House for the inspection of members. The first measure of the New Zealand Parliament, carried out under this scheme, is a compilation of all the New Zealand laws relating to coalmining. In my opinion, from a perusal I have made of that measure, I am perfectly certain that those charged with the administration of that important industry in New Zealand will find great benefit from the whole of the laws on that subject being embraced in one statute, the compilation being made, not on the floor of Parliament but under the direction of Parliament, and subject always to parliamentary approval, with the safeguards set forth in Clause 4 of this Bill. In New Zealand that important work of consolidation has gone on at very little cost to the State, and as far as I can see, with great benefit to the country at large. I strongly recommend to the House the acceptance of this small measure. I believe that, bound up as it is with the work of administering the departments of this State, it must be of the greatest benefit.

HON. G. RANDELL: How will you deal with future amendments?

HON. M. L. MOSS: I presume the hon. member is alluding to amendments which may be made at dates subsequent to the compilation. In this State we have adopted a procedure which will be found in the Justices Act, the Criminal Code, the Electoral Act, and a number of more recent statutes. The Government Printer, in printing subsequent copies of any statute that has been amended, is entitled to embody the amendments; and in the amendments we have passed we have put corresponding numbers against the clauses, so that when printed subsequently with the principal Act, the amending Acts and the principal Act will appear as one statute. That will meet the case; and the plan has been carried out in a number of instances. If members will look at the amendments hitherto made in the Criminal Code, they will find that with the idea of preventing the need for reprinting that large statute we have taken the precaution to avoid the necessity for formal consolidation. The work of consolidation goes on automatically with the work of amendment. We shall not find the good effect of this immediately; but I am convinced that as time goes on, perhaps five or six years hence, it will be very beneficial, and of great assistance to those charged with the administration of justice.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9·33 o'clock, until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 30th November, 1905.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 2·30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

QUESTION—ENTOMOLOGIST'S SALARY AND EXPENSES.

MR. A. A. HORAN asked the Minister for Lands: 1, What is Mr. Compère's annual salary as Government Entomologist? 2, What has the Government paid this gentleman for travel-

ling expenses for the past three years? 3, Has the State received in return parasitic insects of equivalent economic values to this expenditure? 4, Does the controlling Minister authorise Mr. Compére's excursions to any part of the world on Mr. Compére's own suggestions? 5, Are the other scientific experts in the Government service treated in the same generous fashion?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, £250. 2, Up to the end of 1904, £668 14s. This year he has an advance of £300, not yet accounted for. The Californian Government pay half of this expenditure. 3, It is impossible to put a money value on the good that has resulted from the introduction of parasites, notably those that destroy the black and red scale, also the cabbage aphis and the cabbage moth, the latter two being worth thousands of pounds to the State. 4, Mr. Compére or the Secretary of State for Agriculture in the State of California suggest the best place to go in search of certain parasites, and this is put before the Minister for approval. 5, Mr. Compére receives only actual out-of-pocket expenses instead of the usual travelling allowance fixed by scale for other officers, and the cost to the Government is considerably less in Mr. Compére's case.

QUESTION—FACTORIES REGISTRATION.

MR. HOLMAN asked the Minister for Labour: 1, Have See Wah & Company, Ltd., cabinet-makers, of West Perth, been registered under the Factories Act 1904? 2, If so, when?

THE MINISTER FOR COMMERCE AND LABOUR (Hon. J. S. Hicks) replied: 1, Yes. 2, See Wah & Co., Ltd., were registered on the 6th October, 1905.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS ACT, AS TO AMENDING.

MR. HORAN asked the Minister for Railways: Is it the intention of the Government to introduce an Amending Railways Act during the currency of the present Commissioner's term?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES AND RAILWAYS replied: It is impossible to define what may or may not be necessary during such a lengthy term as that referred to.

QUESTION TO MR. SPEAKER.

OUT OF ORDER—RULING.

MR. A. A. HORAN (Yilgarn): On a point of order, I desire to call attention to the fact that I gave notice yesterday of a question to be submitted to you, Mr. Speaker, asking whether or not it was intended by the Standing Orders Committee to amend the existing Standing Orders during the present session; and I observe that the question has not been placed on the Notice Paper. I have been informed that reliance for this step has been placed on *May* as the authority that a member is not entitled to ask Mr. Speaker any questions. Not only for my enlightenment, but for the enlightenment of other members of this House, the newer members more particularly, I shall be glad to know whether in the circumstances my question should have been placed on the Notice Paper to-day. We are all sure, I am satisfied, that the Standing Orders (No. 1, I think) provide that—

> In all cases not provided for hereinafter or by the sessional or other orders, resort shall be had to the rules, forms, and practices of the Imperial Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland, which shall be followed as far as they can apply to the proceedings of the House.

That provision is in perfect agreement with what we should like to see carried out here; but I submit that under Standing Order 107 specific power is given members to ask questions of any member of this House, or Minister, so that resort should not be made to any practice that prevails in the House of Commons. Under the Standing Orders approved by both Houses, by which we are to be guided, there is no necessity whatever to refer to the practices that prevail in the House of Commons. In another portion of our Standing Orders —I think it is Standing Order 412—we find that a Standing Orders Committee shall be appointed at the opening of every Parliament. You, Mr. Speaker, very rightly occupy the chairmanship of that committee; and as far as I can see there should be no reason why I, as a private member of this House, may not approach you and ask a question on this subject. In putting this matter before

you, it is with no desire to undervalue the high position to which you have rightly and honourably attained, and to which I am sure you will be an ornament; but it is with the desire to be enlightened to some extent as to what shall be our rules in the future. Why should we go away from our Standing Orders that provide specifically the right of any member to inquire from any other member or Minister any information? We should not have to refer to any practice of the House of Commons. If we wish to refer to *May*, we have to go back 50 or 60 years to find the occasion when the procedure came into practice, and I think that the circumstances are totally different now. I think that as you, sir, are chairman of the Standing Orders Committee, any hon. member has the right to know whether the business of the Standing Orders Committee is going to trend in the direction of an amendment of the existing Standing Orders. And if that be so, I respectfully suggest I have the right to have my question placed on the Notice Paper. However, I shall be glad to have a ruling on the subject.

MR. SPEAKER: In answer to the hon. member, it will give me especial pleasure to afford him any information I can. I am following the precedent of years past. The Notice which the hon. member gave was not in accordance with the recognised rules of Parliament, and I need only quote a few words from *May* to show that I was wholly within my rights. I do not want to make any new departure. Although it is provided in Standing Order No. 1 that certain things may be done, Standing Order 107 does not apply in this case, as it is provided there that questions may be put to Ministers of the Crown. That does not apply to the Speaker of the House. I will read to the hon. member the portion of *May* dealing with this matter:—

> As regards questions addressed to the Speaker, no written or public notice of such questions is permissible.

In reference to the question being omitted from the Notice Paper, it is recorded in another portion of *May* that it is not absolutely necessary to submit the Notice even to me. The Notice may be submitted by the Clerk to the hon. member himself if necesssry. I am not aware whether that was done, but I am inclined to think it was because I know that courtesy has always been extended to members of Parliament as long as I have been in the House and as long as the two present officers have filled the positions they hold. They have always been most obliging and courteous to everyone. Possibly the Clerk notified the hon. member. I am relying on that portion of *May* which I have read and which I do not wish to depart from although I shall always be most happy to do all I can for the hon. member or any hon. member. I specially rely on the words I have already quoted. In respect to my being chairman of the Standing Orders Committee, that is a post which has yet to be filled by the committee.

BILL—WINES, BEER, AND SPIRIT SALE ACT AMENDMENT.

SECOND READING MOVED.

MR. J. C. G. FOULKES (Claremont) In moving the second reading of this Bill, I should like to inform the House that it is a copy of a clause of the Bill that passed this Chamber in December last. The Bill was introduced by the then Premier, who is now the member for Subiaco, and it received the support of members who sat on the same side of the House as himself. The general principles were opposed by members sitting on the Opposition benches, at least by some of them, and the present Premier moved an amendment to that particular Bill providing that the Bill should only remain in force for twelve months from the day of the commencement of the measure; so practically the Bill I am moving now has passed the House unanimously, and was sent on to another place and reached the Council late in the session. Perhaps for that reason it was thrown out there. The member for Subiaco gave us reasons last year why he thought the Bill should be passed. Last December the Government of the day proposed to amend the Licensing Act conferring the principle of local option, but it was recognised then in some of the arguments brought forward that some of the clauses dealing with the granting of licenses were exceedingly difficult, and did not give an opportunity to the people who wished to support the granting of licenses to send in

a petition to support the granting of the licenses. People opposed to the granting of licenses did have the power under the existing law of attending and showing their objections to the granting of any particular licenses, but they have no guarantee that the application for the granting of the same licenses may not be continually repeated. In some cases indefatigable applicants will devote years in obtaining the granting of a particular license. They have not much to lose if a license is refused, and if it is granted a great benefit is conferred on them. From my personal experience objectors are obliged to attend four times in the year in order to keep a license from being granted. Not only that, but in many parts of the country there are no licensing benches as such. It is true in the metropolitan district and in Fremantle and on the goldfields, at places like Kalgoorlie, there are a number of magistrates specially selected from the magistrates of the district, and these selected magistrates are called the licensing bench; but there are many districts in the country that have no licensing benches as such to deal with the granting of licenses, and the result is that in many cases we can hardly expect that full justice is done to the wishes of the people. In regard to the granting of licenses in any particular district, as this Bill has received the support of both parties in the House, it is no party measure. All I seek to do, seeing that we are to have legislation in a short time dealing with local option, is to obtain power to the effect that no more licenses shall be granted, say for a term of twelve months.

