

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 11 OCTOBER 1910**

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

TUESDAY, 11 OCTOBER, 1910.

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

### PAPERS.

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

Report of the Under Secretary of the Home Secretary's Department upon Government relief during the twelve months ending 30th June, 1910.

Report of the Chief Inspector of Machinery and Scaffolding for the year ending 30th June 1910.

The following paper was laid on the table:—Return to an Order, made on the motion of Mr. Nevitt, on the 23rd August, relative to the employment of aboriginals in the Gulf district.

### QUESTIONS.

COST OF TAKING CASES FROM BOWEN TO TOWNSVILLE.

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

What cost has been entailed on the Government, for the year ended 30th June last, in taking cases from the Bowen district to the District Court sittings at Townsville?

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

The answer is, "Nothing."

WESTERN ALLOWANCE TO STATION-MASTERS.

Mr. HAMILTON (*Gregory*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. Are station-masters west of Hughenden allowed Western allowance?

2. If not, will the Minister state the reasons why they were deprived of this concession, considering it is granted to others?

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

1 and 2. Not specially; but this is taken into account when fixing the salaries. Salaries will be revised after the Estimates have passed, but nothing can be done at present.

### HANDCUFFING TOGETHER OF BLACK AND WHITE PRISONERS.

Mr. FERRICKS asked the Home Secretary—

1. Is he aware that on Saturday, 17th September last, a white man, who was arrested at Proserpine and remanded to Innisfail on a charge of breaking an employment agreement, travelled from Proserpine to Bowen handcuffed to Billy Boslem, a kanaka, under committal to the Supreme Court at Townsville on a charge of wilfully murdering his wife, who was most brutally clubbed to death by this infuriated kanaka; also, that on arrival at Bowen the kanaka who committed this ghastly murder and the white man who committed a venial offence were marched, handcuffed together, through the streets to the lockup?

2. Seeing that such sights have been previously witnessed in Queensland during recent years, will he take steps to prevent a continuance of such degrading spectacles?

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

1. A white prisoner was handcuffed to a kanaka, between the railway and police stations, for safe custody, as the former had previously attempted to escape.

2. The action taken was, under the circumstances, unavoidable, and no unnecessary degradation was caused thereby.

Mr. LENNON: Very unnecessary.

### BUTTER MANUFACTURED IN BUTTER FACTORIES.

Mr. BRESLIN (*Port Curtis*), in the absence of Mr. Allen, asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

In view of clause 10b of section 3 of the Dairy Produce Amendment Act of 1905, which requires owners or managers of butter factories to deliver to an inspector monthly a full and accurate statement in the prescribed form, and to be verified in the prescribed manner, and showing the exact amount of butter fat purchased or received from suppliers by each factory during the preceding month, and the amount of butter manufactured therefrom, why is the information I asked for in Question No. 1 yesterday not available?

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

This provision was included in the Act to enable a check to be made if necessary, but the occasion has not arisen to put it into force.

### PROMOTION OF POLICE OFFICERS.

Mr. FERRICKS asked the Home Secretary—

1. Is he considering the abolition of the rule of twelve or fifteen years' standing that subinspectors and inspectors of police over fifty-five years of age are not eligible for promotion?

2. Would any change, while benefiting a few aged officers, tend to delay advancement, destroy ambition, and cause discontent among the rank and file?

3. Was the fixing of the fifty-five years' limit the result of abuses in the past—political and otherwise—by which old men remained in the service until they got promotion to the highest rank to which they could reach, and then retired on the highest pension which it was possible to attain, thus becoming an unnecessary burden on the police superannuation fund?

4. Do the majority of officers now in the service owe their present position to that rule which creates vacancies?

5. Would it be just that a few such officers having thus benefited, but who have now passed the age of fifty-five years, should get the rule altered to enable them to receive further promotion to the prejudice of the young men in the lower ranks?

6. If contemplating the abolition of this rule, will the Government consider the claims of many officers who retired on reduced pensions owing to

the fifty-five years' limit, and state the cost to the country of paying the full pensions according to their length of service?

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

1. The rule has already been considered and is no longer in operation. Each case of promotion will, in future, be considered on its merits.

2. The change may, to some extent, delay advancement, but it should not destroy ambition or cause discontent.

3. I am not prepared to state the reasons which guided my predecessors.

4. No.

5. As each case will be dealt with on its merits, no injustice will be done.

6. This cannot be done.

Mr. FERRICKS: The police tell a different tale to that.

### EXCHANGE OF LAND.

Mr. LAND (*Balonne*) asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

Has he any objection to laying upon the table of the House copies of all papers and correspondence in connection with exchange of land between the Australian Pastoral Company and the Government?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. D. F. Denham, *Oxley*) replied—

I have with me the papers, which I shall be pleased to hand the hon. member for perusal, and, if then he desires copies tabled, I will have them copied, but it appears needless labour to copy them for purposes of tabling if full perusal will meet the case.

### BIBLE IN STATE SCHOOLS TEXT-BOOK.

Mr. KEOGH (*Rosewood*) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction, without notice—

1. Are Messrs. Canny, Papi, Kennedy, Exley, and Fowles the gentlemen selected to compile the text-book for Bible instruction in State schools?

2. Will the Minister consider the advisableness of substituting the names of the Revs. D. J. Garland and Rowe in place of Messrs. Canny and Kennedy?

(No reply.)

Mr. KEOGH: I asked that question, because the third reading of the Bill is down for this afternoon.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

### STATE EDUCATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

#### THIRD READING.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I beg to move that the Bill be read a third time.

Mr. LENNON (*Herbert*): I rise for the purpose of saying that I do not think this Bill should be read a third time. Hon. members will perhaps remember that from the very inception of this measure I promised I would oppose it at every stage, and I purpose keeping that promise, and opposing it at this stage. The reason that I have for opposing it is that this particular measure was forced through Committee—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Nonsense!

Mr. LENNON: And no consideration was given to any reasonable amendments from this side of the House. I refer particularly to one amendment which was drawn up for the purpose of really facilitating the business proposed to be carried out under the measure—to facilitate the thing in a way that would not

offend the religious susceptibilities of the children attending, particularly in one-room schools, and also in flouting the parents of those children. We contend that the children in State schools, particularly in one-room schools, having no place of retirement when the lessons are being given, the amendment proposed by this side, fixing the time for religious instruction at the closing hour of each school day, should have been accepted without question. Had that been conceded, I say it would have facilitated the desires of the gentlemen who intend to introduce religious teaching in schools, because those children who desire this religious teaching would be there to be taught, and those who do not desire religious teaching would be allowed to go to their homes. It was a reasonable amendment, and I think I am justified, after it was refused, in my appeal to recommit the Bill so that it might be reconsidered. The scornful attitude of the other side with regard to the several amendments we proposed justifies me, even at this late stage, in opposing the third reading of the Bill. I also oppose it on the ground that a very important amendment moved by some member on this side, which I may briefly describe as the "conscience clause," was also rejected with scorn and contempt—a clause which was moved for the purpose of enabling the teachers to say whether they were, in the first place, desirous of teaching, and in the second place, whether they were competent to teach it. Surely no teacher should be compelled to teach anything that his conscience prohibits him to teach. Nor should any teacher be compelled to teach anything in the Bible which he may be inclined to twist or distort in such a way as to bring ridicule on it—to make the children laugh at its teaching and thereby offend the religious feelings of the community, and bring religion down to the very lowest depths of degradation. I think that would be a very wise clause to have introduced into the Bill, so that if religion is taught, it will be taught with due decorum. I regard religion as a very serious matter, and I object at all times to that subject being treated in a flippant manner. I think that, even at this eleventh hour, the Secretary for Public Instruction will be wise to recommit the Bill, so that these two practical, sensible, and reasonable amendments might be included in the Bill, otherwise I predict for the Bill a very, very unkind reception throughout the country. I am quite satisfied it will not satisfy the parents of the children, nor will it satisfy the general community. I make this last appeal to him. I see by the appearance of the Minister that he will not listen to any appeal. He intends to carry the Bill through willy-nilly. However, I now make this most emphatic protest against this Bill being passed into law. How can you call this a deliberative Assembly, when we have no opportunity of discussing reasonable amendments or discussing any measure put before us—when things are forced through in this House by the gag without rhyme or reason? I consider I would be neglecting my duty if I did not utter, at this present juncture, my most emphatic protest against the third reading of the Bill being passed.

