

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 13 JULY 1910

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QUESTIONS.

YARRABAH MISSION STATION.

Mr. MANN (*Cairns*) asked the Home Secretary—

Is it the intention of the Government to make further inquiry into the working of the Yarrabah Mission Station, to confirm or otherwise the report made by Police Magistrate Grant, of Cairns?

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. G. Appel, *Albert*) replied—

The inquiry is not yet finally closed.

GOVERNOR'S RESIDENCE, FERNBERG.

Mr. NEVITT (*Carpentaria*) asked the Secretary for Public Works—

1. What is the length of the lease of Fernberg, the present Governor's residence?

2. What is the cost of improvements up to date?

3. Who are the owners of the property?

4. Will the improvements revert to the owners after the expiration of the lease?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Bulimba*) replied—

1. Three years.

2. £2,813 1s. 3d.

3. Adelaide Louisa Palmer.

4. No.

ALIENS IN SUGAR FACTORIES.

Mr. FERRICKS (*Bowen*) asked the Chief Secretary—

Is it the intention of the Government to introduce legislation this session for the prevention of the employment of aliens in sugar factories?

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

Not this session.

MOTOR CAR FOR USE OF GOVERNOR.

Mr. MAY (*Flinders*) asked the Chief Secretary—

1. Has one of the Government motor-cars been made entirely over for the use of His Excellency the Governor?

2. Is not the use of the Government motor-car equivalent to an increase in the emoluments attaching to the office of Administrator of the Government of the State?

3. If so, upon whose authority was the increased emolument sanctioned?

The PREMIER replied—

I think hon. members will agree with me that it would be more in keeping with that respect we feel for His Majesty's representative, and with the dignity of this House, if such matters of detail relating to the Governor's establishment were raised and discussed in proper form, when the Estimates for Government House were under consideration.

Mr. MURPHY: I suppose you will gag them through then, like you did the Port Alma Railway.

ALLEGED SALE OF HOMES OF PERSONS RECEIVING INDIGENCE ALLOWANCE.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER (*Maranoa*) asked the Home Secretary—

1. How many homes of widows and orphans and others receiving indigent allowances has he ordered to be sold?

2. Without giving names of the unfortunate recipients, will he inform this House what are the respective amounts paid to each?

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

1. None.

2. See above.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

WEDNESDAY, 13 JULY, 1910.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (W. D. Armstrong, Esq., *Lockyer*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

PAPERS.

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

Report upon the Government life insurance and annuity business for the year 1909.

Regulation under the Navigation Act of 1876.

Report on the control, conservation, and use of the water resources of Queensland, by Elwood Mead, Dr., Eng., etc.

ADVANCES UNDER THE WORKERS' DWELLINGS
ACT OF 1909.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER asked the Secretary for Public Works—

1. The number of applications received for advances under the Workers' Dwellings Act of 1909?
2. The names of places from which received, and number from each respectively?
3. The number of advances granted?
4. The total sum applied for?
5. The total granted?

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

1. Fifty-eight.
2. Brisbane—Bowen Hills, 1; Bulimba, 1; Clayfield, 3; Coorparoo, 2; Eagle Junction, 2; Fast Brisbane, 2; Hamilton, 1; Kangaroo Point, 1; Lutwyche, 1; Morningside, 1; Moorooka, 1; New Farm, 2; Nundah, 2; Red Hill, 1; South Brisbane, 2; Taringa, 4; Toowong, 1; Torwood, 1; Wilton, 3; Windsor, 1; Woolloongabba, 3; Wooloowin, 2. Booval, 1; Cairns, 4; Inglewood, 2; Longreach, 1; Mackay, 1; Mount Morgan, 1; Rockhampton, 2; Silkstone, 1; Sunnyside, 1; Tingalpa, 1; Toowoomba, 1; Townsville, 1; Walloon, 1; Wynnum, 1; Yeppoon, 1.
3. Forty-eight.
4. £13,114. (Includes ten applications for £2,460 not yet considered by the board.)
5. £10,459.

INCREASE OF INDIGENCE ALLOWANCE.

Mr. MULLAN (*Charters Towers*) asked the Home Secretary—

Is it the intention of the Government to increase the indigent allowance during the current financial year?

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

No.

ADDITIONAL MAIL TRAIN ON CENTRAL
RAILWAY.

Mr. RYAN asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. Is it the intention of the Railway Department to run an additional mail train weekly from Rockhampton, on the Central Railway?
2. If so, when is such service likely to be started?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. W. T. Paget, *Mackay*) replied—

1. Yes.
2. In a few weeks at most.

DAYS OF SITTING.

On the motion of the PREMIER, it was formally resolved—

That, unless otherwise ordered, the House will meet for the despatch of business at 3 o'clock p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday in each week, and that on Tuesday and Wednesday, and after 7 o'clock p.m. on Thursday, Government business do take precedence of all other business.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the PREMIER, it was formally resolved—

That the Standing Orders Committee for the present session consist of the following members:—The Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, Mr. Hardacre, Mr. Grant, Mr. Maughan, Mr. Macartney, Mr. Lesina, Mr. Tomlie, and the mover, with leave to sit during any adjournment, and authority to confer upon subjects of mutual concernment with any committee appointed for similar purposes by the Legislative Council.

WAGES BOARDS ACT AMENDMENT
BILL.

INITIATION.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS, it was formally resolved—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the Wages Boards Act of 1908.

MINES REGULATION BILL.

INITIATION.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. J. G. Appel, *Albert*), it was formally resolved—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to make better provision for the regulation and inspection of mines.

BIBLE IN STATE SCHOOLS REFER-
ENDUM.

On the motion of Mr. MAUGHAN (*Ipswich*), it was formally resolved—

That there be laid on the table of the House a return giving details showing the votes polled in the respective electorates in connection with the recent Bible in State schools referendum.

DEATH OF KING EDWARD VII., AND
ACCESSION OF KING GEORGE V.

The PREMIER, who was received with cheers, said: Mr. Deputy Speaker.—Hon. members will agree with me that we should make it our first duty on the assembling of this House to express our sorrow and regret at the death of our late King, to express our sympathy with the widowed Queen Mother, and to convey to his present Majesty King George the assurances of our loyalty and devotion. (Hear, hear!) I think that it will seem less formal and more in unison with the simple sincerity of our feelings on this subject to combine these three matters in one motion. I therefore beg to move—

1. That we desire to express to His Majesty the King our heartfelt sympathy in his sorrow for the death of our late beloved Sovereign His Majesty's father, whose loss we sincerely mourn; to send a message of condolence to Her Majesty the widowed Queen Mother, whom we will ever regard with the deepest reverence and affection; to congratulate His Majesty King George the Fifth on his accession, and to assure him of our unalterable loyalty to his Throne and Person.

2. That this resolution be presented by Mr. Speaker in an address to His Excellency the Governor, requesting that the same be transmitted to the Secretary of State for presentation to His Majesty the King. Seldom, if ever, and certainly never in our own day, has the death of any man, whatever his rank, evoked so general, so widespread, and so sincere a sorrow throughout the world as did the death of our late King.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: Every civilised country felt the shock of the sudden news, and rulers and people, in sad accord, felt that the world was the poorer for his loss.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: Throughout the great Empire over which he ruled, and of which it is our privilege to form a part, there was, as was natural, a still deeper sense of regret—a feeling of great national loss, that became almost personal in the intensity of the consciousness that a great and beneficent influence, operating for the welfare of our people and the safety of our Empire, had been removed.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: It was not only that Edward the King was dead, but Edward the Statesman was dead—Edward the Peacemaker. (Hear, hear!) Edward, the man of broad and kindly human sympathies—

“The kindest man that ever wore a crown.”

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: One whose goodness of heart and simple sincerity of character endeared him to all those whose privilege

it was to come into personal contact with him. Since his death, we have had the testimony of men of all classes of society, and we now know that the secret of his great influence was personal to himself, and lay in the simple kindly sincerity of his character. (Hear, hear!) Edward has again shown us what we can never be shown too often, that

"Kind hearts are more than coronets"

—that even in his exalted station the rank was but the stamp of the guinea, and that the man himself was the gold.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: He was a King, he was an English country gentleman, he was a lover of music and the fine arts, he was a genuine lover of all forms of sport, he took a keen and active interest in the condition of the poor, and in all that tended to the betterment of the condition of his people; and all these many-sided phases of his character were made one harmonious whole by his broad sympathies and kindly simple nature. (Hear, hear!) As a constitutional King, Edward VII. has—

"wrought his people lasting good."

It may be said, with much truth, that Edward was but the second Sovereign of Britain who with loyalty and sincerity accepted the position of a constitutional Sovereign, and with unvarying care respected the limitations of such a position. During his reign there was never a word, there was never even a hint of friction, or that His Majesty ever felt any sense of limitation in the discharge of his high duties. Indeed, it would not be too much to say that he has given the world a truer and better idea of the position of a constitutional King, and that he has shown how powerful and far-reaching may be the influence of such a Sovereign. It is a matter of common knowledge that more than once his tact and sagacious statesmanship smoothed the way for the settlement of international difficulties. Indeed, it is this very thing which earned him the honourable name of Edward the Peacemaker. (Hear, hear!) Yet he always managed to exercise his influence without any stretching of his authority as a constitutional Sovereign, and without any friction with his Ministers. Indeed, as I have said, he gave the world new ideas of how great and far-reaching the influence of a strictly constitutional Sovereign may be. And it is not our own country alone that will benefit by the lesson, for it is not too much to say that the combined reigns of Victoria and Edward VII. have confirmed and established the principle of constitutional monarchy, and that the beneficent influence of those two great examples will be felt far beyond the bounds of our Empire. It is undoubtedly true that the life and example of Edward VII. will tend to strengthen and popularise constitutional monarchy, that he—

"Left his throne, unstaken still,

Broad-based upon the people's will."

(Hear, hear!) It is also fitting that we should take this occasion to express our sympathy with the bereaved Queen Mother, who has held so long and so deservedly a first place in the esteem and affection of the British people. (Hear, hear!) I remember that March day, some forty-seven years ago, when she landed in England, the—

"Sea King's daughter from over the sea."

I can remember the enthusiasm with which she was welcomed, and how the great heart of the nation warmed to her at once.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: It is a long time since then, and in those years Her Majesty has seen and has felt many changes. Then she was the youthful and joyous

"bride of the heir of the Kings of the sea."

To-day she sits aged and sorrowful, the widowed Queen Mother. But in all the years and amidst all the changes, one thing has remained unchanged, and that is the constant esteem and affection with which she is and has always been regarded by the British people. (Hear, hear!) Even in this outlying portion of our great Empire we share in her sorrow, and join our brethren in the old land in their expressions of affectionate respect for Alexandra. In addition to sending our condolences to the King and to the Queen Mother, it is our desire to congratulate King George V. on his accession to the throne.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: He takes upon himself the heavy but ennobling toil and the burden of empire, and he comes to the task with many advantages. He is better acquainted, by means of travel and personal observation, with the circumstances and requirements of the various parts of his wide domain than any previous Sovereign has been, and he cannot fail to have gained by the example, by the teaching, and by the close association that has existed between his father and himself, and we hope and believe that he will wear worthily the mantle of his illustrious father. We desire to express our loyalty and devotion to the Throne and Person of our new Sovereign, and trust that his reign may be long and glorious. (Cheers.)

Mr BOWMAN (*Fortitude Valley*), who was received with "Hear, hears!" said: I desire to second the resolution that has been moved by the Chief Secretary to-day, and regret that an event has taken place which makes it necessary for such a resolution to be passed. (Hear, hear!) As a monarch, I think King Edward was regarded as one of the best and most popular who has ever sat on the British Throne. He has been looked upon as a peacemaker, and I do not think without some justification. (Hear, hear!) When we have one in that position who is prepared to establish peace between nations, it is regrettable that a life such as his should be cut off. I also sympathise with those who are left to mourn the loss—that is, the Queen Mother and the other relatives of the late King. He was a man who was esteemed by all classes of society, and those of us who are British

subjects feel that, whether it be [4 p.m.] King or whether it be peasant, there is a sorrow that goes out at a time when loved ones are taken from the bosom of their families.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: And I only hope, Mr. Speaker, that the new King who ascends the Throne will follow the example of his father.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: I hope that he may use the same influence for the peace of the world that his father did, and, if he does that, I am sure that he also will be looked upon not only by British speaking people, but by the world over, as a man who is striving to be at peace with all nations.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: All that I can say in conclusion is that I heartily second the resolution.

I do it in sorrow, because I believe that we have lost the head of our Empire, a man who was esteemed and loved by all who knew him and those of us who have read of him, and may those who are left to mourn for him find a solace during the sorrowing time that they are undergoing at present. I think that those of us who have undergone sorrow at any time can feel for those who are deprived of their loved ones.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: I second the resolution that has been so ably moved by the Chief Secretary.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MANN (*Cairns*): I called "Not formal" to this motion, not because I disagreed with it, but because I think that the wording of it is very incongruous. Firstly, we desire to express to His Majesty the King our heartfelt sympathy and sorrow over the death of the late Sovereign, and later on we congratulate the new monarch on his accession to the Throne—an accession which was only obtained through the death of his father, the late King. I think it would have been much better if two messages had been sent. However, that is for the Government themselves to decide. I rose to say that I have every sympathy with those who express their sorrow at the death of His Majesty King Edward VII. because I believe that, as well as being a good monarch, he was a humane man.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MANN: His late Majesty had a touch of human sympathy about him that endeared him to all classes. Like the Premier, I believe that the regret evoked by his death was general. There is only one other man in my memory whose death evoked as great an amount of regret as the late King, and that was the late W. E. Gladstone. I believe that the whole civilised world mourned his loss.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Hear, hear!

Mr. MANN: I would have much preferred if the Premier, instead of reading a carefully prepared speech, had got up and spoken as he can do, and from the fullness of his heart uttered a few simple words to be conveyed to the widowed Queen Mother from Parliament representing the people of Queensland, expressing their regret at the death of the late King. We would convey our sympathy at the bereavement of the Queen Mother and show that we feel the sorrow that is universally felt among the English speaking people that a man who has made his mark as a King and a statesman has passed away. I think it would be well to send a separate message to King George V., congratulating him on his accession to the throne, and a further message condoling with him on the death of his father. What I wish to say before sitting down is this: That I trust that our message will be duly forwarded, and that the reply will be duly conveyed to this House. On a former occasion we sent a message through the Governor to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and no reply was received by this Parliament at all. Whether we should blame the Governor, the Secretary of State, or the Premier for that, I do not know, but I hope and trust that on this occasion when a reply is received that we will be made acquainted with it, and not, as happened in 1908, when we sent a certain message through the then Governor, Lord Chelmsford, that we should

be ignored, and no reply received, or if it is received that it should be kept back by the Premier.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would suggest to the members of the House that this resolution might be passed with the members standing.

The members then rose, and the question was put and passed in silence.

JOINT COMMITTEES.

MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Council intimating that the President, Mr. Norton, and Mr. Smith had been appointed members of the Joint Library Committee; the President, Mr. Murphy, and Mr. Fahey members of the Joint Committee for the Management of the Parliamentary Refreshment-rooms; and the President, Mr. Hall, and Mr. Cowlshaw members of the Joint Committee for the Management and Superintendence of the Parliamentary Buildings; and requesting that the Assembly nominate a like number with a view to give effect to the 8th Joint Standing Order.

On the motion of the PREMIER, it was resolved that the message be taken into consideration to-morrow.

