

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**FRIDAY, 4 DECEMBER 1896**

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FRIDAY, 4 DECEMBER, 1896.

The SPEAKER took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

ADDITIONAL SITTING DAY.

The HOME SECRETARY, in moving, in the absence of the Premier—

That the House will meet for the despatch of business at 3 o'clock p.m. on Monday next in addition to the days already provided by Sessional Order; and that Government business take precedence of all other business on that day—

said: Hon. members will at once see the reason for this motion by looking at the eighteen Government Orders of the Day on the business paper. No doubt there is a good deal of other business of importance on the paper, but these measures form the programme of those who are responsible for the government of the country. I stated yesterday—and I emphasise it to-day—that the necessity for introducing some of the Government Orders of the Day has arisen since the opening of the session. That refers to those which are coming on to-day, and those to which I referred yesterday, but I did not say it of the whole eighteen. During the six months of the present session certain persons have brought forward certain claims for consideration, which ought to be treated as matters of urgency. The object of meeting on Monday is to advance certain non-contentious and formal matters a stage, as, according to the forms of the House, they must be advanced stage by stage. I hope on Monday to advance those measures which are considered to-day through the committee stage. With regard to the first Bill that appears on the paper for to-day, it is merely intended to ask that it be discharged from the paper with a view to bringing in another Bill, so that that will not take up any time. We hope to put such minor, though necessary, Bills as the Gold Mines Drainage Bill, the Suppression of Gambling Bill, the Federal Council Bill, and the Rabbit Boards Bill, through committee on Monday if we get through the second readings to-day. I feel sure that if, in view of the late period of the session, hon. members reserve the observations which they desire to make on the second readings of Bills, they will be granted the indulgence in committee of using arguments which would more properly be made on the second readings of those Bills.

Mr. DRAKE: How do you know? That is for the Chairman to decide.

The HOME SECRETARY: I feel sure the Committee will agree to that.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is now going outside the question before the House, and anticipating another question which may arise.

The HOME SECRETARY: I was only giving my reasons why the House should meet on Monday. I shall not pursue the subject, but I felt sure the Committee would have no objection to that being done. I hope the motion will commend itself to the House. We have been sitting here for many months now, and we are getting into extremely hot weather. I also put it on another ground: The House should consider the departmental work which devolves upon Ministers, in addition to the late hours

we have to sit in this House, and when hon. members have an opportunity of undertaking that work they will feel the strain of it as it grows from year to year. If the departmental work is slumped it is injurious to the colony; and when Ministers have to come here night after night for six months in the year, and sit here till 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, after having done an eight-hours' shift, it is pretty hard work. We wish to get the work done which has been delayed in consequence of the work cast upon the Executive by the administration of the affairs of the colony. I trust the House will agree to meet on Monday, and if the non-contentious business is advanced a stage—as I hope it will be—I hope we shall be able to rise in a very short time—probably within the next fortnight.

Mr. GLASSEY: The Home Secretary has given some reasons why the House should sit on Monday, but he should have told the House why there are so many Government measures on the paper at this stage of the session—a most extraordinary and exceptional number. In the early part of the session no measures were brought forward—only tin-pot things of no consequence—but after having sat six months we have sixteen or seventeen Government measures, a good many of minor importance, and some which might be left over till next session. The hon. gentleman might have given some reason—it may be on account of pressure from constituents in some cases—why we have these measures introduced at this late period. The Railways Bill, for instance, might have been introduced a couple of months ago; and now we are asked to compress within a couple of weeks as much work as we have done for several months. There is something radically wrong in such management, and it shows want of capacity and foresight on the part of the Government. Personally, in order to bring the session to a close, I would much rather sit on Monday; but I want to ask the Home Secretary whether he imagines that hon. members sitting on this side, some of whom have had motions on the paper for months past, will be content to allow the session to close without having an opportunity of saying something further and taking the decision of the House upon them. If he does, he is expecting too much. Therefore I ask the hon. gentleman, or some other Minister, to give some assurance that an opportunity will be afforded of going more fully into some of those questions—to some of which hon. members attach considerable importance—and coming to a decision upon them.

Mr. DRAKE: I agree entirely with the remarks made by the leader of the Labour party; but I should not attach very much importance personally to any assurance that might be given by the Government that they will give facilities to private members to get on with their business, because that always means favouritism. When the Government towards the end of a session make that promise, it simply means that if private members can conciliate the Government and satisfy them with regard to the subject-matter of their motions, then the Government will condescend to give a portion of their time; but an arrangement of that kind is entirely unsatisfactory to private members generally, because every private member should have equal opportunities of bringing forward any business he may consider desirable in the interests of the community. We are dropping into a very bad practice year after year of having all the Government business introduced at a late period of the session. When the weather begins to get hot the Government begin to bring down business. They say, "We are nearly at the end of the session, the weather is getting almost unbearable;

and it is best that these Bills should be pushed forward with all possible expedition." That is not a state of things that should be assented to by private members generally; and if private members who have business on the paper do not stand together in insisting on having legitimate time afforded for that business, they have no right to ask other private members to assist them in getting that business through when it does come on for consideration. With regard to the indulgence to special members, it will mean that time will be afforded—

The SPEAKER: Order! I must remind the hon. member that the question of private business is not before the House.

Mr. DRAKE: Then I will move an amendment to put myself in order. I do not object to sitting on Monday or on Friday; but proper facilities should be given to private members to get their business through, and if we are content with the ordinary assurance, it will simply mean that facilities will be given on a system of favouritism. It is possible that the hon. member for Oxley may get a whole day for his excursion train motion.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is now transgressing by imputing motives of favouritism.

Mr. DRAKE: It certainly is a fact that when arrangements of this sort are made private members have to go to the Government.

The SPEAKER: I remind the hon. member that the question of arrangement is not before the House.

Mr. DRAKE: The hon. member for Bundaberg asked for an assurance that an opportunity would be given to private members to discuss their business. I am following the hon. member who spoke last—

The SPEAKER: Yes; and I would remind the hon. member that in traversing the arguments of the hon. member for Bundaberg he is not in order in saying that if an assurance of that kind is given partiality will be shown.

Mr. DRAKE: I should not accept an assurance of that kind; it certainly would not satisfy me. I have a very important motion on the paper, and I desire that an opportunity should be given for discussing it. The Home Secretary has stated that I have got all I desire in that respect; but I have not, nor have I all the information which should be at my disposal and at the disposal of other hon. members. Therefore that is a reason why if we agree to sit on Monday next part of the time should be devoted to private business. If that is not so, I can foresee that no time will be allowed for the discussion of private business. With regard to the Government Bills on the paper being non-contentious, I think, strictly speaking, all public Bills are contentious. Every public Bill should be discussed, and there are very few measures on which all members are absolutely agreed. In order to obtain an expression of opinion from private members I will therefore move that the word "Government" be omitted with the view of inserting the words "private members."

The HOME SECRETARY: If hon. members will look through the business paper carefully they will find that much of the business has been settled by the action of this House. The Premier has said that if members will intimate to him what particular business they desire to have settled this session he would be glad to give facilities for its settlement. If on Monday hon. members will intimate what motions they want to go on with I shall place it before the Premier, and the Government will be glad to do all they possibly can during the next week to give facilities for the settlement of business. The Government have no desire to avoid a settlement. If hon. members will look at the paper they will

find little, after all, that requires more than termination. All the rest of the matters are inchoate, and would remain inchoate, even if we sat here for the next three weeks, which I hope we will not do.

Mr. BROWNE: I have a motion on the paper which has been there a very long time, and I should like an opportunity of terminating it. I do not wish for any further discussion, and would be willing to leave unanswered the arguments which have been used so long as a vote can be taken upon it. That is only a reasonable request to make considering the long time it has been on the paper. A great many of these motions have been discussed and talked out at 6 o'clock; but it would be just as well if we could decide them one way or the other. If we consent at this stage to rush on with Government measures, the least we can expect is to get some time allowed for our own.

Mr. TURLEY: Hon. members on the front Treasury bench seem to think that members put notices on the paper, not because they are important to their constituencies and the general community, but simply to get as much business as possible on the paper in their own name. That is a ridiculous idea. If I did not think the motions I put on the paper were of importance, I would not dream of putting them there. If the question was one which I simply wished to call attention to, I would get a certain number of members to support me and move the adjournment of the House. The Home Secretary says the Premier will give facilities to every member who wishes to have his business dealt with; but I think every member with a motion on the paper will want a settlement of it. I do not believe in sitting five days a week; four days are quite enough, but we should have our fair proportion of that time. We should get more than two hours out of the whole week for private business. The Home Secretary also says that the business which the Government are submitting now is non-contentious, but there is very little business that every member agrees with absolutely. The hon. gentleman says he hopes members will endeavour to curtail their remarks on the second readings.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member cannot discuss that question.

Mr. TURLEY: Full discussion is invited by private members on their motions, and the same thing should apply to Government measures.

Amendment put and negatived.

Original question put and passed.

## RAILWAY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

### SECOND READING.

On this Order of the Day being called,

The SPEAKER said: I would point out to the House, as I have already pointed out to the Minister in charge of the Bill, that clause 7, in my opinion, is clearly an act of appropriation; and therefore the Bill must be withdrawn and reintroduced by a message from His Excellency the Governor.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS, the Order was withdrawn, and the Bill discharged from the paper.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS, the Order for the introduction of the Bill, on the 26th November, was read by the Clerk; and leave was given to bring in another Bill on that Order.

The HOME SECRETARY: I have it in command from the Governor to intimate to the House that His Excellency, who has been informed of the objects of the Bill, recommends the necessary appropriation to give effect to its provisions.

The Bill was introduced and read a first time ; and its second reading made an Order of the Day for Monday next.

### GOLD MINES DRAINAGE BILL.

#### SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES : This is a Bill to amend an Act passed in 1891, which, although general in its provisions, has so far only been put into operation on the Gympie Gold Field. Experience has shown that the Act, as it at present stands, is not effective enough. The drainage board has a good deal of power, but not sufficient power to ensure all its commands being carried out. During the last floods the board ordered ten or eleven mines to be closed, and they were all closed with one or two exceptions. By 11 o'clock on the night of the day on which the order was given, in consequence of those mines not being closed, the whole of them were flooded, involving a loss to that particular district of £10,000 or £12,000, and throwing out of employment 250 men for three or four months. This Bill is simply to give drainage boards greater powers, and to enable them to inflict a penalty of fine or imprisonment on anyone not obeying their orders. There is nothing contentious in the Bill that I can see, and I move that it be now read a second time.

Mr. BROWNE : From all I can hear of what occurred at Gympie during the last floods a Bill of this kind is very much wanted there. I do not think there is anything objectionable in it. In committee there are one or two matters with regard to the regulations that I shall ask about, as I do not at present see why so much power should be given to the boards. As far as the Bill itself is concerned there is nothing in it I take exception to, and I shall support the second reading.

Mr. STUMM : I am glad the Minister has introduced this Bill, and I am also glad to hear from the hon. member for Croydon that there is not likely to be any opposition to it. The rainy season will shortly be setting in on Gympie, and it is absolutely necessary that the drainage board should be given the fullest powers to do what is necessary to guard against the flooding of mines. The board have at considerable expense, constructed concrete dams and have provided flood-gates. This work has been done under the principal Act of 1891, but the weakness of the Act is that sufficient power is not given under it to the board to enforce its orders, and the want of this power led to the flooding of the mines on Gympie last February. The manager of the lowest mine there received timely notice to put down his flood-gates. Apparently he did not realise the pressing nature of the danger, and when he did attempt to put them down the water was coming down the shaft with such force that he was unable to get the gate into its proper position. The consequence was that the whole of the southern part of the field was flooded, fifteen mines were swamped, nearly 300 men were thrown out of employment for a period averaging fully eight weeks, and the cost to Gympie may be fully set down at £10,000, reckoning the loss of wages and the actual cost of bailing the shafts. The only way to guard against a similar calamity in the future is to give the Governor in Council power by general regulations to enable the board to carry out the provisions of the Act and enforce compliance with its orders, making provision at the same time for a substantial penalty for wilful refusal to obey those orders. It is better that the matter should be dealt with by regulation, as in that way any change of circumstances may best be met. The Bill will involve no additional cost to the Treasury, as the mine-owners have to bear the expense. I do not think that is quite fair,

because it is not usual to ask a lessee to bear the expense of protecting his landlord's property. However, the mine-owners have so far incurred the necessary expense, and no demand for assistance has been made. They simply ask now that the board should be invested with power to render the work already done of value.

Mr. DUNSFORD : Under this Bill it would appear that these boards are to be nominated by the Governor in Council.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : No ; the boards are elected by the mine-owners, under the principal Act.

Mr. DUNSFORD : I do not agree with that system. We do not want only one section of the mining community represented on these boards. They should be elected as in Victoria—by the holders of miners' rights.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES : This is simply a Gold Fields Drainage Act, and it only applies to Gympie.

Mr. DUNSFORD : Certainly ; but it is tinkering with the Gold Fields Acts, and while we are dealing with mining boards we should have a system that would apply generally. The mining boards in Victoria have worked splendidly, and it is intended there to give them extended powers. I would sooner see a system of mining boards constituted to deal with all grievances arising on goldfields than this proposal dealing with one little mining centre.

Mr. JACKSON : It is quite true that the members of these boards are elected by the mine-owners within the drainage area, but that area is defined by the Governor in Council, and I can quite conceive an injustice arising through the setting apart of a certain area as a drainage area, which would throw a great deal of power into the hands of certain mine-owners. Large powers are given to these boards under this Bill, but if they were properly constituted perhaps I should not be so disposed to object to them having such powers. At present the Bill only applies to Gympie.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES : What will apply to Gympie will apply elsewhere.

Mr. JACKSON : That is just what I am pointing out ; for that reason I think we should take a wider view of the question. I do not quite understand whether under clause 2 a warden may make an order without a case coming before him in the usual way.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : The case will have to be heard in the usual way.

Mr. JACKSON : That is a point I wanted to get the opinion of the Minister upon, as it would be unfair to enable a warden to make an order without the case coming before him in the usual way. I think in committee I shall be able to show some inconsistency between the orders a warden is given power to make under section 10 of the principal Act in the matter of a difference in the levies made for public purposes and for drainage works.

Question put and passed ; and committal of the Bill made an order for Tuesday next.

### COMPANIES BILL.

#### SECOND READING.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : This is a Bill to further amend the Companies Acts of 1863 to 1893, and is practically an amendment of section 35 of the Companies Act Amendment Act of 1889. Under that section the court have power in case a petition is presented for winding-up a company to order a meeting of creditors to be called, and, if they decide upon a compromise, that compromise will be binding. It was under that section that the companies which were reconstructed in the crash of 1893 called their creditors together. The section is only a transcript of a similar section in the English

Act and in the Acts of the various colonies. In 1893 we further amended that section in order to remove some doubt expressed at the time as to whether a compromise could be legally effected without a petition having been presented and a winding-up order made. It was held by three judges of the court individually that such a compromise was legal, although no order was actually made for the winding-up of the company. Some doubt was also expressed in England on the subject, and an Act was passed empowering a judge to make an order calling a meeting of creditors without a winding-up order having actually been made. This Bill is a further extension in the same direction, and is a transcript of the Act in Victoria dealing with the subject. Of course the experience of 1893 was novel to the whole of us. It was found then that there were impediments and difficulties in the way of companies calling meetings of their creditors through their having to have petitions presented against them, and having their businesses suspended before they could call such meetings. Victoria passed a measure allowing companies to call meetings of their creditors without a petition being filed, and clause 2 of this Bill practically enacts the same thing. Hon. members will understand at once that if trading companies—banks and other companies—must have petitions presented against them, and an official liquidator put in before convening a meeting of creditors, that practically means that their business must be suspended. But if this measure is passed they can call meetings of their creditors without any such inconvenience. The 3rd clause, which is also taken from the Victorian Act, provides that shareholders also may call meetings of creditors for the purpose of effecting a compromise; they are given the same powers as creditors. That is the whole object of the Bill, and I think it will be found useful if circumstances arise by which any company may be driven to take advantage of its provisions. It is of general application, and is not confined to any particular class of company. I can recommend the Bill to the House as one that can be passed with absolute safety, and I now move that it be read a second time.

