

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 25 AUGUST 1910

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

PAPERS.

The following papers were laid on the table—

Return to an Order, made by the House, on motion of Mr. May, on the 24th instant, relative to the medical fund, Cloncurry-Mount Elliott construction works.

Return to an Order, made by the House, on motion of Mr. May, on the 24th instant, relative to the medical fund, Richmond and Cloncurry construction works.

QUESTIONS.

TOTALISATOR LICENSES.

Mr. COTTELL (*Toowong*) asked the Chief Secretary, for the Attorney-General—

1. What number of totalisator licenses have been issued during the past three years—

- (a) To *bonâ fide* racing clubs;
(b) To proprietary racing clubs?

2. What amount of tax has been received from each club during the said three years?

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

I am sorry to say that I have not got the information. I suggest that the hon. member give notice of the question again.

HOTEL LICENSING FEES—SUNDAY CLOSING.

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*) asked the Home Secretary—

1. What was the amount received during the financial years ended 30th June, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909, and 1910, respectively, for hotel licensing fees, for the metropolitan area?

2. What was the extra cost thrown on the State during the above-mentioned years, respectively, to enforce the Sunday closing clauses of the Licensing Act within the metropolitan area?

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

1. The amount received for license fees in the metropolitan area for the financial years ending 30th June, as under, was—

	£
1906	3,870
1907	3,840
1908	3,900
1909	3,850
1910	3,950

2. One shilling a day is paid to each member of the Police Force engaged on Sunday closing duty, and the cost was as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
1906	68	17	0
1907	87	9	0
1908	99	7	0
1909	89	6	0
1910	76	12	0

COUNCIL OF PUBLIC MORALITY.

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

1. Has his attention been directed to the statement made at a public meeting of an irresponsible body known as the "Council of Public Morality," that the school children of Queensland are "immoral" and "degenerate"?

2. Is there any statistical evidence in the possession of the Government which supports this serious statement?

3. If not, will he take such steps as he may deem advisable to remove the wrong impression created in the public mind of the Commonwealth, and possibly abroad, by these mischievous and defamatory statements?

The PREMIER replied—

1. Not until the honourable gentleman called attention to it.

2. No.

3. It might be worth while taking into consideration.

LIGHTING OF BOWEN JETTY.

Mr. MULLAN (*Charters Towers*), for Mr. Ferricks, asked the Treasurer—

1. What is the estimated cost of providing, on the Bowen Jetty, lighting sufficient to ensure ordinary safety to men going to and from work at the jetty head?

2. What would be the annual cost for maintenance of such lighting?

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

1. Lamps could be installed at a cost of £100, but lighting the jetty is advised as not being necessary.

2. £75.

SALE OF INTOXICANTS IN PARLIAMENT HOUSE.

Mr. RYLAND (*Gympie*), in moving—

1. That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that the sale of intoxicating liquor should be prohibited within the precincts of this House, and that the said prohibition should take effect from the close of this present session of Parliament.

2. That the foregoing resolution be transmitted to the Legislative Council, by message, requesting their concurrence therein—

said: This question has been before the Chamber on two or three occasions previously, and on one occasion it was lost on the casting vote of the Speaker, who thus gave an opportunity for the further consideration of the matter. There is a prevalent idea that this motion has been moved every year, but I am of opinion that it is not so. Last year I moved a reduction on the Estimates as a protest against the refreshment-rooms generally, and especially in connection with the bar. I do not think it is necessary to make a long speech in connection with this matter. I notice that there is a good deal of dissatisfaction in connection with the refreshment-rooms generally, but my motion only deals with the sale of intoxicants within the precincts of the House. Hon. members will have an opportunity before the end of the session of dealing with the refreshment-rooms in a general way. I have in my hand a paper showing that the expenses of the rooms last year amounted to £927 5s. 4d., but that has nothing to do with the sale of intoxicants. My reason for introducing this motion is because I do not think there is any necessity for intoxicating drinks to be sold within the precincts of this House, and I think the business of the House could be carried on quite as well without it. I know that in other Government institutions—in the Government Printing Office, in the railway workshops, in other big concerns carried on by the State, and also in those conducted by private enterprise—there is no necessity to have a public-house on the premises. A good many people outside think we should be able to do our work—I admit that it is sometimes

very hard, and that we work long hours—without the use of intoxicating drink. If we carry this resolution, and it is brought into effect, this will not be the first Legislature that has worked under temperance conditions.

Mr. COTTELL: Do you think that it will stop drinking?

Mr. RYLAND: I notice that in some of the Canadian States they have abolished the sale of intoxicants, and their example has been followed in the Dominion Parliament. My chief object in bringing forward this motion is that we should set an example to the people outside, and especially to the young men of this State. A little self-denial in this respect will go a long way, and will have a good effect. There is no mistake that the young people always look up to a member of Parliament, especially to the member representing their own district, as something superior, and as one in whose footsteps they should follow. When they see us doing our work, and doing it well, without the use of intoxicating drink, it will be an encouragement to them to go and do likewise. It should be the duty of Parliament to make it easy to do right and hard to do wrong. I am one of those who believe that we should do our utmost to carry out the prayer, "Lead us not into temptation," and we should remove this temptation from our midst. We are plastic to our surroundings. It is very hard to get away from the surroundings in which we find ourselves. For that reason we should remove this temptation from amongst ourselves, and thereby set a good example to the people outside. In some countries they eat opium simply because they are born there, and the temptation is in their way. In other countries they drink alcohol simply because the temptation is there. If the temptation was not there, or the means of doing it, they would not do it. We want to reform the habits of the people as much as possible. I do not blame the Government. I do not blame the man or the woman who falls a victim to the drink evil, or to any other evil in our midst. The man who falls is the victim of circumstances. When I see a man fall under the influence of drink, I do not blame him. I blame myself for not having used greater energy and for not having infused more earnestness into my attempts to remove the cause of the disease. His state is only the effect of a cause. Drunkenness is a disease. Plague is a disease. Why should I blame the poor unfortunate who falls a victim to the plague? I do not blame him. He is the victim of the defective sanitary arrangements and of the people who do not destroy the rats which communicate the plague. I do not blame the man who contracts typhoid fever. I blame the local authorities which allow hatches of typhoid fever to exist in our midst. He is only a victim of his surroundings, and why should I blame him? The same with the victim of malarial fever. I blame the mosquitoes for that. (Laughter.) Only the other day I read an article in connection with the cutting of the Panama Canal. At one time men could not work there on account of the malarial fever, but by doing away with the mosquitoes they have made it possible to proceed with the work. Now, we want to do away with the cause of drunkenness, and, if we do that, Queensland will be a happy place.

The PREMIER: Is this the cause?

Mr. RYLAND: We shall be setting an example. The bar is supposed to be here for our convenience; it is supposed to meet the

Mr. Ryland.]

necessities of hon. members; and if by our votes we can establish a little prohibition colony within the precincts of the House, we should do it to show the people outside that we are prepared to practise self-denial, so that they may follow in our footsteps and remove the cause of this disease. I am sure that there is not a single member but must admit that there are many victims to intemperance in our land. There are some who say that reducing the amount of temptation will not effect any reform; but I find, on looking at the statistics for last year in New Zealand, that the cost of drink consumed during the year was 4s. 3d. less per capita than during the preceding year, showing that by reducing the number of public-houses, and thereby reducing the amount of temptation, the quantity of drink consumed was correspondingly reduced.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: How do they compare with the figures for Queensland, per capita?

Mr. RYLAND: I have not got a lot of figures, but the hon. gentleman can find that information in the library if he likes. What I want to impress upon hon. members is their personal responsibility to set a good example to the people of Queensland. Every hon. member can do that by supporting this resolution. I read the other day of a policeman who saw a woman pick up something in the street outside a theatre in one of our large towns. Thinking that she might have picked up a brooch or something valuable, he followed her, and when he overtook her he said, "My good woman, what did you pick up in the street?" She showed him a piece of a broken bottle, and said, "I was afraid that the kiddies might walk on this broken bottle and cut their feet. I have children of my own, and I don't like to see the poor little things suffering pain." And she threw away the broken bottle where it would do no harm. Now, my object is not to deal with broken bottles, but with full ones. (Laughter.) I want to do away with the full bottles. (Laughter.) And I want to do away with the full bottles because I think they might do some harm to members of this House if we allow them to remain on the premises. (Laughter.) I hope I will be able to succeed in having the full bottles removed. Perhaps hon. gentlemen may think that there is no necessity whatever for such a motion. I will admit that this is perhaps the most temperate Parliament that we have ever had in Queensland, and one of the most temperate in Australia. But why not make it perfect? We have not reached perfection yet. It was only last session that some comment was made about what took place in this House during the late sittings here, when things were no better than they had a right to be, and the hon. member for South Brisbane, Mr. Allan, asked this question—

Is it the intention of the Government to take immediate steps to restrict or prohibit the sale of intoxicating drinks in the Parliamentary Refreshment-rooms?

The Premier replied to that question as follows:—

Such matters are entirely in the control of Parliament itself.

The PREMIER: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYLAND: That is one of the reasons why I am bringing this matter up to-day, just to give this House an opportunity of deciding, and I hope this House will decide to do away with the bar and the sale of intoxicants within the precincts of this House.

[Mr. Ryland.]

I see that the Premier has proposed to do away with all-night sittings, and I am with him in that.

The PREMIER: I did not propose that. Don't you believe it. (Laughter.)

Mr. RYLAND: I have reason to believe that he will bring that about. (Laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: "The wish is father to the thought."

Mr. RYLAND: As it is proposed to do away with all-night sittings, and I propose to do away with the sale of intoxicants in the refreshment-room, well, if both of those things are brought about, we will have a perfect Parliament House here. That is why I move this motion. I hope it will be adopted. The tendency of the age is for temperance, for self-denial, and to set a good example. I hope that hon. members here will realise, as I realise, that "We are our brother's keeper." And, at least to this extent, we should set a good example. I have much pleasure in proposing the motion standing in my name. (Hear, hear!)

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. D. F. Denham, Oxley): I remember that some years ago the hon. member for Gympie went to Europe for a trip—(laughter)—and on his return to Queensland he advocated—or, rather, he told us how he had found out that brandy was made out of a certain commodity. (Laughter.)

The TREASURER: In France?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Yes. In consequence of the hon. member's utterances somebody might be tempted to indulge in that particular production, and ever since he has been trying to make atonement by advocating that at least in this House there shall be no means provided whereby members can obtain spirituous liquors.

Mr. RYLAND: It was the best speech I ever made

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The hon. gentleman is the greatest egotist in the House. Everything he does is of the best. Yesterday he spoke about a speech he made on land valuation which occupied two hours, and he said it was his best speech. Now he tells us about the great lecture which he delivered when he proved that on the Continent they could produce brandy from a waste product. (Laughter.) I suppose that by and by, when he goes back to his electors in Gympie, he will tell them that this afternoon he delivered the most powerful speech he ever delivered in his life in order to reform parliamentary life. The hon. member for Gympie himself is a member of the Parliamentary Refreshment-rooms Committee, yet he has not told us how he exerted his influence in that direction.

Mr. ALLEN: He has not stopped the brandy there, either.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: And he has not produced his special brand of brandy there. (Laughter.) He told us that there was no necessity for intoxicating liquor in the Parliamentary Refreshment-rooms at all. Nor is there any necessity for a billiard-room in Parliament House. (Hear, hear!) I do not know whether the hon. gentleman wishes to carry his advocacy any further and abolish everything that is not absolutely necessary, because really if we get down to that, life will become very dreary altogether. There are a lot of things that I can see that are not absolutely necessary which we indulge in from day to day.

Mr. RYLAND: There are a lot of things about this House that I don't want.

Mr. MULLAN: The Government is one of them, I suppose? (Laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Seeing that the hon. gentleman has dealt with this question for a number of years, I fully expected that he would have an array of arguments with which he could impress the House with the necessity for immediate action. He has referred to one or two matters that have no relation at all to this question. He says that there is no bar or drinking shop in the Government Printing Office, and there is no bar or drinking shop in the railway workshops. Quite so. But their hours of labour are quite different to our hours of labour here, and the need for introducing a bar in those places is neither apparent nor desirable.

Mr. MULLAN: Would you advocate the establishing a bar in places where they work at night?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I am not advocating bars anywhere.

Mr. LENNON: Do you advocate barmaids?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I want to show that this sort of motion is really of no interest or value to the community at large. The hon. gentleman said that we should set a good example and that a little self-denial was a good thing. I do not think I have ever seen the hon. member for Gympie in the tearoom or in the refreshment-room, and I do not think I have ever seen him in the billiard-room.

The PREMIER: You don't know him.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I never spend much time there myself, but I have never seen him there.

Mr. RYLAND: Have you ever seen him in this Chamber?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Yes; and I have heard him a good deal, I can assure you. I do not think that anyone has developed so obstructive a tendency as the hon. gentleman has this session. On every possible occasion he has addressed the Chamber, evidently determined, if possible, to retard public business—or, rather, I will withdraw that and say evidently with a desire to shed the light of his knowledge on the Assembly.

Mr. RYLAND: I did not want to speak, but the Minister for Railways made me.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Had my hon. colleague not called "Not formal" to this motion, the hon. junior member for Gympie would have been disappointed. And I wish to save the hon. member disappointment by getting a division very early on this matter, if it does not go through on the voices, because it is not the intention of the Government to stonewall this thing at all. (Hear, hear!) The Government have no hostility at all to the motion, and the question is really in the hands of hon. members. The hon. gentleman never gave us any arguments, and when I asked him for some he referred to the drink bill of New Zealand. For a number of years past the New Zealand [4 p.m.] drink bill has been increasing annually. Some eighteen months ago there was a very able lecturer from New Zealand in Queensland; he was a member of the New Zealand Legislative Assembly, Mr. Taylor by name. He was a most able advocate of prohibition. I heard him lecture, and was very much impressed by his address. I

invited him to my home for dinner, so as to have further conversation with him on the question as to how temperance matters were going on in New Zealand. One question I put to him was, "How is it, Mr. Taylor, that for the last five years your drink bill per capita has steadily gone up?" He replied that it was by reason of the prosperity of the State. I said, "Well, Mr. Taylor, will you please tell me how it is that our drink bill in Queensland has gone down during the last four years, though we have unparalleled prosperity?" It is a pleasing feature, as far as Queensland is concerned, that for years past our drink bill per capita has been diminishing. That goes to show that the rising youth of Queensland is not addicted to spirituous drinks. Mr. Taylor was unable to explain anything further; his only explanation of the increase of the drink bill of New Zealand was that it was due to a period of prosperity, and that argument I answered by showing that we, too, had been singularly prosperous, and yet our drink bill had gone down. Of that fact he could give no satisfactory explanation.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: There is more private drinking in New Zealand.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Until New Zealand has what is called "State prohibition," that kind of thing will take place to some degree, inasmuch as the dry parts of the State will be inundated by people who bring their liquor across in their private kegs and bottles. I am not at all hostile to this motion, but I say it is a matter of no significance, morally or intellectually, whether the motion is carried or not. I certainly have no personal interest in the retention of the bar; I make no use of it; but I do not think I am entitled to force my wishes upon other members of the House.

Mr. RYLAND: You will leave it to the House to decide.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I think that instead of accomplishing the object the hon. member has in view—that is the reducing of the drink habit—it is quite possible that it will have the opposite effect. It is also probable that gentlemen who are in the habit of taking a little liquor, and who can now readily purchase that liquor at the parliamentary bar, would not deprive themselves of it because they could not purchase it there; but would bring their bottles into the refreshment-rooms, or perhaps leave them in their lockers in the writing-room. The result would, perhaps, be that instead of the drinking habit being diminished it would be intensified, and hon. members would leave their bottles on the verandas or elsewhere. During the past few days we have heard it said over and over again, sometimes in earnest stentorian tones, sometimes in pleading tones, that minorities have rights. It is also well known that majorities rule. If the majority in this Chamber vote this afternoon for the abolition of the right to sell liquor in the Parliamentary Buildings, and the motion is concurred in by the other House, then the view of the majority will prevail, and the wishes of the minority will be subordinated. My opinion is that the majority in this House are opposed to drinking habits. (Hear, hear!) I believe that if heads were counted the number of total abstainers, or of total abstainers and almost total abstainers, would preponderate.

The PREMIER: Nearly three-fourths of the House.

Hon. D. F. Denham. 1

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I think quite three-fourths do not make use of liquor at all. If those of us who have no personal interest in the retention of the bar succeeded in having the bar abolished, we should feel very uncomfortable, and resent it very much if other members turned round and said, "Well, we will abolish your cup of tea or cup of coffee."

Mr. LENNON: Why don't you apply that argument to the teaching of religion in State schools?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Because a majority of the electors in Queensland have expressed their wish through the ballot-box that there shall be religious instruction in State schools.

Mr. ALLEN, interjecting from the table,

The DEPUTY SPEAKER said: Order! There is a growing disposition on the part of hon. members to make interjections. Interjections generally are disorderly, and they are more disorderly when made from the table, which is reserved for writing purposes. This disposition is not confined to hon. members on any one side of the House—(hear, hear!)—and I hope it will cease. At any rate, I shall take it upon myself to see that interjections which come from members sitting at the table do not find a place in *Hansard*.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Very shortly there will be an opportunity for the people of Queensland to express their views in regard to local option. If the opportunity presents itself for the introduction of the Bill which the Government have prepared, it will be found that that measure makes provision for submitting this question to the people.

Mr. LENNON: You are not going to allow fair discussion of the measure under your new Sessional Orders.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: One member can take up one phase of the question and another member take up another phase of the question, and each discuss his one particular phase of the matter fully. The hon. member for Gympie would be able to take up that phase of the question which deals with the production of brandy from a certain commodity, and another member could take another phase of the question. It is only a matter of arrangement. If the matter is carefully arranged, the whole gamut from Alpha to Omega can be fully and fairly discussed. It is well known that a number of constituents of country members come to the city to do business. They are not frequently in town, but not infrequently when they do visit Brisbane they take the opportunity to consult their member at the House, and also to attend here to see how things are conducted. That is a thing which should be encouraged in every way. When they come here to meet their member, he very often invites them up to have a cup of tea or something else.

Mr. FORSYTH: Especially something else.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Some men who wish to take something else have the convenience of getting it at the parliamentary bar for consumption in the strangers' room. The spirit of hospitality manifested in such cases would be curtailed if the motion of the hon. member for Gympie were carried.

Mr. FOLEY: The "spirit."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Yes, the spirit both in the bottle and in the

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individual. If reform is really necessary in this matter, let us each one act for himself, and if a member can possibly influence his neighbour to refrain from going to the bar, then let him exercise that influence. It is quite true, as the hon. member said, that we are all more or less creatures of circumstances. Some lads never see liquor in their homes, and they grow up without any desire to partake of it. For such lads I have only words of congratulation, because I am satisfied that liquor is not a necessity for either our physical comfort or our physical development. (Hear, hear!) It is true, as the hon. member said, that we are creatures of circumstances, so it is that between the hours of 8 and 11 o'clock at night, if we adjourn at that hour, some of us resort to the tearoom for a cup of tea, and others resort to the other room to get their drinks. If the bar were abolished, would it prevent the individual who has a desire for whisky—would it prevent him from obtaining it? He could obtain it by more than one means—either by bringing it here or by going across to the hotel. Is it not better that the drink should be concentrated and held in one place, as it now is, just at the bar? Whereas with the abolition of the bar—mark the terms of the resolution: it is "the sale of liquor"—is it not abolition or prohibition of same within the precincts of this House? Is it not far better to keep the bar there and centralise the drinking habit, rather than have it scattered round the various parts of the building? I would resent very much the man who takes whisky saying: "You shall not have your cup of tea." The ideal condition is State prohibition. That would apply to the whole thing—not merely to the sale, but to the prohibition of its manufacture and of its importation.

Mr. BARBER: Start it this way.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I do not prefer to start it in this way; it is so priggish—so paltry. I may perhaps use my influence in the House, but I have no right whatever to exert force on those who desire to merely take that which they are in the habit of taking, whether in the House or in their homes. This Government is distinctly in favour of temperance. There is being prepared at the present time, under the control of the Commissioner for Public Health, a system of lessons that will be taught in our schools—lessons on health, hygiene, and temperance. I believe also that we should exert our influence on the platform. I quite approve of its advocacy in the newspapers. Our method should be to educate, educate; and, above all, be charitable. If the hon. member will refrain a little from so frequently speaking in the House, I think the day would dawn much more quickly on which the Licensing Bill would be introduced, and when once it is introduced it will be found to be a Bill that will place in the hands of the people the control of this liquor habit—something far wider than just the control of the sale of liquor in this House. I am glad to know that the drinking habit in Queensland is not a growing habit, and when one says that, it is something to be proud of. (Hear, hear!) At the same time, the sum spent on liquor is colossal and appalling. When one knows that the amount spent on spirituous liquors in Queensland is equal to the amount of interest paid on our public debt—when one recognises that the consumption of liquor is equal to the interest paid in regard to our railways, our public buildings, and

loans to local authorities, then one recognises what a colossal thing it is.

Mr. FORSYTH: Between £3,000,000 and £4,000,000.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No; not so much as that. I think the amount per capita is just over £3—altogether about £1,600,000 or £1,700,000; just about the amount we spend on the interest on the public debt, and about four times the amount we spend in our Public Instruction Department. Therefore, I am quite ready to help in every regard to solve this drink question. If we once solve the drink habit, to my mind, we will solve the unemployed question.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: No; you won't.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We shall at once solve the unemployed question. Of course at the present time there is no such thing as unemployed in Queensland.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Yes, yes; and laughter.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: There are no unemployed. There is not a day passes but men come to the Lands Office and tell me how impossible it is to get men to undertake work on their properties.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Owing to the poor wages.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No; good and fair wages are being offered and paid. There is no question of unemployed in Queensland to-day. I am speaking now on the broad lines. I say if you once solve this drinking question, particularly in Great Britain, you will solve the unemployed question, and you will certainly solve the poverty question.

Mr. LENNON: Instead of drink being the cause of poverty, poverty is largely the cause of drinking.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: All economists and sociologists—all who have investigated the subject—I have not searched very closely into the subject myself—all aver that the drinking custom has a great deal to do with our poverty, and particularly our crime.

