

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Council

THURSDAY, 12 JANUARY 1905

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

THURSDAY, 12 JANUARY, 1905.

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN (Hon. A. Norton)
took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

ELECTIONS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.
FIRST READING.

This Bill, received from the Assembly, was
read a first time, and its second reading made an
Order of the Day for a later hour of the day.

QUESTION.**SUICIDE OF A TEACHER'S WIFE.**

HON. C. S. MCGHIE asked the Secretary for
Public Instruction, without notice—

1. Has the Minister's attention been directed to the
following statement in the *Daily Mail* of to-day :—

One case was brought vividly to recollection by
the suicide of a teacher's wife a few months ago,
after having been compelled to live many years and
bring up a large family in the West. The poor lady
had, of course, become demented. Her husband
was one of the best teachers in Queensland, and he
stuck manfully to his work when most men would
have collapsed. The appointment to such a place
was practical banishment almost for life. Such a
case ought not to have occurred.

2. Is this statement accurate?

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. A. H. Barlow) replied—

1. Yes.

2. No; it is inaccurate in several particulars. The details are much too painful for publication, but the hon. gentleman is at liberty to read all the papers in the case at the Education Office.

ELECTORAL FRANCHISE BILL.

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

HON. F. CLEWETT: In common with other hon. gentlemen who have spoken on this subject, I take the opportunity of recording my emphatic protest against Parliament being called together at such an inconvenient time as the present, more especially for such an ineffective purpose. Assuming that the Bill now before the House is passed, the 2nd clause provides that it is not to come into operation before the 1st January, 1907, so that there will be two sessions of Parliament in which the measure could be dealt with under ordinary conditions before it is to come into operation. That being so, it seems an unnecessary proceeding to call Parliament together at this time to discuss this measure. It appears to me to be an indication of the condition of over-government which exists at the present time, and of a desire and intention on the part of political faddists and professional politicians to interfere with the ordinary method of conducting the public business of the country. With regard to the general principle of the Bill—or I may perhaps more correctly say the special principle of the Bill—that is, woman's franchise—I have said before, and I say it here again now, that I have no objection whatever to women exercising the privilege of voting at parliamentary elections. It is not by any means a new thing, for women have been in the possession of voting privileges in connection with local government ever since the system has been in operation in Queensland. That being so, I do not see any reason why they should not also take part in the voting at parliamentary elections. But there is a curious inconsistency in connection with what is considered necessary for the qualification of electors under the two systems of representation. In the case of local government, where only questions of a purely local and limited interest are dealt with, residence is of no consequence whatever as a qualification. Only those who are holders of property and who have an interest and stake in the locality are permitted to vote for members of a local authority. But when we come to the larger field of parliamentary representation the position is altogether different apparently. Why it should be so, I do not understand. In the larger field of operations in which matters of vital importance to the welfare of the community at large are submitted for consideration, practically absolutely no qualification is required to indicate a man's fitness to use what may be considered one of the most important, if not the most important, privilege which can be exercised by the citizens of a country. Members of Parliament are thus subject to the influence of voters having absolutely no stake or interest in the country. What is residence? A man living in a cave in a rock, or even without the cave, and without any apparent reputable means of support, may, if he can prove six months' residence—which he will probably be able to do very easily—claim to have his name placed on the electoral roll, and he can trot down to the polling-booth and record his vote at an election, which probably will be given for the candidate or candidates who more nearly approach to his own high ideal of life. Those are conditions which are altogether unacceptable to me. I cannot understand, and never have

been able to understand, why for the less important field of local government the larger and the more important qualification should be required, and for the more important field of parliamentary operations the comparative absence of qualifications should exist. But apparently this principle is in operation in most of the Australian States, and I suppose will have to be accepted here. With regard to the length of residence required in the different States to qualify for the parliamentary franchise, I find that in only one State—that is in South Australia—is the period of residence limited to six months. In all the other States it is practically twelve months, and in some the property qualification is also retained. I have taken the trouble to go into this matter a little, and I may be permitted to read a few extracts from "Coghlan's Statistics" for 1902-3 bearing upon the question of the electoral qualification and the franchise. In New South Wales—

The qualification for an elector is that he must be a natural-born subject who has resided in New South Wales for a continuous period of one year, or a naturalised subject who has resided continuously in the State for one year after naturalisation. It was provided in the principal Act that in every case he must have resided three months continuously in the electoral district for which he claimed to vote.

It is practically manhood suffrage in New South Wales, and recently also the franchise has been conferred on women. In Victoria—

Manhood suffrage is the basis on which electors vote. They must be natural-born or naturalised subjects, or naturalised for one year prior to the 1st January or 1st July in any year, possessing an elector's right, and untainted by crime.

That is a rather important consideration—

Or be enrolled on the roll of ratepaying electors, or hold a voter's certificate under the provisions of section 23 of Act No. 1601.

That would seem to indicate that in Victoria there is a property qualification. [THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: No. They are placed on the roll for rented properties.]

Ratepayers in the municipal districts have their names placed on the roll without any action on their part.

[HON. M. JENSEN: That is in municipalities.] Yes; but they are placed on the parliamentary roll in consequence of their names being on the municipal rolls. [HON. M. JENSEN: That is correct of ratepayers for the Council.] No, that is for the Legislative Assembly—

To qualify for an elector's right a person must have resided in Victoria for twelve months, and in a division of his district for at least one month prior to application. The non-residential qualification for a right consists in possessing property of the clear value of £50 or an annual value of £5 in an electoral district.

So that it appears that in addition to manhood suffrage there is also a right to vote for property. In South Australia there is a particularly simple franchise—

All that was required of an elector was that he should be twenty-one years of age, a natural-born or naturalised subject of Her Majesty, and registered on the electoral roll of any electoral district for six months previous to the election.

In Western Australia—

The electoral qualification for the Legislative Assembly is as follows:—Electors must be twenty-one years of age, natural-born or naturalised subjects of the King, and must have resided in the State for six months and been six months on the roll.

That requires a residence of twelve months before they can get the qualification.

They must also be resident in the district, or hold freehold estate there of the clear value of £50, or be householders occupying a dwelling of the annual value of £10, or holders of an annual lease of the value of £10, or holders of a lease or license of Crown lands of

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an annual rental of £5, or have their names on the electoral list of a municipality or roads board in respect of property within the district. Electors for both Houses may be of either sex. Aborigines, natives of Asia and Africa, and persons of half-blood are not entitled to vote, except in respect of freehold qualifications.