MR. T. WALKER: Why twelve months?

MR. FOULKES: I take it that in the next session this Government will introduce a Bill—they are pledged to introduce legislation—embodying the principle of local option, and as soon as that Bill comes into force and the local option clauses with it, the people will have the right to decide whether they will have public-houses in their midst or not. When that Bill passes, and it will pass, judging from the platform of various members returned to the House—pretty well every member is pledged to the principle of local option—it will give the right to people to decide whether they will have public-houses in their midst or not. The question will then arise as to whether those people who hold licenses are to be compensated if their licenses are taken away from them. At this stage I am trying not to raise any difficulties apart from what may arise in connection with the Bill. If compensation is to be paid, it means that if any more licenses are granted we shall have to face the possibility and contingency of compensating those licensees who have obtained licenses up to the passing of the Local Option Bill. The member for Subiaco gave us figures when he introduced the Bill last session showing the number of licensed houses in the country, and in some distfricts there was one hotel to every 200 of the population. That, I believe, was in the Murchison district. In the metropolitan area I believe there was one licensed house to every 400 or 500 people. No one can dispute that we have a sufficient number of licensed houses amongst us. Provision is made in this Bill that any applications that have been granted for provisional licenses shall not be affected by the provisions of this measure; also provision is made that the Governor shall have power to suspend from time to time the operation of the Bill. Where there are no licensed premises within a radius of 20 miles the Governor has power from time to time to suspend the operation of the Bill. Power is given to the licensing magistrates to grant transfers of existing licenses; this does not interfere with the existing rights under existing licenses. All the Bill does is to say that no more licenses shall be granted throughout the State during the next twelve months. The term of 12 months was inserted by the present Premier in order that time should be given to the Government of the day to bring in legislation dealing with local option. As I said before, this is no party measure, and I hope it will not be looked on as such. It received the support last session of all parties in the House, and I hope it will receive the same now.

THE PREMIER (Hon. C. H. Rason): Although I appreciate the motive which has prompted the hon. member in bringing this Bill forward, I regret very much that I cannot see my way clear to give it undivided and unqualified approval. It

seems to me that it is somewhat a dangerous practice to institute on the eve of a meeting of the licensing benches, to pass an Act of Parliament which takes away from the licensing benches all discretionary power in any shape or form. It is true, I believe, that a large section of the community is very anxious that there should be an extended degree of local option. But let me remind the hon. member that to a certain extent, and to a considerable extent, a degree of local option exists already, inasmuch as licensing magistrates are generally supposed to have a good idea of the requirements of the district and the wishes of the people of that district, and they exercise their unfettered judgment in the granting or refusing of new licenses. It is true, as the hon. member points out, that if a full measure is given at a future date, the question of compensation will arise, and therefore the more licenses there are granted in the interval, the greater will be the question of the compensation to be given, or how many licensed houses may have their licenses taken away from them. But I do not think that fact would justify us in adopting legislation of this character. I took exception to the Bill when it was introduced last session, and I feel bound to take the same exception now. It is true that I moved last session that the Act then proposed, which was on all fours with the Bill now before the House, should only remain in force for the term of 12 months from the date of the passing thereof; and that was the best effort I could put forward then to minimise the evils that seemed to me to be contained in the Bill; that if it did come into existence, at all events it would have only a lifetime of one year. I think that whatever may be the future legislation introduced into Western Australia with regard to the control of the liquor traffic, we may very well, until a comprehensive measure is introduced, leave to the discretion of the licensing benches the question of granting or refusing additional licenses. Depend upon it that although the gentlemen comprising the licensing benches throughout the State are not dictated to in any way, either by the Government or by the people, yet they are as a rule men who are closely in touch with the trend of public opinion, men who have a thorough knowledge of the districts in which they adjudicate, and are generally well able to judge of what is or what is not required. I think under these circumstances we should not be doing any great harm to the cause of temperance even, if we left with those gentlemen the control of the question of granting or refusing licenses for some little farther time to come. I am well aware, in fact I have already stated and I beg to repeat it, that the gentleman who has introduced this Bill is actuated by the best of all motives. He wishes to protect the State in regard to compensation in the future, and to do something, I believe, in the cause of temperance. I wish that I could consistently support him with this Bill; but trying to be consistent and adhering to the attitude adopted on a previous occasion, I can do no more than say I would infinitely prefer to wait for a comprehensive measure dealing with the whole question in a thorough manner rather than adopt this temporary expedient, which I am afraid, although it may attain the ends of the mover in one way, would yet militate against his wishes in another. Let me point out to the hon. member that the very fact of a suspension of the granting of any additional licenses for 12 months can only have the effect of increasing the value of the existing licenses. To say that no more licenses shall be granted in any district where there is already a licensed house within 12 miles is certainly to put an enhanced value on all the licenses existing to-day. I am not anxious that should be done. I believe that the licensing benches throughout the State will protect the interests of the State, and will see that no more licenses are granted until there is ample justification for more. I hope the hon. member will not press this Bill any farther, but will be content with having made an effort in what he believes, and I believe, to be the right direction.

MR. F. ILLINGWORTH (West Perth): I regret exceedingly the attitude of the Government on this question, and more so as the Premier was a member of the James Government, and Mr. James was in favour of reform. Of course, how far Mr. James was acting simply as a member and not as head of the Government I cannot say. But it has been

evident for a long time past that far too many licenses have been issued in the State. The argument of the Premier is that the present licensing system is sufficient for the present, and ought not to be disturbed until we get a comprehensive measure. At the same time undoubtedly, and under the existing system, we have attained to this, that in this State of Western Australia there is one licensed house for every 350 of the population. Notwithstanding all that may be said in favour of the licensing benches, that is what they have achieved. Will any member in this State say that there is any necessity in the world for having a licensed house for every 350 men, women, and children in this State? Here is a condition of things that has grown up under the existing licensing system. We cannot possibly expect the Government to deal with the larger question this session. What we ask is that they shall at least check the increase of licenses. Surely one license to every 350 of the population is sufficient for all practical needs, unless there be some new district, and a provision is made in the Bill for the supply of that need if it arises. As to the question of compensation, there is a point in that, but perhaps not a very serious one, because it becomes a question whether this State will submit to compensation in the way of money at all. I very much question if the State will. I think it will not. Some compensation may be given, but I do not think this State will submit to money compensation for existing licenses. However that may be, we have to face the facts as they stand. What, I ask, is the position? Three hundred and fifty people, men, women, and children, a large number of these being total abstainers, are asked to maintain a licensed house. To grant additional licenses is not fair to present licensees, and it is certainly not fair to the public generally. There is a difference of opinion, perhaps, as to whether the demand creates the supply, or the supply creates the demand. As far as licensed houses are concerned, I think there can be no second opinion that the supply creates the demand. If this demand were of a legitimate character, one good for the State and individual, then we might cater for it. But when it is universally admitted that it is not good for the State and not good for the people, why should we extend an evil which we all admit to be an evil? The very licensing system is an admission that the drinking system is an evil. It has to be restrained, it has to be kept in check. For that reason it is an admitted principle that we have to deal with something which requires control, as much control as we can possibly give it. Practically in all ages this system has had to be controlled. It is getting now, in this State at any rate, beyond control. I hope our friends, particularly those interested in labour, will take under their notice and attention some of the facts in connection with this drinking question. I will quote from an authority which I think all will be willing to take as a sufficient authority on labour questions—Mr. John Burns, king of labour. He states that the industry is a profitless one, and he proves it in this way. He says that the amount paid in wages in various occupations out of each £100 of value produced is as follows:—Mining, 55·0; shipbuilding, 37·0; docks and harbours, 34·7; railways, 30·0; agriculture, 29·0; canals, 29·0; cotton manufacture, 29·2; waterworks, 25·7; iron and steel manufacture, 23·3; textile industries, 22·6; gas manufacture, 20·0; brewing, 7·5. This is a labour question. Out of £100 value produced by brewing the amount paid in wages is only 7 per cent. This is an economical question which our labour friends will do well to take into consideration.

MR. BATH: A profitable industry; not much expended in labour.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Only 7 per cent. From the brewer's standpoint undoubtedly it is an excellent business, and proves successful to those engaged in it. Those who hold shares in the Swan Brewery can testify to the truthfulness of that assertion. [MEMBER: I suppose you have some yourself?] I have not, and I do not hold any liquor interest. I once had the control of a license, and was offered £7,000 for it, and I refused it. I speak on behalf of those who hold strong views on the question. I appeal to the House. I repeat that we have one licensed house for every 350 of the population, and I ask is there any necessity to increase the number? If there is no necessity to do so, what

can be the objection to this Bill, which says that no more licenses shall be granted until the people have a voice in the matter? [MEMBER: They would decrease very quickly, too.] Possibly they may decrease quickly. I do not wish to occupy any more time on the present occasion. Later we shall have opportunity to deal with the drink question, and I hope the Government will bring in a local option Bill. I think they are in favour of it; I hope they are. I think this House is in favour of such a Bill. I am quite certain that when we have time to consider the question we shall evolve a Bill which will be for the good of the State. At the present time there can be no possible necessity for an increase of the licenses, and if there is no necessity to increase the number, what, I again ask, can be the objection to the Bill of the hon. member? We want something to guide our licensing benches at present, and it would be a great help to licensing benches if they had this measure. I hope the Government will withdraw their opposition to the Bill.

