

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 1 DECEMBER 1898

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

THURSDAY, 1 DECEMBER, 1898.

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

TRUSTEES AND EXECUTORS ACT
AMENDMENT BILL.

ASSENT.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Governor, intimating that His Excellency had assented to this Bill.

FEDERAL COUNCIL OF AUSTRALASIA.

APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES.

The SPEAKER further announced the receipt of a message from the Governor, intimating that His Excellency, on the advice of the Executive Council, had been pleased, on the 30th November last, to appoint the Hon. Andrew Henry Barlow, the Hon. Justin Fox Greenlaw Foxton, and Mr. Thomas Glassey, to be representatives of Queensland in the Federal Council of Australasia.

PETITION.

SUPPRESSION OF GAMBLING ACT.

Mr. COLLINS presented a petition from a number of residents of Southport in reference to the Suppression of Gambling Act.

Petition received.

TOOWOOMBA TOWN HALL BILL.

REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Mr. GROOM, as chairman, presented the report of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into this Bill, and moved that the paper be printed.

Question put and passed.

The second reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for Thursday, 8th instant.

QUESTIONS.

MAIL OFFICERS, NORTHERN RAILWAY.

Mr. McDONNELL asked the Premier—

1. Have there been two appointments made as travelling mail officers upon the Northern Railway from Townsville to Hughenden?

2. If so, how many applications were received for said positions?

3. Were the positions offered to classified letter carriers who held certificates from the Public Service Board under section 32 of the Public Service Act of 1896?

The PREMIER replied—

1. The appointments have not been made.

2. Ten applications have been received.

3. The positions have not been offered to anyone.

PETRIE TERRACE AND RED HILL POST OFFICES.

Mr. CURTIS (on behalf of Mr. Drake) asked the Premier—

What amount of business has been done at the Petrie Terrace Post and Telegraph Office and at the Red Hill Post and Telephone Office, respectively, during the past twelve months?

The PREMIER replied—

A return is being prepared, giving the information desired. This question should have been submitted as a motion for a return.

THE BOY LEPER.

Mr. KEOGH asked the Home Secretary—

1. Is it a fact that the boy recently sent to the lazaret was a pupil at the Normal School, Brisbane, as reported in a Brisbane publication called the *Street*?

2. Will the Minister be good enough to place all papers, including the school roll and Under Secretary's correspondence, on the table of the House?

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

1. No.

COMMERCIAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
GOVERNMENT.

Mr. GROOM asked the Premier—

1. Whether any reports have been received from Mr. Russell, the commercial representative of the colony to the United States; Mr. Heussler, the commercial representative of the colony to Germany; Mr. Finucane, the commercial representative of the colony to southern Europe? If so, will he lay the reports on the table of the House?

2. What was the total cost to the colony of the visits to the respective countries of each of the gentlemen named?

The PREMIER replied—

1. Three reports were received from Mr. Russell; monthly reports and a final report were furnished by Mr. Heussler; and Mr. Finucane has reported from time to time on special subjects. The reports have been made public through the Press, and are too voluminous to justify the expenditure involved in laying them upon the table of the House; but if the honourable member desires to see them, he can do so at the Chief Secretary's Office.

2.—

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Mr. J. D. Russell—						
Salary, one year ...	300	0	0			
Allowance and return passage, etc. ...	430	7	10			
				730	7	10

Hon. J. C. Heussler—						
Salary, one year and three months ...	733	6	8			
Allowance and return passage, etc. ...	575	11	10			
				1,308	18	6

Mr. W. Finucane—						
Salary, two years and one month ...	1,008	7	8			
Allowance, passage, and expenses, etc. ...	732	12	5			
				1,741	0	1

Grand total ... £3,780 6 5

RESIGNATION OF JUDGE NOEL.

Mr. McDONALD asked the Premier—

Has a new judge been appointed to the District Court in place of Judge Noel, resigned?

The PREMIER replied—

As already stated, in answer to Mr. McDonald's question of 23rd November ultimo, Judge Noel has not tendered his resignation, and consequently the necessity for the appointment referred to has not arisen.

Mr. DAWSON: Has not Judge Noel applied for his retiring allowance?

LIFE ASSURANCE BILL.

FIRST READING.

On the motion of Mr. CROSS, leave was given to introduce a Bill to deal with life assurance companies and kindred matters.

At a later hour, the Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for Thursday, 8th December.

MINING BILL.

THIRD READING.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR MINES, this Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be transmitted to the Council for their concurrence.

PRESS RAILWAY TICKETS.

Mr. ANNEAR, in moving—

That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing—

1. How many Press tickets were issued by the Railway Department at Maryborough during the past six months.

2. The names of those to whom the tickets were issued, the names of those who signed the requisitions, and the names of the papers for which they were issued.

3. The destination in each case, and for what purpose the tickets were required—

said: I am very sorry indeed that I have not been allowed to keep the promise I made to the hon. member for Enoggera this day fortnight, when I said that this motion would not, as far as I was concerned, take more than three minutes—that is about the time it would take to read the motion. But the motion has now been called “not formal” on two occasions by hon. members sitting in opposition, and it is therefore incumbent on me to show hon. members why they should vote for this return to be laid on the table. We have on several occasions heard one of the members who called “not formal” to this motion speak about political immorality. I quite agree with that hon. member that we should uphold the standard of political morality as much as possible, and it is in that interest that I move for this return to be laid on the table. Hon. members are aware that when members of the Press are on duty reporting for their papers they are allowed certain concessions by the Railway Department, and I believe that up to the present time the Press—what I call a Press worthy of the name—has never abused that concession.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear

Mr. ANNEAR: Some hon. members may wonder why I move for this return. The reason is that some respectable members of the Press in my electorate have had suspicion cast upon them that they have used the requisition to travel at reduced fares when not on Press duty, and I desire to remove that suspicion from those gentlemen. I am confident that there is not one gentleman connected with the respectable Press in Bundaberg or Maryborough who would be guilty of signing a requisition to obtain a railway ticket at half-fare when he is not travelling on Press duty.

Mr. JENKINSON: Nor in Gympie.

Mr. ANNEAR: Nor in Gympie; I thank the hon. member. I should have included Gympie, but I mentioned the two towns more particularly concerned in my motion. I shall give an illustration of what I mean. Suppose it was decided by the political association, for which hon. members opposite have a great respect—

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. ANNEAR: Supposing that association decided to call a conference of their friends throughout the colony, and the different branches of the association elected delegates to attend that conference and represent what the political

association represents—that is, the views of the national, liberal, and constitutional party sitting on this side of the House.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. ANNEAR: When I make that statement I do not wish it to be inferred that there are not gentlemen on the other side of the House who uphold the Constitution of this country. I know there are a lot of them; I see two or three in front of me at the present time; but we know that whenever the question of the Constitution comes before this House there are hon. members on the opposite side who vote against the Constitution on every occasion.

Mr. DUNSFORD: I have never seen the Constitution here yet.

The HOME SECRETARY: You would not know it when you did see it.

Mr. ANNEAR: If it was decided, I say, that delegates from Bundaberg or Maryborough should attend a conference of the political association in Brisbane, what would be thought of the proprietor of the *Bundaberg Mail*, or of the *Bundaberg Star*, or of the *Maryborough Chronicle*, or the *Wide Bay News* if any of those delegates went to them and said, “I am going to Brisbane solely to report for your paper; I want you to sign this requisition.” The proprietor or editor of a paper who would do that would be a party to a conspiracy to defraud the railway revenue, and not one of them would be a party to it. On that requisition the following certificate has to be signed by the editor or proprietor:—

I certify that the abovenamed gentleman is permanently employed by the proprietor of this newspaper, and is travelling only on Press business.

And the person who receives the ticket has to sign the following:—

Received the ticket requisitioned for above to be used by me only on Press business.

I shall now quote from the official organ of the labour socialists of this colony, a paper called the *Worker*. I believe its office is in what is known as the “temple of dry bones,” in Turbot street—the Trades Hall.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh oh! Hear hear!

Mr. ANNEAR: I am glad to say that several hon. members opposite who are respected in this House and throughout the country are not under the influence of this paper. Now, I shall show why I wish to convince hon. members that it is necessary that they should vote for this return being laid on the table of the House. I have to go to the *Worker*.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. DUNSFORD: A cheap advertisement for the *Worker*.

Mr. ANNEAR: I shall quote from the *Worker* of 11th June—

The Labour in Politics Convention was opened on Friday morning, 3rd June. Mr. A. Hinchcliffe, as secretary of the joint executive, temporarily occupied the chair, and read credentials of the delegates, which were formally accepted.

The following is a list of the delegates elected by the various labour unions and labour political organisations, and who attended the convention:—

Now, hon. members all know, and the public all know, that there was no necessity to send a reporter to report the proceedings of that meeting for any paper in the colony, because the meeting was held with closed doors, and its business was not reported in the daily Press of this city.

Mr. McDONALD: Yes, it was.

Mr. ANNEAR: It was held with closed doors. I believe most of the delegates present with the exception of the secretary represented an electorate in the colony, but I think Mr. Hinchcliffe represented three or four. And yet he is the gentleman who tells us that there should be one man one vote!

Mr. DUNSFORD: He only represented one.
Mr. ANNEAR: I find Mr. J. M. Dawson represented the electorate of Maryborough.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: What Dawson?

Mr. ANNEAR: I wish to state that that was not the hon. member for Charters Towers. Mr. J. M. Dawson was the endorsed candidate of this executive in Turbot street for the Burrum at the last general election in opposition to my friend the present hon. member, Mr. Tooth. He is also the endorsed candidate for the next general election, and I shall tell hon. members who this gentleman is. He has a very lucrative business in the town of Maryborough as a pawnbroker.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

Mr. ANNEAR: What will the people in the country think when they know that the Labour executive endorse a usurer of this kind?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

The SPEAKER: Order! I hope the hon. member will not go outside the question. He will have every opportunity of proving his case, but it seems to me that he is now going outside the question.

Mr. ANNEAR: I am only giving an illustration of one thing that the return will show. I would not have mentioned this Mr. Dawson, but hon. members pressed me to do so. I wish to show that my respected friend, the hon. member for Charters Towers, is not the person referred to. I wish to prove that this gentleman did not receive a first-class fare at half-price to report for what is called a newspaper, but to attend this conference. Then I find from the *Worker*—

Convention continued its sittings at the Trades Hall on Wednesday, Mr. T. Glassey, M.L.A., in the chair.

The constitution and election of the central executive occupied the greater portion of the sittings, and after a protracted debate it was unanimously decided that the central executive consist of the chairman, and secondly the parliamentary Labour party, the president and secretary of the Australian Labour Federation; the elected members to be elected by and from the Convention.

A ballot was then taken, resulting in the election of the following gentlemen, who, with the officers above-mentioned, will constitute the central political executive:—W. Kidston, J. C. Stewart, C. McDonald, F. McDonnell, Geo. Jackson, and J. Dunsford, M.L.A., J. M. Dawson, A. Moffatt, J. Wilkinson, W. C. Higgs, and J. Bond.

These latter are laymen, and Mr. J. M. Dawson came to this meeting as a delegate representing Labour unions in Maryborough and the Burrum. He is also a member of the executive which held its meetings in the palatial hall I have referred to. Now, if this return be laid upon the table—and I think it should be—it will remove the suspicion which rests upon gentlemen connected with the respectable portion of the Press in the town I represent. I may tell hon. members that I received certain information from some of my constituents in Maryborough, and they requested me to try to remove this suspicion from the gentlemen I have mentioned.

Mr. KIDSTON: Have you spies out there?

Mr. ANNEAR: I have no spies anywhere. The work I and other hon. members on this side do will bear the light of day.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear! Oh, oh!

Mr. ANNEAR: We hold no meetings with closed doors. I am very glad the hon. member made that interjection. I have no spies, and I have no fear of any man in the colony. But when other people preach about political purity they should practise what they preach, and I say that this man is not connected with any paper as a reporter. He may have invested money in the paper, but when he signed that requisition he stated that he came to Brisbane on Press business connected with the paper.

Mr. KIDSTON: You are assuming all that.

Mr. ANNEAR: That is what I am told in Maryborough by reliable people, and when this return is laid upon the table it will prove whether my informant is correct or not. I move the motion standing in my name.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. GLASSEY: It is quite refreshing to hear the hon. member move a motion such as this, more particularly upon a Thursday afternoon, when hon. members generally want a little outlet. I may say that I have not the slightest objection to the hon. member having this return laid on the table in order to gratify his desire.

Mr. ANNEAR: Why did you call "not formal?"

Mr. GLASSEY: I did not call "not formal," but we were very anxious to hear what the hon. member had to say. This motion is not due to a regard for purity of action and to save the public revenue so much as to a desire on the hon. member's part to have a little slant or cut at my friend, the future member, I hope, for Burrum.

Mr. ANNEAR: I hope not.

Mr. GLASSEY: The hon. member sneers at Mr. Dawson because he happens to follow the occupation of a pawnbroker, but let me tell the hon. member that there is no man in the colony who stands higher in the estimation of the public where he is known than Mr. Dawson. I remember that gentleman many years ago as a school teacher in the public service at Fassifern.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: "How are the mighty fallen?"

Mr. GLASSEY: Mr. Dawson then occupied a high and honourable position in the estimation of the people of Fassifern, and though he may now, as the hon. member alleges, follow the occupation of a pawnbroker, what is there wrong in that? Mr. Dawson is a general dealer and auctioneer, and if he works in with his other business the business of a pawnbroker, is there anything wrong in that? The hon. member for Maryborough describes this gentleman as a "usurer." Does he describe the various pawnbrokers of this town as usurers?

Mr. ANNEAR: Yes, they all are.

Mr. GLASSEY: Does he describe auctioneers as usurers? It has been asserted and insinuated from time to time that the hon. member has not been slow to make a considerable profit on the sale of explosives and cement to contractors. The hon. member himself has sailed very close to the wind as far as corruption is concerned. It is alleged that as a member of Parliament, occupying a position of responsibility, he has frequently used his position and his parliamentary ticket to travel to different parts of the country to sell his wares to contractors. This is the gentleman who tells us that Mr. Dawson is defrauding the public revenue because he travels to Brisbane to attend a conference on a Press ticket! Is there anything more wrong in Mr. Dawson travelling to Brisbane on a Press ticket to attend a conference than there is in the hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Annear, stepping into a train and travelling to different parts of the country on his parliamentary ticket to sell his wares? I ask where is the difference?

MEMBERS of the Labour party: None whatever.

Mr. GLASSEY: I find no fault with the hon. member for doing that, but let me remind the hon. member that when he charges other persons with attempting to defraud the public revenue in such a way, he has not been slow to do the same thing himself in connection with his commercial business.

Mr. ANNEAR: If I have done anything wrong you prove it. You tried to, and you can't.

Mr. GLASSEY: I have never attempted to prove it, nor would I have said a single word about it on the present occasion, but I think that "persons who live in glass houses are not in a position

to throw stones." The hon. member has followed the occupation of a commission agent for the sale of explosives and cement for years. He sells explosives and cement, and I find no fault with that, but I say that he travels frequently on his parliamentary ticket to sell those wares. And if it be true that Mr. Dawson travelled to Brisbane to attend this conference and obtained a railway ticket in the way mentioned, he certainly violated no moral law any more than the hon. member for Maryborough has done from time to time.

The HOME SECRETARY: There is no parallel at all.

