Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 24 MARCH 1908

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

TUESDAY, 24 MARCH, 1908.

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) Regulations as of 28th December, 1907, and 12th March, 1908, relative to the Government Savings Bank Act of 1864.

(2) Return to an Order, relative to grazing farms in Central Queensland, made by the House, on motion of Mr. Grant, on the 11th instant.

QUESTIONS.

REAPPOINTMENT OF DR. MAXWELL.

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*) asked the Chief Secretary—

1. Is it the intention of the Government to reappoint Dr. Maxwell at the end of his present engagement?

2. If so, will he afford Parliament an opportunity of discussing the proposal before the appointment is gazetted?

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

1. and 2. The matter is now being considered.

Mr. LESINA : I think we ought to know something about the reappointment of a man getting £3,000 a year.

CLONCURRY RAILWAY EXTENSION.

Mr. MAY (*Flinders*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

Seeing the Cloncurry Railway extension was to be constructed by day labour, is it the intention of the

Government, as report states, to let the bridge work between Helton and Cloncurry by contract?

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

No. It is not intended to let bridges on the Cloncurry extension by contract, but offers have been invited from men willing to undertake the erection by piecework at a stated price. The erection of bridges in this way is a common practice on day labour lines.

RAILWAY FROM CLONCURRY TO MOUNT ELLIOTT.

Mr. MAY asked the Secretary for Railways—

Is it the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill to construct a railway from Cloncurry to Mount Elliott this session; if not all the way to Mount Elliott, could not a part of the way as far as the Malbon, which I understand is already fully surveyed, be constructed?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

The matter is under consideration.

(Laughter.)

ENFORCING MINING REGULATIONS.

Mr. MAY asked the Secretary for Mines—

Is it his intention to enforce regulations as specified in part XIII., clause 214, subsections 13, 14, 16, 17, 22, 30, 32, and 33, of the Mining Act of 1898, in the Cloncurry district?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. J. W. Blair, *Ipswich*) replied—

A resident inspector of mines has been appointed for the Cloncurry district, and is now on his way to the field. The inspector will see that the provisions of the Act are complied with.

Mr. LESINA: That is better than "The matter is under consideration." (Laughter.)

RAILWAY FROM WALLOON TO MARBURG.

Mr. KEOGH (*Rosewood*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

Is it his intention to have a survey made from Walloon to Marburg, as promised by the Secretary for Public Lands when acting as Secretary for Railways?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

This matter will have careful consideration, but so far there has not been a surveyor available.

Mr. LESINA: We are getting tired of "This matter is under consideration." (Laughter.)

REPRESENTATION AT PREMIERS' CONFERENCE.

Mr. SUMNER (*Nundah*), without notice, asked the Chief Secretary—

In view of the introduction of the Surplus Revenue Bill in the Commonwealth Parliament, is it the intention of the Government to be represented at the forthcoming Premiers' Conference to be held in Melbourne?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. LESINA: Who will you send down there? Airey?

The SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. MAXWELL: Send Lesina.

ELECTIONS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

COMMITTEE.

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2—"Discontinuance of certain advertisements"—

HON. R. PHILP (*Townsville*): Before they repealed section 29 of the consolidated Acts, which was provided by the clause before the Committee, hon. members should understand what it meant. Would it mean that the names that were struck off the roll at the revision courts would not be advertised?

The HOME SECRETARY: No; that is not so. We will continue to advertise the list of dead, left, and disqualified.

HON. R. PHILP: The lists of those put on the roll should be advertised too. He would like the Minister to tell them the cost of advertising the names put on at the bi-monthly or quarterly courts.

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. A. G. C. Hawthorn, *Enoggera*): The cost of advertising the bi-monthly lists of names last year was £1,367 14s. 9d. The cost of advertising the electoral lists, as mentioned in section 29, was £279 7s. 8d., and the cost of advertising the lists of dead, left, and disqualified was £226 16s. 3d. That was a reduction on what it was the previous year, still hon. members would see that it was a very large amount.

Mr. PAGET: What was the total amount?

The HOME SECRETARY: About £2,000 altogether.

Mr. MAXWELL: That will be so much more towards the old age pensions.

Mr. JENKINSON (*Fassifern*) hoped the Minister would see his way clear to allow the clause to be negatived. When the clause was discussed on the last occasion that this Bill was before the Committee, the consensus of opinion was that the money was absolutely well spent.

Mr. MAXWELL: No, no! The majority were against that.

Mr. JENKINSON: The majority might have been against it as far as the voting was concerned, but the consensus of opinion was that the money was well spent.

GOVERNMENT AND LABOUR MEMBERS: No.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is you, I suppose.

Mr. JENKINSON: He was one of those who believed in giving as much publicity as possible to these matters. There was no scheme suggested for giving electors the same opportunity of ascertaining whether their names were placed on the roll as was given by advertising the lists. Posting the lists outside a post office or courthouse was not sufficient, as many electors would never see them at those places. In the provinces numbers of electors would have to travel many miles into town in order to ascertain whether their claims had been accepted by the bi-monthly court, and their names registered. The amount spent in advertising the lists was very insignificant when it was considered that it was spread over the whole of Queensland. The metropolitan journals would absorb two-fifths of the amount, so that there was very little left for advertising names in the provinces. He hoped the matter would be pressed to a division, and that the clause would be negatived.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member for Fassifern spoke about the consensus of opinion in the last Parliament being in favour of continuing this expenditure. The voting on the repealing clause was "Ayes" 35, "Noes" 24, so that the consensus of opinion was against the retention of the provision, and he thought the majority of hon. members would agree with him that the advertising was absolutely unnecessary, and that it was a waste of money.

Mr. PAGET (*Mackay*) did not agree with the Minister that the advertising of the electoral lists prepared by the bi-monthly courts was

absolutely unnecessary. There was no question but that in districts away from the centres of population the only method by which people could ascertain whether their names were inserted on the electoral roll was by reading the local newspapers. It was absoutely impossible for the great majority of those people to visit the post office or the courthouse to see whether their names were registered. Though the striking of names off the rolls was not strictly related to the clause under discussion, he would draw attention to the enormous number of names which were struck off the rolls at the last annual revision court.

Mr. LESINA: They were nearly all Labour supporters.

Mr. PAGET did not agree with the hon. member for Clermont that they were nearly all Labour supporters. During the election campaign quite a number of cases were brought under his notice in which persons who had never moved from their residence, and who were not Labour supporters, had their names struck off the roll.

Mr. MURPHY: Did not they notice their names in the newspapers?

Mr. PAGET: No. In his own electorate very few cases came under his notice, but quite a number of people in Brisbane, who had not moved from their old residence, when they went to vote, found that their names were not on the roll. He believed it was the desire of every member of the House, and of every right-thinking person in the community, that every person in the State who was entitled to vote should be allowed to vote. How names came to be struck off the roll at the last revision court he did not know. The police were supposed to make a house to house visitation for the purpose of finding out whether electors still resided at the addresses given on the rolls.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No.

Mr. LESINA: They were sent round.

Mr. PAGET understood that the police in the Brisbane districts did make a house to house visitation.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: They did at one time.

Mr. PAGET: Well, they were alleged to have made this visitation. With regard to the question of advertising the names of persons whose names it was proposed to strike off the roll, he would point out that the notices sent out by the electoral office did not always reach people in country districts. In view of the state of the rolls at the last general election, he thought it would be a very excellent thing to form a committee from all parties in the House to inquire into the working of the electoral office, and to see whether some inexpensive system could not be evolved by which every person in the State entitled to the franchise should have his or her name enrolled, and that the names of such persons should not be struck off the roll except for very good reasons.

HON. D. F. DENHAM (*Oxley*) asked whether it was the intention of the Government to still advertise the annual list of persons who were "dead, left, or disqualified"?

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes, that is to be continued.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: This clause merely applies to the bi-monthly lists?

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes.

Mr. ARMSTRONG (*Lockyer*): Many people in the country districts did not come into town more than once a year, and some did not come more than once in two years, and such people would not be able to see the bi-monthly lists if they were only exhibited at a post office or courthouse, but they would probably see them if they were advertised in the local newspapers. The amount spent in advertising these lists was only £33 for each electorate in the State. Was not the advertising worth £33.

The HOME SECRETARY: I do not think so; it is unnecessary.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: He disagreed with the Minister on that point, because there were people who had no means of finding out whether their names were registered except by reading the advertised lists in the local newspapers. Before the last election names were improperly removed from the roll, and the electors received no notice that their names were to be struck off.

The HOME SECRETARY: A notification is sent out to every elector.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: He could give specific instances in his own household where notices were not sent out.

The HOME SECRETARY: They were sent out.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: The notices should be served by some authorised person, and proof of service should be given before a name was struck off the roll. He thought it was more difficult to get on the roll now than it was previously; the provisions with respect to change of residence were certainly involved.

Mr. RYLAND (*Gympie*): From the evidence given by Opposition members who had spoken, the advertising of lists did not prevent people being knocked off the roll last year, and yet those hon. members advocated that the advertising should be continued. This clause had nothing to do with knocking people off the roll—it did not interfere with the advertising of the annual revision lists, but dealt with the claims of persons applying to be enrolled. It cost £1,400 last year to advertise the names of new electors. He agreed that there should be an annual revision of the rolls, otherwise they would become obsolete, and thought that the £1,400 expended on advertising the names of applicants for enrolment should be spent in making a proper annual investigation, with the view of ascertaining who were qualified to have their names on the roll and who should have their names struck off the roll. When the police went round to inquire whether electors continued to reside at the addresses given on the rolls, they should at the same time make it their business to put on the rolls the names of all persons qualified to exercise the franchise.

The HOME SECRETARY: With regard to the statement of the hon. member for Lockyer that he knew cases where the names of persons had been struck off the roll without those persons being notified, he would point out that this clause had nothing to do with the matter. The Government were not proposing to do away with the advertising of the list of those electors who were "dead, left, or disqualified." In addition to advertising that list, every person whose name appeared upon it was notified from the office of the electoral registrar that it was intended to knock his name off the roll if he did not make good his claim in six weeks or two months, so that electors received a double notification.

Mr. JENKINSON: The notice is not always sent.

The HOME SECRETARY: On every occasion.

Mr. JENKINSON: It is not always received.

The HOME SECRETARY: They were posted to the addresses of the electors. As to new names, he did not think there was any hardship in doing away with the advertising. It was

the simplest thing imaginable now to get on the roll. A claimant had only to sign his application, and get it attested by an elector; and then forward it at any time to the electoral office, and it would be considered at the next bi-monthly court. If any person objected to the application, then the claimant would be notified of that objection by the electoral office. So that it seemed to him there was absolutely nothing to complain of. If a person received notice that his name was intended to be struck off, he had the right of going to the registrar's office, and on showing good cause his name would be restored.

Mr. CAMPBELL (*Moreton*): Members generally were well aware that a great many people were knocked off the rolls without just cause. In his own electorate he could name
[4 p.m.] 150 such cases of people who had never moved from their residences or done anything to justify their removal from the roll. Then take the case of the Toowong electorate, in which over 800 names were knocked off. He understood that it was the duty of the police to see that names were on the roll, and the persons who had been instrumental in removing that number of names from the Toowong roll must have taken the cue from someone. He did not think it was a fair thing to the electors that the present practice should be allowed to prevail. It was of the utmost importance that everyone who was entitled to the franchise should have the opportunity of exercising it, but under present conditions that was impossible. How could anyone claim with justice that 15 per cent. of the electors of Toowong had become disqualified? Why, the thing was monstrous, and there was absolutely no justification for such wholesale removals.

The HOME SECRETARY: They get notice of intention to remove their names.

Mr. CAMPBELL: In many cases, in his electorate at all events, they did not get notice. A pretty systematic canvass of the electorate had been made, and it showed conclusively that notices were never sent out, or, if sent out, were never received. If they were sent out they must have been wrongly addressed, and it should be the duty of the registrar's office to find out whether the addressee had received his notice before the name was struck off. It did not tend to good government or the general welfare of the country if the names of electors were struck off without due cause. So far as the advertising was concerned, he did not think it did much good in the towns, but to the country electors it was a great advantage, because they read the papers from end to end, and got due notice of impending trouble. It should be their object to get the names of as many people as possible on the roll and to keep them there until very good cause for their removal had been shown. Some person should be specially appointed for that duty, and should be held personally responsible for it.

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*): It was a matter of the first importance to give every publicity to the applications of persons to get on the electoral roll. He knew of several persons who had applied, not once but twice and thrice, to get on the roll, and the names had still been omitted. Every consideration should be given to such an important matter, and local advertisements should be inserted drawing attention to the fact that such and such advertisements appeared on a certain day. That would have great weight, because it would draw the particular attention of persons to the information they so much desired.

Mr. KEOGH (*Rosewood*) was pleased to hear the Home Secretary say that everyone whose name it was proposed to strike off received a notice, but, at the same time, he was thoroughly conversant with many instances in which no notice had been received by the parties. The Chairman would be acquainted with the name of one of his own supporters, Mr. Donald Macpherson, who had been on the Ipswich roll for twenty years, and whose name had been struck off, whether designedly or not he did not know. It was no credit to anyone that persons whose names had been on the roll for years, and who were not disqualified, should be omitted unknown to themselves. He knew that the police had done their duty in connection with the matter of collecting names, and, though it was really not part of their work, it was authorised by Executive minute. For that he gave the late Home Secretary, Mr. Airey, every credit. He was also aware of the fact that there were instances in which persons did not care about having their names placed on the roll, more particularly the ladies. In fact, he did not know of any instance in which men had declined to have their names put on the roll. He contended that it would be advisable to spend money freely in sending out officers to see that the names of every man and woman entitled to vote were put on the roll.

Mr. COYNE: What parties do you suggest?

Mr. KEOGH: He suggested the police, and they should get extra pay for it. They should not be asked to undertake such a thankless job for nothing, as they had got quite sufficient duty to perform already. If it was intended to continue the old system of sending out notices to persons under the heading of "dead, left, or disqualified," he hoped they would be sent in such a way that they would be received. He should be very pleased to see the name of each and every individual in the community on the electoral roll. It mattered not to him whether they opposed or supported him, because he was thoroughly well satisfied that there was no earthly use in anyone coming against him.

HON. E. B. FORREST (*Brisbane North*): The Committee was certainly entitled to some explanation as to why the police were taken off the duty of putting people on the roll. Speaking for the metropolitan area, unless the police had taken the matter in hand the roll would not have been half as big as it is, and, in his opinion, they could do the work better than anybody else. (Hear, hear!) In the metropolitan area 7,000 names altogether had been taken off the roll. It was nonsense to say they were all on one side, because the examination at the last election showed that it applied evenly to both sides. He was not complaining about any particular section being taken off the roll; but how those 7,000 got off the roll in an unknown way wanted explaining.

The HOME SECRETARY: What about the 9,000 who were taken off in an unknown way?

HON. E. B. FORREST: It was because the applications were not sent in in time. The names had to wait until a revision court came on two months after. He was perfectly satisfied that that was so.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: There are always a number off at any time.