Question put and passed; and committal of the Bill made an Order of the Day for Monday next.

#### SUPPRESSION OF GAMBLING BILL.

##### SECOND READING.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The object of this Bill is to put foreign newspapers, with regard to advertisements of lotteries and various other things which are declared illegal by the Suppression of Gambling Act, on the same footing as our own newspapers. By that Act newspapers published here are forbidden to publish those advertisements, but southern newspapers still print them, and the post office transmits the papers, although I believe that is to a large extent a breach of an understanding arrived at by a postal convention of the different colonies. The colonies agreed, I believe, that a simultaneous course of action, as far as the post office is concerned, should be taken with regard to this question of gambling, and Queensland was rather unbridled for not having taken an active part at the time. Subsequently, when Queensland did take an active part, it seems to me that some of our neighbours were greater backsliders than we had been previously. This Bill proposes that foreign newspapers containing those advertisements shall be treated in the same way as our own, and that it shall be unlawful to sell papers containing advertisements of that description. Provision is also made that persons carrying on

businesses which are unlawful by the law of this colony shall not be permitted to advertise those businesses in our own newspapers, or in any other newspapers which come into the colony, and power is given to the Postmaster-General to refuse to transmit through the post office papers containing such advertisements, penalties being imposed for breaches of the law. That is the whole object and purpose of the Bill. The measure has certainly been called for by the Press for some considerable time, it being urged, with some show of reason, that the law should not stifle local papers and leave the door open to foreign papers to do that which the law declares to be unlawful with regard to our own newspapers. I do not think the Bill requires any further explanation, and I move that it be now read a second time.

Mr. McDONNELL: It is my intention when the Bill gets into committee to submit an amendment in the direction of allowing charitable institutions, friendly societies, and others to carry on lotteries. I do not think it was intended when the original Act was passed that it should go so far as to prohibit lotteries in such cases, and I am sure that when I have my amendment drafted and it is submitted to the Committee, and I have placed my arguments in its favour before the Committee, they will deal with it in a generous manner. I intend to submit the amendment to the Attorney-General, and I hope he will favourably consider it. I believe that the public of Brisbane will be favourable to such an amendment.

The SPEAKER: I would remind the hon. member that he should leave his arguments in favour of the amendment until the Bill is in committee.

Mr. McDONNELL: Then I shall finish my remarks by stating that when the Bill gets into committee I intend to move the amendment. I shall support the second reading of the Bill.

The HON. J. R. DICKSON: I can hardly imagine that the Attorney-General intends to pursue this matter to a serious conclusion. Does he seriously intend to prohibit the circulation of the leading newspaper literature of Australasia in this colony simply because the advertisement of the domicile of a person doing a lottery business in some other colony is inserted in it?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: They must obey our law.

The HON. J. R. DICKSON: What right have we to interfere with the liberty of the Press elsewhere? Are we to have censors established at different places to prohibit the introduction of literature, and are we to have expurgated editions of works introduced? I am surprised that an attempt at legislation in this direction should have been introduced. Are we not to read the *Argus* and the *Australasian* or the *Bulletin*, or any other leading paper, which is now read with so much interest and instruction, simply because it contains the address of Mr. Adams, of Hobart? This Bill proposes to inflict a penalty of imprisonment and fine upon men outside the colony.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No; inside the colony.

The HON. J. R. DICKSON: Clause 3 makes it unlawful for persons to print or publish advertisements as to the whereabouts of a person carrying on an unlawful gambling business outside the colony, and how are we to prevent the circulation of these papers throughout this extensive colony? The hon. member must know that these southern papers are read with much interest here, and have an extensive circulation in this colony. The newspaper literature of the south has proportionately a greater circulation in the interior of this colony than our local newspapers. I am very sorry that our own newspapers should

be placed at this disadvantage, and I always disapproved of the restrictions placed upon them. I admit that it is desirable to prohibit immoral or indecent literature, but to interfere with the circulation of a paper because it contains the address of a person engaged in a particular vocation, is carrying the suppression of gambling to a preposterous issue. I shall be no party to such a piece of legislation, and shall oppose it. I would even go so far as to desire the repeal of these restrictions upon our own papers in regard to advertisements which are neither indecent nor immoral. I give the hon. member credit for desiring to purify the community, but at the same time it seems to me that to prohibit the circulation of the best colonial literature because it contains advertisements relating to businesses that are not legal here, is inflicting upon us who read those papers a penalty that we do not deserve. The men who read those papers are innocent of any desire to evade the original Act, but to curtail our privileges in connection with the perusal of this literature is a most arbitrary act, for which there can be no justification. If we pass this Bill we will have a censorship established such as exists in some of the Continental countries of Europe, and possibly every packet of books that arrives from Great Britain or elsewhere will be subjected to the censorship of the Postmaster-General.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Three-fourths of the books that come out are rubbish.

The HON. J. R. DICKSON: That has nothing to do with it. I believe in a thoroughly free Press, and any restriction which tends to prevent the circulation of either newspaper, literature, or books emanating from popular authors is to my mind reprehensible. The free Press has been the great glory of the mother country, and I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that I shall give the most unqualified disapproval to the proposal to read this Bill a second time.

Mr. DAWSON: It is quite refreshing to hear the vigour of the hon. member for Bulimba, and I agree with him in objecting to the proposal of this Bill, although for different reasons. My reading of the Bill is that its object is to prevent people in other colonies from doing things that people in this colony are not allowed to do. Southern papers are circulated through the post office, and contain advertisements which are an offence against the Suppression of Gambling Act, but we have no power over those papers at present, whereas if any paper published here contained similar advertisements it would be subject to a penalty. The object now is to make the publishers of those newspapers suffer the same penalty as those of the papers published in this colony, and I agree with that object, although I do not agree with the method adopted by the Attorney-General to bring it about. If we are going to put the people of Queensland on the same footing as those in other colonies we should do so in another way, and that is not by penalising papers that come from the other colonies, but by removing the restrictions from our own Press within the colony. These defects were pointed out when the Suppression of Gambling Act was going through, and I understood when the Attorney-General decided to amend that Act that he would do so by removing the restrictions from our own papers, and not by imposing them upon others. The hon. member for Bulimba pointed out that it would be a great hardship to a great number of people to be prevented from reading the *Argus* and the *Australasian*, and probably he singled those out because they may contain the best standard literature; but there are other people who think the *Referee* and the *Hawk* are the best class of literature, while many think the same of the *Sunday Times* and the *Bulletin*, all of which

contain these advertisements. Instead of imposing a penalty upon papers published in the southern colonies, it would be much better to remove the penalties imposed upon Queensland journals. If the hon. member for Bulimba continues vigorously to oppose the Bill, and his vigour takes the shape of calling for a division on the Bill, I shall vote with him against the Bill.

Mr. GRIMES: As one of those who supported the passing of the Bill for the suppression of gambling, by which we made gambling an unlawful occupation, to allow gambling advertisements to be inserted in southern papers which are circulated in this colony would be ridiculous. I am certainly in favour of placing the Queensland papers in the same position as those published in the other colonies, and I think the step taken by the Attorney-General is the right one. I do not see that this Bill will place any undue restrictions upon the Press. It would be a very easy matter for papers which contain gambling advertisements to place them all upon one sheet, and leave that sheet out of the Queensland edition.

Mr. KERR: Would that be honest?

Mr. GRIMES: I do not see that it would be dishonest, because whoever put those advertisements in would know that the law of Queensland prevented their circulation here. I rose principally to ask the Attorney-General, in view of the notice which has been given of a material amendment, not to hurriedly bring forward the Bill in committee.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I am certainly not going to bring it forward to-day.

Mr. GRIMES: Nor on Monday either, as we should have time to consider the matter. The junior member for Fortitude Valley has given notice of his intention to move an amendment excluding lotteries in connection with friendly societies from the operation of the Act, and that is of such importance that the Bill should not be taken in committee as early as Monday.

Mr. HAMILTON: The hon. member for Oxley states that last year gambling was made an unlawful occupation. Certainly it was; but that has not decreased it to any extent. The great objection at the time the Act was passed was to small sweeps, but I frequently get tickets in 1s. and 2s. sweeps in this town. Before we attempt to clean other people's houses we should sweep out our own. Betting-houses are not lawful; but I go into betting-houses in Queen street sometimes, and put £3 or £4 on a horse, and I see numbers of persons there, although it is supposed not to be allowed. We all know they are betting-houses. They are advertised, but there is not the slightest action taken to stop them. The object of this Bill, of course, is to place the papers in the other colonies on all fours with our own papers, but I would sooner do what has been proposed by the hon. members for Bulimba and Charters Towers, and remove the restrictions which have been placed upon our own papers, because it is an insult to men of intelligence to say that not only shall they not be permitted to gamble, but that we will not allow them to read papers which contain advertisements referring to a thing which is illegal in Queensland but not in any other colony. Clause 5 says that "The Postmaster-General may refuse to deliver or transmit through any post office any newspaper or other postal matter whatsoever containing any advertisement or notice in contravention of the principal Act or this Act." I do not know whether that applies to letters, but I should certainly hesitate before supporting any tampering with letters.

Mr. BROWNE: The attempts which have been made by the Government to suppress gambling always remind me of a remark made

by a rather humorous friend of mine in Normanton in order to describe an impossibility. He said that as a youngster he had heard an impossibility described as an attempt to carry three water-melons in a stirrup-leather. The Attorney-General, in attempting to stop gambling, is in the position of a man trying to carry three water-melons in a stirrup-leather. As soon as he gets the stirrup-leather round the three melons one drops out, and when he stoops to pick it up out drops another. The hon. gentleman has now got the three together again, and he is trying to get the stirrup-leather round them again. I think he is just attempting an impossibility. I agree with the hon. members for Bulimba, Charters Towers, and Cook, that the object of the Bill is all right—namely, endeavouring to place the journals published in the other colonies in the same position as our own papers; and I agree with them as to the best means of effecting that object. If we pass this Bill, next year another difficulty will crop up. We will have these people using hieroglyphics to describe themselves. Speculators in horse-racing in Queensland want to be kept posted as to the state of the market just as much as speculators in Western Australian mines, and that sort of thing. I do not think, from all I can learn, that the passing of the Act last year has made any difference in the amount of money invested in gambling in Queensland. Nearly as much money has been sent out of Queensland over the Melbourne Cup and other races this year as used to be invested in sweeps in Brisbane, though the Act may have done something in the direction of stopping the small sweeps. The provisions of the Bill are too drastic altogether. It is proposed to make it unlawful to sell papers containing a gambling advertisement. Any unfortunate man or boy who is hard up, and sells newspapers because he can find nothing else to do, will have to turn to and look through every one of those papers to make certain that there are no gambling advertisements in them, otherwise he will be liable to fine and imprisonment. In the same way other clauses in the Bill constitute other penal offences. The question with regard to letters which has been mentioned by the hon. member for Cook also struck me. Any hon. member, no matter what his opinions with regard to gambling may be, ought to be very cautious about giving power to any postmaster to detain and open letters because he has a suspicion that they contain advertisements relating to gambling. A postmaster cannot possibly tell by looking at the outside of a letter whether it contains any such advertisement or not. I think the postal authorities have power enough in that direction at present; and if there is a division I shall oppose the second reading.

Mr. CALLAN : I do not believe in gambling, but I do believe in reading the *Australasian* and the *Sydney Bulletin*. I consider the *Australasian* one of the best papers in Australia—possibly in the world; but the effect of this Bill would be to prevent that paper being sold in Queensland, because it contains an advertisement from Mr. Adams. I have the highest estimation for the mover of the Bill, but how he can think hon. members would allow such a ridiculous measure to pass the second reading passes my comprehension. The hon. member knows as well as I do that people in the bush of Queensland look forward to the weekly receipt of the *Australasian* and the *Bulletin* with the greatest pleasure; and it appears to me that he could not have thought what he was doing when he introduced this Bill. The introducer of this Bill is the strongest supporter of the totalisator, which is one of the greatest gambling things in the country, because it teaches children to gamble, and is nearly as

bad as a church bazaar. It is only a short time since a church, which the hon. gentleman and I both respect, made £10,000 in Sydney by one of those bazaars, where children are taught to gamble. Believing that members of this House generally are sensible men, I am persuaded that they will not allow such a rotten thing as this Bill to become law.

Mr. DANIELS : I should like to know whether the Minister who introduced this Bill has not a few of Tattersall's tickets in his pocket.

The SPEAKER : Order, order!

Mr. DANIELS : I may say that nearly every member has had tickets since the Gambling Act has been in force. The hon. member for Fitzroy says it is a most ridiculous Bill; and I would advise the Attorney-General to withdraw it, because any hon. member can see that it is only a waste of time. If there is any time to spare, let private members have the benefit of it.

Mr. STEWART : This is one of the most extraordinary measures ever brought before this Assembly, and I think the hon. gentleman who fathers it has found himself in the wrong country. He has already fathered one coercive measure; now he proposes to father another. So far as I can discover, his proper habitat is Russia.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : Your proper habitat is Siberia.

Mr. STEWART : No doubt if the hon. gentleman had his way with me I would be in Siberia. The hon. gentleman is a despot from the toes of his boots to the crown of his head; but he will not try any of his despotic tricks in Queensland if he is wise. He tried once already, and if he is allowed he may perhaps try again, but I warn him that it is a dangerous game. And if he is wise he will not talk about Siberia, because some of the men who are allied with him are much more deserving of the Queensland Siberia than any man on this side of the House.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : He does not like that.

Mr. STEWART : The hon. gentleman says I do not like that.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL : You make a joke. Why can't you take one in return?

Mr. STEWART : This is no joking matter; and any remark I made about the Bill is not intended as a joke. It proposes to force the law of Queensland on gambling down the throats of the other colonies—to establish a censorship on the Press of the other colonies. When any English, French, or German newspaper comes to the Russian frontier it is ripped open and read from beginning to end to see that it does not contain a sentence reflecting on his lordship the Czar. If this Bill is passed that is just what will happen here, only for a much more contemptible purpose. Every paper will be ripped open to see that it does not contain a paltry advertisement on the subject of gambling. If we are going to abolish gambling let us do so—I have not the slightest objection. I never gambled in my life; I do not intend to gamble; but when I realise that some of the men who assisted in passing the Act are the greatest gamblers in the colony I see the hypocrisy of it—hypocrisy from beginning to end. Talk about abolishing gambling when the whole political life of Queensland is one mass of gambling! What is this Queensland National Bank but a huge gamble? What are our gold mines but gambles? On what lines is almost every business in the colony conducted but upon gambling lines? And here because a person puts 2s. 6d. into a sweep he is to come within the long arm of the law. The whole thing is hypocrisy from beginning to end. I would like to ask the hon. gentleman, who is a literary man, I believe, and one who desires that the people of the colony should advance, whether he thinks

that because some influential and powerful southern papers contain gambling advertisements that it is desirable to keep them out of the territory of Queensland? Take the *Australasian*. For a farming or a mining man that paper contains most valuable information. Take the *Town and Country Journal*. If a farmer wants hints as to cultivation or markets, in nine cases out of ten he goes to that journal, and he gets free and full information on any point relating to his business; but because it contains gambling advertisements he is not to be allowed to read it in future. Take the subject of politics. There is no paper in the whole of Australia which is more forcible or clear upon that subject than the *Sydney Bulletin*, and yet if this Bill is passed into law the people of this colony will not be allowed to get the full and complete and accurate information which that journal affords upon politics, mining, and commercial subjects, because it publishes a few gambling advertisements.

