LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Tuesday, September 1, 1953.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir Walter Duncan) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTION.

OBJECTIONABLE COMIC PAPERS.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—Last session I asked the Chief Secretary whether the Government would consider setting up a censorship board to deal with unsavoury comics which are coming into the country and are being read by young children.

The PRESIDENT—The honourable member must ask his question or seek leave to make a statement.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—In deference to your ruling, Sir, I ask leave to make a statement with a view to asking a question.

Leave granted.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—The Chief Secretary intimated that the Government would consider the matter. Has any further action been taken to establish a censorship board?

The Hon. A. L. McEWIN—This problem has received much consideration and was the subject of discussion at the last meeting of Premiers. These publications mainly come from overseas and the only control by the State that does operate is that exercised by the police. This problem is not as simple as that associated with films and other forms of entertainment which are advertised before they are shown and which can be examined for suitability by the Minister who has power to act. Nothing is known about these publications until they are actually before the public: there is no preliminary warning. Consideration is still being given to the matter and I think that some of the difficulties are being met in the Police Offences Bill. The problem is constantly before the Government, which is seeking some remedy.

PUBLIC PURPOSES LOAN BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 27. Page 536.)

The Hon. R. R. WILSON (Northern)—Each year the Public Purposes Loan Bill affords members an opportunity to comment on many matters because the ambit of the Bill is extremely wide. Members always examine the measure to see if their districts are provided for and to ascertain what slice of the loan will be allotted to them. It is a coincidence that no one ever tries to obtain less expenditure but always seeks more. I appreciate the Treasurer's position because he has to make ends meet and balance the budget. That is a colossal undertaking. It is somewhat similar to that confronting the manager of a company or the owner or manager of a farm. Under this Bill an amount of £25,118,000 may be borrowed. With our increasing population it is not to be wondered that each year there is a steep increase in loan expenditure. Great progress has been made in this State for a number of years not only because of a stable Government in power but because of good seasons and good prices. It is proposed that more amenities and privileges shall be provided in the country and that is highly commendable. The farmer is the national barometer and if he is prosperous the nation is prosperous. Progress will continue only if amenities are provided for country people. There have been many warnings that we are entering, or have entered, a buyers' and not a sellers' market to which we have been accustomed for many years.

Of the sum of £170,000 for land £5,000 is provided for land repurchased for closer settlement and £165,000 under the Crown Lands Development Act. Agriculture is the backbone of this country and I have always advocated greater production from established farms for I believe it is possible with modern methods to expand considerably the production from farms which we thought had reached their limit years ago. I congratulate the Government on its land development scheme. In another place on August 18 the member for Stuart, Mr. Riches, asked whether any land had been purchased in recent years for civilian settlement and whether it was available for that purpose. The Minister of Lands replied that there was a considerable area in the South-East which had been bought some time ago for war service land settlement, but which had been rejected by the Commonwealth Government. He went on:—

The department is now investigating the land with a view to developing the area under the Crown Lands Development Act, which would then make it available not only for soldier settlement but for civilian settlement as well. At the moment I have no land in mind for the particular purpose.

Under the War Service Land Settlement Scheme 738 men have been settled on irrigation and dry lands. A further 100 have been

selected and it is expected that they will receive their blocks before long as the department is making allotments at the rate of about three a week. However, another 400 approved and classified applicants are, as it were, in cool storage, and they have been advised that it is unlikely that they will get land because, as far as can be seen, it is not available. The average age of these men would be 35 to 36 years. I hope that the Government will honour its promise—as I am sure it will if it is at all possible—and that these men will be given blocks before any civilian settlement scheme is launched, for in my opinion we have ample good land which could be developed.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—The honourable member still believes in civilian settlement after returned soldiers are satisfied?

The Hon. R. R. WILSON—Yes. In view of this acute demand for land, some action must be taken against investors who are holding land out of production.

The Hon. F. T. Perry—What do you mean by investors?

The Hon. R. R. WILSON—I mean those who have sunk surplus cash in land for the purpose of avoiding taxation.

The Hon. Sir Wallace Sandford—The Federal land tax is supposed to look after that.

The Hon. R. R. WILSON—There is no Federal land tax today, but I cannot see that its abolition has made any difference.

The Hon. S. C. Bevan—Then the honourable member should subscribe to Labor's policy to prevent reaggregation of land.

The Hon. R. R. WILSON—I heard the Leader of the Opposition's speech at Peterborough and I do not agree with all he said, although some of his ideas had merit. Australia has a population of 8,500,000, but to our immediate north there are 1,200,000,000 land-hungry Asiatics who naturally have designs on this country. Can we blame them if we do not develop our land? I believe it possible to more than double our population within 10 to 12 years.

Quite a lot of criticism has been levelled against the item of £4,200,000 for the Electricity Trust, but on the other hand critics are always crying out for decentralization of our population. South Australia's population is 751,000, of whom 459,000, or 61.8 per cent, live in the metropolitan area. If we expect people to leave the city we must provide comparable amenities in the country to those to which they have been accustomed, and I think that electric light and power is perhaps the greatest boon it is possible to give country people. Although the trust made a profit of £18,000 last year the Treasurer said that it was not its policy to make profits although any that were made would go to the benefit of the consumers. An Act was passed two years ago to provide for the extension of electricity services to the sparsely populated parts of the State and I know that it is the Government's intention to carry out this work. We are looking forward to further extensions of electric light and power. The new power station at Port Lincoln is almost completed and the trust has already taken electricity to Tumby Bay, 35 miles away, and to Cummins, 41 miles away, and we are hoping that before another 12 months has elapsed it will have been given to that important district of Yeelanna. Mr. Bardolph made much of the £700,000 for the Leigh Creek coalfield. At present 56 per cent of the total electricity produced is being generated with Leigh Creek coal, and if it were not for the bottleneck in the narrow gauge railway another 4,000 to 5,000 tons of coal could be brought down each week, which would offset the high cost of imported coal. The bulk of the £700,000 is for the construction of Aroona dam and no-one can deny that water is the very greatest asset for people who live at Leigh Creek with its intense heat and dust throughout most of the year. When that dam is completed Leigh Creek will probably be self-supporting with regard to vegetables and meat, for I do not know of any other area which will respond more than this if it has water. A new Australian at Leigh Creek is producing, with the aid of sewage refuse, trees which are suited to the climate. If ample water is available I do not think it is impossible for the coalfield to become self-supporting.