So that much more discrimination is shown in connection with these matters there than appears to be shown here. In Tasmania—

The electoral qualification for the House of Assembly is as follows:—Every man of the age of twenty-one years, who is a natural-born or naturalised subject of His Majesty, and has resided in Tasmania for a period of twelve months, is entitled to have his name placed on the electoral roll, and to vote at an election of a member of the House of Assembly for the district in which he resides.

In New Zealand—

Every man or woman of the full age of twenty-one years, who is either a natural-born or naturalised British subject, and resident in the colony one year, and three months in one electoral district, is qualified to be registered as an elector and vote at elections of members for the House of Representatives.

So that the residence qualification required there is longer than it is proposed to make it here. We have had intimations regarding amendments that it is proposed to introduce into this Bill in committee for the purpose of bringing it more into line with requirements. If amendments can be made in such a manner as to make it a more useful and desirable measure, then it may be made to answer the purpose for which it has been introduced. To say that this measure has been demanded by the country as one of urgent necessity seems to me to be saying a great deal too much. If it is said that it is required by a certain section of politicians and by some of those by whom they are supported, it may be admitted that such is the case; but, fortunately, they are not the whole of the country, although at present, perhaps, they occupy a rather conspicuous position. [Hon. P. MURPHY: Three-fourths of the members of the Assembly were returned in favour of it.] They were not returned in favour of this special measure. The questions of electoral reform and adult suffrage have been discussed at more than one election. [Hon. P. MURPHY: This is the only way to get it.] But this particular method of dealing with it certainly was not submitted to the electors. [Hon. P. MURPHY: The extension of the franchise and the abolition of plural voting were before the electors.] The principle is admitted, and no one wishes to offer any opposition to it. What is objected to is depriving people of privileges to which they have always been entitled, and which they have always exercised with discretion, and I contend that the women's vote would have been exercised more in the best interests of the country if it were exercised on the basis of the existing qualifications. [Hon. P. MURPHY: The abolition of plural voting was just as prominently before the electors.] As far as the abolition of plural voting is concerned, if you are going to make a uniform franchise, why not bring the whole franchise into uniformity, and deal with the local government voting in the same way as it is proposed to deal with the larger and more important question of parliamentary voting? Where is the consistency? In the one case nothing but property qualifies to vote. In the other case there is absolutely no

[4 p.m.] qualification. For what is residence? A man may live in a tent,

or even without a tent, for six months; it is no business of anybody's how he lives, whether he is good or bad, so long as he keeps clear of the police he is qualified to vote. Who will he vote for? Not for the candidate who will probably make the best representative of the district he is in and for the country at large.

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We have very clear evidence of that now. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The Premier said at Warwick he thought it was highly desirable that our franchise should be assimilated to that of the Commonwealth.] The Premier's utterance at Warwick is not disputed. But I do think it is very much open to question whether it is a desirable thing to follow in the footsteps of the Commonwealth, seeing the unsatisfactory results of almost all their deliberations in their parliamentary operations up to the present time. I, for one, would certainly avoid as much as possible anything that would be an imitation of the operations of the Federal Parliament in most of their public measures. There are certain measures which would conduce to economy and good government which, if sanctioned by Parliament, would meet with the favour of an overwhelming majority of the people of the country. One of these is a reduction of the members of the Legislative Assembly, and the other the redistribution of seats. I contend that, under existing circumstances, until those matters have been dealt with, a Bill of this sort is entirely superfluous, and previous to the requirements. Those are matters of urgent importance, and would receive universal approval if they were submitted for consideration. If this Bill gets into committee, which, in all probability, it will, I hope such alterations and modifications will be made in it as will make it a more desirable and workable measure. Before sitting down I should like to refer to a remark made by an hon. gentleman when addressing the Council on Tuesday last. He referred, as he said, to the contemptuous manner in which this Bill had been dealt with when previously before this Chamber. For myself I may say—and I think I may say the same for others who voted in the majority on that occasion—there was no desire or intention to treat the measure with contempt, and no contempt was shown. It was simply an application of well-founded constitutional and parliamentary practice to the question before the House. Such terms should not be used when no grounds for them exist. I hope, as I have said, that if the Bill gets into committee, it will be so altered and amended as to make its provisions useful in their application to the purpose for which they are required.

Hon. F. T. BRENTNALL: It will not be supposed, I imagine, that there is very much novelty about the proposal now before this Council. It may be comparatively new here. It may be one upon which a certain class in the community lays very considerable stress. It may, indeed, be one upon which the life of a certain political section of the community largely depends, but it is not by any means a new subject. It is a good many years now since this kind of subject came before the public of the home land, and demands were made, during the great Chartist agitation, for such rights and privileges as are now being claimed for the democracy of this country. In order to substantiate that statement, I would like to quote from a recognised authority the points of the Great Charter which was advocated towards the end of the thirties in the last century. There has been for a long time a dispute as to whether that Great Charter contained five or six points. The Charter itself, as originally drawn up, contained six points, but the petition, which was ultimately sent to Parliament, had only five. That accounts for the discrepancy that has got into some of the records relating to that period. The first of the six points of the charter was universal suffrage. Supposing that meant universal adult suffrage it was just precisely what is being advocated in this Bill, and is looked upon by some people in this community as being the only means of

salvation for the large amount of poverty and distress and misery of the people of this land. It is hardly necessary to remark that after the passage of some sixty-six years they have not yet got near universal suffrage in the old country. The next point was annual Parliaments. Nobody yet has had the effrontery to bring that forward as a condition of the existence of Parliaments, but it was one of the objects agitated for during the great Chartist movement. The third point was equal electoral districts. That is what we are going to insist upon, I hope, in this Chamber, because if we are to have universal suffrage, we ought also to have equal electoral districts. The next point was the abolition of the property qualification. That is proposed in the Bill before us, so that, after the lapse of two-thirds of a century from the first advocacy of this point in the old country, it looks as if we are about to have it accomplished in this portion of the Empire. The next point was vote by ballot, and the last payment of members. With regard to universal suffrage, annual Parliaments, equal electoral districts, abolition of the property qualification, and payment of members—five out of the six points of the Charter—they have failed to get in the old country during a long period of suspense and waiting. In the petition presented to Parliament there was the following:—

May it therefore please your honourable House to take this, our petition, into your most serious consideration, and to use your utmost endeavours, by all constitutional means, to have a law passed, granting to every male of lawful age, sane mind, and unconvicted of crime, the right of voting for members of Parliament; and directing all future elections of members of Parliament to be in the way of secret ballot; and ordaining that the duration of Parliaments so chosen shall in no case exceed one year; and abolishing all property qualifications in the members, and providing for their due remuneration while in attendance on their parliamentary duties.

