

this being amply sufficient to meet interest, sinking fund and other charges in connection with the old scheme. Prior to the commencement of the construction of the new works the board gave to the Minister a definite undertaking that they would, when the scheme was completed, take it over and levy the maximum rate of 3s. in the pound, it being necessary to do this so as to meet extra charges involved. When the Minister visited Wagin and officially handed over the new scheme, the board again voiced their intention to levy the high rate. But a question arose as to whether this could legally be done. The Solicitor General at first advised that it might be done, but there was an element of doubt. That being so, the Solicitor General was requested to draft a Bill which would make it possible for the Wagin board to levy a supplemental rate as from the 1st November, 1928, and incidentally it gives to all other water boards the same authority. I am advised by the Minister that so far as he knows there is in Western Australia no other water board in a position similar to that of the Wagin board. At a meeting of the board held on the 27th July the supplemental rate was struck and at the same time the board asked the Government that legislation be introduced to legalise their action. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. Lovekin, debate adjourned.

#### ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.56]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday the 3rd September.

(Question put and passed.)

*House adjourned at 4.57 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Thursday, 22nd August, 1928.*

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

### QUESTION—MAIN ROADS, STATE CONTRIBUTIONS.

#### *Charges to Local Authorities.*

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Works: 1, What amount has the State contributed on the basis of 15s. in the £ towards the making of main roads, apart from developmental roads, under the Federal Aid Roads Agreement for the past three years? 2, What amounts were contributed from revenue under the Federal Aid Roads Agreement for the years 1926-27, 1927-28, 1928-29? 3, What amounts were charged by the Main Roads Board to the local governing bodies under the Main Roads Act, for the years 1926-27, 1927-28, 1928-29?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, £209,158. 2, 1926-1927, £23,996; 1927-1928, £15,345; 1928-1929, £20,333. 3, 1926-1927, £4,702; 1927-1928, £7,449; 1928-1929, assessment not due. No payments have been received to date.

### QUESTION—FREMANTLE HARBOUR, REPORT.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Works: 1, Has he received the report of Mr. Rustat Blake on the Fremantle Harbour Scheme? 2, If so, when will it be available to the House? 3, If not, when does he expect to receive the report?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: The report was presented to Parliament yesterday.

### QUESTION—APPLE EXPORTS, INSPECTION.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1. Is he aware that grave complaints are being made by Eastern States buyers of Western Australian apples? 2. Is the inspection of fruit sent to Melbourne, Sydney, etc., carried out with the same care as with shipments for overseas? 3. In view of the importance of the Eastern States markets, will he take steps to ascertain the position and advise as to the method and responsibility of inspection?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, Yes. 2, No; as at the present time there is no Act under which inspection can be insisted on, but it is proposed to introduce during the coming session a Topping and Grading Bill, which will provide for the inspection of fruit shipped to the Eastern States. 3, Answered by No. 2.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY, PRESENTATION.

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to inform the House that, accompanied by the member for Forrest (Miss Holman), I waited upon His Excellency the Governor and presented the Address-in-reply, to which His Excellency has been pleased to deliver the following message to the Assembly:—

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly, I thank you for your expressions of loyalty to His Most Gracious Majesty the King and for your Address-in-reply to the Speech with which I opened Parliament (Sgd.) W. R. Campion, Governor.

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. North, leave of absence for two weeks granted to the member for Mt. Margaret (Hon. G. Taylor) on the ground of ill-health.

### BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

- 1, Agricultural Lands Purchase Act Amendment.
  - 2, Divorce Act Amendment.
- Transmitted to the Legislative Council.

### BILL—LAND AGENTS.

Report of Committee adopted.