Mr. LESINA: Not half as much as land monopoly has.

Mr. LENNON: You are the Minister for Lands, and that is a nut for you to crack.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We have only alienated about 6 per cent. of land in this State.

Mr. LENNON: Still there is land monopoly.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No. So far as alienation of land in Queensland is concerned, it has been the reverse of contributing to poverty; it has been the means of enriching quite a large number directly, and a still greater number indirectly. This motion has been before the House several times. It was thought, perhaps, not well to let it go by without a word from the Treasury bench, but I can assure the hon. member that the Treasury bench are not antagonistic to the motion. Personally, I am going to vote against it. Some of my colleagues, I dare say, will vote for it; but I want it to be clearly understood that, so far as temperance propaganda and temperance work is concerned, I am with him all the time.

Mr. BARBER: Show an example in this case.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I am not prepared on this occasion to place disabilities upon my co-members in this Assembly.

Mr. BOWMAN: You are willing to place them under a disability in regard to the Standing Orders.

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*): During the past ten years I think this question has come up on five or six occasions. The hon. member for Gympie is usually the hon. member who takes on his shoulders the responsibility of fathering this proposition. To him it appeals as one of those far-reaching reforms which, once passed by the express will of this House, will rapidly usher in an entirely new order of things in this Assembly. I do not know whether he really believes that the mere closing of that refreshment-bar and the preventing of certain members here having access to it during late sittings, or during any period the House is in session, is going to regenerate members of this Assembly. I do not know that there is any particular need for the moral regeneration of members of this Assembly, yet every man outside who reads the annual introduction of this motion comes to the conclusion that there is some pressing necessity for the moral regeneration of this Assembly, otherwise a moral reformer like the hon. member for Gympie would not be forthcoming every session. That is the natural and inevitable assumption. "Why should it be proposed to abolish this bar," the man in the street says, "unless there is an absolute need for it?" And in that sense the moving of this resolution is a constant reflection on the moral character of the members of this Chamber. I do not know whether the hon. member for Gympie is really anxious to cast a reflection on the sobriety and moral living of members in this Chamber. Mr. Finlayson, one of the members in the Federal House, who is another member with a similar crank as the hon. member for Gympie has shown, moved a similar motion in the Federal Parliament.

Mr. TOLMIE: It is 6s. a week there.

Mr. LESINA: They don't drink 6s. a week there. This is from the Federal *Hansard*, No. 14, which I have in my hand, page 1766. It is a resolution moved by Mr. Finlayson, the hon. member for Brisbane, similar to the motion now before the House—that within the precincts of the House the sale of intoxicating liquors should be prohibited. And he made a very excellent speech in favour of his motion for prohibition—the very best I have read for many years past. The hon. member quoted the following facts in regard to the matter, and, as it is appropriate to this discussion, I will trouble the House for one moment with this quotation. He takes this from *Hansard*, 1904, when Sir Thomas Ewing, then Mr. Ewing, who was the hon. member for Richmond at that time, put the following questions to the Federal Treasurer:—

1. What is the average number of individuals who use the refreshment-room at the Commonwealth Parliament House during the sitting of Parliament?
2. What is the average expenditure per individual on spirits per month during the sitting of Parliament this session?
3. Are all spirits paid for by those consuming them?

To those questions the Treasurer replied—

1. About 250.
2. 1s. 5d. per month, or about 4d. per week.
3. Yes. No free drinks or free meals are given to any person.

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I would like to know whether there is any Parliament in the whole of the known world that has such an excellent record for sustained sobriety as our Federal House since its establishment.

Mr. MAUGHAN: So has this Parliament.

Mr. LESINA: I have already said that previously. I say the same thing is also equally true of this Parliament; and the hon. member for Gympie must admit that from the time he first came here there has been a great improvement in this Chamber—not that there was any great need for improvement, but the improvement has been gradual, and that improvement indicates that a general improvement has taken place in the community outside as well as in the House. In fact, the tendency of the times is to increased temperance in all things, except in temperance propaganda. Now, the hon. junior member for Gympie quoted Scripture to justify the attitude he proposes to take up in connection with the abolition of this bar. Before I make reference to that as an argument in favour of the justification of carrying this by the Chamber this afternoon, I desire to say that I have resented, and propose to resent this afternoon, the proposition before the Chamber for that very reason. In a sense, perhaps unwittingly, the moving of such a resolution is a reflection upon members of this Chamber, for the reformative zeal of the hon. member for Gympie leads to the assumption that members of this Chamber are in a sense, by such a motion, taken under his wing, in order that their morals may be protected from contamination. I do not know that any member would break out if the hon. member for Gympie removed his sheltering wing from their moral character, and I resent the attempt on his part, or on any other member's part, to protect me. Every man must be the guardian of his own morals in this matter, but if there is one assumption more than another to which there is a growing tendency nowadays to accord legislative sanction, it is the idea that "I am my brother's keeper," that I am his moral censor. That reminds me of some of the characters which Butler described in Hudibras, who—

Compound for sins they are inclined to,
By damning those they have no mind to.

With respect to Scripture quotation about not leading our brother into temptation, I could also give Scriptural quotations justifying the attitude I take up this afternoon.

Mr. RYLAND: The Premier himself on two occasions quoted Scripture. (Laughter.)

Mr. LESINA: Here is a text from Psalms—
Wine makes glad the heart of man.

Has the hon. member ever attempted to carry out in actual fact, in everyday life, that text of Scripture? (Laughter.) Has he ever discovered the entrancing, the revivifying influence of a sparkling glass of Pomeroy, of a glass of claret, in which the ruby gleams? (Laughter.) Has he ever attempted at any time in his past career, or does he propose in future, when wisdom comes—as it will come with the passage of years—to taste, as old Omar Kha Yam points out—

Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough;
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse—and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness—
And Wilderness is Paradise enow!

Then in the Book of Judges it is stated—

Wine cheereth God and man.

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Then we have the Apostle Paul's advice to Timothy—

Do not still drink water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thy frequent infirmities.

(Laughter.) That is a text.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Have you given that verbatim?

Mr. LESINA: Yes. This is the Douay version; I will give the hon. gentleman the Protestant version. (Laughter.) The revised version—the Protestant version authorised by King James I.—reads—

Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities.

(Laughter.) Again, the other day, in one of those excesses of religious fervour which sometimes seize upon me and men like me, I betook myself to the Book of Deuteronomy, for spiritual information, and I discovered there, in chapter xiv., verse 26, the following astounding lines:—

And thou shalt buy with the same money whatsoever pleaseth thee, either of the herds, or of sheep, wine also, and strong drink, and all that thy soul desireth, and thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God, and shall feast thou and thy house.

Here is a distinct invitation in Deuteronomy to expend my substance to a limited extent upon strong drink. What has the hon. member for Gympie got against this? Here we have a verse of Scripture relating to the hon. gentleman from this side; and on his own he had merely his unscriptural and unbiblical propaganda in which he has been engaged in this Chamber for years past. I do not desire to vex the hon. gentleman by piling agony upon agony by further quotation from the Scriptures, both ancient and modern, but it appears to me that, in these things alone, I have justification for occasionally approaching the bar and taking a glass of claret for my benefit. And am I not entitled to know whether it is for my benefit?

Mr. BOWMAN: Sometimes you do not know.

The PREMIER: Whisky? (Laughter.)

Mr. LESINA: Or barley bree. But it is not a matter of what temperance reformers, or what physiology, psychology, or even the Scripture says on the matter. If I think a glass of Australian wine, made from grapes grown in Australia, reddened in the bright Australian sunshine, watered by the Australian rain, and made by workers who are protected by the wages boards, will do me good, have I not a perfect right to consume it?

The PREMIER: Is this a matter of conscience, where the majority have a right to rule? (Laughter.)

Mr. LESINA: I do not permit the intrusion of the majority into this matter. The majority have no right to decide what I shall drink, any more than to determine my religion or what I shall wear. The attempt by a certain section of the community to assume the right of the majority to determine these things for me is going to be fruitful of many evils in the future. It is a thing the Legislature ought to take a stand against. In a sense, the hon. member for Gympie takes this stand; it is a small thing, but, nevertheless, it indicates the general spirit of the class of people whom he speaks for outside, in a larger attempt to determine what I shall drink, how I shall drink it, and where I shall drink it. He made reference to the fact that drinking was a bigger evil than the consumption of opium. Does the hon. member know what has been

the result in China for the past three or four years in connection with the attempt by sumptuary legislation to debar the Chinese from the use of opium, to which they have been accustomed now for half a century? If he will look up Ronaldshay's work, which I read some time ago—it is by the Earl of Ronaldshay, a member of the House of Commons, who recently took a tour in the East, and entitled "A Wandering Student in the Far East"—he will find that one glaring result of the abolition of opium in China is this—

An HONOURABLE MEMBER interjected.

Mr. LESINA: He is an English aristocrat, and he derives his income from family properties. The majority of people preaching temperance do not go so far as to [4.30 p.m.] want to abolish bars. Bishop Stretch, at the Anglican Synod in Newcastle, spoke so strongly against the way some of the temperance people worked that his remarks were circulated throughout New South Wales and other parts of Australia; and Mrs. Barton, of the Glasgow Municipal Council, who arrived in Sydney the other day, when the leaflet containing the remarks of Bishop Stretch on the intemperance of the temperance party was put into her hands, said from the public platform, "God's curse on Bishop Stretch." There is a lot of charity about that. But that is by the way. The author of this work, on page 215, says this—

There is another danger besides that of an increased production of opium in China itself, which has to be carefully guarded against *pari passu* with the reduction of the supply of the drug—the danger of abolishing one vice only to make room for a worse. It is well known in the East that where opium-smoking is suppressed, the use of morphia or of some equally deleterious drug is almost certain to take its place, unless the most stringent precautions are adopted to prevent it. This danger appears to be imminent in China at the present moment. "Since the closing of the dens," says Dr. Main, of the Church Missionary Hospital at Hanchow, "anti-opium pills, containing morphia or opium in some form, have been freely distributed by the gentry, and shops for the sale of these anti-opium pills are opened everywhere and doing a roaring trade. Some have been cured, but most of those who frequented the opium dens have simply replaced the pipe by morphia pills, and the last state is worse than the first."

This was quoted by the Shanghai correspondent of the *Times*, in a letter to that paper of 3rd July, 1908. There is a great deal more to the same effect, showing that there is an enormous amount of smuggling from America. I desire to say in connection with this matter that precisely the same result follows in dealing with the liquor question. The same results have followed in New Zealand; and if in our small community, envired by the walls of this Chamber, you abolish the bar, you have no right to prevent a member from bringing liquor in his bag or his pocket, or from having a drink before he comes to the House. Then what will you do? Will you appoint a committee of members to smell a member's breath—(laughter)—to see if he has been taking a drink at the bar of the hotel over the road, to which we have access? It is impossible. It is one of those things characteristic, in a way, of the whole temperance propaganda. I believe in temperance in all things, not only in wine but in dining, and particularly temperance in the advocacy of temperance. The most intemperate thing to-day is the temperance movement; and just as the attempt to prevent people drinking outside has been a failure, so the attempt to prevent

members from drinking would be a failure. They would close the bar and prevent members from buying drinks at that bar, giving them access only to tea and coffee refreshments; but the members who wished to do so would take a drink outside, or bring drink with them, and it might lead to the establishment of the same system as in "no license" towns in New Zealand—the locker system—where men pay for lockers in which to keep a supply of barley bree or other liquor for themselves and their friends. I take it that the hon. member has no desire to produce that effect here. That is taking the smaller view; but I depend on the larger view, that it is impertinence on his part to attempt to dictate to me whether I shall drink or not. Suppose I travelled with the hon. gentleman and some of his friends in a railway train, and we got out at a station, and he said, "We are going to have a cup of tea. Will you join us?" And suppose I said, "I do not care about a cup of tea; I would rather have a glass of whisky or claret or sherry." And suppose he said, "You must come and have a cup of tea," and he and his friends took hold of me and dragged me in to have the tea. That would be a distinct invasion of my personal liberty. And would not that be resented by every sensible man? Similarly, if we were travelling under the same circumstances, and I am going to have a drink with some friends, and ask the hon. member for Gympie to join us, he would say, "No; I do not drink wine. I only drink tea." Then suppose we took him by the shoulder and said, "You must have wine, because we are going to have wine." That would be an invasion of his personal liberty. And does he not see that his action is exactly the same when he says to people, "You shall drink tea or coffee, but you shall not drink a glass of wine." It is an impertinent interference with our personal liberty, and if that principle were recognised outside there would be a great deal less of the interference with liberty which has characterised legislation in New Zealand. I am against that interference not only here but outside. Another aspect of the matter is the social aspect. People come here to see members. They are taken to the visitors' room, where they have soft drinks, wine, or anything else they like to call for. Having had the refreshments, they go about their business. They cannot return the drink, and, naturally, that limits drinking. If you abolish the bar, when people come from my district to see me we shall have to go to the corner for a drink, and in that case they can return the drink.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It would be a good thing to have the visitors' room closed, perhaps.

Mr. LESINA: I have never seen anything out of the ordinary happen in the visitors' room; and I do not know that the hon. member patronises the room sufficiently frequently to have witnessed so many of the scenes of which he spoke so warmly. I have never seen anything of them, and I think the majority of members can say the same. The only use of this motion, which never appears to get any "forrader," is simply to offer the opportunity for the discussion of matters that might be left untouched. I think this question is much better treated on the broad ground that we have a perfect right to enter that room and take our refreshment in a manly, moderate, and temperate way. I think the majority of members do that, and there is no need for

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this motion. There is no need to correct our morals—no need for a sub-committee to safeguard them; and I think very few members would care to entrust their morals to each other for safe protection. Each man must be the guardian of his own morals and tastes, and control them in his own particular fashion. The proposal to make people temperate by prohibition is simply to substitute the truncheon of the police for moral influence. In the past Christian temperance men relied largely in these matters on an appeal to the conscience and religious and moral instincts; now an appeal is made to the truncheon of the police to do things which formerly were done for the love of virtue. The puritanical style is becoming more and more apparent, and there is a tendency on the part of Labour legislators to bow the head more and more to the influence of puritanical associations outside, but the people of this twentieth century cannot be corralled and coerced and morally castigated in the way that our ancestors of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were, or as Scotland was under the "Rule of the Saints." The time for that has gone. It is a bad sign of the times that a motion like this—insignificant as it is in its way—should be introduced. It is like a straw that indicates the direction of the wind or the drift of the current. I hope that when we dispose of it this afternoon, it is the last time we shall see it for many years. I shall vote against the resolution.

Mr. NEVITT (*Carpentaria*): It gives me very great pleasure indeed to have an opportunity to support the hon. member for Gympie in his advocacy of the abolition of the sale of intoxicating liquor within the precincts of this House. A good many reasons have been given by the hon. member for Clermont why he considers it inadvisable to do away with the bar. It is not from the point of view of economy that the hon. member for Gympie has brought forward his motion; but he and those of us who think with him on the subject consider it is our duty to set an example to the rest of the community by doing away with the bar in Parliament House. I cannot understand the hon. member for Clermont advocating its retention, because even from the point of view of the people whose cause he himself said the other night he was advocating—the licensed victuallers—he should support the motion. The hon. member should be up in arms against the raid that is being made upon the rights and privileges of the licensed victuallers, since the manager of the bar is allowed to sell liquor without paying the license fee that licensed victuallers are compelled to pay. I do not think it is possible to have a more temperate body of men than the members of the two Houses of Parliament in Queensland. I do not think that it would be possible to get 110 men in any walk of life who are more sober than the members of the two branches of the Queensland Legislature. But the object of the motion is not to attempt to make them more temperate. The object is to set an example to the people outside. My friends on this side—and this applies also to the hon. member for Clermont—he also was elected on the platform of the Labour party which was passed at the Rockhampton Convention in 1905, and that platform reads as follows—"That it is the opinion of this convention that the refreshment bar in Parliament House should be abolished." I would draw my friend's attention to that resolution.

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Mr. MAY: It was only a recommendation.

Mr. NEVITT: It does not matter—it was carried by a majority of the members in conference assembled.

Mr. COTTELL: It is not in your platform, though.

Mr. NEVITT: The plank in our platform is total abolition, of which I am a strong advocate. But not being able to get total abolition, I go for the next best thing, and am, therefore, in favour of reducing the consumption of alcohol as far as possible. The Secretary for Lands said that if the bar were abolished he did not think it would reduce the consumption of alcohol. Well, I differ with the hon. gentleman, because my experience among my friends who occasionally take a glass is that, if they were asked to go 200 or 300 yards to get a drink, they would not go. If the conveniences were not there for getting drink, the consumption would inevitably be reduced. The Secretary for Public Lands also said that he did not believe in interfering with the liberties of the subject. He held that if the bar were abolished it would interfere with the hospitality members show to their friends, and he did not think it was altogether a good line to interfere with hospitality in that direction. Yet in the next breath the hon. gentleman said that he was a total prohibitionist. I do not understand the hon. gentleman's attitude. It certainly seems inconsistent to say that he did not believe in forcing his opinions down other people's throats, and then to say that he was a total prohibitionist.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I have no desire to enforce restrictions upon my co-members. I think they have strength of mind enough to do the right thing.

Mr. NEVITT: I am very pleased that the consumption of alcohol in Australia, taken as a whole, is very much less than the average in other countries. The last statistics I have been able to get are for 1908, and at that time there were only two countries in the world that consumed less alcohol than Australia—Russia and Canada. I have not been able to get the amount per head of population for the different States of Australia, but from my previous reading I am inclined to think that Queensland compares very favourably with the other States. I am sure that the consumption in Queensland is less than that of New South Wales, but I believe it is a little higher than in Victoria and South Australia.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: And less than in New Zealand.

Mr. NEVITT: Yes; according to the last figures I saw, it was less than in New Zealand. But I would like to see it lower still; and this is one of the methods by which it can be reduced, although the reduction might be infinitesimal. Still, we have to make a start, and I believe in making a start whenever we have the chance. The Secretary for Lands said that he was a State prohibitionist, so I presume he is prepared to go in for State production and distribution.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No; I do not believe in State control at all.

Mr. NEVITT: I thought from an interjection the hon. gentleman made that he was in

favour of State production and distribution. Personally, I should like to see State production and distribution. By that means the liquor consumed would be of far better quality than we get to-day. It is the injurious class of liquor that is dispensed over the bars and in other places that is accountable for a good deal of the trouble that arises from this cursed traffic. It would be a good thing, if we cannot get total prohibition, to have State production and distribution. In Sweden some years ago they adopted the Gothenburg system. That is a spurious form of State socialism; but it had this effect: I think it was introduced in 1864, and at that time there were as many as 173,000 domestic stills in Sweden—one for every seventeen people; and only the other day a plebiscite was taken on the question of whether liquor should be either produced locally or imported into Sweden. The result was that out of 2,500,000 people—that is, adult voters—1,700,000 said "No alcohol," and only 12,500 were in favour of retaining alcohol. (Hear, hear!) I shall be pleased to see the day in Queensland when we will be able to have a referendum with a result of that kind on this particular question. The moral effect of it would be that every man and every woman would be able to look round and say, "There is not the slightest doubt about it, it has done a great amount of good." I do not wish to monopolise the time of the House any longer, but I heartily support the motion before the House.

Mr. FOLEY (*Townsville*): I do not intend occupying the attention of the Chamber very long on this question. I have been a total abstainer for some years now, and I have great pleasure in supporting this motion. I would like to make a reference to some of the remarks of the Minister for Lands in his attempt to give reasons why we should not interfere with the parliamentary bar as at present constituted. One of the reasons that the Minister gave was that there was need for the bar because we sometimes sit long hours in this Chamber, and members need refreshments to sustain them during their long and arduous labours while sitting here. I am one of those who think that strong drink is not needed to sustain a man at all. I have been a hard worker myself; I have done the hardest work that a man is ever called upon to do, and during the last thirty years I have never swallowed any strong drink at all. I have worked alongside of men who I knew had been in the habit of taking strong drink, and I found that the man who did not take it could stand hard work much better than the man who took a lot of it. (Hear, hear!) We have evidence to show that strong drink is not of any assistance to hard work. We have the evidence of Lord Kitchener on that matter. At one time when he was marching his army through Egypt he tried an experiment by keeping one part of his army on tea and the other part on beer. He gave each division as much as they could drink, either of tea or beer. (Laughter.) The fellows on the beer were the first to give in, and those who had tea lasted much longer. (Hear, hear! and laughter.) That is one proof that men who drink tea can sustain themselves longer than men who drink beer, and they had a fair trial on that occasion. I think that for a man to say that he needs strong drink to sustain him while he is doing hard work is like saying that a duck needs an umbrella when it is raining. There is no necessity for a parliamentary bar to be kept in existence because the House is kept open

longer than usual sometimes. The hon. member for Gympie said we should set a good example by abolishing the bar and abolishing the strong drink in it. I would point out to the Minister for Lands that since last election a number of young men have been returned to this House, most of them under thirty, and they are on both sides of the House. The hon. member for Gympie quoted from Scripture, and gave as his text, "Lead us not into temptation." There is certainly a temptation for young members to start drinking in Parliament House when the bar is so handy for them. No young man starting out in life intends to become a drunkard—that is, a habitual drunkard as we understand it; but if temptation is put in his way he might start to drink, and the chances are that he might become a drunkard. We all know the evils of drink, and what they lead to in some people. It is a well-known fact—we have it on the testimony of the medical fraternity—that drink creates an appetite for itself. When a man takes a glass he generally intends to stop at that, but he meets a friend and has another glass, and the drink creates an appetite for itself; the habit grows, and in years to come the young man becomes a drunkard against his will. He may have got his temptation at Parliament House for all we know. I have heard a temperance advocate say that a moderate drinker is the worst example to show a young man starting in life. It is not the moderate drinker who should be shown as an example. If you wanted to show a young man starting in life the benefits of drink, you would not take him to the house of a man who comes home drunk on Saturday night after doing a hard week's work, and he might be in the act of striking his wife with a chair, or, perhaps, striking one of his half-starved children. No; if you wanted to show the benefit of drink you would take him to the house of a moderate drinker—a man who can take a glass and then leave it alone for a few days. But the chances are that that young man in starting out might only mean to take a glass, yet he might become a habitual drunkard; and in time he might get married, and while in a drunken state he might kill his wife. The more we can do to remove temptation from young men the better it will be for this House and the reputation of it. I do not say that the present bar has been the means of creating any drunkards in this Assembly. Far be it from me to say that. But in order to sustain members when sitting up late I hold that there is as much virtue in a cup of tea or a cup of coffee as there is in a glass of whisky, and more so. The Minister for Lands said that he was an abolitionist—that is to say, a prohibitionist. He said he believed in absolute prohibition of drink, and he said that if drink was prohibited it would go a long way to solve the labour problem and the unemployed question. I agree with the Secretary for Public Lands to a great extent in that statement, that if the drink traffic could be abolished altogether there would be more money available for doing other work. I remember once a temperance advocate, who took the trouble to go into figures on these matters, said that if there was no drink, and that the bill in England were abolished, and the money spent in drink were spent in other industries, there would not be enough room in the workshops in England to contain all the men to make the necessary articles required by the people. That is an argument in favour of what the Minister says—that doing away with the drink would be the means of solving the

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unemployed question. There are many reasons which I could bring forward in favour of this question, but it will suffice to say that the abolition of the sale of drink

[5 p.m.] in this House will be an example to the people outside. I know that this matter has been talked about outside the House for many years, and the *Telegraph* recognises this fact when it says that "Mr. Ryland's annual motion for the abolition of the bar is coming on to-day." There are a large number of people watching how the vote will go on this question this afternoon, as they have watched the vote on similar motions in years gone by, and I feel sure that if the motion is carried the result will be received with much satisfaction. I hope the motion will be carried, and that this House will decide to abolish the sale of drink within the precincts of Parliament House.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. W. T. Paget, *Mackay*): As one who voted against a similar motion moved by the hon. member for Gympie some years ago, I listened very carefully to the hon. member's remarks this afternoon to see whether he would adduce some reasons which would induce me to alter my mind on the subject, but I must confess that I have been disappointed with his arguments. The hon. member drew a very pathetic and telling picture of a policeman seeing a woman of the town—

Mr. RYLAND: I said a lady.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member said a woman.