Mr. GLASSEY: I think the cases are on all-fours, except that in my judgment, if there is any breach of moral law, the hon. member for Maryborough is a far greater sinner in that respect than Mr. Dawson. To come to the question of Mr. Dawson obtaining a ticket in the way mentioned: Mr. Dawson has been one of the proprietors of the *Patriot* newspaper from its inception, and the hon. member for Maryborough must know that. And when Mr. Dawson travels to any part of the country he cannot divide himself into two individuals. While travelling on business he is travelling at the same time for the purpose of getting the best and most reliable information for the columns of his paper. If he is the proprietor of that paper what moral law did he break in obtaining a Press ticket to travel to Brisbane and report proceedings which he had an opportunity of attending? I regret that the hon. member for Maryborough—whom we are always pleased to hear, and who entertains us, especially on occasions like this, when we have a little time at our disposal—should have made this motion. I may fairly say that the hon. member is generally respected by members of this House; but, in my opinion, he never descended so low, in order to get a cut at a political opponent, as he has done in the action he has taken this afternoon. It will not redound to his credit to ask for this return—what for? To attempt to prove that certain persons, one of whom he has mentioned, Mr. Dawson, did something dishonourable in obtaining a Press ticket to come to Brisbane to attend the conference which sat in June last.

The HOME SECRETARY: But the declaration says, "and is travelling only on Press business."

Mr. GLASSEY: Well, was he not travelling on Press business? Was the mere fact of his taking part in the conference going outside his Press business?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The conference was closed to the Press.

Mr. GLASSEY: Then how did the reports get into the papers from day to day?

MEMBERS on the Government side: Spies.

Mr. GLASSEY: Every day as the conference went on reports of the proceedings appeared in the papers.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The Press were not admitted—on a vote of the conference.

Mr. DAWSON: Only the respectable Press were admitted.

Mr. GLASSEY: The Press generally were not admitted by a vote, but is it usual for the political association when holding a conference to open the doors to the Press generally? No; they select a portion of the Press most favourable to themselves, and supply accurate and true reports of their proceedings, so that they might not be misrepresented to the country.

The HOME SECRETARY: What about the man who got a Press ticket to report those proceedings?

Mr. GLASSEY: I come back to what I said: I have never seen the hon. member for Maryborough taking such a mean advantage of his

position to cut at an individual for whom he always professes to have respect—to have it appear in *Hansard* that this man had done some dishonourable act with a view of defrauding the public revenue of some small amount. I think it is unworthy of the hon. member. But, again, assuming that what the hon. member has said is true—that Mr. Dawson obtained his ticket in the way mentioned—I contend that the hon. member himself is far more guilty of a violation of the moral law every year and almost every month of his life. I regret that he should have attempted to sneer at Mr. Dawson for being a pawnbroker, because Mr. Dawson is a respectable man in Maryborough, with a respectable family, every one of whom has a decent record. Mr. Dawson's character and career in this country, extending over a period of twenty or twenty-four years, will compare very favourably with that of the hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Annear, or of any other member of this House. I would be failing in my duty, and would be disloyal to a man for whom I have the highest respect—a man I hope yet to see in this House—if I had not mentioned what I have in vindication of his position. The hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Annear, knows Mr. J. M. Dawson very well, and I ask him when he comes to reply if he can put his finger on one single spot or stain of a disreputable nature concerning Mr. J. M. Dawson or any one of his family.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: He did not say so.

Mr. GLASSEY: If he does travel on a Press ticket for the newspaper of which he is part proprietor he is not alone in that respect; I believe it has been done as long as the system has been in operation, and I see no harm in it. It is perfectly justifiable, and he has a perfect right, as part proprietor of a public paper, to go to Brisbane from time to time to get the most reliable information. It is done every day, therefore there is no ground for the sneer the hon. member made regarding Mr. J. M. Dawson, more particularly with regard to what he terms political immorality. If there is no more political immorality practised by any other member—

The HOME SECRETARY: It was impolitic immorality.

Mr. GLASSEY: If there is no more political immorality practised by the hon. member—if he stands on as high a pedestal as far as honour and integrity are concerned as my friend, Mr. J. M. Dawson—he will be able to retire from politics with clean hands.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. McDONALD: I quite approve of a motion something similar to this being passed, but I do not think the hon. gentleman has gone far enough. I think it is about time we had a return showing the various free passes given throughout the colony not only to pressmen but to people generally. I think the hon. gentleman has wasted a considerable amount of time in bringing this motion forward in the way he has done. If he objects to hon. members on this side not allowing the motion to go as formal, I would point out that there are dozens of questions asked every session requiring ten times the detail that would be required by the motion he has submitted. Why did not the hon. gentleman get the information in the ordinary form of an answer to a question?

Mr. ANNEAR: I gave it first in the form of a question, but was told it was too voluminous.

Mr. McDONALD: If that is so, I withdraw my remarks on that point.

Mr. BROWNE: If it is toooluminous there must be a lot of them.

Mr. McDONALD: That is the only conclusion we can come to—that the case the hon. gentleman referred to is not the only one in

Maryborough. There must have been a large number of Press tickets issued from time to time in Maryborough, more especially during the last six months. If the hon. gentleman wanted to get a fair return he should have extended the matter over a longer period. We should have a return, not only showing the Press tickets issued in Maryborough during the last six months, but a return of all free passes issued by the Railway Department for other than departmental purposes from the 1st July, 1888, to 1st July, 1898. That would be a fair period, by which we would be able to judge what the various papers of the colony have been doing with these Press tickets; also other people who have travelled on railway passes, and got railway passes for their friends. The hon. gentleman went out of his way to bring in matter that was foreign to the question. He started by talking about the convention, and said that no reports were issued, and yet he brought the *Worker*, from which he was quoting the very report—

Mr. ANNEAR: I said in the daily Press.

Mr. McDONALD: When the hon. gentleman and his friends held a caucus meeting in the Treasury building, at which there was a good deal said on both sides, I believe, did they admit the Press?

MEMBERS on the Government side: Certainly not.

Mr. McDONALD: When they hold meetings on the Lucinda do they invite the Press?

MEMBERS on the Government side: No. The convention was held with closed doors. The Press was not admitted.

Mr. McDONALD: I am dealing with the question the hon. gentleman laid so much stress on about the convention being held and the Press not being admitted; so that after all we find nothing extraordinary in holding a convention at which the Press are not admitted. I think the hon. gentleman went out of his way to drag in the convention. If he wanted to show that Mr. Dawson was there on that day, he could have shown that without indulging in the language he indulged in concerning that gentleman.

Mr. ANNEAR: I never said a wrong word of anyone.

Mr. McDONALD: The inference to be drawn from the hon. gentleman's remarks that there were certain respectable members there—

Mr. ANNEAR: I did not say "respectable."

Mr. McDONALD: The inference was that other members were not respectable. As a matter of fact the convention was held, and no doubt Mr. Dawson was there. Nobody denies it, but the hon. gentleman must not say that Mr. Dawson came down purely on that business. How does the hon. gentleman know what Press business he came on?

The HOME SECRETARY: Mr. Dawson said he came only on Press business. He certified to it.

Mr. McDONALD: How does the hon. gentleman know? Has he access to the papers in the office?

The HOME SECRETARY: I know what is the form he has to sign before he gets the ticket.

Mr. McDONALD: The hon. gentleman says a certain form has to be signed. Then we can only come to one conclusion, and that is that he has had access to the papers.

Mr. HAMILTON: There is circumstantial evidence.

The HOME SECRETARY: The ticket could only be obtained on one form.

Mr. KIDSTON: But it is not proved that he got it at all.

Mr. McDONALD: That is the point I wish to get at. Up to the present time we do not know that Mr. Dawson had a pass at all. The hon. gentleman first of all stated that there was

a certain suspicion hanging over the heads of the Maryborough Press, and he wanted this return in order to remove that suspicion, but at the same time he says he knows the Press of Maryborough is not guilty. If he knows that, why does he want the return?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: He wants evidence.

Mr. McDONALD: The hon. gentleman must have known there was no suspicion hanging over these people, and his suspicions relate, not to the Maryborough Press, but to the Press elsewhere.

The HOME SECRETARY: They ought to be cleared.

Mr. McDONALD: Why did not the hon. gentleman inquire as to the Bundaberg Press? I notice also he carefully left Gympie out. I think he has given his case away entirely. In speaking of the Labour conference he also made the remark that Mr. Hinchcliffe represented a number of districts.

Mr. ANNEAR: I made a mistake. I withdraw that.

Mr. McDONALD: I am glad the hon. gentleman withdraws that. As I said in the earlier portion of my remarks, the motion is not broad enough, and therefore I intend to move by way of amendment that after the word "showing" the following words be inserted:—

All free passes issued by the Railway Department for other than departmental purposes from 1st July, 1888, to 30th June, 1893, with the names of the persons to whom such passes were issued, the duration of such passes, the reasons for granting same, and the estimated cash value of the same.

The hon. gentleman will still be able to get the information he requires, but I do not think it is a good thing to select one particular place to which this return should apply.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: It would take too long to make the return out.

Mr. McDONALD: It may take a long time, but it will be a most valuable return. These free passes have not only been confined to this colony, but have been granted to persons in Queensland to travel over the lines in the other colonies, and I think such a return as my amendment asks for would be a useful guide to the Government in determining what system should apply to the issue of free passes in future.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I am rather surprised that this amendment does not provoke more discussion. I do not understand the amendment. If it had been brought forward as a substantive motion we could then consider the advisability of supporting it or otherwise, but it seems to me very clear that it is merely a red herring drawn across the trail. There has been more or less of a charge brought forward—at any rate it is implied by the motion of the hon. member for Maryborough—that some improper conduct has taken place in the matter of Press tickets—that the privilege has been abused. If it has been shown that other tickets have been given improperly, it in no way affects this particular complaint which is made by the member for Maryborough. Apparently it is narrowed down to one case—there may be more cases—but I do not understand how the hon. member for Bundaberg can take up the position that this is no breach of moral law. It certainly seems to me that if the gentleman whose name has been mentioned went to a conference, not as a member of the Press, but as a private individual, and if he expressly obtained the ticket, having to make this statement—

I certify that the above-named gentleman—

That is to say, the one who gets the ticket—is permanently employed by the proprietor of this newspaper, and is travelling on Press business.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member should confine himself now to the question whether these words should be inserted or not. The main question is not now before the House.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I at once submit to your ruling, Mr. Speaker. The amendment evidently has the effect of preventing the main question being discussed.

Mr. TURLEY: Not after the amendment is disposed of.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Just so; but it would be preferable to discuss the main question before this alternative is discussed. It confirms me in the impression I formed that the intention of the amendment is not only to distract attention from the particular complaint which has been made, but it is apparently intended to burke or prevent discussion. At this stage of the proceedings I decline to consider whether the amendment is a desirable matter to be considered or not. I shall oppose it on the ground that I desire to speak on the main question, and not upon the amendment. There are two reasons then for objecting to the amendment.

Mr. TURLEY: The hon. gentleman knows perfectly well that the amendment is not intended to burke discussion on the main question. He knows perfectly well that when the amendment to insert certain words is disposed of, whether they are inserted or not, the main question will then be open for discussion. It is absolutely a matter of indifference, so far as the main question is concerned, whether these words are inserted or not, because then the main question will still be open for discussion.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It will not be the same main question.

Mr. STUMM: It will not be the same question then.

Mr. TURLEY: The junior member for Gympie says it will not be the same main question.

Mr. STUMM: No more it will. Press tickets are not free passes.

Mr. TURLEY: It has nothing to do with Press tickets or free passes. The question is not that the motion be omitted, but simply that certain words be inserted in the motion, making the return more complete. We can easily understand hon. members on the other side opposing a motion such as that. I remember the question was brought forward in 1893, and I think it was brought forward again in 1894, with the result that hon. members on the other side to a man voted against any such return being laid on the table of the House to show the way free passes had been issued to large numbers of persons for various purposes. It has been the rule, practically, all round. We know perfectly well that free passes were issued years ago to an almost unlimited extent. Almost every person in authority simply asked for a free pass, and got it without trouble. People who were in a position to pay for their railway tickets, simply because they happened to be in Parliament, or because they knew someone in authority, thought it was not worth while paying, and asked for free passes. Here we have a question raised about certain concessions to the Press. If it is necessary that a question of this sort should be raised, it is necessary that the country should be furnished with a complete list of these concessions.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They have been granted to the Press for the last twenty years.

Mr. TURLEY: No return has been asked previously regarding the Press tickets granted to any individual or in any town. The object of the hon. member for Flinders, I take it, is to get more information for the community. He does not want to limit it to one man or two men

because there happens to be a little political feeling between them and a member of this House. He wants the whole thing to go out to the public. He does not want it to be limited to six months. He wants the whole thing, and if the hon. member for Maryborough chooses to amend his motion he can get all the information furnished. That seems to be a reasonable request. Why should we be humbugged round wanting to find out how Mr. So-and-so travelled on the Press concession? He may have gone 100 miles on the railway, but because he has a political opponent on the other side of the House, that political opponent must come down here and say, "I want this information concerning Mr. Jones. It does not matter about the other people. It does not matter how much corruption has been going on previously in connection with the Railway Department; I am prepared to cover that up so long as I can get this dig at a political opponent." That is absolutely mean. We on this side are not endeavouring to cover anything up.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Yes, you are.

Mr. TURLEY: We want not only the return that the hon. member for Maryborough has asked for, but we want the whole thing made public—not that it should be confined to the concession issued to one person.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: There are no concessions to the Press. It is provided for by the rules of the Railway Department.

Mr. TURLEY: It is just as much a concession to the Press as to other persons.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No more than it is a concession to give a ticket to a child for half-price.

Mr. TURLEY: If a number of people go in a body and take tickets for a certain journey, they get those tickets for less than a single individual would get a ticket.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is the rule of the department.

Mr. TURLEY: Never mind whether it is the rule of the department or not. That does not interfere with its being a concession granted to those people because they go in a body. In the same way this is a concession granted to the Press, because it is presumed—and a great deal of it is presumption—that it is necessary that a person connected with the Press must travel at half-price because he will be able to get reports of meetings, and thereby disseminate news.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Because the Railway Department can sell more tickets than it could at the higher rate.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It is a trade discount.

Mr. TURLEY: It is nothing of the sort. The fact is, it is all in the interests of the newspapers—just as they get their telegrams at about half the amount that ordinary people have to pay, and just as they used to be carried free.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: They give large orders.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It is a discount for taking a quantity.

Mr. TURLEY: It is a concession whichever way the hon. member likes to take it. Although it has not struck us on this side before—there is a great desire on the other side of the House to uphold the standard of political morality. We have not noticed that desire before, and, as a matter of fact, I do not think there is a great deal of it existing at the present time. It seems to me that what we have noticed in connection with political dodges—I suppose that is the best word—with hon. members opposite has been what we would consider as political immorality. Anyway, they now appear to be mending their ways, and they are going to stand on the side of

political morality. They contend that it is necessary that something which concerns a political opponent should be stated in a return to be laid on the table of the House, even though they have no actual knowledge that he has committed the act alleged against him. It is because we wish to know how this political morality has been upheld by hon. members opposite in the past that the hon. member for Flinders has moved this addition to the motion. Hitherto we have been unable to get a return on that subject in Queensland. But I shall point out how political morality in this connection has been upheld in the adjoining colony. I have here a return from the 1st of June, 1891, to the 1st of October, 1894, showing the reasons for the issue of free passes, and the period for which those passes were available in New South Wales. This return is only from 1891 to 1894, and it was laid on the table of the New South Wales Assembly on the 20th December, 1894, but it was moved for a considerable time before that. It is to be found in "Votes and Proceedings" for 1894, volume IV., page 655. In that list I find the name of "Mrs. Annear, wife of an M.P. of Victoria," pass from 26th October to 26th November. Then there is another entry, "Mrs. Annear, wife of M.P. from Victoria," pass from 17th December, 1893, to 31st January, 1894.

