

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 6 JANUARY 1905

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FRIDAY, 6 JANUARY, 1905.

The SPEAKER (Hon. Sir A. S. Cowley, *Herbert*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORTS.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt from the Auditor-General of the following reports :—

- (1) Report on Government Savings Bank Securities to 31st December, 1904.
- (2) Report under Treasury Bills Ac. of 1893 to 31st December, 1904.

Ordered to be printed.

QUESTIONS.

DISMISSAL OF RAILWAY EMPLOYEES.

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

What number of railway employees, casual or permanent, included in the charges made by me in Parliament during the discussion of the Estimates of the Railway Department, have been dismissed since Parliament was prorogued in December ?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. A. Morgan, *Warwick*) replied—

The Commissioner informs me that on the 15th ultimo, the day on the evening of which the hon. member for Clermont spoke on the Railway Estimates, the General Traffic Manager recommended that eight casual employees in the Roma-street goods-shed should be discharged. The recommendation was approved by the Commissioner, who assures me that the hon. member's remarks in the House had no bearing on the recommendation or its approval. Some of the employees affected are believed to be identical with persons referred to by the hon. member.

ALLEGED FREE RAILWAY PASS TO MR. P.
PEGLER.

Mr. LESINA asked the Secretary for Railways—

Did Mr. P. Pegler, of the Mitchell Rabbit Board, receive a first-class railway pass from Charleville to Brisbane during December, 1904; if so, upon whose authority was such pass issued ?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

No.

ELECTORAL FRANCHISE BILL.
COMMITTEE.

Clause 1—"Short title"—put and passed.
On clause 2, as follows:—

This Act shall not affect any election of a new member to fill any vacancy occurring in the Legislative Assembly during the continuance of the present Parliament, and prior to the first day of January, one thousand nine hundred and seven.

HON. R. PHILP asked what was the meaning of this clause?

The HOME SECRETARY replied that it simply meant that if a vacancy occurred during the continuance of the present Parliament that particular vacancy should be filled by an election conducted on the same basis as the present Assembly had been elected. The addition to the clause, "and prior to the first day of January, one thousand nine hundred and seven," had been put in to make the clause harmonise with a corresponding provision in the Elections Bill.

HON. R. PHILP: Supposing there was a dissolution next June, and a new Parliament had to be elected, what then?

The HOME SECRETARY: If there was a dissolution the new Parliament would of course be elected on the new franchise.

HON. R. PHILP said he did not read the clause in that way. It seemed to him that if there was an election next year females would not be allowed to vote—not before the 1st of January, 1907. [The HOME SECRETARY: There is no justification for that at all.] He thought the intention of the clause might be more clearly expressed. Under the Bill the new franchise would not come into operation for two or three years.

The HOME SECRETARY: If there was a general election within the next five or six months, they would go to the country on the new franchise. The clause only covered the case of any vacancy that might occur. [Mr. J. LEAHY: Why for two years?] They were presuming, of course, that Parliament would run its course. The chances were that in the earlier part of the year 1907 there would be a general election, and the clause covered that. [Hon. R. PHILP: I think two years is too long to keep the females out of a vote.] They would not be kept out of a vote for two years.

HON. R. PHILP: In the case of by-elections, the females were kept out of a vote for two years. Why not give them a vote as soon as possible? [The HOME SECRETARY: We would have one part of the Assembly elected under one franchise, and another under a different franchise.] Twelve months ought to be ample time in which to provide a new roll. There were new electors getting on the roll every year. They came in and voted at by-elections. Now it was proposed to keep the women out of their vote for two years. [The HOME SECRETARY: Only in the case of a by-election.] He thought they should get them into the way of voting. He moved the omission of the word "seven" on the last line, with a view of inserting "six." That would give twelve months for the preparation of the rolls.

The HOME SECRETARY would call the hon. member's attention to the fact that in case the amendment were taken seriously it would render the clause altogether inconsistent, because it expressly said—

This Act shall not affect any election of a member to fill any vacancy occurring in the Legislative Assembly during the continuance of the present Parliament.

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In the ordinary course of things the present Parliament would run on until 1907. The hon. member was not justified in saying that women would be kept out of a vote for two years. It altogether depended upon the time when the general election took place. In so far as by-elections were concerned he was quite right. No doubt the hon. member was aware that there was nothing original in the clause; it was taken from the second clause of the Commonwealth Franchise Bill. The hon. member did not mean to seriously argue that, if one of the members for the constituency of Brisbane North departed this life, it would be fair to Brisbane North to have a new election on the new franchise when the whole of the rest of the Assembly was elected on a different franchise? The thing would be altogether inconsistent, and the situation altogether indefensible.

HON. R. PHILP could not follow the Home Secretary at all. They were continually having new names on the roll. New arrivals came to the State, and young men arrived at the age of twenty-one years, and both those classes of persons were allowed to vote, though they did not vote at the general election. If it was going to be such a good thing to allow women to vote; if what the hon. member for Clermont predicted was going to happen; if they were going to have higher wages and shorter hours under the new franchise, then the sooner it came into force the better. Putting the women off for two years was giving something with one hand and taking it away with the other. Twelve months was ample time in which to get the new roll in order.

Mr. LESINA: The clause was based on the assumption that Parliament would run its full course of three years. That assumption might be good or bad. No one could lay claim to the faculty of political prophecy, but possibly Parliament would run its full term. If it did, then any vacancy that took place would be filled under the provisions of the old Act—the property vote and the disqualification at present placed on women. In the meantime an effort would be made to gather the women on the roll preparatory to going to a general election, for at any time an election might take place, and if it took place, then the new Act would come into operation. The moment Parliament expired by effluxion of time, or in consequence of a political crisis, and a general election took place, then the constituencies would vote on the basis of the new Act with the women voting and the property vote abolished. Now ordinarily, when a new Elections Act was passed, Parliament immediately dissolved, or as soon thereafter as it was possible to compile the rolls. [The PREMIER: Where is your authority for that statement?] Ordinary common sense dictated that much. He was not such a stickler for authority or precedent as the Premier. He believed that brave men created precedents, and that cowards sought them. If there be no authority for that, why not create a precedent? But he was not anxious to argue that point. He saw what the clause was driving at. He was not grumbling at the clause. If the Committee determined that the House should not immediately dissolve, he was content to put up with the conditions laid down in the clause, but here was a point that had not occurred to the leader of the Opposition: If his amendment were carried, and if Parliament lasted until 1907, between 1906 and 1907 a by-election might take place in one or two constituencies. In that case a new member coming in on the broadened basis would sit in a Chamber the majority of the members of which had been elected under the old property franchise.

That would create an anomaly which was, to him, unthinkable. For that reason he hoped the amendment would not be accepted.

Mr. MACARTNEY: There was no doubt something in what the hon. member for Clermont had said, and he would like to see the amendment withdrawn for the purpose of omitting the words "of a new member to fill any vacancy occurring in the Legislative Assembly during the continuance of the present Parliament, and," and altering the date from 1907 to 1906. That would be a reasonable way of meeting the difficulty. He also agreed with the last speaker that if they altered the franchise as proposed they ought to go to the country at once. Of course, nothing said on that side would effect any alteration, and it was no use carrying the matter on at any length. But it must be borne in mind that after the Act was passed two sets of rolls, bi-monthly and annual, would have to be prepared and constantly kept up, one of male voters under the present franchise, and another of women voters under the new franchise. Such a double-barrelled system would entail an extra expense of thousands of pounds. [The HOME SECRETARY: You will find the expense will be reduced, not increased.] That would be impossible, for immediately after that Bill and the machinery Bill were passed they would have to start preparing the new roll upon which the women of the State would be enrolled, and that would mean 100,000 new names to start with, and that would have to be added to and diminished every two months and revised annually. He thought the position taken up by the leader of the Opposition was unanswerable, but the object in view could be better obtained by adopting his suggestion.

HON. R. PHILP: I withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn

Mr. MACARTNEY moved the omission of the following words:—

of a new member to fill any vacancy occurring in the Legislative Assembly during the continuance of the present Parliament, and

If the amendment was agreed to, the Act would come into operation at any election which might take place after the 1st of January, 1906, and it would give a period of twelve months for the preparation of the new rolls.

The HOME SECRETARY: It was not thought advisable that there should be in that Parliament two classes of members, some elected on one franchise and some on another. It would bring about a totally inconsistent and ridiculous position, and one which, as far as he was aware, was absolutely unprecedented in parliamentary history.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The inconsistency was with the other side, who wanted to give something to the people which would work wonders and reform everything, and, for some reason, would withhold it for two or three years. [The PREMIER: Nonsense!] He was inclined to think the Premier was desirous to see the Bill rejected altogether. [The PREMIER: There is no doubt about that being your wish.] He had proved his sincerity by his actions. They were told that the people were clamouring for the franchise, and would not be happy until they got it; and yet the Government, while giving them the extended franchise, were going to debar them from the exercise of it for three years.

Mr. KEOGH: He was decidedly in favour of the amendment. If an extended franchise was given, those women whose names were on the

new rolls should be entitled to vote at any by-election which might take place during the existence of the present Parliament. They should

go to the country immediately they [4 p.m.] enfranchised the ladies. He had always held that they had a perfect right to be on the rolls. The amendment would meet the case better than the original clause, and he hoped the Home Secretary would accept it, and give everyone whose name was authorised to be placed on the electoral rolls the right to vote at once, no matter whether it was at a by-election or at a general election. Once their names were on the roll they should have the right to vote.

Mr. J. LEAHY: The Home Secretary claimed that the Government had followed the example of the Commonwealth Parliament, but he would ask why they had gone further than the Federal Parliament and proposed that the Bill should not come into operation until 1907? There was a great difference between the position in which the Federal Government found themselves and the position of the present Government of Queensland. The Federal Government had no electoral machinery at all when they first met Parliament, and the members of the Federal Parliament were returned under no less than six different franchises; yet it was not proposed that, as soon as the Franchise Act was passed, there should be a dissolution because members were sitting in that Parliament who were elected under different franchises. If, from any cause, there should be a vacancy in the representation of the Bulloo, what concern could it be to anyone but the electors of Bulloo on what franchise their new member was returned? If there was anything at all in the argument of the Home Secretary, they should go to the country immediately the Bill was passed. When the Federal Act was passed, there was no machinery in existence for carrying out an election, whilst here there was machinery in full working order. It took some time to prepare the rolls, and the federal machinery was so cumbersome that the hon. gentleman controlling the Home Department told the Press the other day that it was not working properly yet, and that they were not ready for an election. In the case of the Federal Parliament, the House of Representatives expired by effluxion of time about sixteen months after the Franchise Act was assented to, but in Queensland they were only at the beginning of a new Parliament, so that there was no analogy between the two things. He was not quite certain that the clause bore the construction placed upon it by the Home Secretary, that, if there was a general election before 1907, it would not be conducted under the old franchise. That should be made quite clear. Something had been said about some hon. members being anxious that the clause should not come into force immediately. He did not approve of the clause as it stood, and he did not approve of the Bill as it was, but that was not the point. If a thing was going to be carried—as this was going to be carried by this House—they should not hesitate, if it was a remedial measure, to give the full benefit of it to the country as soon as it could be brought into operation. [The HOME SECRETARY: It means a general election as soon as possible, then.] He thought there ought to be an election. If there was anything incongruous or wrong about a certain body of members being returned on one franchise and another number of members returned on another franchise, what position would they be in if they enfranchised 100,000 people and refused to give them any say in the election of the representatives who made laws for them? How much more

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strange was that? Once the Bill was passed, not a single member on either side could say that he represented the people in his electorate, or that he possessed the confidence of the new body of electors, or that he was justified in remaining there for one day. If they did remain there, there must be no urgency for the Bill, and it must have been introduced for some other purpose. A similar provision was not to be found in any of the other States of the Commonwealth, and the reason for its introduction into the Commonwealth Act was because they had no machinery previously in existence. The hon. gentleman went beyond the Commonwealth, and put in prior to 1907, but the Commonwealth did not put in prior to 1903 or 1904, when the election took place in the natural order of things, and why did the hon. gentleman put it in? He had tacked this on to the end of the clause, but they had no information about it. In South Australia, where they brought in a new Bill, lock, stock, and barrel, they put in a clause saying that the Act should come into force on a day to be fixed by proclamation, and there was more sense in that, because that would mean that as soon as the machinery of the State had been brought into order, and through the revision courts the names on the rolls had been completed, the proclamation would bring it into force on a particular day as soon as possible after the rolls were completed. That was done in South Australia, and it was the proper thing to do. If the Government did not bring this Bill into force after the rolls were completed, the people would have something to say about it. The Press would want to know all about it, and there would be a public and moral force pressing on the Government to know why it was not done, and compel them to do it. There would be more reason in a provision of that kind, which was the proper thing to do, than in the clause as now brought in. [Mr. HARDAGRE: Supposing an election takes place before that time?] It must be conducted under existing rolls until new rolls were in force. If this Bill was passed, then immediately the machinery was in order they had no business to remain in the Chamber without appealing to the people. They would have to have new rolls, which would have to be revised; so that he did not think it could possibly come into force before the end of the present year; but he certainly thought that after the new rolls were completed they should ascertain at the earliest possible moment whether they enjoyed the confidence of the new electors or not. He had always been in favour of an extended franchise; but that was no reason why, if the House came to a conclusion, they should not say that was the verdict of the House; and they should, in the interests of the country, bring it into force at the first possible opportunity.