Mr. DRAKE: It pokes fun at the Government.

Mr. STEWART: No doubt that is one reason why this Bill is brought forward, but it appears to me that to gain very little we are prepared to sacrifice much by this Bill. If we have to strike an average—and we are compelled by circumstances to do so—we must reject this Bill on its second reading. It may be bad that gambling advertisements are inserted in newspapers, but it is a much worse thing to deprive the people of the colony of the privilege of reading these southern newspapers which contain such a vast amount of useful information. I hope the Bill will be rejected on its second reading.

Mr. HOOLAN: I am very sorry I cannot agree with the preceding speaker, because there is justification for the introduction of a Bill of this kind. Hon. members are quite aware that the Government of the country some time back decided in its wisdom to suppress the evil of gambling, which in the opinion of many reputable persons was assuming large dimensions; so much so that it was considered a crying evil and called for immediate legislation. I was not then in my present exalted position, but I quite agree with a great deal of the agitation of the time for the suppression of gambling. What had we at that time? A system of gambling carried on in an open way from one end of the colony to another. Gambling in the daylight, gambling at night, gambling in the bazaars, the hotels, the fruitshops, the popshops, and in the barbers' shops. We found that a great portion of the businesses of the colony were turned into huge gambling saloons, to corrupt and deprave the morals of the people. I decidedly object to gambling, for the simple reason that, being an ardent politician and desirous of educating our youth in the politics of the colony, I like nothing which tends to distract their attention from so important a subject. The Government found that it was no use trying to suppress gambling without adopting stringent measures, and one of those stringent measures was the prohibition of gambling advertisements. When it is necessary for a Government to introduce legislation for the encouragement of an industry or for the suppression of a vice they should go about their business in a thorough manner. On this occasion they intended to absolutely "scotch" gambling, and there is no possibility of scotching gambling so long as gambling advertisements are inserted in the literature of the colony. Consequently, this Parliament decided to stop all gambling advertisements. I believe the hon. member for Bulimba, who spoke so strongly on this matter, was strongly in favour of the action of the Government on that occasion. The Press of the colony were what is termed "penalised." I do not say that they were penalised by the prohibition of

gambling advertisements. They can live without them. They have got to live, whatever form of advertisement is inserted. There is not a single paper in Queensland that is allowed to publish anything relating to gambling.

Mr. DUNSFORD: But they do.

Mr. HOOLAN: Then it is illegal. At any rate it is not within my knowledge, and as a newspaper proprietor I am compelled to refuse such advertisements. It would be very remarkable if the Government took steps to prevent these advertisements coming into the colony from abroad and allowed them to be printed under their own noses. The Press so far as I know have been compelled to refuse such advertisements when they have been sent from the adjoining colonies, or offered within the colony. The Government now find that while this prohibition is put upon the Press of the colony shoals of literature is coming from the adjoining colonies containing advertisements which the law of Queensland prohibits its own Press from publishing. Certainly there must be something wrong in that for hon. members to consider. We have got a law made by ourselves quite recently and after elaborate discussion. That law was not rushed through the House; it was subjected to considerable debate and amendment, and it places an embargo on the newspapers of Queensland. Yet newspapers from the adjoining colonies, where, owing to cheaper labour and cheaper material, they can turn out bigger journals, not only compete with our own in the matter of circulation, but are enabled to take gambling advertisements at large prices and distribute them right under the noses of our newspaper proprietors. That is manifestly unfair. And yet, because certain papers please certain members they are to be allowed to break the law. I have no desire to impute improper motives to the hon. member for Bulimba. He knows that gambling must be suppressed, but because certain papers printed in other colonies have superior attractions to him over the Press of this colony, the Gambling Act is to remain a dead letter. He would rather gratify his taste in the matter of pictorial or printed literature than see the law of the land carried out in its entirety. That is nothing less than narrow selfishness. If the legislature has declared against gambling it has the right to take every means to stop it. It is a very weak position to take up to set one's own petty personal gratification against a great principle, and muddle up the law of the land because it does not coincide with one little matter of everyday life. I am an admirer of some of those papers which come from the adjacent colonies containing advertisements which are in direct contravention of our law; but I do not care whether it is the *Hawk*, or the *Dead Bird*, the *Bulletin*, the *Argus*, or the *Town and Country Journal*, it would be no particular loss to Queensland if none of that literature came in. If hon. members are so desirous of doing what is right they should take steps to repeal the Gambling Act. The Government are taking steps to enforce it. Quite recently they have put themselves into a very strong position by very strictly enforcing it, and giving an object lesson to the rest of the colonies. They have compelled the police to enforce the law against a certain publican who decided, in defiance of the law, to run a gambling business in his own hotel. It was supposed the authorities would not enforce the verdict. It is satisfactory to know that they have confiscated his goods and chattels for the fine he refused to pay. That being so, it is necessary to carry out the law in its entirety, and it is certainly necessary to do something with the outside papers containing those advertisements which are prohibited to the Press of the colony. We must decide one way or the other. Some



members have their own particular organs, which defend them when they are assailed falsely by other papers or persons, praise them when they deserve it, and keep them prominently before the public in pictures and large capitals, and in print generally. But every legislator owes a duty to the entire Press of this colony, even though any particular organ may be his direct opponent. This question has an important bearing on the growing youth of the country, both male and female. It was not the males only who were becoming infected with the vice of gambling; the females were becoming as ardent gamblers as the males, and in some instances mothers were depriving their little ones of the joys and amusements so necessary to childhood in order that they might indulge their passion for gambling. Let me say here that those papers I am referring to in the southern colonies are getting double and treble the ordinary first-class advertising rates for those gambling advertisements which they circulate throughout Queensland. What must be the feeling of the newspaper proprietors here who are prohibited by law from taking such lucrative advertisements when they see them selling by hundreds in their own districts—circulating advertisements which they are prevented from taking for the public good. There must be something radically wrong in this, and it must be stopped, whether it offends the southern Press or not. The Postal Act gives the Postmaster-General power to see that these prohibited advertisements are not circulated through the post office, but when once the question arose of acting on that authority there was such an outcry against it that the provisions could not be enforced. We have proof positive that the Gambling Act is being set at naught, to the detriment not only of Queensland newspaper proprietors but of the colony generally. I shall support the Bill.

Mr. CORFIELD: The hon. member for Burke has referred to a gambling case which occurred in my district, but he is a little too late in referring to it now. I brought it under the notice of the Attorney-General some three weeks ago. What his answer was I do not feel justified in making public, but it was sufficient to give me hopes that he will cause a special inquiry to be made into it, and also into the case of another publican charged with running a slot-machine similar to those in use in Brisbane. As I have all along opposed legislation of this kind I shall continue to do so. The introduction of this Bill goes to prove that past legislation has been a failure in inducing people who have an inclination for gambling to get rid of that propensity. I admit that to be consistent the Government are quite right, in justice to Queensland newspapers, to bring outside publications to the same level; but I cannot see that this legislation will be any greater success than that which we have already passed to deal with this subject. Holding these views, I feel bound to vote against the second reading of this Bill.

Mr. DUNSFORD: I interjected just now that under the Act of 1895 gambling advertisements are still being published in the Queensland papers. I believe they are not really a breach of the Act, as by some cleverness in the wording their publication is legal. To refer to a couple, I find this advertisement in to-day's *Telegraph*—

"J. Dowridge, George street, Brisbane, has opened a branch business in Hobart, Tasmania. Please address all letters: J. Dowridge, Eldon Chambers, 16 Elizabeth street, Hobart, Tasmania."

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: That will be blocked by this Bill.

Mr. DUNSFORD: The effect of the Act has only been to prevent Dowridge carrying on his business in Brisbane, and has compelled him to open a branch business in Hobart. The people

are still gambling with Dowridge, but their money is going out of the colony now, and we find Dowridge's advertisement of his Hobart business published in a respectably daily paper like the *Telegraph*. I have taken the latest dates and I find "Tattersall's" (George Adams') advertisement, in the *Gympie Times* of yesterday. The police stopped the issue of the *Sportsman* in Brisbane for publishing the same advertisement from Adams which now appears in the *Gympie Times*, but it was afterwards discovered that the advertisement was within the four corners of the Act. The fact that Adams and Dowridge are still advertising in the colony goes to show that the gambling business is still going on, and the only effect of the Act has been to force people to send their money out of the colony. There was a fair amount of gambling going on in Charters Towers, and while I admit that the transactions on sweeps have lessened, gambling is still going on there; and I know for a fact that the Chinamen are doing a roaring business in the sale of gambling tickets which they sell from house to house. I admit that the intention to stop what is considered by some to be a crime in this country was good; but I deny that it is a crime, and I point out that though the Act may prevent poor man's gambling, it does not prevent gambling in high places—gambling in clubs, on racecourses, and on 'Change—where men may still gamble as much as they like. But if a man living in the bush has 5s. to spare, he dare not put it into an envelope addressed to George Adams for fear it should be taken from him by the post office or some other officials. Who is to be the judge as to whether an advertisement is legal or illegal? If the police authorities have made the mistake of stopping the issue of a paper for the publication of a perfectly legal advertisement, why should the Postmaster-General be made a Czar to decide whether an advertisement is legal or not? We will only be penalising ourselves under this Bill by preventing the best class of literature coming into the colony, and we will not in any way be lessening gambling. If people desire to gamble we may guarantee that they will find avenues for it, if it be even to go to the street corner on a Sunday morning and throw up their pennies. I am doubtful whether we can make people pure by Acts of Parliament, and I believe that this amending Bill will be only so much waste paper. All that the outside papers will have to do is to slightly alter the wording of the advertisements they publish, as has been done here, and they will evade the law.

Mr. STORY: I was not here when the Gambling Act was passed, and I am not sure that I would have voted for it if I were, but this is a very different matter altogether. This deals with a very much larger question in preventing the introduction of many of the best papers into this colony, simply because they contain a little advertisement that a person need take no notice of whatever. It will be a most outrageous Bill as applied to people in the country districts. For instance, in my district there are numbers of men who came originally from Victoria, Western Australia, and New South Wales, and they still get the papers they were accustomed to get in those colonies. There are as many copies of the *Town and Country Journal*, the *Argus*, and the *Australasian* subscribed for there as there are of the Queensland papers, and if the introduction of those papers is stopped because they may happen to contain a small advertisement which no one need read, there will be a regular howl of indignation out West about it. I do not think this Bill necessary, and even in the interests of common fairplay, I do not think it should be

passed. When George Adams was driven from Sydney and started in business in Brisbane, the New South Wales people did not prevent the introduction of the Queensland papers containing his advertisements. Gambling of all sorts is of daily occurrence, and it will not be affected by this Bill. I suppose that everybody knows that Adams has taken his business to Hobart and that his tickets can be got through the post. Supposing the *Graphic* and the *Illustrated London News* are transmitted through the post office, are those papers to be stopped in order to see if they contain any gambling advertisement? I cannot understand such a proposition. When I read the Bill it seemed to me to be so drastic, and likely to do so little good and probably such a large amount of harm, that I concluded it was not intended seriously, and I made up my mind to vote against the second reading of the Bill, which I shall certainly do.

Mr. FRASER: I also intend to vote against the second reading of the Bill, because I consider it interferes with the liberty of the subject. Under it you will punish ninety-nine persons for the sake of one, for I am sure that out of 100 persons reading the southern newspapers ninety-nine do not read those advertisements. I have no doubt that the stoppage of the *Sportsman* lately by the Postmaster-General is the cause of the introduction of this measure. That paper contained an advertisement stating that George Adams, Hobart, was "carrying on business as usual," but it did not say what business. Adams has a tobacconist's shop, a theatre, an hotel, and a restaurant, and yet on account of that advertisement the paper was stopped; but I believe that the matter was afterwards referred to the Attorney-General for his advice. The people who deal with George Adams do not look at those advertisements at all, for they know all about the matter, and the people who get the southern papers do not look at the advertisements. I know I do not, and I have never spent £1 with George Adams. I do not wish to prevent the southern newspapers coming into the colony, but I wish to see the local papers put on an equal footing with them. I trust the Attorney-General will withdraw the Bill rather than allow it to go to a division, for it is nothing but a piece of rot.

Mr. LEAHY: This measure follows, of course, on the legislation passed last year with regard to gambling. I assisted to pass that legislation, but I am not quite sure that I contemplated that it would finally lead to our being denied the privilege of reading the leading dailies of the southern colonies. I thought that some federal action might be taken by which there would be unanimity among the colonies on this matter, but so far that has not occurred. If there is any probability that we can force unanimity by passing this Bill, I shall be perfectly willing to support it.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I believe it will force that.

Mr. LEAHY: I see no reason to go back on my action of last year, but if this Bill is not likely to bring about unanimity among the colonies, I do not see how I can give it my support. That I should not be able to read the *Argus* or the *Sydney Morning Herald* because either of those papers should contain these advertisements is to my mind absurd. If the whole of my constituents and the people in Western Queensland were not allowed to get the *Australasian* or the *Town and Country Journal*, there would be such a rising in the country that no Ministry could stand against it. I fail to see why, if I can get the *Argus* through the post, I should not be able to buy it at Gordon and Gotch's. I know that clause 5 of the Bill says that the Postmaster-General "may" refuse to transmit

through the post office any newspaper containing certain advertisements, but I say he would not dare to stop them going through the post, and he need not do it unless he likes under this Bill. We shall, however, have to level up or level down, and put local papers and southern papers exactly in line. If you can show me that this measure will force the southern papers to come into line with our own papers in regard to advertisements concerning gambling, I shall be prepared to support the Bill; but if that cannot be shown, then I say it is unfair to the newspapers of Queensland—I am a newspaper proprietor myself, but I leave that out of the question—that southern papers should have an advantage over them in this colony, and unless the Bill will place the local papers on an equality with their southern contemporaries, I am not prepared to give it my support.

Mr. McMASTER: I think it is likely that some of the other colonies will come into line with Queensland if this measure is passed. New South Wales some time ago twitted Queensland with not having carried out the agreement come to by the Postmasters-General at the Postal Conference with regard to the suppression of gambling. When Adams was prevented from carrying on his business in New South Wales he came to Queensland, and New South Wales was constantly calling attention to that fact, and we then passed the Suppression of Gambling Act, carrying out the agreement arrived at by the Postal Conference. The hon. member for North Brisbane calls this Bill a piece of rot. I do not think it is rot; it is only endeavouring to be honest with some of our own colonists. The hon. member for Balonne and the hon. member for Bulloo have said that Western people must have the southern papers, otherwise there will be a howl of indignation. But I say, be honest with our own newspapers. Why should the southern papers be allowed to do as they are doing at the expense of the Queensland Press? It simply means that we are encouraging a certain class of people to look for the advertisements which are prohibited in Queensland. The hon. member for North Brisbane says he never looks for them. But there are other persons who do look for them, and we are encouraging, or at least certain members of this House are encouraging, the introduction of those papers into Queensland, so that those persons can see racing and all sorts of gambling advertisements. If people from Victoria, South Australia, and other colonies are anxious to read the southern papers, and the proprietors of those papers wish to circulate them in Queensland, there is nothing to prevent them issuing a Queensland edition. I do not think we have any right to allow other newspapers to come into the colony, and increase their circulation, if they contain these advertisements, at the expense of the papers of Queensland; but if we are going to allow them to come in we ought to allow the Queensland papers to publish these advertisements also. If we do that we might as well repeal the Suppression of Gambling Act that was passed by a majority of this House last year; but if we pass this Bill, the proprietors of southern papers will either have to issue Queensland editions, or cease to publish these advertisements. I shall support the second reading, and hope it will be carried.

