



BILLE DEOCHA MEISCIÚLA, 1924.
INTOXICATING LIQUOR BILL, 1924.

MEMORANDUM.

This Bill provides for amendment of the law relating to the sale of intoxicating liquor and does not involve compensation to vested interests.

PART I.—HOURS OF SALE.

The appended table contains a comparison between the existing hours of sale and those proposed in the Bill:—

	Existing Statutory Hours of Sale		Hours of Sale proposed in Bill
	In cities and towns where the population is over 5,000	Elsewhere	
WEEK-DAYS, other than Saturday.	7 a.m. to 11 p.m.	7 a.m. to 10 p.m.	9 a.m. to 10 p.m. everywhere.
SATURDAY	7 a.m. to 10 p.m.	7 a.m. to 9 p.m.	9 a.m. to 9.30 p.m. everywhere.
SUNDAY	2 p.m. to 5 p.m., Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Waterford only.	Closed	No change
CHRISTMAS DAY	Closed everywhere	the whole day	No change
GOOD FRIDAY	2 p.m. to 9 p.m.	2 p.m. to 7 p.m.	To be same as Christmas Day, i.e., closed everywhere.
SAINT PATRICK'S DAY.	Same as ordinary week-days		

Under the existing law *bona fide* travellers may be lawfully served by publicans at any hour upon any day of the year.

Under the Bill, however, *bona fide* travellers may not be served (i) at any hour on Christmas Day, Good Friday, St. Patrick's Day, or (ii) during the period 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Sunday.

It is further provided that no person shall be admitted to any theatre (theatre, in effect, means a theatre with a bar) after 9.30 p.m. unless he has paid for a seat prior to that hour or is employed in the theatre. The existing hours of sale of intoxicating liquors—viz., from half an hour before the first performance until half an hour after the last performance—remain unchanged.

Power is given to a District Justice to close licensed premises in towns or villages in the interests of the preservation of public peace and order.

[No. 25 of 1924.]

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PART II.—LICENSING.

The penalties for "shebeening" are increased, and the offence of "keeping for sale," which is the commonest variety capable of detection, is put on the same plane as selling, and for convenience sections in earlier Acts dealing with this offence are repealed and re-enacted in a stronger form.

Sale on credit of intoxicating liquor for consumption on the premises is made an offence to be recorded on the licence of the licence holder.

Sales to young persons under the age of 18 years are prohibited.

Girls under the age of eighteen years may not be barmaids.

The penalties for consumption of liquor on premises licensed only for consumption off the premises are increased considerably. The punishment for a second offence being forfeiture of the licence.

The Licensing (Ireland) Act, 1902, which at present has to be renewed annually, is made permanent.

From and after the 25th September, 1925, mixed trading in public houses will not be lawful. An exception is, however, made in the case of tobacco, matches, table waters and food for consumption on the premises. The provision in question will not affect off-licences.

Provision is made for the compulsory recording on licences of convictions of the more serious offences against the licensing laws. Three convictions of such offenses, or in some cases less, will involve forfeiture of the licence.

PART III.—CLUBS—

i.e., mainly Clubs registered under the Registration of Clubs (Ireland) Act, 1904. It is provided that no club may be registered unless its rules prohibit the supply of excisable liquor, during certain hours. These prohibited hours are the same as those provided in Part I. for public houses on **ordinary week days and Saturdays**. On Sundays, Christmas Day, Good Friday, and St. Patrick's Day such liquor may be supplied only between 1 p.m. and 10 p.m.

The annual registration fee is increased to two pounds (the present fee fixed by the 1904 Act is five shillings).

Restrictions are placed on the grants of certificates of registration to new clubs.

The police are given power to enter and search clubs if they suspect abuses.

Under the 1904 Act every club to secure registration must have rules on the model prescribed by the Act except any lodge of Freemasons duly constituted under a charter or warrant from the Grand Lodge of Ireland. This exception is removed by the repeal of the proviso to Section 4 of the Act (*vide* Second Schedule to Bill), so that in future such lodges will be on the same footing as any other kind of club.

PART IV.—ILLICIT DISTILLATION.

Provision is made giving power to control the ingredients used for illicit distillation. In such areas as may be prescribed purchasers of such ingredients will require police permits. Licence holders convicted of concealing, possessing or selling illicitly distilled spirits will suffer forfeiture of their licences.

Illicit distillation is made an ordinary criminal offence punishable with imprisonment. Under the existing law except the Public Safety (Punishment of Offences) Temporary Act, 1924, it is primarily a Revenue offence punishable by fine.

PART V.—METHYLATED SPIRITS.

The sale of methylated spirits is controlled by Part V., and the drinking of these made an offence punishable with imprisonment.

Money penalties under the Licensing Acts and Illicit Distillation Acts are doubled. This is merely a recognition of the depreciation of the currency since these penalties were first fixed.