such expenditure.

The Minister for Lands: So he does; this is a mistake.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The Minister for Works does not seem to know much about it.

Vote (as reduced to £45,953) put and passed.

[This completed the Estimates of the Colonial Treasurer's Department.]

[The Deputy Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Progress reported.

## BILL—COTTESLOE BEACH RATES VALIDATION.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

## ADJOURNMENT—ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SHOW.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. D. Johnson—Guildford) [7.47]: I move—

*That the House at its rising adjourn until Thursday, the 7th October, at 4.30 p.m.*

Question passed.

*House adjourned at 7.48 a.m. (Wednesday.)*

## Legislative Council.

*Thursday, 7th October, 1915.*

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 3.30 p.m., and read prayers.

## QUESTION—ADVANCES TO INDUSTRIES.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, What amount has been advanced in cash or by guarantee under the Agricultural Bank Act and the Savings Bank Act to persons engaged in any industry? 2, Names of persons ob-

taining advances, and the amount granted to each? 3, Nature of security in each instance?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, No advances have been made from the Agricultural Bank other than to farmers. 2 and 3, No advances have been made under the Savings Bank Act to any industry.

#### QUESTION — WOOROLOO SANATORIUM, MEAT SUPPLY.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Is the supply of meat consumed at the Wooroloo Sanatorium supplied on contract? 2, If so, who are the contractors and what are the schedule prices?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, No. When the institution at Wooroloo was opened in May last, it was not deemed advisable, in view of the disturbed state of the market for general commodities, to invite tenders for supplies to the institution, and meat has been obtained locally where possible to the best advantage. The contracts for supplies to Government institutions will expire on the 31st December next. When inviting fresh tenders the Tender Board will be asked to include Wooroloo as a place where meat and other commodities will be required. 2, Answered by No. 1.

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: State Milk Supply—balance sheet and profit and loss account for year ended 30th June, 1915.

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

##### *Extension of time.*

On motion by Hon. J. J. HOLMES the time for bringing up the report of the committee was extended to Tuesday, 12th October.

#### BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Postponement of Debts Act Continuance.

2, Marriage Act Amendment.

Returned to Assembly without amendment.

#### BILL—MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.

##### *In Committee.*

Resumed from the 5th October; Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair, the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 6—Classification of inspectors:

Clause, as previously amended, put and passed.

Clauses 7, 8, 9—agreed to.

Clause 10—Powers of inspectors:

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: I ask the Committee to vote against the clause; it is the most vital in the Bill. A perusal of Clause 6 makes it quite clear that the drafter of the Bill intended that a district inspector was to have fuller powers than either special inspectors or district inspectors, and Clause 9 reveals the intention that the workmen's inspectors shall be under the authority of the district inspectors. Yet in face of this the clause under consideration provides that workmen's inspectors shall have the full powers of district inspectors. The clause, if passed as it stands, would put the mining industry in a critical position. If the clause is negatived I will move a new clause, clearly defining the powers of workmen's inspectors and district inspectors. If we are to have running about the mines two or three classes of inspectors with equal powers, the position will be intolerable to the mine management and certainly not conducive to profitable working. Further than that, it will not be in the interests of the workmen themselves. I propose to do away with the power of workmen's inspectors to initiate and conduct prosecutions against persons offending against the provisions of the Act. A workmen's inspector will have full power to enter, inspect, and examine any mine or part of

a mine by day or night and shall have what assistance he deems necessary to make the inspection, but he must not obstruct. He may also inquire into all things relating to the safety and well-being of persons employed in the mine. The workmen's inspector should not have the power to initiate and conduct prosecutions and only under certain conditions should he be able to obtain written statements from witnesses, that is when the district inspector is not available. The adoption of the principle of workmen's inspectors represents an important departure which, in the past, has aroused great controversy, and the powers I propose are all that are necessary. The Chamber of Mines desired that a provision similar to that in New South Wales should be accepted, but the Federated Miners' Association contended that the appointment of such inspectors could only be made when a mine had become unsafe. That objection is overcome because the men will be able to elect their inspectors who will have power to enter and examine any mine. The miners' association desired workmen's inspectors who would not be dependent on the mine owners for their livelihood. My proposal will make them independent because they will be elected by the workmen, appointed by the Minister and paid by the Government. The new clause represents a very fair compromise and I am glad that to some extent I have been instrumental in bringing it about. I realise that the men on the goldfields have desired workmen's inspectors in whom they could confide because, it has been urged, it was more than a man's position was worth if he complained about the state of a mine. Under my proposal there will be nothing to fear in this regard. It is essential to the welfare of the industry that the provision governing workmen's inspectors should be modified in the direction I have indicated.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The representatives of the industry should inform us why they have abandoned their former attitude of hostility against workmen's inspectors. I disapprove of workmen's inspectors, but under the Bill we are giv-

ing them sufficient power to annoy the mine owners. Although the hon. member was not prepared to vote against the principle, he is attempting to whittle away the powers of these inspectors. Assuming that the clause is struck out, workmen's inspectors will have very considerable powers and the mere fact of whittling away their powers may make them more inclined to annoy the mine owners. If the principle of workmen's inspectors is accepted, they should be given a free hand.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: The clause should be allowed to stand. The hon. member aims at providing safeguards against workmen's inspectors unduly harassing mine managers. The Bill contains important safeguards, one of them being that the inspector elected shall be subject to the approval of the Minister. The Minister would not sanction any undesirable appointment but, in addition to that, Clause 9 stipulates that these inspectors shall be under the control of the district inspectors so that the latter would have some authority over them.

Hon. R. D. McKenzie: Read the next clause and you will see there is no power over them.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I do not see how that can override Clause 9, which provides that they shall be under the authority of the district inspector.

Hon. R. D. McKenzie: The Bill gives them equal power.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: Probably, so far as the inspecting of mines is concerned, and why not, seeing that a policeman has equal power with a corporal in the maintenance of good order.

Hon. R. D. McKenzie: But the police sergeant decides whether there shall be a prosecution.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: Any Minister would carefully inquire before appointing men to these positions. I have lived among the miners on the Golden Mile nearly all my life and have found them broad-minded, sensible and amenable to what is fair. During all these years, although they are such strong unionists, there has never been a serious strike on the Golden Mile. I have

never known the miners put forward preposterous demands which are put forward by unionists elsewhere. I describe the miners on the goldfields as the aristocracy of the unionists. They are broad-minded men, have a knowledge of the world, and no man can say that they have acted other than in a fair and reasonable way, with a desire to preserve the peace and to work well with the mine managers generally. Whatever inspectors are elected by men of that type will be fair in their demands. If we are to appoint workmen's inspectors, what is the use unless they have real power. The inspectors will be appointed by the Government and paid by the Government and they should have full power, or of what avail is it to appoint them? On the two previous occasions, when the amending Mines Regulation Bill has been introduced into the House the proposals were of a far-reaching character, but the miners on the fields have said that the proposal contained in this Bill is the least that can be accepted by them. Members should view this clause as a compromise. Is there anything unreasonable or unfair in the proposal put forward? Why appoint an inspector at all unless he can initiate a prosecution? There are no powers in the clause that should not be given to inspectors, if we are to have inspectors at all. I think members should allow the clause to pass as it stands. This is not a clause that we ought to view in the light of what is desired by any particular body. We have all great respect for the Chamber of Mines, as well as for the Labour organisation. Both bodies on the fields are held in regard by the people, and this clause is a compromise. This is a Bill that affects the life, the limb and the health of thousands of miners and members should look at it in a different light from which they view other legislation.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** Mr. McKenzie having announced his intention to move new clauses, it is necessary to refer to the particular amendments. One of the proposed amendments is intended to restrict the powers of special