Mr. KERR (*Barcoo*) would like to know if the hon. member for Bulloo could point to any other State where a by-election had taken place before a general election on the new franchise wherever the franchise had been altered. Had he any precedent he could give them of any State that had altered its franchise, and in which before a general election took place the by-elections were not carried out on the old franchise? Then, again, the hon. member said there should be a general election. His party not long ago wanted a general election, and said "Let us get to the people," and the people got to them pretty sharp. (Government laughter.) The people spoke very emphatically at the last general election. [Mr. J. LEAHY: You are not dealing with the clause at all.] He wanted the hon. member, who posed as a constitutional authority in the Chamber, to give them any

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precedent where any State which had altered its franchise had carried on a by-election under the new franchise, but he could not do it. The whole object of the hon. member was to delay this Bill.

Mr. J. LEAHY: The hon. gentleman got up and reported him as having said what he never said at all. He had said in the first place that it would not be an incongruous thing if it was done. He believed there would be far greater reason for its being done than there would be in their passing this Bill, and remaining in the House to legislate for the country, when they did not know whether a single person would be returned by the new electors. What he did say was, that when an alteration took place, as was done in South Australia, as soon as the machinery could be put into effective operation the proper course was to appeal to the electors. The hon. member for Barcoo said that his party were very anxious to appeal to the electors last year. In reply to that, he might say that the then leader of the Opposition, Sir Arthur Rutledge, offered to assist the present Premier to pass any measures which were wanted in the interests of the country, but they were not afraid to appeal to the people. The present Opposition, small as they were in numbers, got more votes at the late general election than the followers of the Premier did.—[An honourable member: That is very ingenious.]—and they were in the anomalous position that though they were sitting in Opposition they had more electors in the State behind them than the Premier or his supporters. (Government laughter.) He did not want to make capital out of that—(Government laughter.)—because everybody knew that the Premier was not the leader, but that the hon. member for Barcoo was. The majority of the votes belonged to the hon. members who sat on the Government cross-benches. [Mr. KERR: You don't represent many votes.] He did not want to take up time on this; but he did not want to be misrepresented. This was a franchise that would double the voting power of the country, and was entirely different from a new franchise as laid down in the other States. It was different from a new franchise which added 5 or 10 per cent. to the number of electors on the roll; it doubled the electors on the roll. It was not an ordinary franchise, but an extraordinary franchise, and that was the reason why he thought the electors of the State should not be kept one day longer than was necessary from having a say in the government of the country. In New South Wales they had passed a franchise similar to this, and it was only last year that it came into operation; but as soon as the machinery could be got ready they appealed to their new masters. That was one instance for the hon. member for Barcoo, and it was the only case which he knew of where the franchise was extended to women in a measure by itself, and immediately the machinery Bill was put into force they appealed to the people. That was exactly what we ought to do here. He did not see how it could well be done before the end of the present year, but it certainly ought to be done as soon as possible.

HON. R. PHILP asked the hon. member for Barcoo if he could give an instance where a Bill of this kind was passed over two years before a general election? He could not name one in the British Empire. [Mr. KERR: What about the Commonwealth Act?] That Act was passed fourteen months before the election, but there was no analogy, because that was an entirely new Parliament. The hon. member had also referred to the last election. The Opposition

were prepared to go to an election at any time; and they always told the truth. As a matter of fact, the women of the State would have had a vote at the last general election had not the hon. member and his supporters stonewalled the Bill the then Government brought in, giving every woman a vote. [An honourable member: Babies, too.] The second reading was passed, and if a majority of the House objected to that provision they could have struck it out in committee. But the hon. member for Barcoo voted against it, and his present action showed his consistency. Now that he had the power—because he was really the leader of the House—he said, “This Bill must go through off our bat.” [Mr. KERR: Was not your women vote on the property basis?] Yes, but that had nothing to do with this question. He again contended that if the extension of the franchise was going to bring about all the benefits to the people that hon. members opposite represented, they should have a general election under the new franchise as soon as possible. But apparently the majority opposite did not want an election; they were quite satisfied to hang on until the Parliament expired. The Home Secretary had given his orders that the Bill was to go through without any amendment; not an “i” was to be dotted nor a “t” to be crossed; this was the only Bill he would accept.

Mr. HARDACRE (*Leichhardt*) had no special quarrel with the clause. It seemed only natural that in the case of a by-election the candidate should be returned on the same franchise as members already returned to Parliament; but still, if the Committee desired that the new franchise should come into operation at once, he would like to see it done, unless there was some vital objection to such a provision being incorporated in the Bill. The objection that they should not have members returned on different franchises seemed at first sight to be a rational one, but upon consideration it had not a very strong foundation, because, as a matter of fact, members were now elected on different franchises. Some hon. members were elected in constituencies which had the plural vote—the property vote—but other members were returned by electorates in which there was no property vote—practically on manhood suffrage—and to that extent it would be an improvement to get the uniform system they were now advocating into operation as soon as possible. With regard to the Act extending the franchise referred to by the hon. member for Bulloo as having been passed in New South Wales, he would point out that that measure was passed towards the expiration of Parliament, and it was a very proper thing to hurry on the elections a little bit quicker than would otherwise have been the case. But here they were in an entirely different position, having only just been returned by the constituencies with a mandate that they should pass the extended Franchise Bill at once. The circumstances, therefore, did not justify another election. The fact that this Bill abolished plural voting was in itself an important matter. Every member of the House, if this Bill was passed, would act on the understanding that when he went back to the country [4.30 p.m.] he would have to face electors enrolled on a new franchise. While he did not quarrel with the restriction with regard to by-elections, still, if the leader of the Opposition desired the measure to come into operation at once, he would certainly welcome that amendment. He should like to know what was the meaning of the words “and prior to the first day of January, one thousand nine hundred and seven.” [The HOME SECRETARY: Any election of a new member to fill a vacancy in the

present Assembly.] He believed that that was what the clause really meant; but it appeared to him that those words were unnecessary.

Mr. FORSYTH said he could not understand why the words in the last line and a-half of the clause were inserted. [Mr. LESINA: To permit Parliament to run its full term.] Precisely; but why should that be? If they had a general election next week, it would have to take place under the old Act. The Government were going to force the Committee to pass two Bills which would be absolutely inoperative until 1907. [The HOME SECRETARY: Nonsense.] They might have seventy-two new members before 1907, and he thought the clause should stop at the words “present Parliament.”

HON. R. PHILP: This clause meant that there would have to be two sets of electoral rolls kept going, which would entail greater expense than the advertising of the names of applicants for enrolment. The provision invited the House to remain there for the next two years. There was no reason why the measure should not come into operation at once. If people were enrolled, and they were not allowed to vote, they would want to know the reason, and would not understand having their names on the roll, and being refused the right to vote. This was about the most farcical legislation he had ever heard of—to pass a Bill which was not to come into operation for two years.

Mr. KEOGH said that during the last general election many persons whose names were on the federal roll were surprised to find on going to the polling-booth that they were not on the State roll, and therefore that they could not vote; the same thing would happen if this Bill were passed and did not come into operation for two years. He hoped the Home Secretary would agree to make it operative at once. He trusted the hon. gentleman would amend the clause to that effect, and allow every man and woman to vote as soon as possible.

Mr. J. LEAHY: They had been repeatedly told that an extension of the franchise was going to be a wonderful benefit to the country. The hon. member for Clermont spoke of it conferring higher wages, and giving shorter hours, and many other things. Now, nothing could be worse for a country than to have its politics or its policy in an unsettled condition. It had a deadly influence on trade. If they were going to have a new policy, they ought to know what it was as soon as possible. People would not invest money, or carry on business, until they knew what the settled policy of the country was. But it appeared that the new Franchise Bill, like Mahomet's coffin, was to be suspended in mid-air for two years. In other ways the settled policy of the country was unknown. There was a party opposite who did not believe in the sale of land, and a Government who said they did believe in it, and were going to realise £100,000 by the sale of land this year. Which of these two things was to be the settled policy of the country? Was it not desirable also that they should know the settled policy of the country in regard to private railways? The Premier said he was prepared to contract with parties for the construction of private railways, and his supporters were opposed to them. The policy of the country might be right or wrong, but whatever it was they should know it definitely. That was a necessity in the interests of the country; but it appeared that the interests of the country were to be set aside in the interests of twenty-five or thirty members. He did not believe the Bill was going to be of such great service to the country; but whether it did harm or good, let it be known at once what the settled policy of the

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country was. The land and the railway policies of the country required to be settled urgently, but members opposite did not agree about them. These were questions so great in their significance, and fraught with such important consequences, that they should be settled at the earliest possible moment. During by-elections in the old country had not the policy of the Government been altered and determined time and again? Suppose there was an election at Toowoomba, Warwick, or Ipswich, the whole of the electors of the State certainly would not vote, but those who did would be a sort of jury for the whole State. In the home country by-elections expressed unmistakably the trend of public opinion. Ministries came in and went out, and changed their policies according to the indications given at the by-elections. By-elections in this State might indicate whether people believed in the sale of land, in private enterprise, or in introducing private capital, or whether Australia was to be isolated, and a stone wall put around it so that no one else might come in. On no account should they neglect an opportunity of ascertaining exactly what public opinion was. He did not believe in the Bill, but he accepted majority rule, though the corollary followed that the measure should become operative as soon as practicable.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member had dwelt on the fact of by-elections in the old country indicating public opinion. No doubt that was true; but the by-elections of which he spoke were, as far as he knew, conducted on the old franchise, and not on any amendment of the electoral laws. The hon. member for Barcoo had asked the hon. member to quote any case of a by-election being conducted on an altered franchise. He did not believe there was such a case. It had been argued that they ought to provide for a new election as early as possible, and in spite of that the hon. member for Bulloo drew attention to the danger there was in having the country seething with unrest. [Mr. J. LEAHY: On account of the want of a settled policy.] If they were going to have an election in the month of August, another in January, and another in March, what kind of settled policy could they possibly have? Several hon. members thought it would be advisable to bring in such a Bill at the end of a session. The danger of that had never been more clearly demonstrated than it was in 1901. They all knew the casualty which prevented the question being dealt with seriously, and all because the matter had been left a little too late, and something cropped up to prevent the Bill becoming law. Hon. members had spoken of the question of expense, and he admitted that having two rolls was a serious expense. It would be seen from the machinery Bill that the Government had provided for a considerable cutting down of expenses. The hon. member for Bulloo had told them that the granting of the suffrage to women in New South Wales took place just before the general election. A reference to dates showed that the Bill was reserved on the 6th January, and that the general election did not take place until August. What the hon. gentleman gave the Committee to understand was that the Bill was actually passed only a very short period before the general election.

Mr. J. LEAHY: He objected to being misrepresented by the Home Secretary. What he had said with regard to New South Wales was, that after the passing of the Act, as soon as they could get the rolls prepared, and the machinery in order, the Government went to the country. [The HOME SECRETARY: No; Parliament went out by effluxion of time.] Perhaps they did, but

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they recognised the vital principle that they ought not to remain a day longer in office, without appealing to the new electorates, after the new rolls had been compiled and the machinery prepared.

Amendment (*Mr. Macartney's*) put and negatived.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He would be wanting in his duty to his constituency if he did not move an amendment on the lines of the amendment he moved last session. Accordingly he would move that the following words be added at the end of the clause:—

This Act shall not come into operation or have any effect until the coming into operation of an Act to be passed by the Parliament of Queensland, whereby provision shall be made for the reduction of the number of members of the Legislative Assembly to a specified number, and the redistribution of the State into electoral districts upon the basis of a quota of electors ascertained by dividing the whole number of electors in the State by such specified number of members with such reasonable margin of allowance as shall be specified, and for the return by each such district of a member or members in accordance with such quota.