Mr. DRAKE: If my memory serves me rightly, the Act passed last year occupied a considerable amount of time in consequence of a difference of opinion between this House and the Council. An exemption clause was introduced in the Bill, which we made an attempt to expunge, and which was struck out by the Council, but it was inserted again here. It is very late in the session, and we have already had one difference with the Council, which took

up a great deal of time, and if we are going to have another over this Bill we will probably be sitting here until Easter. In view of that, I would ask the Attorney-General, when he is replying, whether the Government intend to accept the amendment foreshadowed by the hon. member for the Valley, Mr. McDonnell.

**THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS:** I think it will be admitted by everyone that if the effect of this Bill will be to exclude from Queensland the high-class papers which are published in the southern colonies, it would be a considerable disadvantage to the colony, and a matter which would be deplored by a very large section of the community. But we have legislation upon this subject, and although at that time I was a private member and an opponent of the Act, I have no doubt as to the proper course for me to pursue now. Even if I were not a member of the Government I would support this Bill. There are two ways in which the local papers and the foreign papers may be placed on the same footing; one is to pass this Bill and exclude southern papers which contain these advertisements, and the other to remove the restriction which now exists in regard to Queensland papers. I opposed the Gambling Act last year, but I am one of those who bow to the will of the majority, and I recognise the fact that if we are to have legislation of this sort it should be consistent and complete and not half-hearted. I think that if the restriction that now exists in regard to Queensland papers were removed it would go a very long way to subvert the object which the legislature had in view last year, and for that reason the proper course is to pass this Bill and give due effect to that object, always provided that we are to have an anti-gambling Act at all. I have thought it necessary to make these remarks, seeing the attitude I adopted last year, and believing that I cannot do otherwise than as I am doing.

**THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION:** This question seems a very simple one, and I shall support the Bill. Last year we passed a law and our citizens are not allowed to contravene that law, and is it reasonable that we should allow citizens of other colonies to do so?

**MR. DAWSON:** How can you prevent them?

**THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION:** By this Bill. It is quite probable that if a Bill of this sort is passed it will be the first step to cause the neighbouring colonies to fall into line. We have the alternatives of stopping these papers or not passing this Bill; but there is another alternative, and very probably it will be taken. The proprietors of the *Argus* or the *Bulletin* are persons who do not, I believe, publish these papers out of mere philanthropy; if they did not pay they would not publish them. I do not expect they get very much for printing these advertisements, and if we pass this Bill those proprietors, as men looking after their own interests, will say that in consequence of recent legislation in Queensland, they will not publish these advertisements any more. Instead of these papers being circulated here in spite of the Act, and an outrageous injustice being done to the local publishers, we shall effect our object without any friction at all, and the legislation we have passed will be effective. Outside people will not publish these advertisements, and our people will not either, so the law will be obeyed. The present position is perfectly intolerable and most unjust. It is our business to see that the Act is carried out fairly, not only by our own people but by those who are taking advantage of our machinery to evade our laws. They are violating a law which our people are compelled to observe, and we are providing them with machinery which lands us many thousands

a year on the wrong side of the ledger in the post office, to help them to violate it. Either the Act should be repealed, or this addition should be made on the score of justice and fair play to our own citizens.

**MR. STUMM:** It might be assumed from the discussion which has taken place that if the Bill passes it will stop people from getting such papers as the *Australasian*, *Argus*, and other first-class papers, but that will not happen at all. They will bring out Queensland editions, omitting those advertisements. They know their business, they have a big circulation in Queensland, and they will not lose it. There is no doubt the Bill is the logical outcome of the legislation passed last session. Either we must allow that legislation to be treated as a dead letter, and submit to seeing ourselves defied by people in the other colonies—men who have been hunted out of every colony in Australia except one—out of every decent colony.

**AN HONOURABLE MEMBER:** No.

**THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION:** Out of all the larger colonies, at any rate.

**MR. STUMM:** Well, I will say out of every sensible colony. We should not allow ourselves to be defied, and it is not fair to the papers in this colony that other papers should be allowed to disregard our law. I deny that our legislation has been a failure. On Gympie, whenever an important race was held in Brisbane, Sydney, or Melbourne, local sweeps were got up at once, and they were so well patronised that the proprietors actually engaged a public hall in which to conduct their drawings. It was a common thing to see young girls and boys, and sometimes women with infants in their arms, attending those places and taking part in the drawings. It was a most demoralising sight.

**MR. CALLAN:** Nearly as bad as church bazaars.

**MR. STUMM:** I do not stand up for church bazaars, but I say it was a most demoralising sight. I presume the same thing occurred in other towns in the colony. I know that the Act that was passed stopped it on Gympie, and I hope that whatever is done the Attorney-General will never consent to bring in a Bill repealing that Act.

**MR. NEWELL:** I would just like to say why I intend to vote for this Bill if it should go to a division. We have an anti-gambling Act on our statute-book, and it is evident that that Act requires this Bill to make it complete. If a Bill were brought in to repeal the principal Act altogether I might vote for that; but as we have the Act, and it is necessary to make it complete, I shall vote for the Bill.

**MR. SMITH:** I do not wish to give a silent vote on the subject, because I intend to vote against the Bill. If we are to be prohibited from having the best Press in the world admitted into our homes because of some little advertisements, we are going in the wrong direction. I should be sorry to see such papers as the *Argus* and *Australasian*, the *London Times*, or any of those great publications prohibited from Queensland readers.

**THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** The *Times* does not publish these advertisements, neither does the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

**MR. SMITH:** It applies to all papers throughout the world.

**THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** Respectable papers would not publish them.

**MR. SMITH:** Hon. members generally have spoken in a very protective way of the Press of Queensland. I am a freetrader as regards literature. We should have as much of it as possible. We should give our people the opportunity of reading the leading papers of the world, instead of confining them to the local Press. We should not only allow them to have

such publications sent to them, but we should encourage them. If the Bill is passed, we may safely say that the best papers in the colonies will be excluded from Queensland. If the Bill would compel the other colonies to fall into line with Queensland in regard to the suppression of gambling, I would vote for it; but it will not have that effect. The Press of the other colonies is not at all likely to issue special Queensland editions, or to refuse these advertisements in order to allow their papers to be circulated in Queensland. It will be a great mistake to shut out such papers as I have referred to, and, taking that view of the matter, I cannot see my way to vote for the second reading of the Bill.

**THE HOME SECRETARY:** If hon. members are logical, they will have to vote against a Bill dealing with indecent advertisements, because the papers down south publish indecent advertisements. The Commissioner of Police informs me that there is no more difficult thing for him to do than to administer Acts in regard to which the legislature shows a disposition to pass resolutions contrary to the spirit of the Act. Hon. members will remember that five or six months ago the Home Secretary was made the special butt of several newspapers for being unable to carry out the law. We could not carry out the law on account of the absence of the necessary machinery. This Bill is an evidence of our determination to give effect to the expressed wish of both Houses of Parliament.

**MR. SMITH:** The remedy is worse than the disease.

**THE HOME SECRETARY:** I am satisfied that if the Bill is not passed, no Home Secretary will be able to administer the principal Act. It would be impossible for him to proceed against a Queensland paper for publishing a gambling advertisement whilst similar advertisements were allowed to be circulated through the medium of papers published in the other colonies. No bench of magistrates would inflict a fine in such a case. If the House is determined that it will not place all papers on the same footing, then the logical sequence is to repeal the Gambling Act, and I am certainly not inclined to do that. I have seen the ills which resulted prior to the passing of the Act, and I hope that that measure will long remain on our statute-book in the interests particularly of the youth of this colony.

**MR. BELL:** I move that the debate be now adjourned.

**THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** This afternoon was set apart for the advancement of measures considered to be not of a contentious nature. This Bill has received far more opposition than I anticipated, and I think it is better that the debate should be adjourned. I would propose that it be adjourned till Monday, and that if the Bill is brought on again it shall not be brought on till after 7 o'clock.

**MR. DUNSFORD:** That means "put it in its little coffin."

**MR. DRAKE:** It seems to me that there is a good deal to be said against this motion. From what I have heard, hon. members are prepared to go to a division; and if the Bill is of a contentious nature I cannot see any advantage in postponing it till Monday. I can assure the Government that there are other Bills on the paper which they may think non-contentious, but which will not be found so, and I give the hon. gentleman fair warning that I do not regard the Federal Council Bill as non-contentious. This is supposed to be an off-night. There are very few members here, and these Bills are being put through as a sort of formal matter. I object to that system of carrying on legislation. In the year 1885, on the 2nd October, the leader of the Opposition wanted to know exactly what business was to be brought before the House; and

the Premier, Sir S. W. Griffith, said the business had been brought down in the ordinary course, and all the business that would be presented that session was then on the notice-paper. That was the way business was conducted—

**THE SPEAKER:** Order! I fail to see what that has to do with the motion for the adjournment of this debate.

**MR. DRAKE:** The only connection is this: No notice was given of this new departure till yesterday. Previous to yesterday, if hon. members asked the Government to sit on Fridays, the Government refused; but yesterday, all of a sudden, the Ministerial mind changed, and the Government decided to sit on Friday and Monday, and do nothing but Government business.

**THE SPEAKER:** Order! I fail to see the relevancy of the hon. member's remarks. That question was amply discussed on the motion for sitting on Fridays, and the hon. member's remarks are not at all relevant to the question of the adjournment of the debate.

**MR. DRAKE:** I am coming exactly to the point now. The Government say they will go down this list of Bills and get the House to consent to pass measures so far as they will without discussion; and as soon as there is opposition shown they will get a friend to move the adjournment of the debate, and these measures will be postponed till some other time. That is not the proper way of carrying on the business of the country. The Premier the other day used the word "tomfoolery." It is little short of tomfoolery—

**THE SPEAKER:** Order! The hon. member is again transgressing. When the Premier used that word I called him to order. I now call the hon. member to order for referring to a previous debate, more especially as the expression to which he referred was then ruled out of order.

**MR. DRAKE:** I will just say briefly that I object to the adjournment of the debate. The Bill was brought up for discussion to-day, and we should take the discussion.

**MR. DAWSON:** It was my impression that we were to sit to-day in order that a certain number of Bills of special urgency might be got through.

**THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** Non-contentious measures.

**MR. DAWSON:** Now we find that this Bill has lost its urgency when there is a very strong opposition shown on both sides. I think it would be better to go on with the second reading, which will not take very long, because hon. members have displayed throughout the afternoon a disposition to condense their remarks as much as possible. I do not think it will take long to come to a decision and then we shall know to-night whether we shall go any further with the Bill or drop it altogether. I certainly think the action of the Government gives colour to the suspicion that the adjournment is moved for the reason that if they go on with the Bill to-night those against it will be in the majority. I do not think that is any reason why we should postpone the debate. If the House is against the Bill let those who are present take the responsibility.

**MR. TURLEY:** I am surprised that we should be asked to come here on extra days, and after a considerable number of members have spoken on the Bill the Government get one of their supporters to move the adjournment and thus cause a waste of time by having that motion discussed. They do not want to be placed in the position of having one of their Bills thrown out. I think it is better to confine the sittings to three days a week than conduct business in this way. This Bill was supposed to be non-contentious, but I hardly know of any measure which could be more contentious. It is one upon which

there is a great difference of opinion outside the House, and I doubt very much whether, if Queensland was polled to-day, you would find a majority in favour of it. If there is so much difference of opinion outside, then it certainly should be a most contentious measure inside the House. The discussion on this measure has occupied more time this afternoon than the two measures which preceded it. I think we should take a division upon the Bill instead of adjourning the debate in order to give the Government an opportunity of getting a sufficient number of their supporters here to carry the second reading.

Mr. BROWNE: There is one very strong reason why this debate should not be adjourned. It is admitted that the newspapers of Queensland are labouring under a very great disability; that they are being penalised; and that is a very good reason why we should come to a decision on this question at once. If the Bill is defeated, then the Government would have time to introduce a short measure next week to relieve the Queensland newspapers of the disability under which they are suffering. On the other hand, if we leave the matter over until next week, and the Bill happens to be defeated, we would be in the same position as we are now.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: That will be the result if it is defeated. There will be no other Bill brought in.

Mr. BROWNE: Then that gives colour to the belief that it is being postponed in order to give Government supporters an opportunity of being here. If members do not choose to be in their places I do not see that the business of the House should be delayed for that reason.

Mr. KIDSTON: The Attorney-General has just given the very best reason why the House should not consent to the adjournment. He says if the Bill is defeated there will be no further attempt to deal with the matter this session.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Of course there will not. It would be perfectly absurd.

Mr. KIDSTON: There is an element of pharisaism about the whole thing, and I should very much have liked to have been in the House when the original measure was introduced.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is now discussing the Bill itself. The question is the adjournment of the debate.

Question put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 23.

Messrs. Byrnes, Philp, Tozer, Foxton, Dalrymple, Smith, Pinney, Jackson, McDonnell, Bell, Collins, Leahy, Battersby, Bridges, Stumm, Newell, Grimes, Crombie, Lord, Stodart, Castling, McMaster, and Annear.

NOES 21.

Messrs. Glassey, Cross, Dunsford, Fitzgerald, Hoolan, Kerr, Dawson, King, Sim, Turley, Dickson, O'Connell, Callan, Fraser, Story, Dibley, Browne, McDonald, Drake, Kidston, and Stewart.

Resolved in the affirmative; and resumption of the debate made an Order of the Day for Monday next.

## ELECTRIC LIGHT AND POWER BILL.

### SECOND READING.

The HOME SECRETARY: I take it for granted, in proposing this Bill to the House, that hon. members know the legislation that has taken place on this subject in the mother country. In this Bill legislation on this, what scientists call unknown quantity, has been brought up to date. It is a summary of the measures in force in England, with one or two exceptions adapted to our local conditions. Hon. members will therefore first have this standard to go upon: that this is not altogether tentative legislation. It has been proved and has worked well in other places. Hon. members will also be aware that in connection with the kindred substance used for lighting—gas—whenever you want to get provision for a supply of gas you have

to apply to Parliament on each occasion for a separate Bill. The consequence is that there have been a variety of Bills passed, all conferring different rights. Each Bill has been drawn privately—they are all private Bills—and in some instances the persons who have got those private Bills through in times gone by have really got a monopoly in the places to which those Bills apply. That being the state of affairs with regard to gas, it became necessary for the Government, as electricity is likely to be used to a much larger extent than in the past, to see what its power was, and whether it could protect the public from the ill-use of this power. I may state at once that at present there is nothing whatever controlling it. This Bill does not attempt to deal with the supply of electricity by private persons on their own premises; but when they go outside their own premises, and make arrangements to sell electricity to others, they will be interfering in some degree with the public safety, and some provision must be made for their protection. Although some of the provisions of this measure may be modified in committee, there is no doubt that on the second reading the general principle will be admitted that the State has a right to control this matter just in the same manner as it controls gunpowder or dynamite. For really nobody knows yet the particular dangers that may lurk in this new factor of our daily lives. The tramway company are now proposing to get an Order in Council to work a very powerful system of electricity, and without some method such as this to regulate it there may be danger; hence the urgency of the Bill. The greatest care must be taken in looking after this unknown element, which is likely to affect those persons who have to use the telephone and telegraph lines. More than that, this electricity flows through the ground from one place to another, and if uncontrolled will carry away the iron of gas and water pipes. The general principle of the Bill is that in dealing with this matter there must be a head, one controlling and regulating power in the interests of the safety of the general community. Everyone who wants to deal with electricity outside his own premises, to sell it for a profit, must, whether it be a local authority or a private person, get what is called an Order in Council. That is, the Executive of the colony must inquire into all the circumstances, and see that by that Order in Council everything is provided which will ensure public safety. I need hardly say that all existing rights are preserved. Everybody who has been working at electricity, and who may by that means have got some vested rights, is protected by this Bill. It is not intended to take from anybody anything they have. The Bill also provides as a general principle that the first claim for the supply of electricity shall be vested in those governing bodies who are called local authorities. No order is to be given, except under very special circumstances, to any private person unless the local authority has been thoroughly consulted and has given its assent, except where the local authority unreasonably withholds its assent, as it might if it were a large gas proprietor. Then the general power comes in to inquire into the case, and if the order ought to be granted, no matter whether there is opposition to it or not by the local authority, it shall be granted. I need hardly say that so exceptional a case will hardly arise. This really is a Bill which vests in local authorities the necessary power to provide electricity for the convenience of their ratepayers, and it gives them the power to do what they have not the power to do now, and that is, to supply it to the public at a price. It is therefore a step in advance in the matter of local government legislation.