Mr. ANNEAR: Is there anything wrong in that?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: They are given to the wives of all members of Parliament.

Mr. TURLEY: No member on this side of the House has ever applied for such a thing either in Queensland or in any other colony. They look upon it as absolute corruption to use their position in order that they and their families may travel free.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS: What about Black in New South Wales?

Mr. TURLEY: I don't know.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS: I thought you said "in any other colony."

Mr. TURLEY: I said that members on this side of the House had never used their position to get any concessions of the sort either in this colony or in any other colony. There is another entry in this list, stating that Mrs. Annear, wife of an M.P. from Queensland, had a pass from 30th January, 1894, to 3rd February, 1894, and yet another entry to the effect that Mrs. Annear, wife of an M.P. from Queensland, had a pass from 21st February, 1894, to 3rd March, 1894. Here we see that passes have been obtained in New South Wales for a lady of the name of Mrs. Annear, wife of an M.P. of Victoria, on two occasions, and that on two other occasions the same name is entered as the wife of an M.P. of Queensland. At the time referred to there was no Mr. Annear who was a member of the Legislative Assembly of Victoria, but there was a gentleman of that name who was a member of the Queensland Assembly.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It was a clerical error, if that is so.

Mr. ANNEAR: It is unworthy of you.

Mr. TURLEY: And yet the hon. member stands up here and says, "We want to hold aloft the standard of political morality." Will the hon. gentleman say there is any political morality in a member taking advantage of his position in this House to get free railway travelling for himself, his family, and acquaintances, not only in this colony, but also in the other colonies? There is no member on this side of the House, I think, who would attempt to use his position to get free railway passes for his family or acquaintances in this colony, where he lives and is a taxpayer, let alone throughout the whole of Australasia.

Mr. ANNEAR: Those passes were sent to my wife unsolicited.

Mr. TURLEY: Of course I have to take the hon. member's word.

Mr. ANNEAR: You prove otherwise.

Mr. TURLEY: According to the Standing Orders I am not allowed to say otherwise. The hon. member says those passes were sent unsolicited. I say they are not sent from any colony until they are applied for. Is the Railway Commissioner in this, or any other colony, in the habit of sending free railway passes wholesale to people who have never applied for them? Does the hon. member mean to tell us that that is the way the railways are carried on in Australia? If that is so, how is it that these passes were so close together—that one was an extension of the other? The hon. member knows it is nonsense to make that statement.

Mr. ANNEAR: Not one of those passes was obtained by false pretences.

Mr. TURLEY: I never said they were obtained by false pretences. I simply said that when hon. members opposite stand up to talk about political morality, and attempt to teach us on the subject, they should take a lesson from us, and not attempt to use their position, even in the colony where they are taxpayers, to induce the Railway Commissioner to allow them and their families to travel on free passes. If I had done anything of that sort—if anything of that sort could be found against my name in a return furnished to any Parliament in Australia—I should be ashamed to stand up in this House and move the motion standing in the name of the hon. member for Maryborough.

Mr. BATTERSBY: It is about time now that we had done with this discussion. We might as well go to a division and settle whether the hon. member for Maryborough shall get his return or not. Judging from the arguments of the other side, something has happened which they do not wish to be found out. I shall vote for the motion of the hon. member for Maryborough, and I hope it will be supported by the majority of the members of the House. All I want to do is to get at the truth of this matter, but hon. members opposite are afraid of the truth. I am going to vote for the motion, and it does not matter two straws to me whether I am in the majority or the minority. The hon. member for Bundaberg made a very good defence, but he only killed the matter, so far as I am concerned. I shall say no more, but shall vote for the return, and if the amendment goes to a division, I shall vote for that also, so that we shall know what the colony has been doing.

Mr. STEPHENS: I am sure that if the hon. member for Flinders persists in his amendment it will lead to results which he does not anticipate. He is asking for a return of all free tickets issued during the last ten years, but I may point out to him that a lot of mechanics and others, who had bad luck, obtained free tickets to go to other parts of the colony looking for work. Some of them found better luck, and are now doing very well, and I think it would be unfair to rake up the fact that they had had to apply for free tickets. In many cases they have paid for their tickets since, and it would be unfair to resurrect their names and let the whole world know that they were hard up at one time, and had to apply for free tickets.

Mr. KIDSTON: Hon. members on the other side are assuming a new and unusual rôle in upholding political morality. If they are so very anxious to do that in particular cases they should be prepared to do it in all cases; but I think if this political morality is upheld too far, they will be sorry they ever moved in the matter at all. It seems to me that the debate so far has

been a very eloquent commentary upon the statement of the hon. member for Bundaberg "that those who live in glass houses should not throw stones." Never since I came into this House have I seen the mover of a motion get such excellent cause to be sorry that he moved it as the hon. member for Maryborough has this afternoon.

Mr. ANNEAR: I am responsible for my own actions.

Mr. KIDSTON: The hon. member has come out in a new rôle this afternoon.

Mr. ANNEAR: You evidently don't like it.

Mr. KIDSTON: He has come out as a sort of political Condy's fluid. I am sure the electors of Maryborough who know him, and who know his past political history, will be much more astonished than those in the rest of the colony who do not know him. One thing that astonished me in the hon. member's speech was the shameless way in which he used his position in this House to traduce the character of a man who is not here—

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is wandering from the question before the House, which is the insertion of the words proposed by the hon. member for Flinders.

Mr. KIDSTON: I am in favour of the amendment, but I am also in favour of the motion itself—apart from the motive of the hon. member for Maryborough in moving it. But if the motion is desirable, the amendment is no less so. If it be desirable to find out the truth in one or two particular cases, it can surely be none the less desirable to find it out in connection with other matters. The hon. member in moving the motion assumed something, and based his whole argument upon that assumption—an assumption that he had no right to make, but which gave him an opportunity of attacking a man—

The SPEAKER: Order! I have already ruled the hon. member out of order in referring to that matter.

Mr. ANNEAR: I made no attack.

Mr. KIDSTON: If I cannot refer to what the hon. member said in moving the motion I shall sit down, and have something to say with reference to his extraordinary conduct when the amendment is disposed of.

Mr. STEWART: I am sorry that for once I shall be compelled to vote against an amendment moved by the hon. member for Flinders, my reason being that if it be carried we shall not get the information that is asked for in the motion made by the hon. member for Maryborough.

Mr. McDONALD: It will include that.

Mr. STEWART: The hon. member moved for a return of all free passes, but these tickets were not free passes.

Mr. McDONALD: I only moved an addition to the motion.

Mr. STEWART: The hon. member explains that his amendment is only an addition, but I still think it ought not to be pressed, because it appears to me that it would be rather a large order under the present circumstances. I should be quite willing to vote for an amendment which would leave out the words "in Maryborough," so as to bring the whole colony under the return, but at present I think it is rather a large order, and it has really no direct connection with the subject.

Amendment put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 33.

Messrs. Glassey, Kerr, Kidston, W. Thorn, Jackson, Sim, Browne, Hardacre, Groom, Drake, King, Fogarty, Keogh, Daniels, McDonnell, Turley, Dawson, Dunsford, Dibley, McDonald, Battersby, Cross, and Maughan.

NOES, 33.

Messrs. Dickson, Philp, Foxton, Dalrymple, Chataway, Murray, Smith, Annear, Finney, Moore, Newell, Callan, McMaster, Grimes, Stephenson, Stephens, Bell, Leahy, O'Connell, Smyth, Hood, Castling, Bridges, Petrie, Cribb, Lord, McGahan, Stodart, Hamilton, Collins, Armstrong, Stumm, and Stewart.

Resolved in the negative.

Original motion put.

Mr. STEWART: I think it is very desirable, not only that the information asked for in the motion made by the hon. member for Maryborough should be obtained, but also that some further information should be got. The basis of the hon. gentleman's motion is that a certain privilege given to the Press has been abused. If that has happened in Maryborough—I am not saying whether it has happened or not, and I do not think the hon. gentleman was justified until he knew the facts absolutely in saying that it had or in founding a charge against a particular person—

Mr. ANNEAR: I founded no charge against a particular person.

Mr. STEWART: The hon. gentleman did. He mentioned the name of a certain individual in Maryborough, Mr. J. M. Dawson, who he alleged attended the Labour Convention held in the Trades Hall in June last as a delegate. He even went so far as to say that that gentleman travelled from Maryborough to attend that convention—

Mr. ANNEAR: I did not.

Mr. STEWART: On a Press ticket, and travelled back from that convention on a Press ticket. He went even further than that, and said that he obtained that ticket by false pretences. I was very much amused as I listened to the hon. gentleman's diatribe, and his charges, and his insinuations. Perhaps it will be information to hon. gentlemen, and to the House, to hear that Mr. Dawson travelled down to the convention by the "Burwah," and that he went back from the convention to Maryborough by the "Burwah," so that the hon. gentleman's castle in the air falls to the ground.

MEMBERS on the Opposition side: Oh, oh! Hear, hear!

Mr. ANNEAR: Then his name will not appear in this return.

Mr. STEWART: The hon. gentleman descended to details, and I am only following on that particular detail. When other details are brought forward in this Chamber I am sure that hon. gentleman will be able to deal with them. I have no wish to continue the discussion, but I desire to have much fuller information than is asked for in this return. The hon. gentleman's contention is that a special privilege granted to the Press has been abused in Maryborough. I believe that privilege has been abused in many other places, and I think it is very desirable in the public interest that we should know exactly how the matter stands.

Mr. BROWNE: How do you know he travelled in the "Burwah"?

Mr. STEWART: I am as certain of it as I am that I stand here.

Mr. HARDACRE: Do you know it of your own knowledge?

Mr. STEWART: I know it of my own knowledge. To put myself in order I move the omission of the words "at Maryborough," so that the first portion of the motion will read, "How many Press tickets were issued by the Railway Department during the past six months?" I am sure the hon. gentleman and those associated with him cannot have the slightest objection to the amendment. When that return is laid on the table we shall know exactly how these Press tickets are being dealt with all over the colony, and I think the information is very much needed.

Mr. STUMM: I hope the House will accept the amendment proposed by the leader of the reasonable section of the Labour Opposition. I should like to see this return made to apply generally all over the colony, because I am satisfied that the Press will come triumphant out of the insinuations made against it. I do not believe there is any paper in the colony—certainly not one of any standing—that would apply for a Press ticket at half-fare, and sign a declaration that “the abovenamed gentleman is permanently employed by the proprietors of this paper, and is travelling only on Press business,” when the real object of the journey is something totally different. If that were the case, the sooner safeguards are taken to prevent the Railway Department from being defrauded the better. There have been some very disagreeable and most unfair things said this afternoon; but I will not enter into them.

Mr. TURLEY: Are they true?

Mr. BROWNE: One statement is untrue—against a man that could not defend himself.

Mr. STUMM: I think the hon. gentleman who interrupts ought to be the last to attempt to read a lecture in this House on political morality.

Mr. DAWSON: The mover of the motion bit off more than he could chew.

Mr. STUMM: I believe that if we agree to this amendment it will be practicable to get the information in the course of a week, but if it is made for a longer term we cannot get it before the session is at an end, and suspicion will be cast all round; I do not think that is desirable.

Mr. TURLEY: The hon. member for Gympie said I should not attempt to lecture the House. I have never attempted to do anything of the sort; but I can assure that hon. gentleman and any other hon. member on the other side that when they come down to the business of throwing mud they will find members on this side just as well able—

MEMBERS on the Government side: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAWSON: And we will guarantee that most of it will stick.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: A life-long experience!

Amendment agreed to; and motion, as amended, put and passed.

CASE OF LIEUTENANT-COLONEL BLAXLAND.

Mr. DRAKE, in moving—

That the House will, on the 8th instant, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of an Address to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will cause to be placed on the Supplementary Estimates for the present year the sum of £1,000 for Lieutenant-Colonel G. G. Blaxland in compensation for loss of employment and consequent injuries—

said: In dealing with this matter I shall endeavour to occupy only sufficient time to make the matter clear to the House and to assist members in following the evidence which accompanies the report of the Select Committee. A committee was appointed by the House to investigate this case, and they have presented a report to the House, through me, in which they unanimously agree in recommending that Parliament should award this amount of money as compensation to Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland. I presume hon. members have a copy of the report and evidence in their possession. Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland was appointed to the position of Commandant on the 18th December, 1879, by notification in the *Gazette*. His services were dispensed with by a letter written by direction of the Premier, Sir Thomas McIlwraith, on the 8th June, 1882. The terms of the appointment will be found in Appendix A, and the letter dispensing with his services in Appendix B. It will be noticed by members that whereas

Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland was appointed in the usual way by notice in the *Gazette*, his services were dispensed with in a summary manner by the letter found in Appendix B. Upon his dismissal his first anxiety was that all his papers and affairs, of which he had control, should be properly audited. An auditor was appointed, and matters connected with his papers were found to be in perfect order; but it was not until the 10th August, 1882, as found in Appendix C, that he invited Sir Thomas McIlwraith to state the reasons for his services being so suddenly dispensed with, and he received a letter, which is given in Appendix D, and of which this is a summary—

I think you labour under a misapprehension in thinking that the official letter terminating your services as Commandant in the Volunteer Force in any way implied that you must have been guilty of something mean or dishonourable. I do not think it does, and I can assure you that there was no intention whatever of making the slightest personal objection to you.

The position of Commandant of Volunteers requires very peculiar qualifications, which, it is no disparagement to your general ability, to say you do not in my opinion possess.

Subsequently an official letter was written on the 27th June, 1883, contained in Appendix E, by the Under Colonial Secretary, in which he states—

The Government were of opinion that you are unfitted for the duties devolving upon you.

That was the evidence before the committee upon which Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland was dismissed, and in their report they say—

In the absence of any further evidence on this point the committee cannot infer from these expressions the existence of any grounds which would, in their opinion, justify the dismissal of Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland from the position of Commandant.

I should like to say on this point that the ground upon which this claim is made to Parliament is simply this: The committee consider that a wrong was done to an individual by the State, and they consider that—no matter what may be the lapse of time or changes in the *personnel* of the Government—where the State has done a wrong to the individual it should make redress. If that principle is right, and the House agrees with the committee that a wrong was done to Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland, then I think it should come to the conclusion that some redress is due to him for the loss and injury he has suffered. Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland, I may mention, before he came to this colony, was a military man by profession. He had served very creditably with the British army from 1864 to the time when he was a lieutenant in the 99th Regiment. If hon. members will turn to the appendices they will find in Appendix G a certificate that he passed the school of musketry at Hythe. Subsequently, on the 31st July, he passed through a course of instruction, and was appointed to the position of superintendent of gymnasia for the whole of Ireland. That position was so good that it justified him in resigning the position he then held as adjutant to his regiment, and for the nine months before he came to Queensland he was holding that position. Hon. members will also see in Appendix K a reference to the examination which had been passed by Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland, signed by the Adjutant-General, and with this postscript—

His Royal Highness has been pleased to remark upon the creditable manner in which this officer has answered the questions put to him.