Upon the coming into operation of the aforesaid Act, this Act shall be read and construed as one therewith.

He regretted that the Premier, who was responsible for franchise legislation, had been absent from the Chamber during the whole of the debate on what was probably the most important Bill that could be brought before the Chamber. In fact, the only Minister present was the Home Secretary. The Premier had pledged himself to the country to introduce an Adult Suffrage Bill, which implied also a Bill for the redistribution of seats. The hon. gentleman knew perfectly well that hon. members on the other side were divided on the question of equality of representation. He (*Mr. Macartney*) had already stated that he honestly believed the Premier desired to have the Bill rejected. He would now proceed to give his reasons for making that assertion. The main objection in the other House last year against passing the Bill now before the Committee was that it was not accompanied by a machinery Bill necessary to complete electoral reform. That fact had been admitted in the words put into the Lieutenant-Governor's mouth in his Opening Speech, and that was an admission that the other House were justified in rejecting the Bill for that reason. The Speech showed that the Premier admitted that the other House properly rejected the measure by reason of the absence of the Bill to which they referred, and now the

[5 p.m.] hon. gentleman came down with a Bill which he would have the Committee and the country believe was the Bill the absence of which the other Chamber objected to. But, when they read the contents of that Bill side by side with the debates in the other House, it would be seen that the machinery Bill which was brought in now was not the Bill the absence of which the other House objected to. For that reason he believed the Premier was anxious that this Bill should again be rejected in another place. He practically admitted the objection of the other House was well founded, and by sending the Bill up again, accompanied by the machinery Bill which was now before them, he was inviting its rejection by the other House, and its rejection would be absolutely justified unless he sent a Redistribution Bill with it. [Mr. KEOGH: And a Bill for a reduction of members.] He would not say anything about a reduction of members. He believed the country wanted it, but the Premier had not given a pledge in direct terms to the country regarding it, whilst he had promised a redistribution of seats on the basis of electoral equality; and there was a very serious risk of

their not getting it. The other House, very naturally, in consequence of the precedent established in the old country, asked for a Redistribution Bill on sound, constitutional grounds, and in proposing to send this Bill up again, unaccompanied by that Bill, he believed the hon. gentleman did so in the hope and with the invitation that this Bill should be rejected. There was very good ground for the suspicion that some prominent members of the Labour party would like to see it rejected, so that they could go through the country preaching that the Upper House, or some other legislators, were depriving them of the franchise—the political pap upon which they had lived for years. He did not think hon. gentlemen opposite were sincere, because if they were they would accept the amendment he proposed.

Mr. J. LEAHY: Before the hon. member proposed his amendment he desired to move the omission of the words—
and prior to the first day of January, one thousand nine hundred and seven.

He should like the Home Secretary to explain what was meant by those words. The section in the Commonwealth Act to which the hon. gentleman referred was word for word the same as the clause, with the exception that it did not contain the two lines the omission of which he now proposed. Either those words were mere surplusage or they were something else. Did they convey any other meaning than that the Act should not apply to the election of members to fill vacancies arising during the currency of the present Parliament? [The HOME SECRETARY: They cannot possibly have any other meaning. They are inserted to make the Bill harmonise with clause 21 of the Elections Bill.] They had not come to that Bill yet. If they altered the clause now before them and put it in common-sense form, they could afterwards alter clause 21 of the Elections Bill; but, if they did not alter this, they would have passed the stage of alteration when they came to deal with the Elections Bill. [The HOME SECRETARY: It leaves the situation as it is.] He was ready to sit down and give the hon. gentleman an opportunity of explaining how the clause was to be read in conjunction with clause 21 of the Elections Bill, and, if the hon. gentleman could give any good reason for it, he would not need to propose any amendment. [Mr. BOUCHARD: What do you think those words mean yourself?] He believed they had a sinister meaning. [The HOME SECRETARY: I do not see how they can be construed in any sinister manner.] It was possible that they would lead to misconstruction in the future if they were allowed to remain in the clause. They were not put in for nothing. He did not stand alone in regard to the matter. The hon. member for Leichhardt seemed to share the same views as he did, and the hon. member for Carpentaria certainly did. How did clause 21 of the Elections Bill make those words absolutely necessary? To put himself in order he moved the omission of the words “and prior to the first day of January, one thousand nine hundred and seven.”

Mr. FORSYTH (*Carpentaria*) did not understand the question at all. The Home Secretary said that it had been introduced to bring it into conformity with the latter part of clause 21 of the Elections Bill, which read as follows:—

From and after the completion of the new rolls under this section, and until the first day of January, one thousand nine hundred and seven, all claims made by persons on the ground of residence shall be taken to be claims to be enrolled not only on the existing rolls, but also on the said new rolls, etc.

What was “1907” inserted here for? Would it take from now to the beginning of 1907 to get

1905—E

the rolls fixed up. As the hon. member for Bulloo had pointed out, electoral claims must be sent in in July under the Elections Act, and probably before the end of the year they would have the rolls in proper working order. If that was so, why was it necessary to have “1907” in at all? He was anxious to get the information. The Minister said it was in conformity with clause 21 of the Elections Bill. [Mr. J. LEAHY: It has no business in clause 21.] No, and he really believed if they had the honest opinion of the Home Secretary they would find he did not believe in it himself. [The HOME SECRETARY: You are a very honourable man.] He did not wish to say one single word more, and he wanted to see the Bill go through; but why was “1907” inserted? [The HOME SECRETARY: I have told you time and again.]

Mr. J. LEAHY pointed out that clause 21 of the Elections Bill dealt with the proceedings for the annual revision court, and with the list coming before the court, and provided that such lists when revised should become the electoral rolls for the several districts—

for all purposes except the election of a new member to fill any vacancy occurring in the Assembly during the continuance of the present Parliament.

That was exactly the phraseology used in the section before the House, and then the words came in “and before the first day of January, one thousand nine hundred and seven.” What business had that phrase there at all, unless they wanted to establish a kind of legislative sanction for saying when this Bill was passed this Parliament should not expire? (Government laughter.) That was the only object. When the hon. gentleman came to this clause, if an amendment was moved that the words be omitted, the only justification he had would be to say that they harmonised with section 2 of the Franchise Bill, and he justified section 2 of the Franchise Bill by saying that it harmonised with section 21 of the machinery Bill. [The HOME SECRETARY: There is no harm in them.] There was no harm in them. [The HOME SECRETARY: You admit that.] That was not the point at all. He would admit, as the Home Secretary said, that if there was only this meaning there would be no harm. But if there was no harm, why put a thing there that would be apt to mislead persons if there was no business in it? [The HOME SECRETARY: How would it mislead persons?] They had heard most extraordinary things in the Chamber in regard to the action of electoral registrars and magistrates. The ground they took was that such a thing should not have been put there, but evidently Parliament had some meaning in putting it there or they would not have done so. He did not think it had any business there at all. It might be misinterpreted, and do a great deal of damage. If the hon. member could show that it could do any good he would withdraw his amendment.

HON. R. PHILP: This Parliament might last till 27th August, 1907. Was that not possible? [The HOME SECRETARY: It is very unlikely.] Most unlikely things happened. From the 1st January to the 27th August they could then have members elected on a new franchise. If they might do it then, why should they not be able to do it now? [The HOME SECRETARY: They might go to the country before.] They might go to the country before the month of August, in which case they would have men in the House elected on a particular franchise together with members elected on the present franchise. In the meantime they would be getting two expensive rolls together. [The HOME SECRETARY: You want to wipe out the

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clause.] It was better to wipe it out altogether. This Parliament was not likely to die before its natural term. Up to that time they would have new members elected under the new franchise, and for the next two years they would put 100,000 people on the roll who could not vote till 1st January, 1907. It was described as a farce last year, and it was still a farce. [Mr. J. LEAHY: The Home Secretary is not able to get up and defend it.] [Mr. BOWMAN: He is sick of defending it.]

Mr. MACARTNEY: The only reason the hon. gentleman had given in support of the words, the omission of which had been moved by the hon. member for Bulloo, was that they would harmonise with a Bill which was not yet before them, and which they had not had an opportunity of discussing. Personally, he was unable to see any real reason for the inclusion of the words, and the Minister had not shown the reason.

Mr. HARDACRE thought the amendment might be accepted. The words proposed to be omitted might mean something more than was intended. If the word "or" were substituted for "and," then the provision would mean that the measure should not apply to any by-election during the continuance of the present Parliament, or to a general election until after the 1st of January, 1907. He was not, however, quite sure whether the word "and" did not mean the same as the word "or." In any case, the meaning of the clause, as it stood, was doubtful. It might mean that the Bill should not come into operation until two things occurred—first, an election for a vacancy during the continuance of the present Parliament; and, second, until 1907. It had been stated that those words had been inserted to make the clause harmonise with clause 21 of the Elections Bill, which was not yet before the Committee. That seemed to him a substantial reason why they should not fix any date at all. They might alter the date in the Elections Bill, and if they did, it would be contradictory to the date in the measure now before the Committee. The real objection he had to fixing the date was that, if they fixed the date in the Elections Bill as the 1st of January, 1907, they would practically commit this Parliament to expire in January, 1907. [The HOME SECRETARY: Oh, no!] [Mr. J. LEAHY: Well, I think it reads that way.] It did not necessarily read that way, because it would only mean that certain proceedings with regard to rolls should not come into operation before 1907. But if they fixed the date in the Elections Bill it would practically mean that Parliament said it intended that Parliament should expire on the 1st of January, 1907. He did not think Parliament should expire on that date on account of anything of this kind in the Bill before the Committee, or the Elections Bill. [The PREMIER: The thing is not even implied.] It was not meant to be implied. The clause said the Bill should not apply to any election for a vacancy during the continuance of the present Parliament "and prior to the first day of January, one thousand nine hundred and seven." Did that not mean that the pre-

[5.30 p.m.] sent Parliament should cease to exist simultaneously with the date when this measure would come into operation? [The PREMIER: Oh, no!] Was the 1st of January, 1907, practically meant as the date on which the present Parliament should cease to exist? [The HOME SECRETARY: Not at all.] Well, he was glad to hear that. That was the only substantial objection he had. If it did not mean that, he was content to say nothing more.

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Mr. LESINA: The clause was very clear if read in conjunction with clause 2 of the Elections Bill. At first he thought the latter part of the clause was unnecessary, but since reading clause 21 he thought the words were necessary, and were in strict conformity with the letter and spirit of clause 21 of the Elections Bill. Under the clause as it stood, any vacancy that occurred must be filled under the operation of the old Act. If a general election took place in five or six months, it would take place under the new Act. Now Parliament, if it ran its ordinary course, would not expire until August, 1907, but the clause provided that on the 1st January, 1907, the rolls then prepared up to date would make it permissible for an election to be fought under the new rolls. As a matter of fact, the House would be in recess when the Electoral Franchise Act came into operation. [Hon. R. PHILP: We are not in recess now.] But they were not likely to have another special session in January. If the hon. member for Bulloo looked at the matter carefully he would see that the elimination of the words proposed was unnecessary. Two rolls would need to be prepared up to 1907. The old roll must be kept up to date to provide for by-elections, and in the meantime another roll would be prepared on which would be entered the names of all the men and women qualified to vote. After the 1st January, 1907, if an election should be necessary, then the new roll would take the place of the old roll. If a by-election took place in the early part of 1907, the Act would apply then. At any rate, at that date it could only operate to a limited extent as there were not likely to be numerous vacancies between 1st January, 1907, and the expiry of the Parliament.