HON. E. B. FORREST: As far as the metropolitan area was concerned, the policemen were getting an immense number on the roll, and they should be put on again. (Hear, hear!) No one wanted them to work for nothing. As far as advertising was concerned, there was more in it than some people would admit. He had been informed that the advertising in 1907 cost £2,000. That was just half of what it cost the year before, when it was £4,247, and possibly a

still further saving could be made. Let them have the information so that people could see whether they were on the roll or not; it was money well spent. But, above all things, this system of knocking people off the roll and saying nothing about it was a very objectionable one. They had been told by the Minister that they all got notice.

The HOME SECRETARY: They are still advertised and will continue to be advertised once a year.

HON. E. B. FORREST: They must bear in mind that our roll got altered not once but a dozen times a year.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: No, no!

HON. E. B. FORREST: There were instances of people in Brisbane shifting from one side of the street to the other being knocked off the roll.

The HOME SECRETARY: They can only get off the roll once a year.

HON. E. B. FORREST: The Minister said the people got notices, but if they were issued they did not reach the people themselves. Something drastic should be done to let people know when they were knocked off the roll, and to enable them to get on again. If this small expenditure of £2,000 a year was doing the good which he thought it was, it should not be discontinued.

Mr. COYNE (*Warrego*) was delighted to know that the direct Opposition was falling into line with his party in the direction of wishing to see everybody on the roll. (Laughter.)

Mr. PAGET: We always wished that.

Mr. COYNE: It was only quite recently. During the Philp *régime* in Queensland it was notorious that they did everything in their power to keep a certain section of the people off the roll, and the greatest evidence of their desire to get people on the roll was the baby vote.

Mr. WHITE: Give the facts to prove what you say.

Mr. COYNE: He would give one fact out of a great number. He went into a court on behalf of eighty-four men who were objected to at the annual revision court during the *régime* of the Philp Government. He went into the box and swore that they still held their qualifications, but he could only save two out of the eighty-four. The acting sergeant of police—the acting registrar—was barracking against him, and acting, as it were, as the advocate for the Electoral Reform League, which was the organ of the Philp Government, and succeeded, by a picked bench, in depriving these eighty-two men of the vote to which they were entitled.

Mr. HAMILTON: Has he been promoted since?

Mr. COYNE: He had been promoted since for that reason. That was not an isolated case, but it had been done throughout Queensland. He was in favour of doing away with the advertising of bi-monthly courts, as he thought it had done very little good, and had been a sop to country papers. Very few saw those papers outside the towns they were published in, and it would be a waste of money to continue it. But he was in favour of retaining the publication of the names for the annual revision court, and there was ample notice given of the annual revision courts. The notice appeared in the first week in September, and the people had until the first Tuesday in November, which gave them every opportunity to rectify any error with regard to their names being included in the "left, dead, or disqualified" list. There were other matters which had cropped up which were not connected with this amendment, and he would reserve his remarks on them till the proper time.

Mr. W. H. BARNES (*Bulimba*): The hon. gentleman who had just resumed his seat would probably not have said what he had done if he had been in the House before.

Mr. COYNE: Do you assume that I read nothing?

Mr. W. H. BARNES: He did not assume anything of the kind, but the fact that the hon. member read did not show that he had brains. Members on this side had always been advocates of giving every man a vote.

LABOUR MEMBERS: No, no!

Mr. COYNE: You are too innocent for that.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: It was a remarkable thing that hon. members sitting in that corner should be doing something which would probably block a number of people from getting their votes. It had been stated that the list would be quite sufficient, but how was that going to appeal to the man who was indifferent, and probably he was represented in both sides of politics. He thought democracy should give every one the opportunity of knowing whether their names were on the roll. The principle seemed to be to do something in the dark, and make people find out in some other way than that to which they had been accustomed. He was inclined to think that the proposition was not endorsed at one time by the hon. gentleman now in charge of the Bill; but now, apparently, the Government wanted to get at some metropolitan paper.

The HOME SECRETARY: Oh, no!

Mr. W. H. BARNES: Personally, he had not one shilling's worth of interest in any paper. It was an extraordinary thing that the hon. members in the corner, who were supposed to safeguard the interests of the people, should wish to prevent publicity. He did not think that the striking off of names had been intentional, and he believed that all sides had suffered through the names of supporters being struck off. One strapping fellow at one of his meetings in Bulimba said to him, "You struck me off the roll"; and on that very day a well-known city man said to him, "Look here, my wife and myself are off the roll." The Government were going to take a retrograde step in the interests of so-called economy. It seemed to him that the step was being taken in the interests of political agents. The Home Secretary was sitting there very complacently, though the hon. gentleman at one time advocated the advertising of names.

Mr. COYNE: He is advancing with the times.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: Some persons thought he was going back. He was inclined to think it was the outcome of the squeezing of a certain section of that Parliament. (Laughter.)

The HOME SECRETARY: That is not original.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: Nobody would ever accuse the hon. gentleman of being original. He took it that it was the desire of all parties to see that every individual in the community got his name on the roll, and as easily as possible. A man might shift from one side of the street to the other, and the police, finding that he had left, might make no inquiries as to where he had gone, with the result that the man would find himself disfranchised. That was not the principle of true democracy. He thought the suggestion of the hon. member for Moreton was an excellent one, and that they should try to find out whose fault it was that names had been struck off the rolls, and seek to prevent a recurrence of such a thing. He protested strongly against the attitude of the Government in practically going in for secret business in connection with the enrolment of electors in the interests of

so-called economy. It seemed to him that it was because they wanted to get at some papers which in the past had been too truthful in their statements regarding Ministers. (Government and Labour laughter.)

Mr. LENNON (*Herbert*): He was astonished at the amount of misconception with regard to the intentions of the Government in introducing the clause. The object was to save expense in advertising new names. Some hon. members seemed to think that it was not at all democratic to do away with the advertising of those names; but the mere object of advertising new names had not been to facilitate putting the names on the rolls. The object had been to give people an opportunity of objecting to those names going on the rolls. The Government proposed to do away with what was nothing but an unnecessary expense. They were all agreed that every person in the community was entitled to have a vote; and, according to some hon. members, the best machinery by which that could be done was per medium of the police. Of course, the police should be paid for doing the work; and, seeing that the Government proposed to save some £1,400 by doing away with this unnecessary advertising, some of that money might be devoted to paying the police for the extra work performed by them, whilst the balance might be used in providing for additional polling-places, which would be necessary under the new system of grouping small polling-places. The postal vote was doomed, and some of the money saved by abolishing the advertising of new names might with appropriateness be applied to the establishment of new polling-places.

The HOME SECRETARY: I do not think this Government has ever objected to the establishof polling-places wherever they were asked.

Mr. LENNON: He had a great deal of work to get the late Home Secretary, Mr. Denham, to establish new polling-places in his electorate. He had a big fight, and it cost him a considerable sum in telegrams to get it done.

The HOME SECRETARY: I said this Government had never objected.

Mr. LENNON: This Government would be incapable of anything so undemocratic as that; but the past Government was very much given to that sort of thing, and fought very hard against the establishment of new polling-places. He hoped the Committee would pass the clause as proposed by the Government.

Mr. BOWMAN (*Fortitude Valley*): The hon. member for Bulimba seemed to think that members sitting in the Opposition corner were undemocratic because they disagreed with the necessity for advertising the names on the bi-monthly lists. That did not make them undemocratic. He believed that every member of the Labour party, as well as most members of the Committee, was desirous of getting as complete rolls as possible. He thought all parties had some grounds for complaint respecting the number of names knocked off at the last annual revision court.

The HOME SECRETARY: I do not think there was any partisanship shown.

Mr. BOWMAN thought a good deal of work had been done in a careless manner. In many cases the names of members of families were struck off, whilst other members of the same families were left on. That applied particularly in the large centres of population. What they were desirous of was to devise the best method of ensuring complete rolls. The police were [4.30 p.m.] the best agency for getting a complete roll. (Hear, hear!) That was fully demonstrated to them when the Federal roll was first compiled. Then, later on, they had a similar example shown by Mr. Airey when he was Home Secretary, or by the Government of which he was a member, who gave instructions to the police to collect names in the same way.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Under the new Act.

Mr. BOWMAN: He believed it was under the new Act. So long as hon. members were assured that it was the intention of the Government to use the Police Force for that specific purpose, and that every man and woman who were eligible should be placed on the roll, then the difficulty that had been raised by members of the Opposition respecting the non-advertising of names passed at the bi-monthly courts would be allayed.

The HOME SECRETARY: I do not think that would satisfy them.

Mr. BOWMAN: It would satisfy the majority of members of the House, who were desirous of getting as many names as possible on the roll. As the hon. member for Herbert pointed out, the advertising of names only notified those people who had taken the trouble to put their names on the roll, or had had them registered through some agency. The most complete agency for this purpose was certainly the Police Force, but they had manifold duties to perform, and it was unfair that they should also have to undertake their ordinary police work as well as this specific electoral work which it was hoped would devolve upon them. The Home Secretary should detail members of the Police Force for this work in every district, and their instructions should be to get every man and woman's name on the roll so that everyone would have an equal chance at the poll. (Hear, hear!) The hon. member for Bulimba said that the police in going round might find that an elector had moved from one side of the street to the other, and he would accordingly strike his name off the roll. The Act made that provision that when an elector changed his place of residence, unless he notified the electoral registrar, his name would be struck off the roll. When a notification was sent out to an elector, surely the least he could do would be to send a notice to the registrar notifying him of his change of residence, and the whole thing would be fixed up. It would only cost him a penny stamp.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: The notice is too short.

Mr. BOWMAN: If the notice was too short, they might extend the time. What he desired—and what every member desired—was to give the fullest facilities to people to get on the roll, and then keep them on when they are there. At the last general election they found that 1,300 names had been struck off the roll in Fortitude Valley alone. On making a canvass of the electors they found that there had been struck off the roll the names of electors who had been residing there for the past twenty years. That was unfair to the men and women who wished to exercise their votes on election day. It was not merely the case with the party he was identified with, as all parties seemed to have been treated the same, and complaints were general. His old opponent, Mr. McMaster, complained to him about the number of names that had been struck off. The desire of members of the Committee was that the police should make periodical visits through a district—the department could specify how many times they should go—and they should be responsible for getting all the names on the roll. That would give general satisfaction to members, and also to the electors of Queensland.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: It would be generally conceded that there was a general desire to have

a full and unbiassed roll. (Hear, hear!) So far as the police doing the work was concerned, he did not accuse them of negligence; but they were not capable of doing it thoroughly because of the shortness of time in which they had to complete their work. They would come into a district, knock at the door of the house to ascertain who lived there, and they would be told that Mr. So-and-So was away. He might be at Bundaberg for a trip, or he might have just gone into the city or to the seaside. The police did not stop to investigate the matter; but because the man had left the locality his name would be struck off the roll. The police were first delegated by the Government to attend to these duties immediately after the women were given the franchise, and since then they had been doing the work. If the Electoral Registrar had the authority to negotiate with men in each district to keep up the rolls, it would be the simplest way to do it.

Mr. COYNE: That would be a bad way, because the man appointed to do the work would be biassed one way or the other, and it would never be satisfactory.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: The electoral registrars were not biassed in any way.

Mr. COYNE: No, but the agents they appointed would be.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: He intended that the men appointed should be officers of the department. He would be agreeable to the police doing the work, if their numbers were added to. The Commissioner for Police had been pressing for more men, and he was given an additional seventy. But with the increasing demands for police protection their duties were multiplied, and it was impossible for them to go through a district and see that all the names were on the roll. If something were done like the census they might arrive at a satisfactory result. The suggestion of the hon. member for Mackay, Mr. Paget, for a Committee to investigate the whole question was a good one. In his electorate he knew of instances where the wives and daughters were left on, but the father was struck off. That was because he happened to be away at the time the inquiry was made by the police. He hoped the Home Secretary would give an assurance that an augmented Police Force would undertake the work.

Mr. SUMNER (*Nundah*) agreed that all parties desired to have a complete roll, but it was rather strange to him to hear members of the Opposition advocating it to-day.

Mr. JENKINSON: Why?

Mr SUMNER: Many hon. members remembered the days gone by. (Hear, hear!) He remembered going round the electorate of Nundah seven or eight years ago to get names on the roll. On one canvass he got 100 names on the roll. He was not canvassing for himself, but for the previous member for Nundah; and, as a justice of the peace, he was endeavouring to get names on the roll. Everywhere he went he was followed by a policeman, to see if he did anything wrong, and if he had made the slightest slip he would have been put in gaol. When they got a fresh Government the police were used to put the names on the roll—quite a change to what it was formerly. There was no doubt they had a better condition of affairs than existed a few years ago. In those days the least mistake would disqualify an elector who had gone to the trouble to hunt up a justice of the peace to get his name on the roll, and the electoral revision court used the very flimsiest reasons for rejecting voters that were not of the right colour. In one case telegrams were sent from one electoral registrar to another that if Sumner had witnessed a certain claim they were to put him in gaol. They wanted to find out whether Sumner was doing something illegal or not. It turned out that he was not, but for months and months he was followed about by the police. He was asked if it was right for a justice of the peace to go round putting names on the roll. He replied that it was, and that if the Government was a good Government they would do the work he was then doing. But although the conditions were better now than they ever were since he had been in Queensland, they were not perfect. In one case that had been mentioned the man was an opponent of his, but he had a right to have his name on the roll; he had been a voter ever since the colony was established, and yet at the last election he was deprived of his right to vote, for no reason that he knew of. There ought to be some better system introduced by which such cases would be impossible. One reason why men and women were not enrolled was because of the existence of two rolls—the Commonwealth and the State, and he hoped the day was not far distant when they would have the same roll for the State that they had for the Commonwealth. In his own electorate were numbers of men whose names were on the Commonwealth roll but not on the State roll. As long as they had two rolls there would always be that difficulty. That could be altered by stopping the freehold qualification enabling a man to say in which electorate he would exercise his vote. If that was abolished there would be no difficulty in making the rolls alike—the same roll for the Commonwealth as for the State. As to the clause itself, the money could be much better spent than in advertising. Some of it might be given to the police for the extra duties they had to perform in going round getting the names. He believed the police did good work in that connection, notwithstanding what had been said. Another thing he might mention: In his electorate were many people whose homes were there, but who had to work part of the year elsewhere, and on returning from the sugar districts, where they had been at work four or five months, they found that their names had been removed from the roll. Instructions should be given to the police and the electoral registrars to make fuller inquiries before striking any name off the roll. He hoped the clause would be carried.

Mr. WHITE (*Musgrave*) regretted that the element of bitterness had been introduced into the debate by the hon. member for Nundah, especially after the very moderate speech of the leader of the Labour party, who showed that he fully appreciated the position. He was surprised that more notice had not been taken of the suggestion of the senior member for Mackay. He himself had suffered severely at the hands of the Government. At the election before last, when he was defeated, the Kidston Government did everything they could to thwart him. They actually did away with a polling-booth, because at a previous election he got a majority of the votes there. Many people had been knocked off the roll in his electorate, some of whom had resided there for the last fourteen years, and in one case a man, who had moved from one division into another, found his name on neither roll. This was purely a mistake on the part of the electoral registrar. The matter of putting names on the roll and knocking names off the roll had nothing to do with the Government for the time being, and it was unfair for hon. members to get up and make accusations which, in many cases, were without any foundation.

