

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 1907

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- (2) Rule of the Supreme Court of Queensland, as of Friday, the second day of August, 1907.
- (3) Return to an Order, relative to business of the Supreme Court, Rockhampton, made by the House, on motion of Mr. Bouchard, on 22nd August.
- (4) Return to an Order, relative to moneys paid to barristers and solicitors, made by the House, on motion of Mr. Lesina, on the 30th July.
- (5) Order relative to statistics concerning Woollooga Estate, made by the House, on motion of Mr. Philp, on 29th August.

QUESTIONS.

RAILWAY WORKSHOPS, IPSWICH.

Mr. MAUGHAN (*Ipswich*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. Date of completion of the State Railway Workshops, Ipswich?
2. Cost of buildings to date?
3. Cost of new machinery (including electrical power) to date?
4. Number of wagons and carriages constructed to date?
5. Number of locomotives constructed to date, and cost per ton of same?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. G. Kerr, *Barcoo*) replied—

1. 30th September, 1904.
2. £281,700 2s. 6d.
3. £146,134 12s. 3d.
4. 582 wagons, 50 carriages, and 20 goods brake vans.
5. Nine. The cost per ton for the first seven varies from £52 7s. 9d. to £59 3s. 7d., but these figures cannot be taken as correct, as it appears that in the past enough has not been added for "Shop Charges"—*i.e.*, power, use of machinery, supervision, etc. It is at present impossible to say what is the exact cost of the two engines turned out last month, as the debits so far made refer to other engines as well which are being built simultaneously.

ABORIGINALS WORKING AT LEPER STATIONS.

Mr. HARDACRE (*Leichhardt*) asked the Home Secretary—

1. How many aboriginals from Myora Station are, or have recently been, working at Peel Island Leper Station?
2. How many aboriginals from Barambah are, or have recently been, working at Peel Island Leper Station?
3. What are the names, occupations, and wages of the above aboriginals (if any), and do they get rations?
4. Are they working amongst the lepers; and, if so, are they allowed to return to Dunwich and Myora on Saturdays, Thursdays, and Sundays with their wives and families?
5. Is C. Moreton, an aboriginal, working at Peel Island Leper Station, and has he a brother a leper confined in the lazaret?
6. Is it true that two cases of leprosy have occurred on Stradbroke Island?
7. Is it true that three white women, much against their will, were taken from the women's ward at Dunwich over to Peel Island to wash the clothes of the lepers?
8. What amount has been paid to aboriginals in cash or rations for putting up bark gunyahs on Peel Island?
9. How long have they been at the work, and when will the work be finished?
10. Were any of the Barambah blacks working on Peel Island allowed to come up to Brisbane lately? If so, how many?

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

TUESDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER, 1907.

The SPEAKER (Hon. John Leahy, *Bulloo*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

PAPERS.

The following papers, laid on the table, were ordered to be printed:—

- (1) Report of the Official Trustee in Insolvency, Townsville, for the year 1906.

[*Hon. A. H. Barlow.*]

how comes it that, having been passed in New Zealand seven years ago, it has never been repealed? Surely the excessive amount of litigation which is anticipated here would have occurred there! And I can only find in the Australasian Digest about six or seven cases which have been brought before the courts in New Zealand for decision. With the experience of New Zealand before them, the Legislature of Victoria, in December last, passed a Bill which admits this principle. It is not a measure that I approve of, because its benefits are limited to children under twenty-one years of age, but there is an instance of the most conservative body in Australia adopting this principle that is condemned as an innovation here. As to interfering with the liberty of the subject, we have heard of that objection before. A man with a few pounds deserts his illegitimate children; he does not see why the liberty of the subject should be interfered with, or why he should not do what he likes with the few pounds he has. When we are told that a man should do what he likes with his own, the question arises, Is "his own" his wife's and his children's or is it his property? The remark savours of olden times when a wife and children were the slaves of the husband in the same sense as his ox and his ass. Let hon. gentlemen reverse the case. Supposing a woman leaves her property, not to her infant children and her husband, but to another man. Would hon. members defend that on the ground that she should be allowed to do what she likes with her own?

HON. P. MURPHY: This will not prevent it.

HON. M. JENSEN: Then I claim the hon. member's vote on that ground. He argues that the measure will not effect its purpose. Then why vote against it? Many of the arguments have been adduced against an imaginary Bill. We have heard about the Prodigal Son and the spendthrift son who has already received his share of the estate. What consideration, I ask, could that son possibly receive from any judge? We are told

[5 p.m.] that the judge need not make an order if the character or conduct of the applicant disentitles him, so that if the son is a prodigal, or a drunkard, or a spendthrift, or a criminal, his application would not be entertained. Hon. members may rely upon it that others will be interested in bringing forward all the facts that will defeat his application. When hon. gentlemen oppose this Bill, let the position be clearly stated. I circulated an amending clause to this effect—

Notwithstanding anything herein contained, where a man devises or bequeaths at least three-fourths of his property to his widow, no application shall be made under this Act by the children of such widow, or by any person on their behalf. Notwithstanding anything herein contained, where a woman devises or bequeaths at least three-fourths of her property to her husband no application shall be made under this Act by the children of such husband, or by any person on their behalf.

So that to a great extent the ground is taken from under the feet of the opponents of this Bill. It seems to me that no man should be allowed to disinherit his infant child, or perhaps invalidated wife, and leave them to the care of strangers. We are told that it is the bounden duty of the court to give effect to the wishes of a testator, but, as the Hon. Mr. Davey pointed out, no court would give effect to the wishes of a testator during his lifetime if he decided that he would not support his wife and child, and why the court should aid him in being unjust after his death I fail to see, especially if his wishes are inhuman and unjust. The Hon. Mr. Macpherson mentioned that if a

testator disinherited his wife and children, with whom he was living on the best terms, this action would be evidence of insanity, but I must beg leave to differ from the hon. gentleman. The onus of proof is on those who assert undue influence. If a client makes a present to a lawyer, it is not for the client to show the *bona fides* of the transaction. The lawyer must prove that, and the same thing applies also in the case of a patient making a present to his medical attendant. When an unfortunate wife and children attack a will made in favour of a stranger, the onus of proof is on them. If there was no other evidence than that the husband and wife lived on good terms, the widow would certainly be non-suited, and would lose her case. The chief objection advanced by the Hon. Mr. Thynne was that this measure would lead to too much litigation. Now, in the first instance the solicitor will do his duty, I presume. When he makes a will for a man who wants to disinherit his wife and children, he will point out the danger of such a will being contested. Then, again, if such a will is made, in many cases there will be a compromise. Take the case of a stranger who is the beneficiary. He would be ashamed to go into court and contend that no allowance should be made to the children or widow. One case in New Zealand resulted in the wife securing an allowance of £104 a year out of an estate worth £300 a year. There was an application made to the court, but not by the widow. So that, to prevent costly litigation, there will, first of all, be the warning of the solicitor who draws up the will, and in the second case there will be the possibility of a compromise, even if an unjust will is made. But I claim the Hon. Mr. Macpherson as a supporter of my argument, because on the last occasion when the Bill was before the Council he pointed out that a husband frequently left the whole of his estate to his widow in the case of a small estate, because, he argued—and I agree with him—that the husband thought it unwise to cut up so small an estate. I think the majority of wills in small estates are of that character. The addition I propose to make to the Bill meets that case, so that all the solicitor need tell the man is to let his widow have three-fourths of the estate. If hon. gentlemen say three-fourths is too much, it would be easy to make it one-half. We are told that the expenses will be very great under the Bill, but if it passes its second reading I will ask hon. gentlemen to allow me to add a clause from the Victorian Act providing that the costs of all proceedings are to be in the discretion of the judge who hears the case; but to this I will add, with power to make the solicitor pay the whole or any part of the costs, if he is of the opinion that the solicitor has taken up the case without good grounds. That will go a long way to prevent any speculative case. The Hon. Mr. Murphy avers that the Bill will not effect its object, and for that reason I claim his vote. The hon. gentleman says that testators will distribute most of their estates beforehand, but as a matter of fact that will seldom be done. The ordinary testator who wishes to disinherit his wife and children is the last man in the world to part with any of his property during his lifetime. If the hon. gentleman's argument is correct, how is it that the Act has not failed in New Zealand? Finally, I would point out that the rejection of the Bill means that a testator has the absolute right to send his infant children to an orphanage, and his invalid wife to the Diamantina Asylum, while leaving his property to a stranger.

Hon. M. Jensen.]

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. A. G. C. Hawthorn, *Enoggera*) replied—

1. Seven altogether—six at present.
2. Seventeen.

3. *Myora Boys*—

Charles Moreton	... overseer	... £3 a month.
Tommy Dalton	... labourer	... 10s. a week.
Richard Dalton	... ..	... 10s. ..
W. Nuggan	... ..	... 10s. ..
Amos Blow	... ..	... 10s. ..
Newpong	... ..	... 10s. ..
Richard Wainright	... ..	... 10s. ..

Barambah Boys—

J. Fiddler	... labourer	... 8s. a week.
J. Bond	... ..	... 8s. ..
Bulgi	... ..	... 8s. ..
Bob White	... ..	... 8s. ..
Charles Samuel	... ..	... 8s. ..
Tommy Tomahawk	... ..	... 8s. ..
J. Mimi	... ..	... 8s. ..
Tom Bligh	... ..	... 8s. ..
George Weasel	... ..	... 8s. ..
Sonny	... ..	... 8s. ..
Jerry	... ..	... 8s. ..
J. Robertson	... ..	... 8s. ..
Alf. Maryborough	... ..	... 8s. ..
Bob Lake	... ..	... 8s. ..
Darkey	... ..	... 8s. ..
Franzey	... ..	... 8s. ..
Christie Williams	... ..	... 8s. ..

They also receive rations.

4. The aboriginals are not working amongst the lepers, though occasionally some of them have to carry water for the use of the lazaret. They are never in contact with the lepers, and are camped about a quarter of a mile from the buildings. They are allowed to visit Dunwich or Myora on Saturday afternoons and return to Peel Island on Sunday. Every precaution is taken to prevent them from contracting the disease, and no one is allowed to enter the lazaret without the doctor's written order. The aboriginals are not working at the lazaret, but are employed outside it, getting posts for fences and altering and extending jetty at the old quarantine station.

5. Charles Moreton is working on Peel Island. He has a half-brother who is a leper, but he is confined at the old lazaret at Stradbroke Island, and has never been on Peel Island yet.

6. An inmate of Dunwich was discovered to be suffering from leprosy in March, 1902, and was sent to the lazaret. He had previously been an inmate of Dunwich at various times for thirteen years. He died at the lazaret on 1st January, 1905.

A second inmate who was admitted to Dunwich on 11th September, 1903, was discovered to be suffering from leprosy on 21st November, 1903. Consequently he must have contracted the disease before coming to Dunwich, as this disease develops very slowly. He is now an inmate of Peel Island Lazaret.

A third person who lived at Myora, Stradbroke Island, was discovered to be a leper in October, 1904. Previous to this discovery he had lived in various parts of Moreton Bay as well as at Myora. He is at present in the lazaret.

7. No. Any work done for the inmates of the lazaret was done by persons who volunteered for the work, and for which they are paid.

8. Cash, £75; rations, £41; total, £116.

9. Charles Moreton started work on 22nd April, and three Myora boys on 9th May. Six Barambah boys started work on 16th May, and eleven more on 20th June. Two more Myora boys started work on 25th June, and another on 28th June. The erection of huts took from 16th May to 23rd July. Since that time the aboriginals have been employed carrying water, procuring posts for fencing 160 acres, and repairing and extending jetty, Quarantine Station, Peel Island. It will take three or four months to complete the work required at Peel Island.

10. Twelve of the Barambah boys were allowed to go to Brisbane on 13th August, and returned on 15th August, after consultation between the Medical Superintendent and the Commissioner of Public Health.

RE-CLASSIFYING OF TRAFFIC WAGE-EARNERS.

Mr. MAUGHAN asked the Secretary for Railways—

Is it a fact that the railway traffic authorities are re-classifying certain grades of traffic wage-earners,

including night officers, porters, and signalmen, into salaried employees, with a view of neutralising the good effects of the eight-hour system?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

No. On the 7th January last a deputation from the Operating Porters' Association waited upon the Commissioner to ask that they be placed on the salaried staff. This was approved of on 25th January, but could not be given effect to at once, because the increased expenditure involved had not been provided for. It is included in the Estimates for 1907-8, however, and the change has now been carried out.

DAWSON COAL—ADMIRALTY TEST.

Mr. HARDACRE asked the Chief Secretary—

What is the nature of the unsatisfactory result of the recent Admiralty test of the Dawson coal?

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Kidston, *Rockhampton*) replied—

The report states this coal was very slowly consumed when by itself, and the quantity of ash formed was abnormal.

Mr. LESINA: Have you any idea of what it cost?

The PREMIER: Over £2,000.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN STATE SCHOOLS REFERENDUM BILL.

INITIATION.

On the motion of the HOME SECRETARY, it was formally resolved—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirability of introducing a Bill to refer to the electors of Queensland a certain question respecting religious instruction in State schools.

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION BILL.

INITIATION.

On the motion of the ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. J. W. Blair, *Ipswich*), it was formally resolved—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirability of introducing a Bill to make better provision for technical instruction and for other purposes.

ACCLIMATISATION SOCIETY BILL.

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING.

On the motion of Mr. PAGET (*Mackay*), this Bill was introduced, read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for Thursday next.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

The HOME SECRETARY moved—

That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Local Authorities Act of 1902 in certain particulars, and for other purposes consequent thereon.

Mr. RYLAND (*Gympie*) asked if it would be possible to deal with the question of valuations on that Bill? On goldfields especially the system of valuing mining properties was very unsatisfactory. It amounted practically to a poll tax, as the rich mine was valued exactly the same as the poor mine.

The HOME SECRETARY: There would be no objection to dealing with the question, as it came in in connection with rating.

Hon. A. G. C. Hawthorn.]

Mr. MAUGHAN asked whether any provision was being made for a wider franchise in connection with local government?

The HOME SECRETARY: No provision was being made for any alteration in the franchise.

Mr. MAUGHAN: It is about time there was. It is simply in the hands of a few now.

HON. R. PHILP: Does the Home Secretary intend to deal with the question of endowment in the Bill?

The HOME SECRETARY: There was no provision in the Bill for any endowment. The proper place to deal with that was on the Estimates.

HON. R. PHILP: If the Committee wanted to amend the Local Authorities Act in other directions, they should omit the words "in certain particulars," and then they could move any amendments in the Act that they liked.

Mr. BOUCHARD moved the omission of the words "in certain particulars." If they allowed those words to remain in the motion they would be committing themselves to the provisions of the Bill, and there were many matters which it was desirable to embody in the Bill.

The HOME SECRETARY regretted that he could not accept the amendment. The Bill had been drafted in consequence of a large number of recommendations submitted by the Local Authorities' Conference, and to remedy other defects in the Act. The question of endowment was quite outside the scope of the Bill. If the Committee was of opinion that the endowment should be restored, they could bring in a Bill to make special provision for that.

Mr. MACARTNEY regretted that the Home Secretary could not accept the amendment. It was rather a bad practice to limit the hands of Parliament in regard to Bills introduced by the Government. There might be many other defects in the Act besides those referred to by the Local Authorities' Conference and those which the Government desired to remove, and, if it was considered that the Act would be improved by such amendments, scope should be left for making them. The amendment would only free the hands of the Committee to put in any necessary amendments. The hon. member for Gympie desired a certain amendment.

Mr. RYLAND: I am satisfied with the explanation of the Home Secretary.

Mr. MACARTNEY: When means by which amendments could be made were pointed out, hon. members did not want it. That was rather an extraordinary position for their friends in the corner to take up. The hands of the Committee should not be tied.

The PREMIER: This was a matter in which they had to consider how they could get on with the business of the country. The Local Authorities Act was a most extensive statute, covering an immense amount of ground, and, if they were to start a general discussion on the Act, it might easily take up the bulk of the session. The local governing bodies desired to get a certain number of amendments put into the Act for the purpose of making it work better, and the Government brought in a Bill to amend the Act in certain particulars. The omission of the words proposed to be omitted would have the effect of leaving the whole Act open for discussion.

Mr. MACARTNEY: What is the use of Parliament?

The PREMIER: The use of Parliament—although the Opposition seemed to be unaware of it—was to get through some legislation. But if they omitted those words it would enable the

Opposition to discuss the whole Act over this little Bill, thereby blocking much useful legislation. The reason why the Government did not wish to discuss the whole of the Local Government Act was simply that doing so would prevent much useful work being accomplished. The business of the Opposition was to prevent the Government doing useful work.

Mr. MACARTNEY: You cannot mention a single instance where anything of that sort has been done.

The PREMIER: The business of those who wanted reform was to enable the Government to get through business. The Government adopted the present quite usual course as the most expeditious way of dealing with a matter which, although important in itself, was a comparatively small matter. He hoped the Committee would not strike out those words, otherwise they would simply have to leave the Bill alone altogether and get on with other work. It was very desirable that some of the amendments incorporated in the Bill should be adopted.

HON. R. PHILP: The Premier, of course, raised the bogey that the Opposition were trying to obstruct business. As a matter of fact, it was one of the hon. gentleman's own

[4 p.m.] supporters who raised the question.

It would simplify matters very much if the Home Secretary would give a synopsis of the Bill, and let them know what they were going to discuss. It might not be worth discussing at all. They knew that the Local Authorities' Conference had met in Brisbane, and had asked for a great number of things. There was just as much knowledge of local government on the Opposition side as on the Government side. The junior member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. McMaster, knew more about local government than any other man in the House; certainly as much as the Home Secretary. The House should know what the Home Secretary meant to give them under this particular Bill.

The PREMIER: You will know when you see the Bill.

HON. R. PHILP: It would be too late then to move amendments. The Government simply said, "There is the Bill; take it or leave it."

Mr. KENNA: You used to do the same thing.

HON. R. PHILP: The Government said, "There is our Bill; if you do not like it we will withdraw it," but that was not the way to treat members. Every member of the Committee had just as much right to speak as the Premier; that hon. gentleman was only a member of the Committee, although he was Premier of the country.

The PREMIER: Did you discover that since you crossed over? (Laughter.)

HON. R. PHILP: This discussion might have been saved if the Home Secretary had stated what the Bill contained, and in what way it was proposed to alter the present Act.

The PREMIER: Did your Minister ever do that in the first place?

HON. R. PHILP: Yes. He had often done it himself. He had heard hon. gentlemen on the Treasury bench give explanations—very necessary explanations—because, as they knew, if an amendment was not within the scope of the Bill they could not discuss it. He was anxious to see business gone on with, and it would facilitate business now if the Home Secretary would tell the Committee exactly what the Bill contained.

Mr. BARNES (*Bulimba*): He would be very sorry if the House should do anything to prevent legislation in the direction desired by the Local Authorities' Association. This morning a deputation asked the Home Secretary for financial assistance, leaving the question of whether it was

[*Mr. Maughan.*]

endowment under the name of endowment or some other assistance, to the Government. He took it from the reply of the Home Secretary that there was not much chance of their getting any assistance there. If this amendment was not carried, they knew that they would be blocked from bringing in any amendments.

The PREMIER: But you are not blocked from bringing in a Bill of your own. (Laughter.)

Mr. BARNES: He was surprised at a gentleman of the Premier's experience suggesting that a private member should bring in a Bill of his own to deal with this subject. He had already said that if the scope of the Bill was enlarged they might take the whole of the session over it, and then he could quietly tell them that there was nothing to prevent a private member bringing in a Bill of his own. His words carried their own answer. He might say that the Local Authorities' Association—and he thought these facts ought to be made known—represented 137 local authorities, the number of delegates being 215, including many members of this House. Would this be a fair thing to men who were anxious that assistance should be given to the local authorities, and upon whom there had been cast increasing burdens? Very often there was a decreasing rating capacity by reason of the fact that much of the unimproved land had fallen in value. It was stated this morning that in the city of Brisbane alone since the endowment had been taken away the unimproved value of the land had fallen by about £2,000,000. That simply meant increasing the difficulties for the local authorities, and now they were going to be blocked, apparently, by the limited scope of the measure, from taking in hand what they believed in just as sincerely as hon. members on the other side believed should be done.

Mr. RYLAND: Do you want to do away with rates altogether?

Mr. BARNES: No; but it was their duty to do their very best for this large section of the public who were practically in a smaller sense carrying on the government of the country. Surely they were not going to say that the local authorities were of no interest in the State! He maintained they were doing a great work, which commended itself to their notice.

The HOME SECRETARY: The Government have recognised that.

Mr. BARNES: Yes; but they did not recognise it to the extent of allowing members to make amendments with the view of removing some of the disabilities they were labouring under.

The PREMIER: We recognise that it is much better that any representative body spending money should also raise that money themselves.

Mr. BARNES: The hon. gentleman in charge of the measure had only recently said that local authorities were able to spend their money wisely; and he thought he was doing the hon. gentleman no injustice when he pointed out that this morning the hon. gentleman had said that he believed, under ordinary circumstances, they could easily spend it better than the Government. He did not wish to misquote him.

The HOME SECRETARY: I say they have probably a better knowledge of the actual needs of the district they spend the money in.

Mr. BARNES: The inference was, that being so, that they could spend it better.

The PREMIER: They can spend it better when it is their own money.

Mr. BARNES: The Government forgot that all along the line they had been putting increased

burdens on the local authorities. He wanted to emphasise the fact that when the endowment was withdrawn the conditions were entirely different to what they were to-day. The Government of the day were forced to withdraw the endowment. In the present state of things the local authorities had some claim to ask for amending legislation in this direction. He hoped the hon. member for Brisbane South would press his amendment to a division.