I am extremely pleased that £3,096,000 is provided for expenditure on the production of uranium, for this investment will make South Australians realize their stake in the uranium field. We are led to believe—and I subscribe to the opinion—that the production of power will be revolutionized within another 10 or 15 years, and it is important that a certain amount of Loan money should be spent on plant for uranium production.

The Hon. F. J. Condon—What industries are likely to be opened up as a result of such production?

The Hon. R. R. WILSON—At Port Pirie a tremendous plant is being erected. I have seen earth being carted there and foundations

being laid, and I realize the benefits of such an industry to Port Pirie and to South Australia. I wish to refer to the problem of South-Eastern drainage. A few weeks ago, in response to many complaints from the South-East, as chairman of the State Land Settlers' Committee I inspected the Eight Mile Creek area, and members representing the Southern district in this Chamber have said that they would not object to my referring to the conditions which I saw in that area. I inspected the area when it was in its virgin state, and I have never seen such dense tea-tree and other herbage. It is a great credit to the Lands Development Executive that the land has been brought into production as soon as it has been, but to convert such virgin land, which is all pure peat, cannot be done in a few years for excessive water is the principal problem. I strongly advocate the widening and deepening of the drains, because, as the peat is consolidating, the land is sinking. Since I visited the area I believe a gang of men has been engaged in cleaning up the partially blocked drains. Hundreds of acres of land are covered with water from 12 to 18 inches deep, and it was impossible to go into a paddock without wearing knee-high rubber boots. In one part the tractor in which we were travelling became hopelessly bogged and stock frequently become bogged. I would be afraid of walking through many parts for fear of becoming bogged. One settler, who has to walk through mud 18 inches deep on the way to his dairy, on one occasion became bogged down and had to get out of his rubber boots in order to free himself. I have no doubts about the future of this country, for it is some of the most fertile dairying land in Australia.

The Hon. R. J. Rudall—It has some of the best soil in Australia.

The Hon. R. R. WILSON—There is no doubt about that. The settlers are afraid to light fires because the peat may burn for an indefinite period. The settlers have no source of revenue other than dairying, and, consequently, many are unable to meet their commitments. Some help must be given to them either by way of lower rentals or deferring their commitments. A number have said that, if their commitments were deferred for a number of years, free of interest, they could meet them eventually. That shows that there may be worse problems in excessively watered country than in drought country. In the summer the country is a picture and there is nothing wrong with it, but I would not like to be in the position of the settlers at this time of the year. As a result of my report the Minister is sending the Director and other officers to the area next week, and I intend to go with them.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—What would be the purpose of their visiting the area?

The Hon. R. R. WILSON—To see if things are as bad as is claimed by settlers. I think the visit will do much good. I went down there not as a member of Parliament, but on behalf of the committee of which I have the honour to be the chairman. I have to make such an inspection when asked to do so in my official capacity. I support the Bill.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN (Central No. 1)—This measure is important to all members and indeed to the whole State, especially in view of the total amount involved. The sum of £27,618,000 has been provided for general loan expenditure, to which must be added £4,500,000 which is to be made available under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. Last year the loan expenditure totalled £29,019,000, although I believe all this money was not spent. I feel concerned—as I feel other members do—at the recent steep increases in loan expenditure and about the actual real value being obtained from it. To what extent has the earning capacity of the State been increased and what development has been promoted by such huge expenditure? Unfortunately, little information is given to members on such matters as the development which has taken place at Radium Hill during the last 12 months. Members have been told that a treatment plant is to be established at Port Pirie, but little information has been received about it. In a roundabout way members hear that development is progressing rapidly on Kangaroo Island, but we are never fully informed. Surely Parliament is entitled to reports on the progress being made by expenditure of loan money.

The Hon. E. H. Edmonds—Don't you read departmental reports?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—I have previously complained that if members want information they must read it in the daily press. I criticize the lack of information supplied in Parliament. I believe Parliament is supreme and when we are discussing the expenditure of huge sums of money we should be informed of the various proposals and not have to rely on reports in the daily press for that information.

The Hon. R. J. Rudall—Would you call a departmental report an outside source?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—No, and I have not referred to departmental reports. Information should be available about how the loan money is being spent. The Loan Estimates are worthy of careful and serious consideration, and I do not agree that because this Bill has been passed in another place we should be satisfied. This Chamber has a grave duty to perform in discussing measures of this nature. An amount of £1,300,000 is to be expended on afforestation and timber milling. Last year the amount was £1,100,000, but apparently portion of the proposed expenditure will be for the erection of a new mill at Mount Gambier which, when completed, will be handling approximately 35,000,000 super feet of logged timber.

The Hon. F. T. Perry—Where did you get that information?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—I read that in various reports. It bears out my contention that if a member wants information he will not receive it in Parliament. It is pleasing that the Government milling operations are so satisfactory. I believe that the experimental and development stages of this undertaking are past and that when the Mount Gambier mill is in full operation it will be self-supporting. The milling industry has grown considerably and the Mount Gambier mill should greatly increase returns. An amount of £5,350,000 is provided under the heading "Engineering and Water Supply." Of that, £175,000 is to be spent on River Murray weirs, dams and locks. Last year the total amount provided was £4,000,000. I hope that the increased expenditure will not only assist water conservation in country districts but will hasten the construction of the South Para reservoir and relieve the water position of the metropolitan area.

There is an urgent need for extending sewerage services in some suburban areas, including Croydon. Residents have complained that, after building in a residential area, they have applied to be connected with sewerage but have been informed that the mains are overloaded and that it may be some time before they are connected. Residents were compelled to install septic tanks at considerable cost. On March 26, 1952, Mr. T. McCreight of 29 Charron Road, Croydon Extension, received the following reply from the Engineering and Water Supply Department:—

I wish to advise that this road is outside the present drainage area and cannot be drained back to the nearest sewer in Pym Street. These sewers are too shallow for further extension in a northerly direction against the natural fall of the land and as a result, properties in Croydon Park Extension will have to be served from a separate drainage system. At the present time a comprehensive sewerage scheme for the locality is being investigated, but if this scheme is approved it is probable that three or four years will elapse before the work will be undertakean.

On August 5, 1952, I made representations to the Minister of Works on behalf of Mr. F. Southgate, an ex-serviceman, who had built his own home and expected to have drainage connected. He had been informed that it could not be done. On September 16 I received the following reply:—

It is understandable that Mr. Southgate would not desire to go to the expense of installing a septic tank system as stated in your letter "perhaps only for a limited period." For his guidance it can be stated that plans for sewers to serve Croydon North will be prepared but the area in question is of considerable size and on present-day figures the cost is certain to exceed £30,000 and would necessitate a statutory inquiry by the Public Works Standing Committee. It can therefore be seen that it is unlikely that sewers would be available for Mr. Southgate's allotment for some years and in these circumstances he would be well advised to proceed with the installation of a septic tank which would give satisfactory service until the sewers can be made available.