Mr. HAMILTON (*Gregory*): This new-born zeal on the part of the Opposition to see that every one who was entitled to vote should have an opportunity of recording his vote came as a surprise to him. Not many years ago, when those members occupied seats on the other side of the House, members of the Labour party had to complain from time to time of the difficulty people had in getting on the roll, and of keeping their names on the roll after they had been enrolled. On one occasion the leader of that party moved the adjournment of the House to call attention to the cancellation of a polling-booth in a certain electorate which would have had the effect of disfranchising a number of electors. Year in and year out the Labour party had complained about the difficulty men had in getting on the roll, and had advocated a simplification of the system. From his own experience in the Western districts, he knew that men had their names knocked off the roll constantly.

Mr. LESINA: They were "dead."

Mr. HAMILTON: He had himself received a notice the other day that he was "dead" or had "left the district," and when he lived in the Western district he had to keep sending word to the electoral registrar three or four times a year to tell him that he was not "dead," or his name would have been struck off the roll. He knew of cases in which men who had lived in a district for years went to justices of the peace and asked them to witness their claims, but the justices of the peace would not witness them. The justices of the peace were all of a certain brand of politics in those days. He was very glad to see that it was now the desire of all members on both sides of the House to make some attempt to see that everybody entitled to the franchise was placed on the electoral roll and kept on the roll. The best possible machinery for collecting the electoral rolls was the police, but in many country districts the police were undermanned. In some places a policeman held as many as twenty different offices, and in such cases it would be difficult to get this work done by the police. The Government could, however, assist people in their efforts to ascertain whether their names were on the roll by having a copy of the electoral roll for the district, together with all supplementary rolls, hung up at every post office and at other public places in the district. Nearly every one in a country district went to the post office, but very few ever went near the courthouse. He did not think the advertising of the names of persons applying to be enrolled did much good. The advertising was only done in order to give people an opportunity of objecting to applications where it was considered the applicants were not qualified, but now that we had adult franchise that was unnecessary. It was quite sufficient to advertise the names of persons whom it was proposed to strike off the roll. The persons concerned should also receive notice that their claims were challenged, but many people in country districts received no such notification, and when an election took place they found that their names were struck off the roll, and then it was too late to get their names replaced on the roll.

The PREMIER: Every hon. member knew that there was something defective in our system of collecting names for the electoral roll. He did not suppose there was a member of the House who did not find out on polling-day at the last election that hundreds of people in his district were off the roll. It did not matter whose fault it was—that was the fact. Every hon. member knew that some better system than the present system should be adopted, so that practically everybody's name should be on the roll.

Mr. LESINA: Have you got that matter under consideration?

The PREMIER: Yes, they had got it under consideration. (Laughter.) As a matter of fact they thought that a much larger use might be made of the police in this matter, just as was done in the collection of the first Federal roll. The Government had been working up to that, but circumstances over which they had no control had prevented the thing being framed properly. He was doubtful whether the money they spent under the provision they were proposing to repeal was justifiable expenditure; he was doubtful whether they got value for that money. After they had spent all that money, hundreds of people were still off the roll. There was a large number of respects in which it was desirable to overhaul the electoral law, and he hoped that next session the Government might have a Bill to revise the whole electoral law, and amend it in a large number of particulars.

Hon. R. PHILP: Then withdraw this Bill.

The PREMIER: The purpose of the present Bill, as practically of all the other Bills they had to introduce this session, was simply to put back the business where it was last year when they were dismissed.

Hon. R. PHILP: When you resigned.

The PREMIER: Well, when they resigned. It was more respectful to the Governor to say "when they resigned." Hon. members would understand that Parliament had already declared what was desirable in regard to those several Bills. Perhaps they might not be doing everything that was desirable, but it was [5 p.m.] desirable to pass the Bills substantially as they were. If the House omitted this clause, and put in another, well and good; but he thought it would be better if hon. members, having already debated those Bills as they were now presented, passed the proposed alterations, recognising that next session they would probably have to amend the law in a great many other particulars to bring it up to date, and in accordance with altered political conditions. He only rose to suggest that, having discussed the matter pro and con twice over, they might let it go. They could say nothing new about it, and there was no need to discuss it over and over again. He had no desire, as he had no power, to limit discussion, but as a matter of practical business it was better to put the Bills through as they put them through a few months ago.

Hon. R. PHILP: Why?

Mr. WHITE: We might have grown wiser.

The PREMIER: Well, they might.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: There are quite a number of new members here.

Mr. JENKINSON: They might benefit by the discussion.

The PREMIER: At any rate, if the Committee wanted to alter the Bill, let them alter it and have done with it. It was a mistake to go on with an interminable discussion. He submitted that it would be sensible and business-like, the House having already discussed the matter twice, to recognise that the minds of hon. members were made up pretty well, and it would be far better to take a division and settle the question one way or another.

Mr. LESINA: If they had any other but the present system of government, it might be possible to permit a matter like that to go without further discussion; but the Premier had promised that afternoon, as well as making a promise to the Labour party under other circumstances, that next year he would bring forward a

comprehensive codifying electoral law, and the object of the present discussion was this: Members having no voice in the framing of legislation under the present Cabinet system of government, the only possible hope of getting their ideas embodied in a measure was to have a full discussion now, and in the light of that discussion the Premier and his colleagues might be able to adopt some of their suggestions.

The PREMIER: Is any member of the House ignorant of your ideas?

Mr. LESINA: Nearly all the members who had spoken had made some suggestions which might be taken into consideration when the Bill was being framed. There were new members who might have come there with fresh ideas. They were not stale by long association with Parliament; they came fresh from their constituencies, and they might be bubbling over with information on the matter. It was their business to give information which might lead to a better system of registration. Was it possible to get a better system? If it was admitted that it was impossible, then let them send this incomplete and fragmentary measure to the Upper House, and ask them to pass it; but if it was possible that seventy-two men could devise a better system of registration—an easier way of getting names on the roll—then they should consider the matter, and do something in that direction. To say that five or six men constituting the Cabinet, having no more rights or privileges than other members, should sit down and draft a Bill, and then say, "You must pass this without deleting a 'comma,' or dotting an 'I,' or crossing out the stroke of a 't,'" was an absurdity, and was to permit them to ride roughshod over the Assembly. Next Thursday afternoon they would have a discussion in regard to elective Ministries, and be justified a discussion of the present kind because it was the only chance they had of shaping legislation. The discussion would not bear fruit for many weary months—not until the Home Secretary instructed the Parliamentary Draftsman to prepare a measure of a certain kind—but when that time arrived he might, if he made a careful study of *Hansard*, be able to include some of those points which had been referred to by hon. members that afternoon. However, he was very pleased that the Premier had dragged the discussion back on to the right lines, and that was whether they intended to adopt clause 2, repealing section 34 of the consolidated Acts. Was there any use in publishing those names? The Government said not, and others said there was. He did not know that any party had arrived at a definite conclusion. There was something to be said both for and against the system. On the score of economy—and that was the principal argument that had been used—£1,400 would be saved by not advertising the bi-monthly lists. Under the present system objections were invited, and if there were no objections the names were placed on the roll. The ordinary man in a scattered district like his never saw the lists unless they were published in a local paper. There were in such districts little groups settled in mining gullies, along creeks, and in patchy country, all separated from one another by 25, 30, or 40 miles, and those men seldom came into town.

The PREMIER: Not two men in a hundred see the advertisements.

Mr. LESINA: Still there were some active men connected with the organisation in his district who saw the lists, and who made it their business to see that one man among them came into town to look after electoral business. They examined the lists, and saw that certain men were struck off for the various disqualifications laid down in the Act, and they knew the whereabouts of the different people. Now it was proposed to publish the names once a year, before the annual revision court. This list was advertised for the purpose of making known the objections, and it enabled residents, who knew that a man had not left the district, to go to the court and notify the authorities of the fact. At Clermont they generally sent a man in to the court on behalf of the Labour organisation. If he was a working miner, another man was put on the shift in his place, at, say, 10s. a day. The man came into town to look after the list of names, and it was kept up to date. He supposed that was the practice in other districts; they had to do that in order to hold the seat. If they wanted a seat for Labour, they had to hold it, as there were various influences at work for removing men from the list, and the organisation had to prevent men from being removed from the roll when they had no right to be. They had constantly to see that the list was rectified, and by that means the party was solid. There had been some time wasted in twitting the Opposition that in years gone by they had used their influence to keep men opposed to them off the roll. That was a matter of indifference to him—"let the dead past bury its dead." If they found these same men anxious to put men on the roll, they should welcome their conversion.

Mr. RYLAND: Is it a genuine conversion?

Mr. LESINA: That was a matter that only their subsequent actions would show, but it was an unprofitable occupation to twit men with the fact that they had changed their opinion. He would not twit a man who was an inebriate and became a member of a Rechabite lodge, on the fact that he used to drink whisky. (Laughter.) If the conversion of the Opposition continued, and in future they would help to put men and women on the roll, there would be no room to quarrel with them. What they had to do now, in the limits of this fragmentary measure, was to discuss whether it was advisable to advertise bi-monthly lists any longer, and whether to keep the postal vote. They needed to adopt some better system, and he was pleased the Premier had promised to introduce an Electoral Bill. He hoped the promise would be kept, and not broken as so many past promises had been, not only by the hon. gentleman, but by other Governments. Most Governments lived on promises, which were made lavishly at election times. What they wanted was to make them keep the promises they made, and the Government had promised to introduce an up-to-date consolidated Electoral Bill next session. Whether that session would take place in July or next year, they were not in a position to say. The Bill would include all the good points in the electoral systems of the Australian States.

Mr. JENKINSON: Do you believe that?

Mr. LESINA: He was compelled to believe it; he could not possibly conceive that the Premier would lie about it. (Laughter.) He had made that statement this afternoon, and the *quid pro quo* for that promise was that they should pass this little measure, including the knocking out of the advertisement every two months. He did not care whether they did it or not, the £1,400 they proposed to save was only a fleabite. He quite believed it was worth saving, but when he saw the Government save £1,400 with this hand, and throw away £3,000 with that, he began to doubt their sincerity in the matter of economy. What he was more concerned about was, Did it help a man to get on the roll and keep there? If it did he was prepared to keep it there, but there was a

difference of opinion. Some hon. members said it did, and others that it did not, and how were they to determine the matter?

The PREMIER: Divide.

Mr. LESINA: That would settle the matter one way, but it did not settle the question of right and wrong; it simply meant that heads counted.

The PREMIER: It is the only way we have in this Chamber.

Mr. HAMILTON: Suggest a better.

Mr. LESINA: He could not suggest a better. (Laughter.) He was not there to make suggestions. They paid a Government to make suggestions and carry them out, and, if they could not get a better system than the present one, he could not supply them with suggestions. In conclusion, the hon. member for Herbert, in speaking about the way the late Home Secretary treated him in the matter of a polling-booth, at the same time admitted that this Government could not possibly do such a thing. When he (Mr. Lesina) was fighting Mr. Risien, who was the Kidston candidate at the election before last for Clermont, he could not get certain polling-booths in his district. At one place, called Expedition Dam, which was over 25 miles from town, there were a number of old miners, one of whom was seventy-eight years of age, and he had to walk 25 miles into town to give his vote.

Mr. LENNON: That does not exonerate the late Government.

Mr. LESINA: It only proved that both Governments were guilty. This Government was just as capable of doing that as of doing other things, and they would do them unless the Labour party kept their eyes glued upon them. (Laughter.) Unless they kept them in leading strings, and led them straight down the narrow path of political rectitude, they would wander away, and do these things. (Laughter.) Here was a case in point: What the late Home Secretary attempted to do in the Herbert the present Home Secretary did in the case of Expedition Dam and other places in the Clermont district. He (Mr. Lesina) had received a notice a couple of days ago notifying him that he had been struck off the roll for the Oxley division. He had never shifted from Oxley, where he had lived for eight or nine years, but his wife and himself had been struck off the roll because they had shifted from one side of the street to the other.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Was this in connection with the State roll?

Mr. LESINA: He was speaking of the Federal Government.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Did you notify them that you had shifted?

Mr. LESINA: No; it was their business to send the police to find out. If a member of Parliament, who was pretty well known in Queensland in the district where he lived, was knocked off, it was obvious that Tom Jones or Bill Smith had a remote chance of keeping on the roll. Both in Federal and State matters it was very much easier to get struck off the roll than, having once got on the roll, to stay there. What Ministers should do was to devise between now and next session some effective system for putting people's names on the rolls and keeping them there, and that system should be passed into law as soon as possible after the next session began. If they did that, he would be very pleased to bestow upon the Government his democratic blessing.

HON. R. PHILP: The Premier must remember that this was a new Parliament, which was in no way bound by what the last Parliament had done. The new Parliament could decide every question for itself, without regard to what was done by its predecessor. Nobody had shown that the present law had not worked satisfactorily. Two or three years ago the present Home Secretary approved of the advertising as necessary.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is unnecessary and expensive.

HON. R. PHILP: Seeing that the hon. gentleman had changed his opinion, he had better wait until the new and comprehensive Elections Bill was introduced, as he might have changed his mind again, and believe in the retention of the advertising. In 1904 and 1905 the reason advanced for doing away with the advertising was that it was necessary to save money, but that reason did not hold good now, as they had plenty of money. They should do nothing that would stop even one man getting on the roll. There were very few people likely to go to a courthouse to see if their names were on the list. He had known a man who had collected applications who put them into a drawer and forgot all about them, and a man had no guarantee, if the names were not advertised, that they ever reached the registrar at all. He was astonished at the attitude taken up by hon. members who called themselves democrats. Some years ago they were the strongest advocates of advertising. The hon. member for Gympie on one occasion got into a rage because names were not to be advertised.

Mr. RYLAND: That was the "Dead, Left, and Disqualified" list.

HON. R. PHILP: What was the reason for the change? Had some secret promise been made by the Government that they would introduce a certain law? The money spent in advertising had been well spent. If the names were not advertised, they would have hole-and-corner rolls. The police were the proper people to attend to the work of getting names on the rolls. The hon. member for Warrego was excited about the late Government trying to get people's names off the rolls.

Mr. COYNE: I was quite cool.

HON. R. PHILP: As a matter of fact, the old bad rolls contained the names of more men than the rolls compiled in 1905, until the Government of the day sent out the police to collect names and make the rolls a little more respectable.

The HOME SECRETARY: Under the old system men could get on for so many qualifications.

HON. R. PHILP: That made very little difference. Surely no hon. member wished to see people on the rolls who were not qualified; but he objected to anybody being off the roll who possessed the necessary qualification. That happened in many cases at the last elections. He hoped the police would be employed in getting every man and woman on the roll who was entitled to a vote, and that they would be paid for their work. He also hoped that the advertising would be continued in the meantime, and when this up-to-date Bill was introduced they could consider the question again, as the Home Secretary might have changed his opinion again by then.