ACTING CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

The PREMIER: I think I may say, in rising to move the motion standing in my name, how sincerely I regret, as I am sure all members of this House do, the sudden illness that has overtaken Mr. Speaker, and which makes this motion necessary. I trust, as I think most hon. members do, that he will quickly get over his illness and soon be back in his place amongst us.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: I therefore move—

That Mr. K. M. Grant do act as Chairman of Committees so long as the Chairman shall be acting as Deputy Speaker, and shall, in the absence of the Speaker and of the Chairman of Committees, or when called on by the Speaker or Deputy Speaker so to do, take the chair as Deputy Speaker.

I do not think that any words of mine are necessary to commend Mr. Grant to the House.

Mr. MURPHY: Do you think he is competent?

The PREMIER: Members of the House know Mr. Grant quite well. They have seen Mr. Grant in the position of Chairman, and they know that he makes a fair and impartial Chairman, I think that hon. members will admit that Mr. Grant is likely to carry out his duties as Chairman well and faithfully.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAUGHAN (*Ipswich*): I beg to move that the question be amended by the omission of the words "K. M. Grant" with the view of inserting in their place the words "H. F. Hardacre."

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAUGHAN: I should like to say that, whatever our political opinions may be, we can, I think, all regret that any officer of this House has been temporarily removed by reason of sickness. (Hear, hear!) And I think we can all join with the Premier in expressing the hope that the Speaker of this House will soon recover from his somewhat serious illness. Now, the machinery of Parliament has to be carried on, and as a certain

vacancy has occurred, hon. members on this side of the House claim the right, in common with every other party, to make a nomination to fill that vacancy.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAUGHAN: I have great pleasure therefore in moving that the name of Mr. Hardacre be substituted for Mr. Grant. It is a pleasing duty to me to do that, as one of the older members of the House, as in Mr. Hardacre we would have a Chairman of ripe experience, and a man who has been a very close student of parliamentary practice, and of the Standing Orders generally. I am quite sure that nobody questions his impartiality whenever he was called upon to take up the temporary duty in one of the most honourable positions there is in this House for an hon. member to occupy. For these reasons, and without making a long speech, I put forward Mr. Hardacre's nomination and I appeal to both sides of the House.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAUGHAN: I remember some time ago, when Mr. Hardacre's name was mentioned, that more than one hon. member on the other side of the House seemed very pleased with the idea, and promised to give their support to that hon. gentleman's nomination should it ever be submitted. My duty is therefore a pleasurable one, and I beg to move the amendment accordingly.

Mr. COYNE (*Warrego*): I desire to second the amendment moved by the hon. member for Ipswich. I have very much pleasure in doing so. I think it is a regrettable thing, when a Government have got a following behind them such as the present one, that in a matter of this sort, which should be the gift of the whole House they should select a man from their own party to fill the position and make it a party question.

The PREMIER: Is it not right for the Government to do it just the same as the Opposition?

Mr. COYNE: I think that in a matter of this sort it should be left to the good judgment of the House to say who is the best man to be placed in this position.

Mr. FORSYTH: We are going to leave that to the good sense of the House now.

Mr. COYNE: The hon. member for Moreton says we are leaving it to the good sense of the House now. Why, everyone knows that this thing was fixed up on the "Lucinda" the other day. (Loud Government laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The Speaker was quite well then. (Laughter.)

Mr. COYNE: I understand that there was a caucus meeting of the Government supporters the other day. Whether it was held on the "Lucinda" or somewhere else I do not know, but these meetings are generally held on the "Lucinda."

The PREMIER: Your prophetic soul was too prophetic that time. (Laughter.)

Mr. COYNE: We know very well that at that caucus meeting it was decided that the senior member for Rockhampton should be nominated for this position. It is public property.

The PREMIER: Was it decided that the Speaker should fall ill?

Mr. COYNE: The meeting was subsequent to the unfortunate illness of the Speaker, which I regret as much as any member in this House. I sincerely regret the illness of the Speaker, and I believe all members of the

house have shown their sympathy. But we all know that the Premier has shown no great love for his colleague, the senior member for Rockhampton, in the past, and now why should he nominate him for this position? We know that the Premier was pretty severe on him, and gave him a good castigation last session for showing his independence as a member of this House.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COYNE: I think it is only right that we should add some protest to the way in which the Premier now wishes to whitewash himself for his conduct last session.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COYNE: He brought the Chief Secretary to his knees last session, and I gave the hon. member credit for it. I think he only did what he was expected to do by his constituents.

Mr. MURPHY: They put him at the head of the poll for doing it.

Mr. COYNE: Yes. (Government laughter.) In seconding the amendment, I recognise that we are nominating on this side of the House one of the best, if not the most qualified man in this House to carry out the duties of Chairman of Committees, and that is my reason for seconding the amendment. I hope that the good sense of the House, which has been referred to by the hon. member for Moreton, will decide upon electing Mr. Hardacre, the hon. member for Leichhardt, to occupy that position during the temporary absence of the Speaker.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MURPHY (*Croydon*): Owing to the smallness of the party on the back Opposition bench, we are not able to put forward a candidate. (Laughter.) But so far as I am concerned, I am going to vote for the hon. member for Leichhardt. It is a surprise to me that the hon. member for Rockhampton should have allowed himself to be nominated for this position. Everybody knows that he is competent to fill it, and we all believe he will be absolutely impartial, but what position did the Premier take with regard to the hon. member previously? He never gave him one position in this House. He never brought him forward as a competent man to fill the position of Chairman of Committees, because the hon. member was always absolutely loyal to him. When trouble arose there was no backsliding on the part of the senior member for Rockhampton. I offered him a portfolio myself—(laughter)—but he absolutely declined to take it. He assisted the Premier to retain his position, and although the Premier knew he was well qualified to take the position of Chairman of Committees, he never considered him at all, and it strikes me the reason the senior member for Rockhampton is being brought forward to-day is because he has been showing signs of restlessness.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. MURPHY: That is my idea of it. He has been putting it to the Premier at some of those caucus meetings that unless some position was found for him he would have to go elsewhere.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. member is entirely out of order in imputing motives to the hon. member.

Mr. MURPHY: I was not imputing motives at all; but when you take everything into

Mr. Murphy.]

consideration—when you take into consideration the fact that they have two “Whips” on the Government side—

The PREMIER: You have two “Whips” on that side.

Mr. MURPHY: No; you are entirely wrong—we are both leaders up this end. (Laughter.) The hon. member for Leichhardt is an old member of this House, and is well up in the Standing Orders and is quite competent to fill the position, and I think myself it would be a kindly act on the part of the House to appoint him to the position. I am really surprised that the senior member for Rockhampton should have allowed the Premier to make a stop-gap of him. He is a personal friend of mine, and I would like to vote for him—he is a real nice little chap.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. MURPHY: Like all the members of the House, I should certainly like to vote for him, but I think the hon. member for Leichhardt should be elected to the position, and I intend to vote for him.

Mr. MANN: I have no intention of moving that another name should be substituted for “Hardacre,” because I believe both men nominated for the position are quite well qualified to hold it. I remember quite well that the Premier never did anything for his colleague. I moved on one occasion that Mr. Grant should be Speaker of this Chamber, and having done that, I have no fault to find with him, and wish to see him presiding over the deliberations of this Chamber. The only question to my mind is who will be the most impartial, and I believe the Chairman of Committees should always be a member of the Opposition, inasmuch as he would be more inclined to give a fair deal. The Chairman always has the Premier at his elbow whispering to him what he has to do, and if he does not do it, he will be threatened with opposition in his own electorate. Last session hon. members would remember the Premier acted the part of Ramornie—a character in Scottish history who starved his prince to death—and the Premier tried the same thing in this House, and tried to starve this House into passing the Port Alma Railway. I have no words to describe it, but it was one of the most reprehensible acts that ever took place in this House, and for that reason I shall vote for the hon. member for Leichhardt, inasmuch as I believe he will be a good Chairman, and allow members to proceed to their meals at the proper time, and not be coerced by a descendant of Ramornie, who was trying to starve us into submission. (Laughter.)

Question—That the words “K. M. Grant,” proposed to be omitted, stand part of the question—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 34.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Hunter, D.
“ Barnes, G. P.	“ Kidston
“ Barnes, W. H.	“ Macartney
“ Booker	“ Mackintosh
“ Bouchard	“ Morgau
“ Brennan	“ Paret
“ Bridges	“ Petrie
“ Corser	“ Philp
“ Cottell	“ Roberts
“ Denham	“ Somers
“ Forrester	“ Stodart
“ Forsyth	“ Swayne
“ Fox	“ Thorn
“ Grayson	“ Tohnie
“ Gunn	“ Walker
“ Hawthorn	“ White
“ Hodge	“ Wienholt

Tellers: Mr. Grayson and Mr. White.

[Mr. Murphy.

NOES, 27.

Mr. Allen	Mr. Mann
“ Barber	“ Maughan
“ Bowman	“ May
“ Breslin	“ Mulcahy
“ Collins	“ Mullan
“ Coyne	“ Murphy
“ Crawford	“ Nevitt
“ Ferrieks	“ O’Sullivan
“ Foley	“ Payne
“ Hamilton	“ Ryan
“ Hunter, J. M.	“ Ryland
“ Lani	“ Theodore
“ Lennon	“ Winstanley
“ McLachlan	

Tellers: Mr. Barber and Mr. Crawford.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Original question put and passed.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS.

The PREMIER, in moving—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended for this day as would otherwise prevent the immediate constitution of Committees of Supply and Ways and Means; the receiving of resolutions on the same day on which they shall have passed in those committees, and the passing of an Appropriation Bill through all its stages in one day—

said: I understood some hon. gentleman to call “Not formal” to this motion, probably with a desire to elicit—

Mr. BOWMAN: Following your example.

The PREMIER: A bad example!

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: Any example you show is bad.

The PREMIER: I presume hon. members want some information, which I shall be pleased to give them; but I cannot imagine any member, with any knowledge of public business, opposing the passing of [4.30 p.m.] such a motion. It is the usual and unavoidable method of granting Supply in the earlier weeks of the financial year. Estimates cannot be passed in the first stages of the financial year, and it is necessary to obtain temporary Supply to pay public servants. Any information that may be required by hon. members I will supply with pleasure.

Mr. BOWMAN: I called “Not formal” to this motion, not with the view of preventing an appropriation, but to enter my protest against the practice, which no hon. member more strongly condemned than the present Premier when the present member for Townsville occupied the position. He at that time considered it altogether unfair that the leader of the Government should get an appropriation passed in one day.

The PREMIER: The sins of our youth! (Laughter.)

Mr. BOWMAN: The hon. member is in his usual flippant style, but it is a serious matter, and should not be allowed to pass without protest. The excuse for the motion is that the payments to the public servants have to be made; but I would remind the hon. gentleman that there was a suggestion before we adjourned last session that he might meet the House in May, so as to have an opportunity of doing business much earlier than last year. If that had been done, there would have been no occasion to pass an Appropriation Bill in one day.

Mr. MURPHY: I am pleased that the leader of the Opposition has put up a protest against this motion. Last year the hon. gentleman got his Estimates through under the “gag,” and promised that he would call Parliament together earlier than for some years previously;

and if he had dealt fairly with members, he would have called the House together earlier. Last year he "gagged" the Estimates through, giving as an excuse that he wanted to go to a conference in Melbourne. With Deakin, he wanted to put the finishing touches on the electioneering campaign; but the finishing touches were put on by the electors on the 13th April; and the shock which the Premier and his colleagues then received is some excuse for them not calling Parliament together earlier. It took them some time to recover, and they were unable to prepare their business. If we were to object to this motion, the Premier would say the Opposition were trying to deprive the public servants of their pay, but I am glad a protest has been made. Under the system of party Government Ministers call us together when they want money, and clear us out when they have got the money they want.

Question put and passed.

SUPPLY.

The TREASURER: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—I beg to move that you do now leave the chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the Supply to be granted to His Majesty.

Mr. MANN: Before you leave the chair I would like to ask the Treasurer a question. What was the motive that actuated the Cabinet in granting the request of the navvies on the Atherton-Evelyn Railway for an increase in wages after it had been refused, and the Minister had allowed all the tools to be gathered in, and had let it be known that the Government did not intend starting work again until the men had given in? The men who left have been wandering all over the North trying to find work, and during the past few weeks many of them have undergone great hardship. Could not the Government have decided to give those men the increase when Mr. Thallon met them and promised to wire to the Minister for Railways in Brisbane in regard to their request for 9s. a day? He knew all the circumstances just as well then as he did a day or two ago, when the request was granted. I hope the hon. gentleman will give the information. It may benefit the men on the Port Alma Railway, for instance, to know that by going on strike for a few weeks they may get what they consider their rights.

Mr. MURPHY: I think the question asked by the hon. member for Cairns is a very pertinent one, and that he is entitled to an answer by the Treasurer. It seems rather tyrannical for a member of the Cabinet to absolutely decline to reply to a civil question asked by a member of the Opposition, and if this is to continue I think a strong protest should be put up by members of the Opposition.

Question put and passed

COMMITTEE.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. K. M. Grant, *Rockhampton*), on taking the chair, said: I thank the House for the honour they have done me in electing me to this position; and though I may be partial outside I can promise to be impartial in my duty while in the chair.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The TREASURER moved—

That there be granted to His Majesty, on account of the services for the year 1910-11, a sum not exceeding £580,000 towards defraying the expenses of the various departments and services of the State.

Mr. MANN repeated his request for information concerning the granting of increased pay to the navvies on the Atherton-Evelyn Railway. If the men had gone on strike sooner for 9s. a day, he believed the bulk of the business people in that district would have been favourable to their cause, and have done what they could to assist them to get a fair living wage, especially considering the broken time there was on the railways. Many other railways were in course of construction at the present time, and if the Treasurer gave the reason they could tell the workers on those railways that if they had a mind to stand out for a few weeks they could get this Government to follow the example of Mr. Wade, and try and make themselves real good fellows when a general election was looming on the horizon. It would be a good thing to take a leaf out of Mr. Wade's book, and, if the majority of the men on the railways struck for a higher wage, he had no doubt that the Cabinet would agree to it, seeing they had left so many things out of the programme which they might have put in. If the Treasurer did not care to answer the question, he took it for granted that the Government gave in because the men were determined, and he (Mr. Mann) should advise as many of the railway workers as he came across to follow the example of Atherton and Evelyn men and come out for higher wages.

Mr. MURPHY: As the Treasurer had not answered the question of the hon. member for Cairns, perhaps he would tell the House for what time this Supply would carry him on? He might be permitted to congratulate the Acting Chairman on having attained that high and honourable position, and to express a hope that he would fulfil his promise to be absolutely impartial during the session. He was sure from what he knew of the Acting Chairman, having seen him in the chair at a few late sittings of the House, that he would be absolutely fair to both sides of the House, and would not permit the Premier, although he was a colleague, to bounce him in any way. (Laughter.)

The TREASURER said this appropriation covered the months of July and August—two months' Supply for all the services. He might say, with reference to the increased wages in the North, that the same thing was going to be done right through all the construction work, the wages would be increased by 6d. a day. That was why it was not done straight away.

Mr. MURPHY: That is why you did not put it in any of the Railway Bills last year.

The TREASURER: The whole matter had been considered, and that decision come to.

Mr. MULCAHY: That is the result of the Federal election.

Mr. MURPHY asked if it was absolutely necessary that they should pass the two months' Supply at the present time? Why could not the Government get Supply for this month, and then come down for Supply next month? He would like to know whether the men would receive the increases about which they had been reading so much lately out of this Supply, or would have to wait till the Estimates were passed?

The TREASURER: They could not possibly obtain an increase for men on the staff until the Estimates had been actually passed. They were acting in accordance with the usual practice in asking for two months' Supply, and they thought it was better to do that than to have two Appropriation Bills in two months.

Hon. A. G. C. Hawthorn.]