After I had received an application signed by many residents in that area asking for sewer connections, on January 9, 1953, I made representations to the Minister and he replied:—

A scheme has been designed for the Croydon Park area (including Shirley Avenue). The expenditure necessary to implement this scheme at present-day costs would be approximately £75,000 and, therefore, as the cost is in excess of £30,000, this work could not lawfully be proceeded with until the proposal has been reported upon by the Public Works Committee. Full details of estimates, revenue, etc., will be available shortly and this matter will then be placed before Cabinet with a view to referring the proposal to the committee. No undertaking can be given at present as to when the scheme will proceed as this will depend upon the nature of the committee's report, the economic conditions ruling at the time the report is received, and the relative urgency of this work compared with other undertakings. I will say, however, that the Government fully realizes the value of this important service, particularly where natural drainage is not good, and that the Croydon Park sewerage proposal can be assured of sympathetic consideration when a report has been received from the committee.

From the last sentence I could have assumed that the matter had been referred to the Public Works Committee for inquiry and report, but up to the present that has not been done.

At Islington there is an open sewer drain extending from behind the Islington railway station to the treatment plant. A housing area has been opened in this locality and there are many young children in the vicinity of that open drain which is only covered where it passes beneath the Islington Road. My attention has been drawn to the fact that children are playing on the edge of this drain and members can easily visualize what would happen if a child fell in. If it is impossible to cover the drain completely—and I see no reason why it should be impossible—surely there should be some means of preventing children playing in this vicinity. All these things are worthy of more attention by members; we do not hear enough of them when we are dealing with expenditure of these vast sums of money.

The Hon. F. T. Perry—But that was done long ago.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—The drain has been there for many years, but I am suggesting that out of this £5,000,000 which is now being provided it should surely be possibly to rectify some of these anomalies. A further sum of £600,000 is to be made available for the Municipal Tramways Trust for capital works such as the rehabilitation of workshops and servicing depots and the restoration of roads. I do not desire to weary members by reiterating what I have said previously regarding the Tramways Trust administration, but I am wondering how much longer the State Government is to be called on to pour money down this drain. It should have had the courage to take over the whole administration when it had the opportunity last year.

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—The whole transportation system of the State.

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—Yes, it should all be under one authority as that is the only way by which we can hope to eliminate these losses.

The Hon. E. Anthoney—Could we have saved money that way?

The Hon. S. C. BEVAN—I think we could have saved a great deal and the longer the present system is carried on the further into the mire it will get and the more money will the Government be called upon to subscribe in order to keep the trams running. The former trust's policy of increasing fares had the effect of driving patronage from the trams and resulted in a loss instead of an increase in revenue. I conclude by expressing the hope that serious consideration will be given to the matters I have raised and that the anomalies I have mentioned will be rectified.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

WILD DOGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. R. J. RUDALL (Attorney-General)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The Act provides a scheme under which rates are imposed on land in pastoral areas for the purpose of securing the destruction of wild dogs. The rates are paid into a fund called the Wild Dogs Fund and are subsidized by the Treasurer up to an amount not exceeding £4,000 a year. The maximum rates which may be imposed is 1s. per square mile of ratable land. The fund is applied by the Treasurer in payments for tails and scalps of wild dogs killed on lands which are ratable under the Act or on Crown lands within pastoral areas.

It is also provided by section 9 that advances may be made to the fund from the general revenue but the total amount so advanced at any time is not to exceed £2,000. The purpose of this provision is to provide moneys for the fund if at any time the amount in it is insufficient to meet current requirements. It has become apparent that, at times, the fund has been in a position where it could be in difficulties to meet the claims amde under the Act and this was the case in October of that year when the position of the fund was as follows:—

	£	£
Amount available Wild Dogs Fund at 30/9/52		2,256
Tails and scalps presented to 30/9/52 but not paid for ..	769	
Estimated amount for cost of management, freight, etc., to be charged prior to 31/12/52 ..	350	
		1,119
Balance available to meet bonus payment between 1/10/52 and 13/3/53		£1,137

The number of tails and scalps presented was not as high as in the previous year and the fund was able to meet the claims made against it though it was necessary to borrow money in order to do so, but had the number of scalps presented not dropped it is clear that the fund would not have been able to meet its liabilities even after borrowing up to the maximum of £2,000 prescribed by the Act. The number of claims fluctuates widely from year to year. For example, in 1950-1951, 6,667 scalps were presented for payment, whereas

13,384 were presented in the following year.

In order, therefore, that the fund should always be in a position to meet claims which can be reasonably expected to be made, consideration has been given to increasing the maximum rate which may be imposed under the Act and to increasing the amount which may be advanced under section 9. The Stockowners' Association of South Australia has been consulted in the matter and agree with the proposals in the Bill.

Clause 2 increases the maximum rate which may be imposed under the Act from 1s. to 1s. 6d. per square mile of ratable land. Each additional rate of 3d. per square mile produces approximately £2,000 so that, if the full increased rate proposed by the clause were imposed, additional revenue of £4,000 would be produced.

Clause 3 amends section 9 to provide that the maximum amount which may be advanced by the Treasury to the fund at any time is to be increased form £2,000 to £4,000. The amounts dealt with by section 9 are, as previously stated, advances only and are required to be repaid from time to time from the fund as occasion offers. The Bill does not make any alteration in the amount of the Government subsidy to the fund under section 8 and which is on a pound for pound basis not exceeding £4,000 in any calendar year.

The whole purpose of the Bill is to enable the fund to be kept financial. The persons mainly concerned are repaid by the Stockowners' Association and they realize that this extra rate is needed. The maximum will not be imposed unless it is necessary but it is quite obvious that these provisions are essential.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON secured the adjournment of the debate.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 27. Page 529.)

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH (Central No. 1)—The essence of this Bill is to bring the sellers of cream under the same provisions as apply to those who treat or sell milk. The Metropolitan Milk Supply Act provides that the holder of a milk producer's licence or a milk treatment licence and the premises upon which he is licensed are to be subject to section 27 of the Food and Drugs Act. However, this section applies only to the sale of cream whereas the Metropolitan Milk Supply Act applies to both milk and cream. The Bill, therefore, extends the provisions of the Food and Drugs Act to include the sale of cream with a view to eliminating the danger of contamination. I have, therefore much pleasure in supporting the proposal.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 27. Page 538.)