and workmen's inspectors by withholding from them the powers which are invested under the Bill in them in common with the district inspectors. It is difficult to understand why the powers in Subclause (a) to make inquiry and examination, should be withheld from any inspector. Obviously the reason for the existence of any sort of inspector of mines is that he makes examination and inquiry to ascertain whether the Act is being complied with. That power is inherent in the very name of inspector. It is desired by the proposed amended Subclause (b) to confine the power of initiating and conducting prosecutions to the district inspectors, withholding it from the workmen's inspector. This is a quite unnecessary restriction which might cause a good deal of trouble and expense. In out of the way places, like Wiluna, or Lawlers, it would save a lot of trouble and expense if the workmen's inspectors could conduct prosecutions in simple cases of breaches of the rules. The workmen's inspectors would not be allowed to prosecute without reference to the district inspectors, and to the head office of their department, any more than the district inspectors are now allowed to prosecute at their own discretion. It is a strict rule that all inspectors must submit their cases for prosecution to the head office before bringing them into court so that legal advice may be obtained from the Crown Law Department if necessary and there may be a proper check on unnecessary or futile prosecutions. Workmen's inspectors would not be permitted to act without instructions from their superior officers but it might be advantageous at times to utilise them to lay information and appear in court to prosecute. The proviso sought to be put before Subclause (c) is unnecessary and would only hamper reasonable freedom of action. The whole of the actions of the workmen's inspectors are under the control and direction of the district inspectors, and it would be only when the latter are not available that any need would arise for the powers to be exercised by the workmen's inspec-

tor. The mere fact of an inspector prosecuting the offender does not constitute a conviction. The case must go into court and must be proved. Moreover, the approval of the Minister has to be obtained, and the authority of the district inspector, if one is available. There would be no power of any consequence given to the workmen's inspectors if the amendment is carried. The Bill will be an empty shell and a farce.

Hon. F. CONNOR: These are very great powers to give to men who are probably not qualified. These inspectors should pass an examination. They may be ignorant of the working of a mine. I want some form of examination for these people to pass. Let it be proved that they can even read or write. These men will have powers to harass certain mine managers if they so desire, though I do not say they will exercise them.

Hon. R. G. ARDAGH: It may so happen that a workmen's inspector is the only inspector who has seen a particular accident, and if that is so he should be more qualified than anyone else to appear in the case. Men will be appointed to these positions who are not so ignorant as has been suggested and they will be the best men obtainable from the ranks of the miners. I do not think the mine managers or district inspectors will be able to show them any points in respect to underground workings. I see no objection to any clause in the Bill. There are over 200 miles of underground tunnelling and drives within the Golden Mile and it is impossible for any two men to supervise the work properly. That is one reason why it is necessary to have workmen's inspectors.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: There appears to be some concern on the part of the Hon. R. D. McKenzie and the Hon. Mr. Connor that too much power is being given to these workmen's inspectors. They cannot do anything which the Act does not empower them to do. The safeguard of the mine manager is that their actions are already set out. The workmen's inspectors might themselves be witnesses of particular accidents. Of what use is it their entering into their

duties if they have not the power prescribed in this clause, or to catch any men infringing the regulations, if they cannot state a case and give evidence? I fail to see why Subclause (e) should be deleted. It might be necessary for the workmen's inspectors to attend inquiries and inquests and to call and examine witnesses and cross-examine them. If the men were so ignorant, as it is said they are, they would not be a great menace to mine managers in their cross-examination of witnesses. If they had not these powers it is useless to appoint them.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: We have already practically affirmed the principle of appointing workmen's inspectors. The amendment proposed by the Hon. R. D. McKenzie appears to differ very little from Clause 10. I would suggest if Subclause (d) is deleted that words should be added to Clause (e) to the effect that in the event of the district inspector being unable to attend, the workmen's inspector may have the powers specified in Clause (d). Clause 10 conflicts with Clause 9. The latter lays down specific instructions, whereas the former lays down something else, which clashes with the other clause. If it would meet with the approval of Mr. McKenzie I would like to give notice of the further amendment I have suggested.

Hon. C. SOMMERS: I favour the omission of Clause 10 and the insertion of Mr. R. D. McKenzie's proposed new clause, which gives all necessary powers. The workmen's inspector will be really only working under the district inspector, and to give the workmen's inspector power to initiate prosecutions is going too far altogether. In the matter of prosecutions the district inspector should direct the workmen's inspector in the same way as the Commissioner of Police directs a constable. If two sets of inspectors have equal powers, it must lead to clashing.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: Clause 9 does not govern Clause 10 in the slightest degree. Under Clause 10 the workmen's inspector will have co-equal powers with the district inspector. That is the aspect

from which we ought to look at the question, and which I think will prove unworkable. Those who support the Bill have no desire to harass the mine owner, but that is likely to be the result of the passing of Clause 10. There ought to be only one authority, and that should be the superior inspector. A proviso that the powers of a workmen's inspector under Clause 10 shall not be brought into operation except with the consent of the district inspector would meet the difficulty.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I hope the Committee will not delete Clause 10. If the point raised by Mr. Jenkins can be met by redrafting the clause, I have no objection. The effect of the new clause, however, will practically be to make the powers of workmen's inspectors just as circumscribed as they are under the 1906 Act. Workmen's inspectors, to be a success, must have first hand power. The main objection raised is that workmen's inspectors should not have power to summon. If they are only to have power to look around and then to inform the district inspector, the latter, not having seen the actual circumstances, will probably put his own interpretation on the matter. Workmen's inspectors in remote localities should be empowered to take the case to court when they discover something wrong, instead of waiting perhaps three months for a visit from the district inspector. In my opinion the workmen's inspector will be just as well qualified as the district inspector. Besides, a court would not listen to trivial cases. I hope hon. members will not whittle away the powers of workmen's inspectors. The proposed new clause is absurd. Under it a workmen's inspector will not have the power to appear at an inquest, except as a witness; while to-day paragraph 3 of General Rule 35 gives to the secretary of an organisation or a union the very same powers which the Committee is now asked to refuse to grant to workmen's inspectors. However, I fear it is useless to debate the question, as hon. members seem to have made up their minds.

Hon. F. CONNOR: I wish to remove a misapprehension. I did not say, as Mr. Millington thought, that all workmen's inspectors would be ignorant. I merely expressed the opinion that there might be some ignorant men among them. Mr. Cornell's point relative to workmen's inspectors in outside centres is worth consideration, because that is where danger would arise in connection with having workmen's inspectors only. Where mining is in its infancy, so to speak, certain risks have to be taken. I think everything that can be, or at least should be, desired by workmen's inspectors is provided in the proposed new clause.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: One matter I think has been lost sight of by Mr. McKenzie in wishing to delete Clause 10. It is this: We have agreed to the appointment of special inspectors, and now under the new clause proposed to take the place of Clause 10, a special inspector will not have power to obtain written statements from witnesses as provided in an earlier clause. Such an inspector might be a medical man appointed to inquire into the sanitary conditions of a mine, yet under the proposed new clause he would have no power to do so.