### BILL—ROADS CLOSURE.

*Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS** (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [4.40] in moving the second reading said: This is a small Bill of a type that is usually introduced from time to time.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There is a copy of only one plan.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have a copy of the other plan and I will make it available to hon. members. The first road dealt with is Broome-st, York. It was originally set out as shown in brown on the litho and tracing that I have here for members to peruse. In order to straighten it, portion of the railway reserve was added to the street, as shown in red. The triangular portion on the opposite side, as shown in blue, is not required as a street and the York Municipal Council state it is of no use to anyone but the York Flour Milling Company, whose premises adjoin. The departmental officers have no objection to this part of the street being closed so that the land may be disposed of. Clause 3 of the Bill deals with a Bunbury matter. The Bunbury Municipal Council desire to erect a municipal power house in the position indicated on the litho, and partly on a disused portion of James-street. As a matter of fact, the power house is now in course of erection. The council propose to divert the street approximately as shown through the municipal endowment land adjoining. There is no departmental objection to the closure of that portion of the street that is shown in blue on the litho. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir James Mitchell, debate adjourned.

### BILL—PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

*In Committee.*

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; The Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—Short title and commencement:

Mr. LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That the following words be added:—"and shall apply only to the metropolitan area."

Last night I expressed the opinion that we should limit the scope of the Bill to the metropolitan area and I wish to test the feeling of the Committee on the point.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	11
Noes	..	..	..	..	23
<hr/>					
Majority against	..	..	..	..	12
<hr/>					

**AYES.**

Mr. Angelo	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Brown	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Doney	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Latham	Mr. North
Mr. Lindsay	

(Teller.)

**NOES.**

Mr. Chesson	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Collier	Mr. Millington
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Munster
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Pantor
Mr. Cowan	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Rowe
Miss Holman	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. Troy
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Mann	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Marshall	

(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 2—Interpretation:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: "Minister" is defined as "Minister for Works." It may not be convenient for him to act at all times, and it is usual in such measures to provide that "Minister" means the Minister in charge of the administration of the Act.

The Minister for Works: If anyone else were acting, it would apply to him.

Mr. SAMPSON: I move an amendment—

That after "building," in line 2 of the definition of "public building," the words "excepting those described as 'B,' 'C,' and 'D,' in the first and second schedules," be inserted.

I am anxious to have exempted halls, schools and other buildings in the country that are publicly owned and not carried on for private profit. At a later stage I propose to move to strike out the latter portion of the paragraph. Public buildings included in the three grades are those which do not come in Grade "A," which relates to theatres or other public buildings specially constructed for stage plays or cine-

matograph or other picture shows. I wish to obviate the possibility of a license fee being demanded each year in respect of comparatively small buildings which already are inspected by the local inspector of health.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister should consider the amendment. We propose to control public buildings and to collect considerable fees annually. Every sort of building that can be used, whether for a race meeting, cricket or football match or gambling saloon, will be included.

The Minister for Mines: Have you ever seen a football match played in a hall?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The definition will apply to grandstands, platforms, temporary structures or any enclosure. The Minister for Mines should study the Bill.

The Minister for Mines: Do not you think a grandstand should be inspected?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Grandstands will be inspected, but the measure provides for an annual license fee. If a grandstand will hold 1,000 people, it will have to be not only inspected but licensed, and the annual fee will be £10. Under the clause, all the small halls throughout the country and every grandstand or pavilion from which the public may view any sort of amusement will have to pay an annual license fee.

Mr. BROWN: In my district, which is typical of others in the country, many small buildings have been erected for the convenience of the people, who at the time of their erection had very little money. These structures are used for church or political purposes, or for social gatherings. I am sure the Government Architect would not grant a certificate for them because they do not come up to the standard, but it would be hard upon the local residents if they were not permitted to use the buildings. I am sorry the Minister will not restrict the operations of the Bill to municipalities only.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This amendment is an attempt to gain an end to which the Committee has just expressed its opposition. The real object behind it is to restrict the Bill to the metropolis. It is more necessary to have inspections of country buildings than of metropolitan buildings. The latter are more substantial and come more frequently under the eye of the officials. Moreover, the people in