Mr. MURPHY (*Croydon*): I protest against the third reading of this Bill, and my first point in opposition is, that the Bill was not legally passed by the House. I raised a certain point the other afternoon, and, after looking up the Standing Orders of the House of Commons, I find that on page 109 of the "Manual of the Procedure of the House of

Commons" it is laid down very distinctly in dealing with the question of the closure, that the motion under this rule cannot be made unless the Speaker or Deputy Speaker is in the chair. I submit that in the later stages of the Bill, when Mr. Tolmie, the member for Drayton and Toowoomba, took your position temporarily and presided over the deliberations of this Chamber, he was not competent to—as will be found on page 1128 of *Hansard*—put a motion from the chair, moved by the Premier, "That the question be now put." I say that the Bill has been passed illegally by this Chamber in consequence of that action. My second objection to the passage of this Bill is that, as a member of the Church of England, I object to any other section of the community being taxed to teach my religion in State schools.

The PREMIER: Do you belong to the Church of England?

Mr. MURPHY: So far as this Bill is concerned, the Government have bludgeoned it through this Assembly, and in doing that they stated that they are carrying out the express will of the people in connection with this matter. And while bludgeoning this matter through this Assembly they have left matters of much more importance alone—matters which the Hon. the Premier promised the electors distinctly that he would pass. I know in my own district a married man with four children who lost both of his legs in connection with a mining accident, and we find to-day that under our Workers' Compensation Act he receives £1 a week. The Hon. the Premier distinctly promised, not only in Rockhampton but at various other places throughout Queensland, that there would be an amendment of that Act in the direction of giving at least half wages to people who were injured. I think that the leader of the Opposition is to be congratulated for the protest which he has made against this Bill. This Bill was put through the Assembly most shamefully. Reasonable amendments, which were proposed by members sitting in opposition, were resolutely refused by the Secretary for Public Instruction, and probably the most important amendment of the lot—that moved by the hon. junior member for Ipswich, Mr. Blair—that is, the conscience clause with regard to the teachers—was gagged through this Assembly. There was no opportunity afforded members to discuss that question at all. The Premier took advantage of the fact that he had a majority behind him to gag it through the Assembly. In other countries we have seen what has happened through clerical domination. In Queensland to-day there are certain clerics who are endeavouring to dominate this Assembly.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MURPHY: They have been abusing and attempting to terrify members of this Parliament ever since this question of Bible reading in State schools came into the political arena. So far as I am concerned, I say here definitely that I am not frightened of any clergyman dominating me. (Hear, hear!) I do not care what denomination they belong to, while I have anything to do with politics I will express my opinion in any way I like. I shall express the opinion which I think is the best one. The fact that a clergyman or the Bible in State Schools League may hold a big meeting and try to bring about my downfall at the next election will not worry me in the least. (Hear, hear!) It is simply shameful the way that certain clerics have been carrying on in Queensland. It is not going to do them any good, and it is not

*Mr. Murphy.]*

going to do Parliament any good either. The passage of this Bill through Parliament will simply mean the introduction of sectarian strife throughout Queensland, and the Government which gagged this proposal through the Assembly are responsible for it. I think myself, with the leader of the Opposition, that it would have been advisable if the Government had endeavoured to recommit this Bill and allow us to deal with that question of a conscience clause. Of course, we shall see in Queensland, as a result of the passage of this Bill, a number of passive resisters amongst the school teachers of the State. I do not wish to say any more but that the Bill has been passed illegally through this Chamber, as the hon. member for Drayton and Toowoomba was not competent to assist the Premier to gag it through the Chamber. I sincerely hope that we shall not have a Bill like this introduced here again. I am satisfied that as soon as this Bill has been passed through both Houses an agitation will be commenced for its repeal. The Secretary for Public Instruction, in speaking the other night, suggested that as soon as this Bill was passed through Parliament the matter would be allowed to drop. It will not be allowed to drop at all. We have been told that the agitation to get the Bible read in the State schools has been carried on in Queensland for the last twenty years.

Mr. MAY: Twenty-one years.

Mr. MURPHY: We have also been told that if the result of the last referendum had not been in favour of the proposal, that the people connected with that league would not have been satisfied with the verdict of the people. We know that in South Australia and in Victoria the Bible in State Schools Leagues are not satisfied with the result of the appeal made to the people. In Victoria the question has been submitted to the people on three occasions, and there is an agitation there on the part of the Bible in State Schools League to have it submitted again. So that when the Bible in State Schools League and the clerics controlling it talk about members flouting the will of the people and going back on their promises, they should recollect what the Bible in State Schools League in other parts of Australia have done in connection with this question.

Mr. COTTELL: You voted to send it to the people.

Mr. MURPHY: If I voted to send it to the people, I also voted to try to keep it away from the people. The question of how I voted has got nothing to do with the subject under discussion now.

Mr. COTTELL: It is a sore point with you.

Mr. MURPHY: It is not a sore point with me, because, since the House decided on that referendum, there have been two elections; and on each occasion I stated that it did not matter how the referendum went, whether I went into Parliament or stopped out, I was against Bible teaching in State schools, and I was going to oppose it whenever it came up. Anyhow, I voted against this Bill all through. I opposed it all through, and I am pleased to-day to be able to have another opportunity of recording my vote against it. The hon. member for Toowoong made a certain interjection just now. Of course, it is possible that he will get up directly and defend his action in connection with it. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. COTTELL: I was ready to let it go to the people, and I am prepared to carry out the will of the people.

[Mr. Murphy.]

Mr. MURPHY: All that the hon. member for Toowoong is able to do is to walk in and vote for the gag.

The PREMIER: I have seen you doing the same thing yourself.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: And he enjoyed it, too.

Mr. LESINA: You do not believe in this Bill.

Mr. MURPHY: If the Premier would only speak up I would reply to him. This is the third reading of the Bill, and, as I said on the second reading, if I felt inclined to vote for it at all, after listening to the speech delivered by the Premier I would vote against it, because he delivered what I might call an atheistic speech.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MURPHY: After listening to the Premier dealing with this question, I certainly would never be inclined to vote for it. If I am opposed to it, then the Premier is as much to blame as anyone, for he made a most convincing speech against the Bill.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MURPHY: If there is an agitation started against this Bill we might do the same as the farmers sitting in this Chamber have done. The farmers' party, at their last meeting, decided to have copies of the speech of the Secretary for Lands distributed—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I hope the hon. member will confine himself to the question before the House.