Hon. R. D. MCKENZIE: If we are going to differentiate between the powers of district and workmen's inspectors it is quite necessary that Clause 10 should come out, because that clause covers the powers of all inspectors. It was clearly in the mind of the drafter of the Bill that the district inspectors should have higher powers than the workmen's inspectors. That is seen in Clause 9. When this principle of workmen's inspectors was first agitated for, it was never intended, even by the workmen themselves, that such inspectors should have the power of district inspectors. What they desired was to have men in the mines to whom they could complain about what seemed to them dangerous parts of the workings. If they get that, I think they will be satisfied. In the proposed new clause I have specially differentiated between district and workmen's inspectors.

Hon. J. Cornell: The differentiation is too great.

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: I do not think so. In regard to Mr. Millington's point, there is no reason why the clause I propose to have inserted in place of Clause 10 should not be amended. As suggested by Mr. Millington, it has been an oversight, but special provision can be made to meet it. However, the main point is that it was never intended that workmen's inspectors should take the place of district inspectors.

The Colonial Secretary: Clause 9 gives the district inspector full control over them.

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE: But the district inspectors will not have that control if this clause is retained. There will be a clashing of control, and an altogether impossible position will be set up. As to why the mining people should have changed their opinion in regard to workmen's inspectors, it is sufficient that it is now recognised that the lives of the men working in the mine are at stake. Arguments have been brought to bear, and the mining authorities have at last agreed that the appointment of check inspectors will be in the interests of the workmen. I think the power I propose to give the workmen inspectors will be ample. If, in course of time, it is found to be insufficient, it will be easy to extend it. I trust the Committee will throw out this clause, so that I may move the proposed new clause.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I do not think Mr. Cornell is justified in saying this debate is useless. The remarks we have just listened to may be taken as evidence that the debate has served a useful purpose. Seeing that the clause deals with the lives and limbs of thousands of men, I think we should have a most exhaustive inquiry to make sure we are doing the right thing. Mr. Duffell called attention to the slight difference there is between the clause as it stands and the proposed new clause, and Mr. McKenzie now admits that in one respect at any rate the proposed new clause should be amended. I am quite prepared to strike out the clause on condition that the two bodies most interested,

the men and the employers, get together and draft a clause satisfactory to both of them; but I am not prepared to delete the clause and insert another clause without further consideration, without full opportunity of thoroughly grasping the effect of the proposed new clause. I think that when we have dealt with this clause progress should be reported to allow the parties most concerned to draft a clause which will suit both of them.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: It will be seen on reference to the original Act that the clause extends the powers of all inspectors to some extent. In the circumstances we seem to be talking round a difficulty which could be easily overcome. I think Mr. McKenzie will be willing to give the proposed powers to workmen's inspectors if they are safeguarded by the control of the district inspectors. If the leader of the House will report progress I will be prepared to give my assistance to the drafting of an amendment which, I think, will be satisfactory to the Committee.

Progress reported.

## BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT.

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 5th October.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS (Metropolitan) [4.28]: It is with diffidence that one approaches the discussion of this measure. Certainly it is not a pleasant subject to talk about, but the necessity having arisen, it behoves members to deal with the Bill as they would deal with any other measure affecting the public health and the welfare of the people. If the Bill has done nothing else it has certainly proved a rod for the backs of those people who are constantly attacking the Council and urging its abolition; for now we find certain of those people writing to members and petitioning the Council, some of them with a view to defeating the Bill and others to having it amended, and practically all attacking another place for having rushed it through so quickly. Truly, time brings its changes and revenges. Believing as I do in the safeguarding of the health of the com-

munity, I desire to congratulate the Minister who introduced the measure; not so much on the measure itself, for in its present state it is certainly somewhat crude and unworkable, and I think, if passed as printed, it would to a certain extent defeat its own ends; but I congratulate the Minister on the principle involved. The Minister, I understand, claims this as his own Bill. It is a pity he did not obtain the advice and assistance of Dr. Hope. That gentleman, judging from his reports and remarks during many years past, has given very careful consideration to the subject and has taken much pains in an untiring endeavour to solve this problem. It is unfortunate indeed that his valuable advice and co-operation were not availed of. I regret, and I am sure every member of this House regrets, the retirement of Dr. Hope from a position he has filled so worthily and for so long. In discussing this measure I propose to discuss it rather from the standpoint of reason and common sense than from the sentimental point of view, believing that the best of all laws are those which tend for the betterment of humanity, for the improvement of the health of the community and which endeavour to protect the race from the suffering which this disease, as a rule, inflicts upon them. On the one hand we have a disease which ruins more homes, which destroys more lives, than any plague known, a disease which is even more prevalent than the common ailment of measles, a disease the result of which fills our asylums and hospitals, and on the other hand, we have the most criminal indifference towards this disease. No serious attempt is made to check its ravages and we find there is in existence a policy of letting things drift rather than a policy of endeavouring to do something to improve the state of affairs. All laws conflict with the liberty of the subject. Many innocent people, both men and women, stand in the dock every month, yet no one suggests, because of the degradation imposed upon them, that the laws for the protection of life or property should be repealed. Laws to a

great extent depend upon wise administration and many Acts are passed which place enormous powers in the hands of officials. Yet we seldom hear that the officials use those powers in any but the right way. After all, which person is the greatest menace to the community, the person who steals or commits some crime, or the person who, having one of these loathsome diseases, is enabled to stalk through the community spreading sickness and death wherever he is so disposed? The thief brings disgrace upon himself and perhaps on his family. A person who commits any criminal offence may do the same thing, but the syphilitic ruins the lives not only of innocent people but generations yet to be born. Who is the greater sinner against humanity? If we imprison one, can any hon. member give a reason why we should allow the other to go free and uncontrolled? Which is the worst crime, that of the robber or that of the man who is allowed to destroy human life wholesale? One of the main arguments is that these diseased people bring the disease on themselves on account of a lapse from some strictly moral principle. Such an argument might be all very well if we were starting a new world, or if we were starting a new code of morals, and if we were to be bound by such a code and live according to rule and follow the motto which I understand from Mr. Patrick the boy scouts endeavour to uphold. But hon. members must not forget that it is the same old world and it is a wicked world, as well as a good world. There is a good deal of vice in it and consequently a great deal of misery and unhappiness. Having the world as it is, are we content to allow things to remain in their present condition, or rather, knowing the attendant consequences of the disease, and that it is in our power to check it and control it, and if it indeed be possible in a young country such as this to stamp it out, should we not take steps to bring about that desirable end? Every time an attempt is made to deal with this unpleasant subject meet-



ings are held, some against and some in favour, and in the divergence of opinion and in the letters which hon. members have been bombarded with during the past two or three weeks, it is shown what an extremely difficult question this is to handle. To those who are opposing all such legislation with much eloquence and good intentions I ask what have they done and what are they doing to combat the evil? It seems to me that oppositionists, when a Bill of this kind is on the stocks, hold meetings, pass resolutions, and then they seem to lapse into a sort of Rip Van Winkle sleep and do nothing further. The suffering goes on. The disease unfortunately does not go to sleep. It keeps growing and spreading all the time, poisoning the lives of many in the community. Unfortunately, however, the sleepers still remain. They shut their eyes in many cases to all the suffering which the disease entails. Are members of this Chamber content to remain as the sleepers? Are they content to stand by while this pestilence spreads, or will they endeavour to put into shape some such legislation as will effectually control it? It may be an offence against the moral law, but surely there is the question of the law of humanity. Why keep on putting off and putting off? Is it not time indeed for us to do something? Statistics in these matters are difficult to obtain, but they are certainly alarming. It is claimed that of the sum total of human suffering, one-eighth is the result of the immediate or latent cause of venereal disease. German authorities say that about three-fourths of all the male population and one-sixth or more of the adult female population have at some time or other contracted some of these diseases. Dr. Foninier, an eminent French doctor, stated after an experience of some years in hospitals that one-fifth of the population of Paris was syphilitic. Dr. Lane, of one of the London hospitals, stated a few years ago that 33 per cent. of the out-patients attended as the result of diseases of this nature. Now, at a time when any danger from plague, smallpox, or cholera, threatens