Mr. DAWSON: The local authorities need not be asked.

The HOME SECRETARY: The consent of the local authorities must be obtained in all cases, but where it is unreasonably withheld the matter is to be decided by the Executive. For instance, the Brisbane Municipal Council may say they cannot or will not supply electricity, and some person or company may desire to undertake to supply it within a certain area—say, to all the houses in a certain block. They must advertise their intention, and seek the consent of the local authority, and if that consent is unreasonably withheld the Executive is applied to and decides whether it is wise to give the powers asked for. If they consider it is wise to do so then the company is constituted an electric authority and comes under the provisions of this Bill as to its operations. There are many cases, especially in mining towns, where the proprietors of different mines may desire to combine for the purpose of working their mines and batteries by electric light. They may have to take their wires across lands belonging to other people, or they may carry out their work in such a manner as to be highly dangerous to themselves and to the public. Under this Bill they will apply for an Order in Council constituting them an electric authority, and their operations will be carried on under the provisions of this Bill, in the interests of the public safety. The Government have got from England the very best electrical authority they could get to advise them in dealing with this matter, and his opinion is that it is essential that the State shall take charge, as it is quite impossible to leave the charge of this matter to any one or any number of local authorities. Not only that, but the Government are such large users of electricity that it is necessary to protect the rights of the State as a whole. There is no doubt, for instance, if the telephone and telegraph wires are to be protected, arrangements must be made for return circuits, otherwise the use of electricity for trams would, where the wires are laid in alluvial soil, affect the telephone and telegraph wires. As hon. members will see, the provision constituting electric authorities does away with the necessity for an Act of Parliament in each case, and prevents a great deal of expense and loss of time. So far as I know at present, the only local authority asking for powers under this Bill is the local authority at Croydon. They are anxious to get an Order in Council under this Bill so that they may apply electricity for lighting and for various other purposes.

Mr. DAWSON: There is a company on the Towers already at work.

The HOME SECRETARY: The company on Charters Towers have already acquired a vested right which this Bill preserves; but, like everybody else, they will have to be guided by the general provisions of this Bill, because the very best experts in electricity acknowledge the danger of its use, and Mr. Hesketh will keep us advised as to the dangers experienced in other places in the use of electricity. I draw attention to the various parts of the Bill. The second part deals with the constitution of electric authorities; the third with their powers, duties, and obligations; the fourth provides for the protection of Government telegraph lines; the fifth deals with the supply of electricity and recovery of charges; the sixth with the purchase of undertakings by local authorities; and the remainder of the Bill with regulations and by-laws, offences, and general provisions. I may say that the Bill has been very carefully drawn, and Mr. Hesketh has given it his personal attention in the application of his knowledge of the subject to local conditions. The Bill has not been delayed by any means, as it was drafted as far back as July last. It has

been discussed in another place, where there are men of scientific attainments, and they remitted it to a select committee, where the evidence of persons who had anything to say on the matter was heard. The Legislative Council have made some alterations in the Bill which I think will be found to be beneficial. We can deal with the details of the measure in committee, and I now ask hon. members to pass the second reading.

Mr. GLASSEY: The Home Secretary has told us that this Bill was introduced in another place in July last.

Mr. DAWSON: No; drafted.

Mr. GLASSEY: I understood the hon. gentleman to say that it was introduced in the Council in July last. If that be so, considering the dimensions of the Bill, this House should have had an opportunity of discussing the second reading before the 5th December. It deals with an exceedingly important subject, and contains no less than sixty-four clauses and a large schedule. Is it fair or reasonable that we should be asked to consider a measure of such importance and such magnitude at this late period of the session? While I am by no means anxious that the Bill should be rejected on the second reading, because I am in favour of the principle of the measure, I absolutely decline to discuss it in detail at this late period of the year. The hon. gentleman stated that the Tramway Company had applied to the Governor in Council for an order.

The HOME SECRETARY: They have got it.

Mr. GLASSEY: The hon. gentleman told us that that company might place their works in some place where they would be likely to be dangerous to the community. But surely there is sufficient sense, ability, and humanity in the Executive authority to see that no local body placed their works in such a way that they would be dangerous to life or property. I am sure that the Home Secretary would not allow such an order to be granted without fencing it round with every possible safeguard in the interests of the people; and if he was not satisfied on any legal point he could consult with his colleague, the Attorney-General. I believe that the utmost facility should be given for supplying cheap lighting to the people, and that if a Bill is passed on broad, rational lines it will ultimately prove a benefit to the community. With respect to the powers proposed to be given to local authorities, that is a matter of great importance, and should be fully considered. I shall say nothing further at this stage of the Bill, but I tell the hon. gentleman and the Government that if they expect an important measure like this to be rushed through in the manner we are asked to rush this Bill through, they will find that they are mistaken.

Mr. McMASTER: I agree to a great extent with the hon. member for Bundaberg. I contend that a Bill of this importance ought to have been brought before the House earlier in the session; and I go further and say that such an important measure should have been introduced in this Chamber, and not in the Upper House. This Bill very closely affects every member in this House, because it applies to every local authority in the colony. I characterise the Bill as a Bill to protect certain companies, and to curtail the powers of local authorities.

The HOME SECRETARY: What company does it protect?

Mr. McMASTER: The 5th clause of the Bill protects any person who has got any electric wire stretched over any part of a town or city.

The HOME SECRETARY: Whatever permission was given in Brisbane you gave.

Mr. McMASTER: We did not give permission to the gentleman to whom the hon. gentleman refers. As far as my memory serves me the

only permission given in Brisbane was given for the Opera House many years ago. The Government have continually set themselves against introducing in a Bill to give the Brisbane Municipal Council, along with other towns, authority to light the municipality with electricity. In 1890 the Brisbane council went so far as to call for tenders for supplying electricity to the city of Brisbane, but we were then told by the present Chief Justice, Sir Samuel Griffith, that we must have an Act of Parliament. We got a Bill introduced, but it had to be brought in by a private member. The hon. member for Enoggera had charge of it, but like many other measures it was slaughtered among the innocents. Since then we have been at the Government almost week after week trying to get a Bill introduced, and this is what has come forth. I hope that if this Bill passes its second reading it will not come out of committee in anything like its present form. At all events, I intend to give some portions of it my most strenuous opposition. Clauses have been cut out of the old Bill, and others purposely inserted to give certain companies the privilege of going to the Government and getting an Order in Council in defiance of the local authority. The Home Secretary said the company applying for the order had first to get the permission of the local authority, but that is not so. There are clauses in the Bill which provide that any company or person who may have wires stretched before a certain period can go to the Government and get an order without any opposition or without acquainting the local authority, which will have to stand by while its streets are cut up, and, if they employ a surveyor to superintend the work, they must pay him themselves. I am aware that it is desirable that a Bill should be introduced to protect the public, but it should have been introduced earlier in the session, so that we might have had more opportunities of discussing it. If we pass the second reading to-night, we shall be asked to go into committee on Monday, and I shall offer considerable opposition to some clauses if they are not amended. I question very much if the electric light is the best for lighting cities. From what I have seen and heard I think the incandescent gas light is far superior, and I was informed that in Sydney, where one side of a street was lighted in this manner and the other side by electricity, the incandescent light was far better. Whether that is so or not, I think the Government has no right to take away the authority of local bodies inch by inch, and then turn round and ask why the council do not keep the streets in better repair. Many clauses of this Bill give powers to the Postmaster-General, who will soon rule everything. I am speaking in the interests of those who sent me here, and I think it is the duty of every hon. member to see that no injustice is done to the local authorities. I hope the Home Secretary was not sincere in the statements he made; I am afraid he has been misled, because I can assure him that the Brisbane council has given no authority to people to use the electric light in Brisbane, except on one occasion, within the last few months, when an application was made to take a wire into the Opera House.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Nobody has power to give authority now.

Mr. McMASTER: I am not sure about that. I am not quite certain that the mayor of Brisbane has not power to order wires stretched across the streets to be cut down.

The SPEAKER: I would remind the hon. member that this is purely a local matter, which has nothing whatever to do with the principle Bill.

Mr. McMASTER: I know I have been drawn a little, but I am better acquainted with what has taken place in Brisbane than the hon. member. I know there is a company constructing works at Charters Towers, and that the Warwick and Rockhampton companies have got authority, and if those companies choose to make application, which no doubt they will do, and get orders from the Government, the municipalities will have to play second fiddle to them, because two companies will not pay. Any hon. member who reads clause 5 of the Bill will see that that is the case. We have heard a good deal about municipal councils having control of gas and water; but the Government are taking all their powers away from them, and at the rate we are going on the municipal councils will be only rate collectors and tax gatherers. By-and-by the Government will take up the work of cleaning the streets, which might not be an unmixed evil. Hon. members seem to be discussing this Bill in a jocular manner; but I cannot treat it in that way, because I know of cases in which Bills have been so dealt with, and they have had to be amended the next session. We had a case of that kind this afternoon in the Gambling Bill. What applies to the municipal council of Brisbane applies to every local authority in the colony. I look upon this Bill with a good deal of suspicion. It should be closely studied by every hon. member. I quite agree with the Home Secretary that it will be necessary to afford some protection, because man and beast will be in danger if we have wires in our streets. It appears to me that any company which comes to Brisbane with anything novel has only to get the ear of the Government and it can do any blessed thing it pleases in our streets. If the Bill gets into committee, I hope that I shall receive some assistance in introducing a large number of amendments. If no amendments are going to be made, the Bill will have my most strenuous opposition.

Mr. BROWNE: I quite agree with a great deal that has fallen from the hon. member for Bundaberg, and also from the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, as to the necessity for introducing the Bill a good deal earlier in the session. I was surprised to find the hon. member for Fortitude Valley such a stickler for the rights of local authorities. I would not for a moment say that the members of local government bodies outside Brisbane have anything like the brains of the members of the Brisbane Municipal Council. That cannot be expected. But I may say that during the last two years the municipal council of Croydon have been endeavouring to get authority for lighting that town with electricity. Under our present Local Government Act they have not been able to carry out their object, as under that Act local authorities have no power to take control of the lighting. Since the Bill was introduced in another place, I have sent a copy of it to the municipal council of Croydon, and, so far from their considering that it took away their rights, they at once requested me to find out whether there was any possibility of its passing this session. They have had plans for the electric lighting of the town ready for twelve months, and they are quite content with the Bill.

Mr. McMASTER: They will come under the 5th clause.

Mr. BROWNE: I am speaking of the municipality. It is all very well for the hon. member to give his opinion upon the superiority of gas and incandescent burners, and so on; but he should remember that many places in the colony have no gas, and they cannot go to the expense of getting it, although they might get it free from their members. They cannot get the coal.



I think vested rights are at the bottom of a great deal of these troubles, and I dare say vested rights are influencing the opposition to the Bill. In many places where there is no gas, there is not the slightest doubt electric lighting will be the cheapest and best. In the Northern parts of the colony—more especially in a town like Croydon—electric lighting is more suitable for the climate. It does not give out heat, and there is not the same risk of fire that there is in connection with gas or kerosene. Gas is an impossibility in that part of the world. At the same time, while I would like to see the Bill passed, if a majority of members are of opinion that we have not been given sufficient time for consideration, in spite of the promise to do what I could to get the Bill through, I would protest against its being hurried through. I have read the Bill very carefully. The hon. member for Fortitude Valley says that he has no doubt that very few local authorities have seen the Bill. I dare say a good many local authorities do not see any of the Bills we pass unless their representatives take the trouble that I did in connection with this Bill, and send them copies. If the Bill goes to its second reading I shall support it, and in committee I shall support any hon. member who knows more about the subject than I do in any amendments he may bring forward.

Mr. ANNEAR: I feel somewhat disappointed at the way in which the Home Secretary introduced the Bill. Legislation of this kind should emanate from the representatives of the people. This Bill is of great importance to many towns in Queensland. I believe it is of great importance at the present time to that great town in the North—Charters Towers. And from what I have heard the people there are not unanimous on this Bill. We all know how fluently and ably the Home Secretary can introduce a Bill; but I do not think he was more than five or ten minutes in moving the second reading of this, and that being the case I am not in possession of that information which I would like to have before I decide how I shall vote on this important measure. I have learned a good deal from the most able and impressive speech of the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, who is a great authority on local government in this colony. I agree with the hon. member for Bundaberg. We are at the end of the session, the weather is very hot, and here is a Bill brought in from another place containing sixty-four clauses and a schedule. To give this Bill the attention it deserves on the second reading would require at least two sittings. And I think that after the principle of a Bill of 100 clauses has been affirmed on the second reading it ought to go through committee in two or three hours. This Bill is of great importance to all the towns in the colony; and seeing that nearly half the members have returned to their homes—seeing also that legislation of this kind should emanate from the Premier—I shall vote against the second reading if it goes to a division. I trust, however, that the Home Secretary, who is always amenable to reason, will withdraw the measure, and introduce it again at an early period of next session.

Mr. FRASER: I think it is premature to bring this Bill forward until such time as the new Local Government Bill is introduced, because the commission that inquired into that matter made some recommendations in connection with the question of electric lighting, and that would be the proper time to consider this Bill. The Home Secretary spoke about the Brisbane Municipal Council giving the right to a company to run electric light cables; but the council did nothing of the kind. As far back as 1888, when permission was asked by Barton and White to run a wire to the rear of the Opera House, the mayor said he had no objection as long as they

ran it at their own risk. In 1891 they asked permission to fix an electric lamp in Queen street in front of Mr. Anderson's restaurant, and the mayor told them he had no objection as long as they did it at their own risk. In 1895, when I had the honour of being in the chair, they asked permission to run a wire to Roma street, and this reply was sent—

"I have the honour to inform you that your letter of the 18th December, seeking permission to run an electric cable line on poles from the Town Hall Reserve in Albert street to the cooling-room at the Roma-street market, has been considered, and I am directed to inform you that the council has no power to grant such permission."

Some time afterwards Messrs. Barton and White went insolvent, and we found that the trustee was advertising the sale of the plant and goodwill of the business. In consequence of that we caused the following letter to be sent to the trustee:—

"Attention was drawn at the last meeting of the city council to your advertisement as trustee in the estate of Messrs. Barton and White, inviting tenders for the purchase of the plant used in supply of electric light and power and the goodwill of existing contracts. It was considered advisable that I should point out to you, with a view to avoiding possible complications hereafter, that Messrs. Barton and White were not possessed of any but an assumed right to carry their wires from place to place throughout the city for the purpose of supplying light and power; and therefore, in disposing of the goodwill of contracts, you would virtually be selling something which has no existence, inasmuch as the purchasers might be compelled at almost any moment to remove the whole of the wires fixed by Messrs. Barton and White."

Of course, I am speaking as a Brisbane man, though I know the Bill is a general Bill. I would not like to oppose the second reading, but I have some amendments to move in committee. I understand that even if the municipal council undertook the electric lighting of the city of Brisbane under the Bill, there is nothing to prevent a private company coming in at the same time and supplying electric light. I do not think that is right. Another thing, a company might get authority from the Government to run the electric light, and the municipal council might be ignored altogether; and we would have to give notice to the company when we wanted to repair our own streets. If that sort of thing is allowed, the city of Brisbane might as well be handed over to the Government, because the aldermen would simply occupy the position of common scavengers and street-cleaners.

