

215 Register
 September 6th 1913

The Register
 Wednesday
 September
 17th 1913

TO ASSIST MAWSON.

Prime Minister Sympathetic.

MELBOURNE, September 5.

A deputation, consisting of Professors David and Masson, and Dr. J. W. Barrett (who represented the antarctic committee of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science), Capt. J. K. Davis (master of the Aurora), and Mr. H. D. Murphy (a member of the Mawson expedition), waited upon the Prime Minister (Mr. Cook) this afternoon, and asked that the Federal Government should grant £5,000 to equip the Aurora and send her to the antarctic to bring back Dr. Mawson and his six comrades and wipe off the debts on the expedition. Professor David said the indebtedness of the expedition was £11,000. To meet this were assets amounting to £5,200, and they hoped to raise £800 from private sources. The expedition was purely an Australasian one, and they felt that the work of rescuing Dr. Mawson and his comrades was the duty of the Australians. The expedition had been undertaken for scientific purposes, and had not been a hunt for the south pole. Scientific men had expressed their deepest admiration of the work accomplished for geography and the survey of more than 1,500 miles of new coastline. The magnetic observations would be of great service in connection with navigation. The weather conditions of Australia were influenced largely by antarctic disturbances. That had been fully admitted by the New Zealand meteorologist and by Mr. Hunt, the Commonwealth Meteorologist. Dr. Mawson had succeeded beyond expectation in the valuable information he had given in regard to weather forecasting. If they in Australia could only get information regarding these antarctic disturbances many shipwrecks each year might be averted.

The Prime Minister said he had the fullest sympathy with the position in which the members of the expedition were placed. He had always appreciated the value of antarctic exploration and its especial benefit to Australia. He would promise to consider their request, and would let them have his answer in a day or two.

The Hon. J. P. WILSON opposed the amendment. If they exempted the University they would be expected to exempt other places.

Sir JOHN DOWNER said the Elder Hall was portion of a most vital educational institution, and had nothing in it erected for the purposes of the amusement of the public. Was there any place in the world where the term "place of entertainment" was applied to a university?

The Hon. E. LUCAS advised the Chief Secretary to stay his hand in regard to the passage of this Bill, the scope of which he thought was altogether too wide.

The Hon. F. S. WALLIS supported the Government in this matter.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said the Elder Hall was a place of public entertainment in every sense of the word, for tickets were sold and an admission charge was made. If the public were not protected now in the building they should be; if they were protected no harm could be done by bringing the building under the provisions of this Bill.

The Hon. E. LUCAS was prepared to allow the Government to inspect all buildings, but he objected to compel every little school or church in the State to take out a license before any entertainment could be given therein.

Sir JOHN DUNCAN said the Elder Hall was not let for hire, and unless the University was exempted the Act would apply to the Prince of Wales theatre at the University, which was distinctly undesirable.

The Hon. J. COWAN considered the regulations under the Bill were too drastic, and he objected to all places being required to be licensed.

The amendment was declared negatived.

Sir JOHN DUNCAN called for a division, which resulted in the amendment being defeated, the voting being as follows:—Ayes, 4—Sir John Downer, Messrs. Lewis, Howe, and Sir John Duncan (teller). Noes—Messrs. Cowan, Hannaford, Lucas, Pascoe, Styles, Wallis, Wilson, and Bice (teller).

The CHIEF SECRETARY moved to amend the clause so that only churches or places of public worship should be exempted. The Government proposed to reduce the amount of license fees for church halls and so on, but it was only right that if places were used for the purposes of gain the body so using it should pay for a license.

The amendment was carried.

Clause 9. Fees payable.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said the objection to license was mainly sentimental. The object of licensing was to have all places of public entertainment registered, and thus placed under the control of the law. He moved that clause 9 be amended by setting out that the license fee be 1/ for a building belonging to and used by a religious body for the purposes of public entertainment.

The Hon. E. LUCAS moved an amendment providing that no license be necessary. He objected to having a church building brought down to the level of a common place of entertainment by compelling the trustees to apply to a Government officer to have the building licensed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said as long as he could provide for Government supervision of places of public entertainment he did not greatly object to doing away with the necessity for a license fee in these cases.

Sir JOHN DOWNER would like to remove the necessity for licensing not only from churches but from educational institutions. It was not desirable that the University should be registered. He moved in the direction indicated.

The Hon. J. P. WILSON wished also to exempt from the necessity to license trades halls, which were educational institutions. (Mr. Howe—"What about Liberal Union halls?") He would support the hon. member if he would propose that.