Mr. J. LEAHY: If 1907 was a landmark in electoral legislation for any purpose whatever, he would admit at once that the date was necessary, but they had not been shown that it was a landmark, or likely to be one. He had read carefully the two sections which were supposed to support each other, and he could see no reason why that date should be in either unless it had some particular value. The Home Secretary said it meant nothing, and, if so, it was simply confusing. Although the hon. gentleman said it could not mislead anyone, yet it seemed to have perplexed one of his supporters—the hon. member for Leichhardt. [The HOME SECRETARY: You admitted that it did not perplex you.] It perplexed him in this way: that he did not know what it meant. As far as he could see, it was surplusage. The hon. member for Carpentaria thought otherwise, and the hon. member for Leichhardt took a different view. Was it proper that an important clause like that should be capable of three or four meanings? But the Home Secretary would listen to no argument; he saw no use in the date, yet he stubbornly refused any alteration, and practically said he would see the Opposition in Jericho before he would make any alteration, whether the thing was right or wrong. Was that the way to treat hon. members? The natural life of Parliament would not terminate for eight months after 1st January, 1907, and in the natural course of things there would be some vacancies either through death, resignation, or insolvency. Whatever happened, the Bill would come into force on 1st January, 1907, and unless something extraordinary happened the present Parliament would still be in existence eight months after the Act came into force. Now, if a certain provision was a right provision for the first eight months of 1907, why was it not a right provision now? There was no doubt, as the lawyers said, that the meaning could be "read into" the clause as it now stood that Par-

liament should terminate on the 1st January, 1907. [MR. LESINA: That is the plain meaning of it.] That was the meaning the hon. member for Clermont put upon it, but it might be read differently by other people, and it would be unwise to insert in an Act of Parliament a confusing section of that kind. To err in ignorance was excusable, but when an almost certain misunderstanding has been pointed out, it was their bounden duty to obviate it.

Mr. MACARTNEY: There was no doubt that the words proposed to be omitted would create a misunderstanding in the minds of some, and if the Government were reasonable they would accept the amendment without hesitation.

Mr. P. J. LEAHY: He could not see the slightest necessity for retaining the portion of the clause that was proposed to be omitted. If it was desirable to have an extended franchise, it was desirable that all members of the House should be elected under it. Of course, a certain time must elapse before the new rolls could be prepared, but once that was done all elections should take place on that basis. The portion of the clause objected to was by no means intelligently worded, and although he was not prepared to go the whole length with the hon. member for Leichhardt, there was something in the contention that there must be a general election early in 1907. The omission of the words would clear up that point. Because similar words appeared in the Elections Bill that was no reason why they should appear in this Bill.

Amendment (Mr. J. Leahy's) put and negatived.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He would again move the amendment he read a few minutes ago, the object of which, he might repeat, was to secure, as nearly as possible, equal political power to the various electorates of the State. He saw no reason why an elector resident in Toowong should not have as much political power as an elector resident in Burke, or Bulloo, or Warwick. The argument applied not only to the metropolitan constituencies, but to the larger farming and mining electorates, such as Cunningham, Cairns, Woothakata, and other electorates represented by hon. members on the other side. The same remarks applied all round. Why should the worker in Brisbane not be as valuable for the purposes of the Franchise Bill as the worker outside? He had already given his reasons for believing that the Premier did not wish the measure to pass. He did not suppose the Premier cared what he said. [The PREMIER: Not the least.] He did not think the hon. gentleman cared a damn whether it passed or not. He did not want to give the country a measure of electoral reform on the basis of a quota of representation with a reasonable margin. He brought down a measure of partial reform. He knew his party was divided on the question of equality of representation. He knew he might not be here to put it through, and he did not care. He had something else in his mind, and he was going to see that through. [Mr. J. LEAHY: "There is many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip."] He believed the hon. gentleman wished to see the Bill rejected again in the other House. As soon as the Bill passed, the hon. gentleman would not be required by the party behind him; but so long as it was not passed, he was indispensable. He was not imputing motives to the hon. gentleman; but was merely stating facts. The hon. gentleman accused the leader of the Opposition of introducing electoral Bills from time to time, which contained provisions that ensured their rejection, and the hon. gentleman supported the present leader of the Opposition at that time.

The hon. gentleman was well versed in that practice, because it was the very practice he was carrying out at the present time.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not in order in making personal reflections upon another hon. member, and I would ask him to confine his remarks to the question before the Committee.

The HOME SECRETARY: He is only trying to block the Bill.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The hon. gentleman knew perfectly well that neither he nor anyone on that side could block the Bill; and there had been no disposition shown to block the Bill. The second reading had been passed in one day. Hon. members on that side desired to place the important fact before hon. members and, through the medium of *Hansard* and other journals, before the country, that the Premier did not wish the Bill to be passed. The other House rejected the Bill because it was not accompanied by the machinery Bills which were necessary to complete it. The hon. gentleman admitted the force of the position taken up by the other House; but, instead of introducing the machinery Bills the other House asked for, he brought forward a shadowy Bill which he ventured to call a machinery Bill, and to send that Bill to the Legislative Council, and say that it was the Bill they said was necessary, was to invite them to again reject this Bill. That was what the hon. gentleman wanted; and he was not sure that some of his supporters did not wish the same thing, because, if the Bill were passed, their particular mission would be gone. [Mr. MURPHY: Is that why you are so anxious to get it passed?] The rejection of the Bill by the Legislative Council for want of a Redistribution Bill was based on the precedent laid down in the Imperial Parliament in 1884 or 1885. Mr. Gladstone passed a Franchise Bill through the House of Commons without a Redistribution Bill. In the House of Lords Lord Salisbury took up the ground that it should have been accompanied by a Redistribution Bill, and it was rejected. He now proposed the amendment which he had previously moved.

Mr. FORSYTH thought there was a great deal in the amendment. He was sorry that the Premier did not intend to introduce a Redistribution Bill this session, as in October last he referred to the necessity for bringing in such a Bill in these terms—

Later, in the Governor's Speech on the opening of the first session, they promised a Franchise Bill providing for one adult one vote: they promised a machinery Bill; and they promised that the question of redistribution of seats and a possible reduction of members should be remitted for the decision of the people.

A great deal of the discussion in connection with this Bill might have been avoided if the Premier had told the Committee when he

[7 p.m.] purposed bringing forward a Redistribution Bill. [The PREMIER: You quoted my speech to that effect.] He had quoted the hon. gentleman's speech on the 5th October last, when he stated what he purposed doing: first the Franchise Bill, then the Elections Bill, and afterwards a Redistribution Bill. [Hon. K. PHILP: He proposed a referendum at the time.] [The PREMIER: You would not have it.] They could have a Redistribution Bill without a referendum. The Premier had told him last night, and that he was at liberty to mention it in the House, that it was the intention of the Government to bring in a Redistribution Bill, and the hon. gentleman should tell them whether he purposed next session to bring in that Bill. [Mr. MACARTNEY: What good

Mr. Forsyth.]

would that do?] They would have his promise. [Mr. MACARTNEY: He could only say if he is allowed.]

The CHAIRMAN: I would ask hon. members to allow the hon. member for Carpentaria to proceed with the debate without so many interjections.

Mr. FORSYTH: He believed he was not wrong in stating that a considerable number of members who supported the Premier were not in favour of a Redistribution Bill, nor yet of a reduction of members. The aim of the Franchise Bill was to give every man equal powers of voting, and he thought it only right that if they had the same power individually they should have it as nearly as possible in the aggregate. In the Elections Bill of the Federal Government there was a statement that they believed in one man one vote and one vote one value, and it was stated that any distribution of States into divisions should be based upon (a) community or diversity of interest; (b) means of communication; (c) physical features; and (d) existing boundaries or divisions; and then it declared that the quota of electors should be the basis for the distribution, and the Commissioner might adopt a margin of allowance to be used whenever necessary, but in no case should such quota be departed from to a greater extent than one-fifth more or one-fifth less. [The HOME SECRETARY: They did not put that in the Franchise Bill.] No, that was in the Federal Elections Act, but it was not in the State Elections Act before the present House. He did not see why it should not be. But they had the Bill here, and knew what it would be. There should be a similar clause in the Redistribution Bill which it was proposed to bring forward—that was, to give a quota, and then in the sparsely populated districts a reduction of 50 per cent. in the quota, and in the thickly populated an increase of 50 per cent. over, and that would assist very materially electorates that were sparsely populated. Suppose there were about 230,000 electors and the Franchise Bill passed. If they divided that number by seventy-two they would get a mean of about 3,000 or 4,000, and while they should not stick absolutely to that, they should keep as near as possible, recognising the fact that some of the Western electorates were very sparsely populated, and had an enormous extent of territory. One single elector in the electorate of Carpentaria had the same voting power as five electors in Bulimba or Toowong, and that was not fair. As a matter of fact, if a Redistribution Bill were passed, he did not believe it would be any assistance to his electorate, because there would not be more than 1,000 electors in Carpentaria, including women, and Croydon would hardly have sufficient electors to constitute a quota, even with an allowance of 20 per cent. [The PREMIER: Why discuss a redistribution of seats on an amendment of this kind?] He was explaining the position, and he maintained that it was unfair that they had not a Redistribution of Seats Bill along with the Franchise Bill. He knew that very few members of the Labour party were in favour of a reduction in the number of members, but they looked at the matter from a selfish point of view. They did not support this Franchise Bill because they thought it would do much good to the general community, but because, as was clearly stated by the hon. member for Clermont the previous evening, they expected that after this Bill passed 75 per cent. of the members of the Assembly would belong to the Labour party. [Mr. LESINA: I did not say they would; I expressed a hope.] He remembered that when the hon. member was speaking at Clermont he said that after the

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passing of the Franchise Bill would come the deluge. The hon. member anticipated a purely Labour Government. They could understand exactly how the straw was drifting.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I think the hon. member is not discussing the amendment before the Committee.

Mr. FORSYTH: What he wanted to say in connection with the amendment was that if they had a distinct promise from the Premier that he would introduce a Redistribution of Seats Bill next session he should be content, and he believed that such an announcement would stop a great deal of the discussion that would otherwise take place on the amendment. The Premier stated on the 10th of October last that a Redistribution of Seats Bill was absolutely necessary. [The PREMIER: And that it would be introduced at the right time.] The question was what was the right time, and he hoped the hon. gentleman would promise that it would be introduced next session, because without a redistribution of seats electoral reform would be incomplete.

Mr. KEOGH supported the amendment, but thought it did not go far enough. He had certainly intimated to his constituents that he was in favour of a reduction in the number of members, and he believed that 90 per cent. of the members of the Assembly had made a similar statement. [Mr. HAMILTON: No; I never mentioned it.] Then, the hon. member must be one of those outside the 90 per cent. Not only did members state at the last election that they were in favour of a reduction of members, but they expressed similar views at the previous election. [Government members: No, no.]

The CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. member will not discuss the question of a reduction of members. That is not the amendment before the Committee. I hope he will confine himself to the amendment.

Mr. KEOGH: As had been very forcibly shown by some members, equality of representation was the main thing to be aimed at. The votes should be equally divided among representatives in that House. He did not believe that seventy-two members were required. He would be very pleased to see all votes of equal value, and that should be the basis of representation. He trusted the amendment would be carried.

Amendment (Mr. Macartney's) put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 11.

Mr. Campbell	Mr. P. J. Leahy
„ Forrest	„ Macartney
„ Forsyth	„ Paget
„ Fox	„ Philip
„ Keogh	„ Stodart
„ J. Leahy	

Tellers: Mr. P. J. Leahy and Mr. Fox.

NOES, 30.

Mr. Airey	Mr. Kerr
„ Barton	„ Kidston
„ Bell	„ Land
„ Bouchard	„ Lesina
„ Bowman	„ Mann
„ Bridges	„ Martin
„ Burrows	„ Mitchell
„ Cowap	„ Moran
„ Dibley	„ Murphy
„ Dunsford	„ Nielson
„ Grant	„ Norman
„ Grayson	„ Reinhold
„ Hamilton	„ Ryland
„ Hardacre	„ Spencer
„ Jones	„ Turner

Tellers: Mr. Bowman and Mr. Nielson

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Hauran, Mr. Petrie, and Mr. Barnes.
Noes—Mr. Maxwell, Mr. Denham, and Mr. Blair.

Resolved in the negative, and clause 2 put and passed.

On clause 3, as follows:—

Subject to the disqualifications hereafter set out, all persons not under twenty-one years of age whether male or female married or unmarried—

- (a) Who have resided in Queensland for six months continuously, and
- (b) Who are natural born or naturalised subjects of the King, and
- (c) Whose names are on the electoral roll for an electoral district of Queensland,

shall be entitled to vote at the election of members of the Legislative Assembly for such electoral district.

HON. R. PHILP moved on line 18 the omission of the word "six" with a view of inserting the word "twelve." When they passed a similar Bill last session the Home Secretary said he desired to make it uniform with the measures in force in the other States. It was then proved that the majority of the other States insisted on twelve months' residence before a person became entitled to vote, and he thought the same rule should apply in Queensland.

The HOME SECRETARY: He failed to see his way clear to accept the amendment. If precedents were wanted they could be found in the electoral laws of South Australia, Western Australia, and of the Commonwealth. He did not intend to discuss the matter, which had been gone through over and over again, and they knew all the arguments could be used for and against it.