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Midland)—The purpose of the Bill is to write back into the Health Act original sections 90 to 94 which were deleted on the passing of the Noxious Trades Act in 1943. Section 89 will give power to the local board of health, if it is of the opinion that any trade is injurious to the health or is offensive to any inhabitants of that area, to institute summary proceedings against the person by or on whose behalf the trade or business is carried on. It is important to realize the set-up of the Noxious Trades Act, which provides that certain areas in any State may be declared noxious trades areas. Up to the present the only areas which have been declared are those coming within the generally understood definition of "metropolitan area." If anybody wishes to establish a noxious trade in such an area, he must secure a licence to do so. If he is unable to secure that licence he cannot carry on that trade. The proposed amendment will mean not that the local board will have power to prohibit the establishment of a noxious trade in the area controlled by the local board, but that the board will have power to institute proceedings against the person establishing such noxious trade to see that he carries it on efficiently, properly, and as effectively as is consistent with the nature of the trade. It appears that, although the Bill does not take the matter as far as it is taken by the Noxious Trades Act in the metropolitan area, it will protect the health of the country people.

New section 90 provides for action against any person who keeps an accumulation or deposit of offensive matter on his premises longer than is necessary for the actual trade or business being carried on, and imposes a penalty not exceeding £20. This, too, appears to be a desirable provision. The amendment to section 123 relates to the matter of drains and sanitary requirements of houses which are outside a municipality. There are numerous towns in district council areas not covered by

the Building Act in which a large amount of building is going on, and it is felt that the question of the installation of ventilation, drains, and sanitary requirements should be put on a proper basis. Clause 3 seeks to do that. Whereas the Act at present requires that plans shall be lodged before the occupation of a house, clause 3 provides that plans for these drains must be approved before the construction of the house is commenced. That is a commonsense provision which will help improve the standard of drains and sanitary arrangements in country areas, therefore, I support the Bill.

The Hon. A. J MELROSE (Midland)—I do not suppose that any honourable member or any deliberative body would lightly oppose any Bill the aim of which was to improve the living conditions and sanitary arrangements of inhabitants; but members should take care that they do not use a sledge hammer to crack a small nut. I am not sure that the Bill approaches the subject in the most ideal manner. The problem of the accumulation of offensive matter must be well covered by the present powers of local boards of health, which have power to maintain slaughter houses, rubbish tips, and many other projects and to insist upon their being kept in a clean and hygienic condition. I feel it would not be difficult for a local board of health, under its present powers, to insist that an accumulation of offensive matter should be cleaned up. I understand that this amendment is aimed partly, if not wholly, at the position which has developed in some country townships largely because of the proximity of market yards, and in this regard I think it would be wise to extend the powers of the local board of health somewhat in the direction of the Noxious Trades Act so that it would definitely have power to prevent the establishment of any trade or business which might be expected to be offensive to residents of that town during the natural course of its evolution. It would not be fair to empower anybody to institute summary proceedings against a business established years ago with the goodwill of the local inhabitants of a previous generation. Permission to establish a business having been obtained from the local authority, people who later build their houses so close to it that it can be reasonably suggested that they will be offended by it can be deemed to have done so at their own risk, and those owning the offensive business should not be called upon to shift it. Because of that, I do not think the provisions of the Bill are the best way in which to deal with the matter, for it would be better to give the local board of health power to prevent the establishment of something rather than merely to give it power to control or eradicate it once it is established. Because local boards of health consist of prominent residents who have been elected by the ratepayers, such problems as I have mentioned should be capable of amicable solution. With those few remarks I support the Bill.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

SOUTH-EAST DEEP SEA PORT.

The SPEAKER laid on the table the interim report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works on a deep sea port in the South-East.

AUCTIONEERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. A. L. McEWIN (Chief Secretary)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

The principal purpose of this Bill is to enable a company carrying on an auctioneering business to hold a licence to do so. The Auctioneers Act, 1934, provides for the licensing of auctioneers and for the registration of auctioneers' clerks under clerks' licences held by auctioneers. Auctioneers' licences are obtained by production to the Treasury of a certificate of fitness given by a local court and payment of a fee. Two kinds of auctioneer's licence are obtainable, a town licence and a country licence. A clerk's licence may be obtained by an auctioneer from the Treasury on production of a fee, and from time to time the auctioneer may register the name of a clerk under the licence.

At present, where a company is carrying on a business as an auctioneer the practice under the Act is for the principal auctioneers of the company to hold auctioneers' licences and for the clerks employed as auctioneers by the company to be registered under auctioneer's clerk's licences held by the principal auctioneers. The problem has arisen that, there being no provision in the Auctioneers Act for the refund of fees or the transfer of licences when an auctioneer dies or ceases to carry on business, on the death or retirement, resignation or dismissal of a principal auctioneer employed by a company the company has to take out a new licence for the successor of the

deceased principal auctioneer and new clerk's licences without receiving any refund of fees. As the fee for a town auctioneer's licence is £25 and for a country auctioneer's licence and a clerk's licence £10, the loss incurred by reason of the death or termination of employment of a principal auctioneer can be considerable. The attention of the Government was drawn to this question by a case which occurred last year. A principal auctioneer employed by a large company died and the company forfeited the sum represented by the unexpired term of his auctioneer's licence and clerk's licences.

The Government believes that it is inequitable that fees should be forfeited in this way, and accordingly is introducing this Bill to enable companies to hold licences which will, by reason of a company's continued corporate existence, solve their problem. If companies are to hold licences, it is desirable to make a number of alterations to the Act and, among other things, if companies are to be enabled to hold licences as auctioneers the Act should provide that they should be compelled to do so.

Clause 3 amends section 3 of the principal Act, which requires a person carrying on business or acting as an auctioneer to hold a licence as an auctioneer under the Act, or persons acting in the capacity of an auctioneer at a sale by auction to be registered as auctioneers' clerks. New subsections (1) and (1a) to (1d) make more complete and appropriate provisions dealing with the same matter. The effect of new subsection (1) is to require any person or company carrying on business as an auctioneer to hold an auctioneer's licence. Subsection (1a) requires a person acting as an auctioneer at a sale by auction to be registered as an auctioneer's clerk if he is not licensed as an auctioneer. New subsections (1) and (1a) will require a company carrying on an auctioneer's business to hold an auctioneer's licence, but will not require the principals of a company to be licensed, though they will be required to be registered as the company's clerks if they actually conduct auction sales. New subsection (1b) and (1c) prohibit persons holding country licences and their clerks from carrying on business or acting as auctioneers within the city of Adelaide or 10 miles thereof. New subsection (1d) makes failure to comply with the provisions of subsections (1) and (1a) to (1c) an offence and provides for a maximum penalty of £100. This provision replaces section 11 of the principal Act, the existing penalty section. That section mentions in addition a term of imprisonment. This has been omitted, as the Government believes that it is inappropriate to the type of offence.