So that hon. members will see that Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland was a soldier by profession before he came to Queensland. He was in Queensland for two years before being appointed Commandant, and during that time he was occupying the position of an officer in the Volunteer

Force. Now with regard to Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland's abilities as a military officer, it appears from the testimonials which he brought with him from the old country, and from the evidence which has been given by the witnesses, that his military qualifications and efficiency were of a very high order indeed. I may remark here that at the time Colonel Blaxland was Commandant there was no military officer in the colony occupying a higher position than himself, so that in getting evidence with regard to the way he discharged his duties we had to take the evidence of officers who are now generally occupying higher positions in the force, but who at that time were his subordinates. The first witness who was examined was Major Tooth, the present member for Burrum. He was asked—question 77—

What was the condition of the Volunteer Force during the time Colonel Blaxland was Commandant? I was in charge of the Wide Bay District, and my experience is that during the time Colonel Blaxland was in office the force was never more popular or more efficient, and I do not think the discipline was ever better. I never knew it better than during the time he was Commandant.

Then he was asked—question 80—

Was he good drill? I consider him one of the best drills we ever had. Certainly he was the only Commandant who took the trouble to come and drill the men, and who took any interest in them. I know he was up in my district several times, and he not only came on parade but he drilled the force. I know I learned more drill from Colonel Blaxland than from anyone else. He would come and give us lectures, too, on military subjects. He is the only man I ever heard lecture on the law of projectiles, or anything like that.

The next witness was Major A. E. Harris, who now occupies the position of deputy assistant quartermaster-general on the staff. He was a volunteer officer at the time Colonel Blaxland was Commandant. At question 87 he was asked—

Was the force popular in his time? Very.

You have had a good deal of experience in the Defence Force. Would you consider Colonel Blaxland a good drill? Excellent at the time. Of course the drill has altered from year to year, but in his day he was the best drill in the colony.

The volunteer branch of the force has fallen off a good deal since his time? Very much.

The next witness was Captain Hinton, who was in the artillery branch of the service. He was asked—question 95—

Was the service popular at that time with the men? Yes, very.

From your knowledge and experience, do you consider that Colonel Blaxland was a good drill? A very good drill.

Did he enjoy the confidence of the men? Yes.

Lieutenant-Colonel Newman was asked a similar question—105—

In your opinion is Colonel Blaxland a good drill? Certainly, the best infantry drill I have ever seen.

Was he liked by the men and by his brother officers? Very much. He was very popular.

Captain George Alex. Macfarlane, who at the present time is a captain in the Moreton Regiment, and is one of the very oldest volunteer officers in the colony, was asked—question 120—

From your experience do you consider that Colonel Blaxland was a good drill? I do.

Was he a good disciplinarian? He was, and he was very well liked by the officers and men; in fact the men would do almost anything for Colonel Blaxland while he was Commandant, and go anywhere with him. The force was never in a better position than it was while he was Commandant.

Lieutenant James Richards Sankey, who was then, and is still, a lieutenant in the volunteer branch of the Defence Force, was asked—question 133—

When did you get your first commission? In 1881.

That was during the time Colonel Blaxland was Commandant? Yes.

Was the Volunteer Force popular at that time? From the encampment of 1878 the Volunteer Force took a great impetus, and was extremely popular.

Do you think the popularity of the Volunteer Force was owing at all to the personality of the Commandant? There can be no doubt at all about it; it was referred to on many occasions and by many people connected with the force. The men at that time declared that they would follow Colonel (then Major) Blaxland anywhere, and do anything for him. His influence at the encampment at Eagle Farm in 1878 was very marked indeed. We were then simply a lot of raw levies, and knew very little of drill, but in about two days after Colonel Blaxland took us in hand the men worked like a machine. There was a marked improvement on anything we had had before in the Defence Force of Queensland.

You consider that that was actually an epoch in the Volunteer Force? Yes.

Then he was asked by Mr. Maughan—

Do you consider him an efficient drill? I consider Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland the most efficient drill we have ever had in Queensland.

And in the matter of discipline? Very strict, very thorough, very effective, and at the same time commanding the thorough confidence of the men.

I have only quoted an answer or two from each of the witnesses who were examined, so that hon. members will see that there is a consensus of evidence from the members of the old Volunteer Force as to the ability of Colonel Blaxland and the valuable services he performed in connection with the Volunteer Force. As hon. members will see from Appendices D and E, Colonel Blaxland was summarily removed in 1882, and from that time the Volunteer Force declined in numbers, in efficiency, and in popularity until a Commandant was brought in from outside—Colonel, the present General French—who came to the colony, and while he was here the present Defence Act was passed, founded upon the Defence Act of Canada, from which time the present Defence Force dates its existence. As a further proof of Colonel Blaxland's fitness for the position of Commandant, I refer hon. members to paragraph 5 of the committee's report—

Three years subsequent to his dismissal, in the year 1885, on the occasion of an anticipated invasion, Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland was specially selected to organise the Defence Force in the Northern portion of the colony, and upon the termination of his duties received the commendation of General French for the very good service performed by him.

If hon. members will turn to question 32 they will find that Colonel Blaxland was asked—

Since you lost the position of Commandant have you been in service with the Defence Force? Yes; I was specially selected at the time of the Russian war scare to go up North to start and organise the various forces which now exist there. There were none at all at that time. They had only a few arms and some ammunition for rifle clubs.

In what year was that? In 1885 or 1886.

How long did you occupy that position? I held that position for about six months, and during the first fortnight I managed to train 254 men and put them into camp for six days at Whitsuntide.

Appendix N is a letter which was written by Colonel French, at the termination of that period of employment, to the Colonial Secretary—

With reference to the temporary employment of Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland at Townsville, I have the honour to point out that if the Government are satisfied that all danger of invasion has passed away for the present, there no longer exists any good reason for retaining this officer on duty. I consider that Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland has performed very good service during the period he has been stationed in the Northern district, and I hope that the Government may be pleased to allow him a gratuity of a month's pay and allowances in the event of their deciding to relieve him from duty.

I mention this because it seems conclusive that so far as military efficiency was concerned the Government were not dissatisfied with Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland. Therefore, whatever reasons may be discovered in the two letters

which are quoted in the appendices, it cannot have been on account of unfitness for the performance of the particular duties for which Colonel Blaxland had been engaged. The sixth paragraph of the report is as follows:—

The committee see no reason to doubt that Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland endured considerable mental distress in consequence of his abrupt dismissal and the injurious comments to which it gave rise; that his bodily health became thereby impaired, and that he was prevented from obtaining employment.

Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland was asked to be rather more definite with regard to the distress that he had suffered in consequence of his dismissal, and he pointed out that from conversations which he had had with persons it was apparent—although probably it was never the intention of the notice that he received that his services had been dispensed with—but, as a matter of fact, many persons had conceived the idea that Colonel Blaxland was leaving under a cloud. At question 173 he was asked by Mr. Macdonald-Paterson—

By Mr. Macdonald-Paterson: I understand you had a great deal of worry over the condition of affairs subsequent to your abrupt dismissal? Yes. I suffered a great deal of mental agony. People seemed to look upon me with suspicion. When I was so summarily dismissed there was a suspicion that my accounts were not right. The matter was mentioned to me by friends.

By the Chairman: That was the reason you immediately demanded an audit? Yes.

By Mr. Macdonald-Paterson: You have not enjoyed good health for some time? No.

Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland also states that in consequence of the reports that were spread about he was unable to obtain employment in other countries, as hon. members will see by reference to question 37.

Have you made any attempt to get any military service outside the colony? Yes, I tried in all the Australian colonies, I tried in New Zealand, I tried in Cape Colony, and I have tried in China.

Do you consider that you have been placed at any disadvantage in applying for service outside? In each case the replies I received were much to the effect that as I was not good enough for Queensland I was not good enough for them. If there had been any reason given for my dismissal, perhaps it would have been all the better for me.

So that I think the committee were justified in coming to the conclusion that there is no reason to doubt that Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland endured considerable mental distress in consequence of his abrupt dismissal and the injurious comments to which it gave rise, that his bodily health was thereby impaired, and that he was prevented from obtaining employment. With regard to the expenditure that was incurred by Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland, he informed the committee that this payment was made with the knowledge that it was intended to appoint a properly qualified commandant at a salary of £700 a year, which was recommended by the committee of 1882, and in the belief that when the appointment was made he would of necessity receive the position, having served so long and so creditably with the force. It was the custom then for volunteer officers to incur a great deal of expense, which is not now borne by the officer himself. On this point I would refer hon. members to the evidence of Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland at questions 46, 47, and 48:—

You speak of the actual expenses incurred by you while Commandant at £500 a year—what were those, particularly? There was one, notably, at Ipswich camp. If you notice, one of my paragraphs says I had to subscribe to the volunteer entertainments. At the camp at Ipswich, in 1880, I had to bear the whole of the expenses of the mess guests—that is, the public guests. Sir Arthur Palmer was there, and Sir Joshua Peter Bell, who was then Acting Governor, and the corporation of Ipswich came out in a body and sat down to lunch. My bill for the three or four days of the camp was £45.

Were you in the habit, then, of paying for entertainments of that sort? I had to pay for everything as Commandant. It came out of my private pocket.

You speak of the expense of obtaining uniform, equipment, and outfit? I had to buy horses and uniform. My horses, uniform, and camp equipment I value at £300 at least. They cost me that. I had to get two horses and full-dress uniform. The reason why uniforms were so expensive was that in those days there was very little known here about the making of uniforms.

An old volunteer officer, Lieutenant Sankey, also gave an opinion on this point. He was asked—

You can tell us something, perhaps, about the expense a volunteer officer incurs? At the present time a volunteer officer incurs very little expense, but in the old days he incurred considerable expense.

From 1878 onwards did officers in the Volunteer Force require to put their hands into their own pockets? Yes, to a very considerable extent. At that time it was quite a usual practice for volunteer officers to entertain their men on the march. We had regular monthly parades down the Valley or along the Ipswich road, and an officer was invariably expected to entertain his men on the march.

Those extracts will give hon. members some little idea of the expense which officers of volunteers at that time were called upon to incur. Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland, in his zeal for the service, and in his desire to make the Volunteer Force as efficient as possible, incurred this expense, and naturally incurred it in the expectation that he was going to occupy the position of a more highly paid Commandant. It has been asked why did not Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland make his claim sooner? A petition was presented to the House by him in 1884, through the late Mr. Francis Beattie, and, like a great many other persons outside Parliament, Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland had the idea that the petition having been received, Parliament would at once on its own motion take the matter into consideration, and do justice to him, and he did not at that time push the matter any further. Of course we know as a matter of fact that when a petition is presented to Parliament, unless it is followed up in some way, it does not generally meet with the consideration of Parliament. In paragraph 8 the committee state that—

Having carefully considered the whole of the evidence, they are of opinion that the petitioner was harshly treated by the Government, and has a fair claim upon the consideration of Parliament.

And they recommend that this amount of £1,000 be awarded to him. The motion now is to go into committee upon the claim, and I trust the House will allow the motion to pass this afternoon, so that there may be a chance of having the matter considered before the close of the session. In the interval hon. members will have an opportunity of reading the whole of the evidence, and I think if they do so they can hardly fail to come to the same conclusion as that which has been arrived at by the select committee.

Mr. JACKSON: Has he not received some compensation in the way of employment in the Civil Service?

Mr. DRAKE: Lieutenant-Colonel Blaxland was employed for some little time as associate to one of the judges, and about five years afterwards he received a position as warden's clerk, or clerk of petty sessions, and he is now occupying a position temporarily in the Government Savings Bank at a very small remuneration. I hope the House will allow the motion to go, and I feel sure that if hon. members will read the report and evidence they will be disposed to grant what is recommended by the committee.

The PREMIER: The hon. member who introduced this motion occupied a lot of time unnecessarily in endeavouring to prove that Colonel Blaxland is and was a smart military

officer. Everyone who knows him admits at once that he is a soldier, and that covers being a clever man at drill and everything else. I do not believe that there has been a smarter military man here, but that does not justify the hon. member in coming down to this House and asking for a vote of £1,000 as compensation to a man whose connection with the force ceased sixteen years ago, and who should have made his claim, if it were a just one, many years ago. I would ask why Colonel Blaxland slept upon his claim for sixteen years?

Mr. PETRIE: Because he never got a chance to bring it forward.

The PREMIER: If it were a just claim, it should have been submitted to Parliament several years before this, but to bring it up sixteen years after he ceased to be prominently connected with the force, and to ask for the sum of £1,000, actually two years' salary at the rate at which he was then engaged, seems to be devoid of reason. I have looked through the report of the committee and the evidence very carefully indeed, and I cannot discover the slightest claim upon the State for that or any other sum whatsoever.

Mr. DRAKE: He is still connected with the Defence Force.

The PREMIER: He is not an officer receiving salary. He holds a rank in the Defence Force, but unfortunately that rank has been the difficulty in giving him employment. It is the very fact of his holding that high rank which has prevented him from being appointed to a subordinate position. As I have said, he is an excellent military officer, and I consider it a misfortune to the Defence Force that he was not continuously employed in the service. He was a great favourite with the corps to which he was attached. He was an excellent drill, as has been testified over and over again, and I can say nothing which will reflect on his ability either as a soldier or a gentleman. But at the same time I see no claim upon the State whatever in this direction. The facts are plainly set forth in the report of the Committee, and throughout the evidence. He was appointed to the force in 1879, and his services were dispensed with in 1882, and if he had any claim whatever upon the State it should have been made long before 1893. I lay some stress upon the fact that representations which appear to have been made to previous Governments have been consistently ignored.

Mr. LEAHY: He never had a considerate Government.

The PREMIER: I hope no Government will recognise the claim of a man to such a large amount of money for loss of office to which all men are subject. Have we not had several cases in which the evidence—

Mr. PETRIE: Under different circumstances.

The PREMIER: This officer was deemed by the Government of the day not to be wholly suitable for the position, and they had a perfect right to dispense with his services. There was no binding contract. It was merely an appointment year by year, and Parliament at any moment might have dropped his salary from the Estimates, and dispensed with his services without any notice. Succeeding Commandants have been engaged for certain periods of service, but he was not. The Government declined to submit any contract to Parliament or to ratify any contract with him, and his remuneration and appointment were simply held at the pleasure of the Government, and after three years' tenure of office the Government deemed that he was not wholly suitable for the position which he occupied. I am not desirous of entering into that matter, because it is a matter of history, and there are none of the present members of the Defence

Force who can throw any light upon the actual circumstances which led to his dismissal. He appears to have been very highly respected, and he is still; but I cannot get from the department any information as to the real circumstances which separated him from active service beyond the correspondence which has been published by the committee. That he had the respect of the volunteer corps is true, but at the same time the hon. member, in his remarks, led us to infer that in his time the volunteer corps were in a thorough state of efficiency, which is not borne out by the report of the committee of inquiry which was held in 1881, referred to in the petition, or by the report of Sir Peter Scratchley, who deplored the growing decadence of the force. He did not attribute that decadence in any way to any defect in Colonel Blaxland's supervision, but to some internal weaknesses which tended to deteriorate the service. He certainly spoke in very high terms of Colonel Blaxland as a soldier, but the allegation in the petition that the report of the committee of inquiry in 1881 cleared the petitioner of all blame for the then undesirable state of the Volunteer Force is not correct. Even he himself admits that before he ceased his connection with the force it was in an unsatisfactory state; but although its deterioration is not attributed to Colonel Blaxland, the statement that he was exonerated from all blame is not correct. I read the records of Parliament carefully last night, and I can find nothing to show that he was exonerated from all blame, unless it can be construed that silence is praise. There is nothing said by the committee of inquiry or by Sir Peter Scratchley exonerating the Commandant from all blame. I am not mentioning this as a censure upon Colonel Blaxland, but simply to show that the statement in his petition that he was relieved of all blame for the unsatisfactory condition of the force is not supported in any way. He is not condemned for it, but the report is silent as to any exoneration for the condition of affairs which then existed. That, however, is by the way.