HON. R. PHILP: In the larger States—New South Wales and Victoria—and in Tasmania and New Zealand, the period of residence was twelve months. It was their example which ought to be followed, and not that of South Australia, with a population of 360,000, and Western Australia, with a population of 200,000. He had no wish to debate the question, especially as the Home Secretary was weary and wanted to get home. What he wanted was fair play and justice, and to secure uniformity with the great bulk of the States of the Commonwealth in that very important matter.

HON. E. B. FORREST wished to know the exact meaning of the words "have resided in Queensland for six months continuously." It was put much more clearly in the Bill introduced by the Treasurer in 1902, where it was provided that a man must have resided in Queensland continuously for the six months immediately preceding the date when his claim was entered. With regard to the amendment, all the evidence that could be brought forward was in favour of it, and twelve months had been adopted by all the larger States, and by New Zealand.

The HOME SECRETARY: It was perfectly clear from the wording of the Bill that it did not mean absolutely that a man must have resided in Queensland for the particular six months preceding an election. It was necessary before a man could vote that he must have been in the State for a certain period during the seven months preceding the election. That matter was dealt with in the Elections Bill.

Mr. MACARTNEY: That could hardly be considered as a satisfactory or substantial explanation. A man might have resided in Queensland for six months twenty years ago; he might then have left with no intention of returning, and afterwards come back to Queensland. [The PREMIER: His name would not be on the roll when he came back. He must be here six months before he can get on the roll.] That was quite true, but it was beside the question. There was nothing in the Bill to show when the six months' residence should have taken place

—it might have been twenty years ago, or it might be within the last three years, or within the last twelve months.

Mr. KEOGH asked if it was intended to treat the whole State as one electorate, because a man might spend six months in the State travelling about, and he could not get his name on the roll of any electorate unless he had resided within that electorate for six months. He believed that twelve months' residence was preferable to six months. Again, he thought that young men and women should be allowed to vote when they reached the age of eighteen years. They could take up land at eighteen and could be taxed, and they were just as well qualified to vote at eighteen as at twenty-one years of age.

The CHAIRMAN: I would remind the hon. member that he is not in order in discussing the age qualification now. There is an amendment before the Committee to omit the word "six," and insert the word "twelve."

Mr. KEOGH: A man should certainly have to reside in the State for twelve months before he became entitled to claim a vote; but he wanted to know whether it was intended to make the State one electorate.

* Mr. P. J. LEAHY was in favour of the amendment, which dealt with a matter of the greatest importance. He was in favour of giving every person a vote, but it was essential that it should be restricted to *bonâ fide* citizens of Queensland. In the more populous States of the Commonwealth, twelve months' residence was considered necessary; and in considerably more than half of the forty-eight States in the United States of America they required twelve months, whilst some of them required two years' residence. Very few of them required as low as six months. In addition to that, men had to prove that they were *bonâ fide* citizens and not mere nomads before the privileges of citizenship were conferred upon them. There were very few civilised countries in the world which did not insist upon a much longer period than was proposed in the Bill. [Mr. KERR: Some of them have three months.] There were very few indeed that had three months. He had a complete list of the whole of the American States, showing the period of residence that a man must put in in the country in order to become entitled to a vote, and it was at the disposal of the hon. member for Barcoo, if he liked to see it. [Mr. KERR: I am going by your own statement.] He had dealt with all the American States, and the information he had given was correct. He recognised the fact that, even if a man had the eloquence of a Cicero or a Demosthenes, he would be wasting the time of the Committee; and he did not profess to have the eloquence that some hon. members on the other side of the House had. All he professed to do was to state emphatically that it was a fatal mistake to give the birds-of-passage classes equal political privileges to those which were given to permanent residents of the country.

Amendment (*Hon. R. Philp's*) put and negatived.

HON. R. PHILP moved that the following subsections be inserted after subsection (a):—

(b) Has a freehold estate in possession situated in the district of the clear value of at least one hundred pounds above all charges and encumbrances in any way affecting the same, of or to which such person has been seized or entitled either at law or in equity during the six months then next preceding; or

(c) Has a leasehold estate situated in the district of the value of at least ten pounds per annum, held upon

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a lease which has then not less than twelve months to run, and of which such person has been in possession during the six months then next preceding; or

(d) Holds and has held during the six months then next preceding a license from the Government to depasture or to occupy lands in the district at a rental of at least ten pounds per annum.

This did not mean a vote for a freehold and a residence as well, but that a man should exercise his option. Plenty of people who had interests in a district might not live in that district, but might want to vote there. Personally, he wanted to vote in Townsville, where his electorate was. He understood there was a clause in the Bill giving the privilege to members to vote in their electorate, and if members had that privilege why should not every person in the State have the privilege to vote where he pleased? He would not have more than one vote, and if he had all his interests in a place he had a right to vote in that place, although he did not live there. He hoped the Minister would accept the amendment, which did not in any way infringe the principle of one adult one vote.

The HOME SECRETARY could not see his way to accept the amendment. He had stated that members of the House might, by virtue of a clause in the Elections Bill, be entitled to have their name enrolled in the electorate in which they resided, but that was in order to do away with the somewhat ridiculous position that a man might be voted for by the electors and yet not have the privilege of voting there himself. The fact that a member of Parliament was not a resident of that electorate was, of course, no fault of his. [Mr. J. LEAHY: Why?] It was impossible, under the circumstances, that he should reside for the greater part of the year in his electorate, and it was recognised that in that respect he was suffering somewhat of an injustice, and the clause proposed to do away with that anomaly. [Mr. J. LEAHY: One month out of the preceding seven will do under this Bill.] It was very hard to say what cases might arise. Every argument the leader of the Opposition had offered with regard to this particular privilege which he desired to confer could be used with equal force in favour of plural voting. It was simply a question of giving a certain man a certain preference. One of his predecessors,

the Hon. J. F. G. Foxton, summed up the matter, as he had mentioned before in the House, in a very able way in his speech on the Bill of 1899. Mr. Foxton said—

I know that there may be some difference of opinion with regard to the expediency of doing that, but I believe that, if the principle of one man one vote is adopted, it is desirable that it should be adopted with regard to residence qualification only.

That embodied the position taken up by that side of the House, and he thought that Mr. Foxton took up that position because he was logically compelled to do so. The hon. member for Townsville wished by his amendment to allow certain people in the State to pick out where they should vote. In Victoria a man might have his name on two or three rolls, and when an election came round he could pick out the particular constituency in which he would vote, and they knew that under a system of that kind abuses were likely to occur. When that amendment was proposed before, a difference of opinion immediately sprang up; certain members wanted the privilege for freeholders only, others wanted it for leaseholders, and so on. The fact of the matter was that in this Bill the Government were determined to insist that there should be no preference given to anyone. They did not propose to deprive any man of a vote. Although a man might not be able to

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record his vote in a particular electorate in which he had his business or possessed property, still he would have the privilege of recording it in the electorate where he resided, and he submitted that in the long run it would pan out six of one and half a dozen of the other.

HON. R. PHILP said he pointed out last year how unfair it was for the hon. gentleman to quote the extract he had read from the speech of Mr. Foxton on the Bill of 1899, seeing that in the Bill introduced by that gentleman in 1902 the provisions contained in the amendment were included. The amendment did not propose to give any man more than one vote. Clause 6 of the Bill provided that no person should be entitled to vote more than once at the same election, and there was a provision in the Elections Bill to the effect that no person should be entitled to have his name on more than one roll. All that was sought by the amendment was that a man should be allowed to record his vote in that electorate where he had his greatest interest, and where he thought he could do most good by the exercise of the franchise. If members of the Assembly—[Mr. LESINA: And Councillors.]—that would be seventy-two and forty, a total of 112—were allowed the privilege of voting in the electorates they represented, why should not other people in the State be allowed to choose in which electorate they would vote, if they had the necessary qualification in that electorate? But, apparently, hon. members opposite did not want people in this country who had property, leasehold or freehold, but wanted the whole thing divided. They did not want the man who saved up to keep himself and his family. Queensland was no longer to be the home for the thrifty and industrious.

Mr. LESINA: A fatal objection to the amendment was that it struck a blow at the uniform character of the measure. This Bill was intended to establish a uniform franchise, with only one qualification—that of residence—and the amendment was an attempt to differentiate in the qualifications of electors. It was proposed to give a man the power to exercise a vote in a particular district where he had freehold, or leasehold, or other property, whilst every other elector there was to qualify by residence. That was striking a blow at the fundamental principle of the Bill. If a preference was to be given to owners of property, why should they not also have a special qualification for clergymen, professors, and leading school teachers? If they were going to bring in that differentiation, they opened up the whole case. If a man claimed to exercise the right of voting in a district because of property, why should he not claim to exercise a vote on account of marked intellectuality? Once they departed from the uniform character of the Bill they opened up a whole series of difficulties. He protested against any departure from the principle of the Bill. The statement that members on his side did not want people to hold leaseholds or freeholds was so much fudge. The hon. member was merely hysterical in making such a statement. There was no attempt to interfere with property rights, but statements of that sort coming from the leader of the Opposition might carry weight in the country, and it might be supposed that the Treasury benches were occupied by a band of legislators who did not believe in the possession of property at all. Hon. members instead of making mere bald charges, should come down to detail and point out where the Bill touched any man's property, instead of making senseless and hysterical charges.

Mr. J. LEAHY did not think the hon. member knew what he was talking about. If he did,

then he was misrepresenting the leader of the Opposition. The hon. member for Clermont contended that the proposal of the leader of the Opposition amounted to a property vote. Even if that was so, he was prepared to support it, but what he understood the proposal to be was that when a person had property in a certain district, and resided out of the district, and having at the same time the right to exercise the franchise by virtue of his residence, he should be allowed to cast his vote in the district where his chief interests lay. That was not deriving the franchise through having a property qualification. [Mr. LESINA: You could pack a constituency in that way.] The hon. member was now shifting his ground. He laid it down that the leader of the Opposition proposed a property vote. That was not so. A new principle was being introduced of allowing members to vote in their own electorates though they might have no residential qualification there. What might that lead to? In the case of the Rosewood election there was a tie. Now, supposing one of the candidates resided outside the electorate, in that case, under the proposal of the Government he could come into the district and disturb the balance of power though he had no residential qualification in it and no interests in it. That was a principle which members opposite were supporting, and it was a very strange anomaly. Now, if in that case a man could go into a district and vote, though he might have no interests whatever there, there was a great deal more to be said in favour of a man who was thoroughly qualified by virtue of residence elsewhere, going into the district where he held property interests, and recording his vote there. If he had property it was to his interest that the district should be represented by a capable man. As to giving that privilege to members of Parliament, they were not entitled to it on the ground of necessity, because, under the Elections Bill, if a person resided one month out of the seven preceding the election in the electorate he was entitled to vote there. Was there any member of the House who could not reside one month in his electorate? The hon. member said there had been no attack made upon property. What was the cry of the party opposite? Was it not, "Run down the fat man"? The Bill was a means to an end—to get as much of the fat as possible off the fat man and distribute it among the lean and hungry-looking. Was that not the object of legislation of which this Bill was the forerunner? If there was any such thing as political principle—and he was afraid it had almost become a thing of the past on the other side—the amendment was entitled to be placed on all fours with the right that was to be extended to members of Parliament.

Mr. HARDACRE: If the proposal of the leader of the Opposition were not liable to abuse there would be a good deal to be said for it. In theory it seemed all right, but in practice it would be liable to a gross amount of abuse, which would upset the whole principle of the Bill. Hon. members opposite were constantly inveighing against the danger of the swamping of electorates by nomads, and against persons being allowed to get on the roll after a short period of residence; yet they now proposed to do a thing which would have that very effect. The amendment might be quite harmless in pastoral districts where land was held in very large areas, but in places like the constituencies round about Brisbane the property vote might be so manipulated as to turn the scale in any election where the contest was likely to be a close one, and quite against the interests of the *bonâ fide* residents. There

were hundreds of men in Brisbane who owned property in all the eight or nine contiguous electorates, and their political organisations could so arrange the manner of voting as to come down with overwhelming force in any case where the result of an election was doubtful. The Cairns election might turn upon three or four votes. If half a dozen men in Brisbane or elsewhere who held property there could be induced to vote for Cairns—knowing that the seat where they resided was perfectly safe—the victory would be won and a member returned whose views ran counter to those of the majority of the *bonâ fide* residents.