MR. N. KEENAN (Kalgoorlie): In listening to the reasons advanced for accepting this Bill, it appears to me the only practical argument is that if any new licenses are granted, from the present time till an Act is passed providing for a measure of local option and presumably leading to the extinction of some licenses, the State will be placed under the disability of having to pay a larger sum in compensation. It has been already pointed out, and I think very properly, that if we revoke, from this day onward, the right of the licensing benches to grant any licenses, the effect will be an enormous increase in the value of existing licenses; and when we subsequently have to pay compensation for extinction of those licenses, it is doubtful whether the amount of that compensation will not be just as great as if we in the meantime allow licensing benches to exercise their discretion by granting whatever licenses they deem absolutely necessary for the welfare of the community. There would appear to be some misapprehension as to the existing rights of the public in regard to the granting of new licenses. By the Act of 1880, the licensing benches are not empowered to grant or to hear any application for a license, if it can be shown to the bench that the majority of the ratepayers living in the neighbourhood of the proposed new licensed premises object to the granting of the license.

MR. DAGLISH: What is the "neighbourhood?"

MR. KEENAN: The "neighbourhood" is defined by the licensing bench. As the member for Subiaco is doubtless aware, the procedure is that the parties who intend to oppose the license apply to the bench to define the neighbourhood, and the bench defines the neighbourhood as bounded by certain streets, or as so many yards in such and such directions.

MR. SCADDAN: Has no license ever been granted contrary to the public wish?

MR. KEENAN: One license was so granted, and it was overruled by the Supreme Court. The licensing bench has no power in such circumstances to grant a license. The case to which the hon. member probably refers was a Kalgoorlie case: the decision of the bench was appealed against, and the appeal was successful. Therefore the fact stands, that if the people in the neighbourhood properly safeguard their rights, they can, under the existing law, prevent the issue of a license, assuming that the bench are so careless and so indifferent to their duty that they are prepared to issue a license which is not wanted in the neighbourhood. Hence, if we can assume that the bench will so neglect their duty or discharge it so indifferently, the likelihood of a license being improperly granted by the bench is extremely remote, if hon. members who are so ardent and properly ardent in the cause of temperance will get those who sympathise with them to exert themselves to prevent the issue of unnecessary licenses. It seems to me there are only two grounds on which this Bill can be based. First, that the licensing benches throughout the country have not carried out their duties in such a manner as to justify their present powers being left in their hands. But is it possible to say that justly? It may be said by those who are in all circumstances opposed to the granting of licenses. But I believe that reasonable men, who do not hold extreme views, will not be prepared to endorse a vote of censure on the licensing benches throughout the State. I speak as one who has been before them as

a pleader; and my experience of licensing benches is that it is extremely difficult to persuade them to grant a license; and any man who has had similar experience will endorse my view that on every occasion the benches require absolute proof of the need for a new license before entertaining the application. Of course, as with every class of men, some exceptions can always be found; but I am talking of the benches as they exist to-day. I have no hesitation in saying that no man can justly accuse the existing benches of consisting of men who will grant any license not warranted by the circumstances of the case. Then we have the farther argument that is really the basis of this Bill, that the granting of a license to any house to sell intoxicating liquors, or in the words of the parent Act "wines, beer, and spirit," is itself an objectionable proceeding. The promoters of the Bill are by conviction ardent teetotallers, and because they are ardent teetotallers themselves they would like to put in operation the machinery of the Legislature to make everybody else an ardent teetotaller.

MR. SCADDAN: Everybody is not so narrow-minded.

MR. KEENAN: I compliment the hon. member on the broadness of his views. Probably he will vote against the Bill. But it is a fact that many people persuade themselves that because they, no doubt properly, hold a certain opinion, that opinion should be forced on every other member of the community. I do not think that this is an occasion for discussing views of that character. When a comprehensive measure is introduced to deal with the licensing laws, and to put severe restrictions on all licenses, then will be the time to arrive at the true value of Bills of this character. But for the present I submit that this Bill is justified by the mover on the sole ground that there is a possibility of the licensing benches granting some new licenses, and thereby increasing the amount the State will have to pay if such licenses have to be subsequently bought out on a compensation basis. That ground is of no real practical value; because, if we prohibit by law the creation of new licenses, we shall immediately give an inflated value to all existing licenses. I do not think that the House can reasonably be called on to pass this Bill, with no better or stronger ground than that for its acceptance. The member for West Perth (Mr. Illingworth) quoted certain figures showing the large number of licensed houses in proportion to the population of the State. But he must be well aware of the fact that, owing to the rapid fluctuations of population in certain goldfields districts, there are places which possess nominally a number of public-houses, though in such places only one or perhaps two houses do any trade. For instance, at Niagara there are four public-houses facing one another and the rest of the town is practically in ruins. At other places like Bulong, Paddington, and Broad Arrow, everybody knows that the men who own the public-houses are not doing any trade, and that possibly there is almost a public-house for every five people in the town. Consequently, when we take the whole State into consideration, we find a large number of public-houses in proportion to the population, simply because of those districts in which practically unused public-houses still survive.

MR. DAGLISH: Why do the owners pay the license fees?

MR. KEENAN: I do not suppose that the Treasurer objects to receiving the fees, so long as any men are foolish enough to pay them. In some cases the license fees are about all that the owners can pay. It is dangerous to rely on such figures as those quoted by the hon. member. If every 350 persons in the State had a circle drawn round them with a public-house in the middle, the matter might be serious; but that is not the case. The figures work out as quoted by the hon. member, because the fluctuating population on the goldfields has led to a number of licenses being granted at intervals in places which are now no longer centres of population. If it were proposed seriously here that all existing licenses should be determined—and I believe that is the logical conclusion—how many members of the House would feel justified in voting for the motion? Yet unless members really work themselves up to that point, is not the present proposal wholly unjustifiable now? If members believe that the granting of new licenses will be an evil to the State, apart from the question of compensation, they must also believe existing licenses to be an

evil; and if so, their proper course, if they wish to carry their convictions to a logical conclusion, is to take such steps as they are capable of to abolish all existing licenses. I do not sympathise with that view; because I believe that properly-conducted licensed premises are not only a necessity, but a convenience. Every day in our midst we see clubs springing up. Why does not the hon. member propose to shut up the clubs? They are far worse than ordinary licensed premises, for the simple reason that they are under no possible control. When once a license is granted to a club, the holders have not to go up every year for a renewal. A club has never to give any account of itself—it stands for all time. And whereas licensed premises are constantly under the eye of the law, and therefore can do the least possible evil, while they give a convenience which the public require, the clubs, which are not under any supervision whatever, can sell exactly the same quantity of drink, and can do any harm they please without any possibility of interference. If we were to carry out the programme now proposed to us, we should have an enormous number of clubs established; and I defy any temperance advocate who wishes to justify his position to say it would be advantageous to the community to abolish licensed premises and to substitute clubs over which we have no control whatever. For these reasons I am not in favour of the Bill, and will vote against it if it goes to a vote.

MR. P. STONE (Greenough): I should like to see this debate adjourned till Tuesday next. To spring such a Bill on the House is hardly fair to country members, for the Bill needs much consideration. I can quite sympathise with the wish of the member for Claremont to restrict the drinking habits of the people in certain localities; but I am at a loss to understand why the Bill should be rushed through. I therefore move—

That the debate be adjourned till Tuesday next.

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

Ayes	...	...	30
Noes	...	...	11
Majority for ...		...	19

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Barnett	Mr. Collier
Mr. Bath	Mr. Daglish
Mr. Brebber	Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Brown	Mr. Gull
Mr. Carson	Mr. Heitmann
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. Holman
Mr. Eddy	Mr. Horan
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Ware
Mr. Hicks	Mr. Lynch (*Teller*).
Mr. Holmes	
Mr. Illingworth	
Mr. Isdell	
Mr. Keenan	
Mr. Layman	
Mr. McLarty	
Mr. Mitchell	
Mr. Monger	
Mr. N. J. Moore	
Mr. S. F. Moore	
Mr. Piesse	
Mr. Rason	
Mr. Smith	
Mr. Stone	
Mr. Troy	
Mr. Verynard	
Mr. A. J. Wilson	
Mr. F. Wilson	
Mr. Gordon (*Teller*).	

Motion thus passed, the debate adjourned.

ROADS AND STREETS CLOSURE BILL.

SECOND READING.

Debate resumed from the 28th November.

MR. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill): In regard to this measure, it is the usual annual sessional visitant, and in the face of the assurance of the Minister for Lands that the local authorities in each of these districts where streets and roads are proposed to be closed, have given their consent to the closure, I have no objection to offer, as presumably those members who are interested and in whose electorates the roads and streets are situated, apparently have no objection to offer to the passage of the Bill.

MR. P. J. LYNCH (Mt. Leonora): Though we have the assurance of the Minister in charge of the Bill, it is within our recollection that a Bill of a similar nature to this was passed last year, and it has come to my knowledge that it has wrought a decided hardship on at least one Perth citizen. I do not know whether in that instance the local authority had been consulted or not. Seeing that my electorate is slightly interested in this Bill, I would ask the Minister if the municipality of Leonora has been consulted as to whether these roads proposed to be closed in the Leonora municipality will interfere with any citizen in the enjoyment of his long-established rights and privileges.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (in reply): This closure is made at the request of the warden; and the Leonora council likewise approved. It is to protect a well and in order that a special lease may be granted. A plan was laid on the table of the House to show very clearly what is provided. I had the plan prepared in order to prevent these discussions.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES, ELECTION.