Mr. RYLAND: Well, woman is the higher title.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member said he saw a woman of the streets—

Mr. RYLAND: No; I said a woman who had kiddies of her own.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Well, I accept the hon. member's statement. He saw a married woman walking along the street in front of the theatre, and noticed her stoop to pick up something, whereupon a constable followed her and said, "My good woman, what is that you have picked up?" I think she was probably a humane woman, and that the constable was a humane man. When a constable sees a person pick up something in the street, or do something he thinks should not be done, he does not usually say, "My good woman." The hon. member told us that this good lady replied that it was a portion of a glass bottle that she had picked up, and when he said that I thought he was going to tell us, for our edification and instruction, to what kind of a bottle that portion belonged. I thought he was going to tell us that it was a portion of a bottle which had contained strong drink, but he did not say anything of the sort. It might have been a bottle containing scent, or a smelling-bottle, or a lemonade bottle. At any rate, I could not possibly gather from his statement any argument in support of this motion, or any reason that would lead me to change my opinion with regard to the matter. I can quite understand that the piece of bottle found by the woman was something dangerous to children, and I admire that woman for her thoughtfulness in picking it up in order to protect children from cutting their feet. I hope we have quite a number of such women in Queensland. A great deal has been said this afternoon as to the desirability of members drinking tea or coffee in the Parlia-

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mentary Refreshment-rooms as against spirituous liquors. I should like to bring this phase of that question under the notice of hon. members—that at the present time we believe in a white Australia. Hon. members opposite look sceptical when I express that opinion.

Mr. FOLEY: Are you serious?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Of course I am serious; I am always serious. What I wish to bring under the notice of hon. members is that, when they or I drink a cup of tea or coffee, we are actually supporting coloured labour, because, I am sorry to say, there is not sufficient coffee grown in Queensland to supply the consumption of the State.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: And you are Minister for Agriculture!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes; and I do all I possibly can to induce people to grow the quantity of coffee and tea that is consumed in the State. At present, however, it is an undoubted fact that we do not do so, and we have to import those commodities from other countries, where they are grown by coloured labour. On the other hand, those who have a glass of whisky in the Parliamentary Refreshment-rooms support a white labour industry. I may say, without fear of contradiction, that all the liquor consumed in the Parliamentary Refreshment-rooms is manufactured by white labour. The phase of the question which has presented itself to my mind is that when I take a cup of tea or coffee I am supporting a coloured labour industry, but I am not going to deprive myself of the refreshment I desire on that account. Therefore, with the Minister for Lands, I fail to see why I should dictate to other members in this House, which is a very moderate and sober House, what they shall take in the way of refreshment. Some members like to have a game of billiards, and some members do not play billiards. Why should I, because unfortunately my education in that direction has been neglected, object to other members playing billiards when they have the time and the opportunity to do so? Why should they not play when there is no occasion for their attendance in the House, or during lunch hour? I think they can spend their time very pleasantly in that way, and I cannot follow my friend, the Secretary for Public Instruction, when he says that the Parliamentary Refreshment-rooms should be shut altogether, because I presume that would mean closing the billiard-room also. I do not know whether the hon. gentleman indulges much in billiards, but I understand that he has played a game occasionally, and that he has done credit to those members who have shown him how to use a cue skilfully. The hon. member quoted the amount of money spent last year by the committee, of which he is a member—that is, a sum of £927. Some years ago, when this motion was before the House, I took the opportunity of pointing out that the sum of money that is spent on the refreshment-room is not spent in inducing hon. members of this House to drink.

Mr. RYLAND: I said that.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is not spent on the parliamentary bar. There are necessary expenses in connection with the carrying on of the catering in this establishment. It would not be reasonable to expect any caterer to carry on the business of supplying refreshments for members of this House unless he had some subsidy, and that is where the money goes. I wish now and here to clear

up the idea that people have in the country, that members of this House get free drinks, or that the drink they get here is subsidised by public money. It is nothing of the sort. The hon. member who moved the motion said that we should deny ourselves, and he also said that quite a number of young people in his electorate looked up to him with the object of following in his footsteps. Take the ordinary average member of Parliament: I have been a member of Parliament for some years now, and it seems to me that the ordinary member of Parliament is just about the average man. Some of them, like the hon. member who moved the resolution, are above the average in regard to temperance, and some of them, like the hon. member, are above the average in being able to speak at great length at times; and I dare say that some of us are also above the average in the number of times we speak in a session. But then we have not to look at the shining examples. In any of these matters we must take the average, and I would say—following out what the hon. member said about the young people—that the young people, I expect, will find that their members are average men, and if their members keep themselves decently sober and hard working, I see no reason why they should not look up to them, as they do to the hon. member for Gympie, for guidance in a great number of things, though I hope the young people in Gympie will not look to the hon. member for guidance in the future in their political opinions. The hon. member who moved this motion, I know, is very sincere in his ideas on the temperance question, although his ideas do not altogether coincide with mine; but if the parliamentary bar is abolished, people outside may think that the hon. member is in league with the owner of the hotel that is a few yards away from Parliament House. Directly the parliamentary bar is abolished then the goodwill of that hotel must be considerably greater than it is at the present time. I think, very probably, the hon. member for Clermont will bear me out in that contention—that there would be a considerable amount of extra business go to that hotel than there is at the present time; so, therefore, I am of the opinion that it would not be a wise thing to abolish the parliamentary bar unless you can abolish drinking in this House altogether.

Mr. RYLAND: Why did you refuse licenses on railway works?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: For very good reasons. The glaring reason for that was, that on a certain railway, then being built in the North, the licensing bench actually granted no fewer than thirteen licenses within 13 miles, practically, and I moved in the direction of trying to keep temptation away from the men.

Mr. RYLAND: Why not assist in keeping temptation away here?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I do not think there is any great temptation here. The temptation that the hon. member referred to was one that the men could hardly keep away from. Those men were working on railway construction work, and they had an hotel about every mile.

Mr. FOLEY: If it is good there it is good here.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I say it is not a good thing there, and it is not altogether a good thing here—(hear, hear!)

but it might be a worse thing to abolish it here. I am one who troubles the parliamentary bar as little as anyone in this House, and I am not a Good Templar. But I say it would not be a good thing to abolish the parliamentary bar for the reasons I have given—that you will not stop drinking in this House: The hon. member for Clermont, I remember, years ago painted a most lurid picture of the evil effects of members having bottles under their seats.

Mr. FOLEY: All bosh.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That was the hon. member for Clermont's argument.

Mr. FOLEY: He was advocating "Bung" all the time.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: All I can say in reply to the junior member for Townsville is, if that is an argument for "Bung," then I say I am going to argue against "Bung." If there will be more liquor consumed in this House if the parliamentary bar were abolished, then I say it would be a bad thing to abolish it. I do not think it should be abolished.

Mr. FOLEY: That argument would not hold good.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Of course I am quite well aware that some men—I do not refer to any member in this House—there are some men outside who have strong opinions about the consumption of liquor. They are quite unable to see that there is any virtue in moderation. The hon. member for Clermont has quoted quite a lot of Scripture this afternoon, and something comes to my mind that I was taught—to be "temperate in all things." That, I think, is the goal that we should aim at, and I am not prepared at the present moment to vote for the motion for the abolition of the parliamentary bar. But I will vote for it if we can go farther and prevent the consumption of liquor in this House altogether. Hon. members have said, if the parliamentary bar is abolished, that we will have hon. members bringing bottles or flasks or jars of drink in here, and going out of the Chamber and partaking of that drink, or bringing it in during an all-night sitting, and having it under the seat.

Mr. FOLEY: He was romancing.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I do not know whether the hon. member was romancing or not. I am bound to take it seriously, and I am very much inclined to move an amendment on the motion. I desire, on the 1st line, after the word "sale," to add the words "and consumption." That would then make it read—

I. That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that the sale and consumption of intoxicating liquor should be prohibited within the precincts of this House, and that the said prohibition should take effect from the close of this present session of Parliament.

I have much pleasure in moving that amendment.

Mr. FORSYTH (*Moreton*): I am afraid that this amendment will be somewhat difficult to work. I do not see how anyone can possibly stop the consumption here if a man wanted to have it. There is no occasion to go to the bar or show it publicly; a man can go into a private room and have it all the same, whether the amendment is carried or not.

Mr. LESINA: He can carry it in his pocket.

Mr. Forsyth.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Do I understand that the hon. member seconds the amendment?

Mr. FORSYTH: Yes. There is no doubt that the consumption of liquor is a very serious business. The hon. member for Gympie has a good object in bringing it forward, if he conscientiously believes that liquor should not be sold in this House, and as long as he conscientiously believes that, he is justified in bringing it forward. The Secretary for Railways made reference to the fact that a great many people outside were under the impression that the liquor consumed in this House was really given by the Government, and that members have a chance of getting liquor free of any charge. That is an impression which every member should deny. A large number of people outside are not only under the impression that we get our meals free, but also our drinks. It would be a good thing if that were the case, but the Government has not arrived at such a state of liberality as to give us free meals as well as free drinks.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It would be a very bad thing. (Laughter.)

Mr. FORSYTH: I was under the impression, before the Minister for Railways spoke, that it would be a good thing to make another amendment. As the hon. member for Gympie said it was against the sale of intoxicating liquors, we might take out the word "sale," and put it in such a way that members would get it free of charge. If that were done, I wonder whether the consumption of liquor in this House would be greater or smaller than it is now? There is one thing in connection with the consumption of liquor outside as well as inside this House. The question was raised by the Minister for Railways. I am sure everyone remembers the fact that the Government have been the means of stopping public-houses along the railway lines. We all know that the men on those lines spend too much in liquor, and perhaps their families suffer.

Mr. LESINA: There are the sly grog-shops all along the line.

Mr. FORSYTH: I think the Government acted very wisely in stopping that from being done. I was under the impression that there was a good deal more spent than there is, but the Minister for Lands is fairly right in the figures which he gave. There is another thing—a great many people appear to think that there is a large quantity of liquor consumed. Now, I have taken the trouble to ask the caterer as to what is the amount of spirituous liquors obtained when the House is sitting, and I am told that the average would not exceed more than 15s. a day. I do not think that with seventy-two members in this House and forty in the Upper Chamber, as well as the officials and the people we have here all the time, that this is a very large bill.

Mr. NEVITT: We all say that.

Mr. FORSYTH: When Parliament is not sitting, the average amount of liquor sold in this House does not amount to 10s. a week.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Then the bar is not worth keeping open.

Mr. FORSYTH: Therefore we can only arrive at the conclusion that this House is a very temperate House indeed. (Hear, hear!) I would vote for this motion if I thought it would stop drinking, but the argument has been adduced over and over again that, in the

[*Mr. Forsyth*

event of this being done, people would go to the Belle Vue Hotel and get what they want there.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: And get them at 3d. each.

Mr. FORSYTH: I don't know whether they may be cheaper, but that is not the point. That may take place when an important division comes on, and it may be lost.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: That is the point; and laughter.

Mr. FORSYTH: It would be a very awkward thing indeed. As a matter of fact, the division bells of the House of Commons are connected with some of the clubs in London. I remember not so long ago, in connection with a division there, being at St. Stephen's Club with the Agent-General, Sir Horace Tozer, and there were bells at the club which seemed to be connected underground with the House of Commons, and they all rang when the divisions took place. I have also been wondering whether the hon. junior member for Gympie is getting a commission out of this business for the Belle Vue Hotel. I do not say for one moment that he is. Now, apart from this question, there is no getting away from the fact that the liquor question is a very serious one, and the amount of liquor consumed, not only in Australia but in other countries, is something enormous. I was just looking up, when the Minister for Lands was speaking, what the drink bill of Great Britain really was, and then I looked up the drink bill of Australia. I find that as far as Great Britain is concerned, it is over £161,000,000 a year, or equal to £3 12s. 3½d. per head of the population.

Mr. LESINA: What proportion of that is revenue?

Mr. FORSYTH: Of course, from a revenue point of view, it would be a very large sum.

Mr. LESINA: What is going to take the place of that?

Mr. FORSYTH: That is a different question. There is no doubt that we look at the thing from different standpoints. I find, in the official "Year Book" for 1909, that the number of cases of drunkenness in Queensland is seriously increasing. In 1905 there were 6,638 cases, while in 1908 there were 9,203. In spite of that fact, Queensland does [5.30 p.m.] not stand so very badly in regard to the consumption of liquor as compared with other States. In 1908 the average consumption per head in New Zealand was 0.76 gallons; in Victoria, 0.60; in New South Wales, 0.75; in Queensland, 0.89; in South Australia, 0.51; and in Western Australia—which contains a large mining population with a greater proportion of males—it is 1.10 gallons per head. In the whole of the States of the Commonwealth the average is 0.72 gallons.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: In Denmark it is 2.54.

Mr. FORSYTH: In New Zealand, in spite of prohibition, it is 0.76 gallons. The cost of the liquor consumed in Australia in 1908 was £13,151,000. The amount for New Zealand was £2,584,000, and the amount for Queensland was £1,622,000. Of course, we have a smaller population in Queensland than there is in New Zealand. While the hon. member for Gympie is perfectly justified in bringing forward this motion—

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What about the amendment?

Mr. FORSYTH: I would like the hon. member to give us more information in regard to the amendment—how the consumption as well as the sale of liquor could be stopped. To stop the sale is one thing, but to stop the consumption of liquor is another thing. The leader of the Opposition might refuse to take liquor under any circumstances.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He would rather die than take a drink.

Mr. BOWMAN: I would not. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. FORSYTH: We must bear in mind that some members sometimes feel the need of a stimulant. I do not think that there is a single member who believes in drunkenness. It is about the most abominable thing one can experience to see a drunken man. (Hear, hear!) At the same time, there are some men who require a little spirituous liquor, more especially old men. It appears to cheer them up a little and help them along.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: It warms the cockles of the heart.

Mr. FORSYTH: Just so; and it does not do them any harm. I do not intend to take up the time of the House any longer, as there are other members who may desire to speak; but I may say that I intend to support the amendment. It appears to be the general wish of the House that the bar should not be closed. If there were disgraceful scenes in the House as a result of liquor being consumed in the refreshment-room, I think it would be wise to pass the motion; but the fact of members being so temperate makes it unnecessary to take action in that direction.

Mr. RYLAND: I am prepared to accept the amendment.

Mr. KEOGH (*Rosewood*): When the hon. member for Gympie brought this before the House on a former occasion I voted with him, and I am determined to do so on this occasion. (Hear, hear!) When the motion was brought forward the hon. member for Bundamba said to me: "You ought to vote for this, Keogh." I said, "Yes." I am prepared to do so now; and I think it is a very good thing to do away with grog in the House. At the same time, I am prepared to have my own whisky. And it would be far better for many members if they were prepared to express their feelings—members who would be pleased to see the sale of liquor here done away with. I am perfectly conversant with the fact—of course, you are conversant with the fact also, Mr. Speaker—visitors are introduced into this House, and, of course, we do not want them to go away without having—

Mr. COTTELL: A cup of tea.

Mr. KEOGH: Hang the tea! I don't want tea. I think that, if we want to offer our friends a drink, we should go outside this House to get it. I am decidedly in favour of doing away with the sale of grog within the precincts of this House. I am perfectly satisfied that this is a contentious matter. I have just to look at my friend on the Treasury bench.

Mr. BOWMAN: Which friend?

Mr. KEOGH: Mr. Barnes. (Laughter.) I cannot say that I would be with him in this matter; but I can see that it would be far better if we were to do away with this affair in the House. If I were to ask my friend, Mr. Barnes, and other members who occupy prominent positions on the Treasury bench to have something, I know very well that they

would not be prepared to do so. They might say, "Well, Dinny, it won't do. We can't get away." (Laughter.) Of course, that would save me 2s. or 3s. (Laughter.) At the same time, I can put my hand on my friend's head (laying his hand on the head of the hon. member for Woolloongabba)—he drinks nothing but water. Of course, these conditions are not favourable to me. I am not one of the water men. I like a drop of something stronger than water.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You want to kill the microbes.

Mr. KEOGH: That is so. At the same time, the hon. gentleman is not one of the water men.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Quite so.

Mr. KEOGH: I voted for the motion on the last occasion that it was brought forward by the hon. member for Gympie, and I see no reason why I should not also vote for it again. I look upon it from the financial point of view. I think the motion is a very good one, and I shall certainly vote for it, as I was asked to do by my friend, the hon. member for Bundamba, and I hope he will do the same.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Bulimba*): I think it is the duty of a member sitting on the Treasury bench who may not hold precisely the same opinions as those expressed by other members this afternoon—seeing this is a non-party question—to express himself frankly and freely upon it. It will be generally admitted that, notwithstanding what we may say or what we may not say here to-day, this is a matter which excites a good deal of interest outside this Chamber, and it is a matter in which quite a number of our electors are concerned. We may treat it seriously or we may treat it lightly, but it is undoubtedly a matter of deep interest to many of the people who send us here. The members of this House are, at any rate in the main, a body of men of whom any House should be proud from the point of view of temperance. (Hear, hear!) There is no doubt this is a model House in that respect, and that it sets an example to many other places. Some of the arguments which have been used do not seem quite to touch the question. The argument has been used that this would be a restriction upon the privileges of hon. members. Now, I would point out that there are restrictions in regard to other matters outside this House. Many of those who have spoken against the motion are quite prepared to say that their fellows outside must be restricted in certain directions. Does not a very great deal of our legislation go along the lines of restriction? What about wages boards, for instance? And what about the Machinery and Scaffolding Act? Have not wages boards been brought about—not because the majority of employers have not been doing a fair thing by the men they employ, but very largely as a result of the man who is not prepared to do a fair thing.

Mr. FOLEY: The unscrupulous employer.

The PREMIER: By the misdeeds of the minority.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: By the misdeeds of the minority. Whilst we must admit that this is a sober House, I ask if it is not a fair thing for us to lead the way in removing what is a temptation to many a man outside? If I

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may be pardoned for saying so, it seems to me that this matter has been treated altogether too lightly to-day.

Mr. RYLAND: I don't think so.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I am glad to hear the hon. member who introduced the motion say that he does not think it has. But, whether we like it or not, the fact remains that the drink question is one of those things that has a great deal to do with the social and political life of a country. The question was asked by interjection a while ago: What would happen to the revenue if the drink traffic disappeared? Well, this is what would happen: There would certainly be a reduction in revenue, but there would also be a reduction in the number of men who are employed to look after others. (Hear, hear!) There would be a distinct advantage to the community in that. Then people would be very much better as a result of the saving of life, and so forth. I am prepared to admit that, whether there is a closed bar here or not, the various States of the Commonwealth are progressing along temperance lines. That arises very largely as the result of public opinion, and public opinion that is going in that direction is going in the direction of making healthy homes, and is acting in the interests of the people. By anyone who has studied our social conditions of to-day it must be admitted that drinking—to excess, at any rate—is the cause of a great deal of the misery that exists to-day. (Hear, hear!) Just one word before I conclude, as I would like to see this question put out of the way. If we can help in continuing the condition of things which apparently prevails in Queensland to-day, and that is a reduction in the drink bill of this State, we should be doing good work. And the Legislature should show the way if there is a temptation in front of any brother in the Legislature. (Hear, hear!) I was much surprised to read a paragraph in to-day's *Observer*, and oddly enough it appears on the day of this debate. It refers to Victoria and says—

Victoria is becoming quite a sober country, the drink bill last year being only £4,005,571, or £3 2s. 4d. per head, 2s. 5d. per head less than last year. The amount per head is the lowest in the history of the State.

That is very significant fact. Then it goes on—

The highest was in the "good old days," in 1853 to be exact, when the bill for beer and such like worked out at £27 19s. 7d. per head.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: There were very few women and children then.

Mr. LESINA: They were all adults; miners and speculators who came with the big rush.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: At any rate, that country is now on the road of progress in that matter.

Mr. LESINA: There were no "wowsers" in the country then.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I shall be very pleased to support the motion.