Mr. FORSYTH: That argument would be all right if immediately before an election men could change from one electorate to another. But as a rule people who owned property got on the roll for residence. A man living at Toowong might have property worth £50,000 in Brisbane, and that large interest would be represented by the vote of his caretaker. As to the amendment spoiling the uniformity of the Bill, that was already spoiled by allowing members of Parliament to vote in the electorates they represented whether they resided there or had any interests there or not. As for swamping any electorate, that was pure bunkum. [Mr. HARDACRE: Your own electorate is a case in point.]

[8.30 p.m.] He did not think it was. He knew that hundreds of names were put on the federal rolls for the electoral district of Kennedy, which included the State electoral district of Carpentaria—names of men who happened to be in the district at the time the rolls were collected, but who were never really resident there, and their names were still on the roll. [Mr. HARDACRE: That is wrong.] There were no less than sixty-nine names on the electoral roll for Canobie station, although there were never more than eight votes polled there. Those men happened to be on the station when the rolls were being compiled. They were only there for the purpose of shifting cattle; they did not remain long, and they did not vote there, but still they were entitled to vote anywhere in Queensland because their names appeared on that roll. They might never be in the electorate again, but yet they could swamp the electorate; and that would be most unfair. Still, it was only natural that people should like to vote in the electorate in which they owned property. [Mr. HARDACRE: I remember when the Carpentaria seat was won by twelve votes cast in Brisbane.] He did not remember that happening. It certainly had not been any time when he contested the seat. On the three occasions when he had been returned the Brisbane votes did not have the slightest effect upon the result. He would be strongly opposed to the imaginary state of things referred to by the hon. member for Leichhardt. He held that no man should have more than one vote, but he should be entitled to say whether he would exercise it where he resided or in the electorate in which he owned property.

Mr. GRAYSON was strongly in favour of one adult one vote, but he was also in favour of the amendment. When the Bill was before the Committee three months ago he asked the Home Secretary to allow such an amendment to be made, but the hon. gentleman refused to consider it. He had forty years' experience of Queensland, and he had come to the conclusion that any old colonist who had accumulated a property worth £5,000 or £10,000 in a place, and then retired and settled down in a city or on the coast, should be allowed to vote for the electorate in which his property was situated, instead of compelling him to vote in the town in which he resided, and in which he had no real interest.

Mr. Grayson.]

So long as an elector could only record one vote, the platform of the Labour party would be protected in every way. As to the fears entertained by the hon. member for Leichhardt that thousands of people resident in Brisbane would be able to swamp the suburban electorates, he did not see where they could come in, as they would only be allowed to vote for one electorate in the State. His own name was on several electoral rolls, but as soon as the Bill was passed he would only be able to vote for one. Personally, he should vote for the amendment, because he considered it was only just and fair.

Mr. SPENCER (*Maranoa*): He had voted for the amendment when the Bill was last before the House, and intended to do so again to-night. Take the case of the settlers in the West who toiled out there practically all their lives, and whose one ambition when they reached a certain age and had made sufficient money was to come and reside on the coast, or in some cooler climate. Probably they had their families residing in the district, and all their sympathies were there; and he failed to see why they should not be allowed to exercise a vote for that particular electorate. Last night the hon. member for Clermont, when talking about the inmates of Dunwich, some of whom had fallen by the way, stated that they should be allowed to have a vote for the district in which they last resided. Surely if they were entitled to that privilege, the industrious, thrifty man in the West, who came to reside on the coast, was entitled to vote in the place where he last resided. On those grounds he was going to support the amendment.

Mr. LESINA: The hon. member had referred to his advocacy of a vote for the Dunwich people in a sense that it would destroy the uniformity of the Bill. He had advocated that the Dunwich people should be included in this measure and be permitted to exercise a vote for the particular districts from which they came, but he had an alternative proposal that would obviate all the difficulty—that the Government should introduce an old age pension scheme, under which people could go back to the district to which they belonged and vote there. That would obviate the whole of the difficulty. If property-owners could exercise their vote in the district in which their property was located if they elected to do so, how would they exercise that vote? Men came from the back country, having gathered together a competence, and settled around Brisbane, and at election times they did not go to those outside places where they had their names inscribed on the electoral rolls. The Government provided booths in the city, and they could go there and repeat the evil of the property vote over again. They did not trouble about the interests of the people in the district, but simply voted for the party candidate. They were kicking the property vote out at the front door and it was coming in at the back door under this particular amendment. The idea was to get back to the old principle and give a vote to property-owners living round about the city. They lived here, where they could put their money out to the best advantage and enjoy themselves to the highest possible pitch, but they did not want to vote here where there was a surplus of property votes, or persons with votes who had property here, but they would exercise their property vote in a district where they would be able to beat down the democratic candidate. The principle of uniformity was a characteristic of this measure, and they should not introduce in an amended or modified form the property vote, which had hitherto been the great curse against which the democratic party had long fought. If they got

electoral reform in Queensland, let them get it in the plainest and purest form, and that was to give to every man and woman over twenty-one years of age of sane mind and clean record, married or single, the right to exercise one vote in the district where they were qualified by residence to have their names inscribed on a roll.

Mr. HARDACRE appreciated the sympathy shown by the hon. member for Maranoa and the hon. member for Cunningham with back country pioneers, but did not think those hon. members saw the danger which might accrue from the adoption of the amendment. It proposed to give a vote, not only to the man who had obtained a selection in the electorate and worked hard there, and had then come down to Brisbane to live, but also to the man who owned property in the electorate, who had bought that property for speculative purposes, and had never seen the district. In the political history of Queensland, elections had frequently been decided by a few votes. On one occasion the sitting member for Maranoa was defeated by 15 votes; at the last general election the Rosewood seat was determined by the casting vote of the returning officer; on one occasion the South Brisbane seat had been won by 7 votes; the Townsville election was once decided by 1 vote; the Burnett election was won by 3 votes; Gympie by 31 votes, and at the last election the member for Cook was returned by a majority of 2 votes. How easy it would be for property-owners outside an electorate to combine in such cases, and swamp the *bonâ fide* residents of the constituency. It had been alleged that allowing members of the Assembly to vote for the electorates which they represented involved a similar principle to that contained in the amendment, and he admitted that position, but the reason was that members were compelled, in the performance of their parliamentary duties, to reside outside their electorates, and on more than one occasion in the past that had resulted in their having their names erased from the roll. The fundamental objection to the amendment was that it set up a principle of inequality, and only allowed property-owners to choose where they would record their votes. Why should not the man with the residence qualification on the same principle be allowed to exercise his vote for whichever constituency he had a predilection? He could not support the amendment.

* Mr. P. J. LEAHY: There was very little in the argument that property-owners outside an electorate might combine at the time of an election to prevent a particular candidate from being returned. There were comparatively few electors for Maranoa or any other Western electorate who resided outside the electorate, and if they were to combine they would not materially affect the result of the voting. While he thought the amendment was eminently fair and just, and would support it, he was of opinion that the object in view would be better attained by amending the amendment so as to permit any man becoming registered in the first instance for the place where his property was situated. If the amendment was rejected a very grave injustice would be done to many persons. A man who had very large interests in the Valley and lived 3 or 4 miles outside the Valley would not be permitted to vote in the Valley where his interests were, but had the right to vote in the district where he resided. As long as the principle of one man one vote was not vitiated, he did not see why there should be any objection to the amendment; but, though the balance of argument was in its favour, he supposed the balance of votes would be against it.

[Mr. Grayson.

Mr. CAMERON said he was a supporter of the measure before the Committee. He believed in one man one vote and one woman one vote, and was going to stand to that. [Mr. KERR: You were not always of that opinion.] He might have held a different opinion many years ago, but it was only a fool who could not change his opinions. (Hear, hear!) He was not afraid to change his opinions when he saw

[9 p.m.] good cause for so doing. He was a supporter of the Bill, but at the same time he was thoroughly in favour of the amendment. He could use as an illustration his own case. All his interests lay in a certain portion of Queensland where he had toiled for thirty consecutive years, and he wished to exercise the franchise in that particular district by virtue of his leasehold qualification. He certainly thought he should be allowed to exercise his one vote for any qualification he possessed. He would support the amendment.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted (*Hon. R. Philp's amendment*) be so inserted—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 15.

Mr. Cameron	Mr. J. Leahy
„ Campbell	„ P. J. Leahy
„ Forrest	„ Macartney
„ Forsyth	„ Paget
„ Fox	„ Philp
„ Grayson	„ Spencer
„ Jenkinson	„ Stodart
„ Keogh	

Tellers: Mr. Fox and Mr. Paget.

NOES, 33.

Mr. Airey	Mr. Lesina
„ Burton	„ Mann
„ Bell	„ Martin
„ Bowman	„ Maughan
„ Bridges	„ McDonnell
„ Burrows	„ Mitchell
„ Cowap	„ Morgan
„ Dibley	„ Muleahy
„ Dunsford	„ Murphy
„ Fudge	„ Nielson
„ Grant	„ Norman
„ Hamilton	„ Reinhold
„ Hamacre	„ Ryland
„ Jones	„ Somerset
„ Kerr	„ Turner
„ Kidston	„ Woods
„ Land	

Tellers: Mr. Cowap and Mr. Nielson.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Hanran, Mr. Petrie, and Mr. Barnes.
Noes—Mr. Maxwell, Mr. Denham, and Mr. Blair.

Resolved in the negative.

Clause 3 put and passed.

On clause 4, as follows:—

No person who is of unsound mind, and no person attainted of treason, or who has been convicted and is under sentence or subject to be sentenced for any offence punishable under the law of any part of the King's dominions by imprisonment, shall be entitled to vote at any election of members of the Legislative Assembly

No aboriginal native of Australia, Asia, Africa, or the islands of the Pacific shall be entitled to have his name placed on an electoral roll.

HON. R. PHILP: Last session he moved the omission of the word "Australia," and he now moved the same amendment. The native Australians were as much entitled to a vote as any member of the House. Their country had been forcibly taken from them, but there were now schools and mission stations at which the young people were being taught to read and write, and they would thus be qualified to vote. Queensland was the only State in all Australia which deprived the native Australians of a vote. Why, in New Zealand the Maoris had representatives

in the House. [Mr. HAMILTON: A different people.] He knew some natives of Queensland who were better educated than the hon. member for Gregory, and who were just as much entitled to vote and sit in the House as he was. [Mr. HAMILTON: You would give a vote to the wild blacks of the Mulligan.] No; if the amendment was carried he would follow it up with a motion that the qualification be ability to read and write. There were 1,000 black children going to the various schools provided by the State at the present time, and when they became of age they should be able to rank with the other people of Queensland if they could read and write. Every State in the Commonwealth but Queensland gave them a vote. The strongest argument used last year in favour of the amendment was that urged by the hon. member for Bulloo, that if the aboriginals had a vote Queensland would be entitled to another member in the Federal Parliament.

THE HOME SECRETARY: The amendment of the hon. gentleman with its qualification would enfranchise only a very small proportion of the aboriginals of Queensland. Besides, he was introducing a new qualification into our electoral law—an educational qualification. By the Elections Act of 1885 it was expressly provided that no aboriginal native of Australia should be entitled to be entered on a roll except on a freehold qualification. The hon. member proposed a qualification which was at variance with that. With regard to the effect that the putting of a number of aboriginals on the rolls would have on the representation of Queensland in the Federal Parliament, the hon. member must know that according to the 127th section of the Constitution Act it was expressly provided that in reckoning the number of people in a State the aboriginal natives should not be counted. The same matter was brought up some time ago, when Mr. Deakin was the Attorney-General of the Commonwealth, and Mr. Deakin was looked upon as a very able politician and a good lawyer. His opinion was asked upon the question, and it was most decidedly against that put forward by the hon. member. There were 20,000 to 25,000 aboriginals estimated to be in the State, and the hon. member proposed to enfranchise only those few of them who could read and write. The thing carried absurdity stamped on its very face. The hon. gentleman must also know that Sir Arthur Rutledge, in dealing with the matter, showed quite conclusively that, taking the most favourable view, Queensland was not entitled to another member on that account. Perhaps it would interest hon. members to hear the opinion of the late Attorney-General—

Department of Justice,

Brisbane, 13th May, 1903.

Memorandum for the Honourable the Chief Secretary.

By section 25 of the Commonwealth Constitution Act it is provided that, for the purposes of section 24 of that Act, if, by the law of any State, all persons of any race are disqualified from voting at elections for the more numerous House of the Parliament of the State, then, in reckoning the number of the people of the State or of the Commonwealth, persons of that race resident in that State shall not be counted.