Mr. MURPHY thought they ought to get away from this usual practice, and that a month's Supply would be quite sufficient. In fact, there might be no Government at the end of the month.

Mr. MANN wished to ask the Treasurer a question with regard to a loan said to be promised to the chairman of the Cairns Shire Council by the Treasurer, for the purpose of extending the present Mulgrave Tramway. The chairman told him (Mr. Mann) and other people in Cairns that he had a distinct promise from the Treasurer that a loan would be available for the construction of a further 6 miles of the tramway to the border of the Cairns Shire Council. Had such a promise been made? Mr. Munro had said the promise was made, and he was a gentleman whose word he (Mr. Mann) had every reason to believe.

The TREASURER said he had made no such promise to Mr. Munro. Mr. Munro came to him with a proposal for two extensions of the Mulgrave Tramway to the Russell River and to Geraldton—one was to cost about £17,000, and he thought the other a somewhat similar amount. He had said distinctly that nothing could be done in that direction without being submitted to the Cabinet, and he did not take upon himself to promise one thing or the other. Of course, they knew Mr. Munro was very anxious to get the line, and he may have thought things looked more promising than they really did, but he could assure hon. members that he had made no promise.

Mr. MANN believed the Treasurer was making his statement in all honesty, but he also believed that Mr. Munro came away from the Treasurer with the full impression that while they would not grant the amount asked for to extend the tramway to Geraldton, the Treasurer had no objection to the tramway being extended as far as the boundary of the Cairns shire.

The TREASURER: It is not so. I did not make any promise.

Mr. MANN: The Cairns-Mulgrave Tramway was one of the best managed little railways in the whole of Queensland; they had always met interest on redemption at due date. He believed that while the Treasurer might think he made no definite promise, in face of the fact that the Mulgrave Tramway was paying, no Treasurer should refuse to give money for the opening up of territory where he knew interest and redemption was absolutely assured. Without saying that the sum was a large one, he was perfectly satisfied that even if the amount asked for to extend the tramway to the Johnstone had been given by the Treasurer, there would have been no doubt about the interest and redemption being met. The avowed aim and object of the Cabinet was to develop the virgin soil of Queensland, and this tramway would open up a big area of virgin scrub. For the life of him, he could not see why the Treasurer, after having given a loan to extend the tramway to Babinba Creek, could not give a further sum of £17,000 to extend the tramway right to the end of the territory. The success of this tramway did not depend upon the erection of a mill at Babinba Creek; the line was paying so well that the Council maintained that they could always keep a non-paying section going, and yet meet interest and redemption, and in about a couple of years' time he was satisfied this extension would pay as, even if there was not a single stick of sugar-

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cane grown, the country would be taken up for banana-growing and dairying. He hoped the Treasurer would reconsider his decision, as even without a mill at Babinba Creek the interest and redemption on the loan for the extension would be amply met by the highly-paying nature of the portion already built.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a resolution.

The resolution was received and agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

The TREASURER moved—

That £350,000 be granted out of the consolidated revenue fund account; £30,000 from trust and special funds; and £200,000 from loan fund account.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a resolution.

The resolution was received and agreed to.

[5 p.m.]

APPROPRIATION BILL No. 1.

FIRST AND SECOND READINGS.

This Bill, founded on the resolutions passed in Committee, was read a first and second time without discussion.

COMMITTEE.

(Mr. K. M. Grant, Rockhampton, in the chair.)
On clause 1—"Appropriation"—

Mr. MURPHY asked the Treasurer whether it was proposed to raise another loan this year?

The TREASURER: The Government had no idea of raising a loan.

Mr. MURPHY: You have no idea how to raise one, you mean. (Laughter.)

Clauses 1 to 4, inclusive, and the preamble were put and passed without further discussion.

The House resumed. The ACTING CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment, and the report was agreed to.

THIRD READING.

The Bill was read a third time, passed through its remaining stages without discussion, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council, by message in the usual form.

PRINTING COMMITTEE.

The PREMIER moved—

1. That, in compliance with Standing Order No. 304, a Select Committee be appointed to assist Mr. Speaker in all matters which relate to the printing to be executed by order of the House; and for the purpose of selecting, and arranging for printing, returns and papers presented in pursuance of motions made by members.

2. That such committee consist of the following members:—Mr. Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, Mr. McEachlan, Mr. Cribb, Mr. Hamilton, Mr. D. Hunter, Mr. Winstanley, Mr. Grayson, and the mover.

Mr. MANN: I called "Not formal" to this motion, Mr. Speaker, because you may possibly remember that upon one occasion a petition was presented in this House by the hon. member for Rockhampton North in regard to the Port Alma Railway. The petition was a weighty one and had a great number of names upon it, and I desired to see that petition printed, so that we could have copies of it in our hands for reference when

the question of the Port Alma Railway cropped up in this House. I moved that the petition be printed, and I was informed that I should prefer my request to the Printing Committee. I went round the House asking for various members of the Printing Committee, and I was fortunate enough to meet one of them. I asked him how often the committee met, what were their duties, what papers they recommended for being printed and which papers they rejected, and to my surprise I was told that the committee never met at all.

Mr. MURPHY: What! What!

Mr. MANN: He told me that they never met at all, and the matter of printing was managed without their ever being consulted at all. Now, I want to know if this committee, which we are asked to appoint, is going to be one of the same nature. Is it going to be merely a dead letter? What is the reason of the Premier moving this resolution, seeing that this committee never met and never did anything? I have been told, and I do not know if it is true or not, that the lift was put up in the Parliamentary Buildings without the Building Committee being consulted in the matter.

Mr. MURPHY: What!

Mr. MANN: The Building Committee were never consulted about the erection of the lift to this building. They say that it was done at the request of an old gentleman known as Mephistopheles, and the Building Committee were never consulted.

Mr. D. HUNTER: Yes, they were consulted

Mr. MANN: I was told that they were not consulted.

Mr. D. HUNTER: Well, you are wrong.

Mr. MANN: Well, the hon. member for Woolloongabba might have been consulted, but none of the others were. I remember that the hon. member for Woolloongabba made a certain promise to his electors and he went back on it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. MANN: So I cannot say if the hon. member is speaking the truth now. He is merely a crank or shaft in the Government machine—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MANN: The hon. member for Woolloongabba is merely a crank or shaft—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I must remind the hon. member for Cairns that if he does not take notice of my calls to order, I will have to take other measures.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MANN: I thought your calls to order were to those members who were interjecting. I was just saying that the hon. member for Woolloongabba was a crank or shaft—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MANN: I am not applying the term in any offensive way at all. I mean like the crank or shaft of a machine. I meant that he was a crank or shaft which drives the Government machine, meaning that the hon. member provides certain motive power to drive the Government. (Laughter.) If my words are offensive, however, I will withdraw them. I wish to know what are the qualifications of the members down here, with the exception perhaps of Mr. McLachlan. I wish to include him, but to my mind none of the other members mentioned here have any idea of printing whatsoever. Mr.

McLachlan has a good deal of expert knowledge of printing, and it is only right and fair that his name should be there. I am not anxious to displace any of the names that are there with the view of putting my own name there, but my friend, the hon. member for Croydon, is an old printer, and might not his name be put there?

Mr. MURPHY: No.

A LABOUR MEMBER: Mr. Ferricks.

Mr. MANN: Mr. Ferricks, the hon. member for Bowen, has also some knowledge of the newspaper trade, and might not his name be put there as well? We want live men on this committee, men who have some practical knowledge of printing, instead of having a number of men picked out in a haphazard fashion. The only member whose name I can justify here is Mr. McLachlan, the junior member for the Valley. Now, is this wise? Can we not, out of all the members of this House, get a small working committee of men who understand something about printing? I have mentioned one or two myself. Possibly some other members of this House may have been compositors and may have done newspaper work. Perhaps the hon. member for Fitzroy or the hon. member for Ipswich might have done some such work? I am asking this House to do away with foolish committees, and let us have committees that are real live bodies. On this committee we should have only practical men who will be able to say what should be printed and what should not. I object to this haphazard way of picking names and putting them on committees. We have a Buildings Committee, and the lift was put in without that committee being consulted on the matter at all. We have a Refreshment-rooms Committee, and we get a report occasionally from them. (Laughter.) But apparently nothing is ever done upon their recommendation. What is the use of burdening this House with committees in this way, unless they are to be of some use? The Premier should only move motions in which there is some business, and if there is no business in this motion, why not leave the whole business in the hands of the Speaker or the Clerks of the House, and not bother appointing a committee of men who will never be asked to meet, and, so far as the Premier knows or cares, will never take any action whatsoever. Perhaps these men are chosen so that when the printing bill becomes a heavy item the Premier will be able to say "I had on the Printing Committee so many Labour members." And I see here the names of Messrs. McLachlan, Hamilton, and Winstanley. I think myself the Premier will be wise to withdraw this motion and substitute in place of those men, the names of men who know something about printing, and make them responsible to the House.

Mr. MURPHY: If this committee never meets—if it is just a matter of form—why not let us put it through at once? The hon. member for Cairns has mentioned my name in connection with this committee, and I certainly say this: I feel confident that the Premier and myself could sit down quietly and discuss matters and bring them to a very satisfactory conclusion.

The PREMIER: Even the Premier by himself.

Mr. MURPHY: I do not think the Premier could do it by himself. I would not like to trust the Premier that far. (Laughter.) My experience of the Premier is that he would probably get away with the printing, as he

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got away with some of those who were foolish enough to believe in him. I would like to see any amount of printing go along to the Government Printing Office. There are a good many "comps." looking for work, and I intend to give them any amount to do this session, and I will receive their blessing, if I can give them something to do by talking in this House.

Question put and passed.

POLICE JURISDICTION AND SUMMARY OFFENCES BILL.

The TREASURER (Hon. A. G. C. Hawthorn, *Enoggera*) moved—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to the powers and duties of officers of the Police Force, and with respect to certain offences punishable summarily, and for other purposes.

Mr. BOWMAN: I would just like to ask the Treasurer whether this Bill is similar to the one introduced last year, or are there a number of alterations?

The TREASURER: It is very nearly on the same lines. There are some slight alterations in the clauses, which will be seen when the Bill is laid on the table.

Mr. MANN: The Treasurer has told us that the Bill is practically on the same lines as the one we saw last year—the Police Offences Bill. I went through that measure, and I just wish to tell the Treasurer that it is most obnoxious, and, as far as I am concerned, I will oppose it on every occasion.

The TREASURER: Then it means a fight, that is all.

Mr. MANN: It means that I will divide the House on every obnoxious clause. A more foolish Bill I never saw drafted, and I give the Treasurer due notice that I intend to oppose it at every stage.

Mr. MURPHY: Can the Treasurer tell us when we are likely to get a copy of the Bill?

The TREASURER: It will be laid on the table of the House to-morrow, if this motion is passed.

Mr. MURPHY: That is all very well. It will be laid on the table of the House, but we cannot sit in the House and read it.

The TREASURER: The next day it will be in the boxes of members.

Mr. MURPHY: Can we take it as a promise from the Treasurer that the Police Offences Bill will be in the boxes to-morrow?

The TREASURER: Yes, if you pass this motion to-morrow. Is that satisfactory?

Question put and passed.

STATE EDUCATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Bulimba*) moved—

That leave be given to introduce a Bill to amend the State Education Acts, 1875 to 1900, by making provision for religious instruction in State schools during school hours, in pursuance of an affirmative referendum poll taken under the Religious Instruction in State Schools Referendum Act of 1908.

Mr. BOWMAN: I think it is only a fair question that at this stage the House should have some information from the Minister as to the nature of this Bill. I myself am certainly opposed to the introduction of this

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Bill at all. I think we should have some information from the Minister before the motion is passed.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: In reply to the hon. member I desire to state that at a later stage I will lay the Bill on the table of the House, and move that it be printed, and copies should be in the hands of hon. members to-morrow morning. I would like further to state that the Bill will be a very simple one. It makes provision for carrying out the wishes of the people as expressed at the referendum. It is of the simplest possible nature, and I would assure hon. members that copies of the Bill will be in their boxes to-morrow morning.

Mr. MURPHY: It certainly is a surprise to me that the Government should want to rush this Bill through this session of Parliament. There is plenty of time to deal with a Bill like this. What about an Eight Hours Bill? The Premier has no time to deal with it. What about a Workers' Compensation Bill? No time to deal with it. But Archdeacon Garland comes along and has a chat with him and he introduces this Bill to oblige him. I am going to vote against it. There are only 800 electors in my electorate, but that is no reason why I should not give a vote against the Bible Reading in State Schools Bill here. Up in the North they pretty well all voted against any alteration in our present education system, and I think all those who are opposed to it ought to fight against any alteration, and we ought to worry the Minister who is going to introduce it right down into his grave. (Laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Oh, don't do that.

Mr. HUNTER: What did you say last year?

Mr. MURPHY: I am in the same position as the Premier. He said, "I am not going to vote against a referendum, but I am going right throughout the country to tell the people it will be wrong to alter the education system." Of course, we know the Premier did not have time to go round Queensland to tell the electors they would be doing wrong by voting for any alteration in the educational system—he was too busy running round trying to get his £1 5s. a head.

Mr. FERRICKS: He was up in the Wide Bay.

Mr. MURPHY: The Premier and most members of the Cabinet went up to Wide Bay, but Mr. Fisher got returned.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. member must see that he is exceeding the bounds of the debate.

Mr. MURPHY: I say we ought to oppose this motion. We ought not to allow it to be introduced at all, if we can stop it. I am opposed to any alteration in the present educational system, and I am prepared to assist any party here that is game to fight.

Mr. D. HUNTER: You have changed your mind.

Mr. MURPHY: If the hon. member looks up *Hansard* he will find that when the question came before this House previously I spoke against it and voted against it. In 1907 the matter was in the Government programme and a number of us told the Premier in caucus that we were opposed to it, but we did not care to cause any dissension in the party. However, I am opposing it to-day. The hon. member for Woollongabba can look up my speeches in *Hansard* in connection with this

question, and he will find I have always been opposed to any alteration in our present education system.

Mr. MANN: When the Secretary for Public Instruction was speaking he said that this Bill was introduced in order to carry into effect the wishes of the people as expressed by them at the late referendum. Now, the people at the late referendum did not actually know all the facts of the matter. Broadly speaking, the vote lay between religious instruction or not. But I took upon myself, in going round the various booths, to ask those advocating religious instruction, if they advocated the whole Bible, and I quoted certain chapters to them, and asked if they intended to teach that in the schools, and they said, "No." That being so, I think before this motion is put on the business-paper the Secretary for Public Instruction ought to have got all the people interested—that is those connected with religious bodies who desired to impart religious instruction to our children in buildings built by the ratepayers' money and used by the children of all denominations—that we should have got laid on the table of the House copies of all the reading lessons to be used before we consent to pass a measure of this description.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! I would call the hon. member's attention to the fact that the Bill is not before the House. The question is that leave be given to introduce the Bill, and the hon. member cannot debate the general question.

Mr. MANN: This motion asks that leave be given to introduce a Bill to amend the State Education Act, and I think before we vote for the Bill we should have had copies of the lessons to be read in the schools by those religious bodies. For example, I have just told the House that I happened to walk round Brisbane while the polling was going on, and I asked the advocates of Bible instruction in State schools if they proposed to teach certain questions in the State schools, and they said, "No." That being so, they intend to teach in the schools a mutilated form of the Bible.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! I would remind the hon. member that he is not in order in proceeding in that form. The question of the principle of the Bill is not before the House at the present moment. Hon. members do not know what may be contained in the Bill, and I cannot allow the hon. member to discuss that matter.