Mr. GUNN (*Carnarvon*): I have no doubt that the mover of the motion and the mover of the amendment are quite sincere in the remarks they make to this House, and they say what they believe to be true. They believe that if the bar were abolished it would be a good thing for the House, and would be the means of doing a lot of good. I cannot see that any argument has been brought forward to prove that it would be of any benefit at all. It appears to me that if the bar of this House

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were closed, all that we would have to do would be to walk across the street and get whatever we require at the hotel there. So far as my experience goes, this is a very temperate House. There has never been any intemperance caused in this House through the bar. If there has been any intemperance here at all it is more than likely that it was obtained from outside, and had nothing whatever to do with the bar in the Parliamentary Refreshment-rooms. The closing of the bar would, therefore, be of no advantage at all, and if we passed a resolution of this sort it would give the people outside an idea that we were afraid of ourselves, whereas all we would have to do would be to go across the street if we wished to get any strong drink. I think it would be a good idea to close the bar and the refreshment-room too at the same time as the bars of hotels outside have to be closed. If the ordinary hotels have to close at half-past 10 or 11 o'clock at night, then the same thing should be done in this House, so as to prevent people from getting drunk here when the hotel is closed over the way. (Hear, hear!) That would also be a good thing for the employees in the refreshment-rooms. The waitresses in the tearoom would not be kept there all night if we closed the rooms at the same time as the hotels were closed. The employees there deserve a rest just the same as anyone else. I am fond of a cup of tea myself when we are having all-night sittings, but I could very well do without it if it meant giving these girls a rest.

Mr. LESINA: Tea is very bad for the digestion.

Mr. GUNN: I think that the temperance people are very sincere in what they advocate, but they are beginning at the wrong end. They should first endeavour to make it unfashionable to drink.

Mr. LESINA: Yes; that is the better way. (Laughter.)

Mr. GUNN: Let them do away with the practice of asking your neighbour to come and have a drink. (Laughter.) Do away with all temptation. For instance, they should abolish the barmaids from behind the bars—(laughter)—because they are such a great temptation to many a good fellow. (Laughter.) The first time a young fellow goes into a bar he sees a pretty girl there—

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh! and laughter.

Mr. GUNN: The young fellow will like the look of that young lady behind the bar. After he has his drink he goes out and gets across the street, when he turns round and goes back again for another drink. (Laughter.) Now, that is the great temptation.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: How do you know?

Mr. GUNN: Because I have been there. (Loud laughter.) The temperance people should begin by abolishing the pretty barmaid first, and they could do that by making it illegal for any but plain Asiatics to serve behind bars. (Laughter.) If those circumstances were brought about, and I asked the hon. member for Clermont to come and have a drink with me, and I said to him that Johnny Ah Sup or Johnny Ah Gunn happened to be in the bar—(laughter)—the hon. member for Clermont would say, "Oh, no; we will go down to Rowe's." (Laughter.) I know there are many pretty girls behind the bars, and I would also like to say that I know there are a lot of

good girls behind the bars. (Hear, hear!) I do not wish to reflect on the character of any girl who happens to be a barmaid. But it is only natural that a nice-looking good girl should attract a nice-looking good fellow. (Laughter.) He only sees her and he is after her at once. (Laughter.) But if we had Johnny Ah Sup behind the bar instead of a barmaid, it would stop all the temptation for the young man. (Laughter.)

Mr. KROGH: Let us have a vote.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Take a division on it.

Mr. GUNN: I know that hon. members are watching the clock. If this motion is carried, it will mean that members will not be able to consume any drink on the premises. They will have to bring it here in bottles. (Laughter.) But they will not be permitted to do that, and they will have to get the liquor somewhere else and bring it here in their stomachs.

Mr. LESINA: What about a hollow walking-stick?

Mr. GUNN: If a member wanted to bring it here in his stomach, he would have to get it across the way. Or he might bring it here in the form of a patent medicine, such as painkiller or even Worcestershire sauce. I do not think that this House can be accused of being intemperate in any way. At any rate, I never saw seventy-two soberer men than are congregated in this Chamber at the present time. If you take the first seventy-two men you meet outside you would find more intemperate men amongst them than you would find in the members of this Assembly. There are many arguments that can be brought forward on this question.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Let it go to a division.

Mr. GUNN: There are plenty more Thursday afternoons for discussing this matter. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. KROGH: Come to a vote now.

Mr. GUNN: If we go to a vote some members will want to go to their electors to show that this House is intemperate, whereas if we do not have a vote on it we will not know which way hon. members were going to vote. There are plenty of other Thursday afternoons for taking a vote. I heard the eloquent speech of the hon. member for Rosewood. I know that in his younger days he was attracted by the young ladies behind the bar.

At 7 o'clock the House, in accordance with Sessional Order, proceeded with Government Business.

NEW SESSIONAL ORDERS.

TIME LIMIT OF SPEECHES—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

On the Order of the Day being read for the resumption of adjourned debate on Mr. Kidston's motion, as amended—

That the following rule be made a Sessional Order for this session:—

TIME LIMIT OF SPEECHES.

No member shall speak for more than half an hour at a time in any debate in the House except in the debate on the Address in Reply, or on a direct motion of want of confidence, when a member shall be at liberty to speak for one hour.

Provided that this rule shall not apply to a member moving the second reading of a Bill or to

the leader of the Opposition or any member deputed by him to speak first in reply to such motion, who shall each be at liberty to speak for one hour and a-half.

Provided further that with the consent of a majority of the House (to be determined without debate) a member may be further heard for a period not exceeding thirty minutes.

In Committee of the House, except as hereinafter provided, no member, other than the member in charge of a Bill, or Minister in charge of an Estimate, shall speak for more than three times on any one question, nor more than ten minutes on the first occasion, and five minutes on the second and third occasions.

This does not apply to a Minister delivering the Financial Statement, or to any member debating the same. Members debating the Financial Statement may speak for one hour, but not more than once. A reply, however, is allowed to the Minister who has delivered such Statement. Such reply not to exceed half an hour—

Mr. FERRICKS (*Bowen*) said: Seeing that the Government, which in this case means the Premier, saw fit last night to refuse to adopt the most reasonable amendment submitted by the hon. member for Kennedy, it is my intention to move a further amendment in the words immediately following the clause in which he proposed to insert his amendment. Before doing so I wish to emphasise the expression of surprise, tinged with amusement, which was made last night by the hon. member for Woothakata in connection with the attitude taken up by the hon. member for Clermont on this matter. The "yes-noism" of the hon. member brought most vividly before my mind a reminiscence of an incident which occurred in Charters Towers in the nineties. I remember that on my way one Sunday afternoon to our weekly orthodox football match at Charters Towers, while passing through the town park, my attention was attracted by a rather sprightly and dark young man holding forth to a large audience in characteristic domain style. I made myself one of his audience, and I may mention that the speaker on that occasion was the present member for Clermont. At the outset of his remarks he told us that, in his preaching against federation, he purposed to give his audience one hundred and eleven reasons why federation should not be adopted in Queensland. That was at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, and when the shades of evening enveloped us about 6 o'clock he had got to the second point, but he had not got through it. I venture to say that if he had insisted on going through his one hundred and eleven reasons, and we had stayed to listen to them, we should have been there yet. On another occasion I heard the hon. member in a public debate in which each speaker was allowed twenty minutes, and I must say that he did not come out of that ordeal with flying colours, as he undoubtedly did in his six or seven hour speech. Included in the very small arguments advanced by hon. members opposite in connection with this proposal to limit speeches is one put forward by the junior member for South Brisbane, who said that members on this side should trust the Government—trust the Premier—to deal fairly with them if they wanted a longer time than an hour or half an hour. It is well known that there is not a member on the other side who trusts the Premier. It is an open secret that there is not a member of the Cabinet who would not back-stab him if they had the opportunity.

The HOME SECRETARY: What are you talking about?

Mr. Ferricks.]

Mr. FERRICKS: Yet, in spite of all that, the junior member for South Brisbane had the audacity to ask us to trust the Premier—to trust our privileges to his tender mercies. As the representative of one of the Northern constituencies, I strongly object to adopt that attitude. This party does not want to obtain anything by craving. We make our demands as of right, and do not crave any indulgence or concession from the party in power. When an hon. member advances arguments of that nature, it is quite clear that the Premier is reduced to a lamentable state to find arguments to support his drastic proposals. A rather amusing statement was made by the senior member for Townsville when he said that if our speeches were not reported, and *Hansard* were abolished, we should not care to make long speeches. I can quite understand the hon. member for Townsville and the people whom he represents taking up that attitude. It would be a very good thing for some hon. members opposite and the people they represent outside—financial institutions, chambers of commerce, and various other organisations—if there were no criticism of the Government. Years ago, before the birth of this party, in what is known by hon. members opposite as the “good old days,” there was no criticism of the Government. They had the daily papers on their side, they had influential organisations supporting them, and in this Chamber they had no criticism of their actions. I contend that it is a very good thing for the State to have the action of any Parliament or any Government open to criticism. If we are to be deprived of that privilege, then that will provide the very best of arguments that has yet been offered for the abolition of State Parliaments. If, as stated by the junior member for South Brisbane, members of this Chamber speak nothing but trash, is not that a very fair argument in favour of the abolition of this State Parliament? I venture to say that if this sort of contention is continued by unificationists opposite, it will not be very long before such a question is submitted to the people. If our deliberations are not worth listening to, it is time we were obliterated, and if ever that question comes before the people I am one of those who will support it. There is another aspect of the question which was mentioned by some speakers on this side last night, and that is that this proposed new Sessional Order does not apply only to legislation and the general policy of the Government. It has a very important application to the wants of the country districts which are voiced in this House by the representatives of those districts which are far removed from the seat of government. Unless we have the opportunity of putting the wants and importance of our districts and our electorates before the people, then it is said, with some justification, that the metropolis rules, because if we have not the opportunity of advertising our constituents and the wants of our people, then it is very evident that the metropolis rules, and I say that that is not a good system to perpetuate. We should go in for decentralisation, and not centralisation. Regarding the value of *Hansard*, we have often seen it quoted in the fusion Press, and we have heard it from hon. members opposite, that *Hansard* also is only fit for the wastepaper basket. I take quite a different view to that. I say that the people, especially in the metropolitan area, if they read *Hansard* to a bigger extent than they do, in a very short time they would reach the high intellectual state possessed by the people of Northern

[Mr. Ferricks.

and Western Queensland. I make that assertion in all seriousness, because I have been over a good deal of Western and Northern Queensland, and I say the people there, on the average, are much higher intellectually than the people in the Southern cities. Why, we can go into any of what are termed our “toney” places, and I want to point out that the conversations which we listen to in Brisbane do not denote the same intellectual capacity or the same intellectual status as that possessed by the people outside. One of the reasons I attribute that to is that the country people, to a much larger extent than those congregated around the cities, peruse *Hansard*. I, myself, before I had any notion of entering Parliament, or presuming to enter Parliament, used to devour from cover to cover every copy of *Hansard* I got hold of. And I can say this: In those parts of Queensland which I have not had the pleasure of visiting personally, I have a very fair conception of their advantages and their resources and their interests, and of the class of people there, and I contend that in endeavouring to curtail the publication of *Hansard* we are taking a retrogressive step, and the Sessional Orders now before the House aim in that direction. I am now coming to the question of my amendment. I just got these few remarks in because I think they are very vital and very pertinent to the occasion. The amendment I desire to move is, in paragraph 4, line 3, to omit the word “ten,” with the view of inserting the word “twenty.” I am one of those who can heartily endorse all that was said on this side of the House last night in regard to the Committee stage of any Bill being the most vital. We realise that it is in Committee that legislation is woven. The corners may be rounded off in second readings, and that sort of thing, but any actual and permanent business is done only when the Committee stages are reached. If there is one time more than another in the Committee stage of any Bill that a member wants to put his arguments before the Committee to the best advantage, it is at that time when he first gets up to speak; and for myself, and I think for every other member in this House, if they would only admit it, I say no man can get up and do justice to his argument on important questions in the space of ten minutes. There are several hon. members opposite who represent country electorates, and might I instance for their edification the proposal which is soon to come before us—the Local Authorities Act Amending Bill. In that Bill there is one clause which deals with the eradication of noxious weeds, and it is sought by this measure, I understand, to throw the responsibility of keeping roads clear of noxious weeds upon the property-owners along those roads. Those property-owners, I might mention, are taxed for the up-keep of those roads, and this provision seeks to add to that the imposition that they should also keep those roads clear of noxious weeds. I ask any of those hon. members opposite who represent country districts, do they think they can debate that question in the space of ten minutes? And there are other just as important questions which are coming before us in the near future, and I say if those representatives of country electorates opposite sit down, as they have sat down during the last two or three nights, and tamely submit to the passage of these most drastic Sessional Orders, then they are muzzling themselves, as they will find out when those measures come to be discussed in Committee. I have no desire to impute motives in regard

to these Sessional Orders, as I know that you, Sir, would—and rightly so—call me to order; but let us hope, at any rate, that the passage of these Sessional Orders will not be followed by a policy of borrow, boom, and burst. Let us trust that after the passage of these Sessional Orders the way will not be made easy for the introduction and passage of any giant swindles, such as a second edition of the £10,000,000 loan. Let us also pray that after the passage of these drastic proposals there will be no measures passed through this Chamber of a kindred nature, with a syndicate railway or two thrown in as seasoning. I appeal on behalf of members of this Chamber, especially members on this side of the House, to grant an extension of these ten minutes, because it is sometimes advanced, as it has been advanced during this debate, that so long as the Government party or the party in majority allows the party in opposition the same length of time for argument, or the same latitude in debate, it is a fair thing. I am one of those who disagree with that entirely. I say the Government, or the party sitting behind the Government, when they speak in this House, do not even have to advance constructive arguments. We know that destructive arguments are much more easily advanced than constructive arguments. Hon. members sitting behind the Government—I am not specifically referring to any party—have not to advance constructive arguments simply because the proposals placed before the House are already there, and all that they have to do is to advance a few words in co-operation. On the other hand, it is the duty of members of the Opposition not to obstruct business, not to intentionally delay business, but to criticise the proposals that are brought before the House; and I say, while objecting to any limitation of speeches, that if the principle is forced on us, the Opposition at least should be allowed twice the length of time that is given to Government members or members of the party in power, for the reasons I have instanced. In the particular proposal under review, to expect any man—I do not care who he be, even if he be a Gladstone—to get up and pull a proposal to pieces—to show its defects in ten minutes—is beyond human power. I do not want to impute motives to the Government. I only expressed the hope that the Government would not follow these Sessional Orders up by any drastic or sudden change. I ask the Premier to accept this most reasonable contention: that when a member gets up to speak in Committee on the first occasion he should be allowed twenty minutes instead of ten. I think it is a most reasonable proposal to advance, and, if the Government have no ulterior motive in these proposals, they can surely have no objection whatever to accepting his amendment. It simply amounts to this: Ten minutes is neither here nor there in time. It is not much when a recess of six months comes to be swamped over; it is neither here nor there as a unit; but it is ten minutes added for an expression of opinion in the Committee stages of a Bill, and should not be denied to hon. members on either side.

Mr. CORSER: You don't value the privilege when you have it.

Mr. FERRICKS: If ever it comes to pass that the Government of to-day will be the Opposition of to-morrow, I will be one who will support the extension of the widest privileges to those in opposition, because they are the people who want it far more than Go-

vernment members. I submit that if this amendment be rejected on division, then the Government are not sincere in their protestation of wanting to save time. It will be a clear indication, in my opinion, of the Government having ulterior motives in stifling discussion, and while I am a member of this Chamber, when the time comes for the Government to put their designs into effect, I promise them that I will be one of those who will put up a strenuous fight against it.

Mr. BOWMAN (*Fortitude Valley*): I think that the leader of the Government might have signified whether he is willing to accept the amendment of the hon. member for Bowen. It seems to me that the hon. member is simply lying back, and is determined to force these Standing Orders through, independent of any arguments that may be advanced by hon. members on this side of the House. I think the hon. member for Bowen has given very good reasons indeed why some consideration should be shown, not only to members of the Opposition but to all those who wish to fairly and freely discuss any amendments in Committee, or any important matter which may necessitate a longer time than ten minutes would afford—say, on the discussion of the Estimates. Seeing that by the curtailment made by the Standing Orders Committee, which has been carried through by a majority of those on the opposite side, we are limited from four to three times as compared with the New Zealand Standing Orders, I claim that we should receive some consideration from the Government the first time a member speaks in Committee, and we should have more time than what is given under this proposal. It was mentioned by some hon. members last night, and by myself—I do not know whether the repeating of it will have any effect on the Government—but I think there are periods in the discussion of a clause in Committee, and also on the Estimates, when it would take more than the ten minutes proposed to be allotted. It has been the custom for years—and I think it facilitated business—for the Minister in charge of an Estimate to give an opportunity to every hon. member to speak on the main question. There is no limitation on a Minister in charge of an Estimate or a Bill in Committee. He can speak as often as he likes in reply to hon. members. I ask if that is fair to the Opposition, when we have not limited the power of the Minister in a preceding clause. I think when the principle has been admitted in a previous place, in regard to the leader of the Opposition, or any member whom he may authorise to reply to the Minister on the second-reading speech, that more time should be given in this instance than is stipulated by the Standing Orders Committee. What has been the result in most cases when the Estimates have been discussed? I know of very few occasions while I have been in the House where there has been deliberate stonewalling on the Estimates. I think the hon. gentleman who is now Minister for Public Instruction was closed when he was sitting in opposition, even against his present leader, who was then Treasurer in the Morgan-Kidston Government. While there have been fairly lengthy debates on the Estimates, I do not think that there has been any undue time lost. I quoted the Minister for Agriculture—I could quote a number of others in this House. It is well known to many hon. members sitting behind the Government to-day that there are periods in our political

Mr. Bowman.]

existence in which we require more time than ten minutes, in the event of any maladministration going on which we wish to object to.

Mr. MANN: Would there not be a howl if the Federal Government brought down Standards like these?

Mr. BOWMAN: I hope that will appeal to the hon. gentlemen behind the Government; it should appeal to the hon. gentleman leading the Government. What we desire is not to wilfully waste the time of the House in discussion on a clause in Committee, or in connection with the Estimates, but I do claim that it is a fair thing that we should have time to consider the business fully, and that we should not be restricted as the hon. gentleman desires us to be. I hope the hon. gentleman will give some consideration to the proposal before us now. No doubt he has a party behind him which will carry what he likes, but there should be some consideration shown even for the men who are sitting behind him. On occasions when the gag was applied to this side of the House, no men squealed more than some of the hon. members sitting behind the Government to-day, but they said, "We dare not do anything." That happened during the last two or three years when the guillotine was applied in connection with the Estimates. I say that is unfair. Every hon. member in this House, no matter

[7.30 p.m.] what side he sits on, should have some right in saying whether money voted has been spent fairly or not. I say the time allotted is insufficient, and I hope the Government will give fair play in connection with the amendment moved by the hon. member for Bowen.

The PREMIER: No one can complain of the length of the speech made by the hon. member who has just sat down, but one cannot help feeling weary of the idle iteration of the same argument over and over and over again.

Mr. BOWMAN: It is our only opportunity, and we cannot repeat it too often.

The PREMIER: If there was any evidence wanted in favour of the imposition of a time limit to speeches, I am sure the evidence furnished by this weary debate is conclusive.

Mr. BOWMAN: We will furnish more yet.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Put on the gag!

The PREMIER: I do not think any argument is needed to convince members that some time limit is desirable. It has been admitted, and it is not necessary to argue it over and over again. Everyone recognises that it is desirable, if for no other reason than that it is a fair thing as between member and member. If there is a limit, it must necessarily catch someone sometime; but what the hon. gentleman wants is to make a limit that will not limit anyone.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: This is oppression, not limitation.

The PREMIER: I am not arguing so much just now about the clause we are discussing. I told the House last night, and I think it should have been once for all, that I was not particularly strong on this.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Oh, oh! Ring off!

Mr. BOWMAN: You cannot be taken seriously at all.

The PREMIER: I am not particularly strong as to the details of this. Members sitting on this side know that quite well.

[Mr. Bowman.]

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Since the caucus yesterday.

The PREMIER: Members on this side know that is true without my saying it. Members on the other side may not know it, and, therefore, I give them the information. But though I am not particular as to the details, as I am on my feet I may say that it would be better, in my opinion, to take the motion as it is than to make the time twenty minutes. But it is a matter entirely in the hands of hon. members. Members opposite know well that this is not a party question. (Opposition laughter.) They would not for one moment deal with a question of this kind on party lines, as all the votes taken in connection with this matter clearly show.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Why not act fairly to all parties?

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Why not dismiss the duma at once?

The PREMIER: As I said before, let the House settle the details for itself. Personally, I think ten minutes would be better than a twenty-minute limit. The leader of the Opposition hinted that I was discourteous in not rising when the member for Bowen sat down. Regarding that I only say: When a member bases his argument, or so-called argument, on his personal suspicion of the unworthy motives of the Government, and when that member appeals to me to take his view of the case if I have not some wicked ulterior purpose to serve, then, Sir, I say—

The noblest answer unto such
Is perfect stillness when they brawl.

Mr. RYLAND: I think the House ought to be tired of the Premier and his non-party question. He knows after the caucus that he is all right, and he can say it is a non-party question now he has brought his followers to heel. When we remember that there will be only so many days for the discussion of the Estimates, it is all the more necessary that the time allowed should be extended. If we had twenty minutes, we might be able to say all that was wanted in connection with a particular Estimate, and, perhaps, would not require to speak a second time.

Mr. BOWMAN: No man would growl more if he was over here.