In Queensland there are, in addition to people of European race, considerable numbers, amounting in the aggregate to several thousands, of persons belonging to the coloured races, including Australian aboriginals, natives of His Majesty's Indian Empire, Japanese, Chinese, and South Sea Islanders. Now, all the aboriginals, and all the natives of India, together with a certain proportion of the Chinese who have come from Hongkong, are natural-born subjects of the British Crown, while, with regard to the other Asiatics, provision is made by the Aliens Act for their becoming naturalised, if they so desire, upon the fulfilment by them of the prescribed conditions.

Hon. P. Airey.]

I understand that the Federal Government contend that in reckoning the population for the purpose of determining the number of members of the House of Representatives to which this State is entitled all people of all these coloured races are to be excluded, and the question is whether that contention is well founded. Except in the case of Australian aborigines, the only ground upon which such a contention can be based is the existence of some law in Queensland disqualifying all persons of these several races respectively from voting at elections for the Legislative Assembly, and the question therefore is, whether, by any law in Queensland, such universal disqualification has been imposed. The law which declares the qualifications necessary to entitle persons resident in Queensland to be entered upon the roll of electors is contained in Part II. of the Elections Act of 1895 as amended by the Elections Act of 1897. By section 6 of that Act it is provided that every man of the age of twenty-one years being a natural born or naturalised British subject, if he has resided for the prescribed period in the electoral district upon the roll of which he claims to have his name entered, or has a freehold of the specified value, or is a householder occupying a building of a certain annual value, or is possessed of some one of the other qualifications mentioned, and is not disqualified or incapacitated for any of the causes specified in the Act shall, subject to the provisions of the Act, be entitled to be entered on the roll of electors for the electoral district in respect of which he is so qualified. To that section there is a proviso in the following words:—"Provided that no aboriginal native of Australia, India, China, or of the South Sea Islands shall be entitled to be entered on the roll except in respect of a freehold qualification."

So far, therefore, from all or any adult male aboriginal natives of Australia, India, China, or of the South Sea Islands, living in Queensland, being disqualified from voting at elections for the Legislative Assembly because they are such natives, it is clear that every one of them, if the possessor of a freehold of the requisite value, is entitled to be enrolled as an elector, and, therefore, to vote at parliamentary elections. (It will be observed that the possession of a freehold is not an essential qualification in the case of those natives of Japan who may have become naturalised.) The question then arises: Is there any law in force in Queensland which prohibits any of such aboriginal natives from acquiring a freehold qualification?

So far as regards aboriginal natives of Australia and India—who are all natural born subjects of the King—the answer is that there is none. There are, and probably always have been, a few aboriginal natives of Australia who, having received a certain amount of education, have preferred to adopt the habits and customs of civilised life, and it is not unlikely that, under the present humane administration of recent legislation for the protection of aborigines, this number may be increased. If any of these have invested, or should hereafter desire to invest, their earnings in the acquisition of freeholds, or if any of them should be fortunate enough to become the devisees of freeholds, why should they not? There is no law which denies to them the right to so acquire or to take.

If, therefore, the only limitation with respect to the reckoning of the population of any State were that imposed by section 25, I think there can be no doubt that the whole of the aboriginal natives of Australia living in Queensland would have to be so counted, but by section 127 of the Constitution Act it is enacted that, "In reckoning the numbers of the people of the Commonwealth or of a State, aboriginal natives shall not be counted." Conformably to this requirement the Registrar-General, in stating the population of Queensland for the purposes of section 24, to be 498,129, has, I understand, excluded from computation every full-blooded aboriginal of Australia, no matter what his social condition, and in this I am of opinion that he has acted rightly.

With regard to natives of India, it may be said that in respect of intelligence and education very many of them now in Queensland may claim to be the equals of the average European, and there is nothing to prevent them from at any time acquiring or holding land in fee-simple in Queensland, while, as to the natives of China and the people of the other Asiatic races, it is provided by the Aliens Act, passed in 1867, that upon the conditions therein specified they may become naturalised, as indeed a considerable number of them already have. Once naturalised, every one of them may, if he pleases, acquire a freehold, and if that freehold is of the required value, and no valid objection on other grounds exists, he will be entitled, by virtue of his freehold qualification, to be entered on the roll of electors for the electoral district in respect of which he is so qualified.

[*Hon. P. Airey.*

The aboriginal natives of the South Sea Islands stand upon a different footing. Unlike Asiatic and African aliens, their existence receives no special recognition from the Aliens Act, which contains no provision for their naturalisation.

That being so, I am of opinion that they are incapable of acquiring a freehold, and, as a result of that incapacity, and not by reason of their colour or nationality, are within the contemplation of section 25 of the Commonwealth Constitution Act—"persons of" a "race disqualified from voting at elections for the more numerous House of the Parliament of the State," and therefore should not be counted in reckoning the number of the people of Queensland for the purposes of section 24 of that Act.

When first approached by a representative of the Press, within half an hour of my leaving Brisbane on a visit to the Downs, and without having had an opportunity of conferring with the Registrar-General as to the basis upon which he had proceeded in calculating the population and consequent proportion of representation of the State in the House of Representatives, I verbally expressed my concurrence in that officer's contention that the number of such representatives should in future be ten instead of nine; but, since my return I have, for the purposes of this opinion, made proper inquiry, and have ascertained that the whole number, totalling about 9,000 of South Sea Islanders, in Queensland are included in the statement submitted by the Registrar-General to the Chief Secretary. If from 498,129, stated to be the population of Queensland, there is deducted that section of the population which consists of South Sea Islanders, it will be seen at once that, after dividing the population of Queensland by the statutory quota of 52,416 (which is obtained by dividing the population of the Commonwealth by twice the number of senators) the remainder is only 17,385, or 9,000 less than half of the quota.

I am of opinion, therefore, that this State is not yet entitled to an increase in the number of its representatives.

[*Hon. R. PHILP*: Why cannot a kanaka be naturalised?] That is provided for in the Aliens Act of 1867. [*Hon. R. PHILP*: It is because he has no king.] He had read those opinions for the purpose of showing that aboriginal natives of Australia were debarred from being counted in Queensland by section 127 of the Commonwealth Constitution Act. He had other authorities whom he could quote if necessary.

Mr. J. LEAHY: All the hon. gentleman had done was to tell them that there was a conflict of opinion. [*The HOME SECRETARY*: Sir Arthur Rutledge and Mr. Deakin agree.] He had discussed the matter with Sir Arthur Rutledge before he gave his opinion, and he was exceedingly doubtful about it. As to the opinion of Mr. Deakin on the matter, he was in exactly the same position as the present Premier of Queensland. He had a dictator behind him who made him do exactly what he was told. [*Mr. MURPHY*: What about section 127 of the Commonwealth Constitution Act?] That related to an entirely different thing. It related to new expenditure and things of that kind which were debited to the various States on a population basis, and it would be most unfair to Queensland to include people who produced nothing when estimating her share of such new expenditure. He went further than his leader in this matter. In addition to 5,000 or 6,000 aborigines, there were about 22,000 other persons who were not allowed to vote. Some were kanakas and some were not. That was a very large number of people, and, if they could receive any benefit from them in the shape of additional representation in the Federal Parliament, every point should be strained to free themselves from the unfortunate position in which they found themselves at present in the Commonwealth of being got at in every direction. Such a provision did not exist in any other State in Australia. They were being constantly told that they should come into line with the other States, and here was a direction in which they might come into line. If a

man was good enough to be allowed to come here and to become naturalised, he ought to be good enough to exercise the franchise. It was a degradation and a stultification of his manhood to deny him that privilege. At one time they were told that because those people had skins of a different colour to their own, they were inferior races; but the scales had fallen from the eyes of many persons about some of those so-called "inferior" races. Some of these races appeared to be the most intelligent men in the world, and great soldiers. After what happened the other

day, could anybody say that the [9.30 p.m.] Japanese were an inferior race?

He was not advocating the Japanese coming here, but there were a few here who happened to be naturalised, and would anybody say that they were not qualified to exercise the franchise? This was the most narrow construction that could be put upon it by persons who talked about extending the franchise, when they said that they would only extend it to those persons who sympathised with themselves. It all depended upon whether they marched to the drum of the Trades Hall; that was the test whether they should get the franchise or not. There was not a member of the Labour party who, if he thought the kanakas would march to the drum of the Trades Hall, would not say they were "men and brothers." (Government laughter.) He was not advocating the franchise for these people, but he believed there were some of them in the State who had been admitted to the status of citizenship, and they should not be deprived of it now. What could be wrong in allowing this thing in Queensland when all the other States of Australia had agreed to it without a word of dissent? How did the hon. gentleman justify the restriction of the franchise in that direction? He said it was establishing a new principle. The proposal of the leader of the Opposition was not establishing a new principle. Yet the Minister got up in the coolest possible manner and said it was included in the amendment. [The HOME SECRETARY: I did not.] He said the amendment introduced a new franchise. [The HOME SECRETARY: An educational qualification.] He wished to show the unscrupulous manner in which the Home Secretary twisted the arguments and statements which were made in that Chamber. The hon. gentleman got up and said this was part of the proposal of the leader of the Opposition, and yet the whole of the amendment only consisted in striking out the word "Australia." Here was a provision which every State in Australia, and even New Zealand, was against, and yet the hon. gentleman insisted upon retaining it. Did not that mighty Republic, which was supposed to have the greatest freedom in the world, under one of its articles, give the franchise to every race of the world? If a man was a man otherwise, his colour did not debar him from having the franchise. This view of the question might be unpopular, but if the thing was right he was going to advocate it regardless of the consequences. He thought it was a disgrace to the Bill, and should be struck out.

The HOME SECRETARY: It must be borne in mind that the leader of the Opposition proposed to leave out the word "Australia." He could only take the amendment as it stood, without any of the verbal qualifications that he had made in the course of his speech; and the only conclusion to which he could come was that by leaving out the word "Australia" he proposed to give this privilege to all the aboriginals of Queensland. It might be asked if it was not a very wrong thing on the part of the Commonwealth to accept the interpretation given by Mr. Deakin in the speech he had quoted, in which he

had expressed the opinion that the coloured people could not be counted in the quota. What did it amount to? He had had a search made some time ago through the most likely districts in Queensland, in which he expected to find the names of Chinese and Japanese aliens. Six districts were taken in which they were supposed to be the most numerous, and only five were found that they could conclude to be those of Chinese or Japanese aliens. [Mr. J. LEAHY: If there was only one man, why should you deprive him of his right?] Were they to argue that because in the whole of Queensland there were possibly a dozen Chinese on the roll, the whole of the Chinese should be exempted from this racial restriction? He preferred to quote the opinions of men who were authorities on the subject, as their opinions would have more weight than those of any member in the House. Mr. R. R. Garran, when examined by the Federal Select Committee on Electoral Act administration, was asked—

Do you still think that the Constitution excludes all persons of the Chinese race from being included in the calculation of the population for the purpose of ascertaining the quota? I think it does, because the persons of that race do not possess the full qualification. The Constitution should be broadly interpreted.

A little further down he said—

I think, however, that if you fully qualified any persons of that race to vote under the State laws, the whole of the members of that race could not be disqualified by the State laws, within the meaning of the Constitution. If, however, you conferred only a partial qualification, the constitutional prohibition would apply.

You say that if the whole of the members of a race are not to have full rights in the same way as other people, but are to be entitled to only one form of special qualification, the terms of the Constitution will apply to the whole of the members of that race: I think so.

He went on to refer to Sir Arthur Rutledge's opinion, and was asked—

In the case of Queensland, would the rights of a Chinaman, who had a property qualification at the time of the passing of the Constitution, be preserved under that section (section 25)? I should regard it as rather doubtful.

You mean that, in order to vote at a federal election, an elector must have the full qualification enjoyed by ordinary British subjects? I think that, on the whole, that is the proper interpretation; but I admit that the question is not free from difficulty.

But the most important contribution on this subject was that in the speech of Sir Alfred Deakin, as reported in the Federal *Hansard* of 1902, page 2962—

As I read section 25, the words, "for the purposes of the last section, if by the law of any State all persons of any race are disqualified from voting at elections," mean that if those persons are disqualified on racial grounds they are to be excluded. But the important consideration, which I think practically concludes the matter, is that when this provision was introduced there were only two laws in existence in the States to which reference was made in the convention, and at which this section was aimed. One of the provisions in question existed, and still exists, in the Western Australian Act, and the other in the Queensland Act. Both are identical in phraseology. The consequence is that this section was drawn with the disqualifications imposed by these laws in view, and in view of nothing else. Next, if it does not mean a disqualification on racial grounds it means nothing. . . . To say that no race is to be excluded from the calculation under this section, unless no member of that race, under any conceivable circumstances as to place of birth, acquisition of property, or naturalisation, could succeed in getting on an electoral roll, would be to render the section nugatory.