Mr. GRANT (Rockhampton): The hon. member for Toowong had said there was no precedent for this course, implying that the late Government never introduced Bills in this manner. In 1902 they introduced a Railways Act Amendment Bill.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I said nothing of the sort; I said it was a very bad practice.

Mr. GRANT understood the hon. member to say so. In 1902 a Bill was introduced to amend the Railways Act in certain particulars, and the Minister for Railways, speaking on the matter, said—

Hon. R. PHILP: What are you quoting from?

Mr. GRANT: From *Hansard* for 1902, page 510—

I may point out that our Railway Acts are lengthy, and that amending them is quite a different thing from amending the Brisbane Water Supply Act, where there are only two or three matters of importance to be dealt with.

Then he went on to say—

The Government must be the judges of the Bills they introduce, and they cannot allow the business of introducing them to be taken out of their hands. I shall oppose strongly any attempt on the part of the leader of the Opposition to take the management of business out of the hands of the Government.

Then the Attorney-General, speaking on the matter on behalf of the Government of the day, said—

Why should the Government be asked to introduce something that they do not wish to introduce, and the Minister in charge of a Bill must be allowed to be the judge as to the extent to which he thinks legislation ought to be carried in the direction he desires. I hope the hon. member will withdraw his motion, because I can assure him that it is not because the Minister for Railways will not accept the suggestion of the leader of the Opposition. It is not that at all; but there must be some control over measures of this kind which are introduced into this Chamber in order to avoid unnecessary discussion.

He had not wanted to speak on the matter, but he wished to bring the hon. member for Toowong to his bearings as to there being no precedent for this step. There were other Bills besides the one he had mentioned.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The hon. member said that he wished to call attention to the speech of the late Secretary for Railways to show the hon. member for Toowong that he was wrong in stating that there was no precedent for the title of a Bill of this description, but he could only tell the hon. member that he made no such statement.

Mr. GRANT: I understood you to do so.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He did say it was a very bad practice. The hon. member for Rockhampton had succeeded in showing that the hon. member for Brisbane South was in very excellent company; apparently there was a motion moved by the present Premier of absolutely the same nature.

The PREMIER: He was in Opposition then. It makes all the difference. (Laughter.)

Mr. MACARTNEY: Sometimes it was very good to refer to what had taken place in Opposition. He would read the hon. gentleman's speech for the edification of the House, inasmuch

Mr. Macartney.]

as the junior member for Rockhampton omitted to do so, although he had it in front of him. It was at page 510 of *Hansard* for 1902—

Mr. KIDSTON: I called "Not formal" to this motion, not to interfere with its passing, but simply for the purpose of having it amended. Unlike the two previous Bills introduced by the Secretary for Railways, this motion contains the words "in certain particulars."

* * * * *
I think it is better, in passing the order of leave, that we should leave the matter at least an open question, so that the hands of the House will not be tied when we come to discuss the Bill. With that view I move that the motion be amended by the omission of the words "in certain particulars."

The PREMIER: You will spoil it by adding anything to it. (Laughter.)

Mr. MACARTNEY: The Premier was actually moving the very amendment to which he now objected, and giving identical reasons in support. Although the Premier and himself frequently disagreed, he thought the Premier was right on that occasion. It was not right for the Ministry of the day to endeavour to tie up the House by introducing a Bill under an order of leave of this sort. Although it might appear highly desirable that an important amendment should be moved, they were not at liberty to do it, and were met with the objection that the amendment was not within the order of leave. Particularly at a time like the present, when there were very many different opinions on matters connected with local government, it was desirable to leave it an open question, in order that amendments might be made; and certainly for that reason, if the hon. member for Brisbane South would not call for a division on his amendment, he (Mr. Macartney) would.

The PREMIER: The hon. member had just read rather a neat little speech of his (Mr. Kidston's). He supported the same motion as had just now been moved by the hon. member for Brisbane South, and had explained the whole situation by saying that he was then sitting on the Opposition side of the House. When speaking before, he explained that the Opposition were trying to obstruct the Government from getting on with business. He was not particularly condemning them. It might not be patriotic, but that was the way the Opposition had to carry on. In spite of the good arguments he gave on that occasion—(laughter)—he found by simply turning over the page that the hon. member for Toowong voted against him on that occasion—(loud laughter)—and now he got up and tried to "sool" on the hon. member for Brisbane South to get the words struck out. Just as when a private member introduced a Bill he settled beforehand what he wanted to do, so did the Government before introducing a Bill settle what they wanted to do. It was undesirable to waste time by further discussion on the amendment, and the hon. member for Brisbane South ought to take a vote on the proposal to strike out the words.

Mr. MAUGHAN: His reason for asking a question a few moments ago was that in March last, at the Rockhampton Labour Convention, a unanimous resolution was passed to the effect that the time had come when the Local Government Act now in operation should be radically amended, and amongst other reforms proposed was that of adult suffrage. He would like to ask the hon. member for Brisbane South, who was moving the omission of the words "in certain particulars," if he was prepared, along with the Opposition party, to support a proposition emanating from the Labour party in the direction of adult suffrage? If the hon. member agreed with that proposition, he might get a certain amount of support from that party; but if the Opposition party was not prepared to support that proposal,

[Mr. Macartney.

so far as he was concerned, he was not prepared to support the proposal of the hon. member. They had heard a good deal about the Local Authorities' Association, but he thought when he said it was a body entirely out of touch with the great mass of the people of the country he was speaking the truth.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: No, no!

LABOUR MEMBERS: Yes, yes!

Mr. MAUGHAN: He could only speak with regard to West Moreton, leaving other people to speak of their own locality; but, as far as they were concerned up there, the local authorities were out of touch with the great mass of the people. He trusted, having regard to the fact that no less than seven or eight different Local Government Bills had been brought down to the House at various times, that the time was not far off when they would have local government measures introduced providing for the important reform of adult suffrage. It was about time it was brought in, and, if the Minister was not in a position to promise it this afternoon, he trusted that he would be able to say something with regard to the very near future.

LABOUR MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOUCHARD was rather surprised at the action of the Premier in refusing to trust the members of the Committee by disclosing the objects of the Bill. The hon. gentleman attempted to follow a similar course some years ago when a Bill was introduced by the previous Government; and surely he should not throw all the arguments he had used on that occasion to the winds and vote against his (Mr. Bouchard's) amendment simply because he sat on the Treasury bench! With regard to what the junior member for Ipswich said, he could tell that hon. gentleman that in moving this amendment he had no idea of bartering with any member of the Committee. His object was to reserve to members of the Committee the right to move any amendment in the Bill which they might think it advisable to do.

Mr. RYLAND: It will take two months to get through a Bill of that sort.

Hon. R. PHILP: We passed the Local Authorities Act in three or four weeks.

Mr. GRANT: But it was referred to a Select Committee.

Mr. BOUCHARD: The Home Secretary said the Bill would include a number of amendments which had been adopted on the recommendation of the Local Authorities' Association, but the Committee did not know how many of the recommendations of the Local Authorities' Association had been adopted by the Government. It was clear from the speech of the hon. member for Bulimba that a good many of them had not been adopted by the Government, and it was therefore his desire to be able to include some of those which the Home Secretary had seen fit to discard. The hon. member for Ipswich said that the Local Authorities' Association practically represented nobody, but they were an important body, as they represented the whole of the local authorities in the State, and had had long and varied experience in local government matters. During the last election the Premier made great capital out of the statement that when the leader of the Opposition was at the head of the Government he took away the endowment which the local authorities had been receiving for years. But it had been stated in Parliament in the early part of this session that it was not the leader of the Opposition who had taken away the endowments to local authorities. The Philp Government only suggested that practice; but before they could carry it into effect the present Premier came into power, and gave effect to the suggestion. So it was the present Premier who

took away from the local authorities the endowment which they had formerly enjoyed. Everybody in the Committee knew full well the difficulties which the local authorities had to encounter through this endowment having been taken away from them. There was an implied contract on the part of Parliament that they would endow the local authorities, and on the strength of that they incurred certain liabilities, so that when the endowment was taken away they found themselves stranded. However, they showed their wisdom in not unduly increasing the rates on properties in the times of stress, when the Government were piling on tax after tax, and taking from the taxpayers all they could get.

Mr. GRANT: And you supported them at that time.

Mr. BOUCHARD: Another thing they would like to know was that if the Government were not going to restore the endowment, would they empower the local authorities to tax the improved Crown lands? They did that in other parts of Australia; it was passed in New South Wales two years ago, and something of that sort should be done here.

Mr. GRANT: That would be a good thing for the towns, but a bad thing for the country districts.

Mr. BOUCHARD trusted hon. members would not throw away their rights. There were grievances which the local authorities suffered from, and it was only right, when an amending Bill was being introduced, that members of Parliament should take the opportunity of introducing amendments to remedy these grievances.

Mr. ARMSTRONG (*Lockyer*) did not wish the statement to go unchallenged that was made by the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Maughan, that the local authorities for West Moreton were all more or less irresponsible bodies, and did not represent the wishes of the ratepayers who sent them there. It might be unknown to the hon. member, but it was a fact all the same, that the ratepayers in that district were represented by men who not only gave their time to attending meetings of the shire councils once a month, but they, day after day, attended to the requirements of the district, and they did a good deal of work gratuitously in the interests of the ratepayers. With regard to the question before the Committee, were those members, particularly those who represented the country interests, to be under the dictatorship of the Premier?

The PREMIER: What do you represent?

Mr. ARMSTRONG: They represented the country districts more closely than the Premier and his quartette of lawyers did, and yet the Premier and his quartette brought down legislation, and said, "That is sufficient, and only that." Were the members of the Opposition to be of no use in the counsels of the country in regard to its legislation?

The PREMIER: Yes, certainly.

Mr. ARMSTRONG claimed to have had a fair amount of experience in regard to these matters, and he claimed to voice the opinions of the ratepayers in his electorate when such matters were brought before the Committee, and he did not see why they should be debarred from making amendments if they chose to do so. If Parliament was to be an institution that was to amend the defects which existed in their laws, then they should be given an opportunity of introducing amendments when amending Bills were brought before them.

Mr. HARDACRE (*Leichhardt*): This was a very important stage of this Bill, and they

would only realise it at a later stage of the proceedings when, if they tried to move [4.30 p.m.] an amendment, they would find that they would be blocked, because it was not in the order of leave, and they could only introduce amendments which were absolutely and specifically within the scope of the Bill as introduced. There were a large number of burning questions concerning local authorities, such as the endowment, altering the franchise, and differential rating in country districts, and, unless they knew they could introduce amendments in the Bill, they were bound to vote against the granting of the order of leave. Unless the Home Secretary would indicate to him that the alteration of the franchise would be included in the Bill, he would feel bound to vote against the proposal. If the things which he had mentioned were included in the Bill they might let it go with the inclusion of the words "in certain particulars."

Mr. BOWMAN: It will take a long time to get a Bill through then.

Mr. HARDACRE admitted that it would take a long time, as members would want to go through the whole Local Authorities Act, and the Government were quite right in choosing their own particulars.

The PREMIER: Each member would want to get in his own particular alteration.

Mr. HARDACRE: That was so. He thought the Home Secretary might in some way indicate the particulars contained in the Bill.

Mr. BOWMAN (*Fortitude Valley*) opposed the amendment of the hon. member for South Brisbane. The Local Authorities Act was one of the most comprehensive Acts on the statute-book, and it was desirable to amend it in many respects; but if they went in for a general discussion it would take a long time. He, for one, was not anxious to see the whole session taken up in discussing amendments of the Local Authorities Act. They had had a promise from the Premier that other measures would be introduced this session if time permitted—measures which to him (Mr. Bowman) were of far more importance than amendments to the Local Authorities Act. He referred to the Trade Disputes Bill—(hear, hear!)—and he hoped they would get it introduced this session. He could say that his party would not hamper the Government in connection with the amended legislation sought by certain members of the Opposition merely to enable them to block the Government in trying to get through legislation.

HON. R. PHILIP asked the leader of the Labour party to speak for his own followers and not for the members of the Opposition.

Mr. BOWMAN: I was criticising your party. Surely I can do that!

HON. R. PHILIP: The Opposition had offered no objection to the Bill until the hon. member for Gympie, Mr. Ryland, asked a question about the introduction of an amendment. The attitude taken up by the Premier himself in 1902 was on all-fours with the attitude of the Opposition on this Bill. On that occasion the hon. member for Rockhampton would not allow the Bill to go through, and called "Not formal" to it, but on that occasion the Minister in charge of the Bill said he would give any information to any member who wanted to know anything about the Bill. But the Home Secretary had not yet said that.

The PREMIER: Perhaps the hon. member for Rockhampton on that occasion did not want the information.

HON. R. PHILIP: They knew that the Premier himself was a past master of insincerity.

Hon. R. Philp.]

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Withdraw, withdraw!

Mr. LESINA: Everybody knows that the Premier is sincere.

HON. R. PHILP: In 1902, on the occasion when the Premier took up the same attitude as was being taken by the Opposition now, a division was taken on the question. The leader of the Labour party was not in the House then, or, at all events, he did not vote in that division. Those who voted with the hon. member for Rockhampton, Mr. Kidston, on that occasion were Mr. Armstrong—

Mr. ARMSTRONG: That shows that I am consistent.

The PREMIER: But you wanted to get at the Secretary for Railways at that time. (Laughter.)

HON. R. PHILP: The others who voted with Mr. Kidston on that occasion were Messrs. Airey, Barber, Blair, Burrows, Cowap, Cooper, Dibley, Dunsford, Fogarty, Fox, Grant, W. Hamilton, Hodge, Jackson, Kenna, Kent, Martin, McDonnell, Mulcahy, Ryland, Summerville, Turner, and Woods.

The PREMIER: Just read the list of the hon. members who wanted to keep the objectionable words in the Bill.

HON. R. PHILP: The hon. gentleman could do that himself. He had read all that he wanted to read about the matter. As a matter of fact, there was no opposition to this Bill at all. The first member who raised any objection to it was Mr. Ryland, the hon. member for Gympie.

Mr. RYLAND: I only asked a question.

HON. R. PHILP: The hon. gentleman asked if he could introduce this question. Then he (Mr. Philp) asked if the endowment could not be brought in, and he was told nothing.

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Gympie showed you your opportunity.

HON. R. PHILP: He did not want to block business. A remark had been made by the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Maughan, about the local authorities. He (Mr. Philp) believed the members of the local authorities were much more in touch with their constituents than the hon. member thought. They did a lot of good work for nothing. He had no hesitation in saying that the local authorities had a far greater knowledge of the wants of the country than members of the House. (Hear, hear!) In 1902 the Local Authorities Act was passed in three or four weeks.

Mr. RYLAND: It took about two months.

The HOME SECRETARY: It was referred to a Select Committee.

HON. R. PHILP: He would ask the Home Secretary if he would tell the House now what the Bill contained. It would save a lot of time if he did so. He had no wish to oppose this Bill. He wished to get on with the business. It was the Minister's own supporters who were opposing it, and it was started by Mr. Ryland.

The PREMIER: He stirred up the Opposition.

HON. R. PHILP: The Premier was only sitting there by the will of the Labour party, and the leader of the Labour party wanted to get on with the work. The Labour party would vote for the Government in order to get the Trade Disputes Bill.

Mr. BOWMAN: A very good measure.

HON. R. PHILP: That apparently was the goal of the Labour party. The Local Authorities Act might go hang so far as they were concerned so long as they got their little Bill through. They had a Wages Boards Bill on the

paper, and that was supposed to do away with all necessity for strikes, so what necessity was there for a Trade Disputes Bill?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not in order in discussing the Trade Disputes Bill now. He may refer to it incidentally, but he is not in order in contrasting it with the Wages Boards Bill. That is not the question before the Committee.

HON. R. PHILP: The hon. member for Fortitude Valley mentioned the Trade Disputes Bill, and surely he should be allowed to refer to the Wages Boards Bill! He hoped the Home Secretary would yet tell the Committee what the contents of the Bill were and save further discussion.

The HOME SECRETARY did not think this was the proper time for making a second-reading speech. He regretted that the practice was growing of attempting to get full information regarding the contents of Bills on a motion of this kind. He told the deputation from the Local Authorities' Association this morning, as he told the Local Authorities' Conference a month ago, that he did not think there was any possibility of the Government bringing in endowment. That was the great point they were harping on.

Mr. BOUCHARD: You have advocated endowment.

The HOME SECRETARY: He had advocated endowment, but the Government were not in a position to give endowment, and did not intend to do it. He went through the other amendments that had been suggested with the deputation, and told them the majority of them were included in the present Bill. The balance of them, so far as he could see, would come within the scope of the Bill. The only question the Opposition seemed to be fighting over was endowment. They wanted it at any price, and were prepared to bring it up on every occasion; but he did not think members on the Government side would allow them to get a victory in that way—by omitting those words. The hon. member for South Brisbane alleged that the Opposition did not reduce the endowment. The records showed that in 1900-1 Parliament voted £106,000; in 1901-2 they only voted £60,000; in 1902-3, only £30,000; and in 1903-4 the vote was omitted altogether. The Estimates of the late Treasurer were taken up by the present Government and carried. Those facts showed distinctly that it was not this Government that knocked off the endowment.

Mr. BOUCHARD: How much did this Government give the first year? Nothing!

Mr. HAMILTON (*Gregory*): The leader of the Opposition read out a list of those who voted under similar circumstances in the year 1902. He was of the same opinion to-day. When leave was asked to introduce a Bill, hon. members should be taken into the confidence of the Government, and if anyone wished to introduce an amendment that did not come within the order of leave, he might endeavour to have the order of leave extended. On the present occasion, however, he agreed with the leader of the Labour party. The question of local government was a very large one, and it might take up nearly the whole of a session; but there were a lot of measures which were mentioned in the Governor's Speech that were badly needed, and which would occupy all the time at their disposal this session. He deplored the growing practice of introducing Bills in Committee to amend Acts "in certain particulars." That tied hon. members down. A worse practice still was that of asking hon. members to agree to the introduction of a Bill of which they knew nothing. The Government might indicate the direction in which it was

[*Hon. R. Philp.*]

proposed to amend the Act. At the same time, he did not want to see the whole of the session occupied in a discussion of the Local Authorities Act, and he intended to vote for the introduction of the Bill as it was, although he did not think it was going to be perfect.

Mr. PAULL (*Charters Towers*) would very much like to hear a short explanation of the Bill. At the conference of local authorities two resolutions proposed by himself were carried unanimously, and he would like to know whether they were embodied in the Bill or whether it would be necessary to endeavour to extend the scope of the Bill. On the 3rd October, 1906, at an even earlier stage of the Closer Settlement Bill, Mr. J. Leahy asked, "Can't you give us some idea of what the principles of the Bill are?" Then the Secretary for Lands gave a *résumé* of the contents of the Bill.

The PREMIER: A very bad practice.

Mr. PAULL: One or two other members said a few words, and, to show how satisfied the hon. members were, Mr. J. Leahy said—

The hon. gentleman in charge of this measure gave us a very clear explanation of the measure, which we thoroughly understand, and which is as much as we can expect at this stage.

The PREMIER: Just a mere waste of time.

Mr. PAULL: Again, on the 16th October, the leader of the Opposition asked at this very stage of the same Bill for further particulars, and the Secretary for Lands very nicely told him that he had given full particulars on the initiatory stage of the Bill. If the Home Secretary had not been quite so obstinate, there would not have been so much delay on the present occasion.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS had not *Hansard* by him to refer to the discussion to which the hon. member had just alluded, but he should be surprised if on that occasion he did not make some protest against the practice which the Opposition was endeavouring to initiate of raising a discussion at this period in the life of a Bill. Unquestionably the stage at which an explanation of the contents of a Bill should be given was on the second reading. It was obvious that, if they permitted the habit to grow of allowing really a second-reading debate to take place on the initiatory stages of a measure, they were clogging the wheels of the parliamentary vehicle.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: We do not ask for a debate. We only want some indication of the contents of the Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: But they knew what followed. The Premier had just pointed out to him what he said on the 3rd October, 1906, on the occasion alluded to by the hon. member for Charters Towers. The leader of the Opposition interjected—

At this stage your colleague debated the Bill for six weeks.

Then he said—

It has never yet been asserted that on the two ordinary stages at which a debate takes place there have been inadequate opportunities for the discussion of a measure.

He went on to say—

I am very sorry that hon. members, when they crossed from the Government side of the House to the Opposition benches, did not carry with them the same principles of procedure.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: That cap fits you admirably for 1902.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No; he was going to vote on exactly the same principles as those which governed his vote in 1902. He should be one of the very few consistent individuals in the Committee. The whole

of the Opposition would be inconsistent, and he was afraid some of his colleagues would be the same; but he would be probably one of the half-dozen consistent members. He rather thought the hon. member for Lockyer would be with him.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: No; I was with your leader in 1902.

The PREMIER: Now he dissents.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He was afraid there was some doubt passed upon the absolute purity of the hon. member's motives in regard to the vote he gave in 1902. Perhaps there was no justification for that doubt.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: If you read my speech you will see that I gave my reasons.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: An hon. member's speech was not necessarily his reasons. There was an expressed apprehension that Parliament might lose its control of legislation, and that legislation might be in the hands of the Ministry; but they should realise that in all Parliaments strict discipline, stern procedure, and the curtailment of debate were absolutely necessary if the parliamentary machine was to do its work. When a Government came forward with legislative proposals they had to keep the discussion upon those proposals as closely as they could to their original intention.