Mr. GRANT (*Rockhampton*): It was remarkable to notice how frequently the leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Clermont agreed of late in slating the Government. So far, no hon. member had shown that the advertising had led to any increase of the number of names on the rolls. In Rockhampton, where the papers had a fairly wide circulation, before the last election there were nearly 2,000 names off the roll. In three nights he and two other gentlemen collected 593 names, but, despite all their efforts, those people were not eligible to

vote at the election. In a small electorate like Rockhampton it was just as effective to exhibit the names at the courthouse; while in country electorates nearly everybody went to the courthouse or the post office. All country residents did not get the papers.

Mr. PAGET: Nearly all of them do.

Mr. GRANT: They might get the Sydney *Bulletin*, where the names were not advertised. The advertising was merely a sop to the big town newspapers. The money could be much better spent by putting on more police to collect the names, and it could be done much more effectively in that way than by advertising. From inquiries which he had made, he found that a number of electors had been left off the roll because they knew their names were on the Federal roll, and when the police came round to collect the names they said that their names were already on the roll and did not bother to put them on. [5.30 p.m.]

Mr. PAGET: The constable should have taken a roll with him.

Mr. GRANT: It was better to put more policemen on than to subsidise newspapers which were well enough off for advertisements now.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER (*Maranoa*): In the last Parliament he advocated the retention of this clause, and he had heard no reason since to justify him in changing his opinion. He recognised that it was the desire of every member that every person entitled to a vote should receive a vote, but he had not heard any sound reason advanced to show that the advertising should be continued. If the advertising of names was good, then they did not do one quarter enough of it. In the country towns they found two or three papers circulating, but according to the law these names could only be advertised in one paper, and everyone did not get that one paper.

Mr. PAGET: They tell each other that they see the names.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Only those who received the paper knew anything about what was going on in connection with the advertising of names. If it was an advantage to advertise they should advertise in every paper. They should either do away with the advertising altogether or else increase it. Was the money worth spending in advertisements?

The HOME SECRETARY: No.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: He held it was not worth it. When a person applied to have his name put on the roll, and complied with all the conditions laid down, it was taken for granted that his name would be put on the roll. It was more important that they should know what names were going off the roll than what names were going on, because every man who made an application—unless he made a blunder or a false application—always had his name put on the roll. It would be better to spend the money in employing extra policemen to put names on. The Premier told them that afternoon that something would be done in this direction when they had a uniform roll with the Federal Parliament, using the same roll for both Parliaments.

Mr. PAGET: What about the boundaries of the divisions?

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: There would be no trouble about the boundaries. The Federal Government was anxious to join hands with the State in this matter, as it would save a good deal of expense in the printing of the two rolls. It was the existence of the two rolls that caused the trouble now, as he knew people who were on the Federal roll and they thought they were also on the State roll. He supported the clause as it stood.

The HOME SECRETARY: The Principal Electoral Registrar informed him that his instructions to the police were to return the names of all who had left their place of residence, and also those who had died or were otherwise disqualified. It was unnecessary for him to tell the House that the Government had no say in these instructions. They left it entirely to the Principal Electoral Registrar, and it was done by him impartially and without bias of any kind. The Principal Electoral Registrar also informed him that at the time of the late election a very large number of electors who thought they were on the roll, and found that they were not, admitted to him that they had got the notice sent out by him at the time the revision of the rolls was in course of preparation. They admitted to him that they had been lazy, or for some other reason they had not taken every care to get their names reinstated on the roll. He believed that was the reason that a large number who were not on the roll at the election were disfranchised. He could inform the Committee that it was the intention of the Government to put the police on to do this work in future. (Hear, hear!) As he said last year, the money which they would save in the advertising would be used—portion of it at any rate—to reimburse the police for the extra trouble they would be put to in collecting names to go on the roll, as it was not intended that they should do this work without some extra remuneration. (Hear, hear!) He hoped the work would be done by them satisfactorily, and that it would meet with the approval of the Committee.

Mr. PAGET: It was evident that the majority of the members of the House thought that the advertising of names should be done away with, and probably the division would show that the clause was to stand in the Bill as it was printed. He had made a suggestion to the Home Secretary at the beginning of the debate, and he did not know if it had been taken notice of at all. He could not include it himself within the four corners of the Bill. It was the wish of every member of the Committee that every person who was entitled to vote should be able to vote. (Hear, hear!) He suggested that just before every revision court an advertisement should be inserted in every newspaper calling the attention of electors to the fact that a revision court was about to be held, and that those electors who had changed their residences were liable to lose their qualifications.

The HOME SECRETARY: The date of the court is advertised, and they get a notification as well.

Mr. PAGET: A printed notice was certainly sent along, but a great many people took no notice of printed notices, and generally threw them in the waste paper basket. But if an advertisement were inserted, as he suggested, it would not cost much, as only a few lines were necessary to call the attention of the electors to the fact that they were liable to lose their qualification if they changed their residence. It would really be the means of getting a great number of names of electors on the roll.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: After two hours' discussion they had the satisfactory statement of the Home Secretary that the Government intended to utilise the police, and he took it that their numbers would also be augmented so as to secure the rolls being kept up properly.

The HOME SECRETARY: I told you that last year.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: They had been waiting for the information all the afternoon, and this was the first time that anyone on the front Treasury benches had made the announcement.

They were glad to hear now that the police were to be utilised to get names on the electoral roll. He would again remind the hon. gentleman that the electoral work of those officers involved, in many areas, the depleting of the police force temporarily, and he hoped the Government would not hesitate to meet the increased expense necessary.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: The hon. member for Maranoa had used, by inference, one of the strongest arguments that had been used that afternoon for the retention of advertising. The inference permissible to be drawn from the hon. member's remarks was that persons might apply to be put on the roll, if the names were not advertised, who had no right to be on the roll at all. There would be no publicity, and therefore it would be all right. In saying that it would open the door to abuses if the advertising was done away with, the hon. member had given the strongest reason why the clause should not be passed.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: The hon. member for Bulimba had drawn a most unfair inference from what he had said. His contention was that if advertising were of any benefit in those matters, they did not go far enough, because the advertising was only done in one paper one quarter, and the following quarter it went to another paper published in the district. Therefore the readers of only one particular paper were made acquainted with the fact that certain names were going on the roll or were knocked off the roll. If it answered to advertise at all, it should be so done as to make the information known to all who might be concerned, so that those whose names had been removed might apply again to be put on. He had never even hinted that the abolition of advertising would lead to the stuffing of the rolls with a lot of bogus names and of people who had no claims. Such a twisting of his remarks into what they were never meant to convey was, perhaps, what they might expect from the hon. member for Bulimba.

Question—That clause 2, as printed, stand part of the Bill—put; and the Committee divided :—

AYES, 40.

Mr. Adamson	Mr. Jackson
,, Airey	,, Kerr
,, Barber	,, Kidston
,, Barton	,, Land
,, Bell	,, Lennon
,, Blair	,, Lesina
,, Bowman	,, Mann
,, Brennan	,, Maxwell
,, Cottell	,, May
,, Coyne	,, McLachlan
,, Douglas	,, Mitchell
,, Grant	,, Mullan
,, Grayson	,, Murphy
,, Hamilton	,, Payne
,, Hardacre	,, Rankin
,, Hawthorn	,, Roberts
,, Herbertson	,, Ryland
,, Hunter, D.	,, Sumner
,, Hunter, J. M.	,, Winstanley
,, Huxham	,, Woods

Tellers: Mr. Barber and Mr. Murphy.

NOES, 19.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Keogh
,, Armstrong	,, Paget
,, Barnes, G. P.	,, Petrie
,, Barnes, W. H.	,, Philp
,, Campbell	,, Somerset
,, Cribb	,, Stodart
,, Denham	,, Swayne
,, Forrest	,, Walker
,, Fox	,, White
,, Hanran	

Tellers: Mr. Paget and Mr. Walker.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Mr. GRANT moved that after clause 2 the following new clause be inserted :—

3. In the first paragraph of section forty-seven of the consolidated Acts, after the word "contested," the words "which day shall be a Saturday," are inserted.

The holding of the last election on a Wednesday was a great hardship to many thousand persons in Queensland.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: A great loss, too.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: It was a very heavy poll.

Mr. GRANT: The voting was phenomenally high, and he did not suppose that it would have been much higher if the election had been held on a Saturday. The minds of the people were stirred to such an extent that they were determined to record their votes, no matter what it cost. He knew a number of men who forfeited a day's wages in order to vote. Not only did they want to vote, but they took such a great interest in the election that they desired to be at liberty to have the day, or a portion of the day, to enable them to go round and canvass other electors and bring them to the poll. The Municipal Council of Rockhampton allowed their employees to go and vote, but if the election had been on a Saturday, when the men would have had the afternoon to themselves, that would not have been necessary. He knew one man who rode 40 miles to a railway station, and then, losing his train, rode another 25 miles in order to come down to Rockhampton and vote. The members of the Opposition had stated that afternoon that they desired that every man and woman in Queensland should have an opportunity of voting. Holding the election in the middle of the week was not the way to give people an opportunity of voting, because many could not vote at that time without loss to themselves. In the country districts the farmers made it a point to go into town on a Saturday with their produce, and they could record their votes without any personal sacrifice if the election were held on a Saturday. The fixing of the last election for a Wednesday recoiled on the late Government. A number of people were so angry at the election day being changed that they were determined at all hazards to record their votes against the late Government. Why the alteration in the day was made he did not know. It was said that it was because it was known that the supporters of the late Government could record their votes on any day, but that the supporters of their opponents would be handicapped if the election was held on any day other than Saturday.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: That is not a correct statement.

Mr. GRANT: He was simply saying that that was what was stated.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: No matter what time you held the election you would have a number of people shut out.

Mr. GRANT: Yes, that was inevitable; but more would be shut out by holding the election in the middle of the week than would be by holding it on a Saturday. An employer might allow his employees off for half an hour to record their votes, but he would not allow them off for half a day. The excuse that a half-holiday was proclaimed on election day was no excuse, because while civil servants might be paid for the half-holiday, private employers did not pay their employees for the half-day.

Mr. PAGET: Do not they?

Mr. GRANT: Well, there were not many cases in which private employers paid their employees under such circumstances. Although the argument of the Premier was that they should send all these Bills to the Council in exactly the same form that they left the Assembly last year, yet this was such a crying evil that he could not refrain from moving his amendment.

The HOME SECRETARY said he could not see his way to accept the amendment. In the first place, he did not think they could deal with the subject-matter of the amendment in this Bill, because it was a matter entirely within the province of the Governor under the Constitution Act, and it would require an amendment of the Constitution Act to carry out the object of the amendment. Further, he did not think the amendment was within the scope of the Bill; and lastly, as the Premier had said, the Government wished, if possible, to get the Bill through the House in the identical form in which it was sent to the Upper House last year. They wanted to say to the Council, "This is the Bill the Council threw out last year, the Bill on which we went to the country, and on which the electors have given such a pronounced decision." He thought the amendment was entirely outside the scope of the Bill, because it was not proposed by the Bill to alter the day on which elections were to be held. Further than that, the acceptance of the amendment would necessitate an amendment of the Constitution. The only way in which the object of the hon. member could be accomplished, supposing the amendment were not outside the scope of the Bill, would be to provide that if the election was not held on a Saturday, the time for polling should be extended to 8 or 9 o'clock. On ordinary days the poll would close at 6 o'clock.

Mr. GRANT: The Home Secretary had given several good reasons for not accepting the amendment, but one reason [7 p.m.] alone was good enough—namely, that it would necessitate an alteration of the Constitution. Under the circumstances he would ask the leave of the Committee to withdraw the amendment.

HON. R. PHILP wished to say a few words before the amendment was withdrawn. The junior member for Rockhampton had had a good deal to say about the late Government altering the day on which the election was held, but he would remind the hon. member that neither the New South Wales Government nor the Federal Government held their elections on a Saturday. Apparently, because the Morgan-Kidston Government had held an election on a Saturday the hon. member seemed to think that that was the only day on which it should be held.

Mr. GRANT: You were the only Premier to do it.

HON. R. PHILP: In 1902 it was proved that more people recorded their votes during an election held in the middle of the week than on a Saturday, when the Morgan Government held an election. Moreover, more people voted at the last election than did when an election was held on a Saturday. On Saturdays some people went down the bay, others went to cricket matches, and others, again, would not take the trouble to vote. The middle of the week was a much more convenient time for country people to record their votes.

Mr. RYLAND: Nonsense!

HON. R. PHILP: Saturday afternoon was by no means a holiday all over Queensland. In Toowoomba and most of the big inland towns they did not keep Saturday as a half-holiday.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They are taking a poll in Toowoomba now.

HON. R. PHILP: At the present time they held their half-holiday on Wednesday in Toowoomba. He believed that was also the case in Gympie and Charters Towers.

Mr. COYNE: This is to provide for bushmen.

HON. R. PHILP: Bushmen could come in on any day to vote just as well as on Saturday.

Mr. RYLAND: Timber-getters, prospectors, and the poor unfortunate bullock-drivers.

HON. R. PHILP: The last four elections had proved beyond dispute that more people would vote during the week than on Saturday.

Mr. COYNE: How can shearers come in in the middle of the week?

HON. R. PHILP: They usually voted where they were shearing.

Mr. COYNE: They cannot where there are no polling-booths.

HON. R. PHILP: He did not know any place of any importance where shearing was done which was not made a polling-place. There was no shearing going on last February.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: There was a little.

HON. R. PHILP: In May last at all the big shearing-sheds there were polling-booths, and it was much better that a man should take half an hour or an hour in recording his vote than spend the whole day doing it, and go in for some fun afterwards. More people voted in the middle of the week in 1902 than did on Saturday in 1904. There never had been any fixed day for holding elections in Queensland or in Australia. The Federal Government did not hold their elections on a Saturday, and they were dominated by the Labour party, as everyone knew.

Mr. COYNE: No.

HON. R. PHILP: What was Mr. Deakin's position? Exactly the same as that of Mr. Kidston.

Mr. COYNE: The Deakin Government make a concession to the Jews.

HON. R. PHILP: Mr. Deakin was entirely dependent upon the Federal Labour party, who had not compelled him to hold elections on a Saturday.

Mr. COYNE: The Federal Government will not hold elections on a Saturday out of consideration for the Jewish people.

HON. R. PHILP: There was the fact staring them in the face that the Premier of all Australia did not hold elections on a Saturday because the middle of the week was found more convenient. The last election in New South Wales was held on a Friday, and yet because he, as Premier, had done what he did he was told he acted illegally, and the junior member for Rockhampton called it a crying evil.

Mr. GRANT: So it is.

HON. R. PHILP: If he had done half the evil the junior member for Rockhampton had done he would not sit in the House. Personally, he did not care whether the amendment was accepted or not. The Home Secretary was afraid of altering the Constitution. He said the amendment would wreck the Constitution.