the community, the people insist on the strictest quarantine, but as has been stated, here is a plague which destroys more lives, and more homes, and causes more suffering than all the rest of the plagues combined, yet we stand by with almost criminal indifference and do nothing. It is said this is the C.D. Act in disguise. I am afraid people who say that have not closely studied the measure. They have confused the regulation of prostitution with compulsory notification of the disease; two entirely different questions. This Bill applies equally to men and women, both will be affected by the Bill, both will come under its provisions and even if there are more women affected with the disease, and they may come under the provisions of the Bill, is that any reason why we should hesitate to cope with it? I am one of those who say that we cannot stamp out prostitution, do what we will. I venture to think that no sane person, either, thinks that it is possible to stamp it out. For the reasons I have given I shall support the Bill with certain amendments. I believe in compulsion if the necessary safeguards are put into the Bill. I am not one of those who think that the Commissioner of Health will seize young and innocent girls and subject them to medical examination. I rather believe he will be a man who will administer this Bill in a wise and careful manner. I think an amendment is necessary to provide that all information that is received by any officer should be confidential and that the publication of names, except such as may be necessary in the course of duty, should be punished with the severest penalty. An amendment is also required that all proceedings under certain sections of the measure should be heard in camera and that no newspaper should be allowed to publish any of the proceedings, and that default should be met with by the imposition of a severe penalty. In regard to the publication of advertisements, I think the remarks of Mr. Cullen are worthy of attention. An advertisement may be inserted in a newspaper through an

oversight, and before the prosecution is instituted a notice should be given that the advertisement must not be repeated. I intend to support the Bill with the necessary safeguards proposed by Dr. Saw and also other matters to which I will draw attention in Committee. To refer the Bill to a select committee will mean a postponement of the question for another 12 months and meanwhile the disease will grow and spread. It is never too late to mend. Surely a young State should have sufficient sense to protect itself against venereal disease, to protect those who innocently suffer and at the same time punish the guilty person and endeavour by legislation to raise a strong nation free, if possible, from the dread diseases which cause so much suffering. I intend to support the second reading of the Bill.

On motion by Hon. J. Duffell debate adjourned.

## BILL—SALE OF LIQUOR REGULATION.

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 30th September.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY (East) [4.47]: In approaching this matter of the regulation of the sale of liquor during war time I may say that I have listened carefully to the remarks of previous speakers. I feel that it is very necessary to take this matter in hand at the present time. It surprises me, however, that the Government did not bring down a measure to deal with the matter outright and ask Parliament to pass the necessary legislation to regulate whatever hours Parliament may decide upon. I do not think we would gain anything by postponing the matter until some future date for a referendum. I realise that it might be an easier way out of the difficulty, but we want to conserve our money in these days. A referendum would be a costly method of arriving at a decision, and I think the country throughout would be satisfied with some decision that Parliament might arrive at, and if we view the

matter in this light we can all decide to agree upon the hours that would be suitable. I have not been approached by anyone connected with the liquor trade. I am perfectly free, so far as my feelings are concerned, one way or the other. Although I am not a person who is particularly fond of drinking I have a great objection to having the hours curtailed to the extent that this proposed referendum might bring about. I cannot help thinking that when the hour of six o'clock or seven o'clock for closing time was suggested in the referendum this was drawn up in the winter months, and that those responsible entirely forgot that during the summer we have extremely hot weather which makes everyone, whether he is a drinker or not, particularly thirsty. At six o'clock or seven o'clock in the evening the sun is still up and many of us are about our daily business, and I am certainly one of those who most strongly object to being given Perth water to quench my thirst with. Where I come from in the country I suppose I drink more water (it is my usual drink) than anything else, and I am a firm believer in it, but when one comes into the City—and every member of my family is in the same plight—one finds one cannot drink the water supplied by those responsible in the city of Perth. It is an abominable drink we are supplied with, and we have to quench our thirst with something better. I am in the unfortunate position sometimes of being obliged to jump on a train late in the afternoon. I cannot control our train service. I have frequently to travel up from the country with stock, and after a person has come from a dusty stockyard and put his stock into the train, by the time he reaches the City, say, at nine o'clock or 10 o'clock in the evening, there is nothing that he looks for more than a good satisfactory drink. I hope that if Parliament fixes any hours consideration will be given to the effect upon those who have a large amount of travelling to do. There will be many people who will travel on our trains during the hot weather and arrive in the City late at night. I do not say that people should make

beasts of themselves and become a menace to the community, but I do think it will be a great hardship to those people if any hour earlier than 10 o'clock at night is fixed for the closing of hotels. I would favour the opening of hotels at a later hour in the morning. I think that everyone will agree that a person who wants a drink at six o'clock or seven o'clock in the morning is the person who certainly needs restricting. The desire to drink then is evidently caused by the after effects of a heavy drinking bout on the previous night, and such a drinking bout ought not to have been necessary. My point is that we usually find, in the country with all the work that we have to carry out, that the later we can put off having a drink the better it is for our health, and the quenching of our thirst throughout the day. If we can put off our first drink in the morning, whether it is water or anything else, to as late an hour as possible, no matter what the heat of the day may be, one could go through the rest of the day more comfortably. I know this from the army. It is the general advice to men who go out on the march not to start drinking too early in the day. I would favour the opening of hotels for the sale of liquor at a much later hour. The hour of eight o'clock or nine o'clock is quite early enough, but the hotels should not be closed too early at night. Some of these conditions, which if laid down, would probably lead to a great deal of the sly sale of liquor in the country districts. In legislating on this question there is considerable difficulty. I know that one effect of closing hotels early in the evening would be to drive people to lay in a stock of liquor and take it outside the township to be consumed at private houses or on the premises of the workers. By having all the drinking done at recognised places it would be better than to have it distributed far and wide throughout the country. If we closed the houses too early the people would buy a quantity of drink and would have it distributed and consumed outside the radius of the various towns. The closing of hotels on Sunday has that effect now

in many instances, and men take liquor round and consume it very freely. When they take it out by the gallon they drink infinitely more than they would if they drank at the hotels where they would soon get rid of their money. That seems to content most of those who are heavy drinkers. In my district I have seen men getting their cheques of £10, £20, or £50, and it does not seem to matter very much how great or small the cheque is, it only lasts these drinkers for about the same length of time. The man with the big cheque does not seem to last more than a week and the man with 30s. always seems to last out the week also. They are both, it seems to me, equally ill after the drinking bout, and it takes them just about as long to get over their troubles. I do not think any legislation will stop these fellows from getting a drink. At the same time if our legislation is too drastic it will work extremely hardly upon those who are going about their ordinary work during the hot summer months, when they require to quench their thirst in a reasonable and sensible manner. I dislike the idea of the referendum on this matter, if for no other reason than that it will confuse the issue, to my mind, of the referendums which the Federal Government will be taking on other matters. I, in common, I suppose, with the whole country, regret that the Federal authorities are about to take those referendums, and I think we will only be confusing the issue by taking the State referendum upon the same day on this liquor question. I think that will be in itself sufficient reason for me to object to this measure. I shall support the second reading and I hope when the Bill reaches the Committee stage there will be a sufficient number of members in the House to persuade the Government to take this matter in hand and let us fix some hours in the direction I have suggested, of from eight o'clock or nine o'clock in the morning until 9.30 or 10 o'clock at night, and that the Government will then be armed with all that is necessary and create something which would be suitable to themselves and the country. I have pleasure in supporting the second reading.