Mr. RYLAND: If he was here, and we had such a proposal made by the Government, there would be rebellion in the House. In days gone by, when there was any attempt to curtail the liberties of members, no man in the House put up a bigger or longer or more determined or more effective fight than the present Premier when he was in opposition. When it was proposed by the hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Philp, on one occasion that a speech should be curtailed, the hon. member said that it was an attempt to murder free speech; but now we have something far more drastic. The New Zealand Standing Order allows four speeches of ten minutes each, but hon. members here are only to be allowed to speak three times—ten minutes the first time, and five minutes on each of the subsequent occasions. The New Zealand Standing Order gives forty minutes, but this proposal only gives half that time. I do not think that is a fair thing. It is right to prevent a member occupying two or three hours in Committee, but that is quite a different thing to what is here proposed. It would be a fair thing to allow a member to speak for twenty minutes the first time he speaks in Committee. As the Committee of Supply has so many days in which to do its

work, it should not matter to the Government how we use that time. They might leave it to the Opposition to make the best use of their time. I cannot see why the Premier will not accept this amendment, except that he is stubborn, and says, "I will not yield one inch to the Opposition. I have my followers behind me, and they will come in and vote as one man when the bell goes. What do I care about what the Opposition say? What do I care whether their amendments or proposals are fair or not? I have a majority behind me, and I am going to do just what I please." It is only a few days since the Opposition members in the Federal Parliament were complaining that measures were being rushed through with such haste that the country knew nothing of what was being done. Well, with Sessional Orders like these, the country will certainly not know what we are doing in this House. Business will be rushed through, and there will be no opportunity of getting in an intelligent amendment. I have an amendment to propose in the Local Authorities Bill, for instance, dealing with valuations, and it will be utterly impossible for me to submit it to the Committee in ten minutes as it should be submitted. It would be impossible for any man in this Chamber to give an intelligent explanation of the matter in that time.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You could refer them to your previous speeches in *Hansard*.

Mr. RYLAND: Then in connection with the Mines Regulation Bill or the Workers' Compensation Bill, and other measures which the average member is not well acquainted with, they want to hear an explanation of the bearing of amendments that may be proposed. The best way to save discussion is by giving members a fair time in which to explain their amendments and read them into the Bill, or into the Act which it is proposed to amend, where necessary. I am thoroughly in agreement with the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Bowen. In the Standing Orders of the Federal Parliament there is a provision whereby a member submitting a set of figures, with the permission of the Speaker or of the Chairman of Committees, can submit them to the House without even reading them. That is one means by which time could be saved. But there is no provision like that in our Standing Orders. If there were, then figures need not be read, but could be printed in *Hansard*, and they would give a lot of information, and would be read throughout the State. If we adopted that provision, it would give hon. members a little more time to address themselves to the questions that come before them in Committee. It is a good provision, and it is not abused in the Federal Parliament. I have read many columns of figures in the Federal *Hansard* connected with finance, the State debts, or the sugar industry, and I have appreciated them, and undoubtedly a great deal of time was saved by members not having to read them in the House. It is possible that an amendment in Committee may involve reference to two or three Acts of Parliament, in order to explain its effect, and however can that be done in ten minutes? Twenty minutes should be allowed. If twenty minutes were given, it does not follow that the full time would be taken. We have had no limitation whatever so far in Committee. A member moving an amendment could take two hours if he chose; but time after time I have seen very important amendments moved in speeches that did not occupy more than four or five minutes. That was

because the amendments were quite simple, and every hon. member could grasp them without much explanation. But in other cases it is necessary to give a much longer explanation to show what we are pleading for. As I want to have business done in an intelligent manner, I shall support the amendment.

Mr. THEODORE (*Woothakata*): I cannot understand the Hon. the Premier's attitude in not accepting the amendment or giving some excuse for not accepting it. He has not attempted to give any reason why we should not have this increased time. He merely said he was not strong upon it. But the Government members understand what their attitude is to be in regard to the amendment. The hon. member for Brisbane North smiles

Mr. MACARTNEY: I should think so.

Mr. THEODORE: And yet I am sure that the Premier knows exactly how the hon. member is going to vote on the amendment.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He does not.

Mr. THEODORE: I am sure the Premier knows exactly how every member on that side is going to vote; and yet he talks about not being strong upon it.

The PREMIER: I know how every hon. member on that side is going to vote.

Mr. THEODORE: Certainly; we are going to vote to preserve our privileges.

Mr. FERRICKS: Mr. Hertzberg knows how the Premier is going to vote.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. THEODORE: I am satisfied the Standing Orders Committee would not have been called together unless the Premier had had a desire to curtail the privileges of members of the Opposition. I am not very sure, as the Premier would say, that it would not be wise that we should have a provision in the Standing Orders that they could not be amended except by a majority of two-thirds of the members of the House. I am not sure that sooner or later, in order to preserve the privileges of the Opposition, it will not be necessary to have some such provision as this. Why should the party that occupies the Ministerial benches have the privilege of altering the Standing Orders to suit themselves, irrespective of members of this House?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is discussing the question of altering the Standing Orders. The question before the House is the omission of the word "ten," with the view of inserting the word "twenty." I hope the hon. gentleman will keep to that question.

Mr. THEODORE: I was saying that the Opposition have certain privileges; their privileges are at present embodied in Standing Orders, and one of the privileges of the Opposition is about to be encroached upon at the instigation of the Standing Orders Committee.

The PREMIER: That is not correct. The Opposition are not privileged. It is hon. members who are privileged.

Mr. THEODORE: It amounts to the same thing. I was saying that the proposal introduced at the instigation of the Standing Orders Committee was one thing, and the thing which we wish to amend is another; and the Premier will not give any reason why he is not prepared to support the amendment we put forward, and which we are prepared to substantially support by good logical argument. I am bound to say that I have a very

Mr. Theodore.]

strong suspicion that the Premier came to an arrangement about this with certain members of the Standing Orders Committee. It is a very strange coincidence that upon the Standing Orders Committee there happens to be four Ministerialists and only three members of the Opposition. Consequently, if the Premier wishes to introduce a proposal which will have the effect of curtailing our privileges, he can call a meeting of the Standing Orders Committee, carry out his proposals, embody it in a resolution to this House, and, unless he is prepared to hear arguments or accept amendments from this side he can force it through the House, and our very parliamentary liberty is tampered with without demur. Seeing the attitude of the Government on this question, I consider that it is time we arranged that our Standing Orders cannot be amended except with the consent of two-thirds of the members of the House. The Premier has not combated the argument that we require a greater time in Committee on the first vote of the Estimates or on the Committee stage of a Bill. We require much more time than ten minutes when we speak for the first time in Committee. The Premier says that he is not strong on it, but he knows that his party are strong on it. There are some departmental Estimates that no man who has gone thoroughly into them, and has some complex grievance to ventilate, can ventilate in ten minutes. Members might be told that they will have an opportunity of ventilating their grievances while discussing the Financial Statement. But that is a humbugging way of doing things. The Treasurer surely does not expect me to criticise every detail of departmental administration or maladministration while discussing his Financial Statement. But, under the proposal which the Premier has introduced, that will be the only opportunity we will have. I myself will have a good deal to say this session while the Estimates of the Mines Department are under consideration, but under this proposal I will have to do it in ten minutes. It is true that I will have another opportunity of speaking for five minutes, and then again for a further five minutes, but that is a disconnected method of doing it, and how can we bring any grievance before the Chamber or criticise any acts of administration or maladministration in that way? Surely the Ministers do not think that their departments are above criticism! Surely they have no right to think that the administration of their departments is perfect and above criticism! I have any amount of material in connection with the Mines Department, and to put it properly before the Chamber would take more than an hour. I am going to take the fullest opportunities I have got of exposing certain practices in connection with the mining industry, not so much through the fault of the present Administration, but it is in connection with the industry and which requires to be ventilated in this Chamber. Every publicity should be given to such things, and the Premier—I maintain that the Premier is responsible for this—proposes not to allow us to have that opportunity.

Mr. BOWMAN: He wants to stifle discussion.

Mr. THEODORE: In regard to the Mining Estimates, if we wanted to discuss anything of serious import, such, for instance, as any big mining disaster, what opportunity would we have for discussing it?

Mr. RYLAND: Ten minutes.

[Mr. Theodore.]

Mr. THEODORE: Or we might avail ourselves of certain devices which were suggested by the hon. member for Clermont last night.

Mr. LESINA: You could move the adjournment of the House on any question like that.

Mr. THEODORE: Even if we can do these things, why should it be necessary for us to have to resort to devices while at present we have a chance of discussing them in a legitimate manner? The excuse that we will be able to break or evade the rule is no excuse why this rule should be made. It is rather an argument that we should not alter the Standing Orders at all. I shall support the amendment.

Mr. LENNON (*Herbert*): I would like to offer a few words in support of this amendment. I think that the Standing Orders Committee, and the Premier, who is fathering their recommendations, should give way on this matter and accede to the reasonable request of the hon. member for Bowen—that is, that on the first occasion when we speak in Committee we should be allowed twenty minutes. The hon. member who just sat down said it would be necessary for us to resort to various devices to secure our end. I myself, when we come to dealing with the Estimates on sugar-mills, might feel it necessary to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of calling the attention of the people of the country to the very shameful neglect by this Government of that great industry. Other members may feel it necessary to have recourse to similar methods in regard to other departments. I would just like to remind the House also that last session was one of seven weeks and we had a recess of seven months. There was a considerable waste of time there which might well have been reserved for a full discussion of measures in this House. The hasty legislation which we had last session, when Bills were rushed through without discussion, must inevitably lead to the necessity of amending Acts. I warn the Government that if they continue to rush their legislation through the House, it must lead to amending Bills.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: There are any number of amending Bills here.

Mr. LENNON: Yes, there are. I recall the fact that last session in one of the Bills the Minister in charge of it made no less than eight amendments. That was all brought about by the unseemly haste displayed in rushing the measure through. Under this Sessional Order similar haste will have to be expected on all occasions. Fair time will not

be allowed for discussion. For the [8 p.m.] credit of this House and for the credit of the Queensland Government it is very desirable that we should avoid putting on the statute-book hastily-considered, ill-digested measures. We are to have submitted to us a most important measure consolidating the Land Acts and amendments thereof. It will be impossible for any member in Committee to deal with the important clauses of that measure in the space of ten minutes. I should like to remind hon. members that, as a rule, there are not more than two or three, or at any rate half a dozen, clauses in a Bill that are of vital importance. The whole of the discussion generally centres round those clauses—sometimes round one clause or two clauses, all the other clauses being merely machinery clauses. On the really vital clauses of a Bill we should be entitled to

speak for twenty minutes at one time. The amendment proposed is so reasonable that I am astonished that the Premier does not at once see his way to accept it, but his method of dealing with all amendments from this side is not calculated to make us sit down very quietly under these mailed-fist regulations. We shall have to put on our considering cap, and endeavour to devise some means not yet discovered to meet this new element of the iron fist in our regulations. Surely we have sufficient restrictions in our Standing Orders without introducing this Sessional Order! I would warn hon. members opposite, as well as members on this side, not to permit themselves to be lulled into a position of false security by reason of the fact that this is only a Sessional Order. It may be introduced next year, and the year after, and the year after that, on the motion of the leader of the House, and be put without debate, and it may become a permanent gag on members. On that account I heartily support the amendment.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER (*Maranoa*): When I saw the Premier sitting still in his place after the amendment of the hon. member for Bowen had been moved, I thought the hon. gentleman was considering whether he would be reasonable for once, and accept the amendment. Indeed, I was rather sorry that the leader of the Opposition rose to speak, because I thought he forestalled the Premier in his desire to accept the amendment. However, the hon. gentleman did not wait very long after the leader of the Opposition resumed his seat before he explained his reason for not accepting the amendment. The hon. gentleman stated that there was a very general desire in the House for the limitation of speeches. That is perfectly correct. I think that, with few exceptions, there is a desire on the part of members to adopt a limitation, but they do not desire to limit members under normal conditions. The desire is that the limitation should apply only to abnormal conditions. It should be the desire of every reasonable person, not to prevent or stifle speech, but to direct speech in such a way as to ensure our getting the best results from it. The Premier stated that he is not very strong on this matter. The hon. gentleman's strength has been exhausted in bringing his own followers to heel, and he can now afford to say smilingly that he is indifferent how they act, knowing that he is perfectly secure in the strength of his party. I am afraid that the proposal with which we are now dealing will, if not amended in the way we are desirous of amending it, have a very bad effect on legislation. One effect will be that it will not ensure that purity of administration that is necessary to give the people confidence in representative government, because unless full opportunity is given to the Opposition side of the House to criticise the administration of the various public departments, not only will Ministers become careless, and even reckless, in their administration, but subordinate officers will feel freer to be careless, and in time may become indifferent as to the civility and courtesy that the public are entitled to receive from them. The only safety that is now enjoyed by the public in these respects lies in the power of the representatives of the people in Parliament to expose any maladministration that may be taking place in public departments. For that reason I am strongly in favour of the amendment. I cannot see how any hon. member can take up an important question in connection

with the Estimates or administration and deal with it effectively inside five minutes, and I intend to support the amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. D. F. Denham, *Oxley*): I have listened for three days to the arguments advanced against these proposals, and have not, up to the present, risen to speak. One argument advanced is that twenty minutes is not an adequate time in which to discuss Estimates.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Ten minutes.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Ten minutes, five minutes, and five minutes, which make twenty minutes.

Mr. HAMILTON: They may be on different subjects; there may be a dozen different items in one vote.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It is quite clear that hon. members do not understand the position at all. Frequent references have been made to the Estimates. If you look through the Estimates, you will find that in the Chief Secretary's Department there are 11 votes; in the Home Secretary's, 22 votes; Works, 4 votes; Justice, 15 votes; Treasury, 11 votes; Lands, 5 votes; Agriculture, 9 votes; Instruction, 7 votes; Mines, 8 votes; Railways, 13 votes; Trust and Special Funds, 15 votes; Loan Fund Account, 11 votes—not to speak of the votes on the Supplementary Estimates. There are in those departments 131 votes, and any one member can speak twenty minutes on each of those votes without any amendment being proposed; so that one member can occupy forty-five hours on the Estimates.

Mr. BOWMAN: What is the use of talking like that?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I will take another case. Take the Land Acts Consolidation Bill, which I am glad to know has so much interest for hon. members.

Mr. BOWMAN: You are as changeable as a weather-cock.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The hon. member should never raise his voice about the weather-cock after speaking so vehemently on a big public question and then entirely somersaulting, as well as going back on his platform. With regard to the Land Bill, in which there are 205 clauses, each member, without any amendment, can take twenty minutes on every clause, which means sixty-eight hours. That would mean that each member can, without any amendment, take eleven full sitting days on that Bill. There are thirty members on the other side, and that would mean 330 days on the Committee stage of the Land Bill; and, as there are fifty-two Sundays in the year, more than one whole year could be taken up in the discussion of that Bill, as provided for in these proposals.

Mr. BOWMAN: You are going from the sublime to the ridiculous.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: As soon as the absurdity is sheeted home, the hon. member begins to resort to his old-fashioned method. These are simple facts. Each member, in the Committee stage, can take twenty minutes on any one clause or on any one vote before the House. If that is not sufficient, then I do not know what is.

Mr. BOWMAN: The greatest gagging Government in Australia.

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The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Gaggling! When on one Bill the House can be kept one whole year during the Committee stages? I think that the provision made by the Standing Orders Committee is quite ample for all purposes. Another remarkable thing is that two of the most experienced members on the other side, one of whom has been Chairman of Committees and the other Minister for Lands—those two members were on the Standing Orders Committee and helped to frame the Orders and bring them into the House, and now they are fighting against them. I say there is ample provision made for the fullest discussion on every question that can come before the House.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Not on the questions we want to discuss.

Mr. MANN (*Cairns*): The hon. gentleman who has just sat down must surely have got the hon. member for Woollongabba to work out those calculations.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Are they so abstruse?

Mr. MANN: They are abstruse, as no one ever believed they could be worked out, because if what he says is correct, he has given the best argument yet adduced in this Chamber against passing these Sessional Orders at all; because if what he says could be done, and has not been done in the past, what is the reason of bringing these Orders down at all? If he wants the Lands Bill passed without discussion, the simplest method would be to move that Bill be read a first, second, and third time, and have done with it. There is really no reason for bringing down these Standing Orders if, as the hon. gentleman says, you can get round them so easily; and I believe you can get round them. He is fairly correct in that, but it leads to subterfuge.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: There is no need for subterfuge.

Mr. MANN: For example, my friend, the hon. member for Croydon, is a mining member, and on the Agricultural Estimates he will not wish to speak three times, so I will have to get him to move amendments in the Agricultural Estimates to allow me an opportunity of speaking. The party will meet in caucus, and the mining members will be deputised by the agricultural members to get up and move amendments they do not wish to move, for, after all, we may not care to move a reduction in a vote. For example, I should have to move a reduction in the Home Secretary's Estimates as a protest against the way the Government are starving the hospitals, and then the Government will say we have no sympathy with the hospitals, as the member for Cairns moved a reduction in the vote. We will actually have to move a reduction in order to get an opportunity to discuss these Estimates. For example, they will cut the Mining Estimates to the bone, and still if mining members wish to thoroughly discuss them, they will apply to the agricultural members to move a further reduction. That is practically what it means. It means that this House will be a House of hollow sham and pretence, because members will have to do things they do not wish to do in order to discuss the Estimates. If there happens to be a very obnoxious Bill brought down, such as a syndicate railway Bill on which we do not agree, and members of this House wish to fight that syndicate railway Bill to the death, they will have to move amendments they do not believe in, for the simple reason of causing discussion on that Bill and delaying its passage. The Pre-

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mier, when he rose to speak this afternoon, said he had heard the same arguments iterated and reiterated over and over again, but members on the other side present a dull, stolid wall of opposition against the arguments of members on this side. It is said constant dripping of water will wear away a stone, and we, by constantly driving home the same arguments, are trying to pierce that stolid wall and armour of silence they are entrenched in. Hon. members on that side know they cannot defend these proposals, and they sit there in stolid silence listening to the speeches on this side; and then, like automata, they march in at the bidding of the Premier and vote as he dictates. I can picture in the very near future the Premier will get some engineering friends to make some automata, and Mr. Barton, the electrician, will get him a little button, and the Premier will only have to press the button and all his automata will march in this Chamber and vote for the Premier. That is what Parliament is coming to. It is practically what it is at the present time, and it is what he would like. He never in all his life would brook opposition.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. MANN: No matter what proposition was brought forward, unless the Premier was the proposer, he was always against it. No one could do anything right but himself.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

The hon. member for Cairns is exceeding the bounds of debate. The question before the Committee is that the word "ten" be omitted from paragraph 4. I cannot see what his remarks have to do with that question. I hope he will confine his remarks to the question.

Mr. MANN: It seems to me other hon. members are allowed to go on. Perhaps I may be wrong; they may be speaking to the motion or they may not. Unfortunately, I seem to have a habit of getting off the mark and getting called to order. Perhaps you are right. Anyhow, I am going to bow to your ruling, Sir, and simply remark that I know what the amendment is and will talk as close to it as I can, and if I stray away I hope you will put me right. I heard the Secretary for Agriculture tell us about the number of votes in the Estimates. I find the number of items in the Chief Office, Agricultural Department, is eleven. That is called one vote. If the Minister was in the Chamber and heard the arguments I advanced, he would see I can speak only on three occasions on the chief vote of the Agricultural Department.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You can speak three times on each vote.

Mr. MANN: The Secretary for Agriculture knows better. I will just go over it again to try and drive it into the heads of hon. members opposite that it is impossible to speak on all those subjects. Here is the vote for the Chief Office. There is the Under Secretary, who is also Chief Inspector of Stock. Then there is the accountant, then the clerks, and then the typist, the Agricultural Inspector, the Botanist, pupil assistant to Botanist, Dairy Expert, Entomologist and Vegetable Pathologist. Then there is the assistant Entomologist, the Instructor in Fruit Culture, the Instructor in Tropical Agriculture, the Tobacco Expert, the Editor of the "Agricultural Journal," the photographer, the storeman, the messenger, the watchman—I have left out one or two items. I can speak only on three of these, unless I get some other

hon. members to move amendments that the vote be cut down. We would have to start by moving that on this vote of £11,000 there be a reduction of £10,000; then, when that is defeated, that £5,000 be cut off. We may have a little bit of funny business in connection with the Railway Department. Members will remember the famous leasing of the Barron Falls. If something like that is done again, and we spend a great deal of time over the first Estimates—which the Government will take care that we do by letting their supporters get up—it will go through without any discussion at all. It might be in the Chief Secretary's Department, and we might start on the Railways first, and then have to allow the Chief Secretary's Estimates to go through without discussion. I have seen the immigration vote left till the last, and then it has received very little discussion. We may give full and ample discussion to the first four or five Estimates, and something may crop up in the last Estimates, but they would be put through without discussion.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You are too pessimistic.

MR. MANN: I am not too pessimistic. I tried to discuss the Mount Molloy timber scandal, but I could not discuss it. I kept the House till 3 o'clock in the morning, and, on the assurance of the then Minister for Lands that I would have the opportunity to discuss the matter again, I let it go through, and before I had an opportunity the matter was put through. That is what will happen again. If the Ministers strongly entrench themselves behind these Standing Orders, they can defy Parliament. What about the Zillmere stealing case? What opportunity will we get to discuss that?

MR. BOWMAN: Ten minutes.

MR. MANN: Ten minutes to discuss why one man was let out, and another kept in gaol. There is a case in the Railway Department again, where a boy at Bowen Hills was caught by the throat and assaulted by a passenger getting off the train. The boy had asked for his ticket. The case was withdrawn by the Railway Department. I don't know whether it is true or not, but I saw it in the paper yesterday. (Laughter.) Perhaps the hon. member for Nundah knows something about the Zillmere stealing case. I read through the papers carefully the other day, and I saw no reason for the Home Secretary letting that man out of gaol. As I said last night, Ministers should welcome ample time for the discussion of the Estimates. It is the only guarantee that the country has got that things are fair, square, and above-board. We want time to discuss why the subsidy to hospitals has been reduced from £1 10s. to £1 6s. 3d. Every hospital in Queensland is feeling the pinch of the hard times experienced through the cheese-paring policy of the Treasurer, and I want time to discuss that.

THE TREASURER: The amount is the same each year.

MR. MANN: The amount is the same each year, but the number of hospitals is increasing, and there is no provision made for that increase. It shows that we shall have the hardest task before us this session in discussing the Estimates fully and freely. I want to make a very searching inquiry into the Forestry Department, how much it costs, how it is managed, and how much of the revenue received goes back in the shape of

reafforestation. But I find the Government coming down with these Standing Orders, and practically telling me that I cannot discuss the Estimates at all. What am I sent down here for?

THE PREMIER: Heaven only knows! (Laughter.)

MR. MANN: The Premier tried hard enough to keep me from getting here. I was sent down here to watch the Premier and look after him. (Laughter.) I told my constituents that he had deceived me worse than any man had ever deceived me before, and I was determined to watch his crookedness—

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

MR. MANN: And try and trip him up as much as I could.