Perth would soon complain if they had any reason to do so, whereas in the country that would not be so likely to occur. Buildings in the country are constructed mainly of wood, and therefore are more likely to catch fire. Many of them are also in a bad state of repair. All the buildings that have been erected in the last two years have been passed by the Public Works Department, and therefore come up to the required standard. The fee for country structures will be only a nominal one. Not one of these community halls will be charged more than £1. It is not worth while writing out a receipt for a lower sum than that. The Ambassadors, the Capitol, His Majesty's and other theatres will be charged up to £20 a year. We do not say that the inspections will pay us, or that the fees pooled together will do more than cover the cost. The member for Swan is not satisfied to make the metropolis pay for the country, as it would do under the Bill, but he objects to a fee of £1 for country halls. Ours is the only State in which fees of this kind are not charged, and they will not be nearly as high as those imposed in the other States. The fees have been kept low so that the owners of the halls will not pass on the extra charge. The buildings in many country towns will accommodate a large number of people. It cannot be contended that these should not be inspected. We have so far avoided loss of life through fires in buildings of this kind, and we should endeavour to keep our record clear in that respect.

Mr. Latham: All your inspections will not stop a fire.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, but we can take precautions to see that if there is a fire people have a chance to get safely out of the building. All the other conditions contained in the Bill are already in operation. The only new thing is the license. I cannot accept the amendment.

Mr. SAMPSON: No one objects to buildings being inspected.

The Minister for Mines: That is already being done from the health point of view.

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes, and there is no justification, therefore, for the imposition of fees, however small. Considerable expenditure will be involved in inspectors travelling all over the State to look at small halls. What could happen in a hall, say, at Barton's Mill or Sawyer's Valley that could be prevented by the visit of an inspector? The

Bill will apply also to mission halls that are used for various purposes. I hope the amendment will be carried.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister said the provision applied only to community halls.

The Minister for Works: No.

The Minister for Health: The Minister for Works mentioned the community halls spoken of by your friends.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There will be an annual fee. The Bill seeks to impose a considerable annual payment on many halls throughout the State. Halls in the country will not be inspected by a proper builder or architect each year, nor is that necessary. The highest fee under the Bill will not be £1. That fee will be charged in respect of a building used for public meetings and not seating more than 500 people. Beyond that capacity fees will be considerably higher. Thus the measure will work hardship. In the country more people will often be found in a hall than the number for which it is licensed. We endeavour to make the public believe that we are caring for them, but we do nothing of the sort. There is already an Act safeguarding the people as regards public buildings. The Bill proposes to extend the powers contained in that Act.

Mr. Kenneally: There should be protection for the lives of the people.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister for Health is surrendering powers—which are sufficient—to the Minister for Works, who considers them insufficient and therefore proposes the present measure. The only result will be the appointment of a few more officials, whom the people can ill-afford to pay. There is also the prospect of the construction of unnecessary works being entailed. If a hall is licensed for 150 people, someone will have to see that not more than 150 are in it at one time. I support the amendment.

Mr. LATHAM: The clause should include schools. Some of the schools built by the Public Works Department do not comply with its requirements.

The Minister for Works: Every school in the State will be inspected and passed under this clause.

Mr. LATHAM: That is not the case at present. There is also overcrowding in the

schools. Let us set our own house in order before dictating to others. It is suggested that the fee need not be considered; but nowadays it is almost impossible to make ends meet in regard to halls, what with the cuts taken by the Minister for Health and the Federal Government. For my district alone the fees under the Bill will amount to £200 a year. An annual inspection fee is out of all reason. If the Minister does not accept the amendment, I shall move for an inspection every three years instead of annually.

Mr. Davy: The measure does not say that the Government shall make an annual inspection, and so they will be collecting fees for nothing.

Mr. LATHAM: The only result of passing the measure will be to harass the people. Out back halls are built and maintained as the result of great sacrifices, and the Minister should show more consideration for the people concerned. The Bill might be described as one to raise £2,000 additional revenue annually. I have never heard of any complaints regarding halls in country districts. If the clause passes, entertainments will be held in unlicensed halls. We should not place on the statute-book a law of this kind which the people will feel tempted to break.