Hon. A. SANDERSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) [4.59]: I support the second reading of the Bill. No doubt we shall have considerable discussion in Committee. It is, therefore, not necessary for me to go over the ground twice. I should like, however, to enter my protest against the proposal that Parliament should decide the hours instead of the people. One reason why I am totally opposed to Parliament deciding the hours is that members do not represent an equal number of people. I do not make that an objection to Parliamentary representation, but I make it a great objection to this House voting on a question which the public thoroughly understand, and in which the public are interested, and which Parliament may or may not be interested in, but on which Parliament cannot possibly give expression to the opinions of people primarily concerned in the decision. If members will look at the Parliamentary roll they will find that the Metropolitan-Suburban Province has 15,000 voters, whereas the North province has 788 only. The North province represents the smallest constituency numerically, and the Metropolitan-Suburban province the largest, and if we ourselves are going to decide this question of hours, it means that three members representing 15,000 people will have exactly the same voting power as three others representing 788 people. I cannot believe that either the members or the public will consider that a reasonable proposition. We have had one election by Parliament—and I trace at any rate half of the difficulties with which Western Australia is faced to-day to the fact that Western Australia was the only State in the Commonwealth which sent to the Federal Conventions representatives elected by Parliament and not by the people. It is the only other time that the question has arisen as to whether Parliament or the people should decide the issue. Parliament sent to the Federal Conventions delegates elected by members of Parliament. What was the result? We know now that those delegates did not represent the people, and my opinion is that if the representatives of Western Australia had been

elected by the people, Western Australia would not be part of the Commonwealth to-day. I find that the numerical strength of the other provinces is as follows:—Central 3,000 voters; Metropolitan 8,000; North-East 2,500; West 5,000. It is thus seen that the Metropolitan-Suburban province contains nearly double the number of voters of any other province. For that reason I am strongly opposed to the proposition of letting Parliament decide this question. I will vote that it be referred to the people for decision. Several amendments have been foreshadowed, and possibly I may have one or two myself. I am strongly in favour of letting the question be decided by a referendum.

Hon. V. Hamersley: What will it cost?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: That I cannot say. Furthermore, we have been warned twice by you, Sir, not only to refrain from making any interruptions, but also not to reply to interjections; and so, as I do not know the answer, and as, if I did, I am forbidden to give a reply to an interjection, I shall not take up the time of the House in doing so. I am most emphatically opposed to letting Parliament decide the question of hours, and I am quite sure the great bulk of the people are in favour of the question being decided by the people. I trust members of this Chamber and of another place will see that it would be a monstrous proposition to throw on Parliament the responsibility of deciding a question of this kind while there is such a disparity in numbers between the voters of the several provinces. What special qualifications have members of this House to decide a question of the kind? I hope members will carefully consider that before they give their support to a proposition to throw the responsibility on Parliament instead of on the people. I will support the second reading.

Hon. C. SOMMERS (Metropolitan) [5.8]: I certainly would not vote for a referendum on this question; more particularly would I not agree to a referendum being taken which would allow of any differentiation between the closing hours in various districts. If we are going to close at, say, 6 o'clock, it should

be for the whole State. I differ from Mr. Sanderson. I think this is essentially a question for Parliament. Members are fairly representative of the whole State, and know what is going on. I am sure that there is not nearly so much drinking now as there was twelve months ago, but all the same I agree with the framers of the Bill that there is too much drinking even now, and therefore I am in favour of curtailing the hours to a reasonable extent. I do not believe in leaving the question to a referendum. There is the question of the hours of opening the hotels. What is the use of opening an hotel at 6 o'clock in the morning, especially in winter time? It is only to allow a few who have probably drunk too much overnight to have some more in the early morning, and before they have time to sober up, they are drunk again. It would not be wise to submit a question of this sort to the people. In Victoria the public-houses are open from 6 a.m. to 9.30 p.m. I would go further and adopt the proposal of Mr. Colebatch for opening the hotels at 9 in the morning, and closing them at about 9.30 in the evening. It has been said that far more drinking is now being indulged in in the State, and particularly in the metropolitan area, than there was twelve months ago. The amount of excise duty paid by the brewers in Western Australia has a bearing on the point. For the eight months ended August 1914, 3,384,720 gallons of beer were brewed in this State. For the eight months ended August 1915 the quantity brewed was 2,993,280 gallons, showing a reduction of 390,000 odd gallons, or 7,249 hogsheads. So, in respect to beer at least, we have something definite. In regard to the other States, I believe nothing has been done either in Queensland or in Tasmania. It is proposed in Tasmania that the hours shall be fixed by Parliament, the closing hour to be, I think, 9.30 p.m. Mr. Hamersley drew attention to the needs of travellers and to the fact that in summer time some of them might reach a town at 6 o'clock, or later, for dinner, and that those accustomed to

taking liquor with their meals should be given some consideration. I think myself to close the hotels at 6 o'clock would be too extreme a step to take. There is too much drinking, and I hold that the excessive drinking takes place between the hours of 10 and 11 at night, and therefore I think if we were to close the hotels at 9.30 p.m. and open them at 9 in the morning we would seriously retard the sale of liquor and so bring about an improved state of affairs. The fixing of the hours is not a question for the public at all, but for the Government. If the Bill is carried there will be many troublesome questions to settle, as, for instance, that of compensation. I know of hotels in the metropolitan area which have changed hands at big prices for incoming. I know of one house which has changed hands three times recently. How are we going to assess compensation in those cases? I do not know whether the one lessee will be responsible to the other, whether the last will have a claim on his predecessor. However, I intend to support the Bill if some hours can be decided upon.

Hon. J. F. ALLEN (West) [5.14]: I intend to support the second reading. I also intend to support amendments which will eliminate the question of the referendum. To my mind the Bill exhibits that quality in the Government which was seen in another measure dealing with the liquor trade, which one hon. member characterised as of the "jelly-fish" type. I think this epithet might also be applied to the Government in respect to their attitude on this question. During the last two or three days we have been given concrete evidence of the Government's lack of realisation of the necessity for taking definite action under the powers they already possess. On Tuesday, when the troops from the ships in port were in Perth and Fremantle, some hotel-keepers found it necessary to close their houses, in contravention of the law, before the recognised hour of closing. They did this for the purpose of self-preservation because they were afraid that their houses would suffer

severely if they kept them open the ordinary time. The Government at present have power to deal with this question of the closing of hotels during war time at any hour which may be necessary in the interests of the common good, and if they fail to do it now it shows that they have not the courage which it is necessary that Governments should have to enable them to deal with questions in the time of a crisis. If it is necessary to regulate the hours of the sale of liquor at this time, on account of the war, it must be so for one of two reasons, either for the preservation of peace or for the purpose of economy; and if it is necessary during the time of war to take this action, then it wants to be taken immediately. Under these circumstances a referendum, which will mean delay, is entirely a wrong way of dealing with the question. If the Government were fully seized with the necessity of dealing with this question, they would take the proper step, already indicated in this Chamber, and definitely introduce legislation stating the hour at which the hotels should open and close. The Government have shown that they are not alive to the responsibilities which exist and that they are not possessed of that necessary courage to deal with a crisis which may arise. Another thing which makes me think that the Government are not sincere in the introduction of this measure is the time of the year at which they propose the referendum shall be taken. The time suggested is December. In December we anticipate experiencing hot weather, and the Federal referendum will be taken on the same day as our own poll, and the polling booths will be open until 8 o'clock in the evening. No one can be expected, on a hot day, to vote in favour of the closing of hotels at 8 o'clock, because on that day, particularly, the voters will require the hotels to remain open to a much later hour, so that the temperature then will indicate to the people the course that they should take. It is thus apparent that a vote taken on a hot day in December would not be as much in favour of the early closing of hotels as, say, a vote