At 7 o'clock the House, in accordance with Sessional Order, proceeded to Government business.

VICTORIA BRIDGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

On the Order of the Day being read for the consideration of this Bill in committee,

The PREMIER: Mr. Speaker—I beg to move that you do now leave the chair.

Mr. GLASSEY: Before you leave the chair I desire to ask the Premier as to what the business is likely to be in the future—

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member cannot do that on this motion.

Mr. GLASSEY: I merely want to ask the Premier what business is likely to be gone on with.

The SPEAKER: Does the hon. member mean to-night?

Mr. GLASSEY: No, not to-night.

The SPEAKER: Then the hon. member is not in order.

Mr. GLASSEY: Very well, I will have an opportunity when the House is rising.

Question put and passed.

COMMITTEE.

On clause 1—"Construction and short title"—

Mr. GRIMES was surprised to see the commitment of the Bill on the business-paper for this evening. Important alterations were embodied in the amendments which had been handed round to hon. members, and though he had taken the earliest opportunity of sending copies of those amendments to four divisional boards in his electorate, who had been brought within the

benefited area and compelled to pay a portion of the expense under the original Act, there had as yet been no opportunity for them to reply. The Premier's amendments would come as a surprise to the divisional boards interested, and he thought it was rather hurrying legislation to press the Bill on in committee this evening.

The PREMIER was sure his hon. friend had not read the Bill and the amendments or he would see that the latter were purely clerical and consequential. There was no interference with the principle, nor would he, at the instance of any local authority, at the present time allow any interference with the principle upon which the original Bill had been passed. It was just as well that hon. members should understand that. This Bill was simply to apportion the balance of the original indebtedness in the same proportion as was indicated in the original Act, and which to any ordinary individual the original Act would have covered. But there had been legal interpretations as to whether the preamble in the original Act dominated the 19th clause, or the 19th clause dominated the preamble, and to remove the ambiguity this Bill was now introduced—to define clearly that one moiety of the total cost incurred in the construction of the bridge should be borne by the Government and the other by the local authorities. The amendments were merely for the purpose of making clearer the process of elections in connection with the groups and of giving the board fuller information from the returning officers. There was only one feature of the Bill which might be the subject of discussion and that was with regard to the bridge allotment, and he would explain the position with respect to that when they came to the clause dealing with it. He would repeat, for the information of the hon. member and other hon. members who had expressed disapproval of the principle of the original Act, that if any attempt was made to alter that principle he should deem it his duty to withdraw that Bill rather than allow any alteration to take place.

Mr. McMASTER did not expect that the Premier would accept any amendment that would in any way interfere with the principle of the original Act; at the same time, he thought, with the hon. member for Oxley, that the Bill was being pressed on rather hastily. What he took most exception to himself was the latter part of the 5th clause, which was a most arbitrary clause.

The CHAIRMAN: I remind the hon. member that clause 1 is now before the Committee.

Mr. McMASTER was aware of that, but the Premier had spoken to the Bill as a whole, and following such an example surely they could reply to the hon. gentleman? They were representing local authorities in this matter. Like the hon. member for Oxley, he had sent a copy of the Bill and amendments to the local authority he had the honour to represent in that House, and he had not had any reply. There was no doubt that the local authorities took exception to the Bill as a whole, but the last clause was certainly one upon which they should have an opportunity of expressing an opinion. He could not read it because he had been ruled out of order.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. gentleman will not take it in that way.

Mr. McMASTER: I cannot take it in any other way.

The CHAIRMAN: I drew the hon. gentleman's attention to the fact that clause 1 was before the Committee. I will also draw his attention to Standing Order 253, which says—

When a clause or amendment is under discussion, a member speaking should confine himself to the matter of that clause or amendment.

I trust the hon. member will not think I am exceeding my duty in doing what I consider the House elected me to do—that is, to carry out the Standing Orders impartially.

Mr. McMASTER: He did not say the Chairman was exceeding his duty, and he hoped the Chairman did not think hon. members were exceeding their duty when defending the rights of those who sent them to that chamber.

Mr. MAUGHAN: You are making a second-reading speech.

Mr. McMASTER: He was not. He was simply saying that he thought the Bill might stand over till the beginning of next week, so that hon. members representing local authorities could get the opinions of those local authorities. He was not speaking for the municipality of Brisbane, because only a portion of that municipality was in his electorate; but the Booroodabin division was in his electorate, and he was there to look after their interests. He had no amendment to propose; and if the local authorities did not send him any amendment he had no intention of blocking the Bill or moving any amendment, so far as he knew at present.

Mr. JENKINSON: Have they had time to send any?

Mr. McMASTER: They had not had time. He had given the clerk of the Booroodabin Board a copy of the Bill and a copy of the amendments which he obtained last night, and the clerk told him this morning that he would send them to the chairman at once, but he had had no opportunity yet of finding out the opinion of the board, or whether they wanted him to do anything or not. In justice to hon. members representing outside local authorities the Bill might be allowed to stand over till next week. If the hon. gentleman intended to push it through, as was done last year, of course they could not help it.

The PREMIER: If there was anything in the amendments which introduced a new principle he would at once listen to the remarks made by the hon. member for Oxley and the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. McMASTER; but the only clause on which there was any difference of opinion was the amendment at the end of clause 5, and he was willing to give hon. gentlemen every opportunity of discussing that; but he was certain that those two hon. members were themselves better judges of what was good and beneficial to the local authorities than the local authorities themselves. They were excellent representatives of local authorities; he felt that they were the embodiment of the wisdom of local authorities, and there was not the slightest reason why the Committee should delay the further consideration of the subject, especially as the session was drawing to a close.

Mr. McDONNELL: He thought the local authorities interested had taken very little interest in the Bill. Early in the year there was a conference in connection with the Victoria Bridge Bill, initiated, he thought, by the Hamilton Board, but very few local authorities were represented. A deputation was appointed to wait on the then Home Secretary, the present Premier, and the members representing the districts in which the local authorities were situated were invited to be present. The hon. member for Toombul and himself attended, and the only board represented was the Hamilton Board. At that time the hon. gentleman suggested that they should call another conference of the local authorities interested, and that was done, with the result that only one local authority turned up. He had therefore come to the conclusion that the local authorities were satisfied with the Bill. They were not at first, and he and other hon. members opposed it because they thought the

Government should build the bridge as a national work, but when they did not secure that they were satisfied to accept what they could get. When the Brisbane municipality were invited to the conference early in the year they declined to send a representative. This Bill had been printed since the 9th November, and there had been sufficient time for the local authorities to consider it and approach their representatives. They had not done so, and he was justified, under the circumstances, in supporting the Bill.

Mr. GRIMES: Speaking for himself, he was very much obliged to the Chief Secretary for the rather flattering compliment paid to him and the hon. member, Mr. McMaster, but was not quite sure that his information and knowledge of divisional boards was as good as the hon. gentleman represented. He had been rather out of touch with them for the last five years, and they might view some provisions of the Bill in a stronger light than that in what he viewed them. He thought there was a danger, and those who felt where the shoe pinched would see more danger than he saw. He had no doubt he would receive by Monday next a letter strongly condemning a portion of the amendments that had been handed round. He was not anxious to interfere with the principle of the Bill, but the sting of this new Bill was in some of the amendments. In reference to the remark of the hon. member, Mr. McDonnell, that only one board took any action, he might say that the reason why the other boards interested did not take action was that they wanted to repeal the Bill altogether, and fall back on the old system of collecting tolls. The other boards were not anxious for the repeal of the Act, but they wanted a readjustment of the responsibility. That was the reason why they did not join with the Hamilton Board. They thought that board was going too far.

Mr. PETRIE: As representing one of the local authorities, quoted by the junior member for Fortitude Valley, he might say that the Hamilton Board is opposed to the principal Act, and called a conference with the idea of amending it. Nobody turned up at that conference; the board were utterly disgusted, and blamed the North Brisbane Council. He was opposed to the original Act, and was defeated in his efforts to have it amended. Although the Hamilton Board had done its best to get justice done, the Brisbane Municipal Council had been so dilatory that they had been debarred from doing anything. He therefore felt disposed to accept almost anything the Premier might bring forward. Possibly if the conference had been held things might have turned out better for the local authorities on the north side of the city. He agreed that the Bill might well be postponed for a few days, so that the amendments to clause 5 might be considered.

Mr. CRIBB submitted that the discussion had been altogether irregular. If hon. members had wished the consideration of the Bill to be postponed they should have opposed the motion "that the Speaker leave the chair." As they had not done so the discussion should be confined to the question before the Committee—clause 1.

Mr. McMASTER could not allow the statements of his colleague and the member for Toombul to go unchallenged. His colleague stated that the local authority in that portion of the city which he represented took no interest in the matter. That was not so. The hon. member for Toombul put the whole blame on the city council. The local authority which the hon. member represented thought they would get all the other local authorities to join them in sitting on the Government straight away. That board asked for a repeal of the whole Act, and the Brisbane Council having approved

of the Act last year by one vote—which they would not have done had the member for North Brisbane, Mr. Fraser, been in his place in the council—they could not stultify themselves by asking for the repeal of the Act. The hon. member for Toombul last year tried to have his local authority exempted from the operation of the Act, but he (Mr. McMaster) voted against that proposal.

Mr. DUNSFORD: What is the question before the Committee?

Mr. LEAHY: Stonewalling.

The CHAIRMAN: I would remind the hon. member that there is nothing in clause 1 in reference to the municipality of Brisbane or the Toombul Divisional Board.

Mr. McMASTER: Neither was there anything in it with regard to the conference of local authorities. The Chairman would not allow him to speak, but he would again ask the Premier whether it would not be well to delay the passage of the Bill, so that the local authorities might have an opportunity of expressing their opinions?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not correct in saying that I will not allow him to speak.

Mr. McMASTER: Except on the 1st clause.

The CHAIRMAN: This is the third occasion on which the hon. member has risen and addressed himself to the Bill generally.

Mr. McDONNELL: The point he had raised was that they had not been approached by the local authorities interested. The Bill had been before the country for the last month.

Mr. McMASTER: Not the amendments.

Mr. McDONNELL: The hon. member had taken exception to the Bill as a whole. He (Mr. McDonnell) had not said that the Booroodabin Divisional Board appeared to take no interest in the Bill. What he did say was that that board was not represented in the deputation which waited on the late Home Secretary, and that the Hamilton Board was the only local authority present at the conference summoned by that body. He had therefore come to the conclusion that there was very little interest taken in the matter by the local authorities.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 2 and 3 put and passed.

On clause 4—"Election?"

The PREMIER moved the insertion in subclause (a) of the word "any" before the words "such election." The amendment would remove the apprehension which existed in the minds of the members of some of the local authorities that the elections in all the groups were to be held on the same day.

Amendment agreed to.

The PREMIER moved the insertion in subclause (n) of the words "and to the board" after the word "Minister." The subclause provided that the returning officer should forthwith report to the Minister the name of the representative elected, and the board might also very justly claim to be made acquainted with the result of the election.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. GRIMES wished to call attention to subclause (j), if he was in order in doing so. The taxation under the Victoria Bridge Board Act was obtained from ratepayers according to the value of their property, and the voting power of ratepayers in local authorities was based upon the relative values of property. In subclause (j) it was proposed to introduce the principle of one man one vote, and that was an innovation that would not work well.

The CHAIRMAN: I would remind the hon. member that the clause has now been amended down to subclause (n), so that the hon. member is not in order in going back to subclause (j).

Mr. GRIMES thought he was in order in speaking to the whole clause. The whole principle of the voting would be upset by the number of votes each voter had to cast in the election of the bridge board.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will be in order in discussing the whole clause, but he cannot go back and amend before the last amendment which has been made.

Mr. GRIMES: The Chairman misunderstood him, as he had proposed no amendment, but was directing the attention of the Premier to the fact that subclause (j) introduced a new principle. In voting for the members of local authorities, the voter had a number of votes according to the value of his property. The subclause he had referred to introduced the principle of one voter one vote, so that the man who held a large amount of property, and had to pay a proportionately large amount towards the taxation under the Act, would have no extra voting power.

The PREMIER: The hon. member was labouring under a misconception. If he would turn to the principal Act, he would find that the first group consisted of the shire of Cooparoo and the divisional boards of Sherwood and Stephens. Assuming that each of those local authorities consisted of nine members, there would be twenty-seven members who were entitled to vote for the representative for the group, and each of those twenty-seven members could only have one vote. It was the members of the local authorities who were referred to and not the ratepayers.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

The PREMIER proposed the following new clause:—

The following provision is added at the end of section 11 of the Principal Act:—

Land vested in and in the occupation of the board shall not be deemed to be ratable land within the meaning of the Valuation and Rating Act of 1890, or any Act amending or in substitution for that Act.

The reason for the clause arose from the fact that in South Brisbane the board had to maintain in good order Victoria place, extending from the southern abutments of the bridge to the alignment of Stanley street. That was a very large piece of land, and its maintenance entailed a considerable expense upon the Victoria Bridge Board. The board were quite willing to continue to keep that approach to the bridge in good order, but they complained that a portion of their land, which had been purchased for the purpose of widening the approach, was amenable to pay rates to the South Brisbane Municipal Council. They contended that their property should be placed in the same position as the property of the Government and be exempt from rating.

Mr. DIBLEY pointed out that a portion of the land was already let for wharfage purposes, and that there was nothing to stop the board from letting the remainder of the land for building purposes. In the event of that being done, the council should have the right to rate the land.

Mr. LEAHY: It would not be in the "occupation" of the board then.

Mr. TURLEY agreed with the proposal to exempt the land from rating as long as it was in the occupation of the board, but held that if the long frontage from the bridge to the hotel, or any portion of it, were improved by the board and let, or if it were let on a building lease, the portion so let should be liable to be rated by the municipal authority.

Mr. McMASTER contended that if the board were placed on the same footing as a local authority, then even if the property were let it would be exempt from rates, as under the Valuation Act no rates could be collected on property held by the Government or by the

local authority. The Brisbane Municipal Council were losing something like £900 a year, besides the endowment they would get on that amount, through the operation of that principle. At the time the matter was before the House he pointed out how the provision would operate, but it was then said that the local authority could put the rates on the rent. However, he did not think that board would have the same status as a local authority, but that the municipal council could collect rates on the property if it was let.

The PREMIER: If the board let the land it would no longer be in the occupation of the board, and it would in that case be amenable to rates; but so long as it was in the occupation of the board it would be amenable to rates, in the same way as the lands leased to pastoral lessees were amenable to rates.

Mr. TURLEY: Is this clause sufficiently clear to carry out that intention?

The PREMIER: The clause was prepared under very careful legal supervision, and was certainly framed on that principle.

Mr. TURLEY: Perhaps the person who framed it had not in his mind the fact that the board might let the land for building purposes, or improve it and then let it. He should like the Home Secretary, who was a member of the legal profession, to tell them whether, in his opinion, the municipal council would be able to rate the land if the board improved it and let it, or if they let it on a building lease. It seemed to him that the clause was hardly clear enough.

The PREMIER was just reminded of an analogous case. The Railway Department had certain land in Roma street, and as long as that land was in the possession of the department unimproved, of course no rates were paid upon it to the Brisbane Municipal Council. But when shops were erected on the land and leased, the council collected rates from the lessees.

Mr. DIBLEY believed he was correct in saying that the Brick and Tile Company leased a portion of the land in question for wharfage purposes, and that being so it was certainly not in the occupation of the board.

New clause put and passed.