Mr. MURPHY: I was just trying to point out that the Premier made a most convincing speech against this Bill. He pointed out all the evils that would ensue from the passage of such a Bill, and yet he used his majority to bludgeon it through the Assembly, and I was suggesting that when I come to deal with this question in any other place in Queensland I will take the Premier's speech with me, and say, "Ladies and gentlemen,—If any of you think that this will be a good thing, I am sure that if you will only read the speech delivered in the Legislative Assembly by Mr. Premier Kidston, then you will feel thoroughly convinced that it is a bad thing to introduce at all."

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MURPHY: I think it was a bad thing to introduce it at all. The Secretary for Public Instruction has been most courteous throughout the whole proceedings while this Bill has been going through, but that does not justify the introduction of the Bill at all. The Secretary for Public Instruction and the senior member for Townsville are the only two members of this Chamber who ever said that they believed in Bible reading in State schools.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: That is not correct.

Mr. MURPHY: So far as I recollect, they are the only two.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: No; I heard another member advocate it the other night.

Mr. MURPHY: Almost every member on the Government side of the House has said, during the discussion of the question whether the matter should be put to the people or not, that they were absolutely opposed to any alteration of our present educational system. However, the matter has been bludgeoned through Parliament, and in a very short time I suppose it will pass the other House, and

this alteration in our school system will take place. As the Minister for Lands pointed out not very long ago, it will be a sad day for Queensland when the Government does anything to alter our present system of education.

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*): As this will probably be the last opportunity that members will have of voting against this Bill—to protest against the fundamental principles of it—I propose to take full advantage of it. Ever since I have been connected with political life, it has been my endeavour to keep the Church and State for ever separate.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LESINA: That has been ever my guiding principle, and here, after twelve years' battling in this Chamber, because of a strange and fortuitous series of political accidents that have gathered together on that front Treasury bench a number of politicians who, in order to keep office, will truckle, and truckle, and truckle, into the very gutter itself to keep there—

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. LESINA: In addition to passing legislation of one kind or another, they lay sacrilegious hands on our system of public education—a system erected by men of genius and intellect whose boots they are not fit to clean.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LESINA: I am surprised that a Government can be found guilty of laying sacrilegious hands on our system of education. If there is one thing that the people should guard against, it is to see that they keep the teaching of our young children free from any sectarian influence, and allow them to be free from this accursed system of religious education. With the system of religious instruction covered by this particular Bill, anyone who believes in religious tolerance at all will see that it will lead to all sorts of evil, and I must express my deep disgust at the fact that a democratic Government could find it possible to introduce such a measure.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Democratic? Allegedly democratic. (Government laughter.)

Mr. LESINA: Allegedly democratic Government could find it in accordance with their conscience to introduce such religious legislation. They say they are doing this because a certain number of people in the country voted on this question. The people were asked the question—

Are you in favour of the introduction of the New South Wales system of Bible lessons in State schools?

And the Women's Electoral League the other day had occasion to express thankfulness that the proposal was carried by a majority of 17,000 people. They said that it was carried by the people, and by a majority of 17,000 people. But we know that 150,000 people did not vote at all at that referendum.

Mr. COTTELL: Why?

Mr. LESINA: Because they took the Premier's advice. He said that those who were conscientiously opposed to the introduction of the Bible into the State schools should not vote at all. He said they should keep away from the polling-booth altogether.

The PREMIER: That is not what the Premier said.

Mr. FERRICKS: The Premier will say anything he is told.

Mr. LESINA: He told the people who did not believe in it not to vote.

The PREMIER: Those whose conscience would not let them.

Mr. LESINA: These people who did not vote should be considered, and they will be considered, too, before very long, because those of us who are opposed to religious teaching in our schools will have to keep it alive. Just as assuredly as those who firmly and sincerely believed in it kept it alive, so also we who firmly and sincerely are opposed to it must keep it alive. Just as those who sincerely and strenuously fought for it until they secured it, so shall we have to work strenuously to defeat it. They would not have brought this question to Sir Thomas Mellwraith if he were the Premier. They would not have come to Sir S. W. Griffith with it. They would not have come to Sir Charles Lilley or to Mr. J. M. Macrossan or to half a dozen other men who loom head and shoulders over the pigmies who occupy the front Treasury benches to-day. They were statesmen in those days. These men are not statesmen. They are mere political atoms, and the strings are pulled from the outside. But they are not going to pull me from the

outside to vote in favour of the [4 p.m.] measure of the Bible in State Schools League. I was inundated with literature on this subject circulated by the league. I got tons of it from Mr. Garland, but I did not recognise that he had any standing in the community in a matter of this kind; he was merely the catspaw of a number of agitators outside who desired to overthrow our present system of education. Mr. Garland sent letters to all those who were candidates at the last election, asking them for a pledge to vote in favour of this Bill. This is the pledge he asked candidates to sign—

Bible in State Schools.—In the event of the referendum under the Religious Instruction in State Schools Referendum Act of 1908 being in the affirmative, will you be prepared, if elected to Parliament, to give effect to the will of the people, as expressed by the referendum?

Write answer here (yes or no):

Name:

Address:

Electorate:

Numbers of them did sign that pledge, and then went back on it. I did not do that, and I do not think that any man who loves our national system of education and desires to preserve it, would do such a thing. Any man who does a thing of that kind knows that he would get into any amount of trouble, and no man would do it except the man who wanted to get a few votes. Most of the candidates who signed that pledge did so in order to shut Garland's mouth, and in the hope of gaining a few votes by his action. I say that a man who does that kind of thing does not deserve a seat in this House. I would rather see my right hand cut off than lift it to make an attack on our education system. The pity of the whole thing is that in this twentieth century, when we find nations in Europe tottering down in revolution—in red revolution—because of religious intolerance, we have this attempt to introduce religious teaching into our State schools. The promoters of the movement may be quite sincere in believing that it will be a good thing, but we must not forget that no matter how good may be their intentions, or how noble and philanthropic may be their desire, we are faced by the solemn fact that the opening of the door of our State schools to Christian teaching

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means the opening of the door to sectarianism. It cannot be disputed that to the Jew Christian teaching is sectarian, and as Jewish children attend our State schools they must withdraw, and must have the stigma that they are not Christians placed even more publicly upon their brow than it is now, that they are not Christians. And these are the people of whose nationality Christ was said to be. A good many men who signed the pledge demanded by the Bible in State Schools League have since been brought to book by the league. A meeting was held by the league in Mr. Rowe's church on Sunday afternoon to criticise those members who voted against the Bill, and to rejoice with the Government over the passage of the Bill through its second reading and Committee stages, to express appreciation of the noble stand the Premier took with regard to the Bill, and admiration of the action of the Minister for Education in sitting all night and part of two days to push the measure through under the operation of the gag. They congratulated themselves on the fact that their agitation had been successful, and made a list of those members who voted for the Bill and another list of those who voted against it, so that at election time they might use their clerical influence in the constituencies against those who opposed the measure. Is not that raising the spirit of sectarianism? They are going to try to down any man who voted against this Bill, and why? Because that man believed that the State and the Church should be kept separate in any community, especially in a community where there are so many creeds as there are in Queensland. This influence will very likely be exercised against myself and other members, if we seek the suffrages of the electors at the next election, and yet the advocates of the measure say it will not introduce sectarianism into our political institutions. Not only will the clerics use their influence against us in elections, but the thing will be brought up against us in everyday life. Therefore, those who object to this kind of thing must become passive resisters. We shall be taxed for the teaching of a system of religion in our primary schools that we do not believe in, and Mohammedans and Hindus and men of every creed and nationality will be taxed for the teaching of that system. On the eve of the last election I received the following letter from Mr. Garland:—

Brisbane, 13th September, 1909.