Sir John Downer's amendment was agreed to, and the amendment of Mr. Lucas as amended was carried.

Second schedule.

The Hon. J. P. WILSON moved to reduce the license fees in each case by one-half.

The CHIEF SECRETARY opposed the amendment. The expenses of inspection were increasing, he said.

The amendment was negatived.

The Bill was reported and the report adopted, and the third reading was set down for the following Thursday.

PLACES OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT BILL.

On the motion for the third reading, The CHIEF SECRETARY moved that Bill be recommitted for the purpose of reconsidering clauses 5 and 9.

The Hon. Sir JOHN DUNCAN asked whether any of the clauses mentioned included the point which he had brought under the notice of the Chief Secretary.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said the point submitted by the hon. member could be dealt with under clause 5, which provided for exemptions.

Motion agreed to. In committee. Clause 5—"Exemptions."

The CHIEF SECRETARY moved to strike out after "The provisions of this Act shall not extend to any church or place of public worship" the words "or to any hall or building which is used solely by any religious body or denomination in connection with a church or place of public worship, and is used only for—(a) meetings for religious instruction or the propagation of the Gospel or any religious tenet or belief; and (b) tea meetings, concerts, lectures, or entertainments held in connection with such body or denomination." He also intended to move later to insert words in clause 9 a provision dealing with fees. His amendment would mean that the fees for educational or religious institutions would be reduced considerably below what they would be if the words were allowed to remain in.

The Hon. Sir JOHN DUNCAN said he had an amendment to propose which would precede that of the Chief Secretary, and he would like to know whether he should submit it at that juncture or after they had dealt with the amendment before the chair.

The CHIEF SECRETARY temporarily withdrew his amendment.

The Hon. Sir JOHN DUNCAN said he wished the chamber to consider whether the University should be exempt under the Act. He did not think that by any stretch of imagination that educational centre could be regarded as a place of public entertainment in the ordinary sense of the term. He did not suppose the matter would have been noticed by the members of the Council, but there were on the Council of the University legal gentlemen who had agreed that unless the University were exempted under the Act it would come within its provisions. There was only one portion—the Elder Hall—which could be so regarded; but that was so amply provided with exits and everything else to ensure the safety of the public that it could well be exempted. He moved to insert after "extend to" the words "to the University of the City of Adelaide, or any of its lands, or buildings, or premises." The place was used only for educational purposes, and was not like other halls.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said he trusted members would recognise that the purpose of the Bill was to protect the public in any building where they gathered in large numbers in connection with public entertainment. If he were shown that the Elder Hall was not used, or not likely to be used, for that purpose, and that people would not gather there in large numbers, he would agree that there was some justification for the amendment, but with due deference he submitted that had not been shown so far. The Elder Hall certainly came within the provisions of the Bill, but there was no attempt to also bring in the general buildings and premises of the University. No indignity was intended by the clause. He hoped the suggested amendment would not be carried. They should not make a distinction of any one institution. Every other place was brought under the provisions of the Bill. If the clause were adopted, nothing could occur to cause the slightest irritation to any one.

The Hon. J. P. WILSON said he was of opinion that the clause would cause no indignity if adopted. The Elder Hall was used extensively for lectures and concerts, but there should be adequate control over it. (Hon. Sir John Duncan—"It will hold 1,200 people, and 250 in addition on the platform.") He had been surprised that more provision had not been made for the

The Advertiser.
 September 17th 1913
 Elder Conservatorium

PLACES OF PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT BILL.

Third reading.

The CHIEF SECRETARY moved that the Bill be recommitted for the purpose of reconsidering clauses 5 and 9. Carried.

Clause 5. Exemption.

Sir JOHN DUNCAN moved an amendment, which had the effect of exempting the University of Adelaide. People did not look upon the University as a place of public entertainment, but he was assured that the provisions of the Bill would apply to the Elder Hall if the University were not specially exempted. There was no call, in view of the excellent arrangements for the safety of the public at the Elder Hall, that the University should be placed under the indignity of having its buildings classed with those of a picture company. The Elder Hall was used for educational purposes only.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said the Bill was intended to protect the public which gathered in buildings in large number. He would need to be shown that the Elder Hall was not a place of public entertainment before he could agree to the amendment. It was straining the point to say that it was an indignity upon the University to have the Elder Hall placed on the same plane as the Brookman Hall, for instance. He thought it would be a mistake to make any invidious distinction in favor of any particular body.