Mr. LESINA: The Government have not to do anything of the sort. Our Standing Orders provide that the Chairman or the Speaker is the person to direct procedure.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS did not see the relevancy of the interjection. He appealed to the practice which had been followed in all British Parliaments of keeping as strictly as possible to the Standing Orders in order to curtail debate. If it was said that this would give too much power to a Ministry and enable it to encroach on the privileges of Parliament—

Mr. LESINA: That power is inherent in the House. The House makes the Standing Orders—not the Ministry.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS was quite delighted that, for perhaps the first time in his parliamentary experience, he found himself in the position of agreeing with a proposition of the hon. member for Clermont. (Laughter.) He subscribed to that dogma most heartily. It was the House which was master; and, if the House came to the conclusion that a Ministry were unfairly restricting the rights of the House to discuss amendments to any of the statutes, all they had to do was to move a vote of want of confidence, and say that the Government were not conducting the business properly, and get a fresh Government. That was the answer to the main point in the contention of the Opposition—that the Government were restricting the Committee. The answer of the Government was that they had a programme to carry out during the session, and they had to keep debate within reasonable limits if they were to succeed in carrying it out. If, in their endeavours to do that, they showed a lack of consideration, all the House had to do was to get rid of them. He commended the attitude taken up by the leader of the Labour party, who recognised the difficulties the Government were in—that they had a number of propositions to put before the House, and that, if they were going at that period of the session to enter upon an interminable discussion on such a measure as the Local Authorities Act, it meant saying "good-bye" to the chance of bringing in fresh legislation.

Mr. BARNES asked if it was a fair thing for the Home Secretary to indicate to a deputation

Mr. Barnes.]

the nature of some of the amendments he proposed to make in the Act and then refuse to give any information to members of the Committee? Where they to go to a paper such as the *Observer* to get that information? According to the *Observer*, the matter of making the voters' qualifications the same in towns as in cities would be considered. That was one point mentioned by the hon. gentleman. Another matter which he promised to deal with was that of pests.

The PREMIER: Is that what you are apprehensive about? (Laughter.)

Mr. BARNES: Not at all. If he were at all apprehensive on that score, he should be afraid that the front Treasury bench would be affected.

The HOME SECRETARY: Did not I tell you that Mr. Pound had been put on the job about pests? You referred particularly to ticks?

Mr. BARNES: Yes. Mr. Pound was to be given a free hand to deal effectively with pests.

[5 p.m.] As the hon. gentleman seemed to doubt his statement that he said local authorities were better able to spend money than the Government, he would read exactly what the hon. gentleman said, according to the *Observer*—

Mr. Hawthorn, in reply, said he recognised that the association was one that was doing very good work—

The HOME SECRETARY: Had not the same intimate knowledge, I said.

Mr. BARNES: He would read on, as he would not in any way misquote the hon. gentleman—

and he considered that local authorities were in a better position to spend the money than were the Government, who had not the same intimate local knowledge.

The Premier had laid emphasis on the fact that what they were after this afternoon was endowment, but the Local Authorities' Association had not laid before the Home Secretary any particular request as to the form the assistance should take. It did seem an extraordinary thing that the Home Secretary refused to give them a summary of what the Bill was likely to contain. He might not know it all himself—he might be giving consideration to some things—but it seemed extraordinary that they could go to the newspaper to get the information, and the hon. gentleman declined to give them any information. He asked if that was the correct position to take up? He hoped the hon. gentleman would, even at this stage, give them the information they desired.

Mr. BLOCKSIDGE (*Woolloongabba*): Mr. Chairman—

Mr. MANN interjected.

Mr. BLOCKSIDGE: When he came to the House he expected to meet gentlemen.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BLOCKSIDGE: He might say that if the hon. gentleman attempted to interrupt him as he did some hon. members he would get paid back in his own coin. Being a local authority's representative he desired to know whether it was intended under these proposals to amend the present Act by making provision for local authorities to put a reserve on lands to be sold for arrears of rates. As the law now stood, when the local authorities took action to sell land for rates they had no power to fix any reserve to recoup themselves for the amount of rates and the expenses in connection with the sale. He did not know whether the hon. gentleman had included a provision for that purpose, but it was a matter that ought to be taken into consideration, so that local authorities might be able to place a reserve upon the lands they were

selling to the extent of the rates and expenses that were due. Another matter he would like some information about was in connection with loans. At present any ratepayer who was a property-owner, whether he had paid his rates or not, was allowed to vote on a loan proposal, but any ratepayer who did not happen to be a property-owner was debarred. He thought that was wrong.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Why should they not all vote?

Mr. BLOCKSIDGE: His own opinion was that all ratepayers should vote on a loan matter. (Hear, hear!) He strongly held the opinion that provision should be made in any amendment of the Act to allow local authorities to put a reserve on the lands sold for rates to the extent of the amount due and the expenses incurred. He knew a number of cases where lands had been sold not only below their value, but very much below the amount of the rates owing on them. He knew a case where there was £26 owing for rates in South Brisbane, and the land was sold for £1 10s., and the man who owned the allotment alongside valued his land at £56. That destroyed values, and had a very detrimental effect on the localities where land was sold at such a low price. He hoped they would find that the Government had seen their way to incorporate such an amendment in the Bill when it came before them.

Mr. KEOGH (*Rosewood*): He rose for the purpose of objecting to the expressions used by the hon. member for Ipswich with regard to gentlemen composing the local authorities, who were as fine a class of men as could be got in Queensland. He would like to see the Government, if they could not give £2, at least give £1 endowment, because it was very necessary that good roads should be provided in farming electorates, so that people should have access to market. In his electorate good roads were a necessity, and, by giving assistance to divisional boards and shire councils, it would materially advance those places. He would like to ask the Home Secretary whether any provision was going to be made in the Bill for giving free passes to shire councillors, as in some of these places members had to travel a long distance, and they were entitled to free passes. That provision ought certainly to be included in the Bill, and he trusted that the Minister would have it put in. If the matter came to a division he should certainly vote for the amendment.

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*): The question of local government was a very much more important one than many members appeared to recognise. He believed local government was of much more importance than any plank of the Labour platform—(Hear, hear! and laughter)—although latterly it had been placed in the Labour platform. He did not think that any of the planks of their platform, with the exception of the one dealing with the land question, brought before this Chamber were in any way equal in importance to that of local government.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LESINA: His reading of some of the advanced works dealing with socialism led him to believe that development of civilisation in the future would largely be on the lines of local government. He thought our State Governments would gradually dwindle down, and more power would be placed in the hands of the local authorities to raise loan taxation and expend it in their own way, and that members of those bodies would be elected on adult suffrage. Therefore he was inclined to consider any proposition to deal with the present Local Government Acts as transcending in importance any other

[*Mr. Barnes*

legislation. In this he was bound to differ from some members sitting on this side of the Chamber. He believed before many years were passed socialism was going to secure some of its wide-reaching triumphs through the extension of the functions of local government by enlarging their fowls dealing with industry and trade. Therefore, he felt that the introduction of a measure of this kind should be wider in its scope than it was. He did not know what the scope of the measure was. He was practically in the position of being asked to buy a pig in a poke, and if he bought it without seeing it it might turn out to be a dog, not a pig at all—perhaps an ungrateful dog. (Laughter.)

The PREMIER: What you are asking is to allow the poke to come off the pig, so that you can see what it is, and then you can say whether you will buy it or not.

Mr. LESINA: The Premier varied his illustration. What he wanted to do was to take the poke off the pig in order that he might examine it. They knew that according to the Standing Orders the order of leave fixed the scope of the measure irrevocably. They could not go beyond the scope of the resolution as they carried it, and it was because of that that the Premier in past days was so anxious to see that the hands of Parliament should not be tied. He had always been led to believe that Parliament was supreme—that the Cabinet was merely an accident. It had charge of Cabinet measures, but Parliament was supreme, and once a measure was laid on the table and distributed to members it became the property of members to do what they liked. Sydney Löw pointed out—and his teachings had been popularised almost every day by the most powerful leading journal in Australia—the *Melbourne Age*—which in almost every issue dealt with this question—that the Cabinet was a parasitic growth on the Constitution, a legal fiction that had become superimposed on the Constitution. Under the present system the Home Secretary came down with a Bill to amend the Local Government Act, and they naturally sought information of the way he would propose to amend the Act, because only recently there sat in Brisbane a most representative convention of delegates and authorities that Queensland had ever had since local government had been established. (Hear, hear!) It was a splendid body of representatives of the citizens—men who did fine work in opening up the country and administering the Act under which they had been brought into existence. Some of these men had done this work in some cases for twenty or thirty years without receiving a penny in the way of payment for their services. One man in his district, who was a strong political opponent of his, had worked for thirty years without receiving a penny for his services, and when he and scores of other representatives drew up resolutions and asked for an amendment of the Local Authorities Act they should receive fair treatment at the hands of the Government of the day. There were certain things he wanted to see in the Bill. He wanted to see a provision made for endowment and a provision for rating Crown land. (Hear, hear!) He was prepared to support sundry other propositions which were carried by the Local Authorities' Convention. At the present time he did not know whether any provision was made for these important requirements in the measure; and if the resolution passed in its present form they could not make any proposition to include provisions in this Bill, as they were tied by the resolution to certain points. Those points were already prepared. They had been adopted by the Cabinet. They were included in the measure—it was now in print; but they knew nothing about it. The Minister for

Lands made a speech in 1906 when he introduced a small Bill, and the Hon. John Leahy asked him whether he would give some information bearing on the scope of the measure. The Minister for Lands jumped up and said, "I shall make an effort to satisfy the insatiable desire of the hon. member for Bulloo for information," and the hon. member then proceeded to briefly sketch some of the leading principles of the Bill which he had introduced. The hon. gentleman used some qualifying adjective that afternoon about the habit which was growing up of giving preliminary information on Bills brought down, but he (Mr. Lesina) was inclined to disagree with the Minister for Lands when he said it was a bad practice, and also with the Premier for echoing that it was a bad practice. It was not a bad practice at all. It appeared that the Premier gave information to the members of the local authorities which he denied to members of the House. He understood the Standing Orders were framed for governing debate, and keeping members to the point, and facilitating debate. These Standing Orders were framed by the House, and provided for the proper conduct of debate when a measure came before them. The Minister for Lands, in making reference to that a moment ago, suggested that the Government of the day were empowered by the House to do that kind of thing. The Government were not empowered by the House to limit debate in any way. The debate would not have taken place that afternoon had the Home Secretary briefly informed them of the points within the scope of the Bill which he now held in his hands. He regretted that the Minister could not see his way clear to widen the scope of the measure. Under the circumstances, he did not feel that he could vote for the measure unless he knew the principles it contained. Therefore he should vote against the introduction of the Bill in its present form.

Mr. CREAGH (*Croydon*) could not let the occasion pass without saying a word or two on the subject, because at the recent Local Authorities' Conference he attended as the delegate from the Croydon Town Council and Croydon Shire Council, and he also had the honour of being an alderman of the Croydon Town Council and chairman of that body, and thought it his duty to speak. When the hon. gentleman behind him, Mr. Ryland, had a little more experience on local authority matters he would know as much as he did.

Mr. RYLAND: You are not the only man in Queensland who has been a mayor. (Laughter.)

Mr. CREAGH: And the junior member for Gympie was not the only man who had been a member of Parliament. The attitude of the junior member for Gympie was diametrically opposed to the attitude which he took up when the Local Authorities Act of 1902 was introduced. He had just been reading through the speeches which were delivered on that occasion. The Premier moved that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee to go into the facts of the case, and the junior member for Gympie was appointed a member of that committee. The Select Committee went into the clauses carefully, and Mr. Ryland seemed to be the reactionary member of that committee. Even when the Home Secretary introduced the title of the Bill, the hon. member, Mr. Ryland, took the opportunity of pointing out that it was absolutely necessary that there should be a full discussion on all these matters. That was rather a different position to which the hon. gentleman took up at the present time. He (Mr. Creagh) wanted the position to be clearly understood. He was not there to take up an attitude of

Mr. Creagh.]

opposition against the Government because they introduced this Bill. He was there to support the Government to carry out the provisions of that Bill, if good. When the Local Authorities' Conference met a few weeks ago, there were about 215 members present. The Home Secretary, on that occasion, led them to understand very clearly in effect, if he did not say so in so many words, that the Government did not intend to give the local authorities the endowment on this occasion; but the hon. gentleman said on that occasion that he trusted that the Government would see their way clear to offer some amendments that would be suitable to the whole State and to the local authorities in particular. He (Mr. Creagh) took the opportunity of speaking at that conference, which was attended by 215 delegates representing the people of Queensland.

Mr. MAUGHAN: A section of them.

Mr. CREAGH: A very big section of them. It was the hon. junior member for Ipswich who also interjected a few moments ago that every person at that Local Authorities' Conference was a reactionary. That might be so, but he could tell the hon. gentleman that at that conference there were representatives belonging to the two parties in the House, or rather the three parties, or if they liked they could say the four parties, as all parties in the House were represented at that conference. On looking round the Chamber that afternoon, he could put his hand on hon. members of the Opposition, hon. members of the Labour party, and hon. members of the Government party who were present at that Local Authorities' Conference. After what those gentlemen had said at the conference they should be prepared to stand up in the Chamber that day and point out what amendments they thought should be included in the Act. Why did not these members get up now and raise their voices as to certain things that they required in the Act? If they were not at the conference as toys or puppets for the time being, let them now assert the position they then took up. If these members were true in their intentions to bring in amendments when they spoke at the conference, let them show it that day just as they showed it then. Whether this Government or any other Government brought in the measure, they should look at it from a sensible point of view. One of the Opposition members twitted the Government with having a quartette of lawyers in the Cabinet. He did not speak of them in that way. There were men in the Government who were very capable men, and there were men on the Opposition side of the House who were also capable men. But he did not think that the Government, consisting of six or seven members, should take it on themselves to say that they knew the wants of the whole of the local authorities of Queensland. He did not think the Government would say that.

Mr. MAXWELL: But they say what they are going to give them.

Mr. CREAGH: And the Committee wanted to know what they were going to get in the Bill from the Government before they voted on this question. He thought the members of any Government in Queensland, or any democratic Government, should allow the members of the House, who were the representatives of the people, to say whether they agreed to certain clauses or certain amendments proposed to be put into the Act or not before they granted the order of leave. He did not think it was a fair thing for the Government to say, "Here is the Bill, and we will bind you to two or three clauses before you see the provisions." The Bill should be introduced in the ordinary way, and the

members should have the opportunity of introducing amendments which they thought should be put into the Act. He had a number of amendments himself which he would like to introduce. He felt one or two of them would be defeated, but he had one or two which he hoped would be carried when the members had come to consider them properly. The junior member for Gympie asked something about the powers of rating under this Bill. He (Mr. Creagh) had the honour of introducing a deputation to the Premier when the latter gentleman paid a visit to Croydon some time ago, and the matter of rating was one of the questions they had touched upon. The Premier promised that a

[5.30 p.m.] Bill would be introduced, and some provision should be made for that sort of thing. He was not aware whether any provision was made for it in this Bill or not. He would read what took place at that deputation at Croydon—

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: What are you quoting from?

Mr. CREAGH: From the *Croydon Mining Record*. He might point out that it was just at this time that the *Croydon Mining News* office and plant was burnt down, but this was the correct report of what took place. The *Croydon Mining Record* said—

MUNICIPAL MATTERS.

The mayor brought before the Premier the difficulties under which municipalities on goldfields, where the land was all leasehold, suffered in regard to valuation and rating, and asked that the Government should amend the present Act so as to meet the difficulties.

Mr. Waram also spoke, stating that the shires suffered also considerable loss of revenue from the same cause.

Mr. Kidston said, in reply, he was distinctly opposed to the endowment system, which would not be again reverted to so long as he had any say in the matter. He said the local authorities should bear in mind that the whole of the money came out of the pockets of the taxpayers, whether the money was paid in rates or by way of endowment, and he was of opinion that the local bodies should raise their own rates without any assistance from the Government. His opinion was that those who had the spending of money in municipalities and shires should also have any odium which might attach to the raising of that money.

The mayor reminded the Premier that no objection was made to this, and no request had been made by him for a continuance of the endowment system. All he wanted to do was to suggest an alteration in the law so as to give local bodies on goldfields power to levy rates which would place them on an equality with bodies in places where the land was freehold.

After further discussion, the Premier said if the matter were laid before him by the mining members of the House it would be carefully considered. He certainly sympathised with the reasons which prompted the mayor in bringing the matter forward.

Alderman G. Pass referred to the difficulties which had been experienced in repaying loan money redemption and interest, owing to the depreciation in values and the inability of the council to levy rates.

Mr. Kidston said they could not expect to be relieved of their liability in regard to overdue loans. He could not take the amount off the shoulders of the Croydon ratepayers and put it on to the people of some other place. The Government had to pay the interest on the State debt to the bondholders, who held out their hand therefor with "Presbyterian regularity." However, they would try and remedy the defects in the Act complained of.

They would see that the Premier was very straight in his answer about the endowment, and he gave him all the credit for it if he thought so. He was sure that those words used by the Premier on that occasion would not be forgotten by him. He was very glad that an hon. gentleman of the standing of Mr. Bouchard, who understood the legal phraseology, had taken the opportunity to move an amendment to delete the words "in certain particulars" in this proposal. He contended that it was not a right

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thing, nor a democratic thing, that they should have to agree to a measure without knowing what was in it. As the hon. member for Clermont had stated, they were sent there as the representatives of their electors to discuss certain matters introduced by the Government. Whatever Government was in power, it was just the same. He would endeavour to do all he could to introduce a clause providing for the payment of endowment to local authorities. If he could not get that in, he would try to get in some clause whereby the lands belonging to the Crown might be taxed or rated. The local authorities had hundreds of miles of roads to attend to, and if they were allowed to tax the improved Crown lands it would help them to pay for this work. Of course, as an hon. member interjected, the Crown could have representatives on these local bodies in accordance with the amount they paid. It was only the man who paid his rates who was entitled to vote. He would never agree to allowing any man, whether in Croydon or anywhere else, to have a vote unless he had his rates paid. The junior member for Ipswich said he was not in favour of a proposal to rate Crown lands, but that he would rather see a land tax imposed. Well, the Premier, in speaking at Toowoomba, pointed out that that was a land tax. He would like to see the amendment carried and he would support it for the particular reason that he would like to get some amendments introduced when the Bill was before the House. Probably the amendments of the Act which were proposed by the Home Secretary would meet with the approval of the members of the House, but, if they accepted the Bill in its present form without knowing what the amendments were, their hands would be tied and they would not be able to do anything later. Therefore he would vote against the proposal to grant leave to introduce the Bill under the present conditions.

Mr. MAUGHAN: The hon. gentleman who had just resumed his seat seemed to think that the Local Authorities' Association was a very democratic association.

Mr. CREAGH: So it is.

Mr. MAUGHAN: There was no more reactionary conglomeration of units in Queensland than the Local Authorities' Association. (Laughter.)

Mr. CREAGH: Why, you have some of them here.

Mr. MAUGHAN: It was quite true that the member for Carpentaria, Mr. Nevitt, was present at that conference.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: So was Mr. May.

Mr. MAUGHAN: He understood Mr. May was also present. But the larger proportion of the members of that conference were men who were remarkable for their reactionary politics. They were men who were past masters in the art of leaning on the Government by way of endowment, grants, and loans. In fact, from beginning to end the whole proceedings of that conference might be boiled down: How best can we lean on the Government, how best can we mulct the public Treasury, and how can we escape our own particular responsibilities?

Mr. BARNES: That is not correct.

Mr. MAUGHAN: He was glad that the Home Secretary had stiffened his back that morning when the local authorities' representatives, headed by the hon. member for Bulimba, waited upon him, and he was glad that the Minister was determined upon ignoring their plea for endowments. He was very glad of that. If the local authorities of Queensland were hard up, if they were on the verge of bankruptcy and were experiencing the results of bad seasons

which would have affected their revenues, it would have been a different matter, and he could have understood their request for endowment. But what were the facts? The facts were that the local authorities of Queensland did not take advantage of the privileges already given to them by law to collect their revenues.

Mr. BARNES: They do.

Mr. MAUGHAN: He was quite sure the hon. member for Bulimba would not wilfully speak an untruth. But if the hon. member investigated the statistics of Queensland having reference to local government he would find that so far as these local bodies were concerned they were very lax in collecting their revenues. The local authorities of Queensland had already on their hands all the machinery for raising a tremendous revenue without any new Act whatever. He expected members of the Opposition would object to that statement. He would give them the figures which had been supplied by the Government Statistician, showing the rates which had been uncollected by the local authorities of Queensland for the five years ended 31st December last—

QUEENSLAND LOCAL AUTHORITIES—ARREARS OF RATES.