taken in winter time. There has been no earnest endeavour on the part of the Government to deal with this question definitely and firmly. I think the proposal made by Mr. Colebatch of amending the Bill in the direction of definitely stating the hours at which the hotels shall be closed is the proper course to adopt. We are here for the purpose of doing that which is the best in the interests of the community as a whole. We are not here for the purpose of relegating the powers which are vested in us by the Constitution to those who send us here to act on their behalf. I, as a member of this House, refuse to consider myself simply a delegate of public opinion. Public opinion was expressed at the time of my election, and during the currency of my term of office I shall only take notice of the arguments, pro and con, advanced by the public, and shall reserve to myself the right of deciding on questions without being dictated to by the outside public. I consider that the referring to the people of any question of this or any other nature is contrary to the intention of the framers of the Constitution. Another thing which does not strike me favourably is the intention to divide the State into four districts and that the votes taken in those four districts shall affect the licenses in proportion to the votes cast. If this measure has been introduced for economic reasons the same argument will apply to one as to another district. If it is necessary for the people in the country to practise economy, surely the same argument applies to the City and to the Goldfields. If it is necessary during war time for the people in one district to conserve their resources, that also must apply to all districts. A principle such as that proposed in the Bill, therefore, is wrong. When the vote is taken, if it is taken, we shall probably find that in the country districts, where there is not the same necessity for early closing as in thickly populated centres, the vote will be in favour of closing at an early hour, but that in the more closely populated centres, where the necessity does exist

for early closing, the vote will be in favour of closing at a late hour. The whole thing seems to be a mass of absurdities, and the only way in which this question can be dealt with, so far as I can see, is for us to take the responsibility which is vested in us and, with the material at our disposal, and the knowledge we possess, recognising also that the trade should be restricted during war time, definitely state the hours at which the hotels shall open and close.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH (East) [5.22]: In supporting the second reading of the Bill I desire to take the opportunity of asking the Colonial Secretary if he will facilitate the consideration in Committee of the Licensing Act Amendment Continuance Bill so that that might be dealt with in Committee before the measure we are now debating. I am sorry that Mr. Sanderson is not now in his place because it had been my intention to reply briefly to the arguments he used against Parliament fixing the hours at which hotels should close. Personally, I do not think there was very much in any of those arguments, and I attribute the hon. member's attitude to his constitutional anxiety on every occasion to throw the responsibility of doing what has to be done on someone else. I have never known Mr. Sanderson, from his place in the House, advocate that he or the House generally should take any responsibility with regard to anything. His suggestion is always that the responsibility should be thrown on the Government or on the people, or on anyone, so long as we get rid of that responsibility. The hon. member asked what special knowledge members in this House had to enable them to deal with this question. We might ask the same question in regard to practically every matter that comes before us. Without having any special knowledge on this subject, I know considerably more about it than I do about horse-racing, or about the issues involved in the Public Health Bill, but I shall not hesitate to exercise the responsibilities of my position as a member of Parliament in regard to those measures, although I have much less practical knowledge of them than I have of

the liquor question. The hon. member's argument as to the constitution of this House, that certain districts have more electors than other districts, would apply to any measure brought before Parliament. If there is anything wrong with the constitution of this House it has no particular bearing or application to the Bill we are considering now. As for the other contention, that Western Australia made a mistake when Parliament elected delegates to the Federal Convention, all I have to say is that at the present time the people elect the members of the Federal Senate, and I refuse to discuss the question as to whether the elected members of the Senate are wiser or truer to the interests of Western Australia than the Parliamentarily elected delegates to the Federal Convention. I do not think we always or necessarily get the best results by referring these questions to the people to decide. Mr. Kingsmill raised objections to the course of action which I propose to take in another Bill in connection with the opening and the closing hours of hotels. From the point of view of Parliamentary procedure, I am inclined to agree with the hon. member, and even if I did not agree with him I would unhesitatingly bow to his judgment in a matter of this kind, but if the difficulty he suggests can be got over, and I think it can be got over, I will appeal to him to assist me in getting over it, because for many reasons I think it would be desirable if we could fix the closing hour of hotels in the Bill which already stands on the statute-book for use in time of war, send it back to another place and learn its fate, learn whether another place would agree to Parliament fixing the hours, before we finally deal with the measure which is now before us. I think that would meet the objection raised by Dr. Saw. Dr. Saw seemed to be afraid that if we amended this Referendum Bill by putting in the closing hours, the Bill might see-saw backwards and forwards between the Houses and come to no result. If, on the other hand, we could place the hours in the Continuance Bill, then if those hours were accepted by another place, the necessity for this Refer-

endum Bill would be removed altogether. If the fixing of the hours were rejected by another place, I have no doubt a majority of members would support the referendum proposal, possibly with some slight amendments. If the Colonial Secretary will arrange to do that, so that we might have the opportunity of considering the Continuance Bill in Committee before the Committee stage of this Bill, I should feel obliged, and I believe it would help us to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. There are one or two features of this Bill that I am not particularly enamoured of, notably the division of the State into districts, but if Parliament will not agree to fixing the hours, I will not be a party to the wrecking of this Bill on the question of districts. If we cannot get reduction in another way I will support it in that form, but I do not think it is right. It will lead to a great many anomalies. The agricultural districts will decide to close at 6 o'clock. Of that I have very little doubt. It will be largely on the vote of the business people and to some extent their vote will be a method of retaliation against what they consider the unfair treatment which was meted out to them in the matter of early closing. It was the practice in those towns to have a Wednesday half-holiday and on Saturdays to close at 9 o'clock at night in winter and at 10 o'clock at night in summer. The Government, by proclamation, applied the Early Closing Act to different districts and compelled the business people to close their shops at 9 o'clock on Saturday night all the year round. In the eastern districts in the summer time it does not get dark until about 8 o'clock, and the people do not go into the streets until that hour, and just at the time when people want to do some business, and when the business people think there is an opportunity of trading, they have to close their doors, and the only places which those who are in the streets can find to spend their money are the hotels. Therefore in retaliation the business people in the country districts will almost certainly vote for the closing of the hotels at the earliest hour. In the other districts, the goldfields