The HOME SECRETARY: I said its acceptance would necessitate an alteration of the Constitution.

HON. R. PHILP: That should not trouble the hon. gentleman. His Government could alter the Constitution in any way it liked. They could wipe it out altogether. Surely in a small matter like that the alteration of the Constitution should not trouble him. If the amendment was put he would not take the trouble to call "No" to it.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 3 put and passed.

HON. R. PHILP had a new clause to propose which was an exact copy of the postal vote provisions of the Federal Elections Act. As it was a long clause, he thought they might take it as read. He hoped members would not object to the Federal postal vote. It might have been an evil in the town, but, of course, they could get any number of cases for and against. The hon. senior member for Gympie had quoted two cases the other night, but he (Mr. Philp) had read of three cases on the other side in Gympie. Three votes came in signed by justices of the peace, and nobody else signed them. Apparently some justice of the peace had been signing them *ad lib.*, and sending them out for use. Three came in without any signature at all. If hon. members read the amendment, they would see that it imposed severe penalties on people who misused the postal vote. Under the original Bill, which was introduced by the present Treasurer, there was no penalty at all; but if this amendment were adopted there would not be the slightest trouble to catch people if they acted wrongly.

Mr. MULLAN: You could not catch those five at Townsville.

HON. R. PHILP: He thought there were fifteen on the other side at Charters Towers. There were as many offenders on one side as the other, but he claimed that when they did wrong they ought to be punished. The amendment was much more comprehensive than the present Bill, and it would enable people who lived 7 miles away from a polling-place to vote by post. People who were ill would not be deprived of their vote, nor the unfortunate people who were in hospitals during the election.

Mr. COYNE: There will be an epidemic under this Bill.

HON. R. PHILP: They should let these people vote under it. It was not a fair thing to ask those 7 miles from a polling-booth to go in and vote. It would be impossible for anyone who was sick to go that distance, and every opportunity should be given to voters to record their votes. If the penalty was not severe enough, he was prepared to make it more severe; he was quite willing to accept any reasonable safeguard which the Home Secretary thought fit. He understood that 7,900 women voted by post at last election, and it would be a disgrace to our present day civilisation to deprive them of a vote. Unfortunate people in hospitals were sometimes dragged out to vote against their wish.

The TREASURER: Far better to leave people in the hospitals alone.

HON. R. PHILP: That might be. It would be better if they could vote quietly by post without undue interference, and he thought they might safely leave them in the hands of the doctor. He hoped the amendment would be accepted; it was a compromise on the old amendment.

Mr. MURPHY: It is worse than the old Act. Previously only a justice of the peace or a postmaster could witness, now anybody can do it.

HON. R. PHILP: Why should not anyone do it?

Mr. RYLAND: Any employer.

HON. R. PHILP: Some members would like to see two electors witness; he did not object to that at all. The matter had been discussed inside and outside the House for a long time, and he hoped the Committee would accept the amendment. He was sure it would please a good number of the women electors in Queensland. As showing how largely the vote was availed of at last election, 20,000 voted by post.

Mr. MURPHY: Look at the large number of people who were canvassing for postal votes.

HON. R. PHILP: There were a good many on both sides.

The HOME SECRETARY: 1,280 went astray.

HON. R. PHILP: Very likely; that would always be the case. He had plenty of evidence, but if every hon. member related his experience of cases which had arisen it would take a long time.

Mr. MURPHY: You said the other day that the country had decided in favour of the abolition of the postal vote.

HON. R. PHILP: Not the whole vote; this is an amendment of it. After experience, this was the amendment which the Federal Government passed, and he understood they did not pass it without the permission of the Labour party.

Mr. RYLAND: No; all of them were against it. It is going to be wiped out.

The HOME SECRETARY said he could not accept the amendment.

LABOUR MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: He looked upon it as carrying out the principle of the postal vote, against which the country spoke so decisively at the last election. It was not necessary to discuss the matter, as they went into it pretty fully on the Address in Reply. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. PAGET did not agree with the Home Secretary when he said that the country had spoken against the postal vote at the last election.

Mr. COWAP: Your leader said the same.

Mr. PAGET: He differed with his leader, perhaps, on that point. There was 20,000 people in the State who took advantage of the postal vote.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: They were compelled to take advantage of it.

Mr. PAGET: There was no compulsion on any elector to vote. The two hon. members for Charters Towers were in the House for the first time, and thought their opinions on the matter must be taken off-hand by every hon. member, but he (Mr. Paget) did not accept them. He believed women hailed the postal vote with delight, and used it to great advantage. In Charters Towers it was used to the extent of 800, and in favour of the two hon. members who were now interjecting.

Mr. MURPHY: They had to send out canvassers, too.

Mr. PAGET: Exactly; and why should Labour candidates, who so strongly objected to the postal vote, not send out canvassers if they chose? He spoke as one who had not employed canvassers to collect postal votes, and who did not occupy his position in that Chamber by virtue of the postal vote. He denied that the two members for Townsville occupied their position because of the number of postal votes they obtained, although there were members, especially some sitting on the Opposition benches, who made that assertion.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: It is perfectly true.

Mr. PAGET: The hon. member repeated a statement he had made the other evening in the absence of the senior member for Townsville. It struck him that certain members measured other members' corn with their own bushel. He was quite in accord with the amendment, with the exception of one or two very small particulars. He desired to move the omission of paragraph (*b*) in clause 4—

(*b*) Who, being a woman, will, on account of ill-health, be unable, on polling-day to attend the polling-place to vote; or

They should not ask women who thought they might be ill on a certain day to make a declaration to that effect. The next paragraph would cover the case of all men and women who could not vote because of ill-health.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: If the clause were amended as indicated by the hon. member for Mackay, it would eliminate the unpleasant conditions of city and suburban canvassing. It would put it in the power of electors going out of town to a greater distance from a polling-place than 7 miles, and those persons who resided more than 7 miles from a polling-place, to vote by post. It would also provide for sick persons voting by post, and would put an end to all the unpleasantnesses which were said to have occurred at the last two elections. There would be no canvassing, as 7 miles was a considerable distance, and people living more than that distance from a polling-place were scattered, so that it would not suit any canvassers to look after votes at such a distance. Provision was made for punishing those who transgressed the provisions of the clause, while it enlarged the number of those who might attest postal vote applications. They might even go further, and allow applications to be witnessed by two electors.

Mr. MURPHY: Try another election without the postal vote.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: At the last election a very large number of people appreciated the postal vote. He saw nothing in the last election which should lead them to wipe it out altogether.

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

Proposed new clause (*Mr. Philp's*) put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 20.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Hanran
,, Armstrong	,, Jenkinson
,, Barnes, G. P.	,, Paget
,, Campbell	,, Petrie
,, Cribb	,, Philp
,, Denham	,, Stodart
,, Forrest	,, Swayne
,, Fox	,, Thorn
,, Grayson	,, Walker
,, Gunn	,, White

Tellers: Mr. Cribb and Mr. Grayson.

NOES, 40.

Mr. Adamson	Mr. Kenna
,, Airey	,, Kerr
,, Barber	,, Kidston
,, Barton	,, Land
,, Bell	,, Lennon
,, Blair	,, Lesina
,, Bowman	,, Mackintosh
,, Brennan	,, Maxwell
,, Cottell	,, May
,, Cowap	,, McLachlan
,, Coyne	,, Mitchell
,, Douglas	,, Mulcahy
,, Grant	,, Mullan
,, Hamilton	,, Murphy
,, Hardacre	,, Payne
,, Hawthorn	,, Roberts
,, Hunter, D.	,, Ryland
,, Hunter, J. M.	,, Sumner
,, Huxham	,, Winstanley
,, Jackson	,, Woods

Tellers: Mr. Barber and Mr. Cowap.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Keogh and Mr. W. H. Barnes.
Noes—Mr. Mann and Mr. Herbertson.

Resolved in the negative.

On clause 4—"Absent voters"—

HON. D. F. DENHAM: He understood the Premier to say that he intended to bring in a Consolidated Elections Bill next [7.30 p.m.] session. Surely, if that were the case there was no need to introduce such an amendment as this, seeing that in all human probability there would be nothing further than an odd by-election in the meantime. As the postal vote had gone, would it not be better to leave the Bill without any such provision as this. Instead of being called the "absent voters' clause," it should be called the "impersonators' clause."

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. D. F. DENHAM: It would be difficult for any scrutineer to challenge the vote of any man as he came to record his vote. A man from Oxley might present himself at Maranoa, or a man from Maranoa might present himself at Cairns, to record a vote. He would not be known there, and he would be asked the questions mentioned in the Act, and he would then sign them. A dozen such men might claim a vote in the same way, and it would be difficult to say who was the impersonator. It was opening the door to something even worse than was said to have been the case with the postal vote. Surely if sick people and those living 7 miles from the polling-booth could not be considered, there was no need to consider any nomad who wandered round the country. It would be a blemish on the Act if such a provision went in, seeing that they had an assurance that there would be an amended Bill introduced. He, at any rate, entered his protest against it going through.

Mr. PAGET did not think it was advisable to insert such a clause in the Bill, especially when they considered what the Premier said about the Government's intention to bring in a comprehensive Elections Act Amendment Bill. At the foot of the declaration appeared the following words:—

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 not exceeding fifty pounds.

There was no imprisonment mentioned. He took it that that word "may" left too much power in the hands of any people who might be in power.

The PREMIER: The people in power have nothing to do with it. It is the magistrate.

Mr. PAGET: It left too much power in the hands of the officials who had to administer the Act. If a man made a false declaration, it should not be permissive for the officials to say whether he might be liable to a fine of £50. Members of the Committee, at any rate, would say that such a man "shall" be liable. He moved the omission of the word "may" with the view of inserting "shall."

The HOME SECRETARY could not accept the amendment. He did not think there was any necessity for it at all. If the hon. member would look at the end of the clause, he would see that subclause (8) read as follows:—

Any person who wilfully makes a false answer to any of the questions put to him under this section, or signs his name upon any envelope, any part of the endorsement of which is to his knowledge false, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding fifty pounds.

Mr. PAGET: Why not make it "shall" in both cases?

The HOME SECRETARY: Because the man might not be liable. They had to prove under subclause 8 that he had wilfully done it.

Mr. D. HUNTER (*Woolloongabba*): He was at a loss to understand what the clause actually meant. It commenced—

(1) Subject to this Act, any elector who on polling-day is absent, etc.

It was difficult to define what was meant by "polling-day." At the last election every candidate in the metropolis was disturbed over that question. They did not know if a man who would be absent from his electorate from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. was to be allowed to use the postal vote. They would have just the same trouble now that they had an absentee vote. As it was, it would have to be decided by the returning officer. Returning officers were not always the same, and one returning officer might give a quite different decision from another. Before passing on they should have the matter properly defined, so that a voter for Woolloongabba might be able to record his vote at, say, Fortitude Valley.

Mr. LENNON: That is what it says. So he can.

Mr. D. HUNTER: They were in great trouble over that question at the last election——

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but he will see that it would be more convenient to discuss that aspect of the question after we have disposed of the amendment before the Committee.

Mr. PAGET withdrew his amendment for the time being.

Mr. D. HUNTER: He wanted the position to be properly understood. The method proposed in the clause seemed too cumbrous. Of course, it was not the intention that it should apply to all those voters who had to leave home before 8 o'clock in the morning, and did not get back until after 6 o'clock, but they should be enabled to vote without any trouble in whatever electorate they happened to be.

Mr. BOWMAN: You can minimise that by extending the hours of polling.

HON. R. PHILP: If the clause would enable voters for the Valley to vote at Woolloongabba he did not think it should pass. He took it that it was only meant to apply to men who could not possibly vote in their own electorate on election day—who were a certain number of miles away on that day.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: The clause would lead to no end of confusion, especially in the metropolitan electorates. At the last election there were polling-places for every electorate in the State, and he knew of one country constituency the candidate for which wrote to Brisbane that a certain number of men would apply to vote. Five out of the seven who applied were challenged, on instructions from the candidate. They happened to be political opponents.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No; they did not.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: They applied to vote, and immediately they saw the scrutineers were up against them they saw the wisdom of walking out of the booth and not recording their votes. The system proposed would lead, as he had said, to no end of confusion and personation.

Mr. BOWMAN thought the clause a considerable improvement, especially in regard to Western and Northern electorates. In the West many men were working who had votes for the Darling Downs, and unless there was some provision for absent voters those men would not have an opportunity of voting at all.

Hon. R. PHILP: And yet you deprive them of the postal vote.

Mr. BOWMAN: Everybody who wished to see an electoral campaign conducted fairly must be pleased that the postal vote was going to be wiped out. But they wanted to give every man and woman in Queensland who had a right to vote the chance to vote. The proposed system had nothing to do with enabling a man to come from South Brisbane to the Valley to vote. At the last election there was a polling-booth in Brisbane for every electorate in Queensland except Fortitude Valley. He did not know whether that exception was premeditated to prevent some of the Valley men from voting. Still, an opportunity was given for every person who was in Brisbane on that day to vote for any electorate in the State.

Hon. D. F. DENHAM: You cannot have a proper scrutiny under this proposal.

Mr. BOWMAN: There could be just as close a scrutiny of absent voters' votes as of any other. They were going to abolish a system which had been admitted by all sides to be pernicious. The members of the Opposition wished to modify it, but the Government and the Labour party wished to abolish it, and to provide that where a man was absent from his electorate he should have an opportunity of exercising the franchise. With regard to the metropolitan area, he did not think any man should exercise his vote in any electorate but his own, unless there was a polling-booth established in another electorate for his convenience.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: That afternoon they had contended that the greatest facilities should be given to people to get on the roll, and members of the Opposition had contended that every elector should have an opportunity to record his vote. Under the provision now before the Committee a great number of electors would be disqualified, as, for instance, an elector who was leaving the State, or a seaman. Such persons would be deprived of the opportunity of exercising the franchise. The postal provisions were much more generous, and much more likely to insure a complete vote than the clause under consideration.

Mr. BOWMAN: Much more corrupt.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: This clause was more corrupt, as it would give greater facilities for personation, and would deprive many persons of the privilege of voting.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member for Woolloongabba had raised the question as to the time when a postal vote should be given, and pointed out that returning officers had given different decisions as to what was polling-day. His (Mr. Hawthorn's) own idea was that polling-day was from midnight to midnight, and that the mere fact that a man was absent from his electorate from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. did not entitle him to use the postal vote.

HON. R. PHILP: The contention of the hon. member for Woolloongabba was that if an elector of Woolloongabba was in Fortitude Valley on polling-day he would be entitled to vote under the clause now before the Committee.

The HOME SECRETARY: If he is out of his own electorate.

HON. R. PHILP: If a man walked from Woolloongabba to Fortitude Valley, was he entitled to vote under this provision?

The HOME SECRETARY: Not unless he is out of the electorate the whole day.

HON. R. PHILP: He would like the hon. gentleman to take the opinion of the Crown law officers on that point—whether a man on the roll for Woolloongabba had the right under this provision to vote in the Valley. He contended that an elector should not be entitled to vote as an absent voter in such a case, and that the distance a man was away from his electorate should be specified. Unless a man was 10 or 20 miles from his own electorate, he should not be allowed to vote as an absent voter.