Clause 4 amends section 4 of the principal Act to provide that where a company applies for a certificate that the company is a proper company to be licensed as an auctioneer, the court hearing the application must be satisfied that the manager of the company is of good character in addition to being satisfied that the company is a fit and proper company. Clause 5 makes consequential amendments to section 5 of the principal Act.

Clause 6 enacts new section 5a of the principal Act, which declares that a company shall be capable of holding a licence as an auctioneer under the Act and that the words "person" and "auctioneer" shall be construed accordingly. Clause 7 provides for a refund of licence fees where an auctioneer dies or ceases to carry on business. Clause 8 repeals section 11 of the principal Act. Section 11, as previously mentioned, is replaced by new subsection (1d) of section 3 of the principal Act. Clause 9 provides for the making of regulations under the principal Act. There is no provision for making regulations at present in the principal Act and the opportunity has been taken to give the necessary power, so that regulations can be made should the need arise. Clause 10 enables companies to carry on under the licence held by their principal auctioneers when the Bill becomes law until those licences expire.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE secured the adjournment of the debate.

VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. R. J. RUDALL (Attorney-General)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Section 12 of the Act provides that two or more district councils whose districts are contiguous may form what is called an associated district councils' vermin board. When duly constituted, the board takes over all the powers given by the Act to the associated district councils relating to the destruction of vermin and, in effect, the board administers the Act on behalf of the councils forming the associated vermin board. Section 12 provides that a board so constituted is to comprise one member from each district council. The member for each council is to be nominated by the council and is to be one of

its councillors. If a member nominated to the board ceases to be a councillor in the council by which he is nominated, his seat on the board is to be vacated and a fresh nomination made. So far, only one associated vermin board has been formed and this is a board known as the Mid-Murray Associated District Councils' Vermin Board and comprising the district councils of Mannum, Marne, Keyneton and Swan Reach.

As before stated, the board consists of one member from each of the associated councils and both the board and the Murray Lands District Councils' Association have suggested that the representation of councils be increased from one to two members. Such an increase, it is considered, will make for the more convenient working of the board. Among other things, if a council is represented on a board by one member only and if that member is not able to be present at a meeting of the board, then the council is not represented at that meeting. Accordingly, clause 2 provides that, instead of each associated council having one representative on the board, there will be two members of each council.

Section 16 provides that the proceedings of the board are to be regulated by the provisions of Part VII. of the Local Government Act, which deals with the procedure at meetings of councils. Among other things, Part VII. lays down the rules for ascertaining a quorum and, as applied to these associated vermin boards, provides that one-half of the members is a quorum.

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS secured the adjournment of the debate.

POLICE OFFENCES BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 27. Page 537.)

The Hon. Sir WALLACE SANDFORD (Central No. 1)—From the remarks of Mr. Condon I think members can expect that, when this Bill reaches Committee, penalties will receive special consideration. Whilst some of them do seem to be rather drastic I do not intend dealing with them now. In his speech the Minister drew particular attention to six clauses. This is a fairly lengthy amending Bill of 85 clauses, but I do not propose to deal with more than two of them. Clause 24 could quite easily be extremely harsh. Before the provisions relating to hotels were restricted, if occasion arose a person could go to the conveniences supplied by hotels. I can quite imagine now, with miles between some hotels, a reputable citizen might find himself in an uncomfortable position and I suggest that this clause was drafted with scant regard for possible contingencies. I hope something will be done about it. Who is going to judge whether a person might be suffering? Under clause 11 a licensee of a hotel can hand an account to a customer for his meal, but what happens if a customer asks to be provided with a meal and the hotelkeeper does not supply it?

The Hon. E. Anthoney—The licensee could be prosecuted under the Licensing Act.

The Hon. Sir WALLACE SANDFORD—Yes, but the man does not get his meal. He must take action at law but if he demurs when presented with an account, with swift action a policeman can put him in gaol or take him away. I hope clause 11 will receive more consideration when it reaches Committee. Clause 24 also has struck me as being particularly unreasonable. I hope, therefore, that this Chamber will not pass something for which later it may wish to make amends. There is no doubt, however, that in the main the Bill fulfils the requirements of the present age and I will not oppose the second reading.

The Hon. L. H. DENSLEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

PRISONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 27. Page 539.)

The Hon. C. D. ROWE (Midland)—Apparently the occasion arises, particularly in the Northern Territory, when it is desirable that prisoners, in the interests of their own health and well-being, should be brought to South Australia to undergo their sentences, because no suitable prisons are available in that territory. That procedure appears to have been carried on since 1923 when the Act known as the Removal of Prisoners (Territories) Act was passed by the Commonwealth Parliament. Last year, however, the question of carrying out the sentence of death on two prisoners from the Northern Territory had to be considered, and because of doubts as to the exact legal position and the grave nature of the sentences it was thought that the matter should be put beyond doubt. The important point about this Bill is that it does not make it obligatory upon the State to carry out the sentences. Apparently the State always has the option because clause 3 provides, "The Governor 'may'

concur with the making of an order . . . ." Clause 4 (1) of the Removal of Prisoners (Territories) Act of 1923 reads:—

Where the removal of a prisoner from a territory is ordered in pursuance of this Act, the Governor-General . . . may . . . direct the prisoner to be removed to the State or Territory mentioned in the order . . .

and section 4 (2) provides:—

. . . the Governor-General . . . may . . . direct the prisoner to be returned to the territory from which he was removed . . .

In other words, the Commonwealth can only bring a prisoner into this State with the concurrence of the Government, so it seems we cannot be forced to carry out sentences if we are not desirous of doing so. I therefore see no danger in the measure and support the second reading.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Prisoners to be removed to the State."

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Leader of the Opposition)—I ask the Chief Secretary to report progress because this is a very important provision. I strongly object to giving power to the Government to hang a prisoner from another State or territory.

The Hon. A. L. McEwin—Where does it say that?

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—The Minister said so in his second reading speech.