MR. W. B. GORDON (Canning): I beg to move that Mr. Illingworth be appointed Chairman of Committees. He has had an experience of Parliament extending over some twelve years, and for three years he has acted as Deputy Chairman. As a matter of fact he has also acted as Chairman of Committees. Those of us who were in the old Parliament cannot fail to remember the pleasing, yet firm, manner in which Mr. Illingworth carried out the duties of Chairman of Committees.

MR. F. C. MONGER (York): It gives me great pleasure in seconding the nomination of Mr. Illingworth to the position of Chairman of Committees of this House. Mr. Illingworth's long parliamentary experience and his intimate knowledge of parliamentary practice and of constitutional law, warrant his nomination to this important position. I am certain that if elected he will peform the duties with justice to himself and maintain the dignity of the House.

Question put and passed.

MR. F. ILLINGWORTH (West Perth): Let me take this opportunity of thanking hon. members for the very high honour which they have just placed upon me. It is true I did some service in a former House before I retired in consequence of my defeat in the Cue electorate: but as other electors have been pleased to return me to this House, I have great pleasure in taking up a work which I shall endeavour to carry out to the best of my ability. I beg to thank hon. members for the honour they have conferred upon me.

The House resolved itself into Committee to consider the Roads and Streets Closure Bill, Mr. Illingworth in the Chair.

THE PREMIER (addressing the Chairman): Before we proceed to the discussion of this Bill, let me be permitted to tender to you, sir, my hearty congratulations on the high honour conferred upon you; and I think the House also is to be congratulated on the fact that you have accepted the position. It is at once an assurance to every member of this Committee that the important duties of Chairman of Committees will be carried out with impartiality, and I am sure with satisfaction to every member. I tender you my most sincere congratulations.

MR. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill): In adding a few words to the felicitations uttered by the Premier, I may say that it gives me pleasure to congratulate you, Mr. Illingworth, on your attaining the position of Chairman of Committees of this House. One recognises that the chairmanship on many occasions during the session is even a more arduous and more trying duty to perform than that of Mr. Speaker himself, owing to the fact that towards the latter end of the session we are in Committee so often and for such extended periods. However, the experience you secured in that position in a former Parliament will assist you materially in filling the position in the present Parliament, and I can only add that I believe you will occupy the position with the utmost impartiality and fair-mindedness.

THE CHAIRMAN: I thank the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition for the kindly way in which they have been pleased to speak of me on the present occasion. It is always my effort to be impartial, as it is my duty to be, and to assist members as far as possible. All members recognise that Committee work is really the hard graft of parliamentary life, and just as trying upon members as it is upon the Chair. We recognise we have a great duty to perform to the State, and must in Committee give the close attention that is required for every Bill placed before the House. I believe we shall be able to perform these duties satisfactorily to ourselves and to the State. I thank hon. members who have spoken.

CLOSURE BILL IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Schedule:

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS moved that certain other roads or streets be added, as set forth on Notice Paper.

MR. FOULKES: What was the nature of the roads proposed to be closed in the Claremont electorate?

THE MINISTER: One road was closed at Claremont in order to include it in the Agricultural Show Ground, this having been done with the approval of the municipal council and the roads board. A road had also been closed with the approval of the Buckland Hill Roads Board.

MR. HOLMES: Had the Fremantle municipality been consulted in reference to a road proposed to be closed at Fremantle?

THE MINISTER: This was simply a right-of-way, which had been shown on the public plans in error, but never used. It had been built on for years, and was now used as a car-barn site.

MR. A. C. GULL: What was the reference to Kalamunda?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: This road was closed on the application of the Public Works Department, the roads board having approved.

Amendments made by adding the following additional roads and streets to the schedule:—

IN THE TOWN OF BROOME.—All that portion of Mary Street lying to the east of a line bearing 109° 24′ from a point situate 100° 24′ 1 chain from the south-west corner of Broome Town Lot 148.

IN THE TOWN OF CHIDLOW'S WELL.—The whole of Keane street.

IN THE TOWN OF NGUMBALLA.—All that portion of Condon Street lying westerly of a line bearing 140° 33′ from a point situate 230° 33′ 1 chain 25 links from the south corner of Ngumballa Town Lot 25.—All that portion of Scougall Street lying westerly of a line bearing 140° 33′ from a point situate 230° 33′ 1 chain 25 links from the south corner of Town Lot 9.—The whole of Rose Street.—All that portion of a public right-of-way lying between Town Lots 7 and 8.

IN THE TOWN OF LEONORA.—All that portion of the main Leonora to Menzies Road lying west of the east side of Gwalia Street, produced southerly.

IN THE CITY OF PERTH.—Add after line 38, page 3, the words "and west of that portion described in a proclamation dated the 22nd day of August, 1905, and published in the *Government Gazette* dated the 25th day of August, 1905."

Schedule as amended agreed to.

Bill reported with amendment.

BILL—WINES, BEER, AND SPIRIT SALE ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Hon. C. H. Rason): In moving the second reading of this Bill, which has for its object the amendment of the Wines, Beer, and Spirit Sale Act, I wish to point out to members and ask them to kindly keep in mind that the object of the Bill is simply for revenue purposes. It seeks to increase the licensing fees under certain circumstances, and I hope members will not confuse other subjects with this Bill. If amendments are sought in other directions they can be obtained, and if it is necessary to fall in with the desire of members in that respect we can have a third amending measure. I ask members if they will—I think they will see the advantage of doing so—treat the Bill as increasing the revenue, and from that standpoint only. My excuse, if excuse is necessary, for bringing in a Bill of this sort lies in the fact, as is within the knowledge of most members, that the duty upon spirits imported into Western Australia has been very considerably reduced. Since the introduction of the Federal tariff, the duty has fallen by 2s. a gallon, and that reduction in the duty must of necessity have made the profits of the retailer of spirituous liquor considerably greater than they were before. I have sought by this Bill and the amendments I propose to move to increase the license fee upon certain houses from £50 a year to £75 a year, and in other cases from £40 a year to £50 a year. That increase in the licensing fee will by no means represent the loss which Western Australia has sustained in the reduction of the duty: it is a mere fleabite as compared with the total loss to Western Australia. Since the Bill was originally drafted it has occurred to me that it was calculated to inflict some hardship on those licensed houses not doing so much trade as those more fortunately situated. I consider, perhaps it would be preferable, certainly to my mind, perhaps to the mind of most

members, that we might differentiate between the licensed premises doing a very great trade and licensed premises doing a comparatively small trade; in other words, those who make the most profit out of their business should pay the higher license fee, and those who make a lesser profit a lesser license fee. It should be borne in mind that when the Act of 1882 was introduced it was provided that only in the districts of Perth and Fremantle should the higher license fee be paid. Outside of Perth and Fremantle the license fee was £40, and within the districts of Perth and Fremantle £50. What was in the minds of members who were responsible for the Act undoubtedly was that in Perth and Fremantle they had the two populous and comparatively thriving districts of the State. To-day different circumstances exist, and the most ardent advocate for the goldfields would not attempt to argue that licensed premises in Kalgoorlie and Boulder do not do as profitable a trade as licensed premises in Perth and Fremantle. There is no excuse, to my mind at all events, why licensed houses in these two places, especially in the thickly populated and business centres, should not pay equivalent license fees to those centrally situated houses in Perth and Fremantle. I think most members will agree with me that it would be just and fair if licensed houses in either of the places to which I have referred where they are doing the greatest volume of trade should pay the larger license fee. Take Perth for instance: a licensed house situated in the centre of Perth doing a large business might well be called on to pay the higher license fee, and those houses on the outskirts of the municipality doing a similar trade should pay the smaller fee. The illustration will apply itself to the other districts to which I have referred. It cannot be argued that this Bill, if agreed to, will inflict any hardship on the licensed victualler. He has already in the incidence to which I have referred, the reduction of the tariff, received a far greater profit than this Bill if passed will take away from him. This will be a mere percentage of the increased profits derived through the loss which the State has sustained by the reduction of the tariff. I commend the Bill to the consideration of members. I do not wish to attempt to press it through Committee to-day. I am anxious that whilst the State shall receive some equivalent for its loss, no injustice shall be done to those who are trying to conduct their businesses in a respectable and proper manner. I move the second reading of the measure.

On motion by Mr. BATH, debate adjourned.

BILL—STAMP ACT AMENDMENT.

SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Hon. C. H. Rason): In moving the second reading of the Stamp Act Amendment Bill, I wish to point out to members that the Act, although somewhat a long one, is composed for the greater part of the schedule, setting out the fees to be charged in the shape of stamp duty on certain transactions, and I wish to state to members that in very few instances indeed have the fees been increased. The law in this Bill is practically the existing law. The changes are firstly, and perhaps it is the most important one, that provision is made for embossed stamps on promissory notes instead of what has been the custom in affixing adhesive stamps. It is recognised generally amongst commercial men and banking institutions that this change is absolutely necessary; it is necessary from their standpoint and it is doubtless necessary from the standpoint of the Treasurer. I have no hesitation in saying that the substitution of embossed stamps in place of adhesive stamps will result in a very large increase to the revenue. There has been a great amount of evasion of the stamp duty in regard to promissory notes. Often purposely and oftener still inadvertently people have been in the habit until only quite recently of signing promissory notes, and leaving the affixing of the duty stamps until the time the notes become due and are liable for payment. If they were not passed into the bank or if they were renewed, the bills received no stamp at all. It will be within the memory of members that quite recently there was a case in the court in which it was held, and indeed the law is clear on the point, that unless a promissory note or bill of exchange has been stamped and cancelled by the person drawing it at the time of

drawing, the bill was an illegal document and could not be made use of in any shape or form. I should like, in order to prove that this is so, to quote from the original Act of 1882. Section 40 provides that—

> Every person who draws, makes, issues, endorses, transfers, negotiates, presents for payment, or pays any bill of exchange or promissory note liable to duty and not being duly stamped shall forfeit a sum not exceeding ten pounds, and the person who takes or receives from any other person any such bill or note not being duly stamped, either in payment or as a security, or by purchase or otherwise, shall not be entitled to recover thereon or to make the same available for any purpose whatever.