for instance, the present hour of closing I feel certain will be continued. I notice that one of the goldfields newspapers took strong exception lately to the remarks made by myself in this connection. I am sorry if I said anything to hurt anyone's feelings. I had no desire to convey the idea that the goldfields people are worse than anyone else. I am not at liberty to disclose it now, because it is contrary to the Standing Orders to do so, but I say that when hon. members have an opportunity of reading the evidence taken in Kalgoorlie by the committee on the racing question, they will be unable to come to any other conclusion than that responsible men in Kalgoorlie hold very much stronger opinions on this question than I myself have given expression to. Men occupying prominent positions in Kalgoorlie do not hesitate to say that the wages of large numbers of the people there are being squandered—I do not say that all the people squander their wages, but a very large percentage do—and that instead of these people living in a condition of comfort on their wages, which are not too high, considering all the circumstances, a very large percentage of them live in a condition of debt and squalor because of the waste which is brought about by maintaining the 120 hotels in Kalgoorlie and Boulder alone. The number of hotels is absurdly large in proportion to the population. Another cause of this condition of the people on the goldfields is the over-racing. Whatever opinion I may have expressed in regard to the necessity for curtailing the hours for selling liquor on the goldfields, I have said nothing so strong or condemnatory as is found in the evidence taken by the Racing committee from responsible witnesses. Mr. Sommers made reference to the return showing the output of local ale, which indicated a reduction of something like twelve per cent. On Tuesday last the figures relating to the year's trading were published in the *West Australian*. These show that the importations of ale and beer for the 12 months ended 30th June, 1914, were valued at £35,000



as against £61,000 for the previous 12 months. There is not only a decrease in the local manufacture of 12 per cent., but a decrease in local importations of £26,000, or roughly speaking, something over 40 per cent. There are also given the spirit importations during the year ended 30th June, 1915. These were valued at £102,000, as against £131,000 for the previous year. There again is a decrease of 25 per cent., indicating, as I said when speaking on another Bill, that so far from there being any increase in the consumption of liquor for the last 12 months, there has been a decrease. That of course is no reason why we should not try and conserve the resources of the people in the near future. If we go on with the Referendum Bill, several months will elapse before any result is arrived at. If we are to go on until February or March before we get any result, so far as the agricultural districts are concerned, we might as well leave the matter over for another 12 months. The harvest wages will all have been spent, and there will be nothing gained by closing hotels earlier than before. I am in accord with other speakers in regard to the hours of closing. Whereas this Bill is supposed to be the outcome of the eight a.m. to eight p.m. agitation in Perth some little time ago, it makes provision by which anyone of a dozen different results may be arrived at, with the exception of opening from eight a.m. to eight p.m. This means that the advocates of the eight to eight movement will not get what they want. The agitation which was the foundation of this Bill seems to have been lost sight of altogether. If it is not possible to fix the hours by Act of Parliament, I should certainly support an amendment which would give the people an opportunity of voting in regard to the early hours in the morning as well as the late hours at night. Other hon. members, who have a better opportunity of judging than I have, have expressed the same opinion. If we could do away with that first drink early in the morning, and prevent men from getting liquor until, say, nine o'clock, we should be the means

of sending many drunkards back to their work. It is that early drink in the morning which is responsible for so much of the damage. I understand that the hotel-keepers themselves are not opposed to the early closing in the morning. One hotel-keeper told me some little time ago that when the night porter opened the hotel at six o'clock in the morning, the baker was a little the worse for liquor, the butcher was a little the worse, and the night porter himself was probably the worse for liquor, and there was very little money in the till. When he himself came down to take charge of the bar, he found that there were many big drinks to be served, but very little money. This being the case, I do not think the hotel-keepers themselves would raise any objection to this later opening, and I am sure that it would be a great benefit from the public point of view. I wish now to refer to the experience which has been obtained in other places. In Victoria an Act has been passed limiting the hours of sale to between nine in the morning and 9.30 at night. In this morning's paper there is a report from the Commissioner of Police pointing out that because of the number of loopholes left in the Act, it was found to be almost impossible to enforce it, and that there were very many breaches of it. I have no doubt that the Government would find equal difficulty in enforcing their Act in this State. One of the great difficulties in the Victorian Act is that it allows the hotel premises to remain open to the public. For instance, a man could be running a billiard or bagatelle saloon until eleven o'clock, although the hour of closing was 9.30. I think this is an obvious flaw in the Act and provides a loophole for abuses. If we are going to prevent the sale of liquor before nine o'clock in the morning and after half-past nine in the evening the hotels must be closed against the general public. If people are to be allowed to go there and are to be entitled to play billiards or bagatelle, we shall certainly have breaches of the Act.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: You cannot have billiards without refreshments.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: That shows the folly of keeping the hotels open for those purposes after closing hours. In South Australia, where the six o'clock movement was decided on as a result of a referendum, nothing has yet been done. I have a copy of the Bill, which was introduced into the Legislative Council of South Australia on the 31st August of this year, making provision to carry out the decision arrived at by the poll. It is intended to apply the early closing in South Australia after the end of March next. The people there were asked several months ago to give their vote on an emergency question, but the effect of their vote is only to be brought into operation 12 months afterwards. The South Australian Bill does not propose to go anything like as far as the Bill introduced here. In South Australia it is not proposed to close the hotels against the lodger. In that State, after six o'clock, a man living in an hotel is to allowed to have a glass of beer with his dinner. Here, if the proposal is carried, he will not be allowed this privilege. I think we shall find some very curious experiences, particularly those of us who travel by train. Let us suppose for a moment that we are travelling to Kalgoorlie by the express, and that the country districts have decided on six o'clock as the closing hour and the goldfields on eleven o'clock. I do not think it will be long before the travelling public will find out exactly the point at which the express passes the six o'clock line of demarcation, and reaches the eleven o'clock line within the boundaries of the goldfields. That long, dry stage through the country districts will be marked clearly in the minds of the general travelling public. I do not intend to say very much more on the question, but I would repeat my request to the Colonial Secretary that he should facilitate the discussion on the Continuance Bill. My desire is that Parliament, in the Bill, should fix the hours of closing. If we cannot get that, it is my intention to support the Referendum Bill with the few amendments I have indicated.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM (North) [5.40]: I do not propose to say much on this question. The only word I have to say in connection with it is that it is inopportune. This is not the time at which to bring down a Bill of this nature. If there is any trouble about drink, or in connection with serving out liquor when it should not be served out, then the Government have the necessary power under the Act, I see here, to deal with it. It is therefore, unnecessary to have the powers contained in this measure. I am a believer in having less hours for drinking and in restraining drink so far as we possibly can. I am also an absolute believer in local option, but I say that the present is not the time to bring in a Bill of this kind. The Government are only sheltering themselves so far as they can behind the vote of the Legislative Council. I do not want to labour the question, because every member here thoroughly understands it. I intend to vote against the second reading of the Bill.

On motion by Hon. J. J. Holmes debate adjourned.

## BILL — INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT AMENDMENT.

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 5th October.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH (East) [5.43]: I have only a few words to say. I intend to support the second reading of this Bill, but trust that the Committee stage will not be taken until Tuesday. In the meantime there is a matter which I wish to bring under the notice of the Colonial Secretary, into which I desire to ask him to have some inquiry made. This is in regard to the payments to be made out of the surplus left in the hands of the board, after meeting the farmers' obligations to the Government. I have not the original Act before me now, but members will recollect that there is in the third schedule of the Bill a list of the order in which payments are to be made, and the seventh on the list, which is a long way down, gives the cost of all cropping

and harvesting in the 1914-15 season, which was the season of failure. A regulation has been issued by the board setting out those things which the board consider constitute the cost of cropping and harvesting, and which confines the preferential payments provided for in the seventh line of the third schedule to those particular matters. The point I wish to bring under the notice of the Colonial Secretary is that stores are entirely excluded. I think it is an injustice to country storekeepers, in particular, that this should be done. Surely the stores required to feed the men who prepared the land for cropping and who did the work of harvesting, when there was anything to harvest, should be considered as portion of the necessary expenses and it was undoubtedly the intention of Parliament that they should be considered. As a matter of fact, in December of last year a deputation waited on the Minister for Lands and brought the question before him and secured from him a written undertaking that stores would be included under the necessary expenses of putting in and taking off the crop, but more recently the board has been written to by people interested, and this reply they received—