The Hon. A. L. McEWIN (Chief Secretary)—The Bill arose out of a request last year of the nature to which the honourable member refers, but this Government was not prepared to carry it out. As a result, other arrangements were made and it is not likely that a similar request will be made again. However, prisoners are sent here from the Northern Territory because the prisons there are unsuitable. I assure the honourable member that there is no catch in this measure and it does not place any obligation on the State Government to carry out sentences of death. Facilities have now been provided in the Northern Territory for the Commonwealth to carry out this obligation and there is no suggestion that the State should do it. It was only on seeking a legal interpretation concerning our obligations that the other matter which is to be corrected by this Bill arose.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—I will read what the Chief Secretary said when introducing the Bill to show whether he is right or whether I am. We have had only one speech on this measure this afternoon and I see no reason for any haste in pushing it through. This is what the Chief Secretary said:—

Last year the Commonwealth requested the State to carry out sentence of death imposed by the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory on two persons convicted of murder. The seriousness of this request led to a careful examination of the constitutional validity of the scheme for transferring prisoners. The then State Crown Solicitor (Mr. Hannan, Q.C.) and the Commonwealth Solicitor-General investigated the question whether the Commonwealth Act was valid, and whether, if it was valid, it was binding on State authorities or only on Commonwealth authorities. The legal officers did not reach complete agreement on all the legal questions involved, but as a result of their discussion it was agreed that in order to remove any doubt as to the validity of the scheme, the State Parliament should be asked to pass legislation complementary to the Commonwealth Act.

The Hon. Sir Wallace Sandford—What is wrong with that?

The Hon. K. E. J. Bardolph—It makes South Australia a dumping ground.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Exactly, and if this Bill becomes law persons sentenced to death in the Northern Territory can be hanged in South Australia. Is South Australia to be a dumping ground when no other State will agree to it?

The Hon. Sir Wallace Sandford—How do you know that?

The Hon. F. J. CONDON—Because all the other States are opposed to capital punishment. I strongly object to any law which permits a man to be brought from another State to be hanged and I regret that the Chief Secretary cannot see his way clear to report progress.

The Hon. K. E. J. BARDOLPH—I support the Leader of the Opposition. As he pointed out, South Australia could be made a dumping ground, and presumably that is the purpose of the Bill. Apparently the Crown law officers of the Commonwealth and the State could not reach agreement and to get over the difficulty this Parliament is asked to amend legislation in order to meet the wishes of the Commonwealth Government. The Commonwealth Government has sufficient territory of its own in which to carry out the decisions of its courts, and I object to South Australia being made the dumping ground for the carrying out of sentences imposed by those courts.

The Hon. E. ANTHONEY—I fail to see the validity of Mr. Condon's objection, for I see no harm in this State's trying to accommodate

the Commonwealth in the matter of the detention of prisoners and the carrying out of sentences imposed in Northern Territory courts, but, if an execution is involved, that is another matter.

The Hon. C. D. ROWE—It is entirely optional whether the State Government accepts or rejects any prisoner from a Commonwealth territory, and the State is assuming no obligation under this Bill, which simply provides that certain sentences will be carried out here if it suits our convenience to do so. As the discretion rests with this Government, we are in control of the situation. The Act provides that, where it is in the interests of the prisoner, his health, or treatment that he should be brought here, that will be done. The Bill is designed to enable the sentence to be carried out in the better interests of the prisoner.

The Hon. A. L. McEWIN—Under this clause the State is still in control of its own forces and may decline to take prisoners from Commonwealth territories, but the provision validates the cases of prisoners who are already here and gives the sheriff the necessary authority for what, in actual practice, has operated for a number of years. The matter raised by the honourable member could be just as objectionable to any Government as it is to him. To enable members to consider this matter further, I ask that progress be reported.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

PUBLIC SERVICE SUPERANNUATION FUND ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. A. L. McEWIN (Chief Secretary)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its object is to reduce the size of the Public Service Superannuation Fund Board. The board controls a fund inaugurated in 1902 and now known as the Old Superannuation Fund. This fund was superseded by the present Superannuation Fund in 1926, but was kept in existence for the benefit of those who wished to remain in the scheme. The Act which regulates the fund, the Public Service Superannuation Fund Act, provides for a board of seven. One seat is filled by an *ex-officio* member, the Under Treasurer, two by members appointed by the Governor, and four by elected subscribers or pensioners. With the passage of time it has become increasingly difficult to find persons to fill the four elective seats.

The position now is that there are only three subscribers and 11 pensioners who are eligible to be members. There are in all 76 pensioners, but only 11 are eligible as ex-subscribers, the remainder being the widows of subscribers. Only one of the three remaining subscribers is available to be a member of the board and is, in fact, already a member. Of the 11 ex-subscribers the only two not prevented by age and infirmity from acting as members are already members. The problem is already acute, and as time goes on, will become more so. It is clearly necessary to alter the constitution of the board in some way, and the Government proposes to make it possible under the principal Act for the membership of the board to fall below seven. Clause 3 amends the principal Act to provide that the membership of the board must not be less than three and not more than seven.

Clause 4 empowers the board to direct that a vacancy need not be filled. Under the proposed arrangement the membership of the board will be reduced as subscribers and pensioners cease to be available, and when there are no more available the board will be able to carry on with the *ex-officio* member and two members appointed by the Governor.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON secured the adjournment of the debate.

PASTORAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 27. Page 537.)

The Hon. R. R. WILSON (Northern)—Pursuant to an arrangement between the Commonwealth and State Governments, the Pastoral Act was amended, in 1950, to provide for the appointment to the Pastoral Board of a fourth member for a period of three years, which expires on December 31 next. It was intended that the board, in addition to its other duties, should act as a land court for settlers in the Northern Territory, thus obviating the necessity for the creation of another board. The Commonwealth Government agreed to pay for the services of the Pastoral Board whilst acting in that capacity, but, as the Commonwealth has not acted in this matter as early as was anticipated, the appointment of a fourth member has not been made.

The Bill removes the time limitation on the appointment, which will now be made only for the necessary period. It is expected that the services of the board will be required in the near future to hear appeals from Northern Territory settlers on assessments and other

matters, and this Bill will obviate the necessity of amending the principal Act each year. Section 95 (2) of the principal Act provides that, where a lessee holds several licences expiring at different dates, the term of those first expiring may be extended for a period up to three years to enable the expiration of the various leases to coincide. The Director of Lands has asked that no maximum period be fixed so that the expiry dates of leases will coincide. I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

The Hon. F. J. CONDON (Leader of the Opposition)—The 1950 amending Act has never operated, but section 2 of that measure amended section 7 of the principal Act and dealt with the appointment of an additional member to the board, but no appointment has ever been made. It was then stated that the board should consist of four members and that no person appointed should hold office after December 31, 1953. The additional member would not come within the provisions of the Public Service Act. I understand that if this Bill operates it may only be for a short period and therefore it is not necessary for the appointee to come within the provisions of the Public Service Act. Section 3 of the 1950 Act amended section 42 (a) of the principal Act dealing with the leases of previously unoccupied land which was not south or east of the River Murray and on the recommendation of the board the leases were for 42 years. Clause 3 relates to the appointment of an additional member to the board and clause 4 to leases of blocks worked as one run. It is possible that the Pastoral Board will be required to act as a land court in the near future and therefore an additional member will be required. I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee without amendment. Committee's report adopted.