Mr. RYLAND suggested that it might meet the case if they omitted the words "absent voter," and inserted "five or seven miles distant from his electorate."

Mr. WHITE considered that the corruption which had taken place under the postal vote would be a fool to the corruption which would take place under this clause. It would be impossible for candidates to have scrutineers at every polling-booth in the State for the purpose of preventing personation, and there would be a great deal of personation in consequence. He hoped the Home Secretary would accept the suggestion of the hon. member for Gympie, which would satisfy members on that side of the House.

Mr. LESINA thought some compromise should be effected in this matter. There appeared to be some doubt as to what was polling-day. The Home Secretary had given a definition of it which might or might not stand if a case arose under the Act, and he thought the Committee should have the opinion of the Attorney-General on the matter.

Hon. R. PHILP: We have power to define it.

Mr. LESINA: Yes; and if there was any doubt about the matter it should be clearly defined, even if they had to stop there twenty-four hours to do it. There was no use rushing the matter through, seeing that it might lead to difficulties at another election—and there was some prospect of another election taking place inside eighteen months. They wanted to clarify the English of the clause, and make it so clear that a fourth-class school boy could understand it. Sometimes when he looked at Acts of Parliament passed by the present Government he was inclined to think that they were really anxious to make work for the lawyers by making their Acts so difficult of comprehension and interpretation that a poor man who wanted to understand them must go to a lawyer and buy his advice and experience. Our statutes should be as simple as the ten commandments, and he would ask the Home Secretary and the Attorney-General to define what was meant by "polling-day"? If they could not get a clear definition, he was prepared to support the proposition of the hon. member for Gympie that they make the distance 3, 5, or 7 miles, so long as they could get finality on the matter. He would again express the hope that the Attorney-General would give his opinion upon the clause. He understood that during the election he declined to express a legal opinion, but they had now got him in the House, and should be able to get from him a definition of the clause.

Question put—

Mr. LESINA hoped the Attorney-General would assist the Committee.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I agree with the opinion of the Home Secretary.

Mr. LESINA: The Home Secretary's opinion had been expressed in such a slipshod fashion as they might expect from a lawyer who had not reached any eminence
[8 p.m.] in his profession, and, therefore, members would like the opinion of a much more eminent legal gentleman. What was the definition of "polling-day"? Was it to be left to the sweet will of the returning officer, who might be a bitter opponent of the Labour party? On the other hand, he might be a partisan Labour man and put an interpretation on the clause detrimental to the interests of the Government or the Opposition. It should not be left to the returning officer to interpret. What they wanted was the clause stated in clear words without any technicalities. Did the term "polling-day" really mean from 12 o'clock midnight until 12 o'clock midnight?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Yes.

Mr. LESINA: Or did it mean ordinary polling hours from 8 to 5 o'clock? Those were matters that should be cleared up. He did not know that any Australian State had a provision of that description couched in such peculiar phraseology. In the expression of the franchise everything should be simple and clear. There should be no difficulties, no artificial limitations of any description. The clause was so full of legal phraseology that he defied a Philadelphia lawyer to interpret it, and when they asked the Attorney-General for an interpretation he merely said he agreed with his colleague, and no one understood his colleague.

Question put—

Mr. JENKINSON trusted the legal gentlemen of the Cabinet would enlighten them.

Mr. LESINA: Give him 6s. 8d. for it.

Mr. JENKINSON was not inclined to treat the matter in as frivolous manner as some members would desire.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: What is your trouble? What is the difficulty?

Mr. JENKINSON: They were entitled to the best guidance they could get from the Attorney-General. The hon. gentleman was not present when the hon. member for Woolloongabba was speaking, and he would therefore briefly recite what the hon. member had said. During last election a question arose as to what should be defined as "polling-day"—whether it was the hours set apart from 8 to 6 o'clock, or whether, as the Home Secretary said, it was from midnight to midnight. To his mind the legal opinion given by the Home Secretary was absolutely absurd. A man might leave his home at 5 o'clock for his work, and not get back until after the poll

closed. He worked the recognised eight-hour day, which the Labour party were so fond of prating about, and yet, because he happened not to be absent from midnight to midnight, he was to be deprived of his vote.

Mr. LESINA: That is the danger I foresee.

Mr. JENKINSON: There were men who left Brisbane in the early morning for their work at Ipswich workshops. Was there to be no provision made for men situated in that way?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: There is a polling-place for Brisbane in Ipswich.

Mr. JENKINSON: He wanted to show the Attorney-General the tangle he had tied himself up in. He said polling-day was from 12 midnight to 12 midnight. Those men left their homes at 7 in the morning to catch the 7.10 train to Ipswich, and left again at 5.30 to come home. Therefore, they were not absent the whole polling-day as defined by the Attorney-General, and it would be impossible, under the hon. gentleman's definition, for those men to vote at Ipswich.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Not at all. They are allowed a certain time off to go and record their votes.

Mr. JENKINSON: To go where?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: To the polling-place, wherever it is.

Mr. JENKINSON: The hon. gentleman previously stated that such men could not vote under that clause, because they would not have been absent from their district from midnight to midnight.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: He can only vote if there is a polling-place established.

Mr. JENKINSON: He could not get back to Brisbane until after the polling-place was closed. He hoped the hon. gentleman could see the mess his colleague had led him into; not that they expected any guidance from the Home Secretary, who was unable to make a living in his profession, but they did look to the Attorney-General for sound advice. They paid him £1,000 a year to give it to them.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: You pay!

Mr. JENKINSON: Yes; he paid his proportion, and as a representative of the people he had a right to ask the Attorney-General to clear up the difficulty they were in, and to give them an interpretation.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: And you have got it.

Mr. JENKINSON: The hon. gentleman had shown that his interpretation was likely to lead to endless trouble. The hon. member for Woolloongabba was quite right in raising the question, and he hoped he would frame an amendment providing for the insertion of the words—"during the hours set apart for polling is 7 miles."

The HOME SECRETARY: The difficulty might be met by the insertion of the words—"from 12 o'clock midnight on the former day to 12 o'clock midnight on the day of polling." The hon. member for Fassifern had indulged in some cheap sneers at the expense of himself and the Attorney-General, and had stated that he was unable to earn his living at the law. He was willing to put his income from personal exertion during the last ten or fifteen years against the hon. member's at any time.

Mr. JENKINSON: That is a question.

The HOME SECRETARY: He was prepared to do it.

Mr. JENKINSON: He was prepared to take it up at any time; anyway, he earned his own money, he did not look to other people to give him money.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope hon. members will abstain from personalities. They are not conducive to the despatch of business.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LENNON said that the absent voters' provision was already contained in the Federal Act, and had given satisfaction. They had done away with the postal vote, and it was wise to have something in its place. The hon. member for Oxley seemed to consider that parties living more than 7 miles away from a polling-booth were worthy of more consideration than those described as nomads, but nomads had been practically disfranchised ever since we had had elections in Queensland. A large percentage of the Western workers and canecutters in the North were regularly disfranchised. They were entitled to the sympathy of every hon. member, and here was a chance of giving them something like their rights. Years ago in Victoria, and more recently, there was a system of electors' rights.

Hon. D. F. DENHAM: In New South Wales.

Mr. LENNON: He had a recollection of it in Victoria. It was a splendid system, and very useful to the nomadic people of the Western parts; but, in the absence of such a provision here, they ought to take what was offered as a substitute. The one consideration which seemed to outweigh any other was that the Bill should go up to the Upper House in the same form as it was rejected by them, and on that account he was very loth to support any amendment.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: It would be a great defect to let the Bill go back as it left the Chamber before, and leave this clause in such a nugatory manner. The hon. member for Fassifern had demonstrated that it would disqualify a large number of electors unless some qualification were inserted. The hon. member for Woolloongabba indicated an amendment which he hoped would be moved, so that they would have something definite to go upon. As the clause now stood, it was clear in his mind that an elector could move into any electorate from another and claim his vote. It did not say "if he is absent all day"; and as long as he was absent from one electorate and in another no presiding officer could refuse to allow him to exercise his vote. If there was any doubt about it, it could be cleared up. He was not averse to nomads being looked after, but this provision was conferring a privilege on the nomad, while the House appeared to have no regard at all for the mothers of the State.

Mr. WOODS: That is not so.

Mr LESINA hoped some compromise would be arrived at. On second thoughts he was not inclined to favour the proposition of the Home Secretary, although it had justified the discussion to this extent: he had admitted that the clause could be made clearer by inserting "from midnight to midnight." That was tantamount to saying that the clause was imperfect and wanted clarifying.

The HOME SECRETARY: No such thing. It is only for the purpose of making it clearer to the House.

Mr. LESINA: It was not the House that would have to deal with the Bill, but the judge and jury and the returning officer, and the Bill should be so clear that they would

have no doubt about it. They should insist on the insertion of the words to make the law clear and understandable. Would the Home Secretary help them? The hon. gentleman had made one admission that would go a long way towards inducing them to take up his challenge and make the clause more clear. He would suggest that they do not make it "midnight to midnight," but make the hours of polling from 8 a.m. to 6 or 7 or 8 p.m.

Mr. RYLAND: That will work against the poor man.

Mr. LESINA: A wharf labourer at Woolloongabba might leave at 5 o'clock to go to Pinkenba, and work from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., getting back at 11 at night. If the polling-day was from 12 a.m. to 12 p.m., and the polling hours from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., he would come back after the poll had closed. How did they propose to give that man a chance to vote? The case was typical of many. They wanted to give such a man an easy chance to vote. The Federal Act made the distance 7 miles, and he thought that was a fair compromise. The case at Ipswich was a case in point. Many men went from Woolloongabba, Red Hill, North Brisbane, and other places to Ipswich in the morning to work, and came back at night. If they were going to give these men a chance, they would have to keep a general polling-booth at Ipswich, unless they had voting by post. The fact that they had not arrived at any determinate distance was evidence to his mind, that the Committee was in a somewhat chaotic condition. They had not clarified their opinion so that they were able unanimously to agree on any one point, and that was a reason why they should not rush the matter through. If they discussed the matter dispassionately, he believed they would come to the conclusion that it was necessary to adopt a compromise. He hoped the Home Secretary would meet them in a fair spirit, and, in order to safeguard the interests of the voter, both rich and poor, give them a chance to see that the law was clearly understandable by returning officers and judge and jury, who later on would have to deal with it.

HON. R. PHILP: They had already disfranchised a good many women voters by abolishing the postal vote, and, if that was carried, it would disfranchise many more electors. If they were going to define polling-day as from midnight to midnight, people leaving by train for Toowoomba at 7 o'clock in the morning could not vote because they would not be absent from the district for which they were enrolled from midnight until 7 o'clock. He hoped members would not make it a party question. Seven miles was a fair distance, and certainly the hours should be from 8 till 6 o'clock. The banking day was 10 till 3 o'clock. He was rather astonished at the Attorney-General giving such a definition. They ought to define it, and make it 8 o'clock till 6 o'clock.

Mr. MAXWELL: Why not move it, then?

HON. R. PHILP thought the responsibility of moving it rested on the Home Secretary. He suggested that the hon. gentleman should amend the clause by omitting after the words "polling-day" the words "is absent," with the view of inserting the words "during the hours set apart for polling," and then afterwards inserting the words "is over seven miles distant." If the hon. gentleman would not move those amendments, he would move them himself. That would prevent a man in Woolloongabba voting in the Valley, or *vice versâ* With the tram system they had in Brisbane, there was no difficulty in any elector voting in his own electorate. The hope had been expressed that our electoral law and our electoral rolls should be the same as the Commonwealth electoral law and the Commonwealth electoral rolls. He hoped the Commonwealth would take our electoral rolls, as they were more correct than their own. Very often people were on the State roll but were not on the Commonwealth roll, and *vice versâ*. If they passed the Bill in its present form, it would lead to endless confusion, and very likely it would have to be amended next year.

Mr. LESINA: What I object to is that it should be left to returning officers to decide what we meant.

HON. R. PHILP: No man on the Brisbane roll should be allowed to vote in South Brisbane, but that could be done under the Bill as it stood. A distance of 7 miles would include all the suburban constituencies, and would allow everybody the opportunity of voting, whilst it would not permit personation.

Mr. DOUGLAS hoped the Home Secretary would accept the suggested amendment of the leader of the Opposition. It seemed a reasonable thing that a person should vote, if possible, in the district for which he was enrolled, particularly in the metropolitan area. It would lead to a great deal of confusion if a person was allowed to walk from one electorate to another and record his vote, whilst it would also pave the way to impersonation. They were there to frame their laws in the best possible manner, and he did not see why, because the Bill was passed last session, they should pass it in exactly the same form this session. They had had the experience of the last election since then. He would have much pleasure in supporting the amendment.

Mr. SUMNER: During the last election electors were at a great disadvantage, even with the postal ballot, in knowing what was really meant by the term "absent voter." A good many electors came to his committee to find out whether, if they had to leave Nundah in the morning before the poll was opened—perhaps having to travel to Ipswich and coming back before midnight—they were absent voters. He believed the Crown Law Officers decided that they were not entitled to be called absent voters. They should make it quite clear what was meant by the term, and it should not be hard for the Committee to make it clear to the comprehension of the simplest elector.

Mr. ARMSTRONG hoped the Home Secretary was going to accept the amendment suggested by the leader of the Opposition. He was astonished to hear the two legal luminaries on the front Treasury bench state that polling-day was from midnight to midnight. A working day was eight hours, and polling-day was only the time that the poll was actually open. There could be no other definition. He went into the library to look up some authorities, and he could not find one which supported the Attorney-General and the Home Secretary.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Are you supported by any authority?

Mr. ARMSTRONG: Yes; Canada and New Zealand; and, as far as he could see, the Commonwealth Act.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: What does Canada say?

Mr. ARMSTRONG: It says that the polling-day is between 8 and 7 o'clock.

Mr. Armstrong.]

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Does it expressly define it?

Mr. ARMSTRONG: They should define polling-day within the four corners of the Bill.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: There is no objection to that.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: When the Attorney-General was asked for a definition, he said that he agreed with his colleague.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Certainly. We will get it defined.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: He looked forward to the time——

The HOME SECRETARY: You do not know the difference at all.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: Let him tell the hon. member for Enoggera that when he understood politics as well as he (Mr. Arm-
[8.30 p.m.] strong) did, he would have very little trouble indeed in regard to it.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: You both agree; but you are arguing from different premises.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: He was not going to be drawn off the track. On looking into the question, wherever they had any definition of polling-day it was always laid down to be certain hours. New Zealand laid it down that between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. was polling-day, and it should appeal to the common sense of the Committee that polling-day was the hours during which an elector could record his vote.