Mr. BATTERSBY: I understand that this Bill has been asked for by a great many towns in the outside districts, such as Charters Towers, Ravenswood, and others; and I think it ought to go to the second reading, and be amended in committee if necessary. I am prepared to help the city of Brisbane, but not at the cost of outside settlements. To my mind Charters Towers is of more importance to the colony than the city of Brisbane; and there are other places as important as Brisbane.

Mr. DRAKE: It has become evident that this Bill is of a highly contentious character, and I think it is to be deplored that the Government should bring down measures of such importance at such a late period of the session. As the hon. member for Bundaberg has pointed out, it is quite impossible for members to properly study a Bill involving such an amount of detail in such a short time. I do not profess to deal with the subject from the technical standpoint of the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, but I do know that in the past a great deal of money has been wasted in consequence of methods of lighting being carried out which were found afterwards to be unsuitable. Electricity has been laid by means of overhead wires, and after a great deal of expense and trouble



a different system more profitable and less dangerous to the public has had to be adopted. This is a kind of off-night, when there are not many members present; and taking all these matters into consideration, I move, in order to give an opportunity for fuller discussion, that the debate be adjourned.

Mr. DANIELS: It is only waste of time to go on with this Bill. Every member who has spoken has said that he proposes to move amendments in it. We are drawing near the close of the session; hon. members have been refused time to go on with their private business, and I therefore do not think that such a contentious measure should be proceeded with.

The HOME SECRETARY: I brought this Bill on to advance it a stage, because I did not think any person would object to its general principle; but I pointed out that the details could be thoroughly gone into in committee. This Bill has been before Parliament since August. It has been published in the records of the Legislative Council for all that time, and hon. members have had the advantage of seeing all the available scientific opinion in the colony brought to bear on the measure. The Council, in order to focus for the information of hon. members, all the light that could be obtained on the subject, referred the Bill to a select committee, and availed themselves not only of the evidence of men of local experience, but even brought witnesses from Charters Towers and elsewhere.

Mr. DAWSON: Still the Bill is contentious.

The HOME SECRETARY: The Bill is contentious solely from the North Brisbane Municipal Council's point of view. I will read an extract from the evidence given before the Council committee, showing the necessity of the Bill. Mr. Hesketh was asked—

"Do you consider it necessary that further legislation should take place to protect the interests of the public, and of the gas and other companies?"

Mr. McMASTER: Of course, he is a Government servant.

The HOME SECRETARY: He is a gentleman who has just come out here, and it is not likely he is going to prostitute his high reputation by saying what is not true. I cannot imagine why there should be such a base suspicion against any man. His answer to that question is—

"Very necessary indeed, equally so in both traction and lighting. As regards electric traction, there is a possible trouble to the gas and water industries, and if there is an unrestricted use of high pressure there is a possible danger to the public."

That is the evidence of a most competent and trained man. Mr. Callander, another expert from Charters Towers, was asked—

"Does this Bill meet with your approval or disapproval? Speaking generally, it meets with my most cordial approval as a Bill which will do a great deal to assist in the development of electric lighting."

Even the mayor of North Brisbane said the Bill was a good one, with the objection that it took away the exclusive monopoly of the municipal council. Under the circumstances of course I cannot consent to the debate being adjourned. I have done my duty in warning the House of the urgency of the measure, and hon. members must accept the responsibility of postponing it. I have myself seen Mr. Hesketh, who has assured me that the measure is urgent, and that he cannot hold himself responsible for any difficulties that may arise if no such measure is passed into law. I ask hon. members to deal with the general principle. Not one expert says that this Bill does not meet with his approval, and not one hon. member has objected to any vital principle in it.

Mr. McMASTER: I have.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member has not objected to any vital principle, but to a detail which if left out is quite immaterial to the principle of the Bill, which is contained in this, that the State should have some supervision. That being so, I ask the House not to adjourn the debate. If, after having affirmed the general principle by passing the second reading, hon. members want further time for consideration of details, I should not propose to go into committee before Tuesday. If they decline to go into the details on Tuesday we shall have to put off the Bill and the responsibility will lie upon those who bring that about. I urge urgency as the ground for objecting to any delay at the present moment.

Mr. McDONALD: It is astonishing how the hon. gentleman always falls back upon some particular officer in his department.

The HOME SECRETARY: Mr. Hesketh is not in my department.

Mr. McDONALD: He is partly, because the real head of that department happens to be in another place. The hon. gentleman quotes, as his principal reason why this Bill should go through at once, the opinion of a gentleman who, he says, is a high authority on this matter. I have no doubt about that gentleman's great knowledge of electricity and its probable dangers. But I would like to draw the Minister's attention to a paragraph in the *Electrical Review* of 21st August, 1896. It is headed "A plain statement about Blackpool," which place I understand Mr. Hesketh left to come to Queensland, and it states—

"Mr. Robert C. Quin, the recently-appointed engineer to the Blackpool Corporation, has, in a report presented to the lighting committee, spoken pretty plainly concerning the municipal system. He considers that the committee were well advised in adopting the high pressure alternating system, but he is not satisfied that the plant and machinery were the best that could have been used, nor that the class of mains, and their method of laying, were best calculated to give a reliable and economical supply. . . . He states that none of the engines and dynamos can be termed highly efficient, and that the committee cannot but regret their choice when the large area required, and the large outlay needed for buildings to accommodate that particular type are taken into consideration. At the same time he does not recommend their replacement, seeing the very large amount of capital such a course would entail. In regard to the mains, he says cables have been rammed and jammed into the pipes until there is an average of six cables per pipe, and if one breaks down the whole lot will follow suit. The high tension rubber cables have perished on all sides, and must be replaced by more lasting ones, and different methods adopted in laying them. The arc-lighting cables are similarly situated; in fact, he does not think there are 100 yards out of the eleven and a-quarter miles laid which is worth more than its price as scrap copper."

My object in reading that is to show the House how very careful we ought to be in considering that gentleman's recommendation that we should pass this Bill at once. I do not quote with any idea of disparaging the gentleman, whom I do not even know, but to remind the House that mistakes have been made before. I do not see what particular urgency there is for the Bill. Parliament, we are told, is to meet early next year, and in the meantime we shall be able to give the matter the fullest consideration. I should not think a few months will make much difference one way or the other. The Bill is full of contentious matter, and I hope hon. members will vote for the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. BELL: I do not think the hon. member for Flinders is likely to be successful in any efforts he may feel disposed to make to prove that the electrical engineer we have lately brought from England is not a good man. From opportunities I have had of judging, I have formed a very opposite conclusion.

Mr. McDONALD: I did not give my opinion.

The SPEAKER: Order! If I had thought the hon. member for Flinders was calling in question the capabilities or qualifications of the electrical engineer I should certainly have stopped him. Hon. members cannot enter into a discussion of that description on this motion for the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. BELL: I will pass that over. I think, as we have imported, through our accredited agents in England, a gentleman who is said to possess high qualifications for his particular work, and that gentleman advises us to take a certain course which is embodied in this Bill, some weight should be paid to his recommendation, and we should at least go so far as to give the Bill a fair discussion. We should not be doing ourselves justice if we adjourned the consideration of so important a Bill at this hour. I have myself heard the electrical engineer say he is most anxious to see this measure go through; and we should be stultifying ourselves if, after bringing out a man to reform our electrical system, we refused to even discuss a Bill which in some degree purposes to carry out his ideas.

Mr. McDONNELL: As one of the members for a metropolitan constituency, I am prepared to support the amendment. The Home Secretary told us that Mr. Hesketh was thoroughly in favour of this Bill, but I hold in my hand a circular from the Local Authorities' Association, signed by Mr. Thurlow, in which there is a report from the electrician adverse to the Bill. The circular explains that the association have had this Bill under consideration, and goes on to say—

"The members of the executive of the association are men of trained minds, and the provisions of the Bill have been carefully studied in the light of municipal requirements with the following result."

Then they submit a number of resolutions, one or two of which I shall read to show the objections taken to the Bill. In one they state—

"That it is desirable that the local authorities should have the right to provide the public with electricity—"

The SPEAKER: Order! The quotation the hon. member is now reading appears to be an argument against the second reading of the Bill, and not against the adjournment of the debate. I must ask the hon. member to confine himself to the motion for the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. McDONNELL: I was trying to show the necessity for adjourning the debate, because the Bill is unsatisfactory to the local authorities. I will not pursue that, but I will read the report from Mr. Hesketh to show that he condemns the Bill—

"Mr. Hesketh is an expert not merely in the sense of understanding the theory and practice of electricity, but also in regard to the advantages of the municipalisation of such works, and therefore his words are worthy of your consideration."

"It is important that the Ipswich Council should consider this question fully, as in the event of the Bill at present passing through Parliament being made law many companies will doubtless seek permission to establish electric-lighting undertakings in the principal towns, and unless they are forestalled by the local authorities they will practically obtain a footing."

The SPEAKER: I must again remind the hon. member that he should introduce that when speaking on the second reading. So far as I can understand his quotation, it certainly seems to me to be an objection to the Bill itself. I think the hon. member will see the distinction between the adjournment of this debate and the passing of the second reading.

Mr. McDONNELL: I will not continue the quotation, but, as the Home Secretary said that Mr. Hesketh supported the Bill, I was trying to show that by his report to the Ipswich Council that he condemned it. The Bill is unsatisfactory to the local authorities around

Brisbane, and it is better that it should be withdrawn, and a Bill more in accord with their wishes introduced. For that reason I support the amendment.

Mr. LEAHY: The question, I think, that is involved in the amendment is whether the Bill should be shelved or not, and I think the hon. member for Enoggera said as much when moving it.

Mr. DRAKE: No, adjourned for fuller discussion.

Mr. LEAHY: Yes, but that is what it means, and I am not prepared to say that there is not something to be said in favour of the amendment. In this matter, as in all others, the question is which way the balance of advantage lies. I think no harm can be done by reading the Bill a second time, and I am prepared to support the second reading if the Home Secretary wishes to go on with it. But of all the reasons that could be given for taking a certain course upon a motion before the House the most extraordinary is that given by the hon. member for Dalby. That a member of the hon. gentleman's intelligence and prestige should urge that members representing the intelligence and the wisdom of the country in this House should be guided in their action with respect to a motion by a desire to please a Government official recently imported from England is a most extraordinary thing. The hon. member ought to be, and I have no doubt he will be, ashamed of himself when he comes to reflect, in the light of his high notions of parliamentary duties, on the reason he has given for opposing this amendment. Perhaps there is a reason why this Bill should not be gone on with now in the fact that we will have a Local Authorities Bill before us next session, and this matter may be dealt with in connection with that Bill, as no doubt the time is coming when the control of all these things will be placed in the hands of the local authorities.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is now discussing the Bill, and this is a question of the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. LEAHY: I quite agree with you, Mr. Speaker, and I have no intention of discussing the Bill. I was giving a reason why the motion of the hon. member for Enoggera might be fallen in with on the premises with which I started, that it is a shelving motion.

The SPEAKER: The motion of the hon. member for Enoggera is not a shelving motion. If the hon. member had wished to shelve the Bill he would have moved quite a different motion. This is simply a motion for the adjournment of the debate, and it must be taken as such.

Mr. LEAHY: Very well; the hon. member knows how to do a thing in an ingenious way, but I have much pleasure in following the Speaker's ruling. I think there are some reasons for not agreeing to the hon. member's amendment. If the House is not prepared to go on with the Bill hon. members should say so on the motion for the second reading, and that would be a better way of settling the question than by accepting the amendment. When we get back to the original motion I may have something more to say on the Bill.

Mr. DAWSON: The hon. member for Bulloo has been fairly successful in arguing both cases, but he was most successful, I think, in arguing in favour of the side taken by the hon. member for Enoggera. If we affirm the second reading of the Bill now we affirm the principles of it, and we cannot go back upon them afterwards. We cannot go back on that afterwards.

The SPEAKER: I must call the hon. member to order. I hope that hon. members will not wander from the question before the House—that is, the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. DAWSON: I am trying to show that it is necessary to adjourn the debate on the second reading in order that we may not commit ourselves to any important principle by being too hurried. If we go right on to-night, and do not adjourn the debate, but agree to the second reading of the Bill, we may be affirming a thing that we will be sorry for afterwards. The very fact that it is an understood thing in the House that in agreeing to the second reading of a Bill we are affirming its principles is a reason why the motion of the hon. member for Enoggera should be carried. But there is another reason—that is, that this is an extra sitting day for the particular purpose of advancing certain measures of a non-contentious character through a certain stage; and that not quite two hours ago we were informed that the urgency of the measures had nothing to do with the sitting, and that if a Bill brought forward was shown to be contentious the debate upon it would be adjourned. I contend that during the time this measure has been before the House there has been abundant evidence to show that it is contentious—certainly the most contentious measure dealt with this afternoon. I therefore think the hon. member for Enoggera has a good case, and that he is entitled to claim the votes of a majority of the members of the House in favour of his motion.

Question—That the debate be now adjourned—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 22.

Messrs. Cross, Hoolan, Dickson, Glassey, McDonnell, Kerr, Dawson, Fraser, King, Kidston, Turley, Hardacre, Drake, Annear, McMaster, McDonald, Dunsford, Dibley, Sim, Fitzgerald, Daniels, and Stewart.

NOES, 26.

Messrs. Tozer, Byrnes, Philp, Dalrymple, Foxton, Collins, Finner, Leahy, Newell, Battersby, Bridges, Bell, Curtis, Castling, Hamilton, Corfield, Browne, Story, Callan, Grimes, Smith, Lord, Stodart, Crombie, Stamm, and O'Connell.

Resolved in the negative.

Mr. LEAHY: I think this Bill, when it passes its second reading, might very well be allowed to stand over. From the information we have had to-night from the hon. member for Fortitude Valley and others it appears likely that it will prove a very contentious Bill when it gets into committee. I do not say that as far as I am concerned it will be contentious at all; but still I cannot ignore the fact that the tendency is for all these things to pass to a great extent into the hands of the local authorities. Electric power is one that is likely to be much greater in the future than we have any knowledge of at present, and for that reason I think a measure of this kind requires very serious consideration. The main objection urged by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley against the Bill is that as a matter of fact it is directed against the municipal council of Brisbane.

Mr. McMASTER: No; against every town in the colony.

Mr. LEAHY: I understand that the objection is that there are a great many wires being laid down in the city at the present time, and that the wires already laid down will be protected to a certain extent. The number of those wires is likely to be increased, and the argument is that they ought to be under the control of the municipal council. At all events that is the object of the Bill, but the amendments which have been suggested will involve serious consideration. Hon. members are about sick of work for this session, and if the second reading of this Bill is passed its consideration in committee might well be left over till next year, when we will have a Local Government Bill before us, and the two matters can be discussed

together. Although I am prepared to support the second reading, I am not prepared to support the Bill any further now.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed; and the committal of the Bill made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

#### FEDERAL COUNCIL REFERRING BILL.

##### SECOND READING.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: This is a Bill to confer authority, as far as this legislature is concerned, upon the Federal Council to deal with certain specified subjects. The Council is fixed to meet on 26th January, at Hobart, and some of the legislatures of the other colonies have also referred matters to it; those of Victoria and Western Australia having referred matters not quite the same as these, but these are included amongst them. There are certain subjects in regard to which the Federal Council has original powers of legislation, but other subjects can only be dealt with when referred to the Council by the legislatures of the different colonies. The matters referred to in this Bill are of importance to this colony. The first is quarantine, upon which there was a discussion at the last meeting of the Council; and the representatives of Queensland and Western Australia were very strong upon it, because those colonies are the two points by which Australia is approached, and we are very anxious that quarantine should be made a federal charge. Hon. members will see that a vessel may call at Thursday Island without having any passengers or cargo for Queensland, and if she happens to be quarantined, Queensland would have to bear the whole expense, which, if not borne by the colony to which she is going, ought to be a general charge. The same remarks apply to Western Australia, which is the first point at which the Peninsular and Orient steamers touch. There has been a great deal of trouble in connection with the matter, which is one that the Federal Council is a very competent body to deal with. Of course it is unfortunate that South Australia and New South Wales are not represented on the Council, but still I think they will voluntarily agree to things that have been decided by the four other colonies.