On clause 5—"Amendment of 61 Victoria No. 15, s. 20"—

The PREMIER: This clause dealt with the contributions of groups of local authorities for the purpose of providing such sums as might be necessary under a precept issued by the board. It provided that it should be the duty of the clerk of every such local authority, as soon as the valuation lists of the district were compiled, to furnish to the board a statement certified to be correct, showing the total value of the ratable land in such district as ascertained by the valuation list. That was a great improvement, because the original Act left it somewhat doubtful as to how the board were to obtain any satisfactory basis on which they could ascertain the amount of revenue they would derive under any precepts that were issued. But upon consultation with the board, it had been decided to submit the two following paragraphs as a further amendment:—

Such statement shall be and remain conclusive evidence of such value until a fresh valuation has been made and a fresh statement of such value has been furnished to the board.

When a local authority makes default in the payment to the board of the sum stated in a precept issued to it within the time therein limited, the board may cause a copy of such precept, certified as correct under the hand of the chairman of the board, to be filed in the office of the Registrar of the Supreme Court, and thereupon such precept shall be deemed to be a judgment of the Supreme Court for the sum stated therein, and may be enforced with costs accordingly.

He presumed that the last paragraph was one on which there might be some difference of opinion. His attention was directed to it by the bridge board, on the ground that the original Act gave the Treasurer power to enforce the precepts, but that it was doubtful whether the board itself had that power directly. He admitted that it was very direct action, but he did not view it with the alarm that some of the local authorities seemed to regard it. He should be glad to hear an expression of opinion on the matter from hon. members representing the local authorities concerned.

Mr. McMASTER: As one of such members he had no hesitation in saying that it was a most arbitrary provision. It was as much as to say to the local authorities, "Stand and deliver!" "Your money or your life!" No local authority would object to give the board the same power that the Treasurer had now—namely, if there was a defaulting local authority, to step in and order a levy to be made on the rates. But it might happen that a precept might be lodged and judgment enforced against a local authority at a time when they could not pay it without very great inconvenience. Many local authorities were at present so loaded with debt, on account of the endowment on which they depended having been cut off, that it was impossible for them to make their payments up to date, and the chairman of the bridge board might say he would have his money no matter who suffered. And it must be remembered that the board was a changing body. Local authorities changed their members every three years, and municipalities every two years, so that in two or three years not one of the present members of the board might have a seat upon it. And it was rather too arbitrary to say that immediately a precept was lodged with the Registrar of the Supreme Court it should be deemed to be a judgment of the court. It carried costs just as if they had gone through all the preliminaries of a trial, and, therefore, he contended that it was too much power to be placed in the hands of a board that was, to some extent, irresponsible, because, although the members would be members of local authorities, there was no control over them when once they were gazetted. They would then be masters of the situation, and could snap their fingers at the local authorities. The Premier should not forget that most local authorities had been asking the Government to allow the principal of the debts they owed the Government to stand over for a time, because they were unable to keep up their payments. They were in great difficulties owing to the endowment being kept so low, and that made it more necessary that this great power should not be given to the bridge board.

Mr. DRAKE regretted that the Premier could not see his way to accede to the suggestion he made last night that there should be some reasonable interval between the second reading and the committal of this Bill, in order that the local authorities should have an opportunity of expressing their opinions on the subject. He did not claim to represent any local authority, but still in matters of this kind he always endeavoured to obtain the views of the local authority in his electorate. The Ithaca Shire Council held a meeting to-day, and passed this resolution—

That this council protests against any further precept or claim in connection with the Victoria Bridge, but that this resolution be forwarded to the members for the district, asking them to use all their efforts to oppose it.

No doubt if other local authorities had had opportunities of expressing their opinions they would have done so.

The PREMIER: They have had ever since the 9th November.

Mr. DRAKE: That argument was used last year. It was considered that as soon as a Bill was laid on the table the local authorities would study it at once, but he might point out that the Local Government Bill was circulated all over the colony for the purpose of obtaining opinions upon it before it was introduced at all, but nothing of the kind was done in regard to this Bill, or to the Act passed last year. The reason why there was such an objection to this Bill was that the local authorities complained that it was unjust to ask them to bear this burden—

The PREMIER: It is no use re-opening that subject, because it was all settled by the Act passed last year.

Mr. DRAKE: The hon. gentleman had admitted that there were inequalities in regard to the rating, and where an Act of Parliament inflicted an injustice it was the right of any hon. member to continually urge that it should be altered. He was not speaking particularly in regard to this clause, because the local authority he had referred to had no particular objection to it, although the hon. member for Fortitude Valley spoke strongly in condemnation of it.

The PREMIER: You could not get them to agree.

Mr. DRAKE: They might not all agree, but they could find out what the weight of evidence was. He objected altogether to the way in which the Bill was being forced on, as it was not of an urgent nature and there was no necessity for passing the committee stage of it to-night. He had nothing particular to say with respect to this clause, as there were two sides to the question, but he thought that the power, under the Act of 1897, for the Treasurer to step in and levy rates was quite sufficient.

Mr. LEAHY: It is not a good power to give a Treasurer.

Mr. DRAKE: In one sense it was, because it was not likely to be enforced, whereas this clause proposed to give a much greater power to the bridge board. It might put the board into the position of a tyrant. Some of the local authorities affected by the Act of last year had all they could possibly do to meet the wants of their districts without having that new burden thrust upon them.

Mr. FINNEY pointed out that some of the local authorities combined to pay for the bridge had been put into a very unfair position. The shire councils he represented objected to being taxed for a bridge which they believed was of no benefit to them. The Toowong council had a most expensive road to keep up, for the river bank on one side of it required heavy expenditure to repair slips caused by floods, and the road itself had to carry the traffic of all the funerals of the whole city, and the shire council got no outside aid to keep that road in repair.

The CHAIRMAN: I draw the hon. member's attention to the fact that all that he has said was said on the Bill of last session, and his remarks do not in any way apply to the amendment before the Committee.

Mr. FINNEY: The amendment before the Committee gave an arbitrary power to the board to crush the Toowong Shire Council, and he was shewing a reason why they should not have such an arbitrary power in the Bill. He was asking the Premier not to permit such an arbitrary power to crush local authorities that were already struggling for a bare existence.

The CHAIRMAN: I am sure the hon. member will see that the payment to be made by each local authority was settled last session.

Mr. FINNEY: Not this payment.

The CHAIRMAN: The payment was decided by the Act passed last session. The hon. member will see that the amendment does not in any way bear upon the contribution which each local authority shall pay. That was settled long ago.

Mr. McMASTER : Not this method of payment.

The CHAIRMAN : I trust the hon. member for Fortitude Valley will assist me to carry on the business of the Committee in a proper manner. The hon. member for Toowong, I am sure, wants to see the business carried on properly. There is an amendment before the Committee, and I trust hon. members will confine their remarks to it. We are in committee now ; the Bill is not on its second reading.

Mr. FINNEY : He would bow to the Chairman's ruling, and would rest satisfied with entering his protest against such an extraordinary clause and amendment. Why should this extra arbitrary Bill be passed now ? This £3,000 was not in the Act passed last year, nor was this arbitrary clause in it. He did not suppose the bridge board would do anything unfair, but they never knew what might be done, and why should this board be invested with arbitrary powers which no other board was invested with ? It looked as if the local authorities were not to be trusted at all, and he could not see why the Premier should not be satisfied with the same power as the Treasurer had now for collecting money due by local authorities.

The PREMIER : Some hon. members representing local authorities seemed very apprehensive that the bridge board would carry out the amendment in so drastic a way as to very much interfere with the financial ability of the local authorities to pay the precepts. He did not think for a moment that the bridge board would act in that harsh manner. But the local authorities must recognise that they would have to meet those precepts.

Mr. FINNEY : Of course.

The PREMIER : He was very glad to hear that interjection, because they had had during the debate some expressions which would imply that the precepts might stand over until it suited the convenience of the local authorities to pay. He hoped that was not the general feeling. He hoped the validity of the precepts would be acknowledged, but he did not want the bridge board to take such drastic action as would cause a judgment of the Supreme Court, as provided for by the amendment, to be immediately enforced, when perhaps a little indulgence might fairly be granted to a local authority. To that extent he was inclined to recognise the expression of the opinion of members of the Committee, and he was, therefore, prepared to move that the word "thereupon," in the 3rd last line of the amendment, be omitted with a view of inserting "at the expiration of sixty days thereafter." He thought that was meeting the local authorities in a very reasonable way. He saw a great advantage in this clause—in its direct action between the board and the local authorities, because he did not approve of the intervention of the Treasurer. He thought the amendment was advantageous in every sense, and with the concession he was prepared to make he hoped it would meet with the approval of the Committee.

Amendment, by leave, amended.

Mr. LEAHY thought there was a good deal to be said on behalf of the contention of the hon. members for Fortitude Valley and Toowong. He did not think the amendment proposed by the Premier, though it modified the position, removed the objection. It was a very objectionable proposal, as it conferred a power never conferred by any statute before, as far as he knew. It gave a power which the Supreme Court did not possess, and which the Government did not possess. It was entirely opposed to British practice and British sense of justice that an irresponsible body should take upon itself to levy upon another body straight off, without going through any process of law. He was astonished at the hon. gentleman taking up

such a position, and it devolved upon him to show what necessity there was to give such an extraordinary power. Local authorities could sue and be sued under the present law, and he did not know of an instance where the present law had not been sufficient to compel them to meet their liabilities. And if the present law had been sufficiently powerful hitherto, what reason was there to suppose that it would not be sufficient to make them pay their just liabilities in this case ? He could understand the hon. gentleman wanting to relieve the Treasurer from the unpleasant duty of enforcing payment ; but there was no necessity to jump from that to a remedy that was far more objectionable. If they passed the Bill without this power, and the present law was found wanting as far as enforcing payment was concerned, it would be easy next year to come and say so, and the full strength of the Chamber would assist in passing a measure, however stringent, that would make the local authorities take up the position they ought to occupy. This was not a matter that affected him except in principle. It was a principle that was obnoxious to give to any half-dozen individuals such extraordinary power.

Mr. CROSS : Can you show that it is not necessary ?

Mr. LEAHY : This was a new departure, and the onus of proof was on the hon. gentleman making the departure to show that it was necessary or justified. If this was going to be the law in one case, how far was it going to be put in force ? The principle was a bad one, and he hoped it would not be insisted upon.

The HOME SECRETARY : There was nothing so very extraordinary about the proposal after all. The hon. member was familiar with the case in which an award was made a record of the court, and immediately became a judgment of the court and execution could be issued thereon.

Mr. FINNEY : That is after trial.

The HOME SECRETARY : That was so, but he would show the analogy. There was no need for a trial when a man himself admitted that a certain amount was due. If hon. members read the original clause as well as the amendment they would find that the amount of the precept depended on the return furnished by the clerk of the local authority upon which the precept was made, and it was not till they made default in payment of what they admitted to be due that the precept was made a judgment of the court.

Mr. McMASTER : The local authorities must make their valuations at a certain time in the year.

The HOME SECRETARY : Yes. They had to practically admit that so much was due by them, and that did away with the necessity of asking an arbitrator, or a jury, to assess the amount.

Mr. McMASTER : Why alter the power under the old Act ?

The HOME SECRETARY : He presumed because the power had not been found sufficient.

Mr. BRIDGES : Some of the boards had failed to pay the precepts that had been issued, and some power should be given to compel them to do so. There was really no machinery to compel the boards to pay. Seeing that a necessity had arisen, it was for them to say what were the best steps to be taken. He thought, with the Premier, that sixty days was sufficient notice to give, and that it would remove all possible hardship. Either they must authorise the bridge board to collect the debts or exempt from payment those boards that would not or could not pay. It did not seem that they could exempt them, and therefore the only plan

was to accept the amendment before them, and give the bridge board power to enforce its precepts.

Mr. GRIMES: The hon. member who had just sat down did not speak very feelingly on the subject, because he did not represent a board that had to bear any portion of the burden. He wished to correct the hon. member's statement that there was no power to enforce payment of the precepts. Under subsection 4 of clause 20 of the principal Act, power was given to the Treasurer to collect a special rate for the payment of the precept if the board did not collect such special rate, which they were empowered to do under the Act. It was proposed now to give an extraordinary and arbitrary power to the bridge board, which, in his opinion, they should not possess. He wished to point out that even the amended amendment would not help them much, because when the board issued a precept they had to name a time limit. It might be, in the ordinary course, sixty days, but there was nothing to prevent them from fixing the time at fourteen days. He was sure there would be a great outcry amongst the boards against the arbitrary power conferred by the clause.

The HOME SECRETARY: It was all very well to give the Treasurer power to step in as provided under subsection 4 of clause 20 of the principal Act, but if they gave similar power to what was practically a local authority there would be conflict at once between the officers of the two local authorities. On the one hand there would be the bridge board going in to collect the rates, and on the other the local authority itself. That would not be desirable at all. If the two local authorities were to work without interfering with each other it was desirable that one of them should have the authority of the Supreme Court for what it was doing.

Mr. GRIMES pointed out that hitherto most of the local authorities had not collected a special rate, but the precepts had been paid out of general rates. In cases where the precept was unpaid the bridge board would step in and collect a special rate.

Mr. McMASTER: No doubt the proposal now made by the Premier was a modification of what he at first proposed, but for all that it was objectionable. The hon. member for Nundah spoke very glibly on the subject because his district was not interested. He did not care who sank so long as he swam. The power now asked for had never been given to a local authority before.

Mr. CROSS: You must make a beginning somewhere.

Mr. McMASTER: If such a system was to begin let it begin with those who could best afford to deal with it and the Government. If a local authority borrowed money from the Government and failed to pay, the Government had not the right to go to the Supreme Court. They could step in and collect the rates.

Mr. TURLEY: The board cannot do that in this case.

Mr. McMASTER: They could do worse under the amendment. He would not object to giving the bridge board the power to step in and collect the rates. Parliament had passed an Act authorising local authorities to borrow money outside the Government, but they had not given the mortgagee such a power as was now asked for. He could only collect the rates. It was too arbitrary a power to hand over to a board which was not appointed by the ratepayers, but by the members of the various local authorities. He challenged any hon. member to mention one local authority which had refused to pay its precept. The board had not been in existence twelve months yet. Some of them had levied rates and paid their precepts. He believed

that the amendment had not emanated from the Premier, but that he had been asked to move it by the bridge board. There might have been something to be said in favour of such a proposal if the board had been in existence for two or three years, and some of the local authorities had shown that they were determined not to pay, but there was no evidence that any of them had refused. The hon. member for Nundah was the only hon. member who had made a statement to that effect; but the hon. member knew nothing about the matter, as he was not interested. Hon. members who represented local authorities who were interested would be failing in their duty if they did not endeavour to get the amendment modified. It had to be remembered that more rates were collected in the two months preceding the 1st of November than during any other period of the year, and it would be a great hardship if the local authorities should be made to fork out by such a clause as this. The least the Premier could do was to extend the time to ninety days.

Mr. FINNEY had not heard of any local authority refusing to pay the precept of the bridge board. The Bill was one-sided; the people would object to it, and the Government would have to amend it. If a bridge in any of the local authorities broke down, it would have to be put up again by the local authority within whose boundaries it was, without any help from outside. It was a one-sided, unfair Bill, without mutuality, and it was a great pity that Victoria Bridge had not to be paid for by the two municipalities of North and South Brisbane.

Mr. BRIDGES: He had brought down on his head the wrath of the hon. members for Fortitude Valley and Oxley, but the hon. members had not disproved what he had said. He reminded the hon. member for Oxley that last year he was a staunch supporter of the Bill.

Mr. GRIMES: I opposed it.