Hon. R. PHILP: You cannot turn night into day.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: No; and you could not turn the hours when you could not record a vote into meaning polling-day. The Committee should come to some decision as to the hours which constituted a polling-day. The Committee had now limited one of these matters, which gave absent voters and people who were away from their electorates a chance of voting by post. It was said that there had been corrupt practices under that system of voting, and it was stated that all the corrupt practices were indulged in by members sitting on the Opposition benches, but, as a matter of fact, they all knew that there were corrupt practices on all sides in connection with that matter.

Mr. COWAP: Were you guilty yourself?

Mr. ARMSTRONG: The hon. member for Fitzroy could swallow that interjection as it had no effect on his (Mr. Armstrong's) election at all. So long as their Elections Act allowed corrupt practices, and so long as it left the means at the disposal of candidates to secure a vote, they would secure it. When a man was up for a fight, if he did not use every means in his power to secure votes, he had no right to be up for a fight. (Laughter.) They were all equally guilty in connection with that matter. No one party was whiter than another, and no member blacker than another, in that respect. Whether they belonged to the Government party, the Labour party, or the Opposition party, they would all secure votes by whatever practices they could. They had prevented corrupt practices by postal voting by doing away with it, but a new *régime* was introduced, and they were giving an opportunity for corrupt practices in another way. These practices would be far more practised by the Labour section of the community in the outside districts than they would be in the towns, and there was a bigger chance of impersonation. To correct it they should define absolutely what the polling-day should be, defining the hours of polling and the distance between polling-booths or electorates to enable an absent voter to record his vote.

* Mr. RANKIN (*Burrum*) was rather surprised to hear the hon. member for Lockyer. He had some high opinion of the political morals of the hon. gentleman, but after hearing him say that he took advantage of any legalised wrong that hon. gentleman had fallen in his estimation. (Laughter.) He agreed with the hon. member for Clermont that they should define both the time and space. He agreed with the Attorney-General that polling-day was from midnight to midnight. The amendment suggested by the leader of the Opposition put the matter in a nutshell as to what most members wanted to see inserted. They should make the clause so absolutely clear that he who ran might read, and not leave it to the returning officer to decide what polling-day meant, and how far distant a voter must be before he could claim an absent voter's vote. They should lay it down in clear language. He hoped the Home Secretary would see his way to amend the clause in that direction.

The HOME SECRETARY thought it would be better to define what polling-day was, and he would do this by inserting the words "during the hours set apart for polling." (Hear, hear!) That would make it absolutely certain. He moved that these words be inserted after the word "polling-day" and before the word "is."

HON. R. PHILP would like to know if the Home Secretary was also going to amend it with regard to distance?

The HOME SECRETARY: I think time is sufficient.

HON. R. PHILP: It was not sufficient. Surely they would not allow people who were in North Brisbane to go over to South Brisbane and vote.

Mr. GRANT did not think there should be any limit put in. Why should they limit the distance?

Mr. JENKINSON: We have been explaining that all the time, and, if you were here, you would have heard.

Mr. GRANT: Why should they fix an arbitrary 7 miles as the distance?

Mr. JENKINSON: To make it the same as the Commonwealth.

Mr. GRANT: Seven miles was really too far. He could speak from experience in Rockhampton. A great number of Rockhampton voters worked at Lake's Creek, which was only 3 miles away, and, through stress of work—which unfortunately did not happen at the present time—they might be kept down there working during the hours of polling, and thereby be debarred from voting.

Hon. R. PHILP: Have another polling-booth down there.

Mr. LESINA: The difficulty referred to by the junior member for Rockhampton might easily be overcome by the establishment of a polling-booth at Lake's Creek Meatworks. It was such a large place that he should imagine that it would be a simple matter at any time to get a polling-place there. No injustice was likely to occur there. He agreed thoroughly with the amendment which the Home Secretary had the good sense to accept after hearing the discussion in Committee. It was a good thing to have a Minister who was approachable and who adopted wise suggestions after hearing the discussion that took place. He was inclined to go the whole way with the Home Secretary in the matter, but there was one thing that he had overlooked. They had settled the question of time, and now came to the question of space.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would remind the hon. member that we have not yet settled the question of time.

Amendment (*Mr. Hawthorn's*) put and passed.

Mr. LESINA: They now came to the question of space. A certain distance should be fixed, otherwise it would be left to the returning officer, and how was the returning officer to determine?

Mr. JENKINSON: In order to bring the question of space to an issue, he would move, as a further amendment, that, in line 6, the word "absent" be omitted, with the view of inserting the words "over seven miles distant."

Mr. HARDACRE: Before the question of space was settled he should like to have it made perfectly clear what the question of time meant. Did the words "during the hours set apart for the poll" mean the whole of those hours or any particular moment during those hours? If it meant any particular moment, it meant that they were opening all the polling-booths to which a man could have access so as to record his vote. If, for instance, he went from North Brisbane to South Brisbane he could record his vote there, and the mere fact of his doing so would make him an absent voter. If John Smith wanted to vote for John Brown, he might go to some other electorate where his vote could not be properly scrutinised. He was of opinion that it was intended to mean that the absent voter should be absent during the whole of the hours set apart for polling.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: It says so.

Mr. HARDACRE: In that case the proposed amendment regarding the distance was entirely unnecessary. The clause was intended to apply, not merely to country districts, but to metropolitan districts, and others where there were several adjoining electorates. If they made the limit 7 miles they excluded all the metropolitan electorates from the advantage of the clause. It ought to be made to apply to the man who cannot get back to his own particular electorate during the hours set apart for polling. If he could not get back, he should be entitled to vote. The amendment would exclude such a man from being able to vote if he was absent from a metropolitan electorate.

Mr. KENNA: However desirable this amendment might be from a town point of view, from a country point of view it would result in a number of anomalies. In a country district, a man 7 miles outside the borders of his own electorate might be 50 or 100 miles from a polling-booth in his electorate, and he might at the same time be within 2 miles of a polling-booth in an adjoining electorate. As he understood the amendment, a man could only get a certificate to exercise an absent voter's vote if he was more than 7 miles from his electorate on polling day. There was no particular virtue in "7 miles" from the actual border of the electorate, and, in his opinion, it would be better to keep to the actual border of the electorate. A mail-man leaving the border of his electorate at 5 or 6 o'clock in the morning would be 30 or 40 miles from his electorate by noon, and yet, according to the definition of "polling-day," that man would not be competent to vote as an absent voter.

Mr. PAGET: Yes, he would; the hours of polling-day have been defined.

Mr. KENNA: He was glad to hear that. Still, for the reasons he had given, he was not disposed to vote for the amendment making the distance 7 miles.

Mr. COYNE was going to oppose the amendment, because he had not the slightest fear that the clause without the amendment would lead to personation. Under the principal Act, if a voter went from one division of his electorate into another division, or into another electorate, to avoid facing the scrutineers in the division for which he was enrolled, the scrutineers had the power to require the returning officer to compel the elector to sign a declaration before he recorded his vote. The same safeguard was provided in the clause under discussion, as an absent voter had to sign a form which was equivalent to a declaration before he was permitted to vote. He had never heard of a case of personation under the principal Act where an elector who was challenged by a scrutineer had to sign a declaration, and he did not think that hon. members need entertain any fear that there would be a great deal of personation under this clause as it stood without the proposed amendment. A penalty was provided for making a false declaration, and he presumed that an elector making a false declaration could be sued for perjury just as he could be sued under similar circumstances under the principal Act. The members of the Opposition had been telling them all the afternoon that they wished to give every elector an opportunity to record his vote, and yet they now supported the restriction proposed in the amendment.

Mr. PAGET: Will not you allow sailors and passengers on coastal steamers to vote?

Mr. COYNE: They could not expect to make any Bill perfect. As to the clause opening the door to corruption, they did not hear of many cases of corrupt practices in connection with the postal vote under the Commonwealth Act. He believed there were some cases of corruption, but they were not so universal as they had been in Queensland. He considered that the clause provided sufficient safeguards against personation, and would vote against the amendment.

Mr. RANKIN: The hon. member for Warrego was apparently an optimistic politician. No doubt, all the hon. member's own people were very clean and aboveboard; but it not unfrequently happened that many persons tried to take advantage of any points they could find in our electoral laws to personate others. Personally, he was not a single bit in
[9 p.m.] love with the clause, because it would open the door very wide to corruption in future elections. Consequently, the Committee should be very careful in dealing with it, and could not well safeguard it too much. Not only should they limit the time, but also the space; and he should certainly support the amendment of the hon. member for Fassifern, because he could see the great dangers that might arise under the clause.

Mr. RYLAND did not think the clause as it stood was quite safe, as it would throw open the door to abuse of various kinds. Possibly the amendment of the hon. member for Fassifern was not the best that could be devised, because of the weakness pointed out by the hon. member for Bowen. Although the voter might be distant 5 or 7 miles from his district, he might be a great many miles away from the polling-booth. He thought they might provide for his being 5 miles away from the polling-booth. That would meet the objection raised by the hon. member for Bowen. The clause as it stood would leave a lot of room for personation, and he only hoped there would be no election held under it.

Mr. Ryland.]

Mr. DOUGLAS thought the clause as amended by the Home Secretary about met the case. There was ample provision under clause 6 to deal with personation, which was not very likely to take place, as the clause had been amended. The only instances in which personation might take place would be in the cases of those persons who were absent from the State, in which case personators might go to the districts in which those persons were enrolled. By fixing the limit of 7 miles it would be disfranchising a great number of people—in fact, a great many more than the absent voters clauses provided facilities for. He could not see his way to support the amendment.

Mr. LESINA was never very much enamoured of the experiment which the Government were trying. He could find no parallel to it in any Australian Act. The clause had, perhaps, been improved as amended, but he was afraid that it was going to work into the hands of the rich man, and the poor candidate was going to get the worst of it. It would work against Labour every time. That was why there had not been such a violent assault upon it by the leader of the Opposition and his cohorts. There had been no outcry against it. There was an ominous silence, which made him think that the Opposition saw in the clause a bludgeon with which to belabour the Labour party. The Home Secretary, too, had kept remarkably quiet on that aspect of the case. It seemed to him that it put undue power into the hands of returning officers, some of whom were bigoted political partisans, hide-bound Tories who had been appointed by the late continuous Government. They had been deeply grateful for their appointments, and held on to them with much tenacity by means of suppressing their feelings somewhat at election times.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: They are being weeded out.

Mr. LESINA: He hoped this Government would weed them all out and replace them with solid Labour men. One attempt had been made at democratising the clause by means of the amendment already carried, and now it was proposed to make the distance a person must be absent from his district 7 miles before using the provisions of the clause. He saw considerable danger in that. It might turn out that all electors were perfectly pure, and all candidates wingless angels, but in his opinion a great deal of evil might arise from the clause. However, the House passed it a few months ago, sure in the faith that it would do no harm. Perhaps he was ultra suspicious in supposing that evil would result from it, but the fact that they had amended it so carefully, and defined it so accurately, convinced him that there was something more than appeared on the surface. He hoped his suspicions would not be justified; that it would not work against the poor man, and that the rich man would not benefit by mysterious absent voters who got away 7 miles from the electorate. He knew of a half blind old man, seventy-eight years of age, who walked 20 miles to record his vote for the Labour candidate at the election before last, and, if that was so, there were few able-bodied men who could not travel half that distance. That was necessary in his case, because the Government would not appoint a polling-place at Expedition Dam in the Clermont electorate. It was possible that the new clause might work to some extent in the interests of his party, but he had his doubts about it. Those new-fangled notions were very like boomerangs. They, as likely as not, recoiled upon the unskilled thrower instead of striking the object aimed at. Very likely the leader of the Labour party was anxious to use that particular boomerang with the skill of an old aboriginal, though it was possible he might find it a dangerous weapon. But it might not be so skilful in his hands or in the hands of the hon. member for Gympie. (Laughter.) That hon. member might throw it unskilfully, and it might come back and injure him, and even kill him. (Laughter.) They did not know whether such a clause was justified, as it had not been tried so far, he thought, with any measure of success. The hon. member for Charters Towers said it had worked well in connection with the Federal election laws, and he should like to be enlightened, as he did not know such a thing existed. Under the provision inserted in the other House, which had already been knocked out, men who went away shearing in the West of Queensland might have exercised a vote by postal ballot, but now they would have to exercise it by means of this absent voters clause. He did not know how it would work, but it appeared to him that men who wished to down Labour candidates would be more anxious to exercise the vote than the Labour men, who would not go to all these formalities. Before a man secured one of these ballot-papers he had to answer a list of questions—

1. For what electoral district are you qualified to vote?
2. Have you within the last preceding seven months been *bonâ fide* resident within the above-mentioned electoral district for a period of one month?
3. What is your name (surname and Christian name in full)?
4. What is your occupation?
5. Where is your usual place of residence?
6. What is your present address?

And a question as to who was his great grandfather might safely be included. All these questions might induce an ordinary working man not to trouble. He might say, "Harry Coyne is all right, he won't want our vote"; or, "Joe Lesina is perfectly safe"; or, "We know that Bill Hamilton is unbeaten." The Labour man was untroubled, but all the other men would trouble. He believed that just as the postal vote brought grist to the capitalistic party, so would this absentee vote bring grist to the mill of the other crowd. He did not say his party would gain if they used it, but would the men use it? He hoped they would, but the chances were that in that lackadaisical way which led to Barcoo being won by the Minister for Railways—simply not going in to vote as they thought the other man could not possibly win, and the election was lost. He hoped that would not be so in this case, and that he was not ultra suspicious.

Mr. MULLAN was of opinion that if the 7-mile limit was accepted a considerable number of electors would be disfranchised, especially in the metropolitan electorates. For instance, if an elector of Fortitude Valley left his home before 8 o'clock in the morning and proceeded to work 6 miles away, and was engaged at work till the closing of the poll, not being 7 miles away he would not be able to record his vote, and as he would not be able to return home in time he would be disfranchised. Therefore, he thought, greater facilities for voting should be afforded to the general community under the Bill as it stood, without a distance limitation at all.

GOVERNMENT AND LABOUR MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MULLAN: They had ample safeguards in the Bill as it stood to preclude the possibility

of impersonation. He took it that at any other polling-place than his own district he would have to subscribe to a declaration, and that vote was not counted until the roll was compared with the number on the envelope which accompanied the vote. The safeguard here was an excellent one. He had had some experience of the working of this particular vote in connection with the last Federal election, and he found this absentee voters proposal worked excellently, and he knew of no cases of impersonation. He thought the House—particularly metropolitan members—would be well advised, as it affected them the most, in rejecting the amendment.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: If this amendment were accepted there would be appointed in the city, as there was last year, a polling-place for all the electoral districts in Queensland. That being so, it would entirely do away with the objection of the junior member for Charters Towers. If there was a city polling-booth for the whole of the electorates, it would be necessary to have scrutineers appointed for scores of places, and it would delay the compiling of returns for many hours. The objection of the junior member for Charters Towers had no force as applied to this amendment.

* Mr. MULLAN: It did not create the necessity for having any extra scrutineers at all. Under our present system of fighting there were scrutineers representative of the particular parties, and it did not matter whether it was for their own particular candidate they were fighting or any other candidate of their party, they took an interest in his vote just the same. If John Jones came to Woolloongabba and said he was a voter for Fortitude Valley, he had to sign a declaration. That was an absolute safeguard against impersonation.