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I called the hon. member to order. The hon. member must recognise that it is as unpleasant for me to call him to order as it is for him to be called. I must ask him to obey my ruling.

MR. MANN: I must apologise. I was clearly out of order, but I was drawn away by interjections. I was sent down here to make full inquiry into the Treasurer's department, to discuss that Estimate fully, and I want proper time to do it, because, owing to the fact that the Adelaide Steamship Company, or some other company, had got the ear of the late Treasurer, Mr. Kidston, we were at a loss of £8,000 over the resumption of the wharves. There are many other questions I would like to discuss, and, if the late Treasurer wishes to come out with clean hands, he should give me full and ample time to discuss these matters. It is a very serious thing when allegations are made that a member of this House, holding a responsible position, listens to the solicitations of shipping companies, and prevents the people of the town from acquiring their wharves except at an exorbitant price. It has not been shown during the whole of the time that this power has been in existence that there has been any undue discussion on the Estimates. I remember when the late Opposition were discussing the Estimates we had to apply the gag to them only on two occasions, although they kept us here till dinner time, and up to half-past 3 on another occasion. On that occasion the *Courier* said they were doing good work for the country, and showing up the administration of the then Morgan-Kidston Government. Surely, if it was a virtue in 1904, 1905, and 1906, to discuss the Estimates very fully, it cannot be a vice now? I think this Opposition is just as much justified in discussing the Estimates as the Opposition were in the years that I have mentioned. "What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander." It shows how unjust it is on the part of members who themselves discussed the Estimates thoroughly to seek to curtail me to more than ten minutes when I criticise their work. I want to know a lot of things from the Secretary for Agriculture—how the new foreman of the Kamerunga Nursery is getting on.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is the reason the Minister is allowed ample time to answer all the inquiries.

MR. MANN: That is just the trouble. The Minister can speak for an hour of the work done under his direction at Kamerunga, and we are only allowed ten minutes to discuss and criticise. The Minister has unlimited opportunity to get up and belaud every official, although he may not be worth

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his salt, while I have only got ten minutes in which to reply to it. I can speak a second time for five minutes and a third [8.30 p.m.] time for five minutes; and if I exhaust my right so far I cannot speak on any other item in the vote. Had these orders been in force before, the hon. member for Clermont could not have occupied so much time in ventilating the grievances of the widows of policemen in his district. There may be a policeman killed in my district, and the hon. member would prevent me from having the opportunity of trying to get justice for the unfortunate widow of that policeman. The full discussion of the Estimates is the sole guarantee the country has of the departments being administered fairly and squarely; and if there is not sufficient time to discuss them in a six months' Parliament, we should be called together earlier and more time should be allowed. Last year the Lands Estimates were put through in about two hours, and the Education Estimates were put through in about the same time. I would urge the Government to withdraw these Sessional Orders, and trust to the good sense of the Opposition not to unduly prolong the debate on the Estimates.

Mr. LESINA: The hon. member for Cairns seems to be perturbed at the idea that I am supporting the proposed new Sessional Orders. I admit that I am hard-hearted enough to manifest a certain amount of independence in dealing with a question which is above party politics.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Is it above party politics?

Mr. LESINA: So far as I know, it does not constitute a plank in the platform of any political party. I am advocating the limitation of speeches because I believe in the principle. To express faith in the principle and not give effect to it when opportunity offers appears to me to be rather quixotic. If a man says he believes in peace, and does nothing to bring about peace, he is simply making a profession for the purpose of getting credit which he does not deserve. I not only believe in the principle of a time limit, but I want to give effect to it. The situation in which the hon. member for Cairns finds himself is this: He finds an accumulation of grievances in his district—an accumulation which is reaching mountainous proportions—and he comes panting with a patriotic desire to attack those grievances and remove them. How can he deal with the Kamerunga State Nursery in ten minutes? If he has any knowledge of maladministration it is his duty to expose it. If it is a serious matter it is his duty to bring it before his party, and through the leader of his party it will be brought before the Chamber. (Laughter.) Apart from the twenty minutes allowed under this Sessional Order, under section 130 of the Standing Orders he can move the adjournment of the House if five members come to his assistance; and I am sure they will do so. If there is a case of maladministration by the Minister for Lands, the Treasurer, the Minister for Railways, or the Home Secretary, there will be no difficulty in the way of bringing him to the bar of justice. Instead of merely firing off a scold on the Financial Statement or on the Estimates, he can get his leader to come down and move a well-charged vote of want of confidence, when he will have ample time to make out his case. Under the circumstances it appears to me that this is cutting down gnats with a scimitar. I consider that

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the limitation proposed is a very reasonable one. I am reminded by the hon. member for Cairns of the lines—

When the devil was sick, the devil a saint would be.

When the devil got well, the devil a saint was he.

I do not know that the illustration is an apt one as far as my case is concerned; but I adopt it as the hon. member is close handy. (Laughter.) With regard to the time allowed, the Minister for Lands has demonstrated by the quotation of a carefully-prepared table of figures that a very long time indeed might be occupied by members in ventilating grievances on the Estimates. We have the Financial Statement, which took the Minister an hour or an hour and a-half to read, covering the whole field of operations in the State during the past twelve months, and including a comment on Federal finance. If a member carefully prepares his speech, I do not see why he should not be able to deliver an exhaustive and useful criticism.

Mr. LENNON: He will not be permitted to read his speech.

Mr. LESINA: He can prepare a careful statement of his case; and by choosing his words can give an effective criticism of the administration of the Government. I have said before, and I now repeat, that there are very few members who can indulge in a financial criticism that will interest this Chamber. There are only the Premier and the hon. member for Moreton who have made a special study of the matter. A knowledge of high finance is not to be picked up by the ordinary lay member. We have the Financial Statement, the Treasurer's tables, and Mr. Weedon's A.B.C.; and other publications to assist us in preparing what we have to say on the subject. The first thing that happens will be that the Financial Statement is open for discussion. We can talk an hour on that. In one hour I can talk on all the grievances connected with all the departments that affect my constituents. If there is one of those grievances that seems to be a big one, I can devote three-quarters of an hour to that, and squeeze all the others into the remaining quarter of an hour.

Mr. HAMILTON: I have seen you attacking the Secretary for Lands for three hours over the branding of a butter box.

Mr. LESINA: That is quite true, and I might have to do something of the same sort again. But under this Sessional Order it will be necessary to specialise. It will be better to concentrate rather than scatter your shot. Choose the most vulnerable point, and concentrate attack on that. In our debates on the Estimates for years past we have paid too much time to questions of the village-pump order, and I know that members of the Labour party have resented this, because it has made them mere wood-and-water joes for their constituents, instead of appearing as large-minded statesmen taking a generous view of big public questions. I say, then, we should devote ourselves on the Financial Statement to ventilate grievances, and, when we come to the Estimates, ten minutes will be quite sufficient for a first speech, with two subsequent speeches of five minutes each. The Secretary for Railways interjected just now that this proposition will give a Minister in charge of an Estimate more time than other members. That is so, and that is justified by the fact that he will have to answer the questions put by hon. members. That is why I am prepared under this Sessional Order to

give a Minister more time. The Minister to-day may be a private member to-morrow, and the hon. members sitting on the front Opposition bench to-day may be Ministers to-morrow, and they will then see how such a provision is to their advantage. They may be asked twenty questions on an Estimate, and to limit them to ten minutes would not permit them to answer all those questions. I can ask twenty questions on the first vote on the opening of Supply this session, and when I receive replies to those questions I can make a ten-minute criticism, and subsequently I can make two speeches of five minutes each, and, in addition, I can again ask as many questions as I wish.

Mr. BOWMAN: It may not be necessary to do that on each Estimate. There are particular items that want more consideration than others.

Mr. LESINA: A well-organised party will be able to arrange to concentrate its united attention on any department that requires special criticism. The Labour party, for instance, may hold a caucus and declare that its twelve months' experience has taught it that the Home Department requires a thorough investigation. During debate on the Financial Statement they can riddle that department with destructive criticism, and on the Estimates they can concentrate their attention on it again.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: What about the trust funds?

Mr. LESINA: How many members know anything about the trust funds? It is not the business of the Government to instruct members in their business in these matters.

Hon. R. PHILP: Reports are published on them all.

Mr. LESINA: That is so. I have here a report on the public debt reduction fund. That deals with a big question, and hon. members may concentrate their attention upon it. Under our Standing Orders and under the proposed Sessional Orders there is sufficient time afforded to ventilate grievances, and for that reason I shall vote against the proposed amendment.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN (*Kennedy*): I think this is only a reasonable amendment. During last session the hon. member for Dalby spoke on the Lands Estimates about the State forest at Tuckekoi. Look at the debate that arose on that little question. We had the hon. member for Dalby and the Secretary for Lands having a wordy duel over it. I am sure it was educative to hon. members, and threw a light upon the question that I should never have got had these proposed Sessional Orders been in force. There are many things like that. I do not understand the position taken up by the hon. member for Clermont. I heard him say last night that he was going to vote for the motion because he was a member of the Standing Orders Committee. To be logical, then, whenever a Bill is brought into this House, the hon. member should support it because he is a member of this House. That is a most inconsistent attitude for the hon. member to take up.

Hon. R. PHILP: He approves of the motion.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: It is only natural that an hon. member who has been the leader of a Government himself should not want trenchant criticism of any administration that he is in entire accord with, and that is the position of the hon. member for Townsville at

present. Take, for example, the Financial Statement. The Treasurer has introduced what I might term a foreign matter—the relation between the Commonwealth and the State finances.

The TREASURER: A very serious matter for us.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: No doubt the Premier has brought in these Sessional Orders to hide his laches in that connection. All this is playing into the hands of autocracy and of the plutocracy. It is not going to be in the interests of democracy to have restricted debate. The Premier might as well dispense with this House altogether—like the Czar dismissed his Duma.

The TREASURER: Are we to drop £400,000 a year and say nothing about it?

Mr. NEVITT: You knew it was coming.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: I am quite satisfied this is going to be harmful in its effect. It will also prove oppressive, and not lend itself to the intelligent review of questions coming before the House. The Department of Agriculture has to do with some very big questions. Then, in connection with the Lands Department, there is the question of afforestation, which really ought to be under a separate department. How are we going to discuss that question on the Lands Estimates as it should be discussed? We have foreshadowed in the Governor's Speech a Local Authorities Bill. That is a question that will entail a great amount of discussion. The local authorities are microscopic governments, dealing with numerous infinitesimal things, but upon the good administration of which the health and happiness of the people largely depend, whereas under our present Act nothing but vested interests can get a lodgment on these local authorities, and this side wish to see a greater extension of the franchise. Are we going to bring all our arguments to bear on this matter in ten minutes, with two speeches of five minutes each afterwards? It is preposterous to think so. It will react against good government and good administration, which we of all countries should be most consistent in, and we should give a generous margin of time to debate these questions. Take that great volume, the Police Offences Bill, and see the provisions in that measure. The very liberties of the subject have got to be gone into in that measure. It is a very big question indeed, and yet we are to be tied down on a big measure like this to ten minutes.

The TREASURER: You can speak twenty minutes on each clause, and there are 126 clauses.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: But we do not want to discuss every clause. We want intelligent discussion, and we do not want to be tied down to ten minutes. Because I can speak on every clause and move an amendment on every clause, it does not say that I want to do so. I can assure the Government that by introducing this Sessional Order it will not tend to advance legislation, or to give a high tone to the debates in the House. It seems to me that the old adage will apply here, that "He whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad." This is a most insane proposal to bring before a deliberative assembly. The Government see that they are going to be destroyed, and they will not have any intelligent debate. I am not going to say that I will speak on every conceivable thing in Committee, but I will take advantage of all the cramped conditions I can in these

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so-called Standing Orders, which are being made undoubtedly in the interest of the Government of the day. I could not help being amused at the remark of the leader of the Government when he followed the hon. member for Bowen. The Premier said: "I don't feel very strongly on this." It does not become a man in his high position to deal flippantly with a matter like this. His very action shows that he does feel strongly on it. A man holding a high position like that of the Premier should not try to throw dust in the eyes of members of this House. We know that he feels very strongly on it, and nothing can move him. I believe that members on his own side had a deputation to him the other day and asked him to broaden the Standing Orders, but he would not do it. Is not that feeling strongly? At any rate, it is acting strongly, in resisting any widening of the Sessional Order.

Hon. R. PHILP: Who were the deputation? You cannot name one.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: The senior member for Townsville does not need any information from me on this matter. He simply wants to get his remark into *Hansard*, and make out that it is not so.

Hon. R. PHILP: It is not so. Mention one name if you can.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: I do not wish to delay the House, but I protest very strongly against this very drastic proposal, and the only deliberative Chamber where it is fit to exist is in the dominions of the Czar of Russia.

Mr. RYAN (*Barcoo*): This question is of such importance that I feel compelled to say a word on it. I listened with considerable interest to the speeches made both for and against the amendment, and those who spoke against it seemed to devote a great deal of their time to showing us how this Sessional Order could be evaded. I conceive it to be my duty—and I take it that every member of this House conceives it to be his duty, and privilege too—to be able to come here and discuss intelligently the questions that we are sent here to discuss without any qualification such as has been suggested by the hon. member who spoke from the Treasury benches. The Minister for Lands said he did not think that members on this side understood the matter. He went on to explain that we have an opportunity of speaking for some hundreds of times. His argument was quite fallacious. Hon. members on this side can understand the position quite as well as hon. members on that side. It may be that there is only one particular question that a member wishes to criticise, and he is confined to the space of ten minutes for so doing.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Twenty minutes. Ten minutes first, and then two speeches of five minutes each.

Mr. RYAN: Whether we understand the true meaning of these Standing Orders or not, anyone who is acquainted with constitutional authority knows this, that the greatest safeguard for the public both in legislation and administration is that in the Legislative Chamber there shall be the fullest, freest, and most effective criticism possible.

Mr. HAMILTON: What is an Opposition for?

Mr. RYAN: That proposition is admitted and must be accepted by both sides of the House. There is another proposition that must be conceded by both sides, and it is this: that the present proposal brought down by the Standing Orders Committee—whether

they have been instigated or not—have been fathered by the Government. (Hear, hear!) These Standing Orders go further to fetter the free, full, and effective criticism that I have mentioned than those of any other Legislative Chamber under the British Constitution. That is a statement I challenge any Minister to contradict. The only other Chamber that has been mentioned is the Legislature of New Zealand, which allows exactly twice as long for discussion in committee as these proposals allow.

The TREASURER: That is only in committee.

Mr. RYAN: Yes; and they allow twice as long as these Sessional Orders do. In addition to that they have not got the machinery in New Zealand which we have here. They have not got what is commonly known as the "gag," but which is properly called the "clôture," in operation there, and the attempt that was made to put the "clôture" into their Standing Orders was defeated by 41 votes to 12. In the Queensland Legislative Assembly, in addition to having the gag, in addition to being able to move "that the question be now put," they now propose to put on an automatic gag, which means that at the end of ten minutes we shall have to sit down.

Mr. BOWMAN: Which they glory in.

Mr. RYAN: Which they glory in. Although the gag is objectionable, it has this feature about it which makes it more acceptable than an automatic gag, in that every hon. member who votes for the gag takes the personal responsibility of doing so. It is cast upon him therefore to say whether he shall prevent any further discussion of any particular subject. This Sessional Order proposes to take away that personal responsibility, so that if there is any complaint about it, a member can say "The Standing Orders provide for it, and the Standing Orders were passed by the House."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: At the suggestion of the Standing Orders Committee.

Mr. RYAN: The hon. gentleman has given me an opportunity of commenting further on the fact that these recommendations have been fathered by the Government.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Who else could introduce them but the Government?

Mr. RYAN: We have nothing to do with them.

The TREASURER: Who else could bring them forward but the Government?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I hope the hon. member for Barcoo will not be led away by the interjections. It is quite out of order to discuss the Standing Orders just now.

Mr. RYAN: Quite so, Mr. Speaker. The proposal submitted by the Standing Orders Committee is that the first time a member speaks in Committee he shall be limited to ten minutes, and on that the hon. member for Bowen has moved an amendment.

[9 p.m.] The Minister for Lands wishes us to believe that this proposal for ten minutes is not made a party question. I say we have absolute evidence in what has taken place in this House that the ten-minute proposal is fathered by the Government. Whether it is a coincidence or not I do not know, but it is a fact that the majority of the Standing Orders Committee consists of Government supporters. Then, look at the division lists in connection with this proposed

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new Sessional Order, and you will find that in every division every supporter of the Government has voted for these proposals.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Not in every division.

Mr. RYAN: There was one supporter of the Government who did not vote in one division, and that was the hon. member for Brisbane North, who went outside the Chamber. Yet we are told that this new rule is not a party question! The Estimates contain votes involving the expenditure of millions of pounds, and it is necessary that we should have a longer time to discuss those votes than is permitted by this Sessional Order. I do not feel that in asking for a longer time I am talking in favour of my own privilege. I feel that I am speaking on behalf of the electors I represent. It is their privileges which are being curtailed. It is not for a member of the House to say "my privilege" or "your privilege" is being curtailed by this proposal. It is the privilege of the people of Queensland that is being curtailed, and, when we ask for more time, it is in order that an opportunity may be given to the representatives of the people to properly discuss the affairs of the country. Why should this proposal be brought down for this session? I fail to understand that procedure, unless it is that the proposal is an experiment. But why is it considered necessary to go so much further than has been gone by any deliberative assembly in this matter? I know we have not the slightest chance of carrying the amendment moved by the hon. member for Bowen. I do not believe that if I was to talk for a week I would be able to convince one hon. member on the other side of the House of the unfairness of this proposal.

Mr. BOWMAN: You have a hard-hearted jury to plead with.

Mr. RYAN: I am afraid I have a jury upon whom I can make no impression, as far as that side of the House is concerned, but I am talking in order that my protest may be placed on record, because there is a court of appeal behind the jury, and that court of appeal is the people of Queensland. Therefore, it is necessary that members on this side of the House should make it clear to the people of Queensland that we are fighting for their rights and privileges. I feel certain that before very long we shall have an opportunity of seeing that this Sessional Order will have a very detrimental effect on the discussion of the Estimates. I have no doubt that many members will have to sit down before they have finished the criticism they had intended to offer. Just one more word. Several hon. members have spoken against the twenty minutes' proposal, and strangely enough the member for Clermont, who was one of those members, occupied twenty-five minutes on one occasion and about fifteen minutes on another, which is the strongest evidence that more time is necessary.

Mr. LESINA: No; the strongest evidence that less time is necessary.

Mr. RYAN: I do not agree with the hon. member. It is the strongest evidence that more time is necessary. However, I do not intend to delay the Chamber any longer. I am satisfied with having entered my protest on a matter which I consider of the most vital importance to the privileges of members of this House and of the people of Queensland in general.

Mr. COLLINS (*Burke*): I rise to enter my protest against this proposed limitation of speech. I have listened very carefully to the whole of the debate, but I have not heard one single argument from members on the Government side of the House in favour of this attempt to encroach upon the privileges of hon. members.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Not privileges—rights.

Mr. COLLINS: Well, rights, as the hon. member interjects. It has been admitted that in the last session of Parliament we got through an enormous amount of work in a short time. What indication is there that we would not get through a larger amount of work this session, when we have so much more time? The rights of Parliament have been slowly won, and at great cost. Why, then, should there be this attempt to take away one of those rights? The hon. member for Clermont said there was a growing tendency for members to become parish-pump politicians. I am inclined to think that if this Sessional Order is passed it will have that tendency, because a representative of the people must devote some of his time to local grievances, and with this restriction on speech he will not be able to take that broad outlook that he should take. The discussions that have taken place since I have been in Parliament have not impressed me. It seems to me that we are developing into the parish-pump type of politician. We do not want to be confined solely to matters concerning our individual electorates, as we shall be if this Sessional Order is passed, because when the Estimates are before us we shall be compelled to deal with local grievances, and not with affairs of State.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I hope the hon. member will not discuss the Sessional Order as a whole. That question will come before the House when the amendment is disposed of. The question now is whether the word "ten" should be omitted with the view of inserting the word "twenty," and I hope the hon. member will confine himself to that question.

Mr. COLLINS: I was trying to do that; at least, I thought so.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Unfortunately, I did not. (Laughter.)

Mr. COLLINS: Well, I will give an illustration. When we are discussing the Financial Statement, does anyone think for one moment that the senior member for Maryborough, who, I believe, is recognised as a financial genius, will be able to discuss the Financial Statement in ten minutes?

The TREASURER: He has an hour for that.

Mr. COLLINS: In dealing with the Estimates, will he be able to deal with them in a proper manner in ten minutes on the first occasion, and on two other occasions of five minutes each? I do not think it is possible for any one of us to deal with the various items in a proper manner in the time proposed. From the very start I could see the danger—members opposite may not be able to see the danger, and even the Premier may not be able to see the danger—in trying to get these Orders put into operation. The danger is that we are encroaching on the rights of the people, which we are not sent to Parliament to do; at least, I was not sent to Parliament to do that.

Mr. RYLAND: This was not in the programme.

Mr. Collins.]

Mr. COLLINS: Neither was it in the other programme the Premier put forth. It seems to me, as long as you have a majority behind you, you can put forth any programme you like. At any rate, I want to enter as strong a protest as I possibly can, because, as I said last night, I have not been sent down here—a distance of 900 miles—to speak only for five minutes. I cannot expose the wrongs that exist in the Burke electorate in connection with, say, the Mines Estimates—the exemptions that are taking place in the Burke electorate—in five minutes or ten minutes, nor yet in twenty minutes.

Hon. R. PHILP: Nor twelve months.

Mr. COLLINS: The senior member for Townsville interjects "twelve months." I do not want twelve months to expose the wrongs that exist in connection with any department, and therefore, to my mind, the interjection is a very foolish one. I do not wish to delay the House any further, but to say that all through these Sessional Orders I have objected as strongly as I possibly can against any limitation of speech in this House.

Mr. FOLEY: Like the speakers who have gone before me on this side, I cannot allow this division to be taken without entering my very mild protest against this ten minutes' duration of speech on the first occasion in Committee. It is almost futile for a member on this side to get up at all, because it does not matter what he says or what he puts forward as reasonable arguments, there does not appear to be anyone on the other side to listen to such arguments and assertions.