Mr. SAMPSON: The Minister knows that in most instances in which the Government have advanced money to help in the provision of halls in country districts, the people have great difficulty in providing the funds necessary to make repayments. I hope the Minister will agree to the deletion of the tax.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	15
Noes	..	..	..	23
				—
Majority against	..			8
				—

## AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Maley
Mr. Brown	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Davy	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Doney	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Latham	Mr. North
Mr. Lindsay	

(Teller.)

## NOES.

Mr. Chesson	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Collier	Mr. Millington
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Munale
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Cowan	Mr. Rowe
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Sleeman
Miss Holman	Mr. Troy
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Withers
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Marshall	

(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Will the definition of "public meeting" apply to a political meeting held in a private house?

The Minister for Works: First of all, the building where the meeting is held must be a public hall. Can you imagine a public meeting being held in a private house?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Such meetings are very often held in private houses in the country districts. Then again public meetings are held in hotels. Will the owners of such hotels and private dwellings commit an offence under this legislation if fees are not paid?

The Minister for Works: No, only public buildings will have to be licensed.

Mr. Davy: But under the definition of "public building," the Minister will see that it refers to any building where a public meeting is held.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course, I do not think the Minister intends to apply the legislation in that direction, but we have to realise that possibility.

The Minister for Works: The New South Wales Act has been in force for 20 years and it has a similar provision.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That does not affect the point I make.

Mr. Corboy: But you do not really consider that in the administration of the Act, anything of the sort you suggest would happen? You do not suggest the Minister would interfere with meetings in private dwellings?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The point is that if the definition be agreed to, the legislation could be applied as I suggest. Someone might get busy during the forthcoming election campaign.

The Minister for Works: If you think there is any fear of the home of a private individual being affected, you can move an amendment.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I move an amendment—

That at the end of the definition of "public meeting," the words "or any assemblage in a private dwelling" be inserted.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That at the end of the definition of "school," the words "and shall include Government schools" be inserted.

If we agree to the amendment, the departmental officials will have sufficient work ahead to keep them busy in putting the schools in the metropolitan area in order, to prevent them from troubling about the country area.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The Government will not punish themselves!

Mr. LATHAM: Probably they will not. The school in James-street is an absolute disgrace owing to overcrowding and general inconveniences.

The Minister for Works interjected.

Mr. LATHAM: It is so, and there is another school in Newcastle-street and another at Victoria Park to which the same remark can be applied.

Mr. SAMPSON: The amendment is desirable. In one school the ceiling is within 7 feet of the floor. The only ventilation is that provided by doors and windows. I will support the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I think the hon. member is inclined to be facetious when he moves an amendment such as this. He wants to see the Minister for Works take action against his own department.

Mr. Latham: I want to see you set an example to others.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Every Government school now complies with the Bill. The Bill will cover all schools. There is no exemption for Government schools. As I say, they already comply with all the conditions.

Mr. Latham: There is no annual inspection of Government schools.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There are periodical inspections. I cannot conceive that the amendment is seriously meant.

Mr. LATHAM: If, as the Minister says, the Government schools comply with the conditions in the Bill, then I say many of the agricultural halls also comply, and therefore there is no necessity to charge an annual fee for licenses.

Mr. DAVY: This would look like one law for the Government and another for private persons. Daily we have the spectacle of differential treatment of trams and motor buses. If one rides in a tram he is half smothered amongst the other passengers and has no chance of getting a seat, but if he rides in a motor bus and stands up, the proprietors of the service are prosecuted for overcrowding.

The Minister for Mines: I have ridden in overcrowded buses twice this week.

Mr. DAVY: About once a fortnight owners of motor buses are prosecuted for overcrowding. So it is by no means unusual to find the Government enforcing one law for their subjects and quite a different one for their own activities. Even if it were a fact that the amendment means that the Minister would have to prosecute himself, it is not suggested that he would initiate the prosecution.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause as previously amended put and passed.