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from August 26. Page 504.)

The Hon. Sir WALLACE SANDFORD (Central No. 2)—This Bill, as was not unexpected, has created considerable interest. Most honourable members have, judging by my own experience, received many letters and communications and have also had personal interviews and conversations. This, to my mind, is quite in order. We are told that in a multitude of counsellors there is much wisdom. I feel obliged to those who have addressed me and I consider that herein lies part of the strength and value of our system of government. Most, if not all, honourable members who heard Mr. Cudmore explain the Bill felt that he did so in a most creditable and effective manner. He obviously felt impelled to state a case from a point of view on which he held a definite and positive opinion.

This Bill is designed to correct a weakness which calls for attention from various points of view. Some honourable members will recollect that most members who spoke on the Licensing Bill of 1938 expressed the opinion that this type of legislation would be aimed at maintaining a sober, honest and good-living community. They, as Mr. Cudmore said in other words, expressed the opinion, nay more, the convictions that we each hold. This objective should never be lost sight of and thus our obligation and duty is to examine the Bill most carefully. We must not run away from our duty and our obligations. Mr. Cudmore drew particular attention to the advantages and benefits to be secured by the whole community in taking as a pattern the English system of hours. I fully realize that we are making comparison with people living on the other side of the world and, in fact, it has already been said that such comparisons may be quite misleading. We must remember that in referring to and holding up for examination the English system we are making comparison with our own kinsfolk in the overwhelming majority of cases and I submit, therefore, that a real and reasonable comparison can be argued therefrom.

Only last year I, too, had the opportunity, while in England, of seeing again the system that I had noted on earlier visits and always with the remaining recollection that one did not come across the same degree of excess as might have been expected from extending the number of hours at a period of the day when there would be possibly less restraint and yet, in actual practice, that system apparently works smoothly and certainly satisfactorily. Those of us who have visited what is termed the "local" have seen, at very short range, people from more or less all sections of the community or, at any rate, a fair cross-section of the people who live in the neighbourhood. They take their innocent amusement and abandon themselves to a certain freedom, but are always extremely respectable and do not bother those associated with them or congregated near them to any degree requiring criticism. In fact, I came to the conclusion last year that therein

lay part of the material that plays no small part in developing the English character. It is in the "local," when they have finished their day's work, that the patrons are to be seen in the best way by a stranger who can realize where the strength and solidity of the English character comes from. Nor do the evening hours of service apply only to Great Britain. On most parts of the Continent the right to sell alcohol extends well into the evening and in most of those places one finds practically no drunkenness. I saw none, or at least the percentage was negligible. It is true I was not looking for it but I think it is probable that there is a general improvement that is developing a self restraint that convinces one that the privilege would not be abused.

The Hon. F. T. Perry—Do you advocate the English hours?

The Hon. Sir WALLACE SANDFORD—Before concluding I will summarize my views in that direction. I saw no drunkenness, or any evidence that the opportunity to secure liquid refreshment of that type was in any way affecting the people's behaviour or morals. Are we so apprehensive of the results that we are prepared to admit that the degree of self-restraint which we can impose upon ourselves is less than that of other peoples? I am sure that would provoke a wild outcry of objection if it were suggested for one moment. We have to make up our minds, and in all probability vote, on this question because our views do not coincide, and on each side some points of view will be so positive that the usual compromise will be difficult to attain. For that reason I shall vote for the second reading in order that the whole scope of the Bill will be inspected in the Committee stage and the various phases of the question fully debated. In reply to Mr. Perry's interjection, I take it that there are definite opinions in the minds of a number of members, because within the last two or three years several members of this Chamber have seen the English system in operation and will therefore have arrived at some conclusion. Whatever the decisions arrived at I think that everyone who has communicated with members either by letters or circular or by personal conversation may rest assured that out future welfare and the good of our young people will not be overlooked. I am sure that whatever the decisions are the spirit of tolerance for the point of view of the other fellow will be maintained. Therefore, I will support the second reading.

The Hon. A. J. MELROSE (Midland)—I propose to express my own views on this question and have no intention of criticizing, much less trying to analyse, the arguments advanced both in favour of the attempt to improve matters and in resistance to the Bill. I must say that those who have organized themselves into various bodies—such as temperance alliances, but all with more or less the same purpose—are not the only people who desire to see temperance in all things. I believe that that is one of the fundamental principles inherent in all of us, and that it is in that spirit we should discuss the measure. A strong point was made by the Chief Secretary—and one with which I entirely agree—that it is to be deplored that when these social questions are brought before us the tendency is for people to form themselves into armed camps bitterly opposed to the ideas of the other side. That is a dead-end sort of argument and can lead to no possible solution of the matters exercising the minds of both camps. I agree with the Chief Secretary that we would be acting much more like wise human beings if we attempted to solve these social questions, upon which there are marked differences of opinion, by approaching them more in the spirit of a round table conference and tried by give and take principles—or at least tolerance of the other's point of view—to arrive at, if not a complete solution of the major difficulties, at least a gradual process of improvement towards more idealistic conditions.

I have no hesitation in saying that no-one believes that the present conditions for the sale of alcoholic beverages are ideal, and therefore as a natural consequence I take it we are all more or less interested in making some attempt to improve conditions. Therein lies that very atmosphere which should lead us to a round table conference, or at least to open-minded and friendly discussion leading to some happy middle course. If, after such an approach to the question, some alteration were arrived at and after a period of trial for, say, a year or two, it were found to be no improvement we could review the position and either revert to the *status quo* or try some other innovation because, after all, we do not labour under the laws of the Medes and Persians. Our time is almost wholly occupied every year in amending Acts of Parliament, which proves that none of our laws is entirely satisfactory and that we have the sense to clip bits off, or add bits on, or adjust them to meet changing circumstances. My feeling about this matter

is that we should aim at an amiable middle course to control the sale of alcohol, and by its sale its effect upon the people, rather than swing towards prohibition, which was so tragic a failure in the U.S.A. It seems that in a free people human nature has a violent resistance to anything that labels itself prohibition, and in that I think lies the reason for the so-called six o'clock swill. People know that they have to get their drinking done before a certain hour and therefore they drink a lot more than they would if this Sword of Damocles were not hanging over their heads.