	£	£
31st December, 1902—		
Municipal boroughs ...	49,116	
Municipal shires ...	9,315	
Municipal divisions... ..	67,063	
		125,494
31st December, 1903—		
Cities	17,772	
Towns	38,330	
Shires	78,303	
		134,405
31st December, 1904—		
Cities	21,105	
Towns	36,030	
Shires	79,346	
		136,531
31st December, 1905—		
Cities	24,065	
Towns	30,608	
Shires	79,000	
		133,673
31st December, 1906—		
Cities	22,464	
Towns	30,306	
Shires	88,148	
		140,916

And yet the Local Authorities' Association had the audacity to approach the Treasurer and the Home Secretary, and plead with them to revert to the old system of endowment. He spoke with experience upon this question, having had the honour to be on a local authority for some years, and he knew the majority of the members of that council were always approaching the Treasurer of the day seeking State assistance, when all the time they had sufficient power to raise all the revenue they needed. The hon. member for Croydon had practically implied that the local authorities were being conducted on democratic lines. How was it possible that that could be the case, considering the very limited franchise? The members of the Legislative Assembly were elected on rolls upon which were something like 220,000 electors. The same applied to the Commonwealth electoral rolls, but he found, according to the return he had been quoting from, that there were only 22,000 electors on the local authorities' rolls for cities, 13,000 on the rolls for towns, and 64,000 on the rolls for shire councils, making a total of 99,000, and yet the hon. member for Croydon called that a democratic franchise; and when he was asked if he would support adult suffrage, he resorted to a mere subterfuge. He (Mr. Maughan) could not support the proposition moved by the hon. member for South Brisbane. He regretted they were not to have a more liberal local government measure presented to them. Surely if an institution like the Local Authorities' Association had the right to

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go to the Home Secretary, and practically dictate to him as to what provisions the measure should contain, then surely members of the Committee should have an equal right. (Hear, hear!) He hoped the time was not far off when our system of government would be amended, whereby private members could have the same rights and privileges of amending Bills as Ministers of the Crown. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. MACARTNEY: Since the amendment was moved the question had assumed a somewhat different aspect. It was not so much a question of the omission of the words as it was the refusal of the Minister to give something like a synopsis or some particulars of the Bill he proposed to introduce.

The PREMIER: That is not the question.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He understood that the real question before the Committee was the omission of the words, but the Minister had actually refused to give particulars of the Bill which he proposed to introduce, and the Committee was being asked to pass a resolution that it was desirable to introduce a Bill to amend the Local Authority Act in certain particulars without any information at all as to what those particulars were.

The PREMIER: That is the case with every Bill.

Mr. MACARTNEY: It showed the absurdity of putting to the Committee a resolution of that sort, to which every member of the Committee was bound, having voted for the contents of that Bill and nothing else. That seemed to be an absurd position. Several times last session information had been asked for, and it had been courteously supplied by the Minister in charge of the Bill, whoever the Minister was. It was done once when the Speaker was in the chair, and several times in Committee. It was a matter of material importance, and he thought it was an extraordinary thing that the Government should refuse the information. The Minister informed the junior member for Gympie that there was some provision in the Bill touching upon rates; and he thought it was very probable that that provision might give the hon. member for Gympie an opportunity of introducing his proposal. He thought the hon. gentleman should go a little further—he should be called upon to tell the Committee what those provisions were with regard to rating power, in order that the Committee might judge whether the hon. member for Gympie was safe in that particular matter. He (Mr. Macartney) thought the hon. member for Gympie would find that the Bill was actually introducing amendments of such a trivial nature that he would be unable to get in what was a comprehensive alteration to the scheme of rating in connection with goldfield tenure, and the hon. member would find out too late that the Bill as introduced would not give him the opportunity he wanted. It seemed rather an extraordinary thing that, when an amendment was moved that tended to extend the liberties of members of the Committee, they found hon. members who were always harping on the subject of liberty and the rights of this House standing in the way of an amendment which would secure to members those rights. The hon. member for Ipswich was anxious to extend the franchise, and the amendment, as had been pointed out, would permit of that being done, and yet the hon. member, because he did not want to hurt the Government, was forced to swallow his principles once more.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Would you support such an amendment?

Mr. MACARTNEY: That was not the question. The hon. member wished to extend the franchise, and he could not do that unless the amendment were passed, and yet the hon. member did not want it now because he found it

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would interfere with the Government. He thought it would be as well if they understood the position of members who got up and advocated certain principles. It was pointed out by the Premier at an earlier stage of the afternoon that he (Mr. Macartney) had voted against the view which he had expressed that afternoon, and he must confess that was perfectly true. But in that case there was a strong difference. The Minister in that case was prepared, and did give accurate information as to what the contents of that Bill were, and we were able to judge as to whether its contents agreed with our opinions or not. If he had been desirous of getting an amendment in that Railway Bill he would not have cast his vote against the amendment on that occasion.

The PREMIER: No, no! (Laughter.)

Mr. MACARTNEY: The hon. member for Lockyer and the hon. member for Normanby both voted against the view he took on that occasion, and voted with the hon. gentleman. They wanted amendments in the Railway Bill, and that was the view they naturally took. However his (Mr. Macartney's) vote was cast against the amendment on that occasion, and he thought he had the right to claim the vote of the hon. member for Bundaberg, Mr. Barber, on the amendment before the Committee, who on that occasion voted for the amendment moved by the Premier. He claimed also the vote of the Attorney-General, who on that occasion supported the Premier's amendment—that the words should be omitted. He claimed also the vote of the hon. member for Ipswich.

The PREMIER: I claim the vote of the hon. member for Toowong.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The Premier was not going to get the vote of the hon. member for Toowong, and he gave very good reasons for it. They had heard no reasons from the Attorney-General why he should not vote for the amendment, and they had had no explanation from the hon. member for Fitzroy, nor the hon. member for Burrum. He found also he was entitled to ask for the vote of the junior member for Rockhampton, also for the vote of the hon. member for Gregory, and, also, he was entitled to ask for the Chairman's vote, if he were at liberty to vote, and if it came to a casting vote he would certainly look for it. He was also entitled to the votes of the two members for Gympie, Mr. Ryland and Mr. Mulcahy, and last, but not least, he had the right to ask for the vote of the hon. member for Woothakata. He thought with that amount of talent the amendment would be carried.

Mr. HARDACRE: The discussion had gone all over the shop. They had had expressions of opinion for the endowment and against the endowment, and for increased rating power and against increased rating power, and so on, and that had all helped to befog the issue. He did not know what the Bill was about, except that it was going to have something to do with the local authorities. Through some mistaken idea, the Home Secretary and the Premier would not give the Committee any information.

Mr. MAXWELL: You have voted for the same thing many times.

Mr. HARDACRE: He had never done so in that House, and did not intend to do so.

The PREMIER: On the second reading of the Bill you say whether you are going to have it or not.

Mr. HARDACRE: They did not know the particular way it was going to amend the Act, but they knew the subject, and that was the whole question.

The PREMIER: You know the subject this Bill proposes to deal with.

Mr. HARDACRE: There were 100 subjects in the Local Authorities Act, and, seeing that a certain number of important questions had been agitating local authorities, the Committee had the right of knowing whether the Bill was going to give the House an opportunity of expressing an opinion on those matters.

The PREMIER: The proper time to do that is on the second reading.

Mr. HARDACRE: It would be too late then. He would vote against the motion unless the Home Secretary told him what subjects the Bill dealt with.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted (*Mr. Bouchard's amendment*) stand part of the question—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 33.

Mr. Adamson	Mr. Kidston
„ G. P. Barber	„ Land
„ Bell	„ Lennon
„ Blair	„ Mackintosh
„ Bowman	„ Mann
„ Brennan	„ Maughan
„ Cowap	„ Maxwell
„ Douglas	„ Mitchell
„ Grant	„ Nevitt
„ Grayson	„ Payne
„ Gunn	„ Rankin
„ Hamilton	„ Redwood
„ Hawthorn	„ Roberts
„ Hunter	„ Ryland
„ Jones	„ Sumner
„ Kenna	„ Woods
„ Kerr	

Tellers: Mr. Mann and Mr. Maxwell.

NOES, 25.

Mr. Armstrong	Mr. Lesina
„ Barnes	„ Macartney
„ Blocksidge	„ McMaster
„ Bouchard	„ Moore
„ Campbell	„ Paget
„ Creagh	„ Paull
„ Cribb	„ Petrie
„ Denham	„ Philp
„ Forrest	„ Somerset
„ Fox	„ Stodart
„ Hanran	„ Swayne
„ Hardacre	„ White
„ Keogh	

Tellers: Mr. Bouchard and Mr. Barnes.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. O'Sullivan and Mr. McIntyre.

Noes—Mr. Millican and Mr. Stephens.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Original question put and passed.

[7 p.m.]

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the resolution to the House, and the report was adopted.

FIRST READING.

On the motion of the HOME SECRETARY, the Bill was read a first time. The second reading was made an Order of the Day for tomorrow.

ELECTIONS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL. RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

HON. R. PHILP moved the insertion of the following new clause:—

Voting by Post.

4. [78k.]—

- (i.) Any female elector who resides at least three miles by the nearest practicable road from the nearest polling-place appointed for the district for which she is enrolled;
 - (ii.) Any male or female elector who believes that, by reason of age, infirmity, or ill health, he or she will be unable on polling-day to attend at a polling-place to vote; and
 - (iii.) Any male or female elector who has reason to believe that on polling-day he or she will be travelling at sea or absent from the State—
- may, not later than the second day preceding polling-day, apply to the returning officer for a postal vote certificate.

No such application by a voter who cannot write his or her own name shall be granted.

Such application shall be in the following form, or to the like effect:—

Application for Postal Vote Certificate.

To the Returning Officer, Electoral District of

I [here state name in full, place of residence, and occupation] do hereby declare as follows, that is to say:—

1. I am an elector enrolled for the Electoral District of _____, and am now entitled to vote.

2. I reside at the above address, and have within the last preceding seven months been *bona fide* resident within the said Electoral District for a period of one month. Or [in the case of a member of the Assembly who is enrolled for the district he represents instead of the district in which he resides] I am enrolled as a member of the Legislative Assembly for the said Electoral District.

(This clause does not apply to electors who are enrolled in respect to freehold or leasehold property.)

3. I [here insert the grounds on which the certificate is applied for], and therefore make this application to entitle me to vote by post.

4. I request that the necessary certificate and postal ballot-paper be forwarded to me at the above address [or to (state other address where voter may be found)]. (If the application is made in person, this clause need not be filled up.)

(Signed) C.D.

Signed in my presence and declared before me at this _____ day of _____, 19____ A.B.

[Returning Officer or Elector for the abovenamed District.]

The application must be signed by the applicant with his or her own hand, in the presence of and must be declared before and attested by the returning officer or an elector of the same district for which the applicant is enrolled.

Any false statement in this application is punishable by a penalty not exceeding one hundred pounds or by imprisonment, with or without hard labour, not exceeding six months.

The application must be signed by the applicant with his or her own hand, in the presence of and must be declared before and attested by the returning officer or an elector of the same district for which the applicant is enrolled, each of whom is hereby authorised to take such declaration:

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

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.

[78L.] Upon receipt of the application the returning officer, if satisfied that the name of the applicant is entered on the roll and that he or she is otherwise entitled to vote, shall grant the certificate, which shall be duly endorsed upon an envelope, and shall be in the following form:—

Postal Vote Certificate.

No. on Roll:

ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF _____

I certify that _____ of _____ is entitled to vote at the ensuing election for the Legislative Assembly.

The vote must be posted to me on or before the _____ day of _____, 19____.

Dated the _____ day of _____, 19____.

Returning Officer.

Signature of voter:

on the _____ day of _____ in the presence of _____ Postmaster [or Police Magistrate, or Head Teacher of _____ State or Provisional School, or Police Officer of or above the rank of Senior Constable, or Justice of the Peace].

[78M.] The returning officer shall deliver or cause to be sent to the voter—

- (a) The certificate endorsed upon an envelope;
- (b) An envelope addressed to the returning officer at the principal polling-place; and
- (c) A postal ballot-paper.

Every postal ballot-paper shall be of such material

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and opacity that the voter may effectually conceal the name of the person for whom he or she has voted, and shall be in the following form:—

[Front Page.]	[Second Page.]
POSTAL BALLOT-PAPER.	HOW TO VOTE.
INSTRUCTIONS—	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. You may vote contingently if you choose to do so by writing the names one below the other to denote the order of your preference.
(i.) You must deliver to a postmaster, or police magistrate, or head teacher of a State or provisional school, or police officer of or above the rank of senior constable, or justice of the peace for the State of Queensland the postal ballot-paper and the two envelopes in the same condition in which they were issued.	
(ii.) You must then sign your name upon the certificate, and the person before whom you are voting must then and there attest your signature.	
(iii.) The person before whom you are voting must then deliver the postal ballot-paper to you, but must retain the two envelopes.	
(iv.) You must then in the presence of, but not in the sight of, the person before whom you are voting record your vote by writing on the second page of the ballot-paper the name of the candidate or the names of the candidates for whom you vote.	
(v.) You must then fold up the ballot-paper so as to conceal the name or names of the candidate or candidates, and deliver it to the person before whom you are voting.	
(vi.) The person before whom you are voting must then, without unfolding the ballot-paper, place it in the envelope which is endorsed with the certificate, and fasten up the envelope.	
(vii.) The person before whom you are voting must then place such envelope in the envelope addressed to the returning officer, and upon receipt from you of the proper postage stamps must in your presence affix them to the envelope.	

No elector who has received any such certificate shall be entitled to vote except by means of a postal ballot-paper.

[Hon. R. Philp.

[78N.] The returning officer shall keep and number the applications in consecutive numerical order.

Before the issue of the ballot-paper to the voter the returning officer shall mark the same on the front page thereof with his initials in ink or pencil, and shall write upon the certificate and also upon the back of the right-hand upper corner of the second page of the ballot-paper in ink or pencil the number set against the name of the voter in the roll, and the returning officer shall fold down the corner of the ballot-paper so as entirely to conceal the number so written, and shall securely fasten the fold with gum or otherwise in such a manner that the number cannot be discovered without unfastening the fold.

[78P.] (1.) In the presence of any postmaster, or police magistrate, or head teacher of a State or provisional school, or police officer of or above the rank of senior constable, or justice of the peace for the State of Queensland, 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 person before whom the voter is voting 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 person before whom the voter is voting shall then and there attest the signature;
- (iii.) The person before whom the voter is voting 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 person before whom the voter is voting 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 person before whom the voter is voting;
- (vi.) The person before whom the voter is voting 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 person before whom the voter is voting 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. If the postmaster has attested the vote, he shall forthwith post the vote in the post office. If any other person as aforesaid has attested the vote, he shall forthwith deliver it to the voter for posting;
- (viii.) For the purposes of contingent voting the voter may write the names of the candidates or of any candidates upon the ballot-paper, one below the other, and the order in which the voter has so written them shall denote the order in which the voter desires the vote or votes to be counted.

(2.) No candidate or duly appointed agent of a candidate shall attest or receive or take from a voter any postal vote or envelope containing a postal vote.

Any such person who so attests, receives, or takes a postal vote or envelope containing a postal vote shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding one hundred pounds, and the election of a candidate who, or whose agent to the knowledge of the candidate, so attests or receives or takes such postal vote or envelope shall be void.

[78Q.] (1.) The person before whom the voter votes shall not look at the name of any candidate for whom the voter votes. In any case where a postmaster has no letter stamp designed to show the name of the post office or receiving office with the date, the postmaster may, instead of stamping with the letter stamp and date where hereinbefore required, write in ink the name of the post office or receiving office and the date in figures together with his or her initials.

(2.) If any person before whom a voter votes in the discharge of his duties under this Act learns for what candidate such voter has voted, he shall not, by word or act or any other means whatsoever, directly or indirectly, divulge or discover, or aid in divulging or discovering, the fact, save in answer to some question which he is legally bound to answer. Any such person guilty of a breach of this subsection shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding one hundred pounds or to be imprisoned for any period not exceeding one year.

[78a.] The returning officer shall on all copies of rolls as used by him for use at the election make a note against the name of every elector to whom a postal vote certificate has been issued.

If there is not time to conveniently note the facts aforesaid on the rolls, the returning officer shall immediately advise all presiding officers of such issue in such manner as he thinks fit.

A signature upon a postal vote certificate purporting to be the signature of a voter shall, upon a scrutiny, without further proof, be *prima facie* evidence that such voter voted by post at the election.

The date upon such certificate purporting to be the date on which the voter's signature is attested shall, upon a scrutiny, without further proof, be *prima facie* evidence of the date on which such voter voted by post.

The number marked upon the back of the ballot-paper as aforesaid shall, upon a scrutiny, be *prima facie* evidence that such ballot-paper was issued to and used by the person to whom the postal vote certificate bearing the same number was issued.

[78s.] At the scrutiny the returning officer shall produce, unopened, all voters' envelopes received up to the close of the poll, and the outer envelopes shall be opened, and the enclosures shall be dealt with as follows:—

- (i.) The returning officer shall produce the voters' applications;
- (ii.) The returning officer, without opening the envelope endorsed with the certificate, shall compare the signature of the voter with the signature to the application, and allow the scrutineers who are present to inspect the same, and shall determine whether the signature on such envelope is that of the applicant. He shall also determine whether the vote was recorded within the time prescribed, and shall disallow all votes which have not been so recorded;
- (iii.) If the vote is allowed, the returning officer shall open the envelope and insert the postal ballot-paper in the ballot-box. He shall also forthwith attach the said envelope by gum or otherwise to the application relating thereto;
- (iv.) No postal ballot-paper shall be allowed at the scrutiny which is not enclosed in an envelope endorsed with the certificate duly signed, attested, and dated under this Act;
- (v.) If the returning officer disallows the vote, then the envelope endorsed with the certificate, unopened, and the application relating thereto shall be attached together by gum or otherwise, and shall be set aside for separate custody.

[78r.] Any mistake in spelling of the name of any candidate, where the intention of the voter is clear, shall not render such vote informal. It shall suffice, when no two candidates have the same surname, for the voter to write the surname only of the candidate for whom he votes.

[78c.] Nothing herein contained shall be deemed to take away the right to appeal to the Elections Tribunal from the decision of the returning officer as to the allowance or disallowance of a postal vote.

There might be some reason for objecting to a female voter living in town, and who was in good health, voting by post; but there could be no possible reason for preventing a female elector living more than 3 miles out of town voting by post if she desired to do so. In the country there were female electors living 20 and 30 miles from a polling-booth, who could not possibly get in to vote if their husbands went. Then there was no possible reason why male or female electors who were sick should be deprived of the right to vote by post. At every election the hospitals were scoured for votes, and unfortunate people were frequently dragged to the poll when they were unfit to go. He supposed that on the average there must be 2,000 people in the hospitals in Queensland every day in the year, and probably there was an equal number of sick people who were not in hospitals, so that there were very likely 3,000 or 4,000 people who were unable to vote through ill-health, and perhaps some of them were more anxious to vote than people who were well. Then, again, there were numbers of people who were travelling at sea on polling-day, including the officers and crews of

vessels. It was not possible for every vessel to be proclaimed a polling-place, but that was no reason why all travellers at sea should be practically disfranchised. The penalties he proposed should prevent infringements of the provisions of voting by post, as they were very severe, and it would not be worth anybody's while to try to evade the law. The clause would do away with the travelling justice of the peace, as no justice of the peace would dare to go about collecting votes if the amendment were passed. Some members might conscientiously object to females in town voting by post if they were able to go to the poll; but they could not object to the clause, unless they wished to disfranchise all electors coming under any of the three categories specified in the clause. At the recent elections over 13,000 persons voted by post out of a total of 130,000 votes—that was, one-tenth of the whole number voted by post. That was a big percentage, and some means ought to be adopted to prevent those people being disfranchised. This is not a party question at all. It was simply an endeavour to get as many electors to vote as possible. He would like to have seen the system of postal voting carried out as before, imposing stringent penalties to prevent fraud. He knew it was not possible to prevent fraud altogether, because at every election there were cases of impersonation, despite the punishment to which those guilty of personation rendered themselves liable. He believed that under the clause there would be fewer cases of fraud than there were at present. He hoped the Committee would accept the clause, and not disfranchise the 13,000 people who voted by post at the last election.

Mr. GRANT: How many of those 13,000 could not have gone to the poll?

HON. R. PHILIP: He had no wish to labour the matter. They had a big discussion the other night, and he was prepared to go to a vote at once. He hoped the Committee would discuss it fairly and free from party considerations. Nobody knew for whom those people were going to vote, and under the amendment it would not be possible to canvass any more than could be done now. It was all nonsense saying it would interfere with the secrecy of the ballot if they canvassed for votes. At every election votes were canvassed. In some cases there was a house-to-house canvass, and a great many people were not afraid to say how they were going to vote. It was astonishing how near some of the party organisations got in their estimate of the votes polled for their candidates. Of course every party had its organisation, the members of which canvassed the electors, got promises, and then totted up how many votes they were going to get, and frequently they were very near to the actual result. He now moved the amendment standing in his name.

The HOME SECRETARY could not see his way to accept the amendment. He did not propose to go into the question at any length, because postal voting was fully discussed last week, but he just wished to say that this amendment appeared to him to be more objectionable than the old clause.

LABOUR MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Hon. R. PHILIP: In what way?

The HOME SECRETARY: In many ways. It enlarged the scope of the people entitled to witness the postal vote.

Hon. R. PHILIP: Oh, no! Only the application.

The HOME SECRETARY: It still kept in the old system of sending certificate and ballot-paper to some address, not the address of the

Hon. A. G. C. Hawthorn.]

voter, which was a most objectionable clause, and it provided for people voting outside the State; that was in addition to the old system.

Hon. R. PHILP: Oh, no! They did it before.