Clause 3.—Application of this Part:

Mr. DAVY: Subclause 1 provides that the Governor may by proclamation apply this part of the Act to any public buildings named in the proclamation. That looks as if the proclamation may say, for instance, that this part is to apply to Hoyt's theatre or to the Prince of Wales theatre. That does not seem to me to be quite proper. The law should deal with classes of things, not with individual things. Perhaps it is the intention of the Minister to put this into operation against classes of buildings. I suggest we add "to such classes of public buildings as may be named in the proclamation."

The Minister for Works: That is the idea.

Mr. DAVY: The clause does not say so. I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of Subclause 1 "any" be deleted, and "such classes of" be inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. LATHAM: I should be glad if the Minister would tell us whether it is intended to restrict the application of the Bill to certain localities, or whether it is proposed to make it State-wide. It looks as though the Minister might put the Act into force only in certain parts of the State.

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS**: The idea is that we should proceed gradually, that we proclaim it first of all to cover theatres and picture shows in the metropolis, and then to the same type of building outside the metropolis. Subsequently, as the machinery got into working order, we would proceed to deal with smaller halls. We would not attempt to deal with all at once. That was the idea. That is why I accepted the amendment just now.

Mr. **CORBON**: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of paragraph (a) of Sub-clause 3 "exclusively" be struck out, and "principally" inserted in lieu.

I think I have the Minister's assurance that "principally" will be interpreted to mean that a building erected for the holding of public worship on the Sabbath will be regarded as a building used principally for that purpose, notwithstanding that on several nights during the week it may be used for other purposes.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. **SAMPSON**: I move an amendment—

That the following be added to stand as paragraph (d):—"To any building publicly owned and used otherwise than for private profit."

Mr. **KENNEALLY**: The amendment suggests that when a building is used for other than private profit the lives of the people who enter it are not to be considered. That is the big point to be determined when voting for or against the amendment. If it is essential to see that the lives of the people are properly protected, I do not think the question whether or not the building is privately or publicly owned should enter.

Mr. **Davy**: Or even whether or not it is a church.

Mr. **KENNEALLY**: I am with the hon. member there. If a building is used for people to congregate in, there should be some system by which we provide that it has the hall-mark of safety upon it. The people should have some guarantee under legislation that the building is safe for them to go into. I hope the amendment will not be agreed to.

Mr. **SAMPSON**: The buildings I refer to are inspected by a representative of the local authority. Further, this part of the Bill relates to the licensing of public buildings. A fee may be charged, when the plans

are submitted to the department, but it is surely unreasonable that a license fee should be charged each year thereafter for a small building where there is no possibility of injury through a balcony or second floor collapsing. There could be no danger such as would exist in a large public hall, because many of the buildings that would be exempted are only 30 x 40ft. or 30 x 50 ft., constructed of jarrah, unlined, and unceiled. Though exempted under this clause, they would still be subject to inspection.

Mr. **DAVY**: The member for East Perth has raised a sound point. I cannot imagine the draftsman intending to safeguard people attending a picture hall and not those attending a church.

Mr. **Latham**: There is not the danger with a church that there is with a cinematograph hall.

Mr. **DAVY**: What about schools?

Mr. **Latham**: We should not require them to be licensed.

Mr. **DAVY**: But Part II. of the Bill deals with overcrowding and with persons sitting or standing in public gangways.

Mr. **Panton**: I do not think churches are troubled with overcrowding.

Mr. **DAVY**: In some places they are. Prohibition of standing in public gangways would be to prevent the exits becoming blocked in the event of fire, and that is as important in a church as anywhere else.

The **Minister for Works**: Churches would be subject to that provision.

Mr. **DAVY**: But Part II. of the Bill deals with that prohibition.

The **Minister for Works**: All of them will be subject to Part IV. of the Bill.

Mr. **DAVY**: That deals with the specifications to be complied with before a building is constructed or extended, but there is no prohibition against people standing in gangways, except under Part II.

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS**: There is no intention of charging churches a license fee annually, but it is intended that they shall be subject to all the safety regulations.