That section in the old Act, which has never been amended in any way since 1882, has rendered it easy for unscrupulous persons to evade the payment of their just debts. We have heard in court quite recently that advantage is taken of the section. The mere fact of the promissory note not having been stamped has enabled persons to evade payment. That was never intended by those responsible for the Bill of 1882. The object of the section I have just referred to was to render additional protection to the Treasury, and not that advantage should be taken by persons to get out of paying the money which they owe. And farther, this Bill will remedy that state of things, and enable a bill which has not been stamped at the time of the making to be stamped within 28 days of the receiving of the same by the payee, or within any such farther extended period as may be allowed by the Colonial Treasurer. It will not do away with the liability of the infliction of a fine upon the person who omitted to stamp. It will remain in the hands of the Treasurer to inflict a fine or waive the penalty. Whilst provision is made to protect the Treasurer against the non-stamping of documents, the mere non-stamping will not invalidate the document itself. In regard to those bills which have been referred to or been the subject of the cases to which I allude, and in relation to which it has been held that there is no remedy against the man who drew the bills, the measure provides that those bills now in existence can be stamped and made valid subject to such penalty as may be prescribed by the Treasurer; so that we protect the general community against the efforts of unscrupulous persons to avoid their responsibility. There is another clause which has been inserted in this Bill at the request of the fire insurance offices, which are about to issue a uniform fire policy. Members who have been interested in fire insurances know that the different policies issued by the different offices vary in terms very considerably; vary in the risks which they undertake and the conditions upon which they will pay. I am glad indeed to say that a uniform policy has been decided upon, and will be issued by all fire insurance companies doing business in Western Australia.

MR. BATH: Is it by their own agreement?

THE PREMIER: By their own agreement, without any compulsion on the part of the State. It will be necessary for the old policies to be called in and for the new uniform policies to be issued. However great may be my desire to get as much into the Treasury as I possibly can, it would be manifestly unfair, to my mind, and I think members will agree with me, to insist upon those policies, which after all only take the place of duly stamped old policies, having also to bear the burden of new stamping.

MR. BATH: It all depends on the terms of the new policies.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member need have no fear. The subject will be duly considered and very carefully watched; but provision is made in this Bill that where the Treasurer is satisfied that the new policy is merely a new uniform policy to take the place of a duly stamped old policy, it will be possible for him to waive the duty for the new stamping. I am sure members, especially those interested in commerce and trade, will welcome this measure. As far as possible I have had it referred to leading men of business in the various centres and to the managers of various banking institutions; and they all assure me that not only will it be a great advantage to the commercial community, but that I may confidently look for a greatly increased amount of revenue. In regard to embossed stamps, I am glad to have the opportunity of telling members this. It was considered there would be very great difficulty and very great expense in

obtaining embossing dies and machines in order to do the work, and that it would mean setting up a new department and perhaps a very expensive staff. The dies and the necessary machinery, I was assured, would have to be imported. I am glad indeed to be able to say that the dies have been made in this State, and that so far from setting up any additional staff, the work of embossing is done in part of the Treasury offices, by the Treasury staff. And I take this opportunity of thanking the Under Treasurer for the amount of zeal and care which I think he has displayed in bringing about such a very satisfactory state of affairs. I commend the Bill to members as being worthy of their consideration and an effort to bring it into law. In Committee, I will take care to point out as far as possible where there is any variation which I have not already referred to in this Bill, as compared with the existing law.

On motion by MR. BATH, debate adjourned.

BILL—PERTH MINT ACT AMENDMENT.

SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Hon. C. H. Rason), in moving the second reading, said: Members who were present in this House last session will remember this Bill. It was introduced by my predecessors, and is a short Bill of only two clauses. It is thought necessary from the fact that the amount provided for the expenditure on the Perth Mint was in the first place fixed at £10,000; then an amending Act was introduced increasing it to £20,000; and now that has been found all too small, and it is proposed to increase the amount to £22,500, the same sum as was proposed last session. Members need not think for one moment that this is running into an increased expenditure without a return. I am pleased indeed to be able to say that in spite of the fact that the minting charges to the public have been considerably reduced, yet the Mint is a highly profitable concern. Not only does it give very great assistance and encouragement in the gold mining industry, but it returns a profit to the State. But very few years will have to pass, if the present satisfactory state of things continues, before the whole cost of that building, and the whole cost of the expensive machinery employed therein, will have been paid for out of the profits earned by the Mint. I know of no more satisfactory institution in Western Australia. I wish I did. I wish I knew of more engagements we have entered into that rendered such profit to the State as does the Perth Mint. Year by year the quantity of gold turned out increases in amount, year by year the satisfaction to the State increases, and year by year the profit which goes to general revenue increases also; so that although we are providing an extra sum, the mere provision of that extra sum in itself means an increased profit. I do not think any farther comment on my part is necessary in order to make it apparent to members that this short Bill is not only necessary, but is advisable in the best interests of the State.

MR. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill): I would like to say that as far as this Bill is concerned I have no objection to offer to the second reading. It was introduced by the Ministry of which I was a member during the last session of the last Parliament, and although it means the application of an increased sum, we are all pleased indeed to hear of the way in which the Perth Mint is increasing its business, and also to hear of the profit which that institution is making in spite of the decreased charges which have been instituted in connection with it. It is pleasing to know of one successful financial institution which exists under the reign of my friend opposite.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. QUINLAN in the Chair.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of 59 Vict., No. 12, s. 2:

THE PREMIER: Last year the actual net revenue from the Mint, whilst under the control of the last Government, was in spite of that disadvantage £15,104. This year, under more favourable conditions, we looked for a greatly increased sum.

MR. TROY: The Government had not got it yet.

Clause put and passed.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—TOTALISATOR DUTY.

SECOND READING MOVED.

THE PREMIER (Hon. C. H. Rason): In moving the second reading of a Bill for "An Act to impose duties in respect to takings of totalisators," I would point out that this is a subject which has often been spoken of in this House and has often been suggested, and was outlined as a probable source of legislation by the previous Government. It has been said, and I have no doubt will be repeated, that any Government which proposes to handle part of the takings of totalisators and apply that part to the revenue of the State is handling tainted money, and that a Government which condescends to do that sort of thing should be deprecated. But I should like to point out that, whether the Government takes by Act of Parliament any portion of the receipts of totalisators or does not, the totalisators will remain, and turf clubs or those who run them will have their share of the profits, unless totalisators are totally prohibited. The legalisation of totalisators exists in many of the Australian States, and in almost every State where it does exist that State takes some of the profits of the totalisators. The New Zealand Act of 1891 is somewhat similar in all its features to the Bill which I submit to-day. A Totalisator Act was passed in Queensland in 1892, providing that 2½ per cent. of the gross takings of the totalisator should pass into the general revenue. In 1902 the Queensland Act was amended, and the contribution was made 5 per cent. instead of 2½ per cent. Consequently those who were conducting totalisators regarded this contribution as being more than they could pay; and instead of being content with a commission of 10 per cent. for conducting the totalisators, they raised the commission to 12½ per cent., thus rendering the takings of the totalisators very small indeed; and I do not wonder at it. But while the tax payable to the State was only 2½ per cent. and the commission charged by the operators of the totalisators was only 10 per cent., no harm seems to have been done either to one side or the other. The tax proposed in this Bill is 2½ per cent. on the gross takings of the totalisators, as against the 5 per cent. charged in Queensland and the 1½ per cent. charged in New Zealand. I do not think that even those interested in the conduct of totalisators can object to that. We pass on, and find that in addition to the 2½ per cent. upon the gross takings of the totalisators, the Bill proposes that all fractions of dividends should also pass into the Treasury of the State. These represent a considerable sum of money; and I for my part cannot see what claim those who conduct totalisators can have upon the fractions which they have hitherto retained.

MR. A. J. WILSON: What else can they do with them?

THE PREMIER: People often do many things that are very wrong; but because some people do wrong, that does not prove that the doing of it can be justified by any argument. What are the facts? Those who conduct totalisators charge 10 per cent. commission on the total amount paid in. Working out the dividends amongst the winners, we will say, for the sake of argument, that the correct dividend should be 19s. 11d. The conductors of the totalisators strike out the 11d. There is at once another 10 per cent., or 9 per cent. at all events, in addition to the 10 per cent. already charged. If anyone can show me that a club or any person conducting a totalisator has any legitimate claim to such fractions, then I shall perhaps be prepared to admit that the State has no claim to them. But it seems to me that these fractions belong, if to anybody, to those people who subscribe to the totalisator, and amongst whom those fractions should be distributed; and as they are not so distributed, it would be just as well, to my mind, to let the State have an opportunity of distributing them in another way. Therefore I do not imagine that any great exception can be taken to our claiming the fractions which are not paid by way of dividends. Then there are, I believe, considerable sums of money represented by unclaimed dividends.

MR. A. J. WILSON: Do you think that is likely?