In reply to your letter of the 18th ultimo, on the subject of stores being included in the cropping and harvesting expenses of the 1914-1915 season. I beg to inform you that the matter has had consideration, and the Board regrets being unable to approve. Many settlers who owe store accounts had no crop in during 1914-15 season, and in view of the fact that stores are a necessity for all farm work, including all ordinary improvements as well as for cropping and harvesting, the difficulties of defining what proportion of such supplies might be considered a legitimate charge against cropping and harvesting expenses are considerable. I do not agree that the difficulties are greater, because it should be a matter of knowledge as to what is a fair amount for stores for cropping and harvesting in a given area. The first

objection does not apply, that "Many settlers who owe stores accounts have had no crop in during 1914-15 season." Obviously they could not therefore come under the section and the storekeeper would not expect to be given any preference on those accounts. That is the only matter I wish to refer to on this Bill and I shall be glad if the Colonial Secretary will have inquiries made so that he can give consideration to the matter during the Committee stage.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [5.47]: I shall be in a position to reply to all points which have been raised when the Bill is in Committee.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### MOTION—PUBLIC WORKS, AUTHORITY BY PARLIAMENT.

Debate resumed from the 21st September on the following motion by Hon. J. F. Cullen:—"1, That, in the opinion of this House, the Government should introduce legislation to provide that no public work, undertaking, purchase, or addition to a public work (except as authorised by the Railway Act), the estimated cost of completing which exceeds £20,000, shall be commenced unless sanctioned by Parliament. 2, That the foregoing resolution be communicated to His Excellency the Governor."

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [5.49]: Mr. Cullen's motion asks the House to affirm the necessity for legislation being introduced by the Government to provide that no public work, the estimated cost of which exceeds £20,000, shall be commenced until sanctioned by Parliament. And the hon. gentleman realises how weak his case is—how much he leaves himself open to attack—when he anticipates the reply which will be given him. As Mr. Cullen clearly recognises, there can be only one answer to his speech, and that answer has been supplied by himself. The Parliamentary Committee on Public Works Bill, which was thrice rejected by this House, would have supplied all the protection that the

hon. gentleman desires. Mr. Cullen's objections, if they rested on solid ground, would disclose a state of affairs in New South Wales which would be deplorable in the extreme. It is difficult to credit that during a period of 29 years there has been such a mercenary spirit dominating the parliamentarians of the oldest State that they keep on the statute-book an Act ostensibly designed for the public good, but really intended for the purpose of looting the Treasury without any compensating return. And it is equally difficult of belief that our great national Parliament, with the support of the party to which the hon. gentleman himself is attached, should have introduced such a corrupt practice into Commonwealth administration. In New South Wales there are seven members of the committee, and the total cost of its administration in 1910 was £6,200. This included fees, travelling expenses, shorthand writing, office expenses and salaries. It is to my mind inconceivable that for the small amount of fees which form portion of this sum, members of both Houses would be prepared to perpetuate a false pretence and that the people should time and again condone their action. Mr. Cullen and other members of this House might well signify their willingness to reconsider the Bill which they have hitherto rejected; and I am sure the Government would be only too ready to afford them an opportunity for so doing. Mr. Cullen is scarcely fair when he says the Government committed the country to all their trading concerns without approaching Parliament. That, I will admit, could be said of the State steamships. In that case the Government availed themselves of a Vote which was placed on the Estimates by their predecessors to spend as they thought fit. The present Government had a mandate from the people to start a State steamship service. But the previous Government, without consulting Parliament and on the eve of the meeting of Parliament, bought a large cattle station with funds provided by a similar Vote—and there was not a word of criticism uttered in this House. With regard to the timber mills, the brick works,

the meat and fish shops, no expenditure worth speaking of was incurred until Parliament had been approached. The purchase of the "Kangaroo," if the attendant circumstances are not considered, could be regarded as improper. But the file shows that if we had not done as we had the ship could not have been secured. One of the conditions was that there should be no publication of sale, for what reason I do not know, but it was one of the conditions. Again, we had no option over the ship; a discussion in Parliament would have brought in other competitors, and we would be going on with the Wyndham works without making any provision for bringing meat down. We shall require another ship—that one must be built—but before anything is done in that direction Parliament will be consulted because the same element of urgency and necessity and the fact that we had to decide straightaway does not exist in this connection as existed in connection with the purchase of the "Kangaroo." We are running great risks by doing so as every week the placing of the order is delayed means months of delay in delivery after the end of the war. The only point in that connection which should exercise the minds of members is—has the State got value for its money; has a blunder been made? If a blunder has been made, it has been made on the advice of the greatest living authority on ships in the world, the adviser of the Commonwealth Government and the trusted adviser of the British Admiralty. Mr. Cullen stated that the conundrum of McArdle, Bell, and Co. had cost the country £6,000 and was not yet solved. The facts are these: The Government entered into a contract with the Federal Government for the delivery at Port Augusta of sleepers for the trans-Australian railway. Having signed that contract it was necessary to make arrangements for the supply of sleepers. Public tenders were not called, but all the shipping people were approached and asked to quote and the lowest tenderer, I understand, secured the contract. Subsequently our contract with the Federal Government was cancelled and as a result we

could not avail ourselves of the shipping space we had arranged. Following on that we were threatened by Bell & Co. with an action for damages amounting to £10,000, and we had to fix up as best we could. We decided to pay something like £6,000 to effect a settlement. The cancellation of the contract for the supply of sleepers to the Federal Government was due to no fault of our own. Following on that cancellation had to be the cancellation of the contract with McArdell & Bell. The proposal of Mr. Cullen to send the resolution to His Excellency the Governor for discussion in Executive Council is a novel one. Even if it were the proper course to adopt, His Excellency would not be likely to forget that there was another branch of the Legislature whose opinion would be worth having—a branch which has the power to bring about the dismissal of the Ministry if it thinks Ministers have done wrong. Mr. Cullen could scarcely expect the Government to act in an important matter like this on the suggestion of one House. Not that there is anything objectionable in the motion. I must confess that it is generous. It gives as free a hand to the Government as any Treasurer could wish; but the danger is that perhaps it goes too far, and that the custodians of the public purse in another place may not be so trusting as Mr. Cullen. Anyhow, they ought to be consulted. But the easiest way out of the difficulty is for this House, by an amendment of the motion, to signify its willingness to pass the Public Works Committee Bill, and I feel certain the Government will do the rest.

On motion by Hon. W. Kingsmill debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 5.59 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 7th October, 1915.

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

### QUESTION—PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS.

Mr. THOMSON (without notice) asked the Premier: What is the position as regards private members' business? About a fortnight ago the Minister for Mines moved that, in addition to Tuesdays and Thursdays, Government business should take precedence each alternate Wednesday. Yesterday being a holiday, I naturally assumed that private members' business would have been given preference to-day, but I find it is at the bottom of the Notice Paper. Can private members' business be dealt with on Wednesday next?

The PREMIER replied: Had yesterday been set aside for Government business, we would have lost a day on account of it being a holiday, and I am afraid private members will have to forego the day the same as the Government would have had to do.

Mr. THOMSON: Will Wednesday next be set apart for private members' business?

The PREMIER: That is governed by a Sessional Order.

### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Attorney General: 1, Education Department, "Lessons on the Laws of Health." 2, Report on alleged special