Mr. **Davy**: I do not think you have achieved that. You have also exempted them from the regulation dealing with overcrowding.

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS**: The lives of people who congregate in churches, schools, universities, and colleges should be protected as much as the lives of people who attend theatres and picture shows. I

shall consider the point raised by the member for West Perth. The member for Swan is merely trying to gain the point at which he aimed from the outset. He is really opposed to the principle of the measure.

Mr. Latham: No, he is trying to protect the small halls.

Mr. SAMPSON: Since my amendment is not inconsistent with the balance of the subclause, the Minister might allow it to be inserted so that it will receive further consideration.

Mr. Kenneally: I prefer to turn it down and, if it is necessary, it can be inserted later.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause, as previously amended, put and passed.

Clause 4—Grades of public buildings:

Mr. SAMPSON: I have already endeavoured to get this principle amended. Perhaps at a later stage it might be more effectively urged that the schedule should be altered.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5 to 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—Buildings erected or completed after commencement of Act:

Mr. SAMPSON: Where a building was erected prior to the commencement of the measure and not in accordance with its provisions, would there be any right of appeal if the Minister refused a license?

The Minister for Works: That relates to Clause 7 which has already been passed.

Mr. SAMPSON: Authorities might differ as to a building erected. In the event of a dispute, perhaps it could be referred to the Architects' Association or Builders' Association.

Mr. Latham: But like all professional men, they disagree.

Mr. SAMPSON: Otherwise it might be impossible to utilise a large building simply because of an issue on which there was room for a difference of opinion.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is impossible for such a situation to arise. For the past two years the plans of every public building erected in the State have been approved by the Works Department and they comply with this measure.

Mr. Latham: Why has the clause been inserted?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It has been copied from another State. The provision could only apply to a building that had been in the course of construction for more than two years, and I do not know of any.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 9—agreed to

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

Clause 10—Issue and duration of license:

Mr. LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That in line 4 "one" be struck out, and "three" inserted in lieu.

Some members opposite have agreed it is unfair to ask that a license fee shall be paid every year. Some longer period than one year should be provided for.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Some people make a habit of altering buildings by blocking gangways, putting in partitions, and doing all manner of other things without regard for the law. If there are to be no inspections for three years, anything that is structurally bad will remain in that condition until it is inspected by the officer concerned. An annual license is a means of enforcing the law.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It can be cancelled at any time if there is anything wrong.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We want the right to issue the license annually in all cases where people have to submit to the control of the law. This amendment is another effort to reduce the fees. I will undertake that if it is found that the income from the Act is greater than is required to administer it, I will bring down amending legislation to reduce the charges. This is not a taxing machine.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is a damned nuisance anyway.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The fees set out in the Bill will be only sufficient to meet the cost of administration.

Mr. LATHAM: It would not be possible for the officers to inspect all small halls every year.

The Minister for Works: All the buildings will not be visited in the first year.

Mr. LATHAM: The amendment will mean that the Minister can make annual inspections if he so desires. The clause pro-



vides only for the granting of a license for a term not exceeding a certain period.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	15
Noes	..	..	..	..	17
Majority against	..	..	..	..	2

## AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Brown	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Davy	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Doney	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Latham	Mr. North
Mr. Lindsay	(Teller.)

## NOES.

Mr. Chesson	Mr. Millington
Mr. Collier	Mr. Munster
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Cowan	Mr. Rowe
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Sleemab
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Withers
Mr. Marshall	Mr. Wilson
Mr. McCallum	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 11 to 13—agreed to.

Clause 14—Fees for licenses:

Mr. SAMPSON: I move an amendment—

That in Subclause (1) the words "or renewal" be struck out.