Mr. MANN: I am not discussing the Bill. I am saying before the Bill should be introduced we should have laid on the table of the House copies of the lessons which [5.30 p.m.] the Bill proposes to be allowed to be taught in the schools. I do not know what the Bill proposes to do. I am merely offering the suggestion to the Secretary for Public Instruction that he should wait upon the various persons who intend to avail themselves of the privileges conferred by the Bill, and lay on the table of the House copies of the lessons they intend to teach. The reason I am asking this is because the Secretary for Public Instruction says the question had been put fairly before the people at the referendum; and that the majority of those voting had declared in favour of Bible teaching in State schools. I could understand them if they intended to take the whole of the Bible; but as they intend to mutilate the Bible, so to speak, and only teach certain portions, I think it would facilitate the passage of the

Bill if we were to see the lessons it is proposed to teach. I think that is a fair and reasonable attitude to adopt; and I would like to get the information, as I do not desire to have any lesson taught that would tend to degrade or demoralise the children of Queensland. I will have little opposition to the Bill if it does not provide for the teaching of anything which parents do not desire their children to be taught.

Mr. BOUCHARD (*Brisbane South*): I must confess that I cannot understand members opposing the introduction of this Bill. The hon. member for Cairns was some time ago a member of a party whose platform, to which he subscribed, contains the principle of a referendum to the people.

Mr. MANN: Free, secular, and compulsory education.

Mr. BOUCHARD: This subject was recently referred to the people of Queensland for their decision, and I ask the hon. member, who has subscribed to the referendum, to accept the will of the people.

Mr. MANN: When did I subscribe to it?

Mr. BOUCHARD: Though hon. members may have their own opinions as to the advisableness or otherwise of introducing a measure of this sort, still, as the question has been referred to the electors, and as they have spoken with no uncertain majority, it seems to me idle to resist the voice of the people. In view of that decision, I say it is incumbent on the Government to introduce a Bill to give effect to the desire of the people.

Mr. FERRICKS: Don't you think there are more important measures to be brought forward?

Mr. BOUCHARD: We all have our opinions as to the importance of measures to be introduced; but I cannot understand why any member, more particularly members who have subscribed to the Labour platform, one of whose planks is the referendum on all subjects, should object to the introduction of this measure.

Mr. COYNE: You believe in the Labour platform?

Mr. BOUCHARD: I do not believe in the Labour platform; I do not believe either in the referendum; but Parliament having referred this particular matter to the judgment of the people, and the people having given their decision, it is the duty of the Government to introduce the Bill. And I say to members, particularly to members of the Labour party who have subscribed to the doctrine of the referendum, that it is their duty to abide by the will of the people.

Mr. BOWMAN: We do not want you to tell us our duty.

Mr. BOUCHARD: I have my own opinion as to the advisableness of passing a measure of this description, and when it is introduced I shall have something to say upon it; but in the meantime I say it is the duty of the House to allow the Government to introduce the Bill to give effect to the will of the people.

Mr. McLACHLAN (*Fortitude Valley*): I wish to enter my protest against the introduction of this measure. I do not intend to speak at length now, because I shall have an opportunity of doing so later on when the Bill is before us; and I shall then have an opportunity of replying to the random statements made by the hon. the junior member for South Brisbane. I object to leave being given for

Mr. McLachlan.]

the introduction of this Bill, which is to provide for the giving of religious instruction in State schools during school hours.

Mr. ALLEN (*Bulloo*): I desire to voice my opposition to this proposal. The majority of the people in my electorate were not given a chance of voicing their opinions, or it would have been found that they did not want religious instruction in State schools.

Mr. BOUCHARD: Why did they not vote against it?

Mr. ALLEN: They did not have the opportunity. Many of them were too far from the polling places; several polling places were cancelled, and others were generally in some out-of-the-way place, and people did not know where to find them. Now we have the hon. member for South Brisbane getting up and lecturing us as to what we should do, and interpreting the Labour platform for us, saying that we believe in the referendum on all subjects. I do not believe in the referendum on all subjects; and it was never intended to apply to all subjects. It was intended to apply to political subjects, and not to religious subjects. This is a question of religion, and it is a question into which sectarianism enters. To say that the majority must rule on all subjects means that on a question of religion I have to accept the will of the majority.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: It may lead to a State church.

Mr. ALLEN: If we accept the principle that the majority must rule in this matter, we will soon find that there is no such thing as religious freedom.

Mr. BOUCHARD: Don't you believe in the referendum?

Mr. ALLEN: I believe in religious freedom.

Mr. LENNON (*Herbert*): In reply to the hon. member for South Brisbane, I may say that this party is not in favour of a referendum on this subject. (Government laughter.) It is all very well to laugh. We have never succeeded in getting the principle of the referendum accepted. When it is accepted, it will be the duty of this party to define the subjects to which it shall apply. I am quite satisfied that it would be better, and be more acceptable to the House, that the referendum should definitely state that all religious subjects will be excluded from it. The hon. member for South Brisbane is really using arguments which should not be used in regard to this party. Maybe he has been in close consultation with the secretary of the Bible League. There is no doubt of that, because the language that he uses is very much like the language that has been used by the Ven. Archdeacon Garland.

Mr. BOUCHARD: I disclaim that entirely. (Labour laughter.)

Mr. LENNON: If the hon. member has been to school, he has learnt his lesson very well. Without undue discussion, I should like to say that I will oppose this Bill at every stage. I do not care how many lawyers there are on the other side, or members like the hon. member for South Brisbane, or any others trying to twit this party with going back on its platform. I say this party is standing by its platform.

Mr. BOUCHARD AND OTHER GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: No, it is not.

Mr. LENNON: I hope it will stick to its platform to the bitter end. By and by, when

[*Mr. McLachlan.*

we get the referendum, it will define what subjects it will apply to, and certainly it will not apply to religious subjects.

Mr. BOUCHARD: How is it you are here?

Mr. LENNON: By the will of the majority. How is it you are here?

Question put and passed.

FIRST READING.

The Bill was read a first time, and the second reading was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION

The HOME SECRETARY: I beg to move—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the law relating to local authorities.

Mr. BOWMAN: I would like to ask the Minister to explain the nature of the amendments he seeks to introduce. Are we to have a more liberal franchise than what we have at the present time, or in what way does he intend to amend the Act?

The HOME SECRETARY: I would suggest that this motion be allowed to go, and hon. members will then have the opportunity of seeing the Bill, from which they will be able to gain all the particulars and information which they desire.

Mr. MURPHY: I would like to know whether this is a similar Bill to the one which was presented to the House some time ago. The last Local Authorities Bill, if I remember rightly, had several hundred clauses. The Premier waves his pencil as if he is going to wipe me clean out, but he cannot. (Laughter.)

Mr. MANN: The reply given by the Home Secretary was not quite satisfactory, inasmuch as he asked the House to consent to the introduction of the Bill before we got information. If the Bill is printed, and we find the title is to amend the Local Authorities Act in certain particulars, in that case amendments will be restricted to matters which the Government choose to bring forward. Probably we may not be able to amend the franchise, if the order of leave is not widened; and while I possibly may not want to go as far as the Labour party franchise, I would like to see it widened. Will the Bill be drawn so that members can introduce amendments relating to any subject connected with local authorities? I want the Act amended lock, stock, and barrel, and I would like the assurance of the Minister that we can do that when the Bill is introduced.

Question put and passed.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS BILL.

INITIATION.

The HOME SECRETARY: I beg to move—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to make provision for the better representation of the people of Queensland in Parliament.

Mr. BOWMAN: I would like to ask the Home Secretary whether this Bill makes provision for commissioners to be appointed for the working out of the redistribution of seats?

The HOME SECRETARY: I would suggest to the leader of the Opposition that he permit—

Mr. BOWMAN: You take notice of what the Premier tells you.

The HOME SECRETARY: That he permit the Bill to be laid on the table of the House and be printed.

Mr. BOWMAN: What is your objection to tell the House?

The HOME SECRETARY: For the simple reason that this is not the time to give that particular information.

Mr. MAUGHAN: It is the time.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is not the time. Let the House give permission to introduce the Bill; it will then be printed and circulated, and full information will be in the hands of hon. members.

Mr. MURPHY: I think we are entitled to get some information from the Home Secretary. It seems to me that the Opposition will never receive any consideration from any member on the front Treasury bench unless the Opposition is game to put up a bit of fight.

The PREMIER: You instruct them what their duties are.

Mr. MURPHY: I have no desire to instruct them what their duties are. I know that the Premier will never have an opportunity of instructing me any more. (Laughter.) The Premier is very good at giving instructions.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. MURPHY: I think we are entitled to an answer to this question. I should also like to know who are the commissioners to be appointed to fix the boundaries.

Mr. ALLEN: You don't know whether there is any provision for a commission.

Mr. MURPHY: We see it in the *Courier*, which is the official organ of the Government, and I, therefore, take it to be correct. I would like to know whether a commission is to be appointed, and to get some particulars regarding the members of that commission; whether it is going to be composed of political friends of the Premier, some of the People's Political League friends who are looking for a job—whether they are going to get recompensed for the work they did at the Federal election by being appointed members of this commission, or whether it is to be a commission of Under Secretaries, men whom Queensland can trust to do the fair thing by all parties. Or is it to be a commission of political dead-beats?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. RYLAND (*Gympie*): I would not have risen had it not been for the reference made by the hon. member for Croydon, who insinuated that the Opposition was not likely to do the work of opposition in connection with these matters.

Mr. MURPHY: Neither you are.

Mr. RYLAND: If we did not do it, we would not get what we want. It appears that this matter has been fixed up by city and country members, who have agreed to the mode of representation, and what is the good of this opposition when it has all been fixed up? I think the hon. member should withdraw his remarks about the Opposition, and let us use our influence to get something. It

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is all fixed up by the caucus according to the paper, and it is only a mere farce bringing it into this House at all.

Mr. COYNE: I think we are entitled to some information as sought by the leader of the Opposition. It is well understood by the public generally that this thing has been fixed up by the Ministerial caucus some time ago in order to save their own skins, as they are a decaying political power in Queensland.

Mr. MURPHY: Look how we beat them on Port Alma.

Mr. COYNE: It is a fair thing to ask at this stage whether it is the intention of the Government to place this matter in the hands of commissioners to allocate the different boundaries and fix the quota. We are told there is only one party which fixes matters up by caucus—that is the Labour party; but the *Courier* has given the show away, and told us that the caucus on the opposite side of the House have fixed this thing up to suit themselves. Probably on the other side there are some who have been led away by the nice—

Mr. MURPHY: Suave tones of the Premier.

Mr. COYNE: By the suave tones of the Premier on this occasion. I would remind members on the other side that the Premier on past occasions has in his oily tones told his friends what he was going to do, and the grand *coup* he was going to make, and those men are outside this House to-day.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I think the hon. member will see that he is transgressing the rules of debate. He is going quite outside the question, and is, therefore, out of order.

Mr. COYNE: I submit it is a cardinal principle in the introduction of a measure of this kind that we should find out what result is going to be brought about; whether the matter is going to be submitted to a commission, and who the commissioners are going to be.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is the object of my motion, and you won't allow yourselves to get the information.

Mr. COYNE: The Hon. the Home Secretary may as well tell us at this stage of the proceedings. The business of the House has been very much dislocated owing

[7 p.m.] to the want of courtesy received from the front Ministerial bench. I think that it is only fair to us that when the leader of the Opposition asks a simple question in connection with a Bill that is about to be introduced, that the Minister in charge of that Bill should give a reply to that question. From what members on this side know, and from what I myself know, I can say that the Home Secretary is a man who is ever courteous both in his office and out of it. But there must be some further influence at work which prevents him from giving a courteous reply to a courteous question. It is not very far to seek where that influence comes from. (Opposition laughter.) I ask again for the Home Secretary to give this simple reply. And it can be simple. A word or two, or three or four words, is all that is necessary to answer the question put by the leader of the Opposition. You must admit, Mr. Speaker, that the leader of the Opposition is entitled to get an answer to any question put by him about a Bill. It is a cardinal principle which is proposed to be introduced in this measure, and we want a reply to the question put by the leader of the Opposition. That is all I have

Mr. Coyne.]

got to say. I will not waste the time of the Chamber further, but hope that the Minister will give a reply to the question.

Mr. NEVITT (*Carpentaria*): I do not think I should have said anything on this subject, Mr. Speaker, had it not been for your remarks to the hon. member for Warrego just before the adjournment for tea. You said you questioned whether this discussion was in order or not. The majority of the members of this Chamber have been under the impression that they have certain rights and privileges in this House. During the tea interval I looked up the eleventh edition of Sir Erskine May's "Parliamentary Practice," and this is what he says on the matter—

In making a motion for leave to bring in a Bill, he may explain the object of the Bill, and give reasons for its introduction; but, unless the motion be opposed, this is not the proper time for any lengthened debate upon its merits

I think that shows that we are quite within our rights in criticising or asking for any information about a Bill introduced by a Minister. Further down "May" goes so far as to say—

Amendments have been made or proposed to a question for leave to bring in a Bill.

Which shows that we are well within our rights in taking up the attitude which we are taking. If we had not that right, there would be no necessity for any motion at all. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that at any other time you will not curtail the rights and privileges of members of this Chamber.

Mr. ALLEN (*Bulloa*): I hope the Minister will give the leader of the Opposition some information about this Bill. If we are to place any credence on what we see in the papers, then all the members on that side of the House have been given the information about this Bill, and, that being so, it is only a fair thing that we should be given some information about what is going to be brought down to this House. It is said that this Bill is going to make for the better representation of the people in Parliament.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. ALLEN: I want to know what line this Bill is going to take. We hear a lot about the necessity for a redistribution of seats because of certain anomalies, but there are greater anomalies which ought to be removed. We are told that some constituencies now have only a few hundred voters and that others have thousands. Very good. But still, in this democratic—it is supposed to be democratic—country there is a far greater anomaly than that. Is the present Government prepared to deal with that anomaly? I refer to the existence of the other Chamber. There we have forty odd members with power to thwart the wishes of 250,000 electors.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. ALLEN: We have heard nothing about what is to be done with that Chamber. Coming back to the other point. Does this proposed Bill make provision for proportional representation? It is a fair thing that we should know that. I do not think that any Bill is making provision for better representation that does not contain that principle. Certainly one member represents, in some cases, a constituency with 1,000 electors, and in another constituency 7,000 electors.

Mr. BOUCHARD: How many do you represent?

Mr. ALLEN: Well, I represent them better than you do. There are two cases—Toowong

[*Mr. Coyne.*

and Woolloongabba, for instance—where the sitting members represent 4,500 votes, and there were 4,000 votes cast against them which are not represented at all.

Mr. BOUCHARD: They are represented by the majority vote.

Mr. ALLEN: Well, it is only right that the minority should be considered sometimes. (Government laughter.) Any Bill making provision for the better representation of the people should provide for all classes of the community being represented. We have had the Premier of late complaining that 83,000 electors in Queensland had got three senators, and 80,000 electors had not got any senators, and he said that was not right. But what did he say three years ago, when the 3,000 votes were the other way?

The PREMIER: When did I say all this?

Mr. ALLEN: I do not remember the exact occasion. I am speaking from memory. Is it not right?

The PREMIER: It is quite right. (Laughter.)

Mr. ALLEN: I do not know if I am right or not. (Government laughter.) I trust that the Bill will make provision to meet with these difficulties. It is only a fair thing that the Minister in charge of the Bill should tell us what the Bill is going to contain. He has apparently told the *Courier* and the *Daily Mail* and the other penny papers, and yet he will not tell us. Have we not as much right to be considered as those papers?

Mr. MURPHY: Did he tell the *Worker*?