Dear Sir,—May I request you to be good enough to let me have a reply by telegram to my letter sending you a question asking if you were prepared to give effect to the will of the people as it may be expressed by the referendum on this subject.

I have already received promises from candidates of opposing political views, and expect that in most of the electorates all the candidates will give the promise. Where this is done by all the candidates in an electorate the effect is to leave our supporters perfectly free to vote for any candidate.

Yours sincerely,

DAVID J. GARLAND, Organising Secretary.

J. Lesina, Esq., M.L.A., Clermont.

Right on the eve of the election they sent me that letter, telling me that if I signed their pledge their supporters would be perfectly free to vote as they liked. I stated on the platform that I did not intend to send a reply, and I presume that because I did not send that reply the people of my constituency who belonged to the Bible in State Schools League were not free to vote as they chose, but had to vote for a man who

was in favour of religious instruction in State schools. Was that not an attempt at clerical dominance in an election? We should know neither creed nor class nor nationality nor anything else of that kind in an election, but that is only a sample of what we shall see if we introduce the sectarian spirit into our primary schools. If this Bill goes through, it will be the worst day's work that has ever been done in Queensland. The most dangerous enemy that democracy has got in Queensland is using his powerful influence to compel his party to pass this Bill, and I very much deplore the fact. The points I take in opposition to this Bill I desire to repeat once more, as I regard them as fundamental—fundamental to the issue of State and Church. We have seen how clerical influence has been exercised in order to obtain a promise from candidates at the last election, we have seen the character of the agitation in favour of this measure, and we are justified in concluding that, if successful in this instance, they will endeavour to influence and mould the political institutions of the State. There can be no question as to the tendency of this movement, and we must take up a very determined attitude with regard to it sooner or later. I hope and trust that every Australian Natives' Association, every native-born member of the community, will take up this matter, and make a vigorous stand against this attempted interference with our national system of education. It has not sprung from Australian natives; it is an old-world movement. It is one of those things which cling, like ivy, round their cathedrals and fanes and ancient superstitions, and our sunshine should kill it and wither it. I object to this Bill because (1) It is a violation of the Gospel principle of the separation of the Church and State. I take even a more extended view, a materialistic view, of the matter, but I do not desire to dwell upon that aspect of the question. I also object to the Bill because (2) it will necessarily infringe upon the rights of certain classes of citizens; (3) it will be a menace to religious freedom and a departure from that generous policy which has been a bulwark of our Government; (4) it will require the use of money, raised by compulsory taxation of all classes of citizens, which is contrary to the just principles of government; (5) it will necessarily establish a kind of State-theology, and ultimately make a religious test necessary for the holding of public trust as a teacher, which is a violation of the privileges of civil government; and (6) the teaching of religion does not belong to the State, but belongs to the home, to the church, and to the private school supported entirely by private contributions. I take those points, any one of which is fatal to the principle of this Bill. If the people who do not believe in this measure for introducing religious teaching into our State schools desire to appeal to the country against its injustice, I know of no better ground to go upon than the speech delivered by the Hon. the Premier in support of the Bill. I shall make just one quotation from his speech in justification of that view. The hon. gentleman took this view of the question; that he challenged the right of the parent to take his child and imprint on his plastic mind certain theological dogmas. That is a materialistic view. It is the view taken by those philosophers who teach materialism, and have no faith in revelation. I have here "The Martyrdom of Ferrier," by Joseph McCabe, from which I shall quote a short extract, showing that the Premier is really a disciple of Ferrier on the one hand—

[Mr. Lesina.



AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: And of Garland on the other.

MR. LESINA: And of Garland on the other, as far as the teaching of theology to children is concerned. The extract is as follows:—

As is notorious, the child is born without any preconceived idea, and in the course of life it imbibes the ideas of those who first surround it, modifying them afterwards according to its culture, observations, and relation to its environment. It clearly follows that, if the child be educated in true, positive ideas about all things, and taught that, to avoid errors, it is indispensable that it should accept nothing on faith, but only what science can demonstrate, the child will grow up with its powers of observation sharpened and with an aptitude for all kinds of study. . . . To educate children with freedom from prejudice . . . the whole value of education consists in respect of the physical, intellectual, and moral will of the child. . . . The true teacher is he who can defend the child against his own will and ideas, making his appeal in increasing measure to the energies of the child himself.

That is entirely in harmony with what the hon. gentleman said in his speech in favour of this Bill. He recognised that to give to the clergy the control of children in their early infancy, when the mind is plastic and they are filled with wonder and surprise at every new thing, they can be influenced for their whole lives. The churches to-day are half empty. I go in occasionally and look at them, and I see that there are about ten women for every one man.

THE PREMIER: Have you never noticed that peculiarity in theatres?

MR. LESINA: Not unless there was a very poor play on. Then the audience was necessarily limited. I do not know whether the knowledge or entertainment provided in the churches is of such a character as to deter the people from attending church, but the fact remains that there is not one person in every five—if the percentage is so high—in the community who goes to church to-day. Even if theatrical methods are adopted to attract the people, as is done by Mr. Rowe, the attendance at churches generally is very poor. The churches are evidently not concerned about boys and girls of thirteen or fourteen years of age and upwards who are employed in our factories, and do not get them to attend church; but they want to catch the children when very young, and inculcate them with the virus of their pestilential theological notions, believing that they will afterwards remain attached to the churches and keep them what they have been for centuries. I say that, if that is their idea. I am not a bit surprised that they want to throw wide open the doors of our State schools to men like Garland and his tribe, but it is not going to be a good thing for Queensland. I believe in absolute intellectual freedom in this matter. Let the child elect his own particular faith later on, if the time comes when he feels it morally necessary, but to take our State schools, which are free to all, and supported by the taxpayers, and to hand them over to sections of one class to teach their fragmentary theological opinions, most of which have been rejected by philosophers, is to my mind a dangerous experiment. The argument is sometimes raised that the result of our system of education is not so satisfactory as it is in other States, but the children turned out by the Queensland schools justify me in believing that our system is an excellent one. (Hear, hear!) Will the Premier, who is with us to some extent, although he agrees with this Bill because the majority of the people favour it—will he, as he promised,

or as he indicated the other day, make some effort to set at rest the minds of those people who appear to be agitated over the growing immorality of these children? It is said that one reason why they have asked for this legislation is because the Queensland children are immoral. That is with Christian teaching, with churches at every corner, Sunday schools in every direction, and scores of theologians engaged in the business—with lay preachers like the Minister for Public Instruction, and his brother the hon. member for Warwick, ever preaching throughout the land. Yet they state to-day that our children are growing up as pagans, immoral, and degenerate. The statement goes to Great Britain, France, Germany, and America, that all over Queensland children are growing up immoral and degenerate.

MR. COLLINS: The Scottish Agricultural Commissioners do not say so—they say they are the finest-looking children they have seen.