THE PREMIER: Not in your case. Still, there are dividends remaining

unclaimed. People lose their tickets, or for various reasons neglect to present the tickets for payment; and unclaimed dividends represent a considerable sum. The conductors of the totalisators can have no legitimate claim to these moneys. Clearly they are unexpected windfalls; and if there are windfalls of this sort to be obtained, I should much prefer their being in the Treasury rather than in the pockets of wealthy people. I cannot for a moment think that any injustice will be done either to turf clubs or to other bodies who conduct totalisators at race meetings; and it is no argument worthy of consideration to say that because betting by means of totalisators should not be encouraged, therefore the State should not have any part of the proceeds of totalisators. Depend upon it, betting will continue so long as horse-racing continues; and the least objectionable form of betting seems to me—this is my personal opinion only—to be betting conducted by means of the totalisator; for this reason, if for this reason only, that betting by means of the totalisator is a cash transaction. If a man has not the money, he cannot conduct an operation with the totalisator; but if a man has not the money, I believe it is possible for him to make wagers with a bookmaker. And so, in many cases, a person finds himself hopelessly involved in debt, or hopelessly in the hands of a member of the sporting fraternity; whereas if his operations had of necessity to be on a cash basis, he would not have got into such difficulties.

MR. A. J. WILSON: It would not be a bad scheme to abolish the bookmaker.

THE PREMIER: When we are in Committee on this Bill, I shall be glad indeed to receive advice from those gentlemen who appear to be experts in this particular business. But I think the House generally will agree with me that the State may well receive some portion of that commission charged by those who conduct totalisators, and certainly that it should receive the unclaimed dividends and the fractions of dividends which are not paid to those who buy totalisator tickets. I move the second reading.

On motion by MR. BATH, debate adjourned.

BILL—RACECOURSES LICENSING.

SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Hon. C. H. Rason): This Bill for the licensing of racecourses is an attempt, a small attempt I admit, but still an attempt, to deal with what is fast becoming a very great evil in our midst. The sport of horse-racing, in itself a noble sport, and properly conducted a nobler sport still, seems as if it were being rapidly degraded, until it is in danger of becoming, if it has not already become, a curse to the community. The evil to my mind seems to lie, not so much in the conduct of racing on well-conducted racecourses, but rather to lie in what occurs at those meetings which are conducted, not by a body which is not actuated by any desire to make money for the benefit of its individual members, but by those where the sole aim of the promoter of the meeting is to make the utmost profit he can for himself. I am informed, on what I believe to be reliable authority, that positively degrading scenes occur at some of those meetings, and that, generally speaking, there is in this State of Western Australia much of what cannot by any stretch of the imagination be called noble sport, or sport which tends to elevate. If we can by any means remedy that state of affairs, it is undoubtedly the duty of the Government to make the attempt, and it is the duty of members, if they will allow me to say so, to assist the Government in every well-directed effort with that object. We therefore propose in this Bill that no races shall be held except on licensed racecourses; that after the passing of this Act it shall be illegal to hold a race meeting upon any course that has not been duly licensed. The question then arises as to who should be the licensing body. Manifestly it ought not to be the Government. We cannot expect members of the Government to go about visiting racecourses —at least I hope such a thing will never be suggested—in order to ascertain what are or are not properly conducted courses, or what are properly conducted race meetings.

MR. SCADDAN: You open bazaars; why not open racecourses?

THE PREMIER: That might be done by deputy; and in that case I know of no better man to conduct the business than

the hon. member who has interjected. But we have to ask ourselves, if an authority is to be set up outside of the Government, what authority is calculated to prove the most satisfactory? It seemed to me that as we entrust great discretionary power to the licensing benches when we empower them to grant licenses for the sale of liquor, we may well give to these bodies the same discretionary power for the licensing of racecourses. The idea seems to have been ridiculed in some degree; but I submit for the consideration of the House that members of licensing benches are, generally speaking, men thoroughly in touch with the surroundings in their districts and with what is going on. It therefore appeared to me that licensing benches were essentially the bodies to whom this work might be entrusted. If any better suggestion can be made, if any member of the House can demonstrate that we can set up another body likely to give greater satisfaction than licensing benches, I shall welcome the suggestion. This proposal is put forward by the Government in all good faith. We wish to obtain men who will be unbiased either one way or another, who will give due consideration to every application for the licensing of a racecourse, and will approach every application without bias. It is true that in the Bill we seek to provide as a farther check that no license shall be granted unless the applicant shall produce to the licensing magistrate a certificate under the hand of the chairman, vice-chairman, or secretary of the W.A. Turf Club, to the effect that in the opinion of the committee and stewards thereof the applicant is a racing club, company, association, or person, fit and proper to be licensed; that the land or place for which the license is required is suitable for horse-racing, and that the granting of the license is in the public interest. Then again, it may be urged that we are putting into the hands of the W.A. Turf Club an immense power. It may be held that we should not give to that club such an enormous power as is conveyed in that clause; but let me ask hon. members if they inquire into the subject, what are the conditions that they find anywhere else? They will find almost without exception—and I say that lest there should be an exception of which at present I am not aware—that the conduct of racing and the general watching over the interests of the racing community are in the hands of some leading turf body, some recognised body that is looked up to with respect, as is the W.A. Turf Club in Western Australia.

MR. LYNCH: It has been alleged that this body is very unrepresentative.

THE PREMIER: That was alleged about the last Parliament, and it did not follow that the statement was true. We always find allegations of that sort set up, but the hon. member should be the last person to adopt them without hesitation. I should like to ask hon. members, if we do not give that power to the W.A. Turf Club, to whom should we give it? [MR. BOLTON: To the Government.] Please, no. If there is any sporting authority, or club, or recognised institution that has a better grip of racing matters and is more likely to be honest in its dealings, and is more likely to be fair than the W.A. Turf Club, by all means have it; but I can find no such body.

MR. HOLMES: What about the body you propose to create?

THE PREMIER: That body would take into consideration the facts from the standpoint of the general public. The W.A. Turf Club takes into consideration whether the land or place is suitable for horse-racing, and whether the applicant is a fit and proper person to hold a license.

MR. HOLMES: He comes armed with a certificate from the W.A. Turf Club, or the licensing bench will not hear him.

THE PREMIER: The licensing bench approaches the matter from the standpoint of what is best for the general community; but the W.A. Turf Club will approach the consideration of the application from the standpoint of what is best for horse-racing and from a sporting view.

MR. TAYLOR: So far as the condition of the land is concerned.

THE PREMIER: That is part of their consideration.

MR. BOLTON: It is the only power they should have.

THE PREMIER: If the majority of members think so I shall be glad indeed to adopt the suggestion. I do not put forward this Bill, and no man who wishes to do what is best for the State would

put forward a Bill of this nature, with hard and fast lines. I do not profess to have an intimate knowledge on this subject. I want to be guided as far as I possibly can by those who are taking sufficient interest in the matter and who are qualified to express an opinion. I hope to receive many suggestions; and if they prove to be valuable, undoubtedly we shall have great pleasure in adopting them. But let us clear the ground as we go along. Will hon. members at all events deny that some reform is necessary? Is it not generally admitted that there must be some check on indiscriminate racing on unregistered racecourses? The Government approach this matter with a desire to effect that remedy which it is admitted should be applied. We are not wedded to the mode of application. Show us better means of applying it if you can: we shall welcome the suggestion. It has to be applied. Let us agree as to that. Let us agree if we can on something for the general benefit of the community, and let us approach this question at all events in a thoroughly non-party spirit. Let us get the best value we can in order to apply the remedy.

MR. HEITMANN: Why do you not wait until you get the information from the select committee.

THE PREMIER: If we waited 100 years we should get none from the interjector. Let us try to ascertain the best remedy to apply. I am sure no member of this Government or of this House wishes to inflict any injustice on any individual. If there are persons who have acquired recognisable rights already, we must do them justice. [MR. HEITMANN: That is what we want.] But if these acquired rights exist, the remedy must still be applied. It does not follow that, because by doing something in the welfare of the State some apparent hardship will be entailed on individuals, what is best must not be done. I feel confident that hon. members will approach the consideration of this measure in the spirit in which it should be approached. I do not wish to take up the time of the House in attempting to debate a subject which I am sure needs no debate at all. I feel convinced the vast majority of the members will agree with me that something must be done, and I rely with confidence upon their assisting me to do it.

On motion by MR. BATH, debate adjourned.

BILL—METROPOLITAN WATERWORKS ACT AMENDMENT.

MOUNT LAWLEY AGREEMENT.

SECOND READING MOVED.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. Frank Wilson): Members who occupied seats in this House last session will remember that a constitutional question was raised by the present Premier, then the Leader of the Opposition, as to whether this Bill ought to be introduced by a Message from his Excellency the Governor. Clause 3 of the Bill gives the Minister for Works for the time being certain powers of expenditure, and although the question is perhaps doubtful as to whether a Message is necessary, yet in order that there may be no mistake in connection with the matter I have brought with me a Message from his Excellency the Governor in connection with this measure.