The HOME SECRETARY: The beginning of the section was somewhat on the lines of the Commonwealth section 109; and he would just like to read, as to the operation of that Act, the report of a committee which inquired into the Federal elections in 1904. They said—

Without concluding that undue influence was used in connection with the postal vote, the evidence adduced shows that, under the present subsection, advantage may be taken to destroy the free and secret exercise of the franchise. The application forms may be witnessed in blank, and these forms may be taken in numbers by agents for candidates when canvassing, and pressure brought to bear upon persons whose names are on the roll. The evidence justifies your committee in finding that many persons who voted by post had not reason to believe that they would be more than 5 miles from their polling-place on the day of election, and were on that day within that limit. It would appear that the voting facilities provided have been used contrary to the intention of the Act.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Your predecessor quoted that when he introduced the postal vote.

The HOME SECRETARY: He quoted that for the purpose of showing what the result of section 109 had been in the Federal election. It had met there with entire disapproval, and he considered, by consenting to this clause going in, they would be emphasising their disapproval and the necessity for doing away with the postal vote. He could not accept the amendment.

Mr. GUNN (*Carnarvon*): He was one of those who voted against the Government the other night, because he thought the postal vote should not be done away with altogether. He thought it was only just that both men and women should be able to vote. At the same time, he did not see that the amendment would be an advantage in the way it was drawn, and unless it was very materially altered he could not support it. The first clause, with regard to females voters residing over 3 miles away from a polling-booth, was intended for those voters who lived in the country districts away from polling-booths. His experience was that those people would go to a polling-booth just the same as anybody else. (Hear, hear!) They went 20 or 30 miles to a race meeting, and they would go to a polling-booth if they wanted to.

Mr. KEOGH: That is not my experience.

Mr. GUNN: He had had a good deal of experience in the bush. At the last election he could not call to mind a single country elector in his own electorate who used the postal vote—they were all used by town electors.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: Scores of them did not vote.

Mr. GUNN: It appeared that there were 1,300 postal votes not accounted for; they got astray somehow or other. That might be accounted for in this way: His brother was living in Brisbane at the time, and was qualified to vote in respect of a grazing farm he had in the Warrego district. He applied for a postal certificate, but by the time he got it it was too late to catch the Western mail, which left two or three hours before it came in. Consequently, that vote was useless. He would like to see male and female sick people have a vote, and also those on the sea. Subclauses 2 and 3 he would like to see passed, but subclause 1 ought to be struck out. Then, as to the application for a postal vote, it was proposed by the amendment that any elector could witness it, and he believed that was quite right. Then the next thing, which was the vital part of the whole matter, was as to who should witness the postal certificate. It had been

suggested that a police magistrate, or a head teacher, or a police officer should witness them, but if any of our women folk were sick in bed they did not want those persons to witness them. He thought, if it was to be of any use at all to sick people, it would have to be witnessed by two electors. When a man made a will it was attested by two ordinary signatures, and he did not see why two ordinary signatures would not do in this case. He could not see that it would lead to fraud. If it was arranged that way, the vote could be witnessed by members of the family; it would not matter if they each knew how the other voted. If the amendment was to be of any use at all, it should provide that two respectable witnesses should be allowed to witness the vote.

Mr. GRAYSON (*Cunningham*) could not see his way to vote for the amendment. He had no reason to find fault with the postal vote. The number recorded in his electorate was 170, out of which 100 were recorded for him, and 70 for his opponent. At the same time, he could see that it was liable to be abused by unscrupulous persons with plenty of money at their back. The postal vote was all right if it had been properly used, but there were many justices of the peace who were very anxious to have their own candidate elected, and they used every means—unscrupulous means—in order to obtain postal votes for their candidate. At the declaration of the poll for Cunningham, he stated emphatically that he would use every means in his power to abolish the postal vote.

Mr. MACARTNEY: That was after the poll. (Laughter.)

Mr. GRAYSON: That was after the poll. He was present at the declaration of the poll at the Warwick election, when he heard the present member state that he was opposed to the postal vote, and would do his utmost to have it abolished. He also heard his opponent, Mr. Barnes, who was equally emphatic in his objection to the postal vote, say he hoped it would be abolished at the first opportunity. He had heard the hon. member for Bulimba, when speaking about the Warwick election, state that the postal vote was used entirely in favour of the present member for Warwick.

Mr. BARNES: I never said so.

Mr. GRAYSON: At the Warwick election the Hon. T. O'Sullivan received at the first count 384 postal votes, and Mr. Barnes 393. On the second count Mr. O'Sullivan received 382 and Mr. Barnes 397. Hon. members would understand that the Opposition candidate, notwithstanding the remarks of the hon. member for Bulimba, received more postal votes than Mr. O'Sullivan.

Mr. BOUCHARD: What has that to do with it?

Mr. GRAYSON: This was a little information that hon. members on the Opposition side did not like to hear. It was as well that the truth should be told.

Mr. KEOGH: The six justices of the peace did not do very much.

Mr. GRAYSON: In reference to those justices of the peace, he might say that at the time of the election it was found by the supporters of the present member for Warwick that nearly all the justices of the peace were on the side of the Opposition candidate. (Laughter.) There were only two available justices of the peace to witness signatures of voters on Mr. O'Sullivan's side, and the hon. member for Warwick was quite justified in nominating further justices in order to witness postal ballot-papers during the contest. The hon. member for Bulimba made certain charges against reputable

gentlemen in Warwick, that they had exercised their full functions of magistracy before being sworn in. That was a deliberate untruth.

Mr. BARNES: I say it is perfectly true.

HON. R. PHILP asked if the hon. member was in order in making a statement that another hon. gentleman had spoken a deliberate untruth.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. gentleman is distinctly out of order. He can say the hon. gentleman is not correct.

Mr. GRAYSON: He would say that the hon. member was decidedly incorrect. The hon. member for Bulimba also stated that they had fraudulently and unlawfully attested documents in connection with the postal vote before they were sworn in as justices of the peace.

Mr. BARNES: Hear, hear!

Mr. GRAYSON: On behalf of the men against whom the libel was uttered, the *Warwick Argus*, in its issue of 27th August, published an absolute and unqualified denial of the charges, and challenged the hon. member for Bulimba to come to Warwick and from the public platform repeat and substantiate the charge which he made under privilege, and allow the right of reply in defence. Had he done so? No. A copy of the *Warwick Argus* was posted to the hon. member for Bulimba; and he asked that hon. gentleman now if he had replied to those charges.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No. He has got another charge now.

Mr. GRAYSON: The hon. member for Bulimba, under the cloak of the privileges of the House, made a charge against [7.30 p.m.] some of the most reputable citizens of Warwick.

Mr. BARNES: It is perfectly correct.

Mr. GRAYSON: The hon. member further made a charge to the effect that "the son of a man who is said to be one of the leading democrats in Queensland was going round in the interests of the member for Warwick, and, in the case of illiterates, guiding their hands and seeing their votes were sent in."

Mr. BARNES: Hear, hear

Mr. GRAYSON: He could say that it was absolutely incorrect.

Mr. BARNES: Were you behind the justices of the peace all the time?

Mr. GRAYSON: He had been a resident of Warwick for forty years, and he was sure the members of the Committee would give him credit for knowing what he was talking about. The statements which he was making were perfectly correct, as he had made strict inquiries, and he would not make those statements before the Committee unless he knew they were correct. The allusion made by the hon. member for Bulimba was to Mr. A. C. Morgan, and to this the *Argus*, in its issue of 27th August, also published an absolute and unqualified denial of the charge, and challenged the hon. member for Bulimba to come to Warwick and from the public platform repeat and substantiate the charge made under privilege; and, further, in order that the denials and challenge should be brought under the notice of the hon. member a marked copy of the paper was forwarded to him. With respect to the hon. member's allegation, he had neither substantiated his statements, refuted the denials, nor accepted the challenge, but resorted to the cowardly expedient of making further charges under the privilege afforded by the House, implicating other gentlemen by imputing motives of malpractice. What he wanted to know was whether the hon member for

Bulimba intended to reply to that—whether he intended to go to Warwick and speak on a public floor and substantiate the charges which he made on the floor of the House. He thought he had said sufficient to refute the charges that had been made against some of the citizens of Warwick, charges that were unworthy of the hon. member who made them.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would like to call the attention of the hon. member to the fact that he is not debating the question before the Committee. He has wandered away pretty considerably, and I shall have to call him to order if he continues to do it.

Mr. GRAYSON: He hoped the hon. member for Bulimba would go to Warwick to substantiate the charges he had made. With regard to the amendment of the leader of the Opposition, he saw sufficient during the late election to convince him that, if the postal vote were allowed to remain in the Act, it would again be very largely abused. The electioneering agents had just got properly educated up to it, and if they had an election in the near future—

The HOME SECRETARY: It will be all postal votes.

Mr. GRAYSON: It would be abused as it was at the last election, and more so. He would like to see some means adopted whereby invalids—both male and female—and inmates of hospitals, and others, could record their votes at elections. If the amendment of the leader of the Opposition were adopted, it would widen the scope, and the postal vote could be abused in a similar way as it was in the past.

Hon. R. PHILP: You have not read it.

Mr. GRAYSON: He had read it.

Hon. R. PHILP: Well, you do not understand it.

Mr. GRAYSON: The difficulty could be minimised by the Government establishing more polling-booths. The £3,000 or £4,000 which had been expended in advertising the names of electors who had been put on the roll could be more judiciously spent on having more polling-booths, so that females could have opportunities of recording their votes on election day. He agreed with the hon. member for Carnarvon, Mr. Gunn, that in a country electorate both males and females would record their votes much more freely at the polls than in the metropolitan areas.

The HOME SECRETARY: The figures at the last election show that.

Mr. GRAYSON: The postal vote was used more freely in the towns than in the country at the last election. In the Cunningham electorate there were only 170 postal votes recorded out of the 4,100 cast. That showed that only a small proportion of the electors of Cunningham took the trouble to use the postal vote. After carefully reading the amendment of the leader of the Opposition, he had come to the conclusion that he could not support it.

Mr. DENHAM (*Oxley*): The arguments used by the hon. member who had just sat down were very singular. The hon. gentleman based his objection to the amendment on the ground that there was a greater proportion of postal votes cast in the large towns than there were in the country districts. That proved that a greater number of the electors in the towns availed themselves of the vote than in the country, but it did not prove that the postal vote was depreciated by the country electors. Anyone who voted against the amendment of the Hon. R. Philp had no sympathy whatever with the female vote.

GOVERNMENT and LABOUR MEMBERS: Oh, oh! (Laughter.)

Mr. Denham.]

Mr. RYLAND : Ring off.

Hon. E. B. FORREST : They do not like to be told that.

Mr. DENHAM : There would be an obligation imposed on every woman twenty-one years of age to cast her vote at the ballot-box. They knew very well that there were many circumstances under which it was impossible for women to avail themselves of that obligation. They had the care of young children, and it was ridiculous for the member for Carnarvon to talk about a circus attracting these people. How many women were there in the country who would leave their homes to go to a circus?

Mr. GUNN : They take their youngsters with them.

Mr. DENHAM : If any hon. member voted against the amendment, which provided that any woman living at a distance of 3 miles from the polling-booth, could exercise her right by postal ballot, he was doing that which was against the best interests of this State, by putting an impediment in the way of women going to the ballot-box. The argument used by the hon. member for Cunningham merely showed that in the town of Warwick the vote was used extensively, and there it was appreciated evidently by both sides, because it was about equally divided. He could not understand the attitude of the hon. member for Carnarvon. That hon. member voted for the retention of the postal vote throughout the whole State, and yet he was not in favour of giving the postal vote for the 3-mile area. In the very short time that the hon. member had been in the House he had got himself into such a ludicrous position as had never before been taken up by any hon. gentleman.

Mr. MAXWELL : There have been a lot of changes in this House.

Mr. DENHAM : He had seen many changes, but it was remarkable that the hon. gentleman should, at so early a stage in the session, be amenable to the control of the whip under whose advice he was acting. The hon. member for Burke who just interjected would never yet be called a good man by any person in the State.

Mr. MANN : He used to be when he was supporting you.

Mr. DENHAM : He never appreciated support from such an individual as the hon. member for Cairns, at any rate.

The CHAIRMAN : Order, order !

Mr. DENHAM : The amendment had been introduced by the leader of the Opposition in very clear terms—showing what an advantage it would be to our women. Already those hon. gentlemen advocated that it should be available to the sick and infirm or to absent voters, such as those travelling at sea. If they were prepared to confer that privilege under those circumstances they certainly should be prepared to confer it on their womanhood who, by reason of their distance from the polling-booth and from homely cares and responsibilities, were unable to attend to their duties and go to the poll, and there should not be any objection to the witnessing of their postal ballots. Any objection there might be would be freely met by allowing the postal certificate to be witnessed by the same person who witnessed the application—either the returning officer or two electors of the district.

Mr. HARDACRE : What part do you propose shall be witnessed ?

Mr. DENHAM : The application. The amendment provided that the application shall be witnessed by the returning officer or an elector. The amendment made it restrictive as to penalties. They could make it as much more

[Mr. Denham.

restrictive as they liked. He did not care how difficult they made it for the wrong thing to be done, but do not let it be said that the Legislative Assembly of Queensland was so lacking in chivalry as to rob the womanhood of Queensland of their political rights.

Mr. HARDACRE : He stated, when he was voting for the abolition of the postal system the other night, that he would be pleased to support some form of postal voting if some suitable system could be devised. He had gone carefully through the amendment, and he had to say that it was a very ingenious amendment, and very cleverly worked out.

Hon. R. PHILP : What is wrong with it ?

Mr. HARDACRE : It did credit to the care that had been bestowed upon it.

Mr. RYLAND : Underground engineering.

Mr. HARDACRE : It had been well done. It did not seem to him to meet the difficulty that existed in his mind. He pointed out before that any proposal that insisted upon the application form being witnessed by anyone was no good. The mail only ran once a week in every part of his district.

Mr. NEVITT : It is not that often in many parts of my district.

Mr. HARDACRE : There were very few cases where the mail ran oftener than once a week, and a voter would have to get an application form sent to him and then would have to have sent back to him a ballot-paper, which would mean at least a delay of a fortnight or three weeks. That would have to be the time that would have to be allowed before the vote could be secured. He had tried to think of some way out of the difficulty, but he had failed to come to a satisfactory conclusion. The amendment proposed that the postal ballot should be witnessed by a justice of the peace, State school teacher, senior constable, postmaster, or others, and that provision, so far as the country districts were concerned, would be of no advantage.

Mr. DENHAM : Or an elector.

Mr. HARDACRE : That would be better, but he would point out that in the outlying districts there would be no justices of the peace, no postmasters, no State school teacher, and no senior constable, and therefore the electors could not take advantage of the proposal of the leader of the Opposition. Then there was the fault that the amendment made no provision that the justice of the peace, State school teacher, or postmaster, as the case may be, should incur any penalty if he saw the way the elector was going to vote.

Hon. R. PHILP : There is a heavy fine imposed.

Mr. DENHAM : The penalty is £100.

Mr. HARDACRE : Who was going to prove it, in any case? Then there was no penalty on the part of the voter if he allowed anyone else to see the way in which he voted. If there was a heavy penalty on both parties, and the proposal was amended so that the signature could be attested by an elector, then he would be more inclined to support it. He certainly desired to give the women in the country districts a vote; but they had not been able to do it in a satisfactory manner.

Mr. SUMNER (*Nundah*) : If he followed the logic of the hon. member for Clermont, he would be only too happy to wipe out the postal vote altogether, because he had suffered a good deal by it. It was his own fault, because he never dropped to it until it was too late. He only got in during the last day or two; but if he had had a day or two longer he would have got a good

deal more votes. The whole fault of the postal clause in the present Act was due to the possibility of justices of the peace being employed to go round and canvass for votes; and the very fact that those votes were recorded principally in the towns and settled districts proved the fact that where justices of the peace could get at them very easily the votes were obtained. He knew of instances where women wanted to go to the polling-booth, and the justice of the peace said, "You may not get there in time and you ought to vote by post," and he took very good care to see which way they voted. A good deal had been said about the possibility of coercion, but he did not think there was very much in that nowadays.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. SUMNER: At election times he thought everyone knew one's colours. In his electorate there was a large manufacturing concern—the Zillmere Bacon Factory. The managing director of that factory was a strong opponent of his—he opposed him by money, and by his eloquence—

Mr. DENHAM: There was no coercion.

Mr. SUMNER: No. Yet he got about 90 per cent. of the votes in the factory, and he never went near the place. He only went to Zillmere one dark night, and never canvassed the place at all. That gentleman did what he could without coercion, and there were a good many men like him in Queensland. (Hear, hear!) Though they might have very strong convictions themselves, they would never try and coerce their working people one way or another. Many members had spoken about the abuses of the postal vote, and rather than have the abuses they would wipe out the vote altogether. He would rather have a little abuse than prevent a number of people who were unable to vote at the ballot from recording their votes by post.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. SUMNER: One of the first principles of democracy was to see that every man and woman was on the roll, and, when they were enrolled, to give them the utmost facility for recording their votes. He was going to give his vote to see that the women of Queensland should have an opportunity of recording their votes, even though there was a possibility of a little abuse creeping in. If they could stop justices of the peace from going round canvassing, they would stop nearly all the abuses that crept in under the clause. There would not be many people who would risk the penalty imposed by the amendment in order to try and get women to vote. He was going to support the amendment, but he should like to further amend it so that an ordinary elector could witness the ballot-paper as well as the application form.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: It was quite refreshing to hear a speech such as that fallen from the hon. member for Nundah. He had had a good deal of experience, and for many years he had spoken on different Electoral Acts, but he had never known of any coercion. Nine-tenths of the employers did not care one bit. Of course they had their political opinions, but there was no coercion or attempt at coercion. He congratulated the hon. member on the stand he had taken. The hon. member for Cunningham, in refuting the charge he made in the Chamber the other night, had made a very much more serious one. He questioned the truth of a sworn declaration. In referring to the matter in the way he did, he was not discussing the statement made by the hon. member for Bulimba, but he was making a very much more serious charge. The hon. member for Leich-

hardt was going to disfranchise or proposed to vote against the measure, because the country district he had experience of received a mail only once a week. Was a country electorate such as he (Mr. Armstrong) represented, which had a mail three times a week, to be disfranchised because of the hon. member's experience of his own electorate, which had a mail only once a week? Surely a person who required a postal vote should know the conditions under which he should apply for it. He admitted that at the last election the manner in which the postal vote was exercised was in some respects objectionable; but where was the first wrong step taken? Would the Home Secretary say that justices of the peace were not created broadcast on the eve of the election?

The HOME SECRETARY: No; not many of them.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: There were justices created within three weeks of the election, some of whom could barely sign their names. He knew of one justice who witnessed voting-papers in blank before they were signed by the electors.

Mr. MAGARTNEY: They were created ten days before the election.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: He did not know sufficient about the Warwick election to refer to it, but the fact remained that a considerable number

of justices were created there on the [8 p.m.] eve of the election. The first person to apologise for the action of the Government in creating those justices of the peace was the hon. member for Cunningham. He said that it was quite right, as all the existing justices were predisposed in favour of the Opposition candidate, and it was only right that the Hon. the Secretary for Public Works should get some of his own nominees put on the commission of the peace. He did not deny that there were abuses. Every man who used the postal vote used it for all it was worth. If he did not, he was an ass. If the law gave a man a certain weapon to use, and he did not use it, he was not fit to be an interpreter of the law in that Chamber as long as he kept within the four corners of the law. Surely the collective wisdom of that Chamber was not incapable of devising some means of preventing abuses in the future, thereby preventing a large number of females from being disfranchised. Speaking as a country member, he said that, unless every schoolhouse was made a polling-booth, a very large number of female electors would not be able to record their votes. Women with household duties to attend to could not afford the time to travel long distances to polling-booths. The hon. member for Carnarvon said they were willing to go to sports, race meetings, and circuses. That was not his experience. The men went to those places, but unless the women lived within a few miles they did not attend.

Mr. GRANT: The highest percentage of postal votes was in the towns.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: The hon. member could not have read the clause, as it proposed to limit the right to vote by post to females who lived more than 3 miles out of town. He intended to vote in favour of the amendment.

Mr. MANN could not support the amendment for the reason that there were too many loopholes. For instance—

Any female elector who resides at least three miles by the nearest practicable road from the nearest polling-place—

might vote by post. She might reside alongside a railway or a tramway, and still be allowed to vote. Then the clause would practically allow anybody to ask for a postal vote on the ground that they might be ill on the day of the election.

Mr. Mann.]

Again, any elector might ask for a postal vote on the ground that on the day of election they would be travelling at sea, while they might merely go on an excursion 4 miles out to sea, and claim that they were out of the State on the day of the election, as some of them did now, and then call that travelling at sea. He believed in everyone going to the poll, as less influence could be used. At the last election two or three persons applied for postal votes in Cairns, saying that they would be absent from the electorate on the day of the poll, and those people were walking about Cairns on election day. Worse than that, the clause provided that applications might be made to the returning officer for a postal vote certificate not later than the second day preceding polling-day. That would only allow the returning officer two days in which to notify to the different presiding officers the persons to whom he had issued postal certificates. In Cairns the returning officer sent up a list of the names of the last ten electors to whom postal certificates were issued to one presiding officer to scratch off his roll, and that presiding officer put in a claim for 10s. for scratching off those names. They were going to have a lot of trouble over the elections if a returning officer could not notify his presiding officers in time. The hon. member for Oxley said he did not want the support of such an individual as he (Mr. Mann). He wondered when the hon. member had changed his opinion, because it was fresh in the minds of most hon. members that at the time of the Federal election he wanted the support of every person. He wanted the women of the National Liberal Union to court working people by shaking them by the hand, and make friends, for the time being, of any sort of person in order to get their votes. When he was sitting on the Government side, he (Mr. Mann) was one of the hon. member's warmest supporters, and, if the hon. member came back again, he would be only too pleased to have him (Mr. Mann) supporting him again. He hoped he would never have the political character of the hon. member of being false to his friends.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would point out to the hon. member that he is making a personal reflection on a member of the Committee. I know the hon. member interjected while the hon. member for Oxley was speaking, but I did not catch his interjection. The hon. member should not make personal reflections.