MR. LESINA: The Scottish Agricultural Commissioners say that because they have no axe to grind. It is a serious thing to have these statements made. I pointed out in a question I asked the Premier the other day that statistics show that our children are as good as children in any other part of the world—that in the possession of those faculties which go to make up a moral childhood the children of Queensland are as good as any other children. And this statement, made by clericals, who by that statement alone publicly confess their failure in the teaching of the children, should induce the Premier to deny the statements on the first public occasion that offers. But I do not believe there is any truth in it. The complaint has been made for a particular purpose; first and foremost, to induce people to believe that the home has failed, the Sunday school has failed, the church has failed. Then they come to the State, and ask Mr. Kidston, as head of the Government—as head of the State—to lend them the State schools, and the State school servants.

MR. FERRICKS: And he said, "Yes," if you will vote for us at the Federal elections.

MR. LESINA: They had said to the Premier, "We have thumped our Bibles in our pulpits till our hands are sore, we have walked up and down to our Sunday schools until our boots are worn out, we have availed ourselves of such lay assistance as we can get, until we are tired; in the homes it has been a failure, and it is a failure in the church and in the Sunday school, and now, in order that we may rescue the children of Queensland from the headlong ruin ahead upon which they appear to be bent, we ask you to allow us to use the State schools and the State school teachers to teach our fundamental beliefs." Is not that a confession of failure, of incompetence, of cowardice, and, above all things, a confession that the only way to succeed in making Christians fill their churches is to get the children young in their State schools, and force them to imbibe the fundamental principles of their theology in their young minds? Was there ever a more humiliating confession of abject failure stamped upon the face of any movement since man began to talk about progressive ideas? The Premier has not advanced an argument as to why he should open our State school doors to this teaching. If we pass this stage of the Bill, it will be putting our seal of approval on the last effort made. If it goes through this Chamber, there is a hope that it will not go through another. The men up there are not swayed

*Mr. Lesina.]*



by popular sentiment, nor swayed by clerical domination; they are not to be bludgeoned to their knees and compelled to sign a pledge in the hope of securing an odd theological vote here and there. I should rejoice to see them reject this measure.

The PREMIER: There is hope in the House of Lords yet.

Mr. LESINA: Yes; there is hope in the House of Lords yet. If they take such an attitude in connection with this measure, I should very much feel inclined to abate some of my hostility to that Chamber. (Laughter.) I should be inclined to call a halt to the agitation for its abolition for a year or two. (Laughter.) I do not know that I should break off altogether. The papers say that one vote will settle this measure. How that vote will go, I do not know. I certainly think the leader of the Opposition took the right attitude in making this final protest this afternoon, and I trust that he will push the protest to its logical conclusion by dividing the Chamber.

Mr. FERRICKS (*Bowen*): Seeing that circumstances over which I had no control prevented me from speaking on the second reading of the Bill, I will not occupy any great length of time in making another protest on the final opportunity which presents itself. Like the hon. member for Clermont, I have been the recipient of pledges framed and forwarded by the Rev. D. J. Garland, and it would have been a very simple matter for me to have signed "Yes" or "No." There was a blank left for either word. The envelope was addressed and stamped, and all that was necessary was to write the single word "Yes" or "No," and my action was to promptly tear it in pieces and put it into the wastepaper basket. The most astounding aspect of this question to me has been not only the wishy-washy speech with which it was introduced by the Minister for Education, but the weak speech with which it was followed by the Premier, and I think I can justify our opposition to this measure throughout the piece in no better way than by briefly recapitulating some of the arguments advanced by the Premier in his speech on the second reading. He told us plainly that he would expect a teacher when teaching Bible lessons in State schools to impart his opinions to the pupil consciously or unconsciously. He said if a teacher were an agnostic, he would impart his agnosticism to the pupil; if he were a Jew, he would impart those opinions to the children, and similarly right through the various denominations. Now that, to my mind, is altogether at variance with the desires of the people who have advocated this proposal, and who have been the means of having it brought before this Chamber, for they do not want any agnostic teacher to impart agnosticism to any pupil. They do not want any Jewish teacher to impart his particular opinions to the children of any persuasion to bring them to his way of thinking; and in the same way the thing applies right through the piece. If there is one salient objection more than another it was the rejection of the proposal which emanated from the junior member for Ipswich last Friday, asking that a conscience clause should be reserved to the teachers in our State and Provisional schools. In all consistency the Minister for Education and the Government should have accepted that amendment. They have already provided a conscience clause for pupils, or for the parents of pupils, and it would only have

[*Mr. Lesina.*

been a fair thing for them to have accorded the same right to teachers. That is to say, if a teacher wished to impart Biblical knowledge to his pupils he could do so; but, if he had conscientious objections to doing so, he should not be forced to teach. But we find that the Minister, in a lame sort of way, said that he could not accept the amendment, because it was not in vogue in other States of the Commonwealth—that is to say, they have no conscience clause in New South Wales or Western Australia, if I remember rightly.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Did he not say something more than that, too?

Mr. FERRICKS: No; I was straining my ears to endeavour to catch any argument of the Minister in charge of the Bill against the acceptance of the conscience clause, but I was unable to do it.

Mr. PAYNE: He adduced no argument.

Mr. FERRICKS: If it is logical that we should never advance—or, if New South Wales and Western Australia should wish to commit national suicide, is that any reason why we should follow them? That was the argument of the Minister boiled down. We contend that he admitted the argument which he denounced, and showed that teachers in the State schools would avail themselves of the privilege of being exempt—that is to say, they would object from conscientious and other reasons to imparting knowledge on Biblical questions. To accept that argument is to accept one of the best that could be advanced against the whole proposal, because it has been acknowledged by the Minister that 50 per cent. of them would not teach it at any price. Why should we force it upon them? That has been the whole contention of the Minister, in his very lame attempts in refuting the advocacy of the hon. member for Ipswich. There is another aspect. It is very apparent that the steps which the Premier has taken in this connection are not of his own free will—so he has given us to understand. Then it is reasonable for us to ask him, as the nominal head of the Government, why should he do it in order to please any organisation or league? The thing is intolerable. The people in a league outside have put themselves over the Parliament and Government of Queensland. They have held caucus meetings with all due pomp and array, and they have given the Premier and the Government to understand that if they do not take action in the direction they wish, then the Government, and the Premier in particular, would hear more about it. Since they have seen that it is probable that this measure will pass the Assembly, these worthy people have turned their attention to the Legislative Council, and, although they realise that bounce is no good there, they are depending on the fact that the majority in that House are favourable to their proposal—in that many of the latter appointees to the Upper House are rabid Kidstonians—and the Bible in State Schools League realise that while they have been appointed because they have been subject to the Kidstonian Government, they have the Premier to thank for their appointment and that they will obey his desires in this connection. Now the attitude of this party is not an anti-religious or a bigoted or a biased one. We aim at a tolerant view of these things. We say that the people of Queensland should be treated fairly and justly—creeds and nationalities all alike—special favours to none, but fair treatment to all. When the Premier, through his

deputy, the Minister for Education, gagged this conscience clause in the Assembly last week, that, in my opinion, won the next election for the Labour party, because we can go to the country and say that the Premier, who, on his own showing, is opposed to Bible reading in State schools—who does not believe in the Bible at all from his own showing in this Chamber, who has no sympathy with the proposal—went to the extreme step of bludgeoning and gagging the conscience clause in the Assembly in face of the opposition shown by the representatives of the people. Now, what are we to think of gentlemen on the opposite side of the House who are very outspoken in their comments outside this Chamber regarding such