Message read, recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS, in moving the second reading, said: Perhaps the House will bear with me for a short period while I endeavour, for the benefit of the new members, to explain the necessity for the measure. The Bill was introduced by Mr. Johnson in the last Parliament; and the main reason for its introduction was first of all to ratify an agreement entered into by that gentleman, when Minister for Works, with the owners of the Mount Lawley Estate, an agreement which was afterwards signed by Mr. Johnson's successor, the member for Mount Leonora (Mr. Lynch). The necessity for this agreement arranged by Mr. Johnson with the owners of the Mount Lawley Estate was due to the action of the Metropolitan Waterworks Board. It appears that the board, as has been pretty well the case right throughout its existence, was in a chronic state of hard-upness; it had no capital. This was in the year 1901. Certain extensions were required by the owners of the Mount Lawley Estate to reticulate the estate, and they applied to the board to have the work put in hand. Exception

was taken by the board; and after some negotiations and a good many interviews in connection with the proposition, an agreement was arrived at whereby Messrs. Copley and Robinson, the owners of the Mount Lawley Estate, advanced a certain sum of money to the board amounting to £1,071 2s. 6d. The understanding was that this money should be expended in extending the reticulation of the Mount Lawley Estate, and that when the board had sufficient funds, or had raised sufficient extra capital by permission of Parliament, the owners of the estate would be repaid the sum of money advanced; but that repayment, if I remember aright, had only to take place after the board had earned a revenue of 10 per cent. on the capital expended. This arrangement was entered into in all good faith. The board thought it was making a good deal on behalf of the waterworks, and the owners of the estate thought they were doing well in advancing the money to get their estate reticulated. This temporary arrangement went on until October, 1904. At that time the board was reaping its 10 per cent. profit from the rates imposed on the outlay and the income it derived from the imposition of fees and meter rents; and the owners thought it time to collect, and a demand was made for repayment. The board was still in the position that it had not much money in hand. Indeed it had none at all; but after some consultation and arrangement with the owners' solicitors, it came to an understanding that a sum of £500 on account should be repaid at that time, and that the balance should still continue to stand over until the board was put into extra funds by Parliament. Then came about the change in the management of the waterworks. It was decided to supersede the board. That was on the 10th of November of last year; and when the matter was placed before Mr. Johnson, then Minister for Works, who took charge of the waterworks and administered the Act, he demurred to pay the £500 which the board had decided to repay to the owners on account of the debt.

MR. TAYLOR: The first payment.

THE MINISTER: The first payment. The matter was referred to the board's solicitors before doing anything, and the then Minister was advised by Messrs. James & Derbyshire that the whole arrangement was illegal, that the action of the Waterworks Board in borrowing money outside the power conferred by the Act was illegal, the only power it had to borrow money for the purpose of the Waterworks Board being through the Treasury from the Savings Bank. Therefore this money had been illegally borrowed, and there was no power to repay it. That was the position until the consent of Parliament was obtained. The then Minister, Mr. Johnson, set to work to arrange a compromise, and I may here state at once that I would have been better pleased, after having gone into the matter, to introduce a Bill to repay the whole sum at once and to have done with it, because I believe the company owning this estate had a just and equitable claim for the repayment of the money it had advanced to the board, although it was advanced under an error and although its action was decided to be illegal. I believe that in equity the owners were entitled to have the sum of money repaid to them. Mr. Johnson thought otherwise, and I am now introducing this measure exactly as it was introduced in the last session of Parliament, because I have taken the trouble to interview the owners and have ascertained from them that, seeing that they entered into the agreement and that it provides for certain farther expenditure on the estate owned by those gentlemen, rather than at this juncture attempt to upset the matter they prefer to let the agreement go as it is. If they think the terms of the agreement fair and reasonable, I take no exception to it; therefore I introduce the Bill exactly as it was introduced by my predecessors in office, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Lynch. It has been explained that Mr. Johnson arranged with the owners of the estate, and made an offer that he should pay £500 in full settlement of all claims for the cost of the reticulation or the repayment of this just debt. He went farther, and stated that in addition to paying the £500 he was prepared to provide the expenditure of £832 for certain three-inch mains which were to be laid on this estate before the expiration of the year 1907. All this hon. members will find embodied in the schedule to the Bill.

Clause 2 provides that the Minister shall, before the 31st day of December, 1907, expend the money of £832 in constructing three-inch water mains along the metalled roads running through the property of the proprietors, known as the Mount Lawley Estate. The said mains shall, so far as practicable and subject to the cost of construction not exceeding the said sum of eight hundred and thirty-two pounds, be constructed along such metalled roads as the proprietors may from time to time request in writing before the 30th day of June, 1907. There is also a saving clause (4), which says that notwithstanding anything contained in Clause 2, it shall not be construed into an illegal rate, but as regards Ministers' intentions it was a moral obligation. I may state that if the House passes the measure, which I presume it will do, and I hope it will, I shall consider it my duty to carry out the spirit and letter of the agreement. I shall consider it my duty to see that the £832 specified in the agreement to be expended on the estate is expended out of the first money that Parliament authorises me to raise under the Metropolitan Waterworks Act. That would only be just and fair in the circumstances. A point was raised during the late Parliament, I think by the member for Perth, as to the question of people drawing water from this main, and he advanced that to show that the owners of the estate had been very badly treated, that they paid for the eight-inch main to be made in Beaufort Street to serve the estate, and that others were withdrawing water from the main. I can assure the member that he is mistaken: no ratepayers in Perth are being supplied with water from the main put down at the cost of the estate. Any ratepayer drawing water from that portion of the reticulation of the city are drawing it from the four-inch main laid down parallel with the main laid down by the owners of the property, and it is improbable that the ratepayers of the city will be supplied with water from this main.

MR. HOLMES: Are there two mains in the one street?

THE MINISTER: Yes, side by side. One is the ratepayers main, the four-inch main, and the other is the main put down by Copley and Robinson, or with the expenditure of their money.

MR. TAYLOR: Does not the eight-inch main belong to the board?

THE MINISTER: Both mains belong to the board. There are certain other minor amendments which I will briefly draw the attention of the House to in connection with the measure. As the outcome of this agreement we have Clause 3, which is to prevent the Minister or board from making a mistake as my predecessors have done in this direction. It is to give the Minister power from time to time to enter into arrangements of this description. If individuals or companies owning estates want special expenditure in the way of the reticulation of their estates, the Minister may enter into arrangements with the owners to expend money which they provide, and enter into arrangements to repay the money under certain circumstances.

MR. LYNCH: You do not mean the Minister for Works as the predecessor who made the mistake?

THE MINISTER: I mean the Minister for Works and the Waterworks Board.

MR. G. TAYLOR: Do you mean that the Minister for Works or that the board made the mistake?

THE MINISTER: I mean that the board made the mistake, and subsequently my predecessor, Mr. Johnson, made a commendable arrangement to repay £500, although illegally.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Johnson was not the Minister for Works when the first illegality took place.

THE MINISTER: Mr. Johnson was the Minister who later on repaid the £500. I commend his action, and I should have commended him if he had repaid the £1,000.

MR. LYNCH: He simply took an honourable form of discharging an honourable debt.

THE MINISTER: Clause 3 gives power to the Minister to enter into arrangements of this sort. There is a safeguard that no such agreement shall confer or be deemed to confer on the owner of such land who has found the money for the purpose, any right or interest in the mains laid by the expenditure of the money, but the mains shall always be the property of the board or Minister. We have a slight amendment

of the Act, giving power to the board or Minister in the by-laws to provide for regulating the rent to be paid by consumers for meters supplied by the board. This is the custom and always has been the custom to charge meter rent; but there has been some ambiguity in the old Act, which makes it doubtful whether there is the power to do so. My predecessor, Mr. Johnson, inserted this clause very properly in the Bill.

MR. TAYLOR: Meters are always charged for.

THE MINISTER: Yes. In Clause 5 we provide for another slight amendment. It is a question of imposing penalties for breaches or neglect of Act, or any of the other Waterworks Acts. The Waterworks Amendment Act of 1889 has been omitted; and this clause has been inserted so that any breach or neglect of any of the provisions of the Waterworks Act of 1889 may come under the provisions of this Act. Clause 6 is very necessary. This gives the board power to levy a minimum rate to be prescribed by by-law upon any land not exceeding one pound. This has been found necessary because we have numerous services about, and we have numerous connections made to houses which do not pay more than from 6s. to 14s. per annum water rate, and the connection has cost anything from £1 to 30s., so that members will see at once it is unfair to expect two years' to two and a half years' or even three years' rates to be expended in first carrying water to the boundary of the property. It is proposed in cases of this description that a minimum rate will be made not exceeding £1. Almost any house of any reasonable size having water taken to the boundary and being supplied with water for domestic purposes would be fairly well treated if charged one pound per annum instead of paying anything between 5s. and £1. This regulation also applies as to vacant land. We have a great number of vacant blocks that pay small sums from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. I do not suppose anyone would suggest that it pays the Waterworks Board to collect a 1s. 6d. rate; it costs more in sending the notices out and in the collector calling. The sums are so paltry that in the majority of cases the ratepayers find it inconvenient to send in the money, and therefore they have to be run after by collectors. Hence I think members will agree that the board or the Minister, with the authority of the Executive Council, ought to be entitled to levy a minimum rate of 2s. 6d. or 5s. as the case may be, on such blocks of land—a rate sufficient at any rate to cover the cost of collection, and in some degree to enhance the revenue of the board.

MR. TAYLOR: A water supply increases the value of the land.

THE MINISTER: True. It goes without saying that a main carried past vacant land must considerably increase its value; and the proximity of any main to a house must undoubtedly increase the rental value of that house. I have no doubt that any tenant would willingly pay perhaps 4s. or 5s. more in weekly rent in order to have water laid on, rather than go to a well or have the water carted. So I think we shall be perfectly justified in passing Clause 6, leaving it to those in charge to see that justice is done. I may mention that this is the system under the Goldfields Water Supply Act; and Clause 6 is a copy of the section which gives that power.