Mr. MANN: What he had interjected was that one day the hon. member called, "Three cheers for Bob Philp, the best man in Queensland," and next day he voted against him. He hoped he would never be so false to his friends as that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

HON. E. B. FORREST: They had been informed that the postal vote had been abused.

The HOME SECRETARY: Do you deny it?

HON. E. B. FORREST: He thought that if they went very minutely into the matter they would find that it had been abused very much more on the Government side of the House than by supporters of the Opposition. If the postal vote had been abused, it had been abused more in Warwick than in any other place in Queensland. They had put up a record at Warwick which it would take a lot to beat. But, notwithstanding all that had been said about abuse, he contended that there was probably no more abuse in connection with the postal vote than there had been in other respects at elections. Everybody who had ever had anything to do with an election knew that, however desirous one might be to avoid abuses, one could not avoid them. Member after member had talked about

[Mr. Mann.

the way the postal vote had been abused, but not one single instance had been cited to show how it had been abused. But, if it had been abused in the sense in which he understood the word "abuse," he maintained that nothing had transpired to justify the abolition of the postal vote and the consequent disfranchisement of thousands of women in the State. Abuse of the postal vote was not the trouble. The fact was that the women had made a mistake. Had they voted for the Labour party, the Committee would never have heard all this talk about the abuse of the postal vote. But the women exercised common sense and voted for the people they thought most of. That was the whole trouble, and all this talk about the abuse of the postal vote was so much humbug. There had been a lot of talk about not allowing the expenses of cabs and canvassing at elections, yet it was well known that in the Federal elections, though there was a limit fixed to the expenses of candidates, more money was probably spent at those elections than at the State elections, not by the candidate perhaps, but by somebody else who put up the money and spent it. He hoped the amendment would be carried.

Mr. RANKIN (*Burrum*) intended to support the amendment which, though possibly defective in one or two respects, might be improved later on. He disliked the parochial spirit which had been introduced into the discussion by members referring to the number of postal votes given in their several electorates. He considered that they should deal with the matter on broader grounds. Having recognised the desirability of extending the franchise all round, what right had they, by the abolition of the postal vote, to practically disfranchise large bodies of electors? That was neither chivalrous, right, nor honest; and chivalry and honesty should play a big part in the work of any Legislature. The principle of the postal vote was adopted in the Federal elections and in the local authorities' elections in this State, and he did not think there had been any great abuse of the system in either case. The best thing they could do in the interest of the State was to retain the postal vote.

Mr. MACARTNEY intended to cast his vote in favour of the amendment. The Government proposed to wipe out the postal vote, simply because their friends in the corner, the smallest section in the House, had dictated to them what they required. That was a discredit to the members of the Government as men and as Ministers. In no electorate was the postal vote more abused than it was in the electorate of Enoggera.

The HOME SECRETARY: I deny that.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He had in his pocket a letter written by a man whom he did not know and had never spoken to, telling of the use made of the postal vote by justices of the peace in the employment of the Home Secretary. The postal vote was worked for all it was worth by the supporters of the Government, and, if there was any blame for abuse in connection with it, it lay at the door of the Government, by whom the postal vote had been introduced. If they had the proper position in the House, they would have the member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. Bowman, sitting on the Treasury bench in charge of this Bill. The amendment was a modification of the postal vote as contained in the Elections Act, and it provided safeguards which would render abuse of the postal vote almost impossible. There were three paragraphs which provided safeguards against abuses. The 3rd paragraph on page 2 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.

Who was likely to make a false declaration when they would be liable to a penalty of that sort for so doing?

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Who could prove it?

Mr. MACARTNEY: The declaration would be signed by the applicant and would speak for itself, besides which the signature would be witnessed, so that it was nonsense to say that that provision was not a protection against fraud. Then in subclause (2) on page 4 it was provided that—

Any such person who so attests, receives, or takes a postal vote or envelope containing a postal vote shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding one hundred pounds, and the election of a candidate who, or whose agent to the knowledge of the candidate, so attests or receives or takes such postal vote or envelope shall be void.

Was that not a safeguard? Not only that, but there was a further paragraph which read—

If any person before whom a voter votes in the discharge of his duties under this Act learns for what candidate such voter has voted, he shall not, by word or act or any other means whatsoever, directly or indirectly, divulge or discover, or aid in divulging or discovering, the fact, save in answer to some question which he is legally bound to answer. Any such person guilty of a breach of this subsection shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding one hundred pounds or to be imprisoned for any period not exceeding one year.

That was a very strong provision indeed, and it would prevent the abuses which had been complained of during the second reading of the Bill and the discussion in Committee so far as it had gone. It was perfectly idle for the Premier or the members of the front Government bench to say that the whole gist of this Bill—the wiping out of the postal vote—had reference to the secrecy of the ballot. As a matter of fact, pretty well in every electorate of the State the vote that every man cast was known. It was known to canvassers and the candidates themselves; and, after all, the secrecy of the ballot was more or less a myth. He admitted there were some cases where there was a secrecy attached to it, but they were few and far between. So far as it was humanly possible to preserve secrecy, it was provided for in this amendment, and he could not understand the hon. gentleman depriving of the franchise so many sick women and unfortunate people, together with the people who travelled by sea at election times. The women took a material interest in this matter. There were some large and extensive organisations of women in Queensland. He had here a letter written to the Premier, which he proposed to read for the purpose of having it placed on record in *Hansard*.

Mr. GRANT: What association does it represent?

Mr. MACARTNEY: The letter was addressed to the Queensland Women's Electoral League to the Premier on 15th August—

Sir,—On behalf of the Queensland Women's Electoral League we beg to protest against the proposed amendment in the State Elections Act, in so far as the elimination of the postal vote clause is concerned. While aware of the abuse it received at the last State elections, we consider that to eliminate it altogether would be disfranchising a very large number of electors who are entitled, as citizens of this State, to vote at all parliamentary elections. But, though protesting against the elimination, we recognise that the clause should be amended so as, as far as possible, to preserve the secrecy of the ballot and prevent abuse of it. This we think possible, and respectfully suggest that the clause be amended so as to provide facilities for voting by post by those who are unable to come to the polling-booths. Our league has consistently urged on all women, if physically fit, to come and record their votes at the various polling-booths. Nevertheless, there are many cases where through infirmity and physical disabilities

—to say nothing of the distances in the country and domestic duties, such as the care of the young—women's first and paramount duty—the fact, beyond argument, remains that attendance at the booth in such cases is a sheer impossibility. This being so, our league is of the opinion that, since women—and in this connection we speak on behalf of all the women of Queensland—are included in the State franchise, it is within their rights to ask that every facility for recording their votes is afforded them. We therefore respectfully request you to give this matter your most serious consideration.

That was signed by Mrs. Corrie on behalf of the Queensland Women's Electoral League. He thought hon. members would admit that the league was a force at the last election, and that they would find it would be a force at the next. (Hear, hear!)

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Not outside Brisbane.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He had extracted the following letter from a paper called the *Worker*, which showed that the women electors who supported the Labour party in Queensland were just as much interested in this as any other electors—

POSTAL VOTING.

Dear *Worker*,—I notice that your attitude to the postal vote is one of hostility, because of the use made of it in certain towns. But there is another side of the shield, which is the benefit the postal vote is to women electors in the country, where bad roads and distance make it an impossibility for them to record their vote at the polling-booth.

Why not retain its use for the country electors—prohibit its use in towns, within a mile of the town boundary, let the voter write direct to the Chief Electoral Registrar for a postal ballot-paper, without the application being witnessed. The registrar's duty will be to search the electoral rolls for verification of the elector's application, and notify the local registrar that postal voting-papers have been issued to the electors, who then would not be permitted to vote personally at the booths.

Then the elector, on receiving his voting-paper, should fill in as he wishes, no witnessing to be required either in this paper, and there would be no intimidation and no breach of secrecy. The form would be again sent to the Chief Registrar, and opened and counted in the head office. There would be no fear of consequences in the local district, unless the voter chooses to say how his or her vote is cast. Of course there will be extra work in the head office at such time, but it will be part of the day's work as in many other cases.

The measure now before Parliament will be very carefully watched, and the members voting will be noted. I trust, sir, that you will give some thought to those using the postal vote honestly, as many have done, and not assist in their disfranchisement through the dishonesty of others.

C. E. TRUNDLE.

Eumundi.

That was a letter written apparently by a Labour woman, and it showed that some of the sympathisers of their friends in the corner did not sympathise with them—at any rate, on that matter. It was not a matter which affected his own electorate in the slightest degree, because out of about 3,500 or more women voters there were only 100 votes cast by post. He thought that the remarks made about the country electors were really correct, and that they were the most affected. (Hear, hear!) With the hon. member for Lockyer, he must say that he listened with a certain amount of pleasure to the manly speech delivered by the hon. member for Nundah. It was refreshing to think that they had had a few members in the House, on the other side, who were prepared to express their opinions even now, and, considering the change that had taken place last Thursday night in the tune of certain members, it was more refreshing still to hear a manly, breezy speech, such as that delivered by the hon. member for Nundah. If his view was correct, we ought to put all the electors on the rolls of the State and

Mr. Macartney.]

endeavour to induce every elector to cast their vote, instead of endeavouring to put difficulties in their way. He must say that he was disappointed, after hearing what took place on Thursday night, in the hon. member for Carnarvon. He spoke in favour of the clause then before the Committee, and voted against it. He also spoke in favour of this amendment, and just now indicated his intention to vote against it.

Mr. GUNN: It was a mistake. I thought it would wipe the Bill out altogether. I only wanted to make a protest against wiping out the postal vote altogether.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He could only say when he heard the hon. gentleman speak this evening that he was under the impression he was acting under advice which would probably land him in a quandary. (Laughter.) Knowledge would come by experience, and some hon. members would find out exactly where they were without being told by the House.

Mr. WOODS: They do not forget 1895 and 1896—"Bulcocking" the rolls.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He was in hopes that the amendment would be carried, and he hoped that as the hon. member for Leichhardt had expressed an opinion favourable to the amendment he would act up to his opinions and support it. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. BARNES: The hon. member for Cunningham stated that the remarks which he (Mr. Barnes) made on the second reading of the Bill about the hands being guided in signing postal votes were untrue. He (Mr. Barnes) recognised the serious position he was in when he made that statement, and he now repeated it, as he was in the possession of the true facts.

Mr. GRAYSON: Will you make the statement on the Warwick platform?

Mr. BARNES: He was going to follow that matter up, and he could prove that the very person who wrote the article in the *Warwick Argus* was the man who was connected with the sworn affidavit which he (Mr. Barnes) read the other night.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Ah!

Mr. GRAYSON: No.

Mr. BARNES: Seeing that some hon. members might think that he was cornered in this particular connection, he would tell them the very person who wrote the article in the *Warwick Argus* asking him to come up to Warwick and substantiate certain statements which he made on the second reading of the Bill. Did the hon. member contend that the sworn statement of Jane Thompson was untrue in connection with the Warwick election? The hon. member did not say so. He would read further what Jane Thompson gave in a sworn statement. She said—

That on Wednesday, 15th May, between 3 and 4 o'clock, Mr. A. C. Morgan and another man called on me at Mrs. Barnett's, and I then at their request wrote a name on a ballot-paper, and the man with Mr. Morgan witnessed my signature on the envelope.

This was the gentleman who made the challenge to him in the paper.

Mr. GRAYSON: Who is Jane Thompson?

Mr. BARNES: The hon. member knew who Jane Thompson was. (Laughter.)

The HOME SECRETARY: I understand there are three Jane Thompsons.

[Mr. Macartney.

Mr. BARNES: He would tell them who Jane Thompson was. This was her sworn statement—

I, Jane Thompson, charwoman, residing with Mrs. Barnett, Dragon street, hereby declare—

That about three weeks ago I was interviewed by a lady and asked if I had a vote for Warwick. I replied I had not. Thereupon the lady stated she would see my name was put on the roll.

That about a week later, Mr. Hagenback, justice of the peace, interviewed me at Mrs. Barnett's house. He said my vote was all right, and at his request I signed a paper presented to me. The paper was not read over to me, and I did not know what it contained.

That on Wednesday, 15th May, between 3 and 4 o'clock, Mr. A. C. Morgan and another man called on me at Mrs. Barnett's, and I then at their request wrote a name on a ballot-paper, and the man with Mr. Morgan witnessed my signature on the envelope.

Mr. Morgan was a young democrat in Warwick.

I wish further to declare that I have been a resident of Warwick for eight weeks only, and I have never made a claim to have my name placed on the Warwick roll.

I know now that I am not entitled to a vote for the Warwick electorate. I am not the person numbered 2492, Jane Thompson, Palmerin street, nor 2493, Jane Thompson, Victoria street.

I am not entitled to a vote for the electoral district of Warwick, and hereby renounce my claim to the vote which I gave on the 15th.

Signed in my presence and declared before me as being true and correct, at Warwick, this 16th day of May, 1907.

(Signed) JANE THOMPSON.

Mr. GRAYSON: Mr. Morgan denies that.

Mr. BARNES: That was her sworn declaration. When this woman found that she was in a corner through her vote having been recorded as a postal vote, and she thought she was likely to get into trouble when the rightful owner had discovered that her vote had been given against her, she took the necessary proceedings, and that statement was made before a justice of the peace. He asked hon. members if he had not proved right up to the very hilt the statement which he had made the other night

Hon. E. B. FORREST: True bill.

Mr. GRAYSON: You have proved it to your own satisfaction.

Mr. BARNES: That was a sworn statement, and it should satisfy every hon. member who was open to conviction that the statement he made the other night was a correct one; and so was every statement he had made there in connection with the Warwick election. He never made a statement in that House that the members of the Government side were the only ones who used the postal vote.

Mr. GRAYSON: You made it by inference.

Mr. BARNES: No; he did not. He would read a copy of a letter which he had received from Warwick.

Mr. GRAYSON: Who from?

Mr. BARNES: He would not give the name of the writer. (Government laughter.) It bore on the appointment of the justices of the peace in Warwick just before the election. The leader of the Government, by inference, said the other night that the employees of the warehouse with which he (Mr. Barnes) had the honour to be associated in Warwick had been intimidated by that house.

Mr. GRAYSON: I did not hear that.

Hon. R. PHILP: The Premier did.

Mr. BARNES: This was the letter he had received—

Warwick, 11th August, 1907.

Dear Mr. Barnes,—I have just read *Hansard* report in re second reading Elections Bill. That yarn of the Premier's *re* forewoman is all moonshine. I think I

heard all the yarns that were going election time about postal abuses, but that one I never heard. I think it is a canard, pure and simple. Mr. Kidston said, also, it was a coincidence only—that the six justices gazetted during the election in Warwick were on O'Sullivan's committee. It was not so. The only coincidence about it was that the Premier spoke in Warwick on 9th May; he got back to Brisbane on the 10th, and that same day these six names were gazetted. He took the names down in his pocket.

I would like you to devise a means to get, through the Home Secretary, a declaration made by one Jane Thompson on 16th May, 1907. While the Bill is going along, this would be interesting to get in from your side and would be an answer to the Premier that the abuses were on our side. In this, Jane Thompson declared that she had been in Warwick only eight weeks and she had never claimed to be enrolled for Warwick. She knew she was not entitled to a vote for Warwick, and she knew she was not the person on the roll 2492 or 2493 (Jane Thompson). A fortnight before the election she was waited upon by two of O'Sullivan's agents (named in the declaration) and told her vote was all right. A week before that she told another agent that she had no vote.

Whilst he recognised that abuses took place on both sides, he would say emphatically that in connection with the Warwick election the other side were by no means free of abuses. Even the Premier, in his judgment, committed an act which was unworthy of his position, and that was on the eve of the election to come down with six men and appoint them as justices of the peace.

Mr. GRAYSON: It was done before.

Hon. R. PHILP: It was never done before.

Mr. BARNES: It had been said that greater publicity was given to the postal vote than to the vote at the ballot. The hon. member for Toowong had already questioned that, and he (Mr. Barnes) also questioned it. Any man who knew anything about electioneering could always tell how the voting was going. When he first stood for Bulimba his scrutineer at Coorparoo told him how the voting was going there. He (Mr. Barnes) could not give the exact figures, but they were in the same proportion as the correct ones. His scrutineer said you have got so many; if the number was 200, he said you have 201; and, as a matter of fact, when the numbers were declared, there was 200. They were one out.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: A good guess.

Mr. BARNES: It was not a good guess at all—it was active electioneering. The majority of the people, as the hon. member for Nundah stated, were not afraid to say how they were going to vote. Remarks had been made about employers intimidating their employees. He did not believe it, and he did not believe any man was worthy of the name of employer who would do it.

Mr. LESINA: There are a few; not the majority.

Mr. BARNES: He ventured to say there were men sitting on that side of the House who would never for a moment attempt to intimidate their employees, and yet if the truth were known they would find 99 per cent. of their employees voted for them. It all depended upon the relations between employer and employee. If a man were a tyrant he did not get many votes, and he did not deserve them; and if the conditions, generally speaking, were satisfactory, the average man was not a strong politician, and appreciated the relationship between his master and himself. Coming again to the principles of the Bill, the first point he should like to make was this: Should every person have a vote?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Yes.

Mr. BARNES: He was glad that one hon. member in the corner said "Yes," and he hoped he would seal that conviction by giving his vote for the amendment, because if he voted against

it he would block some of the people from getting a vote. When discussing a matter of that kind they had to be very guarded in their language; but he appealed to members of the Committee, Was it possible for every woman within 3 miles of a polling-booth, or nearer, or further away from a polling-booth—was it possible for every woman to vote on polling-day?

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Neither is it possible for every man to vote.

Mr. BARNES: They knew it would be death for some women, and some men too, to attempt to go to the poll and vote. And yet, while advanced democrats urged that every person should have an opportunity of voting, they were going to say that certain women should not vote. Whilst on the one hand they were crying out to keep the cradle full, on the other hand they were saying, Do not keep the cradle full, because if you do we will not give you a vote. If that was democracy, all he could say was, "Save me from it."

Mr. GUNN: The hon. member for Toowong stated that he must have voted in mistake. He admitted that he had. He wished not to abolish the postal vote altogether. What was the use of the amendment to sick ladies if they had to get a police magistrate or chief constable to go into the sick-room to witness the signature on the ballot-paper?

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member for Toowong stated that Enoggera had abused the postal vote. He (the Home Secretary) distinctly denied that. The postal vote was carried out as honestly in Enoggera as anywhere else. When he started his campaign he distinctly told his committee not to have anything to do with the postal vote. He looked upon it as a very dangerous weapon, and he had not intended to use the postal vote at all until, on the 15th April, he got a letter from the Enoggera branch of the Women's Electoral League asking him to obtain from the Home Secretary about 300 or 400 application forms for postal votes. He tried to get the papers from the Home Secretary's Department, and was informed that they were not available.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Except to their own supporters.

The HOME SECRETARY: He never got a single paper from the Home Secretary's Department or any other department—he bought all his forms. When he saw that they wanted 300 or 400 for the Enoggera branch, he thought it was time for him to take a hand.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: Having five or six justices on his committee, he no longer restrained them. There were 286 postal votes polled in Enoggera, and he got a good number of them; and, under the circumstances, he would have been very foolish if he had allowed the other side to get in first and get all the votes. At the same time, he said distinctly that the postal vote was a very dangerous thing.

GOVERNMENT and LABOUR MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: It might prove a tremendous abuse at the elections. Anyone who took the trouble to get postal votes could get them long before polling-day. The hon. member for Toowong also accused the Government of having introduced the postal vote. That was so, but they introduced it with a safeguard that was afterwards upset by the other House. As introduced by the Government, only postmasters could witness the postal vote, but it would be found, by a reference to page 112 of *Hansard* of the special session of 1905, that the leader of the Opposition moved an amendment

Hon. A. G. C. Hawthorn.]

to insert the words "or justice of the peace" after the word "postmaster." That was not accepted, as it was recognised by the Government that it would introduce the travelling justice of the peace, and enable him to get votes indiscriminately. In the other House, however, the Hon. A. C. Gregory moved precisely the same amendment as the leader of the Opposition had moved in that Chamber, and the words "or justice of the peace" were inserted. That was where the abuse came in. Had it been restricted to the postmaster only, it would have been all right, but the introduction of the justice of the peace did away entirely with the secrecy of the ballot.

LABOUR MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: They had seen from the reports of the returning officers how the system had been abused, and they all knew what possibilities of abuse there were in connection with it; and, under the circumstances, they were doing the women of Queensland no hardship if, by preventing a few from going to the poll, they restrained the abuses that were possible under the system. A good deal had been said about protecting the women in remote districts, but he would give figures to show that it was not the women in the remote country districts who used the postal ballot. In fourteen towns—Brisbane North, Brisbane South, Charters Towers, Croydon, Drayton and Toowoomba, Fortitude Valley, Enoggera, Gympie, Ipswich, Nundah, Rockhampton, Townsville, Warwick, and Woollongabba—out of 10,781 postal votes polled by females, those fourteen electorates got 7,259, or 67 per cent. of the total vote. The remaining 3,522 votes by females were polled in forty-three electorates, and there were four electorates in which there was no election. Those figures showed that it was in the cities where polling-places were plentiful that the postal vote was mostly used. There was no difficulty in a city like Brisbane in any woman going the short distance necessary to record her vote. It was in the country districts that there was some difficulty, and that would be met by increasing the number of polling-places.