Mr. HAMILTON (*Gregory*): Whatever discourtesy a Minister may extend to an ordinary member of the Opposition, I think that when the leader of the Opposition asks a question that he is entitled to get an answer. If the leader of the Government expects the leader of the Opposition to give him assistance in getting through his business during this session, I think it is only right that the leader of the Opposition should be shown every courtesy, not only by the Chief Secretary but by every Minister on that front bench. This Bill is said to provide for the better representation of the people of Queensland in Parliament. We do not know that. We do not know who are going to be the commissioners, and we do not know if commissioners are going to be appointed to fix the boundaries. Members on this side of the House are totally in the dark as to the nature of the Bill. We know that the details of this Bill and every other Bill about to be introduced this session was submitted to all the members sitting behind the Government when they were down on the "Lucinda" the other day.

Mr. CORSER: It would be a big contract to do that.

Mr. HAMILTON: The *Courier* gave us to understand that that was done.

Mr. CORSER: The *Courier* was not there.

Mr. HAMILTON: We were given to understand that the provisions of the Bill were submitted to the members of the Government party. When the present members sitting in opposition were sitting behind the Premier we were not considered in the same spirit as that. We had not any idea what programme was going to be submitted during the session, or what measures it contained. So that the Premier is evidently more condescending to his present supporters than he was to us when we sat behind him, and yet we placed him in power and kept him there for some time.

I think that the leader of the Opposition is entitled to a reply from the Minister, and if he expects to receive courteous treatment from the leader of the Opposition I think it is his place to give the information that is asked for.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER (*Maranoa*): I am of the impression that the position of Ministerial office suffers nothing in dignity by extending courtesy, not only to the leader of the Opposition, but also to ordinary members. For the second time to-day Ministers have refused to answer questions asked of them. The Treasurer refused to answer a question put to him by the hon. member for Cairns, and it caused a certain amount of time to be wasted, and now we have the Home Secretary declining to gratify the curiosity of the leader of the Opposition. To my mind it is more than curiosity.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: The leader of the Opposition is entitled to the information which he is asking from the Minister. (Hear, hear!) A considerable portion of the time of the House would have been saved if that question had been answered. These things have cropped up early in the session, and I hope it will lead to a better understanding between the Government and the Opposition. We are desirous of seeing the programme of the Government put before the House, at any rate, and whatever good business there might be in it will have to be taken out, and made use of. I do not think the proper methods are being adopted by the Government in taking up the stand they have this afternoon. Personally, I hope that it will be discontinued, and whether it be the leader of the Opposition or the leader of the remnant—(laughter)—they have their rights.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Where is he?

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: The leader of the remnant is not here just now, but he was very much in evidence this afternoon. (Laughter.) However, though their numbers are small, they have just the same rights as every other member of this House, and he has let the Government know that he is entitled to get information, and if he does not get it he will need to be told the reason why.

Mr. BOUCHARD: I am rather surprised at the curiosity exhibited by members on the other side. It is within my recollection that when the one adult one vote franchise was being conferred that the Premier of the Government who introduced that measure and passed it into law intimated to the Parliament of the time that later on he would introduce a Redistribution of Seats Bill. Well, a few years have passed since that measure was passed, and personally I think that the time has arrived when a Bill should be introduced into this House which should give effect to what was promised by the Premier of the Government that passed that measure. I recognise amongst those members on the other side of the House many members who clamoured for that, and who clamoured that there should be one vote one value—

Mr. MULLAN: Are you going to give us one vote one value?

Mr. BOUCHARD: If hon. members on the other side will only wait a little while they will have their curiosity satisfied.

Mr. ALLEN: Why should we wait? It appeared in the *Courier* last week.

Mr. FERRICKS: They told Hertzberg all about it on the "Lucinda."

Mr. BOUCHARD: I venture to say that if all the members of this House are genuine and sincere they will endeavour to see that various electorates of Queensland will be represented by—

A LABOUR MEMBER: The Labour party. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. BOUCHARD: At any rate, that the electorates are somewhat equal in proportion. When we come to consider that there are certain members in this House representing some 600, 700, or 800 electors—

Mr. ALLEN: That is not true.

Mr. BOUCHARD: Who have the same voting power in this House as a member representing 6,000 or 7,000 electors—

Mr. ALLEN: Say 16,000.

Mr. BOUCHARD: I would appeal to hon. members on the other side—(Opposition laughter and interruption)—whether it is a fair thing. Members of the Labour party have clamoured for one vote one value.

Mr. MULLAN: Are we going to get it?

Mr. BOUCHARD: If hon. members on the other side will only possess themselves for a little while, they will have their curiosity satisfied. I do not profess to be in the confidence of the Government. I am like they are—waiting with curiosity to see what this measure will reveal. At any rate, I think it is high time that a measure was introduced which would confer upon the various electorates in Queensland equal representation—a measure which would be more in keeping with the strength of the electorates. I heartily welcome the Bill, and will promise the Government my support in passing a measure of this sort. I will assist them in the introduction of this Bill. I can quite understand that hon. members on the other side, who are representing perhaps a few hundred electors, being somewhat timorous. (Laughter.)

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. BOUCHARD: Being somewhat timorous about the introduction of a measure which might deprive them of a seat in this House.

Mr. FERRICKS (*Bowen*): I did not intend to make any remarks on the formal stage of these matters, but I just want to dissent to some of the sentiments that have been expressed on this side of the House. It has been said that the Government caucus fixed up this matter on the "Lucinda." This matter, in my opinion, was fixed up by Mr. Hertzberg, president of the Merchants' Association in Brisbane. It was passed on for them to look at—it was pushed down their throats. It was very apparent after the Federal elections—there was a great deal said in regard to the position of the Premier. It was common talk about town that he was of no use to anybody, and anybody could have him at their own price. The Merchants' Association of Brisbane wanted to know what he was going to do after the Federal elections, and they invited him down on the "Lucinda," and gave him to understand that they wanted a candid expression of opinion, and he told them, as reported in the Press, that they could have exactly what they wanted. What they wanted is more centralisation, and this is the way in which they are obtaining it. This same Government—the same party that preached decentralisation at the Federal elections for all they were

Mr. Ferricks.]

worth—the same people that advocated the glorious freedom of Queensland, and all that sort of thing—are now going a step further in enlarging the autonomous power in Brisbane at the expense of the other parts of the State, so far as we are aware from the mere mention of the Bill to be brought in. We have no details, but this information was given to Mr. Hertzberg and his friends on board the "Lucinda," at the Merchants' Association dinner, and it is only fair that the leader of the Opposition should be given, and the members of the party should be given, the courtesy of the information supplied to the Merchants' Association and the daily Press.

Mr. RYAN (*Barcoo*): This motion has been moved by the Home Secretary, and I presume any Minister who moves this House is prepared to give some reason why this House should pass that motion beyond the mere fact that he moves it. The leader of the Opposition has very courteously asked for some reason—he has asked whether a certain commission is to be appointed with regard to a redistribution of seats, and the Home Secretary, after some silent collaboration with the Premier, has refused—I think contrary to his own inclination—to give any information. We have received some information from the hon. member for South Brisbane.

Mr. ALLEN: The deputy Home Secretary.

Mr. RYAN: He protests he is not in the confidence of the Government, but he throws out to us that this measure is intended to make one vote one value. The Minister has not deigned to tell us that. He has asked us to pass a resolution, and he has given us absolutely no reason for doing so, except the fact that he moves it, and he has the brute force of the party behind him; and I, for one, wish to protest against that action on the part of the Home Secretary and on the part of the Hon. the Premier. I think the hon. member for Gregory put the position well when he said, if the Minister refused to let any common or garden member, such as myself and other members sitting on this side of the House, know, he might at least give our leader the information which he desired in this particular case. I think the case is one which demands that members sitting on this side of the House should voice their feelings, and that is the reason I have risen in my place to say a word on this particular question, for I feel the Minister is wrong in the attitude he has taken up. I have no doubt the Government, with the strength of the party behind it, can carry through the introduction of this measure, or get leave to introduce it without giving us any information; but still I think it is right we should enter our protest against such discourteous conduct on the part of any Minister. Question put and passed.

APPROPRIATION BILL No. 1.

MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Legislative Council, returning this Bill without amendment.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Mr. BOWMAN, who, on rising, was received with cheers, said: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—I just wish to congratulate you upon the position you

[*Mr. Ferricks.*

occupy as Deputy Speaker, and to express my regret at the cause of the absence of our Speaker, Mr. Bell, and I sincerely trust that he will soon be well enough to resume his duties in this House.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: As you know, my health of late has not been too good, and I have been advised by my medical adviser to go slow, and I intend to take his advice during this session. I would first like to congratulate the hon. members who moved and seconded the Address in Reply yesterday. While not agreeing with many of the statements that were made by them, I think myself that they were well worth listening to. (Hear, hear!) The junior member for Maryborough, Mr. Booker, gave us some rather interesting information, which is known probably to most members—but still I was rather pleased to hear it come from the hon. member—when he referred to the prosperity in Queensland, and particularly in respect to the amount of building going on, estimated to cost some hundreds of thousands of pounds. We have been led to believe in the past that if ever the Labour party gained ascendancy in either the State or Commonwealth Parliament that capital was going to fly out of the country. But the hon. member yesterday furnished us with sufficient proof that it had not been scared at the return of the Federal Labour party during the last Federal elections.

Mr. FORSYTH: The contracts were all let.

Mr. BOWMAN: We have heard that story before—that is one of the hon. member's old gags. It is an old chestnut. I would like to say a few words in reference to the Federal elections. I notice little has been said either by the mover or seconder of the Address in Reply, and very little has been said in the Speech on the subject. Not more than one line—things were not as satisfactory from a financial point of view as the leader of the Government would have desired. I remember the leader of the Government taking a trip some few years ago, and when he landed on Australian soil—he had no sooner landed than we got a wire sent from Western Australia to Brisbane stating that he was after the scalp of the Federal Labour party, and he was going to wage war against them.

The PREMIER: Quite incorrect.

Mr. BOWMAN: I am simply taking the report as we got it in the Press, and it is not the first time I have heard him on the floor of this House say he would do his best to defeat the Labour party.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: That fight we have engaged in, and all the big guns of the Government party were centred in one electorate particularly—that was Wide Bay—with the object of defeating the present Prime Minister of Australia. In fact, the present Premier became prophetic on that occasion. (Opposition laughter.) He even ventured this statement: "As sure as the sun will rise tomorrow, Andrew Fisher will be beaten for Wide Bay." (Opposition laughter.) The sun did rise and Mr. Fisher was returned, and with as magnificent a victory to his credit as was ever given in Australia.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FERRICKS: "And so I beat the favourite!"

Mr. BOWMAN: Most of the leading State politicians were brought into the conflict

during the last Federal fight; and there is no doubt about the efforts put forth by the Premier and his colleagues, who [7.30 p.m.] travelled far and near to exercise their influence. Judging by the result of the recent Federal elections there is a very hopeful outlook for the Labour party. Dealing with the Speech, there will probably be many Bills brought before us during the session upon the principles of which we may agree, but as to whose details we will be at variance with the Government. In regard to some there will be hostility.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: War to the knife!

Mr. BOWMAN: The first is in reference to the redistribution of seats. I was anxious to get from the Home Secretary some idea as to the principles of the measure so that I might be in a position to better direct my criticism in regard to the matter. I am not going to promise to give the Bill any support; I am going to wait till I see it; but if a redistribution of seats is going to take place, I hope the Western districts will not be penalised as compared with larger centres of population. While there are anomalies existing here, this is not the only place where they exist. In the British House of Commons much greater anomalies exist in regard to the electorates than is the case in Queensland. Even taking the population basis, so far as the Senate of the Federal Parliament is concerned, the States of New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland, which have greater populations, have just the same numerical strength as the States of Tasmania, South Australia, and Western Australia. What I am anxious to conserve is the rights of those who live in sparsely populated districts. I think there should be a wide margin between a metropolitan or suburban electorate as compared with an electorate in the far West or the extreme North. With regard to the proposed amendment of the law relating to the sale of intoxicating liquors, we, as a party, have always had a very definite line of policy, from which we have never deviated—namely, the State control of liquor, with the view of ultimate prohibition. While I have not the remotest idea of the present Administration taking up that line of policy, if I cannot get State control, I am prepared to assist in amending the licensing laws where we might be able to check the evils of intemperance such as we know them in Queensland to-day, and I hope something will be done to bring our liquor legislation more up to date. The next question to which I will refer is in reference to the referendum to ascertain whether a certain subject now excluded from the curriculum should be taught in our State schools. On this matter I was one who cast a vote for the referendum, and it is a vote that I more deeply regret than any other I ever cast. I believe that in casting my vote for that referendum I was one who was instrumental in having that referendum submitted to the people; and, while I am of opinion that the referendum should be applied to most subjects that come up for consideration in this House, I believe that the line should be drawn at religious questions. About a fortnight ago a deputation representing the Bible in State Schools League in Fortitude Valley pointed out to me that a majority of 600 had declared in favour of Bible teaching in State schools, and wanted to know what would be my attitude when the Bill came before the House. I told them what I have told this House to-night about the vote I gave

in favour of the referendum; I also said that I would oppose the Bill, and do all I could to defeat it. I know what it means to me. I know that I shall have to face the music, and I am prepared to face the music. I would much rather be put out of this Chamber than give a vote against what I believe to be right. (Hear, hear!) That is why I will go against the Bill being passed—not from an irreligious point of view, because I am a man who believes in religion. And there is a diversity amongst ministers of religion and others on this question. The minister who preceded the present minister of the denomination to which the Minister for Lands belongs was hostile to any interference with the present system; and every member of my party is anxious that the secular system should remain as it is at the present time. We have been free up to the present from sectarian bitterness in Queensland as compared with any other State—(hear, hear!)—and we can be thankful that we have gone so far in our history without interfering with each other in the matter of religion. As I have stated before to-night, religion is largely a question of circumstances in life. We have been born, cradled, and nurtured to it, and it would not matter whether we held one faith or another. I think we have a right to respect every man's creed, but I do not see how we can do that if we allow Bible teaching in our State schools, and I believe it will be the beginning of very serious trouble with respect to the relations existing between the respective sects as compared with what we have enjoyed for many years in Queensland. (Hear, hear!) It means the subsidising of religious instruction in our State schools. How many men in this House have been prepared to advocate from a public platform any measure in favour of denominational aid? Every man, irrespective of his creed, has recognised that the present secular policy is a safe one for the State, and I think it is a pity that it is going to be disturbed. Then there was the time at which the referendum was taken. It was foisted on the country at the time of the Federal election, and the Premier was not prepared to have a day set apart for taking the referendum. When the referendum was passed we said we would go on different platforms and fight, but I know there were members in the metropolitan area who did not ventilate the question because they believed it would affect the chances of their party at the time. I believe if the referendum had taken place at a time when every member who disbelieves in any alteration of the present system—and all those clergymen and adherents outside—could have fought the matter as they might have done, the result would have been very different. I believe that the Department of Public Instruction for some years have regarded our curriculum as a very necessary one for the education of our children. We will want to know, when the Bill is before the House, what part of the curriculum is to be dropped out in order to substitute Bible teaching. My own opinion is that there are three avenues for the religious education of our children—one is the church, the other is the Sunday school, and the other is the home.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: But to bring it into a State school, what does it mean? You ask men and women—some who have no belief in the Bible at all, and some who may have a dogma that they honestly believe in—should such men and women be asked as teachers to