That does not look like universal suffrage, because it refers only to males. Bringing in such a Bill as we have here is history repeating itself. I do not suppose it will take us two-thirds of a century to get this Bill passed through our Legislature. But it is an indisputable fact that we are largely experimenting with legislation which the old country, with its long experience and its saner judgment, has declined to entertain. I regard the measure before us as in many respects an unjust measure. It is a spoliation Bill. I am not going into many of its details. Something like three months ago I expressed my objections to some of the provisions of the Bill rather strongly. Practically, if not literally, this is the same Bill, and there is no necessity to go over those objections; but I do wish to repeat this: That I had more objections then than the absence of a machinery Bill. I also object very much to any attempt being made by legislation to commit a fraud upon any section of the public by despoiling them of their rights and privileges. There is no doubt whatever in my mind that the Bill before us is a violation of natural rights. It is also a violation of natural instincts. But I shall not follow up that train of thought again on the present occasion, beyond remarking that until you can get all men of equal capacity and abilities you are legislating against Nature in trying to bring about uniformity with regard to the exercise of the franchise. I have heard this called a just reform. A just reform indeed! Where is the justice, I would ask, of offering a reward to insobriety, improvidence, and vice? That is precisely what the Federal Parliament has done. It has offered the reward of the franchise to insobriety, improvidence, and vice. Anything more degrading I cannot conceive than to offer the franchise to prisoners. [THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: This Bill does not do

that.] I hope that I made my meaning clear. I was speaking of the federal franchise. We are following somewhat in the footsteps of that franchise. The omissions from it are very wise omissions in my own judgment. They exclude indigent people whose active interests in life have entirely ceased, and who for the remaining few years of their earthly existence are dependent upon the goodness—I will not say charity—but upon the goodness and generosity of the State. I am also very glad we have not the degradation of any proposal to give a vote to our prisoners. I regard this proposal as a phase of the socialism which would place on the same level in all respects the industrious man and the broken-down loafer, the sober man and the dissipated man, the thrifty man and the spendthrift, the honest man and the undetected thief. One man is as good as another under this Bill, in the matter of politics, no matter what he may be in public status or public character. I have said, and I repeat, that I regard a proposal of that kind as being a violation of natural instinct and a violation of natural law. Some interjections were made on Tuesday to the effect that there are now two parties in this House. Well, I think it is to be admitted that practically there are two parties in this Council. I do not very well see how the issue is to be avoided, and I do not think there can be much mistake as to how it has been brought about. There can be very little dispute as to who is responsible for there being two separate and distinct political parties now in this House. I was in it many years before there was any such distinction or any party line whatever, but there is a party line now, and if there be any doubt whatever about that fact, I will bring a bit of evidence in connection with it. I do not think anybody will dispute that some democratic authority should be admitted to lie in the official organ which emanates from the great house in Turbot street—call it Joss-house, or what you like, but there it is—and that is the headquarters of the movement which demands from the Legislature at the present time this universal Franchise Bill. [Hon. A. HINCHCLIFFE: Hear, hear!] This emanated from that headquarters at the beginning of the first parliamentary session of last year—

In this connection the new appointments to the Upper House are an assurance to the country that the Government is not going to permit itself to be thwarted by that Chamber of bitter fossils as it was last year.

[Hon. A. HINCHCLIFFE: Hear, hear!] I am very glad the hon. gentleman says "hear, hear" to that, because it utterly contradicts what he was "hear, hearing" about on Tuesday, and it distinctly proves that a certain number of members were nominated to this Council for party purposes. You cannot get away from it; it is there in black and white. They came into this Chamber for party purposes, and if they came here for party purposes, could it be any matter for surprise if on the other side there should have been a drawing together, a closer association of hon. gentlemen, to carry out what they believe to be measures for the best interests of the country? One of the measures spoken of in the same article from which I have just quoted was this very one of electoral reform, and it said—

The programme which has been submitted to Parliament is not yet, of course, available, but electoral reform, it is known, will constitute its leading feature, as it ought to do.

What will be done in the way of a redistribution of seats is as yet a Cabinet secret, but the *Worker* hopes that the Government, while providing for the readjustment of electoral boundaries, will lend no ear to the

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frantic demands of the Philpites and the bogus reformers for a drastic reduction in the number of members.

I want hon. gentlemen to bear that in mind; it may come up again before this day next week—the question of reduction of members and redistribution of seats. That is the authoritative utterance of the great Trades Hall centre of democracy—

Whatever is done in the matter of readjustment of electoral boundaries, let there be not the slightest heed paid to the cries of those bogus reformers who want to reduce the number of members in the Legislative Assembly.

On Tuesday a remark was made by the Hon. Mr. Annear to the effect that this Bill had been demanded by a certain political party, and that it was on their cry or instigation, or on their demand, that the Bill had been brought forward. The Secretary for Public Instruction interjected "Oh, no." Well, it may not have been wholly so, but to a large extent it has been so. In this connection I am going to read a remark from a little article—this is not the only *Worker* I have here by me—because you cannot have any higher authority. It is the official utterance of the people who are clamouring out for this franchise. When this paper says that the Labour party has demanded certain things from the Morgan Government, and will use that Government to secure certain things, and when they have secured them will deal with the Morgan Government as they please, then I maintain we have got to the fountain head, and may rely on the information being accurate and to the point. What does it say?—

There is a lot to be done before the millennium dawns and the Morgan Government may well do some of it. If it gives us electoral reform only, it will justify the wisdom of those who brought it into being.

With the vote in the hands of the whole of the people, democracy will but need to issue its commands

That means the Trades Hall—

and the Government will obey. If not the Morgan Government, then some other Government.

A people enfranchised and seized of economic liberties is the master of Destiny.

That is a fine little sentence, and remarkably clever—

The franchise the present Government will give us; the economic truths it is the province of the Labour party to inculcate.