Mr. BRIDGES: The hon. member said that he had friends on both sides. It had not been denied that some of the local authorities had failed to pay their precepts. The senior member for Fortitude Valley said that they had not refused. That was not his contention, but they had neglected to meet their obligations, and that was equivalent to a refusal. Some of them had paid twice, while others had not paid at all. He was not there to say whether the clause was too arbitrary or not, but certainly the bridge board ought to have some power to collect their precepts. He was there on an equal footing with other hon. members, and if, when he spoke on a matter before the House, he was accused of being too free in his speech, or of speaking on a subject in which he was not interested, he should not allow such statements to pass without endeavouring to answer them. Many of the ratepayers in his electorate contributed towards the payment of the precept in connection with the bridge, though the electorate itself was not directly interested in the matter. He agreed with the hon. member for Toowong that the whole of the cost of the bridge should have been paid by the two municipalities of North and South Brisbane, but if other local authorities had to contribute, and did not do so, some power should be given to enforce the precept against them.

Mr. McDONNELL was inclined to oppose the clause. He agreed with the hon. member for Bulloo that until the provision in the present Act for the enforcement of payment of the precept by local authorities making default had been proved to be insufficient for the purpose, there was no necessity for such a drastic clause as this.

The PREMIER had held similar views with regard to the proposal when it first came under

his consideration. On reading the section in the Act dealing with the subject he saw clearly that the Treasurer had all the powers that it might perhaps be necessary for him to exercise, and a great deal more than he would probably exercise. The weak point in connection with that vicarious action of the Treasurer was that he was not likely to act so directly as the bridge board, which was not in any way affected by other considerations. Therefore he had a few interviews with the board, and ultimately he gave his consent that the matter should be referred to the Crown Law Officers. It was referred to the Crown Law Officers, counsel's opinion was obtained on the subject, and this clause was the result of the most careful consideration.

Mr. LEAHY: Is not the ordinary provision sufficient in this case?

The PREMIER: No, that only gave the Treasurer power to step in and collect the rates.

Mr. LEAHY: Read section 6 of the present Act, which says that the board is a corporate body, and can sue and be sued.

The PREMIER: Section 6 merely stated that the board could sue and be sued, but he took it that subsection 4 of section 20 was the provision which dealt with the manner in which precepts should be enforced. It prescribed a certain form by which alone precepts could be enforced. The clause under consideration was submitted to the Crown Law Officers, and he was acting on their advice. It was a necessary provision, and, with the concession he had made, it would not in any sense arbitrarily or injuriously affect the local authorities.

Mr. LEAHY: It was very interesting to hear the hon. gentleman talk in high-sounding phrases of the Crown Law Officers, but there was nothing in it; they were just as fallible as other people. There certainly seemed to be a dual method provided in the principal Act for the enforcement of those precepts. By one method—that prescribed in section 20—the Treasurer could collect the rate where the local authority made default. By the other method payment could be enforced by obtaining a judgment in the Supreme or District Court. Section 6 enacted that the board should be a corporate body, and that it should be—

Capable in law of suing and being sued, and of purchasing, holding, and alienating land, and of doing and suffering all such other acts and things as bodies corporate may by law do and suffer.

Surely under that provision the board could sue in the ordinary way, and if judgment was obtained the court would have its own rules and means for enforcing its decrees. But there was also the alternative of the Treasurer stepping in, and there was no necessity for that alternative until it had been demonstrated that the courts of the country were incapable of administering justice between two conflicting interests. The amendment would establish a pernicious principle that was repugnant to all ideas of British justice, and to all the instincts of fair-minded men. The idea that any body of men should be allowed to register their own decrees—

The HOME SECRETARY: Not their own decrees, but the admission of the local authorities concerned.

Mr. LEAHY: There was no admission. The local authorities were required to send certain information to the board, and the secretary of the board determined how much they would have to pay on that basis. But the secretary might be perfectly wrong; the board might make mistakes; and he was of opinion that, under the 6th section of the principal Act, it was open to any individual to apply to the Supreme Court to compel them to stay proceedings. But there was nothing in the matter that was worth insisting

upon, unless the Government wished to show its strength. If the opposition to the amendment had come from the other side the Government would have given way long ago, and he hoped the Premier would withdraw it.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member, after lecturing the Premier for using high-sounding phrases, talked about the amendment establishing a pernicious principle, and about its being opposed to British justice. But he must see that it was possible for anybody to make a mistake. It was quite possible for the officers of the Supreme Court, or even the hon. member himself, to make a mistake. If he wanted to rely upon the infallibility of any human institution, whether a bridge board or any other body, there was always a possibility of the machine breaking down. The process which was proposed to be inaugurated by the amendment was for judgment to be entered up on what was practically the admission of the local authority that they owed the money.

Mr. LEAHY: Where do you get that from?

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member had apparently not read the Victoria Bridge Act, wherein it was provided that the amount to be contributed should be in proportion to the value of the ratable land in the district as ascertained by the valuation lists in force for the time being. Those valuation lists were the product of the local authorities themselves, and it was the simplest thing possible to show what was the proportion to be contributed. It was a sum in compound proportion, which ninety-nine out of every 100 schoolboys would work out correctly. It was on that practical admission of the local authorities that judgment was to be entered up. If the precept was wrongly made out, they had the whole of the sixty days on which to set aside the judgment, and probably the bridge board, whose officer had made the mistake, would have to pay the costs.

Mr. McMASTER: Has any local authority this power?

The HOME SECRETARY: He was not aware that any local authority was in an analogous position to the bridge board.

Mr. LEAHY: Has anybody in the world this power?

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes; any person in an arbitration case who had an award made in his favour had that power. It was for the local authorities to say what money was due by them, and that put the board in the same position as the successful party in an arbitration. There could be nothing stronger against a man or a local authority than the admission "I owe you so much." The hon. member seemed to know more about the matter than anybody else, even than the Law Officers of the Crown, but it was just possible that for once in his life he might be mistaken.

Mr. CROSS said it was quite evident to the minds of some hon. members there was some thing behind this which had not been let out. After listening to the discussion, he had come to the conclusion that the object of those hon. members who had spoken in opposition to the amendment was to keep the clause as it was, so that the power would be in the hands of the Treasurer, who might be squeezable—subject to political influence. In the first place there was an obligation to pay upon a certain basis which those who had to pay laid down for themselves. The valuation was not made on the sole responsibility of the clerk; it was agreed upon by the responsible members of the local authority, who submitted it to the bridge board, and that board issued the precept in accordance with that basis. The hon. member for Bulloo said that the board could sue and be sued, but did he want to increase the expenditure—waste

time and money in settling a thing that was already settled? The payment of this money should be removed from political interference, and that could only be done by adopting some such proposal as that made by the Premier, especially when the hon. gentleman had gone so far as to allow a period of sixty days to elapse, which would give ample time for the local authority to enter any protest or take such action as they might think proper. As he had said, the Treasurer was a squeezeable man, and had to keep his followers together, and therefore it was better that he should have nothing to do with these payments. It was not the voice of the general ratepayer that they heard this evening, but the voice of the property-holder, and he hoped the Premier would stick to his amendment, and that hon. members opposing it, who desired to see the purity of Acts of Parliament maintained, would withdraw their opposition.

Mr. FINNEY: It was a remarkable thing that when the original Act was passed nobody saw the necessity for any such drastic provision as this, which had suddenly dawned upon the hon. member for Clermont and others who wished to bring out a point which they considered should be put into force. This was not the act of the Government, but the act of the bridge board, which had instigated the Government to bring in a Bill that would be more fit for the Russian Empire. It was proposed to bring machinery into force that had never been tried before, and that nobody saw any necessity for when the original Act was passed. The ordinary machinery for collecting debts was sufficient then, and it was sufficient now, and he was sorry that the Government had made such a proposition as this at the instigation of the bridge board.

Mr. LEAHY wished the Premier to understand that he had no desire to offend him in any way. Every person who knew him would know that if he had anything to say he was not afraid to say it, and what he wished to say was that the hon. gentleman concluded his remarks by bringing in the authority of the Crown Law Officers, and he replied that that was a lofty and high-sounding phrase, used for the purpose of over-awing debates; but he had no intention of offending the Premier. Even if he had, that hon. gentleman would have been quite able to defend himself without the assistance of his lieutenant, the Home Secretary.

Mr. McMASTER: Mr. Annear—

Mr. McDONALD: Is this a stonewall?

Mr. McMASTER: The hon. member could call it what he pleased. Hon. members opposite were not so anxious to do business when it answered their purpose to talk. The hon. member for Clermont said that they wanted the Treasurer to have the power under the clause because they knew it would not be enforced. The hon. member might be speaking for himself, but he (Mr. McMaster) would not assist any local authority, in a position to pay, to evade the just payment of its debts. He was quite correct in his surmise that in this matter the Government had been moved by some power behind them; and he regretted that the Premier should have allowed himself to be moved by the bridge board to introduce such an arbitrary clause, which could only cause a great deal of illfeeling amongst those who would have to pay under it.

Mr. GRIMES had no idea of stonewalling this measure. All he had asked was that time should be given to the local authorities interested to discuss it at their meetings. It had been forced upon hon. members, and they had endeavoured to show where it would pinch the local authorities, and the difficulties which would occur under it. He intended to call for a division on the clause, as he wished it to be recorded in the journals of the House.

Question—That the words proposed to be added be so added—put; and the Committee divided :—

AYES, 36.

Messrs. Dickson, Foxton, Philip, Dalrymple, Chataway, Lord Murray, Armstrong, Newell, O'Connell, Maughan, Stewart, Moore, Daniels, Bridges, Dunsford, Stephenson, Corfield, Dibley, McGahan, King, Groom, Collins, Story, Sim, W. Thorn, Smyth, Morgan, Turley, McDonald, Kerr, Browne, Jenkinson, Jackson, Hardacre, and Kidston.

NOES, 11.

Messrs. Keogh, Finney, McMaster, Bell, Grimes, Drake, Battersby, Petrie, McDonnell, Leahy, and Hamilton.

PAIR.

Aye—Mr. Smith. No—Mr. Fogarty.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Preamble put and passed.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with amendments, and the third reading was made an Order of the Day for Monday next.

BRITISH PHARMACOPEIA ADOPTING BILL.

COMMITTEE.

On clause 1—"Adoption of British Pharmacopœia."

Mr. DRAKE: Since the Bill had passed its second reading he had made inquiries outside, and had been informed that nearly all the chemists were in favour of this Bill being passed, and that there would not be any inconvenience owing to the shortness of notice.

Mr. GLASSEY: Perhaps the Home Secretary would tell the Committee whether there had been any protest from chemists in regard to the time the Bill was to come into operation. He was not aware of any, except from the one gentleman, Mr. Maughan. He believed there was a consensus of opinion that the Bill should become law on the 1st January, the date mentioned in the Bill itself.

The HOME SECRETARY: He had had no protests whatever. The only communications made to him were decidedly in favour of the Bill becoming law on the 1st January. The only intimation to the contrary was what he had seen in the Press, in a letter signed by Mr. Maughan. He was also assured by a representative of the Pharmaceutical Society that, on the appearance of Mr. Maughan's letter, he waited upon that gentleman, and apparently satisfied him that there was no objection to the Bill coming into operation immediately. Unfortunately a firm of manufacturing chemists wrote to the paper and said something to which Mr. Maughan felt bound to reply, because he could not altogether subscribe to it, and then—so to speak—he became obstinate in the matter. That might or might not be true, but that was his information. He thought they might accept the testimony of the Pharmaceutical Society, which represented the chemists throughout the colony, that they desired the Bill to become law at once. In fact, it was at their request that it had been introduced. At first he told them that there would be no time to introduce it, but being assured that it would not lead to much controversy he consented to try and pass it this session. He, however, assured them that if it led to lengthy discussion it would have to be set aside.

Mr. GLASSEY understood that Mr. Maughan had sent in a communication to the Home Secretary?

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes, I am wrong. He did.

Mr. GLASSEY: He was not inclined to disbelieve Mr. Maughan's statements, but if he stood alone—if the chemists and druggists on the other side as well as the medical profession

were willing that the Bill should come into force on 1st January, it might almost be said that those interested were unanimous.

THE HOME SECRETARY: He had a letter from Mr. Maugham which he overlooked. He was glad the hon. member reminded him of it, and he took the earliest opportunity of correcting the statement he had made. After formally protesting against the Bill coming into operation on 1st January, Mr. Maugham went on to say—

I will now with your permission give a few reasons why such an amendment is necessary. Firstly: It would be impossible to stock a great many of the most important new preparations under at least six months from the passing of the Act. Secondly: As we have a Food and Drugs Adulteration Act now in force, on and after 1st January next any chemist would be liable to prosecution under the same, as a number of preparations, although strictly in accord with the test of the pharmacopœia of 1885, would not be so with the new. Therefore as most of the chemists are well stocked with the former preparations, to avoid prosecution and comply with the Act, it would be absolutely necessary to destroy all such stock, incurring thereby great loss. Thirdly: I think it only fair that a reasonable time be allowed the trade to dispose of their stock in the ordinary way of business, and gradually work up to the new formulae of the pharmacopœia of 1898. Lastly: As an instance of the injury to chemists through the hasty adoption of the new pharmacopœia in England, I refer you to the *Chemist and Druggist Journal* for the last six months for accounts of the numerous annoying and pettifogging prosecutions taking place almost daily.

He might mention that the *Chemist and Druggist* had published notices in reference to the new pharmacopœia for the last six months, so that chemists could hardly be said to be taken by surprise. The hon. gentleman also said that it would take six months to stock up with the new preparations, but he could hardly be aware that they were all obtainable at the wholesale chemists already. He had talked to several medical men since last night, and they laughed loudly at the objections put forward by Mr. Maugham. They ridiculed his ideas.

MR. GLASSEY: The statement of the Home Secretary was so far satisfactory, but he had had conversations with Mr. Maugham, who felt strongly with regard to the loss likely to arise through the pharmacopœia being brought into operation immediately. While he was not anxious to see people placed in a position such as he described, he was extremely anxious to see the Bill become law. Seeing that there had been no other protests—although he gave Mr. Maugham full credit for sincerity in the stand he had taken—he thought they would be justified in passing the Bill and allowing it to come into operation at the earliest possible date.

MR. McDONNELL: The Home Secretary had spoken of the secretary of the Pharmaceutical Society waiting on Mr. Maugham after that gentleman had written to the paper. That information was not quite correct. Mr. Maugham wrote afterwards to the paper, and the letter which had been read by the Home Secretary had appeared in the *Courier*, after the appearance of the letter written by Thomason and Chater. Mr. Maugham had seen him on the matter a few times, and he understood that there were other chemists—though not many—who held similar views to Mr. Maugham with reference to the insufficient time allowed before the Bill came into operation. Mr. Maugham referred in his letter to the Food and Drugs Adulteration Act. The 1st clause of the Bill provided that the British Pharmacopœia of 1898 should, after the 1st January next, “be for all purposes the pharmacopœia in force in Queensland.” Would it be compulsory for chemists to have their preparations up to the strength laid down in that pharmacopœia? Another point was whether the Bill would be compulsory or permissive?