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go into our schools and teach something that they do not believe? Then the entrance of our ministers into the school during school hours is, to my mind, the worst feature of all.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: The clergymen of this State for very many years have had an opportunity of visiting our schools either before or after school hours. If the parents of these children who have cast their vote for a referendum believe that it was necessary that they should get religious instruction at the hands of the clergymen in a State school, I think we might well ask why those children were not asked to go to school either before, or remain after, school hours, so that they could get religious instruction which their parents believe is necessary for them; but why introduce it during school hours? I say it is the beginning of sectarian strife, which I think few members of this House would care to see brought about. I trust that the House will, either on the second reading or in the Committee, be able to defeat the Bill, so that we will not have any alteration in a system that has worked so admirably for very many years. Our Church of England friends have their private schools, and our Roman Catholic friends have also their private schools, and they are paying for them; but we to-day purpose to really give a subsidy for our clergymen to go into our schools to teach, and yet we have denied that subsidy to others. It may be said: "Do you believe in majority rule," or "Do you believe in the principle of referendum?" I think I have explained that I do believe in the principle of a referendum, but with one exception, and that is anything interfering with our religion, irrespective of what denomination it is. I would like the country to understand that the opposition I am giving to this Bill it not from an irreligious standpoint at all, but to try and prevent anything of a sectarian feeling creeping into our State, which I think we can do best without, and that is the attitude taken up by every member of the party sitting behind me to-day. That is the object which I, as leader, have in addressing myself to this question as warmly as I have done. It has been said that it works well in other States. Perhaps the leader of the Government when replying may tell us, or the Secretary for Public Instruction may be able to give us some statistics, but I want to know whether our children do not compare favourably with those in the States where they have had religious teaching in the State schools. I think we come out even better than any of them. I am not finding fault with those people who have worked hard to try and secure what they believed was right. As I explained to the deputation, I give them credit for what they are doing, and I expect them to give me the same credit. I am taking, at any rate, the risk of losing my seat in Fortitude Valley, with a majority of 600, which I do not trouble about. As I have already said, I would go out of this House to-night rather than cast a vote in favour of a principle that I did not believe in, and I will take that stand irrespective of the consequences that may follow. I think that the clause in the Speech relating to the consolidation of our land laws is one that will be welcomed by all sides of the House. (Hear, hear!) The Acts which we have now—and you, Sir, have taken part in the framing of them from time to time—have become very cumbersome indeed. I hope that, as we are consolidating these Acts, the Minister for Lands, during his administration, will endeavour to give

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a little more encouragement to a principle which this party has always placed before any other form of tenure—that is the leasehold tenure—so that people may have a better opportunity of taking land up under that tenure than has hitherto been afforded, either by himself or by his predecessors. Another item of interest, and one on which I spoke during last session, is the question of providing water in our agricultural and pastoral districts. Those of us who have had any experience in the West know that while we may have a run of good seasons, there is always the danger of a periodical drought which plays havoc with stock, and causes great anxiety to those who have stations or grazing farms. I think money spent in this direction is money well spent. I think we have paid too little regard in the past to those districts in the West where you have to travel 40, 50, or 60 miles of a stage without water.

Mr. PAYNE: One hundred miles.

Mr. BOWMAN: I have gone from 40 to 60 miles myself on a bike without getting a drink. It is bad enough when you are on the bike and can cover the country in pretty quick time, but it is worse when you have stock travelling from place to place, and it is very hard that the Government have not seen fit before now to do more than they have done in the direction of giving greater facilities for water, either in the form of tanks or bores. I find here that there is an agitation by the Government for the construction of a grand trunk line running north-west and south-east across Western Queensland, connecting our three main railway systems. I am one of those who have always favoured the linking-up of our present main lines, believing that it will give greater facilities for getting stock in time of drought to places where they could be put on good grass and water; but from the correspondence which I have read in the Press from men who seem to know something about the proposal, I think that one is not over-estimating the case when he says that this line will cost some millions of pounds—that is, to carry it from its starting point to Camooweal, the terminal point. I would very much favour the giving of facilities to the men who are at present primary producers in agricultural districts, who have been battling for years to try and get railway communication, and who have to compete very unfairly with those who have easy access to a market for their products. When the Minister for Railways and the Premier were at Pittsworth turning the sod of the Pittsworth-Milmeran Railway line, the Minister stated that there were about forty railways that had been asked for. He was asked, "Do you get many applications for railways?" and he said, "We are getting them every other day." I believe the desire of this House is to give greater facilities to these men who have done so much in the way of more closely settling Queensland than would have been done had they not had a hope that they would get railway communication. (Hear, hear!) I would never refuse to vote for a railway if it can be shown that there is a prospect of the line paying, particularly in agricultural districts, because we all know the disabilities which settlers in those districts have to encounter, especially in wet weather. I would very much prefer that the Government should continue to build these light railway lines into our agricultural districts rather than venture upon the big scheme which has been outlined in the Governor's Speech—the trunk line from below

Charleville right out to Camooweal. I was reading Mr. Corfield's letter this morning, and also another letter from one of our north-western friends. I think Mr. Corfield, who was formerly a member of this House, favoured the transcontinental line as advocated by Sir Thomas Mellwraith rather than the line proposed at the present time. Of course, no member on this side of the House could have entertained the principle of that line for one moment, because it simply meant the giving away of a great deal of our land; and I believe it was largely blocked by the instrumentality of my friend, the hon. member for Leichhardt, by means of the gridiron map, which will ever be associated with his memory. Among the measures to be brought forward is a Police Offences Bill. We tried to get

[8 p.m.] from the Minister some information as to what was contained in this Bill, and he told us that he

thought that there would be some elimination of some of the clauses that were in the Bill introduced last session. I perused the Bill which was presented last session, and I thought it was very arbitrary in many of its provisions. While I thoroughly agree that the police should have greater power than they have got to—say to deal with certain criminals that we have and that we are likely to have in our midst, still, many of the provisions contained in that last Police Offences Bill were such that I could not honestly support. Another matter mentioned, which I think will meet with the approval of the whole House, is the provision that is going to be made for the medical inspection of school children. (Hear, hear!) I am in hearty sympathy with any legislation, or any effort—I do not care what Government makes it—that will in some measure give relief to our suffering children. Good work has been done in the past by an oculist travelling through Western Queensland. But we are promised now that the Government will go further than merely having an oculist to attend to the eyes of the children. It is proposed to have medical inspection which will include looking after bad teeth, and attending to affections of the nose and ears and other ailments that the children may suffer from. (Hear, hear!) While I think all that is very necessary in the far-out Western districts of Queensland—and I would not hesitate at all in saying that those far Western districts should receive the first treatment because they have not got the same facilities that are to be obtained in the coastal districts where there are hospitals and plenty of doctors who can be consulted at much less expense—while, therefore, I say that the Western districts should receive first attention, still, this is a matter which should not be confined to the Western districts, but should be introduced in the coastal districts as well. The Education Department of New South Wales realise that it has been profitable for them to have medical inspection of their children. The children there are examined periodically, and are shown every care and attention, and the result is that these children grow up into mature healthy manhood and womanhood instead of growing up as delicate children. We know that there are hundreds of our school children to-day suffering from ailments of the nose, ear, and teeth, and I believe it will be to our advantage to have them examined as they are in New South Wales. The cost may be questioned, but I say that it will be a valuable asset if it gives us healthy children who will grow up to healthy men and women. (Hear, hear!) If we had had such a system of inspec-

tion here during the last few weeks, I question very much whether that unfortunate child who was taken away from one of our schools suffering from leprosy would have been as long in that school as it was before it was discovered. That is one of the things which make me think of the urgency of having something done in the nature of a medical inspection in our schools. We all sympathise very much with the mother of that little leper who has been sent down to the lazaret, but the child was in one of our schools for weeks, and it was not detected until the disease began to grow very much indeed. If we are to protect our children, not only from that disease, but from other diseases, it is necessary that medical examination should be made of them similar to that in vogue in New South Wales. Another measure proposed is in relation to mining, and will be more suited to the mining members in this House. Many of my own colleagues know more about the conditions of mines and working in mines than I do, as I have had no experience of mining; but I can say that there is no more hazardous occupation followed by men in Queensland to-day than mining, and any measure brought down by the Minister for Mines that will lessen the danger of these men losing their lives, or losing their health, as many of them are doing to-day, I believe that every man imbued with a humanitarian spirit will warmly support, because if there is one matter we can all agree upon it is in the safety and preservation of human life.

Mr. FERRICKS: We will not have time to deal with it.

Mr. BOWMAN: I sincerely hope that there will be time to discuss it, because I think that the very first consideration which we should give should be to the welfare of our people. (Hear, hear!) We should perhaps give more consideration to the welfare of those who are poor than to those who are rich, because the rich have opportunities of being attended to which are not open to the poorer classes. Now, I find it says here in almost the last paragraph of the Speech—

I regret that the financial relations between the Commonwealth and the States are not so satisfactory as could be desired. In the conference on the matter held last year the representatives of Queensland accepted a settlement which they did not consider quite equitable to the States, but they knew the occasion called for compromise, and felt that permanency justified some sacrifice. The scheme was submitted to the people of Australia, and, though carried by a substantial majority in Queensland, failed to secure elsewhere the majorities required by the Constitution.

I am delighted to think that that referendum was lost as regards putting it into the Constitution.

LABOUR MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: And while it may have pleased the hon. gentleman who leads the Government to-day, and those associated with him, and who are akin to his party throughout the Commonwealth, I was more than pleased to see the fine vote given throughout Australia that they would not put it into the Constitution.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: Mr. Fisher, the present Prime Minister, has been most generous indeed in giving a ten years' promise.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear! and Government laughter.

Mr. BOWMAN: He has given you a great deal more than I would give you.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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The PREMIER: And you are a Queenslander.

Mr. ALLEN: No, an Australian.

Mr. BOWMAN: I know that the Premier has not got a good word to say for the Commonwealth Parliament. I know that.

Mr. FERRICKS: It put him in his place, anyhow.

The PREMIER: How many people have put me in my place. (Laughter.)

Mr. BOWMAN: I do not think that this State or any other State has anything to fear at the hands of the present Commonwealth Administration. In my opinion they have treated the States most liberally; in fact, more liberally than they could have expected. And far from it being a regret, I have nothing but joy at the thought of the referendum being lost so far as the financial agreement being put into the Constitution was concerned. I see here another interesting item:—

The Estimates for the current year, framed with due regard to economy and to the requirements of the public service, will shortly be laid before you. It will be found that liberal provision has been made for improving the position of a large number of the lower-salaried employees, and my advisers hope that the proposed increases will meet with your approval.

Mr. NEVITT: Sarcasm.

Mr. BOWMAN: It may be sarcasm, as the hon. member for Carpentaria interjects, but I am glad to think that patience is getting its reward at last. (Government laughter.) Whenever we have had a chance to discuss the Estimates—which has been a very rare thing during the last few years, owing to the methods adopted by the present Premier—no party has advocated increases to the lower-paid members of the public service more strongly and persistently than the Labour party. We have frequently advocated the same thing on the Address in Reply, and I am glad to notice that not only are increases to be given to the lower-paid servants in connection with the railways, but that increases are also to be given to the construction men on strike. With the hon. member for Woothakata, I have gone to the Railway Department on more than one occasion in the interest of those men on strike. We were told this afternoon by the Treasurer, in answer to a question, that the Government were only waiting to give the increase until they finally decided to give increases all round to the lower-paid employees. I tell the hon. gentlemen had those men gone back to work, he would have been prepared to say that 9s. a day was a fair wage for their work, and to recommend the Minister for Railways to fix the wage at that amount. I am glad that the men are going to get an increase, because there are no men who do harder toil for low pay than the men engaged on construction works, particularly in cuttings. There will be no opposition to the passing of those increases as far as members of this party are concerned. We will cheerfully assist to put that estimate through. I am pleased also to notice that even the police are going to receive consideration. When members of this party advocated increased pay to the police, tabulated statements were quoted showing the anomalies between the pay of the police in Queensland and the pay of the police in other States, and the idea of increasing their pay was scoffed at by hon. members opposite. At last the police are going to get an increase in their remuneration, and free uniforms—a thing which we have advocated for years, contending that they should be granted free uniforms as well as railway

officials, water police, and other public servants. It is well that we should look at some of the omissions from this Speech. My friend, the hon. member for Leichhardt, has mentioned the Trades Disputes Bill, and that is the very first omission I have on my notes. The Trades Disputes Bill was part of the famous Rockhampton programme, and we were told some time ago that it was agreed to by both parties now supporting the Government when the coalition took place. We want to know why that measure is now left out of the running. When the hon. gentleman's colleague, the Hon. T. O'Sullivan, as Minister for Works, introduced that measure, many of the gentlemen who are at present sitting behind the Government were its most bitter antagonists. Have they so influenced the Premier that he can no longer identify himself with a Trades Disputes Bill? A Trades Disputes Bill was passed by this Chamber, and was defeated in the other House; it has been mentioned in the Governor's Speech year after year; it was even mentioned in the Governor's Speech last session; but there is no allusion to it in this Speech. I suppose the hon. gentleman will give the same excuse for that omission as he gave to a deputation the other day with reference to an Eight Hour Bill—"no time to pass it." Did the hon. gentleman believe it was necessary to pass a Trades Disputes Bill when it was before the House previously? Does the hon. gentleman remember how forcibly he advocated it on that occasion? Then why does he not include it in this session's programme? He has boasted that he was a trades unionist. He has boasted that he was associated with the Labour unions of Queensland.

The PREMIER: Never.

Mr. BOWMAN: Why, they hung the hon. gentleman's portrait on the wall of one of the rooms in the Trades Hall because he was a member of the Ironmoulders' Union. But since then they have turned the face to the wall, because they are ashamed of the hon. gentleman. Why do the trades unions want a Trades Disputes Bill? No one knows the reason better than the hon. gentleman. They want it in order that they may have the right to picket, and that they may be able to preserve their funds. They desire that if any man belonging to a union commits a crime, he should be made personally responsible for his act, and not the body of men with whom he is associated. A measure providing for those things is the law to-day in Great Britain, and yet we find the lordly Premier of this State ignoring his past promises in regard to this matter, and omitting such a measure from his programme. Another omission is the promised measure for State insurance. That also found a place in the hon. gentleman's previous programme, and I am anxious to learn why it is not included in the list of measures to be brought forward this session. When the Workers' Compensation Act was passed, it was generally admitted that the necessary corollary of that measure was State insurance. The principle of the Workers' Compensation Act was generally admitted by the majority of employers in Queensland, but they complained that the rates that they would have to pay to insurance companies would be excessive, and urged the Government to provide for State insurance. Have friends of the insurance companies persuaded the Premier to leave that measure alone?

The PREMIER: They have had the good sense to leave me alone.

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Mr. BOWMAN: The hon. gentleman has had the bad taste to leave a State Insurance Bill alone, after having promised the House time after time that it would be placed on the statute-book of Queensland. Another measure which does not find a place in the Governor's Speech—and a measure that no hon. member will deny is an important one—is a Pure Food and Drugs Bill. We had that promised in the last Speech. No measure would be received with more general satisfaction than one which would give us thorough inspection of all our food and drugs. We know that at present there is a great deal of adulteration going on; and I have heard from time to time that the members of the Merchants' Association have been doing their best to block people who adulterate their goods. They have even reported cases of adulteration in their desire to keep their trade clean. And who are the people of Queensland who suffer most from the adulteration of food and drugs? Is it not those with the smallest purchasing power, who are compelled to buy in the cheapest market? Past Governments have recognised the necessity for such a measure. Even officers in our Inland Revenue Department have recognised this in the past. I have gone into their room and have seen stacks of groceries that have been condemned as unfit for human consumption. If that was necessary then, surely it is necessary now to pass a Bill making it imperative that those who sell goods should sell nothing but pure goods. I am sure that such legislation would not meet with hostility from any hon. member. Another matter of great importance not only to Brisbane but to the whole of Queensland is the question of our hospitals. We, as a party, have advocated for some years that the only effective way to deal with the hospitals is to make them national hospitals.