Mr. TURLEY: It is not much good including Tasmania in the question of quarantine. It would not relieve us of much responsibility.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: There is a good deal of traffic between there and Victoria. Then there is the question of patents, in which certain rights are acquired which should receive federal recognition; and that of the naturalisation of aliens of European descent ought to be taken up in the interests of all Australia. A man may be naturalised in Queensland, but that naturalisation is of not the slightest use to him across the Tweed. If he were naturalised in England, under an Imperial Act, that naturalisation would apply all over the empire, but when a man is naturalised in a colony it does not apply beyond the boundaries of that colony. I have known cases in which men have got their property into serious complications through this. If a German were naturalised in New South Wales he would look upon himself as a British subject, and he might acquire real property and various other rights in Queensland, for instance, and yet have practically no legal rights here at all. The Bill only refers to aliens of European descent, coloured aliens not being mentioned. The winding-up of joint stock companies is an important matter. When the smashes occurred in 1893 many financial institutions had ramifications extending throughout the other colonies, and separate legal proceedings dealing with the

reconstructions had to be taken in each, when it would have been far better if the decision of one court had been recognised in all the colonies. A judgment of a competent court in one colony is recognised in all the others, just the same as the judgments of their own courts, and that ought to be the case in regard to the winding-up of joint stock companies. I hold, further, that it would be a very good thing if there were Imperial legislation extending throughout the empire in regard to companies, just the same as the Merchant Shipping Act does, because companies are now a very important element in commercial life, and it would be worth while for a great commercial country to take steps to see that there should be some universal legislation regarding this great subject. At any rate, if we make a start in Australia, it may be the means of spreading the system further. It is also proposed to refer the question of the enforcement by the courts of one colony of any process of the Supreme Court of another colony directed to compelling the production of certain things in the court of another colony with reference to testamentary dispositions. I believe that all these matters are to be referred to the Council by some of the other colonies, and some of them are also referring other matters we have not dealt with. I hope the House—which I believe as a whole supports the Federal Council—will give us this authority, so that at any rate it may have some business to transact when it meets. The Council has not met for two years, and the Act by which it is constituted requires it to meet at least once in two years. It would be most disastrous if the only federated body we have in Australia failed to meet.

MR. DRAKE: No Acts were passed last time.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No. There was really no business done last time. It was most regrettable for those of us who went down to do business to find that there was no business to be done. No doubt what was called the "higher movement," which was dinned into our ears day and night, had a great deal to do with it, and the great things expected of the Premier's meeting practically took away all interest from the doings of the Council.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: They eclipsed the Council.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: They tried to eclipse the Council, but on several occasions we asserted our position.

MR. LEAHY: Will the position be improved this time?

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I think so. There will be more work done. Of course it is very unfortunate for the Council, and for the men who constitute it, that by reason of the attitude of New South Wales particularly we are not able to transact more business.

MR. McDONALD: The same remark applies now with regard to Queensland and the proposed Convention.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Not at all. The Federal Council was really the outcome of a meeting which took place in Sydney, convened by the then Premier of New South Wales. Legislation was passed constituting the Council, but from the very first the colony of New South Wales—which really was the founder of the Council—as held aloof.

MR. DRAKE: What was the reason?

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I have always understood that it was due to a feeling of jealousy of Victoria getting ahead of them on the subject, because the Council was constituted before the bigger federation movement was thought of. I have always maintained that there is nothing in the functions of the Federal Council which is in any way hostile to the

greater movement in favour of federation. It is the best substitute we have in the meantime, and, for my own part, I would like to see the Federal Council enlarged and established upon a basis of popular election, so that members would go there elected for a period of three years.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I am thoroughly in favour of that. If my present intentions will enable me to do so, and if I am at the Federal Council, I shall certainly voice that feeling there, because I believe that until the Council is put upon that basis it will never command that respect or have that strength which it should have. If it was once put upon a basis of popular election hon. members can see that it would have this great advantage: All this talk about the necessity of this Federal Convention in which Queensland is not going to take part would be gone, because in the Federal Council you would practically have a perpetual Federal Convention which would deal with all matters of federal interest. In a Federal Council constituted in that way the result would be that gradually and gradually the colonies would get into the habit of committing more business to that body. If the results were satisfactory, that would lead them still further to strengthen that body, and from that body I believe would develop in time a legislature and an executive, and by a silent process.

MR. DUNSFORD: And a nation.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Yes; though I believe the nation is pretty well here already. Although we are divided into separate colonies, we are practically one nation.

MR. DUNSFORD: Only a dependency.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: A dependency! Why, if we go on in the right way for another 100 years, we shall be swinging the other end of the world after us! What I have suggested will be following the order of national growth, and that is really the way the legislatures of Australia have grown up. Hon. members will remember that the old original Council of New South Wales was a sort of nominee body; then gradually elective members were added, and then further powers were conferred on it, until it eventually grew into a legislature with full responsible government and an Executive. I think that along that line will come our future development, with a true federal body. There are some people who wish us to federate in hot haste on a basis entirely different from that of the Federal Council. They want us to spring full grown and armed like Minerva from the head of Jove—with a paper Constitution, and without waiting to see what the true—

THE SPEAKER: I would remind the hon. gentleman that he is opening up a very dangerous subject. He cannot proceed further on those lines. There is nothing in this Bill which deals with the Constitution of the Federal Council. It is a Bill to refer certain matters to the Federal Council for the exercise of legislative authority thereon.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I see at once, Mr. Speaker, that I was proceeding on a course rather outside the scope of the Bill. I was doing so because it gave me an opportunity of expressing views which some hon. members know I have held in private.

MR. DUNSFORD: They ought to be better known about the country.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I have hinted at them several times, but when we were discussing the Bill relating to the Federal Convention we did not discuss the question of federation at all, but the mere machinery. I do not wish to offend against your ruling, however. Of course this Bill deals with the Federal

Council as an existing fact, and it asks that certain powers may be conferred upon that body. I ask the House to adopt it, in the hope that the Federal Council will be kept going with business to transact, and with the ultimate idea that from it will grow up a more powerful and capable body to transact what are undoubtedly the many common interests of the whole of Australasia. I now move that the Bill be read a second time.

Mr. DRAKE: The statement which the hon. and learned Attorney-General has made—that at the next meeting of the Federal Council he will take steps towards getting that body put upon an elective body—is the most encouraging statement that has been made in connection with the Council.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Of course that will require Imperial legislation.

Mr. DRAKE: If the hon. gentleman will excuse me I shall proceed to show him that that is not so. The hon. gentleman expressed some doubt as to whether he would be at the Federal Council; but there can be doubt upon that subject. The hon. gentleman is appointed a representative for three years, so that that matter is already settled. The statement the hon. gentleman has made has done more than anything else to disarm my opposition to the Bill. I would like to say a few words with regard to the Federal Council, because I have found there is a very general misapprehension with regard to what that Council is. The fault in the Constitution of the Council has all along been that it has had no representative basis. A very great number of years ago, soon after the Federal Council was called into existence, I pointed that out, and I have always advocated, both in private and in public, whenever I have had an opportunity, that the basis of the Council would be strengthened if that were done. The Imperial Act was passed in 1885 for the purpose of constituting a Federal Council to deal with matters of common Australian interest in which united action was desirable, and the basis on which the Council was constituted was that each colony should send two representatives. The number has since been increased to five. The 6th clause of the Act provides that the legislature of any colony may make such provision as it thinks fit for the appointment of representatives and for determining the tenure of their office. In 1885 we passed an Act adopting the Imperial Act, and providing that the representatives of Queensland should be appointed by the Governor in Council for a period of three years—and I think the other colonies adopted the same principle—so that the representatives are simply nominees of the Government. And I think the reason why New South Wales stood outside was because they saw that a body of that kind without any executive, and without any representative basis, could not do effective work. The first meeting of the Council was in 1886, when four Acts were passed; in the second session, in 1888, one was passed; at the third session, 1889, one was passed; in the fourth session, in 1891, one was passed; in the fifth session, in 1893, one was passed; in the last session, in 1895, no Act at all was passed. It is necessary, in order to keep the Federal Council alive, that a meeting be held before February next, and the object of the Bill is to provide some business to be transacted at that meeting. I had a feeling of hostility towards the Bill, because it seemed that this was an attempt to revive the Federal Council as a rival to the higher movement. I should be sorry if this Council were being resuscitated for the purpose of obstructing the higher movement; but if that is not so, I should be pleased to see it continued, because there is a hope that through the medium of the Federal Council something

may be done in the way of promoting a real federation of the colonies. The statement made by the Attorney-General to-night is the first public statement of the kind made by a Minister of the Crown in Queensland—namely, that he proposes to move in the direction of broadening the basis of the Council; and the actions of the present Government have been in a diametrically opposite direction.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No.

Mr. DRAKE: Yes. What did the Premier do when he had power to appoint persons to represent this colony in the Council? He appointed five gentlemen with exactly his own political views, and from one side of the House. I saw a letter in one of our local papers, signed "A Sydney Citizen," in which the writer hoped we should be saved from "the ignorant democracies of the South." I do not know whether they have adopted the same method of choosing representatives as we have, but we have no right to assume that the southern colonies will elect representatives who will go to this Federal Council and make it more fairly representative of the people than the representatives that we send from Queensland. The five gentlemen who went down in 1895 to represent this colony were the Hon. Archibald Archer, the Hon. A. H. Barlow, the Hon. T. J. Byrnes, the Hon. B. D. Morehead, and the Hon. H. M. Nelson.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: All elected by the people.

Mr. DRAKE: Elected at various times by their constituents; but they cannot be taken as representatives of Queensland in any sense. If we see what they are now, we find that Mr. Archer declined to contest the constituency he represented before; Mr. Barlow did the same.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is now going too far in his reply to what the Attorney-General said. I must ask him to confine himself more closely to the Bill.

Mr. DRAKE: I intended, when I first saw the Bill, to oppose the second reading, because I considered this Parliament would not be justified in delegating its powers to a body that has no representative basis. What I desire to show was that these five gentlemen appointed by the Government as representatives of this colony, do not represent this colony. An interjection from the other side tells me that they have all been elected by the people; but I wish to show that the large majority of the representatives cannot be said to be representative of the people of Queensland in any way whatever. I presume that the appointment of Sir Hugh Nelson and Mr. Morehead lapse.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: No; Mr. Archer and Mr. Morehead. Sir Hugh Nelson was appointed when I was.

Mr. DRAKE: It only shows the risks we are running in delegating powers to this Council when it is difficult to find out even the names of the representatives.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: How do we find out the names of members of Parliament but through the *Gazette*?

Mr. DRAKE: We can get them from *Hansard* and "Votes and Proceedings," but I cannot find the names of the representatives to the Federal Council in the "Votes and Proceedings." On the 13th December, 1894, the appointments were Mr. Byrnes, Mr. Barlow, and Mr. Archer. With regard to Mr. Morehead, I do not know whether he will be a representative this time or not. What I wish to emphasise is that at the last sitting in 1895 five gentlemen were appointed to represent this colony who could not in any sense be said to be representative of the representatives of this colony; and what we are asked by this Bill is to delegate to that nominee body power of

legislating in respect of certain matters. We are asked to surrender to this purely nominee body certain powers of legislation which we possess ourselves, and I certainly think that is a bad principle.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: This Parliament does not possess the privilege of legislating with Victoria.

Mr. DRAKE: The representatives from Victoria are, I presume, nominees also. This Federal Council, so far as it has been put forward as the rival and opponent of the higher movement, ought not to be encouraged by anyone who has any democratic views whatever. In regard to the federal movement, we might very well surrender our powers to legislate on certain matters to a Parliament having the same representative basis as ours, but we should not lightly surrender any of our powers of legislation to a body composed of nominees. For that reason we should be extremely cautious as to what matters we refer to the Federal Council, and I trust when the Bill gets into committee hon. members will very narrowly scrutinise the clause containing the list of subjects which it is proposed to refer to the Council.

The HON. J. R. DICKSON: The great merit of this Bill is that it tends to keep alive before the peoples of Australasia the spirit of federation, which may eventually be accomplished in a more complete form than is practicable by means of the Federal Council. The weakness of the Council is its want of representative basis and the absence of the mother colony from the deliberations conducted by her neighbours. The statesmen of the mother colony have simply discussed the question of federation as a sort of holiday exercise; they have never yet attempted to join the Federal Council and assisted to make it a complete whole and a forerunner of a closer union between the colonies. I make these remarks because I have criticised to a certain extent the proposals made by the other colonies, and the spirit shown by New South Wales particularly in regard to federal matters. I have pointed out how the very rudiments of federation have been disregarded by the mother colony in her refusal to be connected with the Federal Council. Had that colony joined with the others and shown a desire to join in the deliberations of her neighbours, the Federal Council would have been an instrument of great good, and we should by this time have made a much closer approach to federation than we have been able to do up to the present time. I say therefore it is well to keep the Council alive, and I join heartily with the Attorney-General in saying that the basis of the Council ought to be enlarged and placed on an elective footing. I trust that that will be accomplished, and that the great knowledge and ability of the hon. gentleman will be available at the next session of the Council, so that the colonies may have the advantage of his advice and assistance. I hope that the Council may ultimately develop into what the hon. member terms the higher form of federation, but I do not think any form of permanent federation will be brought about by the spasmodic efforts such as we have seen displayed from time to time by Premiers of southern colonies, who have not shown the true spirit of federation, but have tried to obtain every advantage for their own colonies rather than study the good of the whole of the colonies combined. I hope the Federal Council will now, under improved conditions, attract greater attention. Possibly it may not be too late for New South Wales to send representatives to the Council and so widen its scope. With regard to the present Bill, the subjects enumerated in clause 1 are such as everyone will admit are fair matters for federal

discussion. I should have liked to see added to them the question of defence, with regard to which federation is more likely to be brought about than any other question. Quarantine, the naturalisation of aliens of European descent, the winding-up of joint-stock companies, and the enforcement of Supreme Court processes in other colonies are most desirable matters for consideration. And I am particularly impressed with the importance of the two subsections relating to property devised or bequeathed situated in one colony of which the executors or trustees reside in another. At present, supposing a person dies in Victoria, say, and leaves property in New South Wales or Queensland, the property is subject to a very heavy additional probate duty—double duty, in some cases, I believe. That is a disability that certainly ought to be removed, and if the Federal Council only settle that question satisfactorily they will have deserved well of the colonies. I am pleased to see that the Council is to be kept alive. While I have criticised the federation proposals in the form submitted this session, I have always held the opinion that the Federal Council is educating the people in the true principles of federation. All that is wanted now is to have the Council formed on an electoral basis. From that may be evolved the greater federation, in its true spirit, which means the union of all the colonies on equal terms, without the aggrandisement of one at the expense of others.