[4.30 p.m.] a measure? We have had them airing their knowledge through the Press and on the platform, and what do they do when they come in this Chamber? They vote at the dictation or desire of the Premier and his servile followers. We have better ground than that to go on. We say that we can go before the country and advocate that no sectarian differences should be introduced into this fair Australia of ours. We should rise superior to that sort of thing, and the only way we can bring our young nation up to the standard which we desire is to have a speedy return to our splendid system of secular education which has stood the test of thirty-five years, and which, I venture to say, would have stood another thirty-five years. And more than that, if it had not been for the fact that we have a servile Premier—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. FERRICKS: Who, in his desire to cling to office, has kowtowed to the Bible in State Schools League on the one side, has made every vain endeavour to get support from the other people, while, as mentioned by the hon. member for Clermont, if we had a statesman in Queensland to-day at the head of affairs, what would have been his reply to those deputations and those intimidation meetings which have been held—do you think it would have been to submit to those people? During the last few years—ever since the hon. gentleman has been at the head of affairs—he has kowtowed first to the right and then to the left—first to the Bible in State Schools League and then to the Licensed Victuallers' Association. At the beginning of this session he propounded proposals to give three sops to these people. First the Bible in State Schools Bill, next the Police Offences Bill, and finally the Licensing Bill, and he has made such good progress with this thing—he has given these people one of their sops, and he thinks it is a good thing to drop the other two. He will drop the Licensing Bill, and he will be palliating the Licensed Victuallers' Association. We contend that this is not statesmanship, as mentioned by the hon. member for Clermont. It is the practice of a discredited politician. I say this party has nothing to fear. We do not want another referendum on this matter. The next referendum will be when we go to the country at the next election, and we are prepared to go to the country on this issue, that we should allow fair play to all creeds and all nationalities and special favours to none.

Mr. McLACHLAN (*Fortitude Valley*): As this is the last opportunity we shall have of saying a word on this amendment of the Education Act, I desire to enter my emphatic

protest against the third reading of the Bill. Ever since I have been in this House, and at each stage, when this measure, or a similar measure, was introduced into this House, I have opposed it. I have taken every opportunity I can find of endeavouring to prevent the passage of this measure through this Chamber, and to prevent any interference at all with our present system of education. In that, I and others who have taken up that attitude, have been unsuccessful. We were not able to defeat the Bill on its second reading. We then took the next best course offering to us, and that was to endeavour to amend the Bill in Committee in such a way that would make it a better Bill than it is at the present time, but we have not been able to amend it at all. I am convinced, by the attitude taken up by the Secretary for Public Instruction in connection with that measure, and by the Premier and supporters of the Government, that it is absolutely useless to attempt to amend at any time any Bill brought into this House, and it appears to me that no opportunity is to be afforded to members on the Opposition side of the House of introducing amendments after any measure is submitted for their consideration.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: We accepted some of your amendments.

The PREMIER: Every reasonable one.

Mr. McLACHLAN: The Minister accepted two amendments from this side of the House. One was the insertion of the words "or guardian," which practically meant parents, and left the clause as it was, and the other was an inconsequential amendment—an amendment in which the word "separate" was inserted, which provided that a separate reading book will now be used. Those are the only amendments the Minister was prepared to accept from this side of the House. Whether he will accept any amendments in another place, I do not know. We put forward several amendments on this side of the House which would have had the effect of materially improving the measure. One amendment which was suggested, and which was moved by the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Blair,—the conscience clause for teachers—was one which should have been accepted. I think it is a most unfair thing for any Government to compel the persons who are engaged in the Education Department to give religious instruction in the State schools against their own inclination. The hon. member refused to accept that amendment and one or two other amendments which were proposed. The Minister said he could not accept them—would not accept them—and stated that in the other States where religious instruction is included in the educational system no such provisions were inserted in the Act. Still, it was pointed out conclusively from this side of the House that two amendments suggested are to be found in the New South Wales and Western Australian Acts. I refer to the amendment which would have the effect of making it compulsory that there should be at least four hours' secular instruction in our schools. That clause is in the New South Wales Act. I quoted the clause and showed the Minister that the clause was there. Another amendment we suggested was the one moved by the hon. member for Bowen, that the children who are to receive religious instruction would have to receive it separate from the other children of the school. That clause also is to be found in the New South Wales and Western Australian Acts. If that amendment had been accepted the Bill would have had the effect of

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providing for the children—particularly children attending one-room schools—a special room for them. At the present time in one-room schools there is only one teacher and there is no possibility of separating them at the time the religious instruction is being given—there is no other teacher to take up the curriculum to those children who have conscientious reasons for not receiving religious instruction—there is no way at all in the one-room schools for the children who do not participate in this religious instruction getting other education, and it means that that time will be lost to those children.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Do you know there are 1,600 one-room schools in New South Wales?

MR. McLACHLAN: Quite so, and the New South Wales Act says the instruction must be separate, and provides a way whereby those children shall receive secular instruction while the religious instruction is going on. There is no such provision in our Act. It seems to me that the Bill was brought to its Committee stage with the full determination, by the power of the members sitting behind the Government, of carrying it through as it was presented to the House, so where was the use of the Committee stage at all? The hon. gentleman might just as well, when he introduced the first clause, have said, "Here is the Bill. It does not matter what amendments you move, we are not going to accept them." That, in effect, is what took place. The Minister sat there in his place and declined to accept amendment after amendment moved by this side of the House, except the two inconsequential ones which I referred to. The Secretary for Public Instruction knows full well that the amendments accepted did not affect the provisions of the Bill.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: You said I did not accept any of them.

MR. McLACHLAN: I am quite prepared to admit the wonderful magnanimity of the Secretary for Public Instruction when he accepted those two amendments.

THE PREMIER: And yet you are not satisfied.

MR. McLACHLAN: I am not satisfied when our education system is interfered with in the way proposed.

MR. FERRICKS: You will find the country is not satisfied.

MR. McLACHLAN: I could take up a good deal of time in talking on this measure—I understand under the Sessional Orders I could take half an hour—but I am satisfied on this point: My action at the present time on the third reading is not going to have the effect, I fear, of preventing its passage. The Premier himself has no belief in any interference with our educational system. He stated in his second-reading speech that he believed our educational system has given satisfaction and it should not be interfered with, but simply because a certain section of the people of Queensland—a minority of the people of Queensland—have decided that this alteration should take place, then the Premier is prepared to sink his own opinion and to sink his desire not to alter our present educational system, and is now carrying an amendment of the Act through this House at the instigation of a few people who worked up an agitation.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: And who obtained a very big majority.

MR. McLACHLAN: The Premier stated in his second-reading speech that he knows full well that this will have the effect of stirring

[Mr. McLachlan.

up sectarianism in Queensland—in reply to an interjection of mine he made that admission—and I think it is a great pity that the hon. gentleman who leads the Government and the responsible Minister at the head of the department should be a party to any amendment of our Educational Act which will have the effect of stirring up this sectarian element, and will be felt at every election time throughout the length and breadth of Queensland. As pointed out by the hon. member for Clermont, already, before we had the amending Bill introduced at all, sectarianism was introduced into the last election by reason of certain statements having been made by a gentleman—a leading light in this particular body who have fathered this agitation right through—to candidates, that if they did not sign a pledge submitted to them, they would feel compelled to interfere with a number of those persons who were adherents of their particular league in the way in which they should vote. I received numbers of those letters in the way other hon. members received them, and, whether it was considered courteous or discourteous, I declined to answer any one of them. At an election time, when an hon. member is seeking the suffrages of his constituents, he is on the platform to be shot at, and any person in the community who has a desire to ask a candidate a question, that is the place he should ask it, and not pester him with letters—and threats at that. I do not propose to take up any further time, and, in conclusion, enter my most emphatic protest against any alteration of our present educational system, and if the deputy leader of the Opposition calls for a division, and I hope he will, I will be found voting against the third reading of the Bill.