I think if that proves anything, it proves that the Labour party is making a very convenient use of the Morgan party to accomplish its own ends, and when those ends have been secured it may make a very easy bed for the Morgan party somewhere or somehow, or it may do the other thing. The main object is to make itself and its own position secure, and to gain its own ends. I believe, with regard to the Bill now before us, from the remarks which were made here last Tuesday, that there is a sufficient majority here to carry the second reading of this Bill, but I fancy there will be some patching up to be done before it gets through committee. There will probably be a little bit of mending and tinkering to be done before it sees daylight in another place, and before gentlemen there have an opportunity of dealing with it. Coming to the main question, I wish to say this: That as far as a majority of members of this Council are concerned, this is a time on which we may mutually sympathise and commiserate with each other. We chose, in the exercise of what we believed at the time to be our rights and our duty, to postpone the consideration of this Electoral Franchise Bill for half a year, and in doing that it appears we gave very great umbrage to somebody. We acted like a lot of naughty schoolboys, and we have been treated like a lot of

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naughty schoolboys. The great pedagogue who has the control of our political destiny for the time being—at any rate, of our political movements—has thought fit to spoil any chance that any of us might wish to have of a holiday or some relaxation or recreation in getting away for a change, and right on the very top of the holidays to bring both Houses together to pass this measure because of its urgency. Where is the urgency for this Bill? I am inclined to think with one of the speakers on Tuesday that there has been some considerable influence—I won't use such words as coercion or dictation—but there must have been some considerable influence to insist upon a considerate and good-natured gentleman like the present Premier putting himself and us all out of our way and inconveniencing us at this time of the year for a bit of legislation of this character. Who is responsible for it? Is the Government responsible for it? I won't go into the other Chamber to ask questions about individuals further, but is the Government responsible for it, or is it a case of the tail wagging the dog? Whose interests and whose influence are they which gave urgency to this subject? Some of us would like to know that. We fail to see exactly where the urgency comes in. It has been properly said that except upon a certain contingency this Bill will not come into operation until 1st January, 1907. That contingency may not be so remote as some sanguine people hope for—it may come sooner than some people expect—but whether it comes sooner or later, there does not seem to be very much urgency in the matter of a Bill which, things going on in the usual course, will not come into operation for very nearly two years yet. Why should hon. gentlemen here and in another place be put to this unnecessary inconvenience to pass a measure which will not in the ordinary course of things come into operation for two years yet? What harm could have been done if it had been deferred for six months, as we desired it, and been brought on in the ordinary session in the middle of the year? No harm would have been done to anything or anybody that I can see, unless there is some ulterior motive on the part of somebody in urging this Electoral Franchise Bill forward at this particular period. Then we are being punished. I take it that this is a vindictive session, and that to call us together now because we did not choose to obey the dictation of a Government and of another place three months ago is little better than an insult to the self-respect of this Chamber. We have as much right to our opinions and to the performance of our legislative functions as the other branch of the Legislature, [4.30 p.m.] and I venture to think we represent the opinions of a very considerable and influential section of the community in the action we first took. If we again took the same action, I believe it would be applauded by the same influential section of the community. There are some parts of the Bill which it has been already stated will be very seriously considered, and probably considerably amended in committee; but this question arises just now. Is there anything more urgent than this required by the present condition of the State? Is this going to restore lost confidence in the stability and capability of the country? Is it going to give an impulse to our pastoral, our mining, and our agricultural industries? I believe instead of helping the workers, it will encourage work-shirkers. Instead of giving work to the hungry, it will probably increase the number of the unemployed, because the further we go with this kind of legislation the more we shake the confidence of the people who are in a position to help us to improve the conditions of the country, and while the women and children are said to be

crying for food they are offered a vote. Honest men are asking work to fill the mouths of wives and children and they are offered the consolation of a vote to their wives, and that is to satisfy them. I ask again, Is there nothing more important, nothing more urgent, than what has been stated in connection with this Bill? Now, I promised I would give you a few further particulars as to whether anybody is behind this Bill besides the Government. I propose to read from the same weekly journal from which I have already quoted—

Labour in this State has fixed its highest hopes upon the achievement of the adult franchise. For this the coalition was sanctioned; for this it is upheld; this, and this alone, is its justification. Once the franchise ceases to be a class prerogative, and the people are made their own real rulers, coalitions lose the sanction of necessity and become politically immoral.

Now, who was going to lose the franchise? Who in the name of common sense was going to lose the franchise in this country if this Bill did not pass? It could only be a question of the female class not getting the franchise, but if this Bill were put on the fire at once and destroyed, there is not an individual in the country who would lose the franchise. We have a vote for every man, and we should continue to have it, and to stuff illogical matter like that into people's ears, and to endeavour to persuade them that if this Bill does not pass they are going to lose something, is trespassing upon honour and veracity. The quotation goes on—

To win the vote Labour surrendered its studied isolation and entered upon the perilous paths of compromise. Such an expedient, nothing short of complete success can justify, and this is the reason the seeming apathy of the Government and the P.L.P. evoked the quick resentment of the Labour organisations of the country.

The sting of the extract is in its tail—

We simply must get this Bill through.

And that "must" is put in small capitals.

Not only does the future of the movement depend upon it, but its past also. Let it fail now, and it will have lived but to make a mock of the conquests of years and offer up a sacrifice of suffering to a leering idol.

Now, is there any indication in that extract that there is a power behind the Throne; that there is an influence which is impelling the Government forward on this path of "progressive legislation," as it is called; this path of just reform? I do not know. I cannot tell. I have no wish to know whether it is the result of the thorough, hearty, independent judgment of every member of the Government or not. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It is mine, anyway.] I am not in the slightest degree surprised at that, because I have known the hon. gentleman to have strong and independent opinions on so many different sides during his political career that I am not surprised at any point on which he may vary. I have not a shadow of doubt that he is sincere about this. Coming to the very latest issue of the *Worker*, that of last Saturday, we have this—

And what is this Franchise Bill but "progressive legislation"? It will break up the rule of the reactionaries for ever: it will visit ruin upon the noble house of Boodle. It is revolution made easy. Every line of its five short clauses is pregnant with the fall of a Bastille. No wonder they want to change the subject.

If this does not disprove the interjection that was made on Tuesday that there has been some dictation with regard to this measure being brought before Parliament at this juncture, I hardly know what would disprove it. The evidence seems to me to be very clear and strong. Now, there is one important question I would like hon. gentlemen to seriously ponder, and that is whether this is class legislation or not. If it is not class legislation, and is not intended to con-