He thought that Sir Alfred Deakin on that particular point was on sound ground.

Hon. P. Airey.]

HON. R. PHILP: The hon. gentleman had travelled all round the subject, and talked about Chinese, Japanese, and other aliens, but had not dealt with the amendment, which was simply to omit the word "Australia." To his mind, the Constitution of the Commonwealth was quite clear on the matter of aborigines. In a conversation that afternoon with Mr. Fisher, one of the Queensland representatives in the Federal Parliament, that gentleman told him that Queensland would have got another representative in the Federal Parliament if Sir Arthur Rutledge had not backed down. In any case, there was no doubt that if they included aborigines it would not make a difference of fifty votes in the whole of the State. At the same time, they must bear in mind that they were educating aborigines and teaching them to read and write, and that in due time they would desire to become more civilised. As to Chinese, he remembered receiving a petition at one time signed by two prominent Labour men in Cairns, in which it was stated that the Chinese were the backbone of that district. Aboriginal natives were entitled to vote in New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, and New Zealand, and why should they be excluded in Queensland? Besides, if those persons were allowed to vote, Queensland would get another federal member. That might be either a good or bad thing, but at all events there would be more representation. The Home Secretary said he wanted a uniform Bill, and, if he accepted the amendment, he would have a measure uniform with every other State in Australia. If the aborigines were worth caring for—and an attempt was now being made to care for them and educate them—then they should have votes as citizens of Queensland if they were fit to exercise them.

Mr. MANN sympathised with the leader of the Opposition. He did not consider his seat in Townsville safe, and was now getting his friends to hunt up the aborigines to support him at the next election. The hon. gentleman said that he (Mr. Mann) represented more Chinamen and kanakas than any man in the House. He was not aware that he represented Chinese or kanakas, who had a much better feeling towards the hon. member than they had towards him. The Chinese never presented him with an album.

Mr. KEOGH was pleased to support the amendment. It was a poor return that members opposite were giving the unfortunate aborigines, whose land they had taken when they refused to give them a vote. Hitherto the aborigines had intelligently recorded their votes in the other States and in Queensland, and now the Bill proposed to take away their rights. He believed the consensus of opinion outside would be in favour of allowing the aborigines to exercise the franchise, and he hoped the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill would accept the amendment.

Amendment (*Hon. R. Philp's*) put and negatived.

Clause 4 put and passed.

On clause 5, as follows:—

No person who is an inmate of any public charitable institution for the reception, maintenance, and care of indigent persons other than a hospital established under the statutes relating to hospitals shall be entitled to vote at any election of members of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. J. LEAHY: That was a very important clause, and considering the stand some members had taken upon it, it was remarkable that they were now shirking the position. They had shirked it on a former occasion when he gave them an opportunity of voting on the subject, and he felt very much inclined to give them another opportunity. While he was in favour of extend-

[*Hon. R. Philp.*

ing the franchise, he thought there was a certain class to which it should not be extended. The franchise of New South Wales was very eloquent in regard to the persons it disfranchised. Their Act disqualified every person who—

(a) Is of unsound mind;

(b) Is in receipt of aid from any public charitable institution, except as a patient under treatment for accident or disease at a hospital;

(c) Is in prison under any conviction;

(d) Has been convicted of any crime or offence wherever committed, for which, if the same had been committed in New South Wales, he might have been sentenced to death or penal servitude, and has not received a free pardon therefor, or served the sentence passed on him;

(e) During six months preceding the sitting of the revision court has been imprisoned without the option of a fine for an aggregate period of three months;

(f) Within one year prior to the sitting of the said revision court has been convicted of bribery, intimidation, impersonation, or any similar offence at any election;

(g) During one year prior to the sitting of the said revision court has been convicted of being an habitual drunkard, an idle or disorderly person, or incorrigible rogue, or a rogue and vagabond.

Other persons disqualified were men who had against them an unsatisfied order of any court for the maintenance of their wives [10 p.m.] and children, whether legitimate or illegitimate, or had been convicted of having committed aggravated assaults upon their wives within one year. Those were very useful disqualifications, and it would be interesting to know why they had not been inserted in the Bill now before the Committee. And it must be remembered that that Act represented the views of the Labour party in New South Wales. If the hour had been earlier, he would have tested the Committee on some of those disqualifications; but he would content himself with protesting against their omission.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Perhaps it would not be a bad thing to have the matter tested. Last session the hon. member for Barcoo asked the Minister whether he was prepared to accept an amendment giving the inmates of Dunwich a vote. The hon. member had preached that gospel all over the country, but when he had a chance of carrying an amendment giving those people a vote he refused to avail himself of the opportunity. At the present moment, with the exception of the hon. member for Carnarvon, every member present on the Government side, and every Minister present, were members of the Labour party, and they could carry such an amendment with the greatest ease if they were really honest in the opinions they had so often expressed. He had been informed that if the hon. member for Clermont, who had the courage of his convictions, ventured to assert his principles on that question he would be hunted out of the House. [An honourable member: That is not true.]

Mr. KERR: The hon. member for Toowong, in stating that he had gone about the country advocating that the Dunwich inmates should be placed on the roll, knew he was making a wilful misstatement.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not in order in saying that a member has made a wilful misstatement.

Mr. KERR: He would withdraw "wilful" and substitute "ingenious." If the hon. member for Toowong thought that the party with which he (Mr. Kerr) was connected was going to play his little game, he was very much mistaken. The Bill went a long way in the direction asked for by the people of the State for a number of years. It was going to enfranchise a very large

number of men in the West and North who had never had the privilege of exercising a vote except at the recent federal election. It was estimated that there were over 130,000 persons, including women, who had never had their names on the State electoral rolls. To all those the franchise would be given by this Bill. [Mr. J. LEAHY: After two years.] They waited for ten years for it from the hon. gentleman's party, and they never got it. If the hon. member for Toowong thought that the Labour party were going to "pull the chestnuts out of the fire" for him and wreck the Bill by including the inmates of Dunwich, he was very much mistaken. If the hon. member moved the amendment, he would vote against it.

HON. R. PHILP: The leader of the Labour party had made a statement that was untrue when he said that for ten years that side of the House had promised the women a vote. He had brought in a Bill three years ago that was opposed so strongly by the hon. member's party that he could not go on with it. [The TREASURER: Was that the "Baby" Bill?] He proposed to give every man and every woman a vote, and to give every man who was the father of two children a second vote. In New South Wales they prohibited a man from voting who had against him an unsatisfied order of any court for the maintenance of his wife or children, whether legitimate or illegitimate. Men of that sort should not be allowed a vote. Many of them were prominent political agitators. [Mr. BOWMAN: What—in the National Liberal Union?] [Mr. J. LEAHY: There are probably some on both sides, but it is no credit to them.] He moved the insertion, after the word "hospitals," in line 13, of the words—

or has against him an unsatisfied order of any court for the maintenance of his wife or children, whether legitimate or illegitimate.

The HOME SECRETARY could not treat the amendment seriously, and he did not think the hon. member meant it seriously. If the hon. member was going to introduce questions of that kind, the best thing they could do would be to sit down and draw out a schedule of offenders and disqualify the whole lot of them.

HON. R. PHILP: He was quite serious in the matter. The Bill was only passed in New South Wales last year, and included, in addition to the class of offenders specified by his amendment, "habitual drunkards, rogues and vagabonds." It was very hard to define what constituted a "rogue and vagabond"; but, if the Home Secretary thought those people ought to be allowed to vote, he was sorry for the morals of the hon. gentleman and his party. He intended to press the amendment to a division.

Mr. LESINA understood that during his temporary absence from the Chamber the hon. member for Toowong had stated that certain persons had gone into the Clermont electorate to damage him (Mr. Lesina) on account of his attitude in connection with one or two matters which had engaged the attention of the Chamber last session, and particularly in connection with this matter.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. member should ask leave to make a personal explanation. If not, he should confine himself to the amendment before the Committee.

Mr. LESINA: He would like to have the option of making a personal explanation. (Hear, hear!) The hon. member made a statement that certain members of the Labour party had laid themselves out to undermine him (Mr. Lesina) in his constituency, because he had differed from them on one or two matters last session, particularly on the Dunwich vote, and to hound him

out of the party. He could assure the hon. member for Toowong that it was news to him, and he had not heard that the party had made such a charge. There had been little differences between them, but, so far as he knew, they had not gone that length. As far as he was personally concerned, they would never have reason to make that statement. [Mr. KEOGH: Are you going to make the *amende honorable*?] He was prepared to take the full consequences of what he had done. If he did wrong, the men of his district were so well informed that they would deal with him. He made this statement publicly, and he resented the statement of the hon. member for Toowong, which, as far as his personal knowledge went, was incorrect. He presumed the hon. gentleman had made the statement on information received, and, if so, he had been deceived. [Mr. MACARTNEY: I am prepared to give you the name of my informant privately.] He contradicted the statement, as otherwise it would work injustice to the party and to himself. With regard to the inclusion of the Dunwich vote in the Bill, the matter was one that he had been somewhat enamoured of. [HON. R. PHILP: The amendment does not refer to the Dunwich vote.]

The CHAIRMAN: I would remind the hon. member that the question of the Dunwich vote is not now before the Committee, but the personal explanation of the hon. member.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He could assure the hon. member for Clermont that he would not have made the statement if he had not received the information, and he would be very happy to supply the hon. member privately with the name of his informant. The statement was apparently borne out by the attitude that had been adopted towards the hon. member by the Labour party.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted (*Hon. R. Philp's amendment*) be so inserted—put; and the Committee divided:—

	AYES, 10.	
Mr. Cameron		Mr. P. J. Leahy
" Fox		" Macartney
" Jenkinson		" Paget
" Keogh		" Philp
" J. Leahy		" Stodart

Tellers: Mr. P. J. Leahy and Mr. Macartney.

	NOES, 30.	
Mr. Airey		Mr. Jones
" Barton		" Kenna
" Bell		" Kerr
" Bowman		" Kidston
" Bridges		" Land
" Burrows		" Lesina
" Cowap		" Lindley
" Dibley		" Mann
" Dunstford		" Maughan
" Fudge		" Morgan
" Grant		" Murphy
" Grayson		" Reinhold
" Hamilton		" Somerset
" Hardacre		" Turner
" Hargreaves		" Woods

Tellers: Mr. Land and Mr. Lesina.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Hanran, Mr. Petrie, and Mr. Barnes.
Noes—Mr. Maxwell, Mr. Denham, and Mr. Blair.

Resolved in the negative.

Mr. LESINA said he wished to make a personal explanation with regard to the Dunwich vote. He had strongly advocated extending the franchise to the inmates of Dunwich, but after looking the matter fairly in the face [10.30 p.m.] he had come to the conclusion that any attempt to load the Bill with such a provision might imperil the passage of the Bill in another place, and as the party to which he belonged had determined to put the Bill through in its present form, and so avoid complications in another place, he felt that he

Mr. Lesina.

must be loyal to his party, and that his logical and consistent course was to refrain from pressing for the introduction of a provision giving a vote to the inmates of Dunwich Asylum. There were about 1,000 men and women in that institution, and the Bill, if passed, would enfranchise 140,000 persons who had hitherto been excluded from any participation in the selection of members of the Assembly; and if he had to choose between the 1,000 and the 140,000 persons he would select the 140,000. He had always been a warm advocate of adult suffrage, and was one of the first in New South Wales to start an organisation whose leading plank was adult suffrage. He had advocated that plank from kerosine boxes, candle boxes, the tails of carts, and from public-house balconies, and they had now got adult suffrage in New South Wales. He very much deplored the limitations of the present Bill; but he regarded it as one step in the direction of political freedom, and would support it even with its limitations, in the hope that, if passed, they would subsequently get a more advanced measure which would include the people of Dunwich.

Clause put and passed.

On clause 6—"One adult one vote"—

Mr. LESINA said the Constitution Act Amendment Act of Victoria contained a similar provision, which read: "No elector shall vote more than once at the same election." That had been interpreted by the courts to mean, not one elector one vote, but that no elector should vote more than once in the same electorate. [The HOME SECRETARY: The machinery Bill deals with that matter.]

HON. R. PHILP thought that to make the position quite safe they should add to the clause the words, "unless he has been a supporter of the Morgan Government." (Laughter.)

Clause put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment.

The third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for Monday next.

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