Mr. HARDACRE: The more he thought of the proposed amendment the more he was against it. It would not only exclude the metropolitan districts from the advantage of the operation of the clause—which might be a reason for supporting the amendment—but the chief objection was that it would be disadvantageous to country districts. He could give a good example of that in the case of a mining centre on the boundary of two electorates. The miners were some 50 or 60 miles away from the nearest polling-booth in the one mining centre, and if the 7-mile limit was imposed they would be excluded from voting at a polling-booth only 2 miles from the boundary of their electorate. The mining centre he spoke of was only 2 miles from the boundary, and adjoining a mining electorate in which the miners were going to and fro constantly, and there was not likely to be a polling-place. There had been a polling-place there in times past for both electorates, but the number of electors from the adjoining electorate had diminished; but there would always be some there, and they would be excluded from voting in the absent electorate if the 7 miles distance was imposed, because the mining township was only 2 miles from the boundary. He believed there would be many other country electorates similarly situated. He thought that having passed the condition that the electors had to be absent during the hours which the poll was open that that was an ample safeguard. No ordinary elector would be absent, with the intention to vote, during the whole of those hours, unless it was for purposes of impersonation, and against impersonation they had provided a penalty of £50, whilst there was the other safeguard, that a person must take an oath that he had not been six months out of the electorate.

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

AYES, 39.

Mr. Adamson	Mr. Kerr
,, Airey	,, Kidston
,, Barber	,, Land
,, Barton	,, Lennon
,, Bell	,, Lesina
,, Blair	,, Mackintosh
,, Bowman	,, Maxwell
,, Brennan	,, May
,, Cottell	,, McLachlan
,, Cowap	,, Mitchell
,, Coyne	,, Mulcahy
,, Douglas	,, Mullan
,, Hamilton	,, Murphy
,, Hardacre	,, Payne
,, Hawthorn	,, Roberts
,, Hunter, D.	,, Ryland
,, Hunter, J. M.	,, Sumner
,, Huxham	,, Winstanley
,, Jackson	,, Woods
,, Kenna	

Tellers: Mr. D. Hunter and Mr. Sumner.

NOES, 21.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Paget
,, Armstrong	,, Petrie
,, Barnes, G. P.	,, Philp
,, Campbell	,, Rankin
,, Cribb	,, Somerset
,, Denham	,, Stodart
,, Forrest	,, Swayne
,, Grayson	,, Thorn
,, Gunn	,, Walker
,, Hanran	,, White
,, Jenkinson	

Tellers: Mr. Jenkinson and Mr. Rankin.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Mann, Mr. Grant, and Mr. Herbertson.
Noes—Mr. Keogh, Mr. Fox, and Mr. W. H. Barnes.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Mr. PAGET again moved his amendment—which he had temporarily withdrawn—to omit the word "may" in line 40 with the view of inserting "shall."

Mr. KENNA desired to call attention to the second question in the declaration—

> Have you within the last preceding seven months been *bonâ fide* resident within the abovementioned electoral district for a period of one month?

He would suppose the case of a man whose name was on the electoral roll, and who answered "No" to that question. If a man's name was on the roll he was entitled to claim the vote.

Mr. PAGET: No, not under the Act, unless he has been a resident in the electorate for one month in the preceding seven months.

Mr. KENNA: But if a man's name was on the roll it was proof positive that he was entitled to vote.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: No, no!

Mr. MAXWELL (*Burke*) hoped the hon. member for Mackay would not press his amendment. Take the case of a man [9.30 p.m.] working on any of the Western stations; he generally described himself as a labourer, and in this clause, under the fourth question, he had to state his occupation. Whatever occupation he put on his claim form he would also have to put on his application to vote. Suppose after a number of years that that man went mining, he would forget what occupation he put in his original claim for a vote.

Mr. PAGET: He will be all right if he answers the questions truthfully.

Mr. Maxwell.]

Mr. MAXWELL: They would compare it with his original claim form. The whole thing went far enough with the word "may" instead of "shall." If it were altered it would make it imperative that he should be fined £50, but if the word "may" were left in he might be fined anything up to that.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL hoped the hon. member for Mackay would not press his amendment. With all due deference to the mover, he failed to see that the amendment would make any difference to the question at all. If the voter pleaded guilty, the whole thing was settled, and, if he pleaded not guilty, it was for the jury to decide. It was provided, in subclause 8, that if he wilfully made a false answer he should be liable to a penalty not exceeding £50. The mere words chosen in the clause would not render a person liable. The question of guilt did not depend on the wording of the clause, but on the verdict of the jury.

Mr. HARDACRE asked if the word "wilful" should not be put in? It might be false, but not false in any material particular.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Subclause 8 provides for that.

HON. R. PHILP: As the Treasurer was the only recognised schoolmaster in the House, he would like to know if the clause in question was grammatical. In the declaration it said—

I sign my name knowing that if any of them is false, etc.

Was that grammatical?

Mr. JENKINSON: It should be "are" false.

Mr. MAXWELL: Well, take out "is" and put "are" if you want to.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: It is quite correct as it is.

The TREASURER: Quite correct.

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

On clause 5—"Duty of presiding officer"—

HON. R. PHILP thought the Government should drop the Bill, as, even if it went through, there would not be an election held under it. They had just put a clause through providing that where an elector from South Brisbane came over to North Brisbane he could vote in North Brisbane as an absent voter. It was making a farce of the Elections Bill.

Mr. LESINA: He might have a very good reason for being absent. The police might be after him.

Question put and passed.

On clause 6—"Duty of returning officer"—

Mr. RYLAND moved the insertion after the word "election" of the words "and also when practicable, with the signature of the voter on his claim for enrolment."

Mr. PAGET: Some of them were made twenty years before.

Mr. RYLAND: There were none that old, as the old forms had all been wiped out. He had been making inquiries of the registrars, and he had been told that in the cases of 99 per cent. of the electors in the metropolitan area he had got the original claim forms, and there was no difficulty in comparing the signature of the absent voter when he asked for an absentee vote with the signature on his original claim for a vote. At the Gympie election, he found that in the case of every voter on the roll the original claim could be easily turned up and the signature compared with his application for an absentee vote. If the amendment was inserted, it would practically do away with personation. If not, the door to personation would remain open, and money would win every time. The poor man could not afford to look after the rolls, and there was a good deal of personation at the last election.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: That is only an assertion; you cannot prove it.

Mr. RYLAND: He could; and any amount of money was spent. There were many electors in Gympie who happened to be working in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia. What was to prevent a man with money paying men to go round to the various polling-booths, and putting in John Jones's name at this polling-booth, and Jack Smith's at that, and signing those names under them unless the signature could be compared with the claim form. However, as he understood the Home Secretary had announced that he wanted to send the Bill to the Upper House in the same form as it was sent last year, he would not press his amendment. He submitted it to the House to show a weakness connected with the clause.

HON. R. PHILP regretted that the hon. member did not intend to press his amendment, because it was one which they on that side were quite prepared to support. As to the allegation that rich men would collect bogus votes and go in for personation, he did not believe a word of it. They on that side were just as anxious to have clean voting as the hon. member for Gympie.

Mr. JENKINSON: The junior member for Gympie had put the country to the trouble and expense of printing his amendment, and now admitted that there was no business in it. He would not ask the Committee to accept it simply because the Home Secretary had made an assertion that he wanted the Bill sent to the Council in the same form as it was sent last session. That was an absolutely illogical position to take up, because the Home Secretary had already accepted an amendment in clause 4 which made the Bill different from that of last year. He wished to protest against such a waste of time and money. It was a regrettable thing that the hon. member thought so little of the Government time and money that he was lavishly wasting both of them. There was a good deal to be said in favour of the amendment if the hon. member would only press it.

The HOME SECRETARY thought the hon. member for Gympie had acted in a very reasonable manner in not pressing his amendment; he was carrying out one of the things for which he was returned to the House.

Mr. LESINA: There were two points of view from which the action of the hon. member for Gympie might be looked at. The first was the fact that the Opposition had announced their intention to support it was sufficient to justify him in withdrawing it. The other was that the hon. member for Gympie, recognising that there were a good many printers out of work, had so arranged that some of them should get employment at the union rate of wages at the Government Printing Office. It was an attempt to find work for the unemployed. (Laughter.)

HON. D. F. DENHAM: Anyone reading the clause would see the reasonableness of the amendment. The returning officer had to compare the endorsements on the envelopes with the marked roll in use at the election. The hon. member wanted to give a double protection so as to ensure the accuracy of the vote. The objection the Minister took to the amendment was that he wished the Bill to go to the other House in the same form as that in which it originally went there. That seemed to the hon. gentleman

of more importance than that the rights of electors and the rights of candidates should be protected. It was of more importance that the measure should be sent to the Upper House in an imperfect form than that it should amended and made more perfect. It had already been amended in an important particular, so that it could not go to the Council in its original form. He hoped the hon. member for Gympie would move his amendment; if he did not, of course it would go by the board.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 7 to 14, inclusive, put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with an amendment.

The Bill, as amended, was taken into consideration, and its third reading was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

WAGES BOARDS BILL.

COMMITTEE.

Clauses 1 to 10, inclusive, put and passed.

On clause 11—"Powers not to be limited by provisions of principal Act"—

HON. D. F. DENHAM: Would the Minister inform the Committee what was the purport of the clause? There must be something in his mind to which reference was made,
[10 p.m.] and on which light required to be shed. The clause was very ambiguous. He had been looking at the principal Act to see to what the clause referred, but could not discover what it was. The clause said that the powers of the special board with respect to matters within their jurisdiction should not be limited or otherwise affected by any express provision of the principal Act. The Minister would surely be able to tell them what was meant by that.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The clause simply provided that the special board should have certain powers, and its jurisdiction was not to be limited by any express provision of the principal Act. It prevented any curtailment of the powers of the special board. The special board was appointed for special purposes which were dealt with by clause 10.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: The Minister had thrown no light upon the clause.

Mr. COWAP: You do not want any.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: He should not have risen if he did not want information. It was to be borne in mind that the Act was to be read in conjunction with the principal Act, and the clause said that the powers of the special board were not to be limited or otherwise affected by any express provision of the principal Act. He should like to know what the clause referred to. It was a clause of very wide sweep and importance, and the Minister should be able to explain it. Merely making a rambling statement about special boards being appointed for certain purposes did not convey any assistance to the committee.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: In answer to the hon. member, he thought it would be within his knowledge that special boards were to be appointed under clause 3, subsection 1. There were various objects stated there. They were established

in order to determine the lowest prices or rates which may be paid to any person or persons or classes of persons employed either inside or outside a factory or in or in connection with a shop in wholly or partly preparing or manufacturing any particular articles of clothing or wearing apparel or furniture, or in any process, trade, or business usually or frequently carried on in a factory or shop, or in order to determine the ordinary working hours, and the maximum of working hours, including overtime, in or in connection with a factory or shop, including shops otherwise exempt from the provisions of the principal Act.

The matters to be dealt with by the special board were dealt with in subclause 2—

In fixing such lowest prices or rates the special board should take into consideration the nature, kind, and class of the work, and the mode and manner in which the work is to be done, and the age and sex of the workers, and any matter which may from time to time be prescribed.

Now, the principal Act, as the hon. member knew, dealt with almost every matter to which the clause he had read alluded, and clause 11 merely provided that wherever the powers of the special board with respect to those matters were invoked, the mere fact that the principal Act dealt with all or any of them was immaterial. The power of the special board overrode the provisions of the principal Act. Clause 11 was a paramount clause. That was the explanation of it.

Hon. D. F. DENHAM: That is what I was asking for.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 12, 13, and 14, put and passed.

On clause 15—"Board to determine lowest price or rate of payment"—

Mr. JENKINSON: The clause dealt with fixing the price or rate for outside work, and it appeared to him that the special board appointed for that purpose could, according to line 45, only be called into existence at the instance of the "occupier." Was no power to be given to the employees to call the special board into operation? They were told on the second reading that the measure was going to benefit the employees as well as the employers, and that their powers were going to be equal so far as the special boards taking their respective claims into consideration was concerned. The clause apparently did not give power to any employee to move the board to fix the rates of wages, but only conferred that power on the "occupier of a factory or shop." That seemed to be an oversight.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That clause referred to work done outside the factory, and the occupier was the person who took that work home. It was the occupier who was affected.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 16 to 19, inclusive, put and passed.

On clause 20—"Apppentices and improvers"—

HON. D. F. DENHAM: This was a very important clause. He was well aware that the Bill had been discussed not only on the second reading, but in Committee; and he had not the least intention to try and block progress at this stage. The clause dealt with the employment of our youths, and the filling up of the places in factories with inferior men. Had the Minister any idea as to how many youths would be permitted to engage as apprentices in any occupation? He knew many parents were finding it difficult to get good occupations for their lads.

Mr. BOWMAN: That will be determined by the court.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: He thought he had noticed somewhere that the number was not to exceed five.

The TREASURER: The clause, on line 55, leaves it to the discretion of the board.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: He wanted to draw attention to the fact that many of our parents in Queensland were concerned as to the occupation of their sons. There had been a tendency of late

to restrict the number of lads as apprentices, and the consequence was that many of the mechanical businesses and occupations were lacking men, and those who had not had any special training were put to work in factories. He hoped it would not act as a deterrent to the young men of the State.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS thought the hon. member was unduly exercised over apprentices. The board would be composed of employers and employees, and would decide the number of apprentices.

Mr. ARMSTRONG asked the Minister whether the words at the end of subclause (1)—

or when engaged in any process, trade, or business respecting which any special board has made a determination—

included the children of farmers who might be engaged in, say, milking—dairying.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS said he would answer that in the Irish way by asking another question. Were the children of the farmers apprentices? This referred to apprentices and improvers.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 21 to 28, inclusive, put and passed.

On clause 29—"Aged, slow, or infirm workers"—

HON. D. F. DENHAM pointed out that subclause (1) provided that the board might grant to an aged or infirm or slow worker a license for twelve months to work at a less wage. It was rather regrettable that he should have to apply annually for the renewal of that license, and he suggested that the words "twelve months" should be deleted.

Mr. BOWMAN: The board under that clause gives him every opportunity.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He may have recovered from his infirmity.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: He merely pointed out that it was an indignity cast upon many of our aged workers.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 30 to 45, inclusive, put and passed.

On clause 46—"Determinations of special board challengeable before Supreme Court only"—

Mr. JENKINSON understood it was rather a costly method to appeal to the Supreme Court, and asked whether it would not be better to grant an appeal to the District Court.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that it was more expeditious, more effective, and less costly to approach the Supreme Court in the first and final instance. Instead of having to appeal first to the District Court, and then to the Supreme Court, they could go to the Supreme Court at once, by simple affidavit, stating the grounds of application, apply for a rule, and call on the Chief Inspector to show cause why the determination should not be quashed in whole or in part, and come to a decision at once.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 47 put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported progress; and the Committee obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

The House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past 10 o'clock.