GOVERNMENT and LABOUR MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: The £4,000 that they were going to save in advertising could not be better spent than in providing extra polling-places in the country districts.

GOVERNMENT and LABOUR MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. R. PHILP: The Home Secretary seemed to be going outside the amendment altogether. The hon. gentleman referred to the number of people who voted by post in the big towns. They fought the other side last week on the abolition of the postal vote, and the present proposal was to give those women who lived more than 3 miles from a polling-place the right to vote by post. He hoped the majority of the Committee would give the women of Queensland an opportunity to vote. At the last election the Government made a big boast about giving the women the franchise, and now they were trying to take it away from them.

GOVERNMENT and LABOUR MEMBERS: No.

HON. R. PHILP: He was willing to give them all the safeguards possible. Surely seventy-two members could come to some agreement as to how to prevent fraud. He would tell the Home Secretary that but for the women of Enoggera he would not be where he was. It was the women of Enoggera who returned the hon. gentleman.

The HOME SECRETARY: Not the postal vote party. I had a majority of 1,000 over that.

[Hon. A. G. C. Hawthorn.]

HON. R. PHILP: So long as the hon. gentleman was there, he did not care a hang for other people. It made no difference to him (Mr. Philp) whether the amendment was carried or not, because the women of Townsville could not vote under it unless they were sick.

Mr. RYLAND: Yes, they will. You will get them all sick.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

HON. R. PHILP: The hon. member no doubt spoke for himself. The women of Queensland were much more honourable than some hon. members, and they would not make a false declaration saying they were sick unless they really were sick. The hon. member for Gympie wasted two hours that afternoon through an interjection, and now his partner was coming in to waste a little more time. This was not a party question at all.

Mr. BARNES rose to a point of order. Was the hon. member for Gympie, Mr. Mulcahy, in order in saying that the leader of the Opposition was "a peevish cat"? (Laughter.)

The CHAIRMAN: I did not hear the interjection; but, if the hon. member for Gympie used those words, he was decidedly not in order.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Withdraw!

Mr. MULCAHY: I will withdraw the "cat." (Laughter.)

HON. R. PHILP: He did not hear the hon. member; and, in any case, he was not worth taking notice of. A number of members said that if the amendment was "so and so" they would support it. Well, the amendment could be amended to meet the wishes of the majority. The hon. member for Carnarvon said he wished the women of Queensland to get the vote, especially in the country, but he spoke about his brother in Brisbane not being able to get a vote. But the clause would not apply to his brother. It would apply to women who resided 3 miles from a polling-place. Women could not possibly walk 3 or 4 miles to vote, although a man might do so. Having given the women

a vote, every facility ought to be [9 p.m.] offered to them for the exercise of the franchise; but apparently for some reason or other—he would not say because the postal votes were not in favour of the Government—the Government had made up their minds that they would do away with the postal vote altogether. He understood that the postal vote was working very well in the Federal elections, and he knew that it had worked well in divisional board elections in Queensland for the last twenty-eight years. Why, then, should it not work well in Parliamentary elections? He was willing to insert in his amendment any reasonable safeguard against an abuse of the system. With regard to the statement of the Home Secretary, that the abuse of the postal vote was all caused by allowing justices of the peace to attest votes, he considered that justices of the peace were as reputable as any body of men in Queensland. If there had not been sufficient justices for the purpose of attesting votes, why had the Government during the four years they had been in office not made the necessary appointments to the commission of the peace? The very last week before the elections six justices of the peace were appointed for the purpose of the Elections Act, and now the same Government who made those appointments brought in a measure to abolish the postal vote. If justices of the peace had done wrong, as had been alleged, then they should be punished. With respect to the sworn declaration read out by

the hon. member for Bulimba, if he were in that hon. member's place he would hand the declaration over to the Home Secretary, as the matter was one in which action could be taken by the Minister and the police.

The HOME SECRETARY: I have called upon the returning officer for a report.

HON. R. PHILP: Several members had stated that they would like to give the women a vote, but at the same time they found fault with this amendment. Well, wherein could they improve the amendment? Surely there was some genius in the Committee who could devise an amendment which would be proof against abuses, and which would satisfy those members who had not made up their mind to vote against the amendment.

Mr. PAGET said he did not pretend to be a genius, but he had a proposal to make which he hoped would meet some of the objections hon. members had to the amendment. Several hon. members had said that they did not desire to see the postal vote done away with altogether, but would be glad to retain it in such a form as would keep the secrecy of the ballot inviolable. It must be admitted that in a great number of cases certain electors, owing to ill-health, infirmity, age, or absence could not possibly go to the polling-booth. There was a provision in clause 4 of the Bill to enable voters absent from their own electorates to record their vote at any polling-booth in the district in which they happened to reside on the day of election. This was giving in certain cases a very big privilege over the women voters of the State, now that the postal ballot provisions had been omitted. Why should men who were not actually resident in the electorate for which they were enrolled, but were travelling about from one district to another in pursuit of their avocation, have privileges which some hon. members were prepared to deny the women who could not possibly go to a polling-booth? To meet the objection to the amendment raised by some hon. members, he moved that, on page 2, in clause 78L, after the words "justice of the peace" in the postal vote certificate, there be inserted the words—

Or any two electors of the abovenamed district, or, in the case of electors in ill-health, a medical man.

At any rate, this would give hon. members who desired to assist the women of Queensland to cast the postal ballot vote an opportunity of voting for the amendment, because it was broadening the scheme by which a postal ballot certificate might be witnessed. It could not be said that there would be any abuses under this amendment, for it was not likely there would be two travelling electors who were round touting for votes; nor could it be said that there would be travelling medical men who were doing the same thing.

Mr. RYLAND: You will have to get a doctor as canvasser then?

Mr. PAGET: He expected the hon. the junior member for Gympie probably knew more about travelling doctors than he did, as he had been pretty active in life insurance matters in his time. He would like to point out that where women were in ill-health and absolutely unable to go to the poll, or thought they would be unable to go to the poll, it would not even be necessary—if they were confined to their rooms—for a male elector to witness their signature, because if the amendment was accepted, two female electors could witness the signature to the postal ballot form. He had taken up very little time on this Bill, and had not gone into the question of the

postal ballot system, except in reply to the hon. member for Carnarvon, who said that the postal ballot was not taken advantage of in the country districts. The electorate where the greatest proportion of the votes were polled by postal ballot certificates was Warwick, which was practically a country electorate. There was a big country district attached to it, and of the 2,472 votes polled at the last election, which was 87.16 per cent. of the total number on the Warwick roll, no fewer than 32.84 per cent. were postal votes.

The HOME SECRETARY: And your side got the most of them.

Mr. PAGET: It was practically a country electorate.

The HOME SECRETARY: No; it is not.

Mr. PAGET: The Opposition candidate got a few more than the gentleman who was returned. Before the election came on he (Mr. Paget) was very strongly in favour of the postal ballot vote being used in his electorate, and he urged the members of his committee to do all they possibly could to see that the provision was taken advantage of by the people in the country, not in the town. The reply he got from the women electors of Mackay, through his committee, was that they did not desire to vote by post, but, if possible, to go to the ballot-box and vote for himself and his colleague. The postal ballot vote in Mackay, where there was a very big poll—78.28 per cent. of the total names on the roll—only amounted to 3.57 per cent out of 8,939 electors.

Mr. RYLAND (*Gympie*) did not like this amendment, because the average working individual, having the least money to take advantage of this vote, would have to get a medical certificate.

Mr. PAGET: No; two electors can witness, or a medical man.

Mr. RYLAND: It would simply mean that if a man had money he could get a doctor to go round.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Or two electors.

Mr. RYLAND: It would be easier to send round a doctor than to get two electors, and consequently the doctor would go round, and he could be paid to give a certificate that people would be sick on a certain day two or three weeks ahead. It was not necessary for a person to be sick at the time; the object was to be sick at election day; in fact, an application might even be sent in at the present time for the next election. (Laughter.)

Mr. PAGET: Your arguments are fallacious.

Mr. RYLAND: There was nothing specified as to when they should send the application in. They could send it in at any time. With money they could get anything done. Money could drive a coach through an Act of Parliament. As an illustration, he might point out that they had prohibition in certain districts in America, and one of the conditions was that no one could get drink except when they had a doctor's certificate that they were in ill-health and wanted stimulants. The result was that nearly all the chemists kept doctors on the premises. (Laughter.) A good electioneering agent would treat the doctor very liberally, and all the certificates necessary to carry out an election would be signed. He saw great possibilities in connection with this amendment of the hon. member for Mackay. The hon. member for Bulimba said just now, "Are we going to give women a vote?" Of course they

Mr. Ryland.]

wanted to give the men and women of Queensland a vote, but what was the use of giving a woman a vote if it was only to be used as an instrument of torture against herself, her husband, or relatives? The Elections Act recognised that the secrecy of the ballot was one of the grand things that the democracy had been fighting for for many years.

The CHAIRMAN: I would point out to the hon. member, and to other hon. members, that the discussion should be confined to the amendment before the Committee. The question of the postal vote is not before us just now.

Mr. RYLAND: The amendment of the hon. member for Mackay was intensifying the abuse of the secrecy of the ballot, one of the things they were all fighting for. Clause 73 of the Elections Acts, 1885 to 1905, provided—

No elector shall take out of the booth or polling-place any ballot-paper either before or after the same has been so marked.

The reason of that was candidates had rooms outside, to which the elector would go, and that particular ballot-paper would not be sent in again with him. They must not allow anyone to come between the secrecy of the ballot and the elector. It did not matter whether it was two electors, a doctor, a justice of the peace, or anyone else, because they were all equally bad. The clause went on—

The elector shall fold up the paper in such a manner as to show the initials of the presiding officer on the back thereof, and shall exhibit such initials to the presiding officer before he is allowed to deposit the paper in the ballot-box.

That meant that he had to show the ballot-paper to the presiding officer, so the presiding officer could see his initials on it, fearing he should have taken it outside and brought back some other paper, leaving the proper ballot-paper outside with the committee. That would interfere with the secrecy of the ballot. If they allowed a justice of the peace or anybody else to come between the elector and the secrecy of the ballot, that would be where the injury would be done.

Hon. R. PHILP: Have you not always done it yourself?

Mr. RYLAND: It did not matter what he did. If he did a wrong thing, that was no reason why the leader of the Opposition should do it. He wanted to keep out every appearance of evil—(laughter)—to make it easy to do right and hard to do wrong. But the postal vote made it easy to do wrong and hard to do right, because the tendency was to get as many as possible to vote by post, and a good many were made to vote in a way they did not want to vote.

Mr. PAGET: That is a libel on the women of Queensland.

Mr. RYLAND: He did not want to deny the women a vote, but he was going to vote against all those fancy votes—like justices of the peace, two witnesses, doctors, or anyone else certifying to anyone voting.

Mr. JENKINSON: Then your democracy is all gone.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

Mr. RYLAND: They had a big fight to get that section into the Act. At Maryborough at one time there were hundreds of votes cast in a way in which he had described, and there was nothing secret about the ballot at all.

[Mr. Ryland.

Mr. KEOGH was surprised at the remarks of the last speaker. That hon. gentleman knew perfectly well, as an old electioneering man, that men often voted at the polling-booth openly. He had voted for the first Parliament in Queensland; he had always voted openly, and would do so as long as he lived. When the late Government was in office they introduced an Elections Bill, which included what was called "the baby vote," which also made for giving women votes. The members of the Government party at the late election prated about giving the women a vote. The member for North Brisbane hit the nail on the head when he said that the women of Queensland did not vote in accordance with the wishes of the Labour party. On this ground they were trying to obviate their difficulty—by trying to curtail the women vote as much as possible.

Mr. MAXWELL: What has that got to do with the amendment?

The CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to the amendment. The hon. gentleman is wandering away from the question.

Mr. KEOGH: He was decidedly in favour of the amendment of the hon. member for Mackay, because where a medical man was in attendance, he would be one of the [9.30 p.m.] best persons to witness the ballot-paper. He considered that two electors should also have the right to witness the ballot-paper, and that would meet all the difficulties some hon. members had against the postal vote. The leader of the Opposition had forcibly shown the inconsistencies that took place in not allowing people outside the radius of 3 miles to vote by post. In his electorate, some electors had to travel 17 miles to vote, which was far too great a distance for any person to have to go for that purpose. The Minister in charge of the Bill stated there would be a saving of £4,000 in advertising, and that amount would be spent in extra polling-booths. He welcomed that, and to a great extent that would give the women in the outside districts an opportunity of recording their votes. They should see that the women who had now got the vote should maintain it at any cost.

Mr. CAMPBELL (Moreton): It did seem an extraordinary thing that the Government, after taking credit for giving the women the vote, should practically attempt to knock it out, and to state "under no circumstances shall we allow you to exercise the vote." He took it that it was the wish of the House that they should enable the postal vote to be taken in some way. The leader of the Opposition had put forward a proposition to enable the Committee to take the matter into consideration, and if it was not acceptable to the majority of members, it was the duty of the House to so amend the Act that they would have some system that would be free from the abuses that took place at the last general election. How would it be possible for a woman with three or five children to leave her house and go a distance of 10 or 12 miles, with her husband away on the same day, to record her vote?

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to point out to the hon. member that the question now before the Committee is whether an elector or medical practitioner can be allowed to witness a vote. The hon. member is discussing the main question, and not the amendment.

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

AYES, 28.

Mr. Armstrong	Mr. Macartney
" Barnes	" McMaster
" Blocksidge	" Moore
" Campbell	" Paget
" Creagh	" Paull
" Cribb	" Petrie
" Denham	" Philp
" Forrest	" Rankin
" Fox	" Somerset
" Gunn	" Stodart
" Hanran	" Sumner
" Hardacre	" Swayne
" Jenkinson	" Walker
" Keogh	" White

Tellers: Mr. Jenkinson and Mr. Stodart.

NOES, 32.

Mr. Adamson	Mr. Kidston
" G. P. Barber	" Land
" Bell	" Lennon
" Blair	" Mackintosh
" Bowman	" Mann
" Brennan	" Maughan
" Cowap	" Maxwell
" Douglas	" Mitchell
" Grant	" Mulcahy
" Grayson	" Nevitt
" Hamilton	" Payne
" Hawthorn	" Plunkett
" Hunter	" Redwood
" Jones	" Roberts
" Kenna	" Ryland
" Kerr	" Woods

Tellers: Mr. Cowap and Mr. Ryland.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Millican, Mr. Bouchard, and Mr. Stephens.
Noes—Mr. O'Sullivan, Mr. May, and Mr. McIntyre.

Resolved in the negative.

Mr. McMASTER: It was very difficult to understand how the Government could call themselves democrats after the vote which had just been given. He had always been one to stand by his guns. He did not shuffle because some other person told him he was to do so-and-so. He regretted to think that even the Government had to do that now, because his colleague was driving the team. Hon. members had spoken about the secrecy of the ballot and the necessity of protecting the secrecy of the ballot. If there was any evidence to be brought forward to prove that the secrecy of the ballot had been violated by the Government, and that their intention was only a pretence to preserve the secrecy of the ballot, it was to be found in the statement of the hon. member for Cunningham. The hon. member stated that six justices of the peace were appointed in Warwick a few days before the election because the Government supporters found the other side had all the justices on their side, and the Secretary for Public Works got six appointed to go round and witness signatures for his party. Now, how did the hon. member know which side those justices were on?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would like the hon. member to connect his remarks with the clause before the Committee. I cannot see their bearing. Previous speakers have been at fault in this respect, but I do not think the hon. member can follow them. The thing has been discussed by previous speakers, although, had I done my duty then, I should have called the hon. members to order.

Mr. McMASTER admitted what the Chairman said, but surely he would give him an opportunity of dealing with the statement made by the hon. member for Cunningham.

He was trying to show that while the Government made so much of the necessity for keeping the secrecy of the ballot intact, they were the very persons who tampered with its secrecy. They must have known that those men were going to vote for their party, or they would never have appointed them. If the general election had taken place during the last month or six weeks, he would ask the Home Secretary how many women would have been disfranchised through the sickness that was about? There would have been thousands who would have been unable to go to the ballot. He knew cases in which a family of three or four persons had been laid up and unable to leave their rooms, and he should like to know how it would be possible for those persons to vote under such circumstances unless they could vote by post. It was only eighteen months ago that women were given the franchise, and it was a very serious matter to deprive them of the right to vote now merely because it was considered that they had not exercised the franchise judiciously. The reason for this proposal was that the women had given an intelligent vote. Because of that the Labour party were forcing the Government to do away with the postal vote altogether. As to the contention that only a few postal votes were given in the country districts, and that it was the towns which had taken advantage of the postal ballot system, he would point out that in Fortitude Valley, where there were 8,600 names on the electoral roll, there were not 500 votes recorded by post. The Minister had stated that they might use the money saved by not advertising the bi-monthly electoral lists in providing an increased number of polling-booths. How would the hon. gentleman increase the number of polling-booths in the Valley, and how would an increase in the number of polling-booths enable women to leave their sick rooms and vote? The women of Fortitude Valley were anxious to vote, but did not wish to vote by post. Still, he thought that a woman who was ill should have an opportunity of recording her vote without being compelled to go to a polling-booth. He failed to see how the Government could justify their action in taking away the vote from women, and he hoped they would see their way to accept the amendment in some other form. The talk about protecting the secrecy of the ballot he regarded as a sham.

Mr. CAMPBELL: With regard to the proposal to abolish the postal vote, it seemed to him that it was due to the manner in which the women had voted at the last election. There could be no other reason urged for the proposal. Ministers and supporters of the Government had made the hills and valleys of the country reverberate with their denunciation of members of the Opposition because they had not given the women the franchise. During the last election the Premier got up on every occasion and told the women that his party had given them the vote, and that they should remember that fact on polling day. Because they had not remembered that on polling day in the way the hon. gentleman desired, the Premier had now joined with the Labour party to disfranchise a large number of women in the State. Surely if the women were entitled to a vote they should be accorded every facility for the exercise of that vote. The great majority of the women who had been disfranchised by this proposal were women who lived in the country, and who could not leave their homes. If the Government were honest, sincere, and consistent, instead of abolishing the postal vote altogether, they would bend

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their energies in the direction of finding out or devising some system which was less objectionable than the one they were now trying to supersede. It was admitted on all sides that the postal vote was not an unqualified success. The Home Secretary had tried to show that this was because justices of the peace were inserted in the Act as witnesses.

The HOME SECRETARY: They were largely responsible.

Mr. CAMPBELL: Even if they were responsible to some extent, that was not a sufficient reason for knocking out the postal vote altogether. Why did not the hon. gentleman try to devise some other way?

The HOME SECRETARY: This is the safest way.

Mr. CAMPBELL: There was no trouble at all in knocking out the system.

The HOME SECRETARY: You preserve the secrecy of the ballot in this way.

Mr. CAMPBELL: A great deal of the talk about the secrecy of the ballot was an absolute farce. He could not understand the way in which employers had been dragged into this business. The statements made with regard to them were an absolute libel on employers as a body. If an employer happened to be a Labour man he would take every care that every man in his employ voted Labour, but not one single instance could be shown in which employers who supported the Opposition had exercised the slightest intimidation on their men at any time. Those who believed that it was a proper thing that

[10 p.m.] women should exercise the franchise should have brain power enough to try and find a means by which that could be accomplished without abuse. The hon. member for Carnarvon struck a very good note when he said that any two persons could witness a will, and surely if that could be done in such an important matter as a will, it would not be going too far to apply the same principle to the witnessing of a vote which was exercised once in three years. Too much altogether was being made of the secrecy of the ballot. If they wanted people to exercise the franchise they should make it as free and aboveboard as possible. Let the penalty for wrongdoing be as severe as possible, but let the people vote. Those people who brayed so much about reform should be the last to deprive others of the right of voting. He had great hopes that the leader of the Labour party would be a champion for the rights of electors in this respect. He was the uncrowned king of the Assembly, and had posed as the champion of the weak and oppressed. He had a difficulty in finding words strong enough to show how much he was in earnest. He now had a magnificent opportunity in front of him; he had the situation in his hand; he had got the responsibility and the credit or discredit of—

Mr. BOWMAN: I will take the responsibility.

Mr. CAMPBELL: He hoped he would also take the discredit of going back on his principles. He had taken every opportunity of showing that he was the champion of women.

Mr. BOWMAN: Why were you not a candidate for the championship?

Mr. CAMPBELL: He did not want to become a ranter—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would ask the hon. member if he thinks his remarks in reference to the leader of the Labour party have any connection with the question?

[Mr. Campbell.

Mr. CAMPBELL: He was leading up to it. If the hon. member was in earnest, he should move in the direction of making the postal vote for women effective, but instead of doing that he was knocking it out in one act. He was very much disappointed, because he thought the Government would have made a serious effort to improve on the present postal ballot. The leader of the Labour party was not assisting the Government to formulate a practicable scheme.

The PREMIER: He is not doing one little bit of what you want him to do.

Mr. CAMPBELL: He was not doing one little bit of what he ought to do. He was no more consistent than the Government.

The PREMIER: Surely you do not expect that from the Government?

Mr. CAMPBELL: He did not expect any consistency from the Premier, but he did from the leader of the Labour party. If there had been abuse in connection with justices witnessing postal votes, why not substitute some other method? Why should the Government, in that cowardly, selfish fashion, say they were not equal to the occasion?