MR. TAYLOR: It works satisfactorily

THE MINISTER: It works highly satisfactorily in respect of the goldfields water supply. The arrangement is, if I remember rightly, that the rate on a vacant block of land shall not be less than 10s. per annum, and not less than £1 on any house. I am not prepared to say what rate I should recommend for city property; but I confidently ask the House to give Cabinet the power under this clause to establish minimum rates. I feel sure that the House will pass the second reading; and seeing that the Bill was introduced by my predecessor in office, I take it there can be no objection from the other side of the House. Objections that were raised in the last Parliament were raised by my colleagues and friends, who were then in Opposition.

MR. BATH: I presume, because they were in Opposition.

THE MINISTER: Decidedly not. I think it is most unjust for the Leader of the Opposition even to insinuate such a thing. Surely members will recollect that the opposition was raised by the present Premier in his former capacity as leader of the Opposition; and he clearly explained his reasons. He feared that

some great injustice would be done to people who had lent money on a distinct understanding, and were then asked to take the sum of £500, or a little less than half the principal, in repayment. I think the Premier was justified.

MR. BATH: I must admit that the Premier used to be very ingenious in finding arguments, if he was not logical.

THE MINISTER: I think he was most logical on that occasion. If members are not satisfied, I may remind them that a select committee was appointed last session. If they think that another committee should sit on the Bill, I shall not object. But I think, after the explanations given *in extenso* last session, and after the perhaps fuller explanation I have been able to give this afternoon, members will be satisfied. The best thing we can do is to pass the Bill as it stands. I will supply copies of the new clauses. I beg to move the second reading.

On motion by MR. LYNCH, debate adjourned.

BILL—STATUTORY FEES.

DISCHARGE OF ORDER.

Order read for the second reading of the Bill.

THE PREMIER (Hon. C. H. Rason) moved:—

That the order of the day be discharged.

Question passed, the order discharged.

MOTION—ELECTORAL ROLLS COMPILATION, TO INQUIRE.

MR. T. WALKER (Kanowna) moved:

That a select committee be appointed to inquire into the method adopted for the compilation of the electoral rolls used at the recent general elections, and to suggest more effective means for their preparation.

He said: After the long debate we had yesterday on this subject, I do not think it necessary to traverse the same ground, and I shall therefore content myself with simply moving the motion. If there be any debate, I will speak in reply.

THE PREMIER (Hon. C. H. Rason): I do not intend to offer any opposition to this motion; rather do I welcome it. I, and I am sure every other member, will be prepared to welcome any suggestion that tends either to improve the compilation of the electoral rolls, or to provide more effective means for their preparation. I would suggest however to the mover that perhaps it would be advisable, and would make his motion more comprehensive, if instead of using the words "recent general elections" he made his motion apply to all general elections. The methods adopted at the recent general election are precisely the methods adopted at other elections. [MR. TAYLOR: Hardly.] And even if that were not so, the term "general elections" would comprise the recent general election.

MR. WALKER: You do not want to go back for ever.

THE PREMIER: On the contrary, I shall be prepared to go back as far as I possibly can. I think the hon. member might receive my suggestion in the spirit in which it is made. The term "recent general elections" will confine the inquiry to that one general election. I do not think the hon. member wishes that, or that any member wishes it. If a select committee were appointed, to make the inquiry as comprehensive as possible it is surely desirable to empower it to inquire into the methods adopted at other elections.

MR. TAYLOR: It would be going far enough if the committee were empowered to go back to all elections held under the present Electoral Act.

THE PREMIER: Yes; under the present Act. Surely, the more comprehensive the inquiry, the greater good may result. The mover, by adopting my suggestion, will achieve his own object. He will comprise the recent general election, and others also. If the words "recent general elections" stand, the scope of the inquiry will be restricted to the recent general election.

MR. WALKER: Is not the last general election the first under the present Act?

MEMBERS: No; the second.

THE PREMIER: Surely, if the committee wishes to inquire into all elections held under the present Act, it should have power to do so. I do not think it would be advisable to restrict it to one election only, when other elections have been held under this Act, which some of us, myself included, regard as defective. I do not intend to offer any objection to the appointment of the committee. If the mover will permit me, I

would suggest that he strike out the words "recent general," so that the motion will read "rolls used at the elections"; and insert after "elections" the words "held under the present Electoral Act." That will meet the case.

MR. WALKER: I consent to that alteration.

Motion amended accordingly, by consent.

MR. J. B. HOLMAN (Murchison): Will the select committee have full power to inquire into everything that took place at the recent elections? Yesterday the Minister for Mines (Hon. H. Gregory) complained that there had been much rowdyism at the booths in his electorate, whereby ladies were prevented from going to record their votes. If that is so, it is a disgrace to the people of that electorate. If it is not so, the Minister has libelled the people of those districts in which he states the rowdyism occurred. As far as I have seen at general elections, especially on the goldfields, where I have seen all the general elections held in my time in Western Australia, I say that respect has been shown to women, not only at polling booths, but in every part of the goldfields with which I have been connected.

THE PREMIER: Will you kindly inform me, sir, to what motion the hon. member is speaking?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member is hardly in order. The question before the House is that the motion as amended be agreed to. It is not permissible to debate that question.

MR. HOLMAN: Can I move a farther amendment?

MR. SPEAKER: You can.

MR. HOLMAN: I was going to ask whether the committee will have power to inquire into this question; and if not, I should move that such power be given to the committee.

THE PREMIER: The motion as amended will give all the power that the hon. member wishes the committee to have.

MR. HOLMAN: I asked for the Speaker's ruling on the point.

MR. SPEAKER: As the Premier has stated, the motion in its amended form will cover all that the hon. member seeks. He is not in order in speaking on the motion now, unless he wishes to move an amendment.

MR. TAYLOR: Am I to understand your ruling, Mr. Speaker, is that a member cannot speak to a motion before it is put, if he has not spoken to it previously? An hon. member may desire to speak and emphasise the necessity for the motion or otherwise.

MR. SPEAKER: I find that the hon. member will be in order in speaking to the motion.

MR. HOLMAN: Referring to the question of rowdyism at polling booths, either it is a disgrace to those electors referred to by the Minister for Mines (Hon. H. Gregory), or his remarks were a libel on those people when he stated that rowdyism existed at certain polling booths to such extent that ladies desiring to vote were prevented from going to the booths to record their votes. I should like the select committee to inquire and find out whether that is so, because the franchise having been given to female voters in this State, every facility should be provided for enabling them to go to polling booths and record their votes. In view of the statement made by the Minister for Mines, the best thing to do is to inquire whether the rowdyism he alleges to have existed really occurred; because if so, it may be necessary that we should provide separate booths in which females may recore their votes at elections.

MR. J. J. HOLMES (East Fremantle): On a point of order, this motion is for the appointment of a committee to inquire into methods to be adopted for the compilation of electoral rolls. Is the hon. member in order in referring to amendments that may be made in the Electoral Act? The matter referred to by him as to polling booths can be dealt with under a Bill for amending the Electoral Act, and I submit the hon. member is not now in order.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member's remarks are very wide of the question, in referring to what has taken place at polling booths. I must ask the hon. member to confine himself to the matter of the motion.

MR. HOLMAN: This motion deals with the Electoral Act, and if the select committee is not to have power to inquire into questions like that relative to the Electoral Act, I wish to move an amendment to give power to do so.

MR. WALKER: The motion is simply to give power to a committee to inquire into the compilation of the rolls.

MR. TAYLOR: I see now that the motion will not cover the ground desired to be covered by the member for Murchison. The resolution carried yesterday for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into electoral abuses will cover that ground; but I am doubtful whether the House will be in possession of that committee's report before the session closes.

MR. HOLMAN: I will leave the matter to some later date.

Question as amended put and passed.

Ballot taken, and committee appointed consisting of Mr. H. Brown, Mr. Lynch, Mr. Price, Mr. Scaddan, also Mr. Walker as mover; with power to call for persons and papers, and to sit during any adjournment of the House; to report on the 15th December.

ADJOURNMENT.

The business on the Notice Paper being disposed of, the House adjourned at 5·34 o'clock until the next afternoon.

Legislative Assembly,

Friday, 1st December, 1905.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 2·30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

QUESTION—PIPES (CAST-IRON) IMPORTED.

MR. BOLTON asked the Minister for Works: 1, Have Messrs. Clemenger & Monteith, contractors for the supply of cast-iron pipes to the Government, supplied any pipes which were imported from the Eastern States or elsewhere? 2, If so, by whose permission such pipes were supplied to the Government? 3, Is this not contrary to conditions of contract?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Yes. The contractors supplied from Victoria 150 8in. pipes out of a total quantity of over 11,000 pipes. 2 and 3, The pipes were urgently required by the Fremantle Water Supply in advance of the date at which they would have been supplied under the contract, and, at the request of the Department, and on the advice of the responsible officers, the necessary sanction was given.

QUESTION—IMMIGRANTS' NATIONALITY AND MEANS.

MR. WALKER asked the Premier: 1, What are the several nationalities to which the 54 third-class passengers belonged who arrived by the G.M.S. "Sharnhorst" on or about the 13th inst.? 2, Were any of the third-class passengers who landed at Fremantle possessed of any visible means of support? 3, Was any "educational" test applied to the foreigners? If so, by whom, and in whose presence was the test submitted? 4, Were any of the foreigners possessed of a trade? 5, Have any of these immigrants brought their wives with them?

THE PREMIER replied: The only five immigrants assisted by the Government consisted of one family and brought £200 with them, with more money to follow. The information asked for in regard to the other passengers landed at Fremantle is only obtainable from the Federal authorities.

QUESTIONS ON FEDERAL AFFAIRS.

A LIMIT.

MR. WALKER (without notice) asked the Premier: Is it not customary to get information in this House from the Federal officers, from some member of the Government? How is a member to inquire of the Federal Government in-