serve the interests of a class, why does this writing take place week after week about the importance of it in the interests of a class, as I have proved to hon. gentlemen? There was a time, a good many years ago, when all those of us who held liberal opinions had to fight, and did fight very hard, against what was believed to be class dominancy in the legislation and government of the country, and ultimately that dominancy was put down. Perhaps the evil was not so very intense as some people supposed, but still it was put down and liberalism came to the front, and now we have another class dominancy. You can think as you believe, but I venture to think that the sole object of such legislation as this is to level down people who are in any degree in a higher position than the ordinary working class, and give the power into the hands of that particular class to do as they will through the Parliament with all the interests of the country. There is no secrecy about it. You may read it week after week if you look in the right place for the information; the object has been plainly declared, and we are to secure this ultimate democracy by a series of legislative enactments which will put the power into the hands of somebody who will perhaps reward themselves for all the alleged suffering and iniquity and injustice to which they have been subject in the past years by the grasping, greedy boodlers whose privilege and duty it has been to give them employment and pay them wages. Now, in closing I wish to say that if we are to pass a Franchise Bill of this kind we pass it, I hope, with our eyes wide open and with a full knowledge of what is likely to be the issue. If it brings about what I have been reading of—revolution by statute—we shall have helped to bring it about by passing such a measure as this, and we shall have nothing to grumble about if any assistance of ours has led to that eventuation. But this Council has to remember that it is an integral part of the Legislature, that it has duties and responsibilities which are no less important than the political duties and legislative responsibilities devolving upon the clamourers for this adult franchise who profess to represent democracy. I have avoided using that harsh word "socialist." The question is: Is this country to be dominated and governed as speedily as measures of this kind can be put through the Legislature by a particular class, and is it to lapse into that condition of socialism in which Jack will be as good in all respects as his master—perhaps a little better—and in which all the best interests of the community—all the interests which we regard as being stable, and just, and safe—will be sacrificed to the whims, the desires, of that party who will then be the governing power in the country? [Honourable gentlemen: Hear, hear!]

HON. M. JENSEN: As this matter has been so exhaustively discussed, I will make my remarks as brief as possible. The Hon. Mr. Brentnall asks, "Who is behind this matter?" The answer seems easy. The Ministry and the Opposition are, and every candidate at the last election, whether successful or unsuccessful. At the last election, the then leader of the Opposition, Sir Arthur Rutledge, stated in his manifesto—and I suppose he represented his party—that one of the measures he was in favour of was the extension of the franchise to women, and the restriction of the right of each elector to one vote—that is, the abolition of the plural vote. I defy the hon. gentleman to mention a single member of the Assembly who has advocated the retention of the plural vote; and the principle must be very much discredited, and the community must be very unanimously in favour of its abolition, when

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we cannot find in the whole of the Assembly one single defender of it. The hon. member alluded to England as a place in which one man one vote would probably never prevail. Let me quote what the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain has to say on the subject. It was quoted very effectively last session by the Hon. Mr. O'Sullivan—

Plural voting is inconsistent with the principles of our present suffrage. Plural voting is doomed, and sooner or later we must have uniformity of franchise.

I presume he is not advocating class legislation there, and judging by the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone's remarks he is also an opponent of plural voting. Earl Grey is another, and Sir George Trevelyan is also another; he uses the argument that a member of the House of Commons, because he is wealthy, does not receive an additional vote, and that it is quite absurd to give an elector an additional vote simply because he happens to possess wealth. I should like to call the attention of the last speaker to the fact that one or two speakers on his own side have argued that the plural vote is not an important factor in elections, and stated that at the last election property voters were found voting on each side. The property vote has not always been exclusively given to the candidates on one side. [Hon. F. T. BRETNALL: That does not affect the question of a property vote.] No, it does not affect that question; but it affects the dire consequences predicted by the hon. gentleman, who spoke of revolutions. [Hon. F. T. BRETNALL: No, I did not predict that; I read it from the *Worker*.] In every other State plural voting has been abolished. I know it is not a cogent argument to say that we must necessarily adopt legislation which is in force elsewhere. Still there is the fact that Conservatives in New South Wales, in Tasmania, and elsewhere, have abolished the plural vote. It was abolished in New South Wales in June, 1893, and in Tasmania in February of last year. The hon. gentleman asked who was behind this proposed legislation, and made allusions to the Labour party. I understand that there is no Labour party in Tasmania. There may be one Labour member in the Legislative Assembly, but there is no Labour party in that State. The Legislative Council there has the reputation of being the most conservative legislative body in Australia, and yet those Conservatives evidently came to the conclusion that there was no danger to apprehend from the abolition of the plural vote. If political changes are too rapid, there is always a reaction. I do not mean to say that the recoil is ever equal to the advance. A notable instance of reaction occurred in England when Disraeli extended the franchise in 1867. Gladstone was then returned to power. He passed a number of important measures, but, as Green says in his "Short History of the English People," the greatness of the changes and the rapidity of the changes altered the minds of the constituencies, and they returned a Conservative Government. Similar results ensue everywhere. If the revolutionary measures which the opponents of this Electoral Franchise Bill fear are attempted, reaction will follow. One hon. member last Tuesday alluded to this measure as "democracy run mad." I would ask that hon. gentleman if, at the next election, every candidate advocated the repeal of the income tax, and a measure repealing the income tax was passed twice without division by the Assembly, and the Bill was then sent to this Chamber, would that be termed "democracy run mad"? Would it not rather be said that this is merely a revising Chamber, and that we should bow to the will of the people, although we might differ from that will? I think hon. gentlemen on the other side exaggerate the importance of

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the plural vote. Has any political party ever yet been continued in power solely by means of the plural vote? Would the plural vote under the existing franchise suffice to keep any party in power? There is a general tendency to the diminution of the plural vote. Every week partners are converting their businesses into limited liability companies, under which the votes which they formerly held for land necessarily disappear.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed.

The committal of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for a later hour of the day.

ELECTIONS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL. SECOND READING.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I shall have to ask hon. gentlemen to review the present position of business. I think that with their assistance it will be quite practicable to conclude the business this week. [Hon. P. MACPHERSON: No.] [Hon. J. T. ANNEAR: No.] Will hon. gentlemen do me the favour to come to-night, so that we may go on with the second reading of this Bill? [Hon. P. MACPHERSON: No.] [Hon. F. T. BRETNALL: There has been quite inconvenience enough over this business now.] Very well, I understand that the House, by a majority, decline to endeavour to conclude the business this week, and, further, that they decline to continue this sitting after tea? Am I right in that? [Honourable gentlemen: Yes.] That is what I wish to understand. I shall, in the first place, state the difference between this Bill and the Bill which was distributed to hon. gentlemen last Wednesday—that is to say, to indicate the amendments which have been made by the Assembly. I propose to do that before I go on with the details of the Bill itself. The Assembly introduced an amendment in the definition of "postmaster" to include "a receiving officer in charge of a receiving office where a date stamp is used." In the Bill circulated among hon. gentlemen last Wednesday the age column was left out of the various schedules. That column is restored for men, but women voters are not required to state their age under any circumstances. There is a provision in clause 16 to the effect that polling-places under certain circumstances may be grouped together for the purpose of mixing up the votes in order to preserve the secrecy of the ballot. The limit of the number of persons who were supposed to vote at those polling-places which could be grouped together was twenty-five. The Legislative Assembly have extended that number to fifty. In clause 21 a verbal amendment has been made to correct an error in drafting, and a provision has been inserted to the effect that members of the Assembly, who, hon. gentlemen will remember, are entitled, if this Bill passes, to remain on the rolls of their respective constituencies, may vote by post. Those are the alterations which have been made in the Bill as it was submitted to you. The 1st clause of the Bill is formal, the 2nd is mainly definitions, the 3rd is collateral to a similar provision in the Electoral Franchise Bill, which says that this measure shall not apply to the election of a new member to fill any vacancy in the present Parliament, and prior to the 1st of January, 1907. I endeavoured to fully explain that when I was moving the second reading of the Franchise Bill. Save and excepting that the Bill will come into operation on the passing thereof. Then we have a new definition of a "naturalised subject," which is rendered necessary by the change in the naturalisation law under the