I think most will agree that the opening hour for hotel bars, 5 a.m., is much too early. There may be people about at that hour of the day but only a very small percentage of the population. There may be market gardeners and dairy farmers abroad, but I doubt whether they feel the need for alcoholic refreshment at that hour of the day. At any rate their numbers would be so small as to scarcely warrant consideration. The hours between 5 a.m. to 11 a.m. or thereabouts might well be eliminated because I feel that, in so far as this Bill seeks to make the consumption of alcohol concomitant with meals, it should be thoroughly supported. It was said, I think by Mr. Cudmore, that in a suddenly precipitated crisis during the war steps were taken to make a break in the sale of liquor in the afternoon, and the effect upon drunkenness was instantaneous. I am sure everyone felt the better for it even though the hilarious time they were having was cut in the middle of the day, so I feel sure there is no real need for hotel bars to be open before 11 a.m. Knock-off time in most industries and offices ranges from 5 to 5.30 p.m., and the interval between that and 6 p.m. is too brief for people, desiring to do so, to indulge in a little social relaxation. The very brevity of that interval naturally makes for hasty drinking, and anybody with experience knows that therein lies the great peril, for that brevity provokes an atmosphere of haste, bustle and, to a certain degree, a sense of excitement, each of which factors is inimical to the quiet social atmosphere in which alcohol could do good rather than harm. Such factors hasten and increase the degree of intoxication. It is an old saying that drink on an empty stomach is no good, and men coming from work and hurriedly drinking on an empty stomach, under the threat of early closing, have the three factors I have mentioned working against them, whereas a few drinks taken quietly would probably have a beneficial effect. Hasty drinking often has the psychological effect on people of making them drink more than they ordinarily would have.

That such reform is overdue is an opinion held widely not only in this State but also in others. Last Monday's *News* reported that the president of the Victorian Chamber of Commerce was supporting a plea made by Mr. Monk, the president of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, to end Victoria's restrictive laws on the liquor and catering industries. Under the heading "Report on Plan for Liquor Reform in Victoria" this morning's *Advertiser* contains the following statement:—

> An extension from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. for the serving of liquor with meals in hotels, cafes and licensed clubs will be recommended to the Victorian Cabinet tomorrow. The recommendation will be made by a Cabinet subcommittee, the findings of which will guide the Government in drawing up its Liquor Reform Bill.

Apparently the members of that sub-committee have not heard Mr. Cain's remarks on the licensing hours. The same newspaper contains the following report from Perth:—

> Sunday trading for Perth hotels and 10 p.m. closing from Monday to Saturday was supported today by the Minister of Justice (Mr. E. Nulsen). He told a ULVA deputation that he believed in more liberal trading hours to reduce drunkenness and encourage moderate drinking. He agreed to put before Cabinet the ULVA request for 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. trading on week days and from 11.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. and 4.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. on Sundays.

These reports show that this Bill contains proposals typical of those receiving the earnest consideration of men in many walks of life in our neighbouring States, and therefore it behoves us, as a deliberative Council, to consider the Bill carefully. I hope that the second reading will be passed for that purpose. Some temperance advocates appear to think that the only objective of the sale of alcoholic beverages is to produce drunkenness, but I say that the aim of those supporting the Bill, particularly its sponsor, is to remove as far as possible the risk of intoxication so that the actual pleasure and stimulation both of appetite and social intercourse remain for the drinker. Everyone feels that, however little drinking is done, it should be conducted in as leisurely a manner as possible so that it will not be conducive in the slightest degree to intoxication.

The move to extend the hour beyond which alcohol cannot be served with dinner in hotels is a step in the right direction. I doubt very

much whether, in those countries where the sale of alcohol is much less restricted than here, people wallow in alcohol. Surely we as Australians can trust ourselves in the presence of a relatively free supply of alcohol. Anyone who owns and maintains with pride and pleasure a private cellar does not go into it and consume as much as possible merely because there is no closing hour there. To suggest he does so is ridiculous. If given more reasonable hours for the consumption of alcohol, South Australians would react as responsible people.

The present position with regard to local option polls is unsatisfactory, and should be reviewed and reformed. Whether some form of poll and local option should be continued and the reform shaped on that basis or whether the power should be vested in some magisterial bench I do not know. I am wedded to no opinion on the question, but I feel that the present type of local option under which the poll is based on the roll in an Assembly district has little to commend it, for the people really responsible on the question must surely be those responsible as ratepayers who might be expected to be the permanent population of the area concerned. I would restrict the area in which the poll is taken to that immediately surrounding the district where the question has arisen and confine the voting to those people concerned. Some members have cited the difficulties in Tailem Bend. Whether that town has another hotel or not is surely a matter for the people of Tailem Bend; those who live far away and are already serviced by sufficient hotels should not be allowed to thwart the wishes of the residents of a growing town.

I understand from previous speakers in this debate that, when a poll is taken by local option, voters are given the choice of the present number of hotels, or an increase or decrease of one-third of the present number, but that seems to me a completely arbitrary figure unlikely to fit with any degree of satisfaction all the varying cases that may arise. A poll should be taken, not of the permanent population, but of that part of the population immediately concerned, and the number by which the number of hotels is to be increased or decreased should be definitely stated. The distribution of hotels has not followed the movement in our centres of population. Because of the decay of some industry such as mining, which was responsible for their mushroom growth in the early days, old towns and districts have been left with few industries and people but many hotels, whereas new districts with increasing populations find themselves with one hotel or none at all.

At this stage it is only necessary to pronounce oneself as being in favour of the second reading and to state briefly one's reasons why the matter is worth consideration. Although I do not expect for a moment that this Bill will go through this and another place in its original form, I hope that out of it will come one or two amendments to licensing hours, if not a major alteration to the English hours, and that it will result in the elimination of some undesirable aspects of our present set-up and an increase in the conviviality and pleasure in the consumption of alcohol in more civilized conditions, which would enable us to hold up our heads with a little more respect in the presence of visitors from overseas who, at present, are appalled to find that we treat ourselves like a lot of naughty children in denying ourselves the pleasures of that standard of living which we deserve. I support the second reading.

The Hon. E. H. EDMONDS secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.45 p.m. the Council adjourned until Wednesday, September 2, at 2 p.m.