The PREMIER: We have heard them all seventeen times already.

Hon. R. PHILP: They are not good arguments—that is why.

Mr. FOLEY: Whether they are good or bad, hon. members opposite know nothing about the arguments brought forward. It just reminds me of a jury staying in court while the prosecuting counsellor is making his statement, and then being allowed to retire from the court while the evidence is being given for the prisoner; and when the bell is rung they file into the court, and simply give a verdict against the prisoner, whether the evidence was in his favour or not. That seems to me to be the way these divisions are being conducted during this debate on the proposed Sessional Orders. Although members on this side may protest and give reasons why the time should be extended on some occasions, members on the other side simply come in when they are told, and vote against any extension of time, whether the reasons given are good or not. There is no doubt that the shortening of time, such as is proposed in these Sessional Orders, will be very hard on new members who are not practised speakers, who are not, perhaps, qualified to come to their point in the time allowed. As a matter of fact, generally speaking, men who are not used to public speaking—it takes them some time before arriving at the point they wish to make. If these proposals are carried, before a member comes to the point he wants to make his time will be up, the bell will ring, and he will have to sit down before he has said what he wants to say. My reason for protesting against these proposals is that there are several new members in this House who are new to this kind of work. I think the Premier will recognise that we are not all as experienced in speaking as himself, and some of the older members of the House

[*Mr. Collins.*

should recognise this, and at least give new members a chance of making themselves understood. For this reason, if for no other, I am bound to protest against the ten minutes' limitation allowed in the proposed Sessional Order. Ten minutes is only to be allowed to a speaker on any question coming before the House in Committee, unless he is the proposer of the clause or in charge of an Estimate. I am in favour of the amendment, and I hope the Government will see the wisdom of allowing it to be carried.

The TREASURER: There is just one item that might be commented on, and that is the assertion of the hon. member for Barcoo that he is looking after the rights and privileges of the people of Queensland. On the other hand, we on this side of the House contend that it is we who are looking after the privileges of the people of Queensland by bringing in these Orders, because the result of past sessions has been that hon. members opposite—particularly those who have been in the habit of making very long speeches—have so taken up the time of the session that there has not been an opportunity for members on this side, who are wishing to get business through, of voicing their sentiments. And they certainly have the right, just as well as members opposite, of voicing their opinions and speaking on behalf of the electorates which they represent.

Mr. LENNON: Do you refer to this session or not?

The TREASURER: These proposed Sessional Orders will give to every member of the House equal rights in putting their views before the House.

Mr. FOLEY: They have that right now.

The TREASURER: They have not that right now, because members on this side, being in a majority, and wishing to get the business through the House, have frequently refrained from speaking, or, if they spoke, have had to drop different matters they would otherwise like to bring forward in their speeches, and thereby have had their rights curtailed. I say these proposals will curtail long speeches, and will give an opportunity to every member to speak, and there will be a proper chance for every member to get his views properly before the country, and business will be facilitated. The people of Queensland consider that it is only right that speeches should be reduced in this way, and this is emphasised by the expenditure that has been going on during the last three or four days. We have been four days discussing the first item of these Standing Orders, and we have hardly got any further to-night than we were at the start. We ought to have been through them before now. Look at the expenditure in connection with *Hansard*, the expenditure in lighting, and the general waste of time that has gone on during the last four days!

Mr. FOLEY: You are responsible for that.

The TREASURER: We have had nothing during the last four days but tedious repetition of the same thing. Hon. members on this side have sat back for that reason. A great many have left the Chamber because they are tired of the tedious repetition. We on this side are protecting the rights and privileges of the people, and not members on the other side who have caused so much obstruction during the last four days.

Mr. MULLAN (*Charters Towers*): I did not intend to speak on this amendment—in fact,

this is the second time I have spoken during the whole of the discussion—but I cannot allow the remark of the Treasurer to pass unchallenged. He states that he wished to get to business, and that the Opposition have wasted the time of the House. On the contrary, I say that it is the Government who are willfully wasting the time of the House and the country.

The PREMIER: By sitting silent.

Mr. MULLAN: By not adopting a reasonable method of dealing with this important matter. It is well known to every member in the House that this party undertook that the whole of these amendments would be disposed of at 10.30 on Tuesday evening last, if the Premier would only have agreed to go into Committee and deal with them in a proper way.

The PREMIER: That is a great admission. And what have you been doing since?

Mr. MULLAN: We have been trying to do the best we could under the most difficult conditions, because everybody knows that there is not the same facility to dispose of matters like this in the House that there is in Committee. I challenge the Premier to get up when I finish.

The PREMIER: No; I shall not get up.

Mr. MULLAN: I challenge the Premier to deny that this party undertook that we would see the whole measure through as far as we were concerned by half-past 10 on Tuesday evening, if the Premier agreed to go into Committee and deal with the matter in proper Parliamentary fashion. That is my reply to the contention of the Treasurer.

The PREMIER: If the Government allowed the Opposition to take control of the business.

Mr. MULLAN: In the interests of the proper conduct of the business of this House, the leader of the Government should not be above meeting the leader of the Opposition, and dealing with him reasonably on all matters affecting the transaction of business. I say that if the time of the country is delayed the fault rests with the Premier.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MULLAN: The Minister for Lands in dealing with this amendment, gave the strongest arguments which could be advanced why there was no necessity for these Sessional Orders.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Ample opportunity is given to discuss all questions.

Mr. MULLAN: He tried to show that under the proposed restrictive measure fathered by the Government on behalf of the Standing Orders Committee there was unbounded time at the disposal of every member. He gave a calculation showing that a member's compound time on the Estimates would go into something approaching a year if he used up the whole time at his disposal. If that be so, what on earth is the good of introducing these proposals at all? His statement goes to show what I stated previously, that freedom of discussion in the House goes further in facilitating business than any restrictive measure which is forced upon us. It is proposed under the motion that we should have at our disposal ten minutes and two periods of five minutes—that is, three times to discuss each item in Committee. What will that mean? Suppose I am discussing the Mining Estimates. No one can reasonably expect that on the first item of the

Mining Estimates I can say all I wish to say in ten minutes. The result would be that after I had spoken for ten minutes I would have to sit down and allow someone to sandwich his speech between that and my next five minutes. Then I would have to let another member jump up and sandwich a speech in again before I got my last five minutes. My speech will be divided by two other speeches. We should have a series of disconnected speeches on the Estimates.

The PREMIER: And yet you would have settled it in one day. If only—

Mr. MULLAN: Yes; if the Premier had accepted the olive branch held out by this party in the interests of good government and economy of time, the whole question would have been settled. I know he is very sorry for that now.

The PREMIER: I am not. Make the same promise to-night that it will go through by 10 o'clock, and I won't do it.

Mr. MULLAN: I am quite aware that the hon. gentleman won't do it. Another aspect of this question which has been lost sight of is this: Why should we impose, as these Standing Orders seek to do, additional burdens on the Speaker? The Speaker, under this, will have to become a mathematician; he will have to be well up in double entry, and to making debit and credit entries, and later on he will have to get an additional officer to keep the record, and sit by him.

Mr. LENNON: It would require a calculating machine.

Mr. MULLAN: As the hon. member says, it would require a calculating machine.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I would point out to the hon. member that this has nothing to do with the question before the House. The matter under discussion deals with Committee work and not proceedings in the House.

Mr. MULLAN: I mean the Chairman of Committees.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the hon. member make himself acquainted with the question before the House.

Mr. MULLAN: With all deference to you, I was dealing with the question under discussion.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Every hon. member on both sides must admit that the hon. member for Charters Towers was distinctly out of order in discussing a question which does not come within the four corners of the motion before the House.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I called the hon. member to order. I think his last remark, whilst, not quite out of order, is certainly unparliamentary.

Hon. R. PHILP: Very impertinent.

Mr. MULLAN: I am sorry if my remark appeared in any way to cast a reflection upon you, Sir. I would be the last member to reflect on you, or anyone who occupies a similar position.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I accept your word.

Mr. MULLAN: Because I hold that it is the duty of every member to respect the Speaker. The Chairman of Committees was the man affected by my argument. However, the fact remains that somebody will have to have handy by him a calculating machine. I do not rise to stonewall or transgress the rules

Mr. Mullan.]

of the House, but merely to reply to what I regard as an impertinent accusation made by the Treasurer. I think the remarks I have made are unanswerable, although I have no doubt that the Minister for Public Instruction, under instructions from the Premier, will now proceed to reply. (Laughter.)

HON. R. PHILP (*Townsville*): The hon. member for Charters Towers has given the whole show away.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear! and loud Opposition laughter.

HON. R. PHILP: He has told this House distinctly that if they had their [9.30 p.m.] way with the Standing Orders the debate would have been finished on Tuesday evening, but because the Premier, rightly, would not allow the leader of the Opposition to take the business out of his hands, they are stonewalling. They are doing this because they could not get their own way. They are like children.

MR. MULLAN: I rise to a point of order. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but he is misrepresenting my statement.

THE PREMIER: What is the point of order?

MR. MULLAN: The point of order is this: Is the hon. member for Townsville in order in misquoting what I said?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: I did not understand the hon. member to misquote the hon. member for Charters Towers.

HON. R. PHILP: I would be the last man in the House to misquote anyone. The hon. member led the House to believe that if the proposal had been agreed to we would have finished the Sessional Orders at half-past 10 o'clock.

MR. MULLAN: I said if we had gone into Committee.

HON. R. PHILP: If we had gone into Committee they would have been finished by half-past 10 o'clock—that is, if their proposals had been agreed to. But because the Premier, rightly, would not allow the Labour party to take the business out of his hands, they are stonewalling this question. Since I have been in the House I have never known a man who understood parliamentary usage to make long speeches on the Estimates at all. We are here to criticise the Estimates and ask questions and sit down again. In New South Wales I have known Estimates for millions of money to go through in twenty-four hours, and in the House of Commons they never take time to go through the Estimates. And the time will come here when we will have no more than twenty-four hours to consider the Estimates. These Sessional Orders will give younger members an opportunity of speaking, instead of the whole of the time being monopolised by three or four members while other members have no chance to speak. On many occasions I have wanted to speak, but, owing to the whole of the time being taken up by a few members, I have had no show at all. Under these Sessional Orders every one of the seventy-two members will have a chance to say something, and that is why I am cheerfully supporting them. Besides, it is only for one session. But if the gentlemen opposite come back in great force they will not alter the Standing Orders. Who protested more than members on the other side when the guillotine was introduced? I brought it in with the greatest of gravity; but when they made use of it it was more like a clown in a circus. We have discussed these Orders for three nights, and the same thing has been repeated over and over again. I have had more parliamentary

[*Mr. Mullan.*]

experience than any other member in the House, and I say that these Orders make for good government, keen criticism, and better speeches.

MR. HAMILTON (*Gregory*): The hon. gentleman who has just spoken says he does not remember long speeches being made in Committee; but I can remember many instances in which it was necessary to make long speeches in Committee. There was the Port Alma Railway Bill, for instance, when the hon. member made long speeches, and good speeches too. As far as the remarks of the Treasurer are concerned, it was the same old gag about the Opposition wasting time. What is the Opposition here for but to criticise the Government and their actions? It is well known that if you want good government you must have strong opposition. We are not here to sit and take whatever the Government like to throw to us. A few years ago, when the present Premier was a member of the Labour party and the hon. member for Townsville was head of the Government, we had measures proposed which were obnoxious to the Opposition, and there was not a greater organiser of obstruction than the hon. gentleman, or a greater stickler for the rights of members, especially members of the Opposition. If we think these Sessional Orders too drastic, we have every right to criticise them and oppose them as long as we like. As was pointed out by the hon. member for Cairns, if we want to adopt obstructive tactics we can move amendment after amendment and take up unlimited time.

THE PREMIER: What are you grumbling about, then?

MR. HAMILTON: We do not want to resort to those tactics; but we want full and fair criticism. When measures are before the House every member does not speak. I remember when the Factories and Shops Bill was before the House Mr. Frank McDonnell did nearly all the speaking for the Labour party; and I can remember other instances of the kind. It does not say that because opportunities are given, every member is going to take advantage of them. Even in criticising the Estimates every member does not want to speak on every item. On the Mines Estimates, for instance, whatever criticism is done is by hon. members representing mining communities. This proposal is worse than what exists in New Zealand, which is the only place under the British flag, as was said by another member, where they have a time limit. We have been told that the hon. member for Leichhardt did not object, as a member of the Standing Orders Committee, to these Sessional Orders. If I were the hon. member for Leichhardt or the hon. member for Ipswich I would resign from that committee rather than allow the Government to make use of that argument. I would have brought in a minority report.

MR. HARDACRE: That is what I ought to have done.

MR. HAMILTON: I think the amendment is a fair one, and the leader of the Government, in order to expedite business, ought to have adopted a more conciliatory method.

THE PREMIER: What do you mean by "adopting a more conciliatory method"?

MR. HAMILTON: The Premier admitted that he was not strong on this—he almost admitted that the proposal was unfair; yet, sooner than accept an amendment from this side, he would get his majority to sit tight and reject it. He accepted one from a member sitting on his own side.

THE TREASURER: And one from a member sitting on your side, too.

Mr. HAMILTON: The one that was proposed by a member sitting on this side was the least important amendment that has been proposed; but, when it comes to important amendments like that proposed by the hon. member for Bowen and one proposed on Tuesday night, the Premier gets his back up, and will not accept them. The hon. gentleman is largely to blame. That is the attitude he has adopted ever since he became Premier, and it is an attitude that is not calculated to expedite the business of the House. The Treasurer said that we are wasting the time of the House. Well, while we are the Opposition, we are going to take advantage of every opportunity to criticise any business brought before the House, and we are not going to ask any member sitting on the Treasury bench when we shall or shall not speak. I have much pleasure in supporting the amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The hon. member for Charters Towers, as the senior member for Townsville pointed out, has let the cat out of the bag, and now we have the hon. member for Gregory—

Mr. HAMILTON: Putting the cat into the bag again. (Laughter.)

The PREMIER: Chasing it round the roof.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The hon. member has been doing something more than that. He has laid down the rule that it is the duty of the Opposition to waste time.

Mr. HAMILTON: No.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: The hon. member distinctly said in connection with the amendment and with the discussion generally that the duty of the Opposition is to waste time.

Mr. HAMILTON: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member is not quoting my remarks correctly. I said it was the duty of the Opposition to criticise. The Treasurer accused us of wasting time.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: At any rate, the hon. member conveyed the impression that, in his opinion, it was the duty of the Opposition to waste time. I always thought that the duty of the Opposition was to help the Government to frame the laws of the country, and to govern the country, by giving honest advice and serious criticism. Yet here we have one hon. member following another on the other side getting up and saying that, if we had followed their advice, the discussion could have been finished in Tuesday night. The hon. member for Gregory said that the discussion could have been finished on Tuesday night if the Premier had adopted conciliatory methods. I would like to ask what the hon. member regards as conciliatory methods. It seems to me that what he would regard as conciliatory methods would have been if the Premier had allowed the Opposition to assume the whole control of the business of the House.

Mr. HAMILTON: I thought this was not a party question.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: One is tempted to wonder what would have happened if we had gone into Committee. We have had it clearly laid down that the desire of the Opposition has been to stonewall.

Mr. BOWMAN: No; to preserve our rights.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: If we had gone into Committee, judging by what we have seen during the last three days, it would have taken the whole session to get these Sessional Orders through. There can be no question that in the main—there are one or two notable exceptions—hon. members on the other side are simply trying to block business, and by and by they will be crying out that the interests of the country are being jeopardised, because what they profess they want to fight against must inevitably happen because of their own obstruction. But I am convinced that the community outside will recognise who are trying to carry on the business of the country, and who are trying to block it.

Mr. HARDACRE: It is remarkable that the only kind of argument by which members on the other side are endeavouring to support this proposal is misrepresentation. From the very first, with few exceptions, the only argument they have used has been misrepresentation. First of all, they misrepresented my attitude in the Standing Orders Committee, and I have seriously to consider between now and the next meeting of the committee whether I shall ever act again in the committee. (Government laughter.)

The PREMIER: It is entirely a matter that concerns you.

Mr. HARDACRE: I know it does, and I am bound to do it after my experience of the Premier on the committee last Wednesday, and after the continued misrepresentation of members on the other side of the stand I took, in spite of my repeated denials. I am bound to take some action to prevent myself being misrepresented in the country. When hon. members persist in their statements in front of my face, despite my denials, I know that they will go outside and repeat their misrepresentations. The next misrepresentation was when the senior member for Townsville got up and distinctly—consciously or unconsciously—misrepresented the hon. member for Charters Towers.

Hon. R. PHILP: I did not. You read *Hansard* to-morrow, and you will find that what I stated was exactly what he said.

Mr. HARDACRE: The hon. member for Charters Towers said that if the leader of the Government had accepted the suggestion that was made on this side, we could have finished the discussion by half-past 10 o'clock on Tuesday night, instead of being driven into this prolonged debate.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: That is what the hon. member for Townsville said.

Mr. HARDACRE: Instead of being able to discuss the motion in a parliamentary fashion, we have been driven to discussing it in an unparliamentary way, and it is that that has taken all this time. If we had discussed it in a proper way, under proper rules, we could have completed it by half-past 10 on Tuesday night. Then the hon. member for Gregory did not say that we were wasting time, as stated by the Secretary for Public Instruction. He asked the question, "What is an Opposition here for but to take all the time they think is necessary in criticising the administration of the Government?"

Mr. BOWMAN: We are not going to ask them what time we shall take, anyway.

Mr. Hardacre.]

Mr. HARDACRE: I have not heard one solid argument in justification of the proposal. It is not now a question of a time limit. Of course we all want a time limit.

Mr. RYAN: No.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: A division in the camp!

Mr. HARDACRE: Generally speaking, members are agreed that a time limit is advisable. The whole question is: What is a fair and reasonable time to do business in. I ask any hon. member who thinks that ten minutes is sufficient for a member of this House to discuss the first vote on an Estimate to attempt to prove it. We usually take the general discussion on the whole department on the first vote, and it must be apparent to everyone that it is an unfair restriction.

The PREMIER: Would twenty minutes be sufficient?

Mr. HARDACRE: My opinion is that it would not be sufficient.

The PREMIER: Would you agree to twenty minutes?

Mr. HARDACRE: As better than ten minutes.

The PREMIER: You would agree to something that is not sufficient, and then afterwards you would disagree with it and move another amendment.

Mr. HARDACRE: I do not think that twenty minutes is sufficient. At the same time, it is better than ten minutes, and I would agree to it as the lesser of two evils. We have been told that the rule in force in New Zealand allows ample time for discussion. Well, I have looked casually through the *Hansard* reports for this session, and I find that it does not work out well at all. Here we have the Speaker constantly pulling up the members of the New Zealand Parliament, and chopping off their speeches at an important juncture by telling them that their time is up. Here is an occasion in the New Zealand *Hansard* where the Premier himself was speaking, and he was in the middle of a very important subject, and the Speaker comes in with the remark, "The hon. gentleman's time is up." (Opposition laughter.)

The PREMIER: That would suit you.

Mr. HARDACRE: The Premier of New Zealand was speaking on an important matter, and he was pulled up.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: You would like to see that happen here, wouldn't you?

Mr. HARDACRE: No; I would not.

Mr. BOWMAN: He is not as unreasonable as you are.

Mr. HARDACRE: Here, again, is another place where a member is speaking in the New Zealand Parliament in connection with the Advances to Settlers Department—a very important department—and this is what the member says—

He hoped the Minister would look into the matter again, and see if he could not give some relief to these people, who were certainly entitled to every consideration at the hands of the State. I am sorry my time is up.

Then, again, another member was speaking about the School Commissioners, and he was pulled up in the middle of his speech. Then on another occasion when a member was dealing with the Land Boards, he was pulled up by the Speaker at a very important juncture and told

[*Mr. Hardacre.*

that his time was up. Then there is another case of a member dealing with a grievance in his own electorate, and he made these remarks—

Had time permitted he would have liked to call attention to Question No. 15, which dealt with the analytical chemists of this country, but as his time was up he would have to deal with it at another time.

We find that in New Zealand it does not work well at all. All that it does is to stifle debate and tend to check criticism.

Mr. BOWMAN: Yet we are only allowed one-half the time they allow in New Zealand?

Mr. HARDACRE: Just as a member begins to deal with an important subject and he reaches a critical juncture, he is pulled up by the Speaker and told that his time is up, and he cannot get in what he wants to say on that occasion.

Mr. HAMILTON: Yet they have double the time that we have got.

Mr. HARDACRE: This Sessional Order, as I have already pointed out, is not going to prevent members from talking. It will not prevent a waste of time. Under the time limit order it will drive them into making disconnected speeches on several occasions, instead of making a speech in a clear way, as is provided now by the rules of the House. For example, this is what can be done, and I may be compelled to do it. In the past we have adopted a very economical practice—it is not a rule of the House, but we adopted it by general consent to save time, and it was this: That on the first Estimate of a department the whole of the general discussion for the department is taken, instead of taking the discussion on every item in that department. Instead of having the whole of the discussion practically on the first vote, as has been the rule for years past, we will have to have the discussion in a desultory fashion, and abandon that practice which has been found to be so useful.

Mr. MACARTNEY: When was that practice introduced?

Mr. HARDACRE: It has been in use for years.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Do you remember what happened to me when I tried to have a discussion on the first vote?

Mr. HARDACRE: No, I do not remember it. I only know that it has been the practice of the House for years and it has been the means of saving the time of the House a good deal.

The PREMIER: Did it save any time at all?

Mr. LENNON: Yet, it saved a lot of time.

Mr. BOWMAN: The Ministers ought to know whether it saved any time or not.

Mr. HARDACRE: Why did the Government agree to it if it did not save any time? It was not a rule of the House, and why was it carried out if it were not a useful practice? We came to recognise it, and we find it very useful to take the whole of the discussion on the first item of the Estimates, instead of discussing every item.

Hon. R. PHILP: And you objected to it at one time.

Mr. HARDACRE: No.

Hon. R. PHILP: Yes, you did; and the hon. member for North Brisbane, who was then the member for Toowong, was blocked by you and your party when he tried to do it.