Commonwealth. That is in clause 4. [Hon. A. J. THYNNE: Am I to understand that we are to get copies of the original Act with the amendments printed in it, so that we can compare them?] Those copies have not been supplied to me. What the hon. gentleman asks is whether I have got at my disposal copies of the consolidated Acts which are proposed to be amended with the amendments printed in them. I have not got those copies, I regret to say. [Hon. A. J. THYNNE: Will they be available?] I am afraid not. [Hon. A. J. THYNNE: That means several days' delay.] I can assure the hon. gentleman that it is no oversight of mine. I was saying just now that the definition of a "naturalised subject" is altered because the federal laws have made a change. The definition of "postmaster" is required on account of the voting by post. The definition of a "local authority" is repealed because the Local Government Act prohibited a man receiving Government pay from being a member of a local authority. That definition is now unnecessary, as the Local Authorities Act does not prohibit it. Clause 5 of the Bill is formal. Clause 6 deals with the registration court. Hitherto difficulty has been found in getting revising justices and registering justices, because they were required to be residents of the place where the registration took place. Very often those justices could not be got, and the Government had to gazette special justices to discharge those functions. This Bill provides that resident justices shall be preferred, but that if they cannot be got other justices may take their place. That will appear further on in the Bill. By clause 7 of this Bill, section 29 of the consolidated Acts is repealed.

[5 p.m.] Section 29 enacts that fourteen days' notice of every bi-monthly court shall be given by advertisement. Section 34 of the consolidated Acts requires that at the holding of every bi-monthly court they shall cause the bi-monthly electoral list to be published in some newspaper circulated in the district. That provision is repealed. Clause 9 repeals certain words with respect to the qualifications of a returning officer. The absurdity exists now that when a returning officer is first appointed, he must be an elector in the district, and that if he ceases to be an elector the day after, he goes on being returning officer just the same. Sections 78A to 78J deal with the contingent vote. The contingent vote is absolutely swept away, root and branch. [Hon. E. J. STEVENS: Do you approve of that?] (Laughter.) I will deal with that when I come to the question. In section 75 the words "in the first instance" are repealed. Those words relate to the contingent vote, and they are no longer necessary. The proviso of section 87 is repealed. That refers to the office of returning officer being an office of profit or gift under the Crown, and is collateral to the matter that I mentioned in connection with local authorities. Clause 12 repeals Part II. of the consolidated Acts. Part II. deals entirely with qualifications and disqualifications. Some hon. members who spoke to me privately seemed to be under the impression that a part of those qualifications in the old Act would remain in force, but they are to be entirely swept out of that Act, and they are re-enacted in the Bill of which we have just passed the second reading. It has been thought more convenient—following the Federal legislation—that the definition of the persons who are entitled to vote should be in one Act, and the definition of the manner in which they shall vote should be in another. Hon. members will therefore understand that all the qualifications in the consolidated Acts are to be repealed—freehold, leasehold, manhood suffrage, and every-

thing else. In section 13, the words "adult males" are repealed, and "adult males and females" are inserted. This requires the registrar of births, deaths, and marriages to furnish a list of deaths in order that the names of the electors who have died may be taken off the roll. This clause requires him to furnish an account of the deaths of all adult males and females and the marriages of all female electors in order that their names may be corrected on the roll. The 3rd subsection is a formal enactment connected with the change of suffrage. So is the next. The last paragraph of section 14 is repealed. That deals with the change of qualification from freehold to residence and from residence to freehold. There being only one qualification now, that is unnecessary. Subsection (4) is very much the same. Then the tabulation in sections 16, 21, and 33 is remodelled. The old necessity for distinguishing between freehold, leasehold, and residence qualifications disappears, and there is only one qualification. The table will contain the surname and christian name, sex—that is necessary because we have such names as Florence, Francis, Frances, and that sort of thing. Then there is age—hat, as I explained, applies only to males. The ladies will not be required to state their age. In subsection (1) of section 23 there is a verbal alteration arising from the change of qualification. All these are not matters of any importance, and they are all formal. Then the court is empowered to make an alteration in the surname of a female elector who marries. The next subsection provides an easier method of changing the qualification from one district or division to another. Subsection (7) of section 23 is repealed. When any person whose name appears on the roll in respect of a qualification ceases to possess the qualification, and has another qualification, his qualification may be changed. That is also collateral to the sweeping away of the different qualifications. Section 24 is repealed, and a provision is inserted that no person shall have his name entered more than once upon any electoral list. Whenever it appears that a man has got on a list twice, the court may strike out one of the names and retain that entry which they think to be the most correct. Now comes an important matter which was removed from the Franchise Bill for convenience, and put into this Bill: "No person shall be entitled to have his name on more than one roll at one and the same time." The 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th paragraphs of section 30 are repealed. They deal with the form of claims, and fresh provisions are inserted in lieu thereof. The questions which are to be put are—

1. What is your christian name and surname?
2. Are you male or female?
3. Are you of the full age of twenty-one years? And, if a male, what is your age?
4. Are you a natural-born subject of the King?
5. If not, are you a naturalised subject of the King?
6. Where is your place of residence?
7. What is your occupation?
8. Have you continuously resided in Queensland for six months?
9. If so, in what place or places?
10. Is your name now on the roll for any State electoral district in Queensland?
11. If so, for what district?