Since the plans of all buildings must be submitted to the Works Department, there is no justification for requiring the annual renewal of a license. Most of the big theatres in Perth will pay a license fee of £20 a year. This may be all right for them, but it is unfair to ask suburban theatres to pay at the same rate. Many of the suburban halls may be capable of seating a thousand people but are generally only 25 per cent. full. They are not paying their way, and the burden it is proposed to place upon them is an unreasonable one. If they did make profits the Government would benefit through the income tax that would be paid. In all the circumstances there is no justification for an annual fee. No alterations or repairs can be effected to any building without the approval of the building surveyor or the local authority. The effect of the annual fee on small halls would be vexatious. The Bill really proposes

taxation of a special class. I hope the Minister will accept the amendment. Alterations and repairs can now be insisted upon by the Health authorities.

Mr. STUBBS: I support the amendment. Why should the Minister desire to place a heavy burden on scores of people outback who do not attend a picture show once in two months? Outback halls are mainly used for dances and concerts, and should carry no burden beyond the entertainment tax.

Mr. RICHARDSON: In view of the fact that sufficient distinction is not made, I, too, support the amendment. In my district there are three picture halls, each with seating accommodation for 750 people. One of these runs three nights, and another two nights, per week. An annual license fee of £20 is too heavy for such undertakings.

Mr. SAMPSON: When a somewhat similar measure was before the House in 1921, Mr. Angwin said there was no necessity for inspections, because every road board, health board and local authority had a qualified inspector, and thus it was a waste of money for the Government to send out officials to make inspections. Mr. Angwin complained that the full charge for the original inspection would not satisfy the then Government. He also objected to a fee of £10 for the mere annual registration, and to a fee for inspection of electrical appliances. Further, Mr. Angwin said that inspection fees belonged to the local authorities, and not to the Government. On the same Bill I pointed out that in small centres of population the upkeep of a hall represented a heavy expense, and that inpection, if required in such cases, could be done by the local authority for a small fee.

Mr. LINDSAY: The amendment has my support, especially in view of Mr. Angwin's able speech. The annual fee would mean a payment of £10 for inspection by many halls in my electorate having seating accommodation for between 500 and 750. Many of these halls would have to pay that annual license fee although the charge for hire of the hall was only £2 or £3 per night and the hall was used on only one night per week. If there were any obstruction within three years there would be that obstruction within 12 months, and inspectors could not be present all the time. Any additions that were made would have to be in accordance

with the building regulations of the local governing body. I cannot understand why the Minister has introduced the Bill at all. There is no necessity for it from the standpoint of the country districts.

Mr. LATHAM: A sufficiently strong case has been made out in support of the contentions of the member for Swan. I can understand a charge being levied for the inspection of plans and specifications, but I cannot understand why a renewal fee should be imposed. I think the Minister should give some consideration to this point and meet the wishes of the country members.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 8.5 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 27th August, 1929.

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

### QUESTION—LAND ACT, RESIDENTIAL CONDITIONS.

Mr. LATHAM asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Have the residential conditions under Section 68 of the Land Act been altered? 2, If so, under what authority? 3, If by regulations, when will they be tabled?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (for the Minister for Lands) replied: 1, Yes. 2, Section 25 of the Land Act, 1898. 3, Answered by No. 2.

### QUESTION—LICENSING BENCH.

Mr. MANN asked the Premier: The term of appointment of the Licensing Bench having expired on 13th inst., what is the intention of the Government with regard to the position?

The PREMIER replied: The term of appointment of the Licensing Bench has been extended until the 31st day of December, 1929.

### QUESTION—STATE SAWMILLS, FIREWOOD.

Mr. CORBOY asked the Minister for Trading Concerns: 1, Has any arrangement or agreement been entered into whereby the whole or the major part of the production of firewood from State Sawmills will be sold to one firm? 2, Is any such arrangement or agreement under consideration?

The MINISTER FOR TRADING CONCERNS replied: 1, No. 2, No.

### BILLS (4)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Electoral Provinces.
- 2, State Savings Bank Act Amendment.
- 3, Fair Rents.
- 4, Agricultural Products.

### BILL—LAND AGENTS.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

### BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR GOLDFIELDS AND AGRICULTURAL WATER SUPPLIES (Hon. J. Cunningham—Kalgoorlie) [4.43] in moving the second reading said: This or a similar Bill has been before the House on at least two occasions during the