LABOUR MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: We have institutions that would be a credit to any State in the Commonwealth. Take, for instance, the Diamantina Hospital—one of the most exemplary institutions to be found in any part of Australia, controlled by one of the most capable women we have in Queensland. (Hear, hear!) Then there is the Dalby Sanatorium for the treatment of consumptives, which is splendidly managed by a sympathetic doctor and a good nursing staff. Not only in Brisbane but throughout the State we largely subsidise the hospitals because we believe they are doing good work. There are no institutions that should be less penalised in the splendid work they are doing than the hospitals. In South Australia and Tasmania the hospitals are national institutions. I think it was the secretary of the Brisbane Hospital who told me that when he went there and was told that the State provided the money, he felt that there was an incentive on the part of the doctors and the officials simply to do their work without ever thinking about the troubles they might have in meeting their financial obligations. Even before Federal old-age pensions were paid, we recognised our duty in respect of our aged poor. We recognise our duty in providing for our unfortunate children who are left fatherless and motherless. We have recognised our duty in such institutions as the Diamantina Hospital and Dalby Sanatorium, where men and women can enter and be treated as if they were paying patients. In a hundred and one different avenues we recognise our duties in this respect. It

would not be a charity if we nationalised our hospitals so that people would not enter them as if they were paupers, but would go there as a right, their maintenance being paid for by the rest of the community and by themselves also. I regretted to hear from an answer to a question by the Home Secretary that it is not the intention of the Government to increase the indigence allowance during the present financial year. Anybody who has any experience in connection with these indigence cases must realise that 5s. a week is but a small amount to help those people to eke out an existence. There are many men and women who are more decrepit than some of our old-age pensioners; but, while the latter receive 10s. a week, these others only receive 5s. a week. Seeing that the Government have been relieved of the payment of old-age pensions, and that they will probably be relieved in a number of cases of the duty of supporting invalids—because it is a part of the policy of the Fisher Government to reduce the age at which women shall be entitled to old-age pensions from sixty-five to sixty years, and to grant invalid pensions to infirm people—the Government of the State might pay something more than this miserable pittance of 5s. a week. Perhaps, if some of us had to try and live on that amount, I am afraid it would make us raise the question of increasing the allowance quick and lively. At the Charity Organisation Conference that was held last week—I believe it was a non-political conference—there was a unanimous feeling that the amount should be increased, and I hope the Government will give a little more in deserving cases. I am very near the close of my remarks, because I do not feel very fit to go on much longer; but before I conclude I wish to make one proposition which might be considered by this House in the direction of saving some expense. I do not know whether it will receive the approval of the leader of the Government, and I am not troubling very much whether it does or not. I think the time has arrived when Queensland can do without an Agent-General and the expense of keeping one in London. I do not know whether the Premier has any ambitions in regard to the position himself; but, as we have a High Commissioner for Australia, and we are paying him the handsome salary of £5,000 a year—

THE PREMIER: And he has nothing to do.

Mr. BOWMAN: Well, he ought to have something to do, and it was the hon. gentleman's friend, Mr. Deakin, who [8.30 p.m.] appointed him to the position.

But I want to know what some of these other men have to do in the old country. If a man is appointed Agent-General, he should be a man who does not merely sit in the office and attend banquets, as some previous Agents-General have done. Although Sir George Reid was always a political opponent of the Labour party, I believe he is one of the most capable men you could get to go home, whether to attend functions or to be a good commercial man of course is another question. I think we might very gravely consider that matter, and I hope the rest of the States of Australia will do likewise. I may be charged with advocating unification. I have never advocated unification. What I am doing at present is simply advocating a change whereby I believe a saving could be effected, and arrangements could be made between the States and the Commonwealth to have one centre, and let that man do his duty impartially to each of the six States of the

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Commonwealth. I think we could do very well without the number of Agents-General we have at the present time.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: As suggested by the senior member for Ipswich, we could really have a staff there of Queenslanders who would know the work and know what was needed for Queensland. We have been told, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, by the junior member for Maryborough, about the present prosperity. I am never going to judge the prosperity of a place by the erection of buildings in a place. I do not think that is a standard by which prosperity can be measured. It is only one of the signs of the times. The seasons have been good for a number of years, and they have been responsible for a good deal of the prosperity that exists, but in addition to that prosperity, which is of advantage to comparatively few, there are numbers in Brisbane to-day that know what the pinch of poverty is. Not later than to-day I got an estimate from the Home Office that there was, roughly speaking, 500 souls, not later than the middle of last month, who got pauper relief in Brisbane.

Mr. D. HUNTER: With a Labour Government in power.

Mr. BOWMAN: I am talking about your Government. That is in Brisbane to-day, but of course there are many in other districts. That brings me now to the last matter on which I am going to touch to-night. We should, I think, curtail our expenditure—I would cut it out altogether—in regard to immigration. I would cut out the £50,000 altogether at the present time, because we know there are men and women—numbers of them come to me week after week that I might try and get them a job—who are absolutely disappointed with the misrepresentations that are made by the agents in the old country in regard to the glowing accounts they receive of Queensland. I do not know what the system is—probably when we get on the Estimates, or the Financial Statement, we shall have an opportunity of dealing more fully with the matter and get more detailed information than can be got on the Address in Reply. Therefore I will reserve any further criticism I may have on the administration till we come to the Estimates, and will deal with the individual Bills as they come before us.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER, who, on rising, was received with Government cheers, said: I wish to say, in all sincerity, that I regret very much to hear that my hon. friend opposite is not yet in vigorous health, and that he will have to be careful of himself. Apart altogether from any personal feeling I may have for an old friend, I would much rather that my opponent was strong and vigorous.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: Very much rather, although I may say the hon. member warmed up excellently well. (Hear, hear!) He got on to some of his old tracks, and really I think he forgot that he was not all right again. I have pleasure in agreeing with the hon. member in the compliment he paid to the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply. I think it was very well deserved. I say, despite the fact that they are supporters of mine, I think they made two excellent speeches and dealt with the Speech better than it is generally dealt with in

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the House. There is one thing I would like to have clearly understood at the beginning. When the Home Secretary, or myself, declined to enter into a discussion of details in the introductory stage of a Bill, the "remnant" suggested that that was discourtesy to the leader of the Opposition, and quite a number of members on the other side of the House got up, parrot-like, and echoed the phrase "discourtesy to the leader of the Opposition."

Mr. FERRICKS: Not parrot-like.

The PREMIER: I want to assure the leader of the Opposition, who did not make much complaint about the matter—I think he knows better—I want to assure him that there was absolutely no intention to be discourteous, and there was no discourtesy to the leader of the Opposition or to other hon. members. Every Minister will be courteous so far as their duties will permit, but this is an important matter. I would have hon. members understand that there is a heavy session's work before us, if we hope to do the work as we ought to do it, and I notice that, for some sessions back, there has been a growing tendency to make the introductory stage of a Bill an occasion for much discussion and waste of time. I do not wish to question the right of hon. members to discuss anything they like at any time they think fit. I don't question the Standing Orders at all, because I recognise there may be occasions, if the Government or anyone else introduce a Bill that is not understood, when it may be a good thing to ask what the Bill means, even on the introductory stage.

Mr. MAUGHAN: You used to do that yourself.

Mr. MULLAN: And will do it again when in opposition.

The PREMIER: Yes, quite naturally. I point out to hon. members, when an hon. member gets up and asks the question, is such-and-such a thing in the Bill, every other hon. member in the House would also have the right to ask was another such-and-such a thing in the Bill, and members will see this—I don't want to put them up to any tricks—(laughter)—they can see for themselves that there would be unlimited ground for obstruction, and I think even the leader of the Opposition must admit that it is hardly the duty of the Government to assist in such things. It is a foolish kind of policy on the part of Ministers to refuse to give information to hon. members, and, while we desire to give members the fullest possible information, I claim that under ordinary circumstances hon. members know quite well what the general principle of the Bill is, and they have ample opportunity of discussing the principle on the second reading, and of proposing amendments in Committee. I, therefore, suggest, with the common desire to get through the lot of very useful work we want to get through, that it is desirable not to waste time on the introductory stage of a Bill, but let it be introduced; then hon. members can see it for themselves, and get all information about it. It was, of course, natural on the part of the leader of the Opposition to blow off a little steam over the Federal elections. I do not grudge the Federal Labour party their win. I like to win myself, and I quite understand that other people also like to win, and I do not grudge them their victory. We often waste a lot of time fighting our battles over again when Parliament meets, but I am not going to indulge in that now.

I suppose the other fellows got more votes than our fellows got, and there is an end of it. But the hon. member must not imagine that, as far as the election went, I have any personal cause for dissatisfaction. (Opposition laughter.)

MR. BOWMAN: You went in sackcloth and ashes for a week afterwards.

The PREMIER: I have no personal cause for dissatisfaction, and I will tell you why. My principal purpose in taking part in that election was to get the financial agreement carried; and wherever I went I told my audiences that, whoever they voted for, I would rather they should carry the agreement even if they chose other candidates.

MR. BOWMAN: You are on your old shuffle.

The PREMIER: The result was that in every electoral division I went to they carried that financial agreement. (Opposition laughter.) You can take it any way you please, but it is a fact. I have not connected the two things, though I can honestly say that I did my best to persuade the people of Queensland to accept the agreement, and I was gratified when they did it. I take the result of the referendum and the election of members with the best grace I can. After all, it is not my business; it is the business of the people of Queensland and of Australia; and, if they are satisfied, there is no reason why I should complain. But I will say that if ever the result of an election or a referendum justified the warning given before polling—(Opposition laughter)—the warning I gave has been justified by the action taken by the new Government, and members opposite had better remember that bad principles introduced into government may hurt themselves as well as their opponents. Both in the Federal Parliament and in this Chamber we have in the current session an example of that.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: How?

The PREMIER: The leader of the Opposition dealt in detail with a large number of measures; and I am glad to know that in the case of a large number of the Bills to be introduced by the Government, though we may differ in detail, the leader of the Opposition and his supporters are willing to discuss them on their merits and try to assist in making them such measures as ought to be passed into law. For instance, there is the Licensing Bill. We all know that drunkenness is an unmistakable evil, and it is the duty of this House, if we can do so by legislation, to improve the drinking customs of the country. I think the attitude which the leader of the Opposition takes up on this Bill, and on other Bills of a kindred nature, is an exceedingly sensible attitude, and I hope that members on both sides will take up the same attitude. In this legislation we are not likely to agree as to details—that is beyond hoping for. Some members will remember that a great deputation once waited on me in regard to legislation on this matter, and I told them that the only rational way of trying to deal with such a question in Parliament was on strictly non-party lines. I told them that the Government would try to get what information was available as to the right lines, and would introduce a Bill based on the best lines they could think out, but the final details would depend on Parliament. The Bill to be introduced will be brought in on those lines.

MR. LENNON: That is why you want a second "Whip."

The PREMIER: No; the reason is because the hon. member for Herbert has been made deputy leader of the Labour party—from that we knew there would be trouble ahead. (Laughter.) I may express the hope that the House will recognise that a measure of this kind involves social consequences of great importance to Queensland, and that they will help the Government, if not to pass the Bill the Government introduce, help to pass a Bill that will be an improvement on the existing law—if they cannot get what they desire in the way of State control, they will at least try to improve the system that now obtains. I was glad that the hon. gentleman expressed approval of the action of the Government, through the Minister for Education, in regard to the medical examination of children. He said he hoped we would not confine it to the children in country districts. I think it is our duty to deal first with the children in widely scattered districts, but I would not like to think we should stop there. But I think our first efforts should be directed to give the children of the bush the advantages of medical advice. Now, the hon. gentleman really went back to his old form when he dealt with the increase in salaries.

MR. BOWMAN: It is true.

The PREMIER: It has been his stock-in-trade and the stock-in-trade of his party. I hope he won't take it in an offensive way, but they have dealt largely in this way with the subject, "Give everybody everything"—

MR. BOWMAN: Much cleaner than something you dealt with last session.

The PREMIER: "Give everybody everything, and don't tax them; knock down the income from Customs and Excise revenue, and give everybody bigger salaries; nationalise the hospitals, and increase that miserable dole of 5s. a week."

MR. ALLEN: Why shouldn't they?

The PREMIER: Why shouldn't you?

MR. ALLEN: I would if I were there. (Laughter.)

The PREMIER: I want to point out to my hon. friend opposite and his friends that they do not seem to see that they have got themselves into a terrible tangle on this subject.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: No, no!

The PREMIER: If the Government do anything good—increasing a man's salary, or such like—the Labour party make them do it. (Opposition "Hear, hear!" and laughter.)

MR. BOWMAN: Constant dripping wears the stone.

The PREMIER: If the Labour party have power to make us do the right thing, and we persistently do the wrong thing, does not the fault lie at the door of the Labour party?

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear! and laughter.

The PREMIER: If we don't nationalise hospitals; if we don't increase this miserable dole; if we don't give them a Trades Disputes Bill; and if we don't give them this and if we don't do the other thing—surely if they have power to make us do one thing they have power to make us do another. And I here call the attention of the deluded supporters of these gentlemen opposite—

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Ah, ah! and laughter.

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The PREMIER: That when this Government does anything wrong, or when it fails to do something right, the fault is on the hon. gentlemen sitting opposite—(Government laughter and "Hear, hear!")—and if they are not prepared to accept the responsibility they should give up this "gag" about making the Government do it.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MURPHY: A humorous Scotchman.

Mr. BOWMAN: We made you do a good deal in the past that you would never have done had the Labour party not been behind you.

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman dealt very warmly, and at very considerable length, with the Bible in State schools.

Mr. ALLEN: You didn't carry out your promise about that.

The PREMIER: I want hon. members of this House to recognise how important this question is. To a very large extent, my personal opinion is quite in accord with that of the hon. gentleman opposite, in regard to the merits of the question itself. The difference between the hon. gentleman and myself is this: That he fancies he is still the representative of the people of Queensland in regard to this matter, but I know that in regard to this question I am no longer a representative of the people of Queensland.

Mr. LENNON: You promised to persuade the people of Queensland and you did not.

The PREMIER: And I have no right, simply because I happen to be in Parliament, to push my opinions on this important question down the throats of the people after the people have decided otherwise.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: How about the small majority? There is really a minority.

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman talks about a small majority. An even smaller majority of the electors gave Queensland federation.

Mr. LENNON: That was not a religious matter.

The PREMIER: It is not a question of the smallness or largeness of the majority. Although the majority is a very fair majority, I am not concerned about the size of the majority. The importance of this matter lies here, although hon. members opposite do not seem to see it—that they are destroying their own platform.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: No, no! We will look after that.

The PREMIER: The discriminating approval which the deputy leader of the Opposition gave to the principle of the referendum this afternoon will kill the referendum in Queensland.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: No; it will not.

The PREMIER: Here is a party that goes to the country with the referendum as the very first plank of its platform.

Mr. ALLEN: Not on religious matters.

The PREMIER: And then they come back to the House and say that it is only a referendum on such questions as they approve—"It is only the referendum if the people vote as we want them."

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The referendum is an excellent thing so long as the people vote as we want them. I do not mean to make any disguise about this matter at all.

Mr. FERRICKS: You cannot do it.

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The PREMIER: I voted in the negative.

Mr. LENNON: Did you go out and persuade the electors as you promised to do in this House?

The PREMIER: Like the hon. gentleman opposite I had other fish to fry. (Opposition laughter.) Which, important as this question is, I still considered of greater importance than this question.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: You did not fry this fish, then?

The PREMIER: I just want the members of this House to clearly understand the position of the Government in this matter, and to clearly understand their own responsibilities in the matter.