Then a person must make a solemn declaration, and it is provided afterwards who the persons are before whom the declaration may be made. Then an important change is made in section 30B. Claims are now to be witnessed by classified female teachers as well as by classified male

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teachers, and also by any elector enrolled on the electoral roll of the district for which the claim is made. Then the proviso to section 49 is repealed, and the following proviso is inserted:—

- (a) No female elector shall be disqualified from voting under the name appearing on the roll merely because she has changed her surname upon marriage;
- (b) Any person whose name appears on the roll at the time of an election, and who is then subject to any of the disqualifications mentioned in the Electoral Franchise Act of 1905, shall be disqualified from voting;
- (c) No person whose name appears on the roll for a district shall be entitled to vote at any election for such district unless at some time within seven months next before the election he has been *bona fide* resident therein for a period of one month.

Formerly it was two months, but it is now reduced to one month. Then the following provision is inserted:—

[43b.] Any member of the Assembly shall, if he so desires, be entitled to have his name placed on and retained on the roll for the district he represents instead of the roll for the district in which he resides.

[Hon. B. B. MORETON: Why?] The reason—perhaps it is a sentimental one—is this: The member for Croydon, Carpentaria, Townsville, or some other place may come down here and may have his name put on some electoral roll here, as he has to be on some electoral roll. To a certain extent he becomes Brisbaneised, and, besides, when he goes up to his electorate he cannot have the privilege of saying, “Ladies and gentlemen, fellow-electors.” (Laughter.) [Hon. A. J. THYNNE: Is it necessary to be on any roll?] [Hon. B. D. MOREHEAD: If he loses his seat, he is off the roll then.] His name is there until he gets on to another roll. He loses his right to be on that particular roll when the roll is revised, and, of course, he then becomes one of the rank and file of the public. [Hon. A. J. THYNNE: Why insist on his being on any roll?] I think it is a foolish thing to insist on a man being on any roll. A member of the House of Commons is not obliged to be on any roll, I believe. I do not know whether hon. members can enlighten me on the point, but I believe it is a fact that any one of us could go to England and stand for the Imperial Parliament. [Hon. P. MACPHERSON: What chance would we have of being returned?] That is another question. [Hon. A. J. THYNNE: An Australian has been returned who could not possibly have had a qualification.] Speaking seriously, I believe there is no qualification of any kind for the Imperial Parliament. [Hon. A. J. THYNNE: Why insist upon it in Queensland?] I do not know why we insist upon it. I do not think there is any particular virtue in it. Then there is an alteration in the questions in section 63. The section reads: “And if such person claims to be an elector and to vote in respect of the qualification of residence the following questions,³ etc. Now that there is no other qualification than that of residence, those questions are unnecessary. We now come to the important question of voting by postal ballot—

Any female elector who desires to vote through the post office, and any male elector who on polling-day will be absent from the district for which he is enrolled and who desires to vote through the post office, may, after the issue of the writ and not later than the second day preceding polling day, apply to the returning officer for a postal ballot certificate.

He applies for a postal ballot certificate, giving all the particulars—

The application must be signed by the applicant with his or her own hand, and must be declared before and attested by the returning officer or a justice of the peace, each of whom is hereby authorised to take such declaration:

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Then follows a proviso for which, I must admit, I cannot see the justification—

Provided that no justice who is a candidate at the election or is a member of the Legislative Council or Assembly shall be competent to take or attest any such declaration.

[Hon. A. J. THYNNE: The members of the Legislative Council are the only disinterested people in the State.] It is then provided that—

Any person who makes in any such application any statement which in any material particular is to his or her knowledge false shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding one hundred pounds or to imprisonment with or without hard labour for any period not exceeding six months.

That is rather a stiffener for anybody who desires to make a false declaration. If the returning officer is satisfied that the name of the applicant is entered on the roll, he is to furnish the postal ballot certificate, which is endorsed upon an envelope addressed to the returning officer. The postal ballot-paper is given in the Bill, and it is certainly very full. It gives the full directions on one page how the voting is to be done, and nothing can be clearer than the direction on the second page, “How to vote”—

Below write the name of the candidate you vote for. If two members are to be chosen you may write the name of one or the names of two candidates.

[Hon. T. A. JOHNSON: Will the postmaster know who the person votes for?] No, he is forbidden to know. It is then provided that no elector who has received any such certificate shall be entitled to vote except by means of a postal ballot-paper. Instructions are then given as to how the returning officer is to initial the postal ballot-paper, and so fold it down as to entirely conceal the number written in the corner. The next proceeding refers to the postmaster, and shows how the vote is to be recorded—

In the presence of any postmaster within the State, and of no other person, the voter may, on or before the second day preceding polling day, but not afterwards, vote in manner following and not otherwise:—

- (i.) The voter shall deliver to the postmaster the postal ballot-paper and the two envelopes aforesaid, in the same condition in which they were issued.
- (ii.) The voter shall then sign his or her name upon the certificate, and the postmaster shall then stamp such envelope with the post office letter stamp of the date of voting.
- (iii.) The postmaster shall then deliver the postal ballot-paper to the voter, but shall retain the two envelopes aforesaid.
- (iv.) The voter shall then in the presence of, but not in the sight of, the postmaster vote by writing on the second page of the ballot-paper the name of the candidate or the names of the candidates for whom the voter votes.
- (v.) The voter shall then fold up the ballot-paper so as to conceal the name or names of the candidate or candidates, and deliver it to the postmaster.
- (vi.) The postmaster shall then, without unfolding the ballot-paper, place it in the envelope which is endorsed with the certificate, and shall fasten up the envelope.
- (vii.) The postmaster shall then place such envelope in the envelope addressed to the returning officer, and upon receipt from the voter of the proper postage stamps shall, in the presence of the voter, affix them to the envelope, and shall post the same as a letter in the post office.

Then the postmaster is directed to immediately stamp with the letter stamp of the date any certificate presented for stamping and immediately post it, and he is not to look at the name of any candidate for whom the voter votes. The object of all this formality is to prevent the collection of votes—to prevent electioneering agents going round and buying votes and either