THE PREMIER: When the deputy leader of the Opposition made a formal protest against the third reading of this Bill, I thought that was all right. When the leader of the other section—I suppose he is the leader of the other section—also made a protest against the third reading of the Bill, I thought it might be all right. But I hardly think this is the time for a general discussion on the principle of the measure. The hon. member for Clermont made a very lively speech—a very good speech—and with a great portion of it I entirely agree, but he had this misfortune—that he was making his speech at the wrong time. It was of no consequence at all. His arguments ought to have been addressed to the men and women outside who settled this question.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

THE PREMIER: And not to this House at all.

MR. FOLEY: You did not give us a chance.

THE PREMIER: This House has no right to settle this question except to give effect to the wishes of their masters, the people of Queensland. What I wish to point out is that probably no Bill which I have seen before this Chamber has been so improperly hindered on its third reading as this Bill.

MR. LESINA: It is a very important Bill, and makes a big departure.

THE PREMIER: It is a very important Bill, a Bill on which men feel very strongly. But it is a Bill which has been brought in and gone through in this House under these circumstances: That in the House, and in caucus meeting, and in personal conversation with members on this side of the House, it has

been announced repeatedly that no man was under any obligation to the Government to vote in any way for this Bill.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FERRICKS: You do have caucus meetings, then?

The PREMIER: So far as this side of the Chamber is concerned, the Bill has been absolutely non-party.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: That is so.

Mr. LESINA: There are not ten men over there who believe in this departure.

The PREMIER: Although it is a very important Bill—important in the sense that men feel very strongly on it—that men have conscientious opinions about it on one side or the other—I wonder that hon. gentlemen opposite, who take so much credit to themselves for having conscientious views on this matter, cannot understand that there may be men who differ with them—who may also have conscientious views on the matter.

Mr. LESINA: The Minister for Education has; you have not.

The PREMIER: Hon. members opposite cannot understand that. These hon. gentlemen who talk about toleration cannot have a little toleration in supposing that men who differ from them may be just as conscientious as themselves. In any case, imputations have been made about the clerical influence that has dominated the Government.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: And we have been told about the undue influence on members on this side.

Mr. LESINA: There has been clerical domination. We will have the rack and thumb-screw next.

The PREMIER: These things are very nasty charges when they are true, but they are quite innocuous when there is nothing in them at all.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: And I do not pay the slightest attention to them. I only point out that this Bill has come before this House, has been discussed in this House, and has been settled in this House on absolutely non-party lines.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: No man was constrained in any way at all to vote one way or the other on this Bill. At least no man on this side was constrained by the Government, and if any man has been constrained on the other side he can speak for himself. But no man has been constrained on this side of the House. Yet, despite that fact, it is patent to everyone that the Bill has gone through the House by a very large majority.

Mr. FERRICKS: A very servile majority.

The PREMIER: Servile to whom?

Mr. FERRICKS: To the Bible in State Schools League.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: Get out. (Laughter.)

Mr. LESINA: Of course you are.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: Rot! Absurd. (Laughter.)

The PREMIER: No person need be servile or under the dictation of the Bible in State Schools League unless they wish to be.

Mr. KEOGH: I know I am not. (Laughter.)

The PREMIER: At the same time, it is just as permissible for a member of this House to be under the domination of the Bible in State Schools League as to be under the domination of, say, the Workers' Political Organisation of Bundaberg. (Government laughter.)

Mr. FERRICKS: That is a great admission. That is the first thing you have admitted yet.

The PREMIER: In the long and wearisome discussion we have had, there was scarcely one argument used that was not out of place in this House. Those arguments would have been quite proper to address to the electors who were going to settle the matter; but, they having settled it, I venture to assert that they were quite out of place

[5 p.m.] here, while admitting that this is an important Bill. The Land Bill is also a very important Bill of 205 clauses, involving many complicated and difficult problems in lands administration, and this Bill of only one clause had already taken up on its second reading more than twice the time the Land Bill took before the closure was applied.

Mr. COLLINS: In a despotic way.

The PREMIER: Members spent on the second reading of this Bill twice the time that was spent on the Land Bill.

Mr. MULLAN: Why didn't you give us a chance to discuss the Mines Regulation Bill?

The PREMIER: And, further, time equal to three ordinary sittings of the House was occupied on the one clause of this Bill in Committee before the closure was applied.

Mr. FERRICKS: What is more important than the education of a country, anyhow?

The PREMIER: Well, after all that discussion, the Bill went through, and went through with very large majorities—unusually large majorities. Do hon. members think they can introduce anything new this afternoon which is likely to make this House change its opinion?

Mr. MULLAN: You have not told us anything new yourself.

The PREMIER: The House has decided by a large majority in favour of this Bill, and the country has decided by a large majority.

Mr. FERRICKS: The country will decide against it next time.

The PREMIER: The country has decided by a very large majority in favour of it, so what can be hoped for from prolonging the discussion on the third reading of the Bill? No good possible. The only thing that will happen will be that it will shorten the time set apart for the discussion of the Local Authorities Bill.

Mr. THEODORE: What time has been set apart?

The PREMIER: I am not only referring to the second reading of the Local Authorities Bill. The second reading of that Bill is, or should be, a purely formal matter, and may go through in five minutes, but it will shorten the time set apart for the discussion on the Committee stages of the Bill.

Mr. FERRICKS: What does it matter? What is the use of Committee stage when you will not accept any amendments from this side?

The PREMIER: I suggest to the House that, however strongly a man may feel on this matter, recognising what the position is, they should boil their protest down, come to a vote, and have done with it.

*Hon. W. Kidston.]*

Mr. KEOGH (*Rosewood*): The Premier stated that there was nothing put forward to make any of his followers vote any way than as they thought proper. With that statement I quite agree. But at the same time I think that the Premier and members of the Government were decidedly wrong in putting this measure through by the gag. I must decidedly enter my protest against that.

Mr. LESINA: You are not frightened of Garland.

Mr. KEOGH: No, I am not. (Laughter.) I am not frightened of Garland or Rowe or any other man. (Laughter.) My object in asking that question this afternoon in regard to the constitution of the committee that has been appointed to carry out the Bible in State school lessons—namely, Messrs. Canny, Kennedy, Papi, Exley, and Fowles—is this: It has been stated in this House that one of those gentlemen was an agnostic. I am thoroughly conversant with this fact—that one of those gentlemen has been a renegade to the religion he was brought up under; so what could you expect from a man of that kind? Certainly nothing. I suggest Messrs. Canny and Kennedy retire from their positions, and allow Messrs. Garland and Rowe to occupy their places on that committee, and we will then thoroughly well know where we are going to and what they are going to do. So far as Mr. Canny is concerned, I think he is making an egregious mistake in accepting a position on that committee, because he is bound to be outvoted, and it will be said afterwards, “You were one of the parties there to arrange that these Bible in State school lessons were not hurtful to any denomination.” Now, he should take the advice of the parties to whom he should belong, and retire from the position and allow them to carry out their own dirty work. With regard to the conscience clause which was brought forward the other evening by the hon. member for Ipswich, I regret that it was not accepted. Why was it not accepted? Simply because they do not want any Roman Catholics to occupy the position of school teacher in the State service, and we know that they will try their best to keep them out of the positions altogether.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: You are making a misstatement.