Mr. FERRICKS: Are you going to make this a non-party question?

The PREMIER: This has always been a non-party question in this House. I refused, when pressed, as some hon. members know, to make the passage of the Bill granting the referendum a party question. I promised the referendum, and my predecessors had promised the referendum, and it was the duty of this House, I think, to give the people who asked for that referendum an appeal to the people. The Parliament of Queensland accepted that view without any party pressure of any kind whatsoever.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The Parliament of Queensland accepted that view, and submitted this question to the people of Queensland, and the people of Queensland by a majority voted "Yes."

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Some of the people.

The PREMIER: The very same kind of majority that authorised the hon. gentleman to sit there.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear! Certainly.

The PREMIER: No other majority of any kind authorised him to sit there.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: There is a majority against it in my constituency. The whole of the North is against you.

Hon. R. PHILP: No; it is not. You are not the whole of the North, you know—not quite. (Government laughter.)

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Seven-tenths of them are, anyway.

The PREMIER: I want hon. members—particularly hon. members opposite—to understand that I am not discussing at

[9 p.m.] present the question of religious teaching in State schools, as they know perfectly well I am in accord with them on that matter. As I have already told the House, I voted in the negative, and, if I had to do it again, I would vote in the negative. But the majority of the people who voted disagreed with me on that question, and that ends the matter so far as I am concerned. If any man says that the people of Queensland are wrong, then it was his duty at the referendum to go about and persuade them to do the right thing. If he did not do that, it was his own fault.

LABOUR MEMBERS interjecting,

The PREMIER: The people have settled the matter. I want hon. members to understand what a referendum means. In regard to a particular question that is submitted to the

people—a referendum means the abolition of representative government.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: It means direct self-government.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: Any man in this House who attempts to oppose the will of the people after they have expressed it, is guilty of shocking impertinence. (Labour laughter.)

A LABOUR MEMBER: Oh, dear!

Mr. MURPHY: We will go on being guilty.

The PREMIER: No matter what party he belongs to, and no matter what his own opinions are, he is going against the principles of democracy.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LENNON: Surely we can resist the tyranny even of a majority.

Mr. MURPHY: We will have to arm ourselves yet. (Laughter.)

The PREMIER: This is the second time I have taken part in a referendum in Queensland.

Mr. HAMILTON: You lost no time over this.

The PREMIER: And I was defeated both times.

Mr. ALLEN: And you will be defeated again.

Mr. HARDACRE: Are there not proper limitations to a referendum?

The PREMIER: Are there any limitations to the rights of the people of Queensland?

Mr. FERRICKS: Yes.

The PREMIER: What are they?

Mr. FERRICKS: Conscience.

The PREMIER: The hon. member for Bowen is a limitation.

Mr. RYAN: You should submit the Bill itself.

The PREMIER: Do hon. members assume that they are the masters of the people?

Mr. ALLEN: We speak for the minority.

The PREMIER: Is it for you to tell the people of Queensland what their limitations are, and that you will not permit them to go beyond those limitations?

Mr. ALLEN: We represent the minority.

The PREMIER: You have no authority except the authority which you get from the people of Queensland. On abstract questions of that kind you should go and argue with the people of Queensland. Tell the people of Queensland the limitations of their rights and get them to observe the limitations you chose to put upon them; but, when the people of Queensland act by means of a referendum, that ought to settle the matter with every democrat.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: You may appeal to them again to reverse the decision.

Mr. ALLEN: There will be an appeal, too.

The PREMIER: I have no objection to that. That is quite democratic.

Mr. ALLEN: Will you give us a second referendum?

The PREMIER: It is perfectly legitimate to ask for a second referendum, and I should be happy to see the verdict reversed. Do not

make any mistake about my opinion on this matter. I have never made any secret about it.

Mr. ALLEN: Will you give us another referendum at the next election?

The PREMIER: There may be people who are dissatisfied with their previous verdict, and they may have another referendum tomorrow so far as I am concerned. But until the people give some indication that they are dissatisfied with their verdict, what right have I, or what right has any member in this House, to arrogate to himself the position that he is master?

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: If any member here is master of the people of Queensland, why does he not tell them where he is right and where they are wrong? I think that members of the Opposition are really losing their heads in this matter. (Opposition laughter.)

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LENNON: All the democrats are over on your side. (Opposition laughter.)

The PREMIER: This matter is of far more importance than the mere question of religious education in the State schools. It is far more important that members of this House, at any rate, should recognise what is the first principle of democracy—that the will of the people—that the legally expressed will of the people of Queensland—should be a law unto every public man in Queensland.

Mr. LENNON: We have heard all those heroics before about the invasion of the people's rights.

The PREMIER: I know how strongly some members in this House are ruled by religious convictions and by political principles. I have not any desire to interfere with any man's convictions on this matter, and I want to say now that every member in this House can exercise his own conscience, that he has no responsibility to me whatever. His responsibility is purely and solely to the people of Queensland.

Mr. ALLEN: It is not a party question?

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: No, no!

The PREMIER: I want to show hon. members that it is not because I am interested in this particular Bill, or that I am interested in the particular question that the Bill deals with, but I took the very same attitude on a question on which I was very strongly moved, on which I appealed—and my friend, the hon. member for Leichhardt, can bear me out in this—on which we appealed to the people of our district and spent money and time in trying to persuade them to follow our views, and while the people of our own immediate district—my own district and my constituents—all followed my advice, still the majority of the whole of Queensland was against me, and that settled the matter in my mind.

Mr. ALLEN: It was a secular matter?

The PREMIER: It settled the matter.

Mr. RYAN: Was that the question of federation?

The PREMIER: It was a matter which the people of Queensland decided by a referendum vote.

Mr. HARDACRE: A secular matter.

The PREMIER: At that time, I remember, there were a number of members who were just as conscientious in their objections to the

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accepting of federation as any man could be on the question of the Bible in State schools—

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: There is no comparison.

The PREMIER: Perhaps it being a different opinion from the hon. gentleman's he does not consider it of so much importance, but these men seemed to consider it of quite as much importance, and this was the attitude which I took up in this matter on the passing of the Bill in giving effect to the vote which I tried to have reversed. This was the speech I made on that occasion. It is on page 256 of *Hansard* for 1899—

The people of the colony have spoken directly upon the matter, and we have no more right to use our position in this House to prevent the opinion of the majority of the electors of the colony being given effect to than a member of the French Parliament would have. When we agreed to submit the matter to the referendum we, in regard to that particular matter, abolished representative government, and the people have said directly by their own vote what they want done, and we have no more right in the matter.

Mr. LENNON: That does not tally with your attitude over the financial agreement.

The PREMIER: That is my position in the matter. I loyally accept the verdict of the majority, but not because I think it is a right verdict. So far as the interests of the Central district are concerned, I am quite persuaded that it is an unwise verdict; but wise or unwise, the people have settled this matter for themselves.

Mr. COYNE: You wanted Central separation.

The PREMIER: And it is neither for me nor any other member of this House to call in question what they have chosen to do. This is self-evident to any democrat, and to any man who knows what self-government means it is impossible to attempt to get behind the verdict given by the people on this occasion.

I have already made clear the attitude of the Government on this matter. I consider it my duty to give effect to the legally expressed wishes of the people of Queensland. The Government consider it their duty to bring in a Bill to give effect to the wishes of the people, and to get that Bill passed, and we will try to get it passed. At the same time it must be distinctly understood that the Bill is not a party Bill. I am not the custodian of the conscience of any member either of this party or of the party opposite. Members can please themselves how they deal with the measure. There is no allegiance to me in this particular matter; I am only claiming that members have a duty to the people of Queensland in the matter, and I want to point out to those who have advocated the referendum for years, that to vote against this Bill is to kill the principle of the referendum.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Oh, oh! No, no!

The PREMIER: What is the good of passing a Referendum Bill in this House giving the people of Queensland the power to vote "Ycs" or "No" on some particular question, when, after they had voted, a majority of this House say, "Well, after all, as you did not vote the way we wanted you to vote, we do not consider it is a proper vote"? Do not hon. members understand that they have sometimes to take the disadvantage of sound principles when they are on the other side—that they have sometimes to give way for the sake of upholding a sound principle, although it is much against their conscience to do so? All I can say is that the most serious blow that has ever been given to the principle of the referendum will be given to it if the House refuses to pass this Bill. I think that is a

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matter of far more importance than the giving or not giving of religious instruction in State schools. I have made it abundantly clear what the attitude of the Government is in this matter. I have made it abundantly clear what I think is the duty of every member of this House in regard to this question, and it is for themselves to say whether they will pass the Bill or not. Their responsibility is not to me, but to the people of Queensland. The hon. member gave a general approval of the proposal of the Government to introduce a Bill consolidating the land laws, but he had to bring in his little fad about giving perpetual leaseholds instead of freeholds—giving preference to the leasehold form of tenure. When the matter comes to be discussed the hon. member will probably be surprised—I confess that I was a little surprised myself—at the figures in connection with this matter.

Mr. BOWMAN: It has never been encouraged by the department.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Every form of tenure has been offered under the perpetual lease system during the last six months.

The PREMIER: Nevertheless, I am glad to know that the hon. member recognises how important it is to consolidate our land laws and bring them up to date. The hon. member recognises—as I recognise—that on this matter—and perhaps on other matters—we may differ as to details. But there is an unmistakable desire to consolidate our land laws and bring them up to date. If we can amend them in the process, I think we should do it. The hon. member has not referred to many matters on which we differ in essential principles. He will see, as I hope every member of the House will see, that there is a general purpose running through the Speech of His Excellency, which may be discovered in two or three references—the reference to the grand trunk line across Western Queensland, connecting up the three main trunk lines, and the reference to the necessity of doing something permanent in the matter of water supply. My own opinion is that if this House sanctions a sound, broad-minded policy in regard to those two matters, it will have taken steps that will revolutionise Western Queensland within the next few years.

Mr. HAMILTON: Can you give us some idea as to where this railway is to go from—from Thargomindah or from Charleville?

The PREMIER: I cannot give you any idea at present. I am quite prepared to be guided by expert advice in the matter, even by the expert advice of such men as the hon. member for Warrego, who knows the country. I have no personal interest in the matter. But I may tell the House broadly what my general idea is. I want the line to be far enough west to open up for commercial purposes all our possible sheep country, but I do not want it to be so far west that it will have only sheep country on the eastern side. I do not want it to be on the border; I want it to be where there will be trade on both sides of the line. I want it to open up and make available for sheep all the country that we have suitable for sheep raising.

Mr. MULLAN: Are you trying to checkmate the Federal Government?

The PREMIER: What has the Federal Government got to do with the building of this railway?

Mr. BOWMAN: You said you would not allow the Federal Government to come into Queensland.

The PREMIER: Certainly not; nor any other Government. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. ALLEN: Can't they come if they want to for the purpose of defence?

The PREMIER: Let them try it. I think they have about as many transcontinental railways on their hands as they are likely to build for many years to come. This ought to be a Queensland matter. As a matter of fact, the line is necessary for the effective development of our Western country. I venture to think that if our proposed policy in regard to this line is carried out, and an effective policy for conserving water is adopted, those two things will altogether alter the settlement and character of our Western country. There are thousands of miles of country there that may be made valuable to Queensland, which in time of drought are of little or no value. The leader of the Opposition said that he would rather build railways into farming districts. I do not give place to the hon. member in a desire to see railways built into farming districts. The past record of the Governments with which I have been associated is ample evidence of that; and I should be very sorry indeed to think that the building of this Western railway would interfere in any way with the building of railways into those districts along the coast where close settlement is most desired and can be most easily attained.

Mr. BOWMAN: What is the approximate estimated cost of the Western railway?

The PREMIER: I would not like to quote figures at the present time. I can only ask hon. members to deal with the principle on estimated cost of the Western railway?

Mr. HARDACRE: It is all a leap in the dark. It all depends on the merits of the particular proposal when it comes before us. We want further information.

The PREMIER: I do not know what the hon. member means by a "leap in the dark." I consider the matter one of first-rate importance so far as regards the future development of Queensland. Accompanied by some other measures, it is calculated to confer a very great benefit on Queensland. But I think I have made it clear that I am not pledging myself to any details about which I am not satisfied myself. We are trying to get sufficient information to put before the House to justify hon. members in building the railway, and until we are in a position to do that we are not likely to make any proposal.

Mr. HAMILTON: Is the object of this transcontinental proposal to open up Queensland or to checkmate the Oodnadatta overland railway of the Federal Government?

The PREMIER: I am surprised at the hon. member for Gregory. There are few men in this House who know the Western country better than he does. There are few men who know better the immense commercial advantages such a line would confer.

Mr. HAMILTON: I do not deny that.

The PREMIER: He has this craze about the Federal Government. Why should I trouble about the Federal Government? (Opposition laughter.) Hon. members opposite remind me of the man who had a pimple on his nose, and, whenever he failed to catch any remark that other men made, he thought they were referring to the pimple on his nose.

(Laughter.) Nothing that the Government can do, or that any hon. member on this side of the House can do, but hon. members on the other side imagine it has some reference to their friends, the Federal Government. (Laughter.) Can they not understand that this project was under discussion a long time before the present Federal Government got there?

Mr. HAMILTON: No.

The PREMIER: Why should the hon. member say that? It was discussed three years ago, at any rate.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It was foreshadowed in the Governor's Speech for the first session of last year, too.

The PREMIER: The leader of the Opposition was very generous in forecasting the money he was going to pay out—lashings and lashings of money—and he also referred to some directions in which he would economise. One of the ways in which he was going to economise was by bringing back the Agent-General from London. He suggested that we should not have an Agent-General. He quite approves of his friends, the Federal Government, paying a High Commissioner £5,000 a year, who has not anything to do; but the hon. member thinks we ought to save £1,500 or £1,250 a year by doing away with an official who has a great deal of useful work to do for Queensland, and who is doing it.

Mr. RYAN: Let the High Commissioner do it.

The PREMIER: Hon. members opposite think that, if they abolish the Agent-General, they will slate me. (Laughter.) They have been telling stories upon this subject month after month, election after election, year after year, and they have always been falsified, and yet always they come on with their stories afresh. If I had particularly wanted to be Agent-General, might I not have been Agent-General?

Mr. MURPHY: You nearly took it two or three times, you know. (Laughter.)

The PREMIER: Would anybody have blamed me if I had taken it?

Mr. MURPHY: We would have been glad to have got rid of you. I reckon Queensland would prosper if you left.

The PREMIER: I have dealt with most of the matters raised by the leader of the Opposition. As I have already stated, we may disagree in regard to a large number of these matters in detail. We may even disagree as to the general principles of some of the Bills which the Government intend to introduce. But in the programme of business put before the House yesterday there is the possibility of very great good for Queensland. In spite of all personal faults, and in spite of political differences, I do not think any of us doubt that most hon. members have a genuine desire to benefit Queensland and to make it a better place for people to live in. I think it is a pretty good place now. The policy laid down in the Government programme, in spite of faults that may be found out as we proceed with it, is a policy that gives this House a very fine opportunity of serving Queensland. It puts it within the power of hon. members to inaugurate a policy that will have beneficial results long after most of us are out of the House.

Mr. MURPHY: What is that Railway Bill on the programme?

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The PREMIER: In spite of all differences that may arise during the session, I sincerely hope that hon. members on both sides will make an honest attempt to pass legislation that will be for the benefit of the State. With regard to the question put by the hon. member, I have already stated that the Railway Bill will bring before the House the principle on which we desire to build this grand trunk railway, and that it is an amendment of the present Railways Act to suit the circumstances of the Western country. (Government cheers.)

Mr. LENNON: I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed.

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

The House adjourned at thirty-one minutes past 9 o'clock.