posting them themselves or tearing them up. It ensures that the postal ballot-papers shall actually go to the returning officer. In New South Wales I believe voters' rights were bought up and held in pawn until after the day of election. All these tricks are to be prevented as far as possible, and these elaborate precautions are necessary. One vote may turn an election, one member may make a majority; therefore we cannot have too great purity of voting. [Hon. A. J. THYNNE: Is that a forecast?] I do not care whether it is or not; it would not trouble me. Then certain legal enactments as to evidence follow as to what is to be considered *prima facie* evidence. Provision is next made for the examination and count of votes; and it is provided that any mistake in spelling of the name of any candidate, where the intention of the voter is clear, shall not render such vote informal. A provision saving appeals to the Elections Tribunal is followed by a number of consequential amendments, one of which refers to late postal votes. If the returning officer is fully satisfied that the delayed postal votes will not alter the result of an election, he is to send in the ballot-papers. For instance, if a candidate has a majority of 100 votes, and there are fifty postal ballot-papers out, it is quite clear that if they all voted one way it could not possibly alter the result. If there is any doubt, he has to delay the return until the postal votes are in. We now come to a provision which for the first time has been introduced in this State. At small polling-places where three, four, or ten votes are recorded, you might as well have no ballot at all, because everybody knows who is voting and whom they are voting for. This is particularly the case on stations. Without mentioning names, I heard only to-day of the case of a comparatively large station where the candidate received a telegram from one of his friends: "It is all right; the votes will be twenty-six to eleven." And the votes were twenty-six to eleven. In order to get rid of this state of things it is provided that where it is not likely that more than fifty votes will be polled at a polling-place a number of those places will be grouped together, and instead of the votes being counted at the place where they are polled they are to be sent in to the assistant returning officer, who is a new creation under this Act, and the assistant returning officer is to mix them all up and act exactly as if they had been polled at his polling-place. The last three clauses consist of temporary provisions. The first is—

As soon as may be after the passing of this Act, every electoral registrar shall send by post to every elector enrolled for any qualification other than residence for any district or division for which such electoral registrar is registrar, at the address of such elector, so far as the registrar can ascertain it, a notice, together with the prescribed form of claim.

Then, in July and August, 1905, every electoral registrar is to compile an electoral list for his district or division, and in that list he is to insert the name and other particulars of every person—

- (a) Who is already enrolled for the qualification of residence;
- (b) Who has made a claim showing a qualification of residence;
- (c) Who is personally known to the electoral registrar to possess the necessary qualification of residence; and
- (d) Whose qualification of residence is proved by some other person, personally acquainted with the facts, by declaration under the Oaths Act of 1867.

This does not prevent the sending in of independent claims. I do not think anything can be more liberal than that. If you are on for residence you are retained. If you are not on for

residence you are warned to make a claim, or someone may make a claim for you, attested by a declaration under the Oaths Act. The last clause refers to the proceedings at the annual revision court in 1905. Lists when revised at that court are to become the electoral rolls for the several electoral districts for all purposes except for a vacancy in the Legislative Assembly during the continuance of the present Parliament, and before the 1st January, 1907. [Hon. T. A. JOHNSON: If any member during the next two years may be elected under the old Act, how will it apply in the case of a dissolution of Parliament?] The new roll comes in then. If a dissolution of Parliament took place immediately, the new system would come into force. Seeing that Parliament expires on the 15th September, 1907, and is not at all likely to expire before its time. [Hon. T. A. JOHNSON: By effluxion of time?] Of course. Is that satisfactory? [Hon. T. A. JOHNSON: It is rather unusual having two rolls.] I again ask hon. gentlemen to consider that the Assembly has adjourned, and is waiting. I can do no more. If hon. gentlemen opposite are still of opinion that they should not meet to-night, my only course will be to move that the House adjourn till to-morrow. I leave it in the hands of hon. gentlemen; I have finished my explanation.

HON. SIR A. C. GREGORY: I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

HON. A. J. THYNNE: Before that is put—I am sorry that I missed an opportunity of speaking at an earlier period of the day, and I think I may be pardoned in putting before hon. members a very valuable and useful return, which, through the courtesy of the Secretary for Public Instruction, I received on my arrival at the House to-day. It is a return showing the number of electors on the roll for each electoral district of Queensland at the time of the last general election, the number of adults, males and females, eligible to become electors in each of such districts under the last census. I ask the House to allow me to take this as read. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Would you like it printed?] Very much. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I am perfectly willing that it should be printed.] I would point out that on the total there would be available, according to this last census, 132,897 adult males and 101,434 adult females eligible for election. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: If you will give it to me I shall lay it upon the table and move that it be printed.] Will it be printed in time to be of use to hon. gentlemen? [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Yes; every effort shall be made.] I may, perhaps, be allowed to go a little further and call attention to one or two figures. Assuming that the franchise followed the Commonwealth franchise, the quota for a House of seventy-two members would be 3,254. According to the Commonwealth, you can add 20 per cent., that is one-fifth, to that; or deduct one-fifth so as to provide half, the result being that one electorate may be 50 per cent. greater in number than another. I would like to give the names of the sixteen electorates which come below that level: Bowen, which has a present roll of 991, will only have a total adult population of 2,059; Bulloo, with a present roll of 581, has a total number of 1,595 adults; Burke, with a present roll of 453, has a total of 905 adults; Carnarvon, with a present roll of 1,011, has a total number of 2,191 adults. Carpentaria will have a total of 1,137 adults; Cook, 2,458; Croydon, 1,673; Dalby, 2,191; Gregory, 1,517; Leichhardt, 2,467; Logan, 2,130; Murilla, 2,143; Normanby, 1,951; Rosewood,

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2,457; Stanley, 2,354; Warrego, 2,089. Those will all be under the quota, assuming every adult male and female in the electorate to be on the roll, which would be permissible under the Commonwealth scale. On the other hand, taking the electors of Bulimba on their present franchise, there would be a total adult population of 6,392. I do not know whether there are not some other electorates larger still than that, but comparing the Burke electorate with a total adult population of 905, which is one-seventh less than the population of Bulimba, you see the question that arises as to the inequality of the elective power of the electors according to the population. [Hon. B. D. MOREHEAD: So it is under the franchise in Great Britain.] It may be, but the franchise of Great Britain is not under discussion. I am only showing figures that, to me, are very instructive, and which may furnish food for thought for hon. members in the further consideration of these measures before us. I acknowledge the courtesy of the Secretary for Public Instruction in so promptly getting me supplied with that information I sought from him.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I am very happy to give this information, which is all cognate to the redistribution of seats. I shall lay it on the table and move that it be printed. As to the adjournment, I do not want to divide the House, as I do not want to have anything like unpleasantness, but I ask the Council again to consider that the Legislative Assembly has adjourned for the consideration of this business. I thought that this evening we could go on with the committee stage of the Franchise Bill, hanging it up for third reading, but I understand now, finally, that the will of hon. gentlemen is that that course should not be taken.

Question—That the debate be adjourned—put and passed.

The resumption of the debate was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

PAPER.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION laid upon the table a return showing the number of electors on the roll, and the number of adults, male and female, eligible to become electors at the time of the last census, and moved that it be printed.

Question put and passed.

The Council adjourned at twenty minutes to 6 o'clock.