Mr. GLASSEY: I do not rise to oppose the second reading of this Bill, which I consider to be of importance not only to Queensland but to Australia generally. I do not know whether I am less patriotic than some other hon. members, but I must confess I have never yet been able to arrive at the conclusion that we are ready for full federation. I have always held that the Federal Council, if properly constituted, and joined in by all the colonies, will pave the way to that higher movement which some hon. members seem to consider is essential to the welfare of Australia. From that point of view it is to be regretted that New South Wales has hitherto held aloof from the Federal Council. I see the Premier of that colony is about to pay a visit to Queensland. I have no fear that he is likely to be successful in his endeavours to induce our cool-headed, calculating Premier to join this higher movement, but I do trust that he will be induced by the arguments advanced by our Premier to send delegates from New South Wales to the Federal Council. I hope also that at the next Council the Government will not monopolise the whole of the representation, as they did on the last occasion, which is manifestly unfair and unjust. I think the time has arrived when the democratic element should be represented. I share the opinion of the hon. member for Enoggera that some of the delegates at the last meeting of the Federal Council in no sense represent the sentiments of the people of Queensland. The delegates should not be chosen on purely party lines. It may not be possible to display much party spirit over such a question as quarantine, but it is possible that the delegates from some of the other colonies, who are not so conservative as hon. gentlemen opposite, may have some very democratic proposals to put before the Council. I refer to Victoria. I regard the Premier, Mr. Turner, as representing broad, liberal, and robust democratic sentiment. I have not met him, and I have not met Mr. Kingston, of South Australia, either, but I have had silent communications with Mr. Kingston, and he does not appear to me to be an old rusty Tory, or to hold some of the cobweb views of some of our friends opposite.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is now going altogether too far.

Mr. GLASSEY: I may be pardoned for indulging in a little banter of my friends opposite. I entirely agree with this Bill now, and only regret that it is so meagre. I think telegraph matters might be introduced, and possibly railway freights and other subjects, the consideration of which will be of benefit to the colony. I must say again that seeing that New South Wales is our nearest neighbour, and is the oldest, most populous, and most wealthy colony, it is to be deplored that she does not join the Federal Council. I shall support the second reading, and will probably offer a few suggestions on the lines I have indicated when we get into committee.

Mr. CURTIS: After what was said by the Attorney-General in moving the second reading of the Bill, I shall have much pleasure in supporting it. The subjects proposed are such as may fairly come under the consideration of the Federal Council. I would like to say that if we are to wait for a complete form of federation through the Federal Council—by a slow process of evolution—we shall have to wait so long that I am afraid none of us will ever see it. The Attorney-General spoke of some of the other colonies being desirous for a federal agreement to bring about federation in one act. Why not? We have been talking about it in Australia for the last fifty years. The late Lord Sherbrooke, when Mr. Robert Lowe, speaking in the Legislative Council in Sydney on the severance of Port Phillip from New South Wales, and its erection into a separate colony, referred to the necessity for federation, and expressed the opinion that before long England would be joined in a vast confederation with her dependencies that would gird the whole earth in its circumference. That has not eventuated yet, but I do not see why we should not have a complete federation at an early date, if the people of Australia were in earnest about it. But so far there has been precious little of what is called the "federal spirit" exhibited in any of the colonies. Federation is a fashionable topic for leading politicians, and no doubt their knowledge of history has impressed them with the necessity for it, and with the fact that it is the inevitable destiny of the Australian colonies; but the people have not taken a very large amount of interest in it. It has not touched their imagination. One reason why there should not be much difficulty in bringing about the complete federation of the colonies is that we have the examples of the United States, Canada, and the other federations of the world having written Constitutions—for a federal Constitution must be a written one—and with these examples before us, and the people in earnest, there should be no great difficulty about it. The subject of federation is one in which I have taken a deep interest.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is making a federation speech, and not discussing the Bill before the House. I would ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to this Bill.

Mr. CURTIS: I am aware that I was somewhat outside the question before the House. I may add that I quite agree with what has been said by the hon. member for Enoggera with reference to the mode of appointing representatives to the Federal Council—that not one party, but that all parties, should be represented. I am sure that if that were the case the proceedings of the Council would have greater interest than they have at present. I was pleased to hear the Attorney-General say that the constitution of the Council should be broadened, and the representatives chosen on the basis of a popular election, for I believe that was the intention of the hon. gentleman.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Hear, hear!

Mr. CURTIS: While the Federal Council is doing what it can in the way of federal action,

I hope what is called the "higher movement" will not wait on the Federal Council. I hope it will not be very long before we shall be able to welcome the advent of the complete federation of Australia.

Mr. DUNSFORD: If we are to have complete federation, I certainly think it should come out of the lower movement of the Federal Council. If that Council consisted of representatives elected by the people, that would be the best way to grow slowly into complete federation. It would have been wise if the representatives in the Council had been made elective before we were asked to give them such extended legislative powers as we are asked to do by this Bill, which will affect more people than any legislation passed by this Parliament. It must be remembered that the Federal Council consists of only one Chamber, and that there is absolutely no means of preventing hasty legislation. I do not object to that; I believe in simplifying our legislative machinery, and consider one Chamber sufficient; but I am pointing it out to hon. members opposite, and especially to the Attorney-General, because if in a body exercising even greater legislative powers than are exercised by this Parliament there is only one Chamber, I do not think it is too much to ask him to assist this side in removing the other Chamber from this Parliament. I shall support the second reading of this Bill, because I believe good will come out of the Council, if the Attorney-General carries out his promise and endeavours to make it a truly representative body.

Mr. LEAHY: There are several matters mentioned in this measure which may be dealt with by the Federal Council, but they resolve themselves mainly into one—that is, quarantine. As a matter of fact that matter is introduced as the result of action taken at the last Federal Council, held at Hobart, when Sir John Forrest proposed a motion, which was seconded by our Premier, to the effect that it was advisable that the Parliaments of the different colonies should introduce a measure submitting legislation on this subject to the Federal Council. But judging from the discussion which occurred on the question of quarantine on that occasion, it has a very poor show of being successfully dealt with at the next meeting of the Council.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Queensland and Western Australia are very much in earnest.

Mr. LEAHY: Quite so; but they are very far apart from one another, and no vessels coming round the coast of Western Australia ever come to Queensland. Of the four colonies represented at the last Federal Council, Tasmania was entirely against the quarantine system, and said it ought to be abolished; and while Victoria agreed to quarantine, she was only willing to pay a proportion of the cost according to the number of passengers going to that colony. But the difficulty is that passengers will be going to the other colonies outside the Federal Council—to New South Wales and South Australia. The hon. gentleman has not given us any information as to whether South Australia will be represented at the Federal Council this year.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: We have no information.

Mr. LEAHY: Supposing, then, that 100 passengers were coming by one of the English steamers round Albany, and all the passengers for those colonies represented on the Federal Council were landed and treated at the federal expense, what is to be done with the other passengers? That is the difficulty I foresee. I sincerely wish that the matter may be successfully dealt with. I have always believed in the Federal Council. I believe in the higher federation, but I am satisfied to do the best we can at



present with the Federal Council. There will have to be some change in the Council in the direction indicated by the hon. member for Enoggera. For the last four or five years it has done very little.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: That is due to the attempts of the southern colonies to kill the Federal Council.

Mr. LEAHY: We have to deal with things as we find them, but if the hon. gentleman can bring forward some scheme that will widen the basis of the Council, he will be doing good work. I shall give the Bill my hearty support.

The HOME SECRETARY: I wish to say a few words about quarantine, because hon. members do not seem to be quite up to date in regard to what has been done concerning it. We are now referring certain matters to the Federal Council in the earnest hope that we will revive it; and in that connection we shall soon have a distinguished visitor here who may be induced by this debate to show a federal spirit, and make arrangements for his colony to be represented when the next Convention meets. There are two lines of action taken. We refer matters to the Federal Council, and at times we attend conferences, and my experience of the latter is that they are valueless. The Federal Council is an authoritative body. It was created by a statute of the Imperial Parliament at the instance of Australasia as a whole, and to show appreciation of the mother country's action in constituting that body we should all join it, and show that federal spirit which I should like to see upon all occasions brought into practice and not merely into profession. There are always great difficulties in connection with these unauthorised conventions, because, although I believe it is my duty to keep promises made, whether at conventions or in private life, there is a great deal of deliberation, but nothing more is done; we are no further ahead than before. The hon. member stated the history of one of the matters referred to in this Bill, that of quarantine, but since the actions he spoke of it has advanced two more stages. The colonies combined together and sent experts in quarantine matters to a convention in New Zealand, where they drew up certain resolutions and did a good deal of practical work. After that the colonies were required to solemnly confirm those resolutions, and I have been prepared to carry out the arrangements I then made. All the same, the thing is a dead letter. The promises made were broken without any consultation with this colony. This shows the wisdom of dealing with an authorised body like the Federal Council, of which I have always spoken favourably, because it keeps alive the federal sentiment, crippled and maimed as it is by the principal colony standing out of it. Queensland holds out her hand to that colony now, and asks it and South Australia to join the Federal Council, because there are a lot of things that may be discussed there. In the case of conventions there always seems to be some obstacle. I do not know what it is, but until we can get federation in fact we cannot do better than deal with the Federal Council. In regard to quarantine, we made an arrangement which has not been departed from. Although Western Australia was accidentally not represented at the last conference, it was decided that there should be two quarantine gates—one at Friday Island and the other at Albany.

Mr. LEAHY: Did they decide who should pay for them?

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes. The colonies were to pay in proportion to population, and they have not departed from that. I hope that New South Wales will come into the Federal Council, just to put the necessary authority upon that agreement.

Mr. LEAHY: Did Tasmania agree to it?

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes. Tasmania would not stand out in any federal measure, but it was a modified consent, although sufficient to justify us in undertaking the arrangement. The thing is all cut and dried, and I hope it will be confirmed by the Council. There are other matters, of course, which might be referred to the Federal Council. This is only Queensland's contribution. Of course, any two colonies can refer any other matters they choose to the Council, and the probability is that the other colonies will refer other matters. It is the worst thing possible for such a body as the Federal Council to have no agenda paper prepared when it meets. The object of this Bill is to have an agenda paper. Queensland will not be at fault this time, and I hope that the other colonies will also have something to put on the agenda paper so that there will be work to do. Although it may be a work of time, I am certain that good results will accrue from the Federal Council, and that in the manner suggested by my hon. colleague we shall get from step to step, and by putting on the agenda paper, as we are now doing, certain work to be done we shall show that we mean business. My principle reason for rising was to give the history of the quarantine movement up to date, showing that really there is a kind of federal spirit in the matter in Australia.

Mr. LEAHY: Is there anything in writing about the agreement you refer to?

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes. So far as regards the bicameral conference of the experts, that is in writing, and I have the printed report of the conference of the representatives of the colonies at which the agreement was come to. I have it here, and the hon. member may see it if he wishes. In point of fact, at the present moment we are acting under the resolutions arrived at at that conference in connection with the "Duke of Devonshire." Still it is far better that the results of the conference should be embodied in an Act of Parliament, because, though we are acting under that agreement now, the other colonies may back out of it at any moment. This carries with it proof that we are putting our house in order at this end, and we can now ask the other colonies to do the same at their end. I am not going to spend any money until I get something tangible, and I hope to get the signature of the Federal Council. I am beginning to find out that to spend a lot of money in the hope of getting it back from the other colonies is sometimes visionary. I do not find that we get all we want, and consequently I do not think the House has wasted time to-night in dealing with this federal matter, because I feel perfectly sure that the discussion, if it is communicated to the other colonies, will have the effect of reminding them of their obligations. In one instance, if not in two, monetary obligations remain unpaid, and in several other instances promises have not been fulfilled. I would like to see the subject of ocean lights remitted to the Federal Council. I did not remember it until this minute, but that is a subject that should be referred to the Council. I would like to see the agreements which have been made between the various colonies in regard to our ocean lights, on which we have spent so much money, reduced to cash. We had a bicameral conference dealing with the question, and it would have been a fair thing to put that subject on the paper. I hope South Australia will be represented at the Council, and I sincerely trust that New South Wales will also be there. I feel perfectly sure that if those four colonies can be got to send representatives with power to



bind their colonies to the arrangements which are come to, it will be the first step towards the federation of the colonies.

Mr. KIDSTON: I quite agree with all the hon. gentleman has said with regard to the desirability of trying to get some tangible results out of the Federal Council. There have been very few tangible results so far from its meetings, and their discussions have been exclusively of an academic character. I am entirely in favour of the principle of the Bill so far as it proposes to give extended power to the Council. What was said by the hon. member for Charters Towers about giving legislative power to one Chamber without any safeguard against hasty legislation does not affect the matter at all. I would rather welcome the experiment, as it might have a good effect in paving the way for the abolition of nominee Chambers throughout Australia. But there is one matter in connection with this that I would like to say a few words about. I do not think it right to give any legislative powers to a body when the electors of Queensland have no say in the election of our representatives to that body. It is not only that the nominees sent down from Queensland will have power to legislate for this colony; but the nominees of the other colonies will also have power to legislate for this colony on the matters that we submit to the Federal Council. The Attorney-General has indicated that he intends to try and get the Federal Council placed on an elective basis. Well, that is the first step to take, and after the Council has been placed on a representative basis, we can proceed to give it legislative powers. It is bad in principle to give it legislative powers first, and then proceed to give it a representative character. If the Queensland representatives succeed in taking direct steps to make the Council a representative body they will have taken one of the greatest steps in the direction of Australian federation, and then it will be time to give the Council legislative powers.

Mr. STEWART: Before asking this House to pass the second reading of the Bill, the ostensible object of which is to promote federation, the Government of this colony should at least have displayed some desire to federate with the other colonies. If the Government had done that I would have had some belief in their professions. If they had done that, I have no doubt it would have been met in a kindly spirit by the other colonies. But what action has this Government taken in the matter of federation lately? We know that but for the action of Queensland a convention would have been held.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is now wandering from the question under discussion.

Mr. STEWART: It appears to me that the whole question is one of federation.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is wrong. The Federal Council is already duly constituted, and the question is whether certain matters shall be referred to that Council for consideration and legislation.

Mr. STEWART: I have no objection to these matters being referred to the Federal Council, but I think before we can have any federal action we should show some desire to federate with the other colonies. I think the Federal Council should be elective, and that the representatives should receive definite instructions as to what they are to do. It is extremely desirable that the question of quarantine should be discussed by the various states; and if the central states stand out and leave the protection of the continent to the outside states, a very insufficient quarantine will be obtained. The first necessity

in this matter is sincerity, and so long as we display such an absolute want of desire to forward real federation—

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is again wandering from the question.

Mr. STEWART: I quite appreciate what you say, but I would just like to remind you and the House that the Home Secretary complained of the indifference of some of the other colonies in the whole matter of the Federal Council. I say that Queensland itself can be charged with the same fault, and we ought to take the mote out of our own eye, and then we will be more able to take the beam out of the eye of our neighbour. I was glad to hear that the Attorney-General was in favour of an elective Federal Council; and as to the Council consisting of only one Chamber, I think that is a most distinct advance on other Australian legislative institutions. I hope that in future, when we desire the other states to act with us, we will show a more brotherly spirit towards them.

Question put and passed; and committal of the Bill made an order for Monday next.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The HOME SECRETARY: I move that this House do now adjourn. The business for Monday will be the consideration in committee of the Bill's read a second time to-day, and after that the Rabbit Boards Bill.

Mr. GLASSEY: I am sorry the Home Secretary has not mentioned the Factories Bill, which I do not think would meet with much opposition either here or in another place.

Mr. McDONNELL: I regret that the hon. gentleman has not intimated his intention of going on with that Bill on Monday. Members on this side, and a number on the other side, are anxious to have it passed; and I think the hon. gentleman should give some consideration to the wishes of a large body of members as well as to the feeling that exists outside.

The HOME SECRETARY: If there is any chance of the Gold Mines Drainage, Companies, and Federal Council Bills going through committee, I will place the Factories Bill after the Federal Council Bill.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at twenty-one minutes to 11 o'clock.