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THE HOME SECRETARY: After the Bill became law, if a medical man in a prescription mentioned, say, the compound tincture of choleform and morphine—which was four times as strong, in regard to some of its ingredients, as the same preparation under the old pharmacopœia—and a chemist put in the preparation as set out in the old pharmacopœia, he took it that he would be liable under the Food and Drugs Act for adulteration. The Bill would not make the slightest difference in that respect. The liability of a chemist would be just the same as at present if he put in some constituent which was not mentioned in a prescription. The passing of the Bill would fix a standard, and bring about uniformity, but he was credibly informed that a large proportion of the members of the medical profession would not take the trouble to work up the new pharmacopœia. They would continue to work on the old lines, in which case they would head their prescriptions “B.P., 1885”; and then chemists would know that they were not working under the new pharmacopœia. The probability was that the old pharmacopœia would continue in operation more or less—getting gradually less—for the rest of this generation, until practitioners who had been educated under the new pharmacopœia were the only ones in the profession. He was told that some medical men actually now used some very old pharmacopœia prior to the one which had just become obsolete.

MR. McDONNELL: The difficulty was that there was no pharmacopœia in force at present in this colony.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Yes, there is.

THE HOME SECRETARY: Merely by custom—there is no legislative authority for it.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Perhaps not, but it is in universal use.

MR. McDONNELL: That made a wonderful difference. There was nothing compulsory. His point was: If the drugs were not up to the standard required by the new pharmacopœia, could a chemist be prosecuted under the Food and Drugs Act? For instance, the new tincture of nux vomica would be twice the strength of the old preparation; could a chemist be prosecuted if he did not keep that preparation up to the required strength of the British Pharmacopœia of 1898?

THE HOME SECRETARY: Only if he makes up a prescription with the wrong strength contrary to the prescription.

MR. McDONNELL: The point was not clear. Clause 1 said: “For all purposes the pharmacopœia of 1898 shall be in force in Queensland.”

THE HOME SECRETARY: It does not say you shall not take anything else.

MR. McDONNELL: Was the Bill permissive or compulsory?

THE HOME SECRETARY: From your point of view it is distinctly permissive.

MR. McDONNELL: That was what he wanted to know, because if it was compulsory, if a chemist kept anything in stock of the old strength he could be brought up for adulteration.

THE HOME SECRETARY: No.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It was really not a question of drugs at all; what the hon. member meant was preparations. What would happen if the Bill passed would be that the preparations in any prescription written after the first of the year must be of the standard of the British Pharmacopœia of 1898, unless it was otherwise expressly provided. But, as had been pointed out by the Home Secretary, if a prescription provided that the preparations should be those of the pharmacopœia of 1885, then they must be of that standard; and it would be essential for every druggist for a very considerable time to come to

keep two classes of preparations where the two pharmacopœias differed, because many doctors would continue to specify the preparations of the old pharmacopœia. Druggists must also be prepared to dispense under the old pharmacopœia, because a large portion of the business of most druggists consisted in making up again prescriptions which they had dispensed before. The Adulteration of Food and Drugs Act did not say that people should not get what they asked for, but that they should not get what they did not ask for. As to the objection to that Bill by Mr. Maugham that druggists must lose because they could not get rid of the preparations they had now in stock, made according to the 1885 formula, they were bound to keep them in stock, not only because many doctors would prefer to order them, but also because they would be required for making up old prescriptions. There was, therefore, nothing serious in that objection. Every pharmaceutical society that had taken action in that matter had taken the view that the change had to be made, and the sooner it was made the better. If Parliament did not say that the druggists of the colony should adopt the pharmacopœia of 1898, then druggists and doctors would have to come to some private understanding among themselves, and that would lead to a more uncertain state of things than that which they proposed to do away by the Bill.

Clause put and passed.

On clause 2—"Alteration of British Pharmacopœia to have force in Queensland"—

Mr. BATTERSBY said the sooner the Bill was withdrawn the better it would be for the colony. The clause before them contained a number of jaw-breaking words which only lawyers could understand. He would rather be in a thunderstorm than have to deal with jaw-breaking names.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3 put and passed.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment, and its third reading was made an Order of the Day for Monday next.

SLAUGHTERING BILL.

REPORT STAGE.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I beg to move that the Bill be recommitted with the view of considering the insertion of a new clause to follow clause 20.

Question put and passed.

COMMITTEE.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: When the Bill was in committee there was a general feeling that too much power was placed in the hands of the Minister administering the Act. He felt himself that while it was absolutely necessary that much must be left to regulations, it was very desirable that some means should be adopted to curtail or limit the powers of the Minister even though he had the power to make regulations. He found that in the Victorian Act regulations had the full force of law until they were disallowed by both Houses of Parliament; but he was prepared to go farther, and he therefore proposed the following new clause to follow clause 20:—

If either House of Parliament within the thirty days next after any regulations have been so laid before such House resolve that such regulations, or any of them, ought to be annulled, the same shall after the date of such resolution be of no effect, without prejudice to the validity of anything done in the meantime under such regulation or regulations, or to the making of any new regulations or regulation.

He thought that would meet the views of the Committee.

Mr. GLASSEY: He thought the amendment would meet the views of a considerable number of hon. members. It had been contended all along that it was unwise to place such exten-

sive powers in the hands of the Minister. Undoubtedly the Executive of the day must have very considerable power to frame regulations, otherwise many Acts would be inoperative. At the same time it was well that a clause of this kind should find a place in the Bill, and it was quite safe to follow the practice of Victoria, where a similar measure had received a great amount of consideration.

Mr. LEAHY thought it would be a great improvement if the responsibility were thrown upon the Government, seeing that the regulations met with the approval of Parliament. Under the clause as it stood the onus was thrown upon private members, and the matter would have to be discussed upon private members' day, when there would not be very much time. Then, again, if any private member moved that a regulation be not approved of, it might be tantamount to a vote of censure upon the Government, or at any rate to a reflection upon the Government. It would be better to alter the amendment so as to provide that the regulations should not have the force of law until approved by Parliament.

The PREMIER: Theoretically the views expressed by the hon. member for Bulloo might commend themselves to hon. members; but if they were put into practice the whole time of Parliament would be taken up in discussing regulations instead of legitimate legislative business. The Government must be trusted to a certain extent.

Mr. LEAHY: The amendment means nothing as it stands.

The PREMIER: It would bring prominently before hon. members regulations which were apt to be obscured in volumes of the *Gazette*. They would have to be placed before hon. members, who could move resolutions regarding them if they thought proper. The business of Parliament was increasing annually, and if they were going to discuss all the regulations connected with every department, they would never overtake it, even if they sat all through the year.

Mr. KIDSTON: The complaint was that there was an increasing tendency to govern by regulation, and it was for the purpose of minimising that that the Minister consented to frame an amendment that would limit the power of the Government in this direction. But the proposed remedy was a mere pretence. If a resolution were carried against the Government, it would be practically a vote of censure.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: There have been several resolutions carried against the Government in connection with the Education Department.

Mr. KIDSTON: What was required was that the Government should obtain the sanction of Parliament before these regulations had the force of law. Of course they must give the Minister power to make regulations, but there must be some restrictions. It had been pointed out that Parliament might not sit for six months after the regulations were issued, but it had been conceded that they might have the force of law until Parliament met, and for thirty days afterwards. At any rate the initiative should be taken by the Government, and not by a private member. He was not prepared to move an amendment, but he should like to see some amendment moved to the effect that within thirty days after the meeting of Parliament the Minister should obtain the sanction of the House to such regulations failing the obtaining of which the regulations should lapse.

The PREMIER: Anarchy and chaos would reign until new regulations were framed.

Mr. KIDSTON: He did not think that either would reign, because the result of such a law would probably be that the Minister would issue

no regulation which he had not good reason to believe would obtain the sanction of Parliament. If a regulation was passed which did not receive the sanction of the Parliament there would be no more of chaos than there was when they repealed a Bill, because in refusing to sanction the regulation the Minister would be given an idea of the kind of regulation on the subject which Parliament would sanction, and there need be no intervening period at all. He hoped that amendment would be amended in such a way as to cast the initiative in getting the consent of Parliament to regulations upon the Minister and not upon a private member.

The HOME SECRETARY would point out the utter impracticability of the suggestion. The hon. member proposed that no regulations should have the force of law if within thirty days after the meeting of Parliament they had not received parliamentary sanction. Why, it was six weeks before they got through the Address in Reply nowadays—since the hon. member and his friends had come into the Chamber. The hon. member must recollect that his principle, if good as applied to regulations under this Bill, would be equally good as applied to regulations under every other Bill. Therefore they might have fifteen or twenty sets of regulations, which would give rise to fifteen or twenty debates, and all would require to be affirmed by resolutions before the regulations became law. And all this was to be done within thirty days, or in about half the time it now took them to get through the debates on the Address in Reply and the Financial Statement. The hon. member must see that it was utterly impracticable. If such a thing had been practicable it would have been adopted by older Parliaments long before the Parliament of Queensland was established. Then, if the affirmative resolutions to give the regulations the force of law were not carried, or if they were stonewalled beyond the hon. member's limit of time—thirty days—what would happen? The law which they established in the various branches of the public departments would be cut off short; there would be no law at all to work under until new regulations were framed. The only practicable way was to give the Government power to frame necessary regulations under every law, but Parliament could fence the matter round as much as it liked in the different Acts. Regulations must have the force of law as soon as they were promulgated in the *Gazette*. It would be better to introduce a new Bill embodying the regulations than to adopt the practice which the hon. member suggested.

Mr. KIDSTON: There were two absurdities in the hon. gentleman's statement. Either the Minister would not be able to frame regulations which would be passed by Parliament—and that would not be very creditable to him.

The HOME SECRETARY: I did not say that. I said there would not be time for him to get affirmative resolutions passed.

Mr. KIDSTON: The other absurdity was that the representatives of the people in that House would take such action as would paralyse the public business of the country.

The HOME SECRETARY: They could not help themselves as they would not have the time to do what you propose.

Mr. KIDSTON: The hon. gentleman seemed to proceed upon the assumption that either the representatives of the colony were fools or they had some wild desire to ruin Queensland. He did not think there was any justification for such assumptions, or for the hon. gentleman's suggestion that there would be any serious danger to the continuity of the business of the public departments if this power were given to Parliament. It was eminently desirable that Parliament should have this power as it was the

only thing likely to meet the present tendency to government by regulation, and he hoped the amendment would be amended in that direction.

The PREMIER: He had no desire to protract the debate, but he was not sorry it had taken place, because it gave him an opportunity of informing hon. members who had not long been members of Parliament that they ought to discriminate between the functions of the Executive and the functions of Parliament. There was a growing tendency on the part of younger members to absorb in the functions of Parliament the functions of the Executive. Our constitutional theory was that there was a line of demarcation between executive functions and parliamentary functions, and Parliament should not seek to invade the prerogative of the Executive. Executive functions were the province of the Government of the day, and if they were to submit to Parliament the regulations framed by the Executive, not only would they be asking Parliament to become co-partners with the Executive, but they would be relieving themselves of responsibility which belonged to them, and it would come to this—that regulations disapproved by Parliament would be the overthrow of a Government. This was a very important matter, and young politicians—he used the term in no offensive sense—should really consider the line of demarcation between the responsibility of executive functions and the responsibility of parliamentary duty.

Mr. LEAHY: Tell us the line.

The PREMIER: "Parliament" meant a council of talk, a council of deliberation. "Executive" meant action, and carried responsibility with it. Every action had its own responsibility—

Mr. LEAHY: To Parliament.

The PREMIER: To the country and to Parliament. Parliament represented the country therefore it was responsible to the country. But there was a natural tendency of Parliament to endeavour to enter upon executive functions for which Parliament was entirely disqualified. That was recognised by all constitutional authorities. He did not say this because he was on the Government side of the House. The same principle would, he was sure, be supported by all thinking men on the other side who recognised the line of demarcation between executive and parliamentary functions.

Mr. KIDSTON: His argument was that the tendency at present was for the Executive to usurp the functions of the Parliament—to make the law rather than execute it. That contention was admitted a few weeks ago by the Government, and the result of that admission was that they had brought in this amendment. The hon. gentleman must admit that if it was an evil thing for Parliament to usurp the functions of the Executive, it was no less an evil thing for the Executive to usurp the functions of Parliament.

The PREMIER: I did not use the word "usurp."

Mr. KIDSTON: What the hon. gentleman said had the same meaning. It was the function of Parliament, not the function of the Executive, to make the law. The boundary line between the function of Parliament and the function of the Executive came on the matter of making regulations. It was partly making the law and partly executing the law. It was just the boundary line. He and other hon. members were not seeking to usurp the proper functions of the Executive; they were simply seeking to keep the Executive to its proper functions—the carrying out of the law made by Parliament. There should be no law that had not been made by Parliament.

Amendment put and passed.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with a further amendment, and the third reading was made an order for Monday next.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER: I move that this House do now adjourn. On Monday, after the third readings—which I presume will be formal—we intend to take the Marsupial Proof Fencing Bill, the Brisbane Technical College Bill, the Brands Bill, and—if time will permit—the Game and Fishes Acclimatisation Bill.

Mr. GLASSEY: I desire to ask the Premier whether it is not desirable that we should have some knowledge as to what business the Government is likely to go on with at this late period of the session. There are no less than seventeen orders on the paper not disposed of; whether the Government have more Bills to bring forward I do not know. I also wish to say that we have now disposed of the Mining Bill—a most important measure—and one, which I am sorry to say, was rather late in coming into our possession.

Mr. LEAHY: It has to come back from the other House yet.

Mr. GLASSEY: It may come back seriously mutilated or amended, and may take a considerable time to dispose of, although I hope that will not happen.

Mr. BROWNE: We are only half way through the Estimates.

Mr. GLASSEY: We are not yet half way through. We have arrived at that period of the session when I do not think the Government are justified in going on with legislation which will cause a great deal of discussion. We have not touched the Loan or Supplementary Estimates either, and seeing that we have arrived at the last month of the year, and that it is usual to rise about the 16th December, I think we are entitled to some statement as to what business will be gone on with. I would ask the Premier to carefully consider the advisability of only taking such measures as are non-contentious, so that they may pass both Houses fairly quickly, and we may then get on with the Estimates. In the Supplementary Estimates alone there is room for considerable discussion, and there are fifty or sixty pages of ordinary Estimates as well as the Loan and Supplementary Loan Estimates. I hope the hon. gentleman's statement will indicate that any future business will be of a non-contentious character, so that we can close the session within a reasonable time. If we had done nothing else but pass the Mining Bill the session would have been fairly fruitful, and I hope the alterations made by the other Chamber will be of such a minor character that it will not take us long to finally dispose of the Bill.

The PREMIER: I may say that I desire to pass at any rate such small non-contentious measures as appear on the order-paper, but which nevertheless are of considerable utility, so that the other Chamber may have something to go on with while we are discussing the Estimates. I am not in a position to state exactly what business will be proceeded with. With regard to the Mining Act Amendment Bill—an important measure—the Government desire that it should become law, but we will have to delay proceeding with it until we learn the fate of the Mining Bill, which has now reached the Upper House. However, I may say that on Monday and Tuesday we will proceed with legislation, and after that we will commence on alternate days the consideration of the Estimates. I shall, however, be in a better position to make a statement as to the progress of public business on Monday or Tuesday next.

Mr. GLASSEY: You will make a statement on Monday?

The PREMIER: Perhaps I had better say Tuesday.

Mr. LEAHY: The House will rise in time for the Federal Council?

The PREMIER: I have no hesitation in saying that I hope the House will rise before Christmas, and I hope hon. members opposite will assist me to bring that about. On Tuesday I hope to be able to make a statement.

Mr. ANNEAR: I wish to make a personal explanation. Speaking on my motion this afternoon, I made the statement that Mr. Albert Hinchcliffe represented four districts at the conference in Brisbane. The information was conveyed to me, but I find I was in error. I regret having made the statement, and I take the first opportunity of expressing my regret.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at four minutes to 11 o'clock.