Mr. HARDACRE: I do not remember it.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Don't you know what happened to me at that time?

Mr. HARDACRE: No, I do not remember.

Mr. MACARTNEY: You must have a bad memory.

Mr. LESINA: Mr. Macartney was suspended on that occasion.

Mr. HARDACRE: I do not think I ever voted for the "gag."

The PREMIER: What is the question we are discussing?

Mr. HARDACRE: The question that this is not going to prevent a waste of time. It will not prevent members from getting up one after another and making the same speech over and over again. (Hear, hear!) A time limit will not prevent that. And we will be abandoning a useful practice if we do not have all the discussion on the first item of the Estimates.

The PREMIER: We could introduce a useful Standing Order for preventing waste of time by providing that ten members shall speak on every question.

Mr. HARDACRE: Some amendment might prevent waste of time, but this Sessional Order will not. After a man has spoken for ten minutes he will have to look over the Estimates and see the other items on which he can speak, and he will say, "As I could not get in what I wanted on the first vote I will speak again on this item—say Central Railway division—and I will try to say here what I should have said on the first vote."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Did you present that phase of the question to your colleagues in the Standing Orders Committee?

Mr. HARDACRE: No, I did not.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You did not argue that question at all.

Mr. HARDACRE: No, I did not. I reported what happened in the Standing Orders Committee and my own action there. This will not prevent a waste of time, because, as soon as every member has spoken, some member will move an amendment and every member can speak again. We can all have twenty minutes' further discussion, and that is the only way we can do it if we are not allowed to do it in a proper, connected, fair, and orderly way according to our present rules. I do not wish to press my remarks further on the House, but I am sure that this will not save time.

Mr. MACARTNEY (*Brisbane North*): The hon. member for Leichhardt has admitted that there is a general consensus of opinion that there should be a general limitation of debate, and he practically admits that the Standing Orders which we now have have been abused in the past.

Mr. HARDACRE: I did not admit that.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The hon. gentleman must be taken to admit that if he admits there is a necessity for a time limit. It must be taken that he admits there has been some abuse in order to support the position which he takes up. I do not altogether agree with the Sessional Orders as they have been presented to us by the Standing Orders Committee.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MACARTNEY: I am very sorry that there is any necessity for them, as I would like to see full and unlimited discussion allowed in the House.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MACARTNEY: But I came to the same conclusion as the hon. gentleman who just spoke, that there must be a time limit to stop the abuse from which we have suffered in this respect.

Mr. HARDACRE: We are all agreed on that.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I quite recognise that there might be some administration of the Government that should be criticised, and that ten minutes would not be sufficient time in which to do it, but in that case twenty minutes would not be sufficient either to discuss it. I remember one occasion, when I was a supporter of the Government, talking myself

[10 p.m.] for two hours to elaborate a case which I considered ought to have a clearing, and I did not think I had done it sufficiently. Since that time I have heard the hon. member for Clermont and other hon. members talk for more than an hour or an hour and a half; consequently I am inclined to think that if we had twenty minutes that would not meet the case on certain occasions. But if we make the limit twenty minutes we shall merely perpetuate the abuse which has given rise to this proposal. For that reason I am prepared to support the ten-minutes limit. I am sorry there is any necessity for it, but that necessity is admitted.

Mr. HARDACRE: Why not make it half an hour?

Mr. MACARTNEY: That is rather a strange position for the hon. member for Leichhardt to take up. I was not present at the last meeting of the Standing Orders Committee, but the hon. member, with one or two other members on that side, met the other members of the committee and fully and calmly discussed the whole of the Standing Orders, and practically came to an agreement. There was no dissentient report, and no rider to the report, and it seems to me very strange that the hon. member should now come down to this Chamber and suggest that there is an ulterior motive behind this proposal. I really wonder that the hon. member does not see the absurdity of the position which he has taken up in this matter. Whatever may be my personal opinion in regard to this proposal, there can be no get away from the fact that it is forced upon the House by the abuses which have taken place. Even in considering the proposed new rule we have had amendment after amendment, duplicating amendments in some cases, though hon. members proposing those amendments say there is no chance of carrying them. It has simply come to this: that those members of the House who desire to discuss the matter in a non-party spirit are prevented from doing so, by reason of the fact that it has been made a party question on the other side, a fact which is very much to be deprecated. If the other proposals in this Sessional Order are worth considering, let members give us an opportunity of considering them.

Mr. MULCAHY (*Gympie*): The hon. member who has just resumed his seat says he would like us to discuss this matter in a non-party spirit. That such a statement is pure humbug may be taken for granted.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MULCAHY: The hon. member told us that we should discuss the matter in a non-party spirit, and in the next breath said he was bound to vote the other way. His was a yes-no sort of speech. He poses before the public as being quite liberal, and—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member has no right to impute motives to any other member, and I ask him not to pursue that course.

Mr. MULCAHY: What is the use of the hon. member blowing hot and cold? He says he regrets the introduction of this proposal, and then in the next breath says he has no option but to do a certain thing. The other evening he said he wanted to liberalise the proposal, and

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felt inclined to move an amendment, and when a vote was taken on an amendment liberalising the proposal, he disappeared. Later on he came back, and said he was still liberal.

Mr. MACARTNEY : That is just as true as your ordinary representations.

Mr. MULCAHY : I think that the ten-minute limit is much too short. I well remember one occasion when, during a discussion on the Estimates, the hon. member talked about two hours in order to show that the present secretary of the Public Service Board was being used by the Premier—that he was very useful to the Premier. I am sure the hon. member could not in ten minutes get over all the ground he covered on that occasion, in pointing out how the secretary of the Public Service Board had given certain information to the Hon. the Premier with regard to the Estimates, the financial position, and all that. Many hon. members now present recollect quite well the action of the hon. member at that time. We recognise, too, that in this matter the Premier will not give way one inch. The hon. gentleman tells us that he is “not at all strong” on this matter. What is the use of saying that? Why does he not tell us that he intends to put the Sessional Order through without giving us an opportunity of making an amendment in it? I have been a member of the House for many years. I was a member when the hon. member for Townsville was leading the Government, and I remember that in those days the Opposition always received some consideration. But the hon. gentleman in charge of this Sessional Order has made up his mind that he is going to be a dictator. That kind of thing is not going to be conducive to the passing of legislation through this House.

Mr. CORSER : Anything we do on this side, you say you make us do.

Mr. MULCAHY : I do not know that we ever made the hon. member who interjects do anything useful. As far as I know, he has never done anything useful in the House yet.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER : He voted for the Port Alma Railway.

Mr. MULCAHY : Yes; we know that on one occasion he was brought back from up the line somewhere at midnight to vote for the Port Alma Railway, which was a job. It is not fair to this side of the House for the Premier to take up the position that he will not concede anything. I again enter my protest against this procedure. It is no use disguising the fact that the hon. gentleman has made up his mind. He says, “I am here; I am the Parliament of Queensland; I am representing every constituency in Queensland,” and that is the position he intends to maintain. He intends to give us what time he thinks sufficient for discussion, and he is to be the sole judge of what time is sufficient. I do not think the Sessional Order he is now forcing through the House will conduce to the passing of legislation. I think the Opposition would be more than justified in taking up a position of hostility to anything that he brings forward—at any rate, to such proposals as the Port Alma Railway, to the syndicate railways that are coming later on, to land-grant railways, and to other things. There is something behind this proposal. There is a motive, and more than one motive, behind it. The hon. gentleman wishes to prevent reasonable criticism of the administration of the Government. He is here as a dictator; he has had a wonderful amount of luck; he has used every party he has been connected with, and he will use the party with which he is now associated.

Mr. PAYNE (*Mitchell*) : If it had not been for the flimsy protest—the flimsy sayings of the

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Treasurer—to try and make members believe that we were wasting time, I would not have risen at all. (Laughter.) The Treasurer went on to tell us that the Government was there to protect the rights of the people of Queensland.

The TREASURER : So they are.

Mr. PAYNE : Are the people of Queensland any different to the people of the other States? Is this House different or in any way inferior to any of the other Houses of Parliament in the Commonwealth? They try to make out that there is more obstruction in this House than there is in any other Parliament House in Australia.

The PREMIER : Not more, but more foolish obstruction.

Mr. PAYNE : The Treasurer said the Government were trying to protect the rights of the people of Queensland by bringing in these Sessional Orders to limit the length of speeches. I am in favour of a time limit of speeches.

The PREMIER : What do you think would be a fair thing—two hours?

Mr. PAYNE : I think twenty minutes is a reasonable and fair thing. I honestly think that if we take into consideration that, apart from New Zealand, there is no time limit to speeches in any Parliament in the British Empire, one would think this is the most obstructive and most unruly House in the Commonwealth of Australia, and they are trying to get the business of the Government through in a way that no other Parliament in the Commonwealth has adopted. For the life of me I cannot understand why this Government cannot get their business through this House the same as other Governments in the Commonwealth. I believe in a time limit of speeches; but what are we getting in these proposals?

The PREMIER : A time limit of speeches.

Mr. PAYNE : I appeal to any fair-minded man in this Chamber or outside: Is this a fair thing?

The TREASURER : Yes.

Mr. PAYNE : Is it a fair thing for a Government with a majority to try and cram this thing down the throats of Opposition members, who are representatives of the people and come into this Chamber on exactly the same footing as the Premier? It appears to me to be a cowardly thing for a majority to cram these very stringent Sessional Orders down our throats in such a way.

Mr. RYLAND : It is the act of a bully.

Mr. PAYNE : I do not say that, but is it a wise thing? I think the least the Premier could have done was to take the New Zealand system in its entirety, and then he would have had the gag in addition, which they have not got in New Zealand. I think he would be perfectly right in using the gag if the Opposition insisted on moving amendments and obstructing the business of the House. In such a case I think any fair-minded person would say they had to do it to get the business through.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS : They say that now.

Mr. PAYNE : Nothing of the sort. They have no right to say it. Hon. members have nothing to back up their arguments. Take the work of last session, or the work of the whole of the sessions for the last five years since I have been here, and can any hon. member or the Treasurer point out that there has been more obstruction in this House than there has been in any other Parliament in the Commonwealth? I say there has not been as much, and I say it is

not a fair thing to jamb this down the throats of the Opposition simply because they happen to be in opposition for the time being. I think twenty minutes is a fair thing. Under the proposed Sessional Orders we are only allowed to speak three times on each question. That is exactly half the time allowed in New Zealand. Members can speak forty minutes in the New Zealand Parliament, and the Premier's proposals limit us to twenty minutes. The Premier has told us, "These are not my proposals; they are the proposals of the Standing Orders Committee." What has it to do with the Chamber if the whole committee were unanimous? I listened to the arguments of the junior member for Brisbane North about the time taken up this session. Why, no Opposition with any grit in them at all, unless they were dead men, would sit silent and see their liberties taken away. I know the Premier fairly well, and I know the action he would take if he were on this side of the House. I know the character of that hon. gentleman, and I know very well he would have obstructed this business very much more than has been done by members on the Opposition side. Another point I would like to make is this: The time limit of speeches was passed in the New Zealand Parliament by a Committee of the whole House. Why could not this Government pass these proposals in the same way? I cannot for the life of me understand why they want to bring in such very drastic proposals. One would think that we were on the eve of a revolution, or that something was going to happen that the world has never seen before. As I pointed out previously, the motion to introduce the gag in New Zealand was defeated by 41 votes to 12, and the late Mr. Seddon voted with the majority. The action which has been taken up by hon. members opposite is only exciting and aggravating the debate. The arguments used by members on the Treasury bench about members of the Opposition wasting the time of the House last session is all nonsense. There is nothing in it, and it is not borne out by facts. What is the use of saying what is not true? What is the good of trying to mislead the people? I do not think any good will come of it. The least the Premier can do is to give due consideration to the rights and privileges of hon. members, even if they are sitting in opposition, and it seems to me there is nothing fair-minded about the present proposals. This is a matter that is not going to help the Government at all.

The PREMIER: Is that one of the reasons why you object to it?

Mr. PAYNE: There is no common sense in this business at all.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: That is a reflection upon the Labour party. (Laughter.)

Mr. PAYNE: It is not going to help the Government in their business.

The PREMIER: Is that why you object to it?

Mr. PAYNE: What has it got to do with me whether it is a good thing or a bad thing for the Government? What concerns me is that I think it is a bad thing for the representatives of the people who are sent into this Chamber to look after the rights of the different districts. (Opposition Hear, hears!) I suppose the Government is not concerned a brass farthing as to whether it is going to burden us in the House. My answer to the interjection is that I do not think it is going to get the business through. I trust that the fair-minded men on both sides of the House will consider the matter without any heat, and I feel certain that they will recognise that twenty minutes for the first speech is a reasonable thing, when we have also

cut down the number of times when a member can speak to three, as compared with four in New Zealand.

Mr. D. HUNTER (*Woolloongabba*): I do not think anyone can say that one side of the House has only fair men on it. Surely it is not contended that there are only fair men on one side! We should discuss this question free from party bias. I am in the unfortunate position that if I venture to say anything against my friends on the other side it becomes almost a crime, as if I were insulting the Kaiser and were guilty of *lese majesty*. Anyone who dares to criticise the action of the Labour party is put down as deserving of every castigation possible. Last night the hon. member for Gympie went out of his way to attack my character and to use the forms of the House in order to do it. Let the hon. gentleman go outside and repeat the statement, and I will deal with him in the proper way. (Hear, hear!) That is the only thing I can say to a member who is cowardly enough to use the forms of the House to attack any member in that manner.

Mr. RYLAND: Why all this heat?

Mr. D. HUNTER: That is a system which the hon. member is very guilty of, and to-night he has adopted the same course by throwing imputations against the Government that they are anxious, for some ulterior motive, to get these things through. He who excuses himself accuses himself, and the hon. gentlemen on the opposite side to-night have been trying to excuse themselves for this waste of time, and they say, "If you had only adopted our course on Tuesday, the whole thing would have been through by half-past 10 o'clock."

Mr. MANN (seated at the table): By inserting reasonable amendments.

The PREMIER: Not some of your own way, but all your own way.

Mr. D. HUNTER: Hon. members on the other side are beginning to feel—

Mr. MANN again interjected from the table.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I pointed out earlier in the debate that interjections are at all times disorderly, and that they are especially disorderly when made from the table.

Mr. MANN: The Premier interjected to me, and I was replying to him. (Laughter.)

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. D. HUNTER: Hon. members on the other side are beginning to feel that the action they took one year in stonewalling and stopping all the business of the country was not endorsed by the people of the country, and they came back a very much subdued party. And I am confident that if this stonewalling goes on, this waste of time will have the same effect on them as it had a year ago. What is this costing the country? What are we elected for? We are elected to try and get on with the business of the country, and pass some of the Bills which the people want. We are paid £284 every day, and what work are we doing for it?

Mr. ALLEN: We loaf six months in the year. Who is responsible for that?

Mr. D. HUNTER: If hon. members opposite have no sense of decency for the country, I think it is time they were being taught a lesson. The Government have a great many measures coming on—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! (Opposition Hear, hears!) The hon. member is not

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addressing himself to the question before the House. He is dealing with the general policy of the Government.

Mr. D. HUNTER: I am going to connect my remarks by the fact that we are wasting time discussing this question of whether it shall be ten or twenty minutes, and the main argument which has been advanced has been that all the members when they are speaking will be tripped up. Now, would they not be tripped up if it was twenty minutes? I am confident that many of the speeches would be cut short by the ringing of the bell or by the Speaker telling them that they had taken up the time allowed. What is the whole system on the other side? They believed in immigration for a long time, but our system was bad.

Mr. BOWMAN: Absolutely rotten—that is your system of immigration.

Mr. D. HUNTER: But you have changed your opinion. The attitude they have taken up in wasting time will have a very bad effect on the country, and, if we do not get to business, in the course of two or three months we will hear them saying that there is no time to discuss Bills. We have a great many important measures before us. In the course of two or three months we will have a good many men out of work, and the measures will not perhaps be discussed as they ought to be, and yet we are fighting against limitations. The agitation of hon. members who are sitting on the other side is for the limitation of the rights of the people—everything they support is limitation—and now they are not prepared to limit themselves to ten minutes. When the question of increasing the Parliamentary Librarian's salary was before the House, member after member got up on that side of the House—like the members of a Salvation Army meeting—to give their testimony why he should get an increase of salary. Under this limitation, the man who wants to speak will concentrate his efforts on one thing, and there will not be so much repetition as we have at the present time.

Mr. NEVITT: I did not intend to speak on this question at all to-night, but evidently conscience pricked members on the front Treasury bench to-night, because every one of them at different times to-night have put up a fight in favour of this reduction.

The PREMIER: It is not true.

Mr. NEVITT: You may say it is not true, but that does not alter the fact. There is only one member on the front Treasury bench who has not spoken. (Government laughter.) The Premier said he did not feel very strongly on the matter, which showed that the times stated in these Standing Orders are not a fair thing. It has been thrown across the Chamber that we are not in favour of a fair limitation of speeches, but we are. We are in favour of fixing a limit instead of the present unlimited time. But I ask, when you have had unlimited time up to now, whether twenty minutes cannot be considered a fair limitation? I defy any man to say that twenty minutes would not be a fair limitation. The

[10.30 p.m.] hon. member for Brisbane North, Mr. Macartney, said he remembered the time he occupied two hours in making a speech, when in opposition, and he still had a good deal of ground to go over; yet he is going to favour a ten-minutes' limit! I ask whether we have been treated in a reasonable manner during the past week on this question? The Treasurer says we have been deliberately wasting time. My answer is that our masters will tell us when we go before the country whether

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we have been wasting time or not. The last time we went to the country we came back stronger than before, and next time we will come back eight or ten members stronger.

The PREMIER: "Hope springs eternal in the human breast."

Mr. NEVITT: Even if these Sessional Orders go through, there will be an opportunity to ventilate some of the most serious maladministrations in the different departments. The hon. member for Leichhardt referred to the length of time and the number of times a member was allowed to speak under the New Zealand Order; and the Premier said it showed how it operated in New Zealand. But how does it operate in New Zealand? When the Premier there was speaking on one occasion—he was making a very important statement—he had to apologise to the House and say he could not finish, owing to the Standing Orders cutting him short. It operated against good government. And the time allowed there is double what is proposed here. Another argument used by the Premier was in connection with the time we may occupy in discussing a Bill. Is that a fair analogy? As a rule the second reading of a Bill does not occupy more than one day's sitting. If these Sessional Orders are adopted, they will be embodied in the Standing Orders for the next session. We know how the Standing Orders Committee is constituted—that there are eight members, five of whom are on the other side and three on this side. Of those three, two belong to this party, and they both took exception to these Orders.

The PREMIER: They permitted these Orders, as printed, to come to the House without protest.

Mr. NEVITT: I admit that they did not bring in a minority report, which they should have done, but they distinctly state that they were opposed to these Orders, and I certainly believe them before I believe the hon. gentleman. The other one of the three sits on this side, but votes with the other side on every question proposed in connection with these Sessional Orders. I think the least the Government can do, with any self-respect, is to agree to the amendment of the hon. member for Bowen.

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

AYES, 27.	
Mr. Appel	Mr. Hodge
" Barnes, W. H.	" Hunter, D.
" Booker	" Kidston
" Bouchard	" Lesina
" Brennan	" Macartney
" Bridges	" Mackintosh
" Corsier	" Paset
" Cottell	" Petrie
" Cribb	" Philp
" Denham	" Rankin
" Forsyth	" Somerset
" Grant	" Swayne
" Gunn	" Walker
" Hawthorn	
Tellers: Mr. Swayne and Mr. Walker.	

NOES, 20.	
Mr. Allen	Mr. May
" Bowman	" Mulcahy
" Collins	" Mullan
" Ferricks	" Nevitt
" Foley	" O'Sullivan
" Hamilton	" Payne
" Hardacre	" Ryan
" Hunter, J. M.	" Ryland
" Land	" Theodore
" Lennon	" Winstanley
Tellers: Mr. Ferricks and Mr. Nevitt.	

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Wienholt, Mr. G. P. Barnes, Mr. Roberts, Mr. Thorn, Mr. Grayson, Mr. White, Mr. Forrest, Mr. Stodart, and Mr. Toimie.

Noes—Mr. Murphy, Mr. McLachlan, Mr. Blair, Mr. Coyne, Mr. Douglas, Mr. Barber, Mr. Breslin, Mr. Maughan, and Mr. Crawford.

Resolved in the affirmative.

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

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER: I beg to move that the resumption of the debate stand an Order of the Day for Tuesday next. I have not attempted to force this thing through, as I think it is much better that members should fully discuss it without any compulsion, and because I think our friends opposite are helping me to prove in a very conclusive way how very necessary it is that we should pass such a motion. I think it will be quite evident that, while for one day they were willing to make a protest against the limitation of speeches, if they could have had their own way, yet, because they have not got their own way, they have taken four days, and I do not know that they may not take a fortnight yet, if it pleases them it pleases me. I think we are doing very well.

Mr. BOWMAN: The hon. gentleman is trying to make this House and the country believe that he is not in any way concerned about the manner in which the Opposition are dealing with this question. I can tell him that we do not purpose asking him how we shall conduct our business on this side.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: We made a fair proposition. As leader of the Opposition I went to him, and asked him to allow us to go into Committee, and the matter could then be fairly dealt with, and, I believe, much more effectively. He refused to agree to the suggestion. Certain reasonable amendments have been proposed. We have not asked for one unreasonable amendment yet. Except in one particular—that three-quarters of an hour should be allowed instead of half an hour—we have only asked for what is contained in the New Zealand Standing Order.

The PREMIER: Two particulars.

Mr. BOWMAN: The Sessional Order as introduced by the hon. gentleman is much more restrictive than the New Zealand Standing Order. Whether he wishes to make the Government more despotic than the Government of any other State in Australasia I do not know, but he is certainly doing it. We as an Opposition are going to take our own time in our attempt to secure a greater amount of freedom, not only for members on this side but for members generally, and we are not going to stand any dictation, either. The hon. gentleman can do what he likes as leader of the Government; but I can promise him that he is not going to threaten us, nor induce us to take any other course than the course we think is necessary for the conduct of an Opposition.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Question put and passed.

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