The PREMIER: Is that in order?

The CHAIRMAN: I would point out to the hon. member that "cowardly" is rather a strong word. I do not say it is unparliamentary, but I suggest that the hon. member should modify his strong language.

Mr. CAMPBELL: He liked to call a spade a spade.

Mr. COWAP: Call it an agricultural implement.

Mr. CAMPBELL: I would like to call you that.

Mr. COWAP: I will give you every chance you like.

Mr. CAMPBELL: At all events, he was in possession of the floor, and if he called a spade a spade without being unparliamentary, he did so because he liked to make himself understood. He did not intend to use the word "cowardly" in an offensive sense.

The PREMIER: In a Pickwickian sense.

Mr. CAMPBELL: It appeared to him that there had been no serious attempt to try and find a remedy for the abuses which had crept in under the postal vote provisions of the Act.

The PREMIER: There are a great many ways. You have failed, and your party have failed, as everyone else must fail, to find a way of letting voters vote away from the ballot-box, and give them the secrecy of the ballot.

Mr. CAMPBELL: As he had pointed out the secrecy of the ballot was an absolute farce. The Premier knew it to be so; but it was only a piece of gerrymandering to go round the Bill in this way. The way in which the Local Authorities Act had been carried out was an evidence that there was no abuse of any serious moment.

Mr. RYLAND: There is any amount.

Mr. CAMPBELL: The hon. member might be an authority on that sort of thing—he talked about intimidation.

The PREMIER: I think I heard about a sawmill once in Brisbane.

Mr. CAMPBELL: He did not know the sawmill the Premier referred to, but he would lay down any money the Premier liked to name that he would not be able to find a solitary individual in his mill to say he was intimidated or influenced one way or another.

Mr. MAUGHAN: They are not there now.

Mr. CAMPBELL: Now or at any time.

Mr. RYLAND: They had to "get."

Mr. HARDACRE: Or a pottery works.

Mr. CAMPBELL: No; not a pottery works. That had no application to what was being done here to-night. That matter appeared in the *Worker*, and the facts were to the credit of his firm and their employees. He wanted to urge on the leader of the Labour party his plain duty in the matter. (Laughter.) He supposed he was bound to ignore the Premier, because he had practically abdicated his position. The hon. member for the Valley said the other night if it pleased him he would do so and so. He asked the hon. member in all seriousness—if he wished to have the white flower of a blameless life in his manly breast—to do something to find a way out of this confessed difficulty. (Laughter.) If he refused to take up that position he would have pinned on his breast that badge which he would be ashamed of ever afterwards, "Found wanting."

Mr. BOWMAN: It was very amusing to hear the hon. member talking of the great weight of responsibility which would fall on him (Mr. Bowman), as leader of the Labour party, if he did not follow his advice. He did not purpose to follow the hon. member's advice. He was prepared to cast his vote, irrespective of what any woman might think of him, against a principle which was proven at the last election to lead to great corruption.

Mr. CAMPBELL: No, no!

Mr. BOWMAN: There was an organisation at the present time which had taken a very keen interest in connection with the women workers of Queensland—the women's political organisation—and they had passed a resolution unanimously thanking the Premier and his Government for endeavouring to abolish the postal system. In all probability he was going to introduce a deputation to the Premier on the subject. The hon. member for Moreton spoke about him (Mr. Bowman) claiming to be a champion for the women electors. Anything he had done in that respect he had done with an honest desire to improve their conditions. (Hear, hear!) He had always known that as an industrial class they were oppressed, and he had striven to do his best to relieve them from that oppression. He had spoken to many women who had exercised the postal vote, and who took a keen interest in it, and they recognised that there was nothing secret about it. At the declaration of the polls, many members from both sides of the House declared that the postal vote system was an evil one and should be abolished.

The HOME SECRETARY: And defeated candidates as well.

Mr. BOWMAN: And defeated candidates as well. He thought that the analysis of the votes, particularly in the large centres, given by the Home Secretary, was convincing proof that the postal ballot outside those particular centres was very little availed of. In forty-six constituencies there were only 3,000 postal votes registered.

Mr. CAMPBELL: They knew nothing about it.

Mr. BOWMAN: He would not belittle them so far as the hon. member for Moreton. He gave them credit for knowing all about it. As he had stated before, there was little need for a postal vote to be used, so far as the metropolis and the large towns were concerned. He was satisfied that the regard of the hon. gentleman was not the question of giving the women a vote, but of exercising the power of the money-bags, of which one particular party had more to back them up than any other party. The hon. member for Nundah had given strong reasons why the postal ballot should be abolished, and said that he

knew of justices having gone into the homes of women in his electorate to induce them to vote by post. He believed that some women were denied the right of exercising their vote through various causes, but he believed the House would be doing a just thing even in depriving women of their votes, rather than allowing the system to remain on our statute-book to be a disgrace, as it was at the last election. Therefore, after all the lecturing that had been given him that night, it was like pouring water on a duck's back. He was going to vote against the amendment, and was going to take the full responsibility for doing so, even if it was the burden of John Bunyan.

Mr. HARDACRE intended to vote against the amendment as it stood. He voted for the last amendment because it was liberalising the position in the direction in which he desired, but this amendment *en bloc* did not meet the difficulty satisfactorily.

Mr. PAGET: Amend it again.

Mr. HARDACRE: They could take it for granted that they all desired to see the women given this vote if it could be satisfactorily given, but he had been unable to find any way out of the difficulty, and perhaps the Government were the same. The amendment did not meet the difficulty at all, and he would give an example. The person who witnessed the elector's signature on the postal-ballot was not to see the way the elector voted, but, as he pointed out before the amendment was drafted, there was no penalty provided if they did see the way the elector voted. It provided for a penalty of £100 if he saw how the elector voted and divulged it.

Mr. MACARTNEY: How can you prove he sees it unless he divulges it?

Mr. HARDACRE: You could not prove it. It would mean that a mistress could practically compel her servants to vote, and she could see how they voted. That gave an opportunity for intimidation which ought to be avoided.

Mr. MACARTNEY: If she divulges it she is liable to a penalty.

Mr. HARDACRE: But she, being in the position of employer, would know how her servant voted, and so could every person know how an elector voted if he witnessed the vote. Then there was the statement made by the hon. member for Gympie that when a vote was witnessed it was handed back to the voter, and no one knew what he would do with it.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Any agent who takes a ballot-paper is liable to a penalty of £100.

Mr. HARDACRE: But there was no penalty if the voter got it back and handed it to the agent. It was not fair to charge members with not wanting to give the women a vote if they voted against this amendment.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Improve it.

Mr. HARDACRE: He was unable to provide any machinery which would meet with that difficulty, and the hon. member's amendment would not meet that difficulty.

Mr. NEVITT (*Carpentaria*) did not care about giving a silent vote on this particular question. Therefore he would give one or two reasons to show he intended to vote against the amendment of the leader of the Opposition. It had been stated by certain members that those who opposed this amendment had no sympathy with the females of Queensland. (Hear, hear.) Well, he gave that an emphatic denial. He was going to vote against the amendment, but he maintained that he had just as much respect for and sympathy with the females of Queensland as the hon. gentleman who made that statement.

Mr. Nevitt.]

Mr. KENNA : You cannot take that statement seriously.

Mr. NEVITT : But the statement had been made, and he considered it was his duty to say that he personally was going to vote against the amendment for the simple reason that he did not think it was possible to permit an amendment of the law to give the females a postal vote without leaving it open to manipulation. In the electorate which he had the honour to represent they went round persuading the females to record their votes by post by telling them that a polling-booth was not a fit place for females to go to on account of the drunkenness and obscene language which went on there, and no woman ought to be seen there.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER : Who said that ?

Mr. NEVITT : A late member of the House said that in the electorate of Carpentaria. That same individual asked a lady elector to record her vote by post in his favour, but she said she was not going to vote by post. He afterwards found out that that lady did record her vote by post, and he made it his business to go to the lady's husband and tell him that his wife had told him a lie. It was quite time, therefore, that they did away with the postal vote, so that it would be impossible for things of that kind to occur. It had been stated by hon. members that just prior to the election a number of justices of the peace had been put on for the purpose of attesting postal votes. There were about thirty or forty justices of the peace in the electorate which he represented, and only one out of that number supported him during the last election. That gentleman had been a justice of the peace for twenty years, so that it could not be said that he was put on for the purpose of attesting claims for the Labour candidate, at least.

Mr. RYLAND : You want to get some more justices of the peace up there.

Mr. NEVITT : Another justice of the peace in that electorate told him that his vote was going to be challenged. He spoke to the presiding officer, and asked him to challenge the vote when it came there, and he said he would. The same gentleman, although he had been absent from the electorate for seven months, only came into the electorate a few days before the election, and still he recorded his vote. That gentleman was on the commission of the peace. When they found that sort of thing it was high time the postal vote was done away with. If the Labour party could see a way of giving the women a postal vote, where it would not be manipulated in any way to interfere with the secrecy of the ballot, then they would give it, but they could not see their way in the amendment that had been drafted. There were ninety postal votes recorded in his electorate, and of that number seventy were recorded in Normanton.

Mr. BOWMAN : What is the area of Normanton ?

Mr. NEVITT : About a mile. The electorate was 70,000 square miles. The majority of ladies outside the towns of Normanton, Burketown, and Camooweal were unable to record their votes, because they could not get a justice of the peace to attest their claims. If they got one to attest their application, they could not get one to attest the ballot-paper. For that reason he opposed the amendment.

Mr. CREAGH : Although he believed, as he stated on a previous occasion, he would be in a minority, he intended to vote for [10.30 p.m.] the amendment. No woman who resided within less than 3 miles of a polling-place would be able to vote by post under the amendment, unless she made a declaration that she was going to be ill.

Mr. RYLAND : That is easily done.

[Mr. Nevitt.

Mr. CREAGH : It was a crying shame for any member to make such a statement regarding our women folk, and he hoped the hon. member would be earmarked for future identification. There was a great deal of talk about not having sufficient polling-places, but he could not complain of that. He believed that every place recommended to the Government for a polling-place was made one.

Mr. BARBER : You can thank Murphy for that.

Mr. CREAGH : Probably he was to thank for it. He was glad of it, because he benefited by it as well as his opponent. However, he did not think that his opponent had anything to do with it, as they were the same polling-places as previously, with the exception of Stannary Hills—which he believed was appointed on the recommendation of Mr. Murphy, and there he (Mr. Creagh) got a majority. Intimidation had been talked of ; but he did not believe that there was one man or woman in his constituency who was afraid to record a vote. His constituency was a mining constituency, and the miner was not a man to be intimidated by any man. He knew that so long as he did his work he would be kept on, and that, if he did not do his work, the manager would sack him. He was independent. He was glad to see supporters of the Government supporting the amendment, because it showed that hon. members were prepared to do what they thought right, quite irrespective of party. For that reason, he was going to continue to take up the position he had taken up ever since this Elections Bill was introduced. He had read the *Croydon Mining News* that morning, and it gave him particular fits for taking up that position, and, in order that it might have something else to publish, he was going to fight it to the end. He wished to refer to the "Jump Jim Crow" business that was going on in the Chamber. One day they heard a member supporting the measure, and the next he spoke against it or apologised for it. When the Bill was introduced, the hon. member for Cairns said—

Mr. MAXWELL rose to a point of order. Would the hon. member be in order in quoting from *Hansard* for this session ?

The CHAIRMAN : I think the hon. member will be in order in quoting from *Hansard* if it is the same debate.

Mr. CREAGH : It was not exactly a debate on that particular question, but it was in connection with the Bill and the matter before the Committee. The hon. member said—

I believe in giving women living any distance from a polling-booth facilities for voting, but I do not believe in having, as was the case at the recent elections, justices of the peace going round to women living only a few hundred yards from a polling-booth to collect their votes.

It seemed remarkable that, after the hon. member had an opportunity of reading the provisions of the Bill, he should on two occasions say that he was going to support a Bill that he did not believe in, and that he intended to vote for the total abolition of the postal vote. There was a good deal of canvassing at the elections, and he admitted that he took the opportunity, as any other hon. member would have done, of working very hard in connection with the postal vote. So did his opponent's friends, and so did other candidates. If the amendment were agreed to, it would not make any appreciable difference in the Croydon electorate, as not more than 1 per cent. of the electors were more than 3 miles distant from a polling-place. The hon. member for Carpentaria pointed out that his electorate was a large one, and a great many people were not able to vote. It had been argued that, if the amendment were incorporated in the Bill,

and no postmaster or other individual authorised to attest the signatures was within reach, it would make no difference, and that the position would be just the same as if the postal vote was abolished; but, if they could get somebody to attest their signatures by riding 5 or 6 miles to a station, electors who took an interest in the elections would take that amount of trouble. He was not speaking from a selfish point of view at all in the matter. For the reason that the amendment would give some people an opportunity of recording their votes, he should support the amendment.

Mr. MANN: Every time the hon. member for Croydon got up in the House he made a mistake of some kind. He could not even quote *Hansard* correctly. The hon. member said that he (Mr. Mann) was prepared to give a vote to women who lived 5 miles from a polling-booth, and talked about a "Jump Jim Crow" business.

Mr. CREAGH rose to a point of order. He quoted these words from *Hansard*—"I believe in giving"—

Mr. KENNA: What is the point of order?

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid the hon. member is not raising a point of order.

Mr. CREAGH: The point of order was that the hon. member said he misquoted him.

The PREMIER: That is no point of order.

Mr. MANN: The hon. member indulged in a lot of talk about the "Jump Jim Crow" business, but forgot that on one occasion he contested a plebiscite in the Labour interest, and—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member should not enter into these personal matters. The hon. member for Croydon dealt more with general statements, but the hon. member for Cairns is particularising in regard to a personal matter.

Mr. MANN said he did not propose to pursue the matter any further.

Question—That the proposed new clause (*Mr. Philp's amendment*) stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 26.

Mr. Armstrong	Mr. McMaster
" Barnes	" Moore
" Blocksidge	" Paget
" Campbell	" Paull
" Creagh	" Petrie
" Cribb	" Philp
" Denham	" Rankin
" Forrest	" Somerset
" Fox	" Stodart
" Hanran	" Sumner
" Jenkinson	" Swayne
" Keogh	" Walker
" Macartney	" White

Tellers: Mr. Barnes and Mr. Paget.

NOES, 34.

Mr. Adamson	Mr. Kerr
" G. P. Barber	" Kidston
" Bell	" Land
" Blair	" Lennon
" Bowman	" Mackintosh
" Brennan	" Mann
" Cowap	" Maughan
" Douglas	" Maxwell
" Grant	" Mitchell
" Grayson	" Muleahy
" Gunn	" Nevitt
" Hamilton	" Payne
" Hardacre	" Plunkett
" Hawthorn	" Redwood
" Hunter	" Roberts
" Jones	" Ryland
" Kenna	" Woods

Tellers: Mr. Kenna and Mr. Maughan.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Millican, Mr. Bouchard, and Mr. Stephens.

Noes—Mr. O'Sullivan, Mr. May, and Mr. McIntyre.

Resolved in the negative.

On clause 4—"Absent voters"—

HON. R. PHILP said before this clause was passed they ought to have some explanation of it from the Minister. Personally, he thought that everybody should be allowed to vote in any part of the State in which he might be at the time of an election, but he wanted to know what was going to be done under this provision. Was the Minister going to provide electoral rolls for all electorates at every polling-booth in Queensland? Was the penalty for personation sufficient? Those were questions to which he should like an answer. If every polling-booth was not provided with electoral rolls, a man going to a place outside his own electorate might record his vote when his name was not on the roll. At the last election a member of the Upper House came from Cloncurry to Townsville to vote for him, and then found that although he had been living in Townsville for thirty years his name was not on the roll. That gentleman might have voted under this provision at Cloncurry or some other outside place believing that his name was on the roll, and might afterwards have been mulcted in the sum of £50 for so voting. The *bona fide* voter would then be quite satisfied that he was on the roll. He would first like to know whether the Home Secretary was going to provide rolls at every polling place? He was anxious to make the clause complete. It professed to enable every man and woman to vote, and if what he suggested was done, would the Home Secretary state how much it was likely to cost?

The HOME SECRETARY: It was not proposed to have electoral rolls in each polling-place. The cost would be prohibitive. There were sixty electoral rolls, and that number would have to be multiplied by the number of polling-places. Provision was made for absent voters to be asked certain questions. If the voter had every reason to think he was on the roll it was not likely that any penalty would be inflicted if it was found afterwards that he was not on the roll. The clause expressly said that any person who "wilfully" made a false answer would be liable to the penalty. Under those circumstances, he thought the absent voter was amply protected.

Mr. PAGET: It was highly advisable that the voter should be allowed to cast his vote if absent from his electorate, but he would point out that the endorsement on the list of questions was, "I declare the answers to the above questions to be true, and I sign my name knowing that if any of them is false I 'may' be liable to a penalty of £50." In subclause 8 it distinctly said that if he made a false statement he "shall" be liable to the penalty. He thought the word "may" in the declaration should be altered to "shall." Why should "may" be used in one case and "shall" in the other.

The PREMIER: Supposing a man made a declaration that he lived in Rockhampton, and it was proved he lived in Brisbane, would it not be held that he knew where he was living?

Mr. PAGET: He only wanted to know if it would not be advisable for "may" to be altered to "shall."

HON. R. PHILP: The Home Secretary might give some explanation in answer to the hon. member for Mackay. The use of the words "may" and "shall" could not both be right.

The HOME SECRETARY: They are both right.

HON. R. PHILP could not see it. In one case it said "may be liable" and in the other "shall be liable."

The PREMIER: If it is proved that he has done it wilfully.

Hon. R. Philp.]

The HOME SECRETARY: Both words were right. In the first instance it might not be proved that he had done it wilfully. In the second instance it said if it was proved that he had done it wilfully he "shall" be liable.

Mr. WHITE thought the penalty should be £50 or six months' imprisonment. A rich man might risk £50 with the object of turning the election. On the other hand, a fine of £50 had no terrors for a poor man, because he would be unable to pay.

The PREMIER: He would have to go to gaol until he did.

Mr. WHITE: It did not say so.

The HOME SECRETARY: The Justices Act provides for that.

Mr. WHITE: Six months' imprisonment would put the rich man and the poor man on the same footing. He would move that the word "may" on line 40 be omitted with a view of inserting "shall."

The HOME SECRETARY could not accept the amendment. It was provided under the Justices Act that if a man did not pay a fine he was bound to go to prison for a certain time.

Mr. SOMERSET thought the mistake was in using the word "false" on line 40. The word "shall" would be better than "may" if used in connection with "false."

HON. R. PHILP: It seemed to him that if a man was going to vote for the Government of the day he would be quite safe. He

[11 p.m.] would say the Government would not prosecute him as he was going to vote for them. (Laughter.) Why should it not be "and I sign my name knowing that if the thing is false I shall be liable to a fine of £50"?

The PREMIER: Would it really make any difference?

HON. R. PHILP: If a man was with "the powers that be," he would sign the present form, but if he knew he would be liable he might think twice over it before he voted. They should treat everybody alike; if they made a mistake let them pay the penalty. It was a big privilege to allow people to vote in any part of Queensland, and we should take all the safeguards possible. We gave the women the privilege of voting by post two years ago, and the Bill was hurriedly rushed through the House. Mistakes had been made, and instead of remedying them the Government wanted to cut it out altogether. It would be the same with this; a few persons might make a mistake, and the Government would say they were quite helpless, and abolish this, too.

Mr. RANKIN did not see much in the contention of the leader of the Opposition, because in cases where a certain penalty was enacted the determination was given to those who heard the case. As a rule the words "may be" meant the limit of the penalty which was mentioned. The bench might not think the conditions of such a nature as to authorise a fine of £50, and if "shall" was substituted for "may" it might be doing an injustice. He was opposed to an amendment of that nature.

The HOME SECRETARY suggested that it might meet the views of the leader of the Opposition if the words "I render myself liable" were used.

Mr. DENHAM: If it made no difference, why not meet the views of those who contended that by having the word "may" it might lead an unscrupulous person into signing a declaration, thinking it would only mean a possible prosecution, whereas by the word "shall" he was rendering himself liable. The

[*Hon. A. G. C. Hawthorn.*]

whole clause was a loose clause—it was a nomad's clause. It was quite apparent that the Government were more concerned about the nomads than they were about the women of the State and the mothers of our country.

Question—That the word "may" proposed to be omitted with the view of inserting "shall" (*Mr. White's amendment*) stand part of the clause—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 32.

Mr. Adamson	Mr. Kidston
" G. P. Barber	" Land
" Bell	" Lennon
" Blair	" Mackintosh
" Bowman	" Mann
" Brennan	" Maughan
" Cowap	" Maxwell
" Douglas	" Mitchell
" Grant	" Muloahy
" Grayson	" Nevitt
" Hamilton	" Payne
" Hardacre	" Rankin
" Hawthorn	" Redwood
" Hunter	" Roberts
" Jones	" Ryland
" Kerr	" Woods

Tellers: Mr. Grant and Mr. G. P. Barber.

NOES, 15.

Mr. Armstrong	Mr. Paull
" Blockside	" Petrie
" Campbell	" Philp
" Denham	" Somerset
" Hanran	" Swayne
" McMaster	" Walker
" Moore	" White
" Paget	

Tellers: Mr. White and Mr. Campbell.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. O'Sullivan, Mr. May, Mr. McIntyre, and Mr. Gunn.

Noes—Mr. Millican, Mr. Bouchard, Mr. Stephens, and Mr. Jenkinson.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 4 put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again tomorrow.

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