Mr. KEOGH: It will be no use their making an application for a position as school teacher, because in every instance they will be knocked out. That is one of the great questions that has stirred up the people belonging to my denomination, and we know they will soon put their foot down on them, and there will be no giving them a place in the Education Department. I will read an extract here to show that the Lutherans are resisting the proposed referendum in Victoria. This appears under the heading of “Proposed Scripture Lessons.” “Proposed Referendum in Victoria.” “Resisted by Lutherans.” It reads as follows:—

From many quarters have come strongly-worded protests against the attempt of the sectaries to capture the Education Act by making it a subtle machine for proselytism. The latest is the following from the Lutheran body. It is known that the Congregationalists, with a few exceptions, are also opposed to this first instalment of a State church.

In passing it may be said that the effort of the puppet of the sectarians, Mr. Swinburne, to talk on the referendum to the new Education Bill is foredoomed to failure. In fact, the Bill nearly wrecked the Government, Ministers just escaping

defeat by reporting progress. The measure has, therefore, been shelved till after the delivery of the Budget.

#### THE LUTHERAN SYNOD'S PROTEST.

The Evangelical Lutheran Synod in Australia (Eastern district) has, through Messrs. J. F. Noack (Nativumuk) and H. D. Mensing (Murtoa), forwarded a circular to the members of the State Parliament appealing to them to resist Mr. Swinburne's proposal for a referendum on the subject of Scripture lessons in State schools. The synod claims that an attempt is being made, under cover of a referendum, to violate the principles upon which religious liberty and equity are based. It protests that the State has no right to claim any authority in matters of conscience and religion, and explains its view that a referendum would give an eventual majority the right to place religious teaching in the hands of the State.

It is impossible, the synod further urges, to give religious instruction of an undenominational character. The introduction of Bible lessons in any shape into State schools would, it says, be the first step towards establishing a State religion, and the outcome would be religious intolerance and endless religious strife. The synod also points out that the Constitution of Victoria and the Commonwealth guarantees perfect liberty in religious affairs, and in its circular adds—

“If the State pays for the teaching of religious truths approved of by only a section of the community, it would also, in order to deal justly and equitably, have to help to maintain the religious teaching of all its various dissenting citizens, including Catholics, Jews, Mohammedans, etc., etc. By such a course the State would, however, go beyond the limit of its duties, and also do injustice to all those who are adherents of no religion at all.

“Any religious community that wishes religion to be included in the regular school course should found and maintain its own schools, and thus pay for its religious instruction out of its own funds, without placing this burden upon the conscience of others. But whoever wishes to make use of the State schools should ask for no more than instruction in purely secular subjects.

“When considering this question, it should be borne in mind that the present Act permits ministers of religion, and others who wish, to enter the State schools at certain hours and impart religious instruction to those who desire it. That is all that any citizen can—and ought to—reasonably expect.”

That is the view taken by the Lutherans in Victoria, and I am perfectly satisfied that it is the view held by that section of the community in Queensland.

Mr. GRAYSON: What are you quoting from?

Mr. KEOGH: From the *Freeman's Journal*, which I suppose the hon. member will admit is a good journal. I think it is a very great mistake that this measure has been introduced. That it is a very great mistake has been clearly shown by many members on the other side of the House. I must confess that members on this side have not shown that it is a mistake, because they have been very reticent throughout its discussion, though they have voted solidly on every question that has been put to a division, and voted in the same way whatever may be their private opinions on the matter. I have spoken to some members on this side, and they have told me that they are personally opposed to the Bill, but that in view of the voting at the referendum they feel compelled to support it. The Referendum Act was a mistake, and I never voted for it, because I knew that under it the sectarian devil would crop up, as it has already done. I believe this House is going to pass the Bill, and all I have to say is that I hope hon. gentlemen in the other House will do their duty and throw it out, and so earn the blessing of the people of Queensland. The other evening I had the honour

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and pleasure of attending a dinner at Ipswich given to the Scottish Commission. One of the leading men of Ipswich made a speech, from which I shall quote a brief extract, and I shall quote from the *Courier*, as the portion to which I refer was not reported in the local paper. It is as follows:—

In conclusion, he assured the commissioners that Queenslanders would welcome settlers of their own blood, men with the same thoughts, desires, and faiths, who would help in making this a country to be proud of.

What does that mean?

Mr. HODGE: Faith in the country.

Mr. KEOGH: No; that is not its meaning, and that shows you that this is the thin end of the wedge in this sectarian business. They want men of the same faith, and nobody else need apply.

Mr. HODGE: Not at all; you are absolutely wrong.

Mr. KEOGH: I am not absolutely wrong.

Mr. HODGE: You are absolutely wrong.

Mr. KEOGH: That is my interpretation of the word, and I am not the only one who interprets it in that way. Why should the local paper leave out the expression if they did not know it was wrong? I regret very much that this matter should have arisen, for it has been the means of creating a great deal of ill-feeling between certain sections of the community. I trust that my view of the matter will not be borne out by experience, and that no sectarian strife will be engendered by the passage of this Bill. Though it is supposed that I was supported in my election by the party occupying the Treasury bench and by other members on this side of the House, I can safely assert that one of the People's Progressive League ladies went up to Rosewood and did all she possibly could to knock me out. That is a fact. My hon. friend the member for Burnett and I are very good friends. We fought our battle on a former occasion fairly and honourably, without religious feeling.

Mr. HODGE: No; we didn't.

Mr. KEOGH: No word or action of mine could be said to introduce religion into the contest.

Mr. HODGE: Any question of religion that was brought up was brought up by you.

Mr. KEOGH: I did not raise the religious question. However, we are still good friends, and I hope we shall continue so till the end. No man in this House has suffered more from religious bigotry than I have, so that I have reason to feel what it means, and no doubt I shall feel it in the near future, even more than I have done in the past. However, I have a broad back, and, whether I am supported by the present Administration or not, I am prepared to take the responsibility of my action with regard to this education question, and I say it was wrong to introduce it.

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Charters Towers*): I do not intend to speak at great length on the third reading of this measure, but, as I had not an opportunity of speaking on the second reading, I propose to make a few remarks on this occasion. The Premier asked what good could come of any discussion at this stage of the Bill? The question naturally arises, what good is there in discussion at any stage of any Bill? Judging from recent experience, it seems that discussion is so much time wasted. If the Premier had the power, I have not the slightest doubt that he would dispense with the Legislative Assembly, and

make himself dictator. Not only in connection with this Bill, but in connection with every Bill that has been before the House this session, amendments have been refused without any sound reason having been given for their refusal, and discussion has been curtailed on important Bills besides that now before the House. Whatever arguments are brought forward we are told that they are brought forward at the wrong time. If they are brought forward on the second reading, we are told that they should be deferred till the Committee stage. The Premier says that the discussion which has taken place on this measure should have taken place in the country. The hon. gentleman should have taken part in that discussion in the country, for he promised to do so. When the question of the referendum was before the country, he should have placed his views before the people. Had the opposition view to this matter been placed before the country in the same way as the Bible in State Schools League placed their views before the electors, I am confident that the result of the referendum would have been very different from what it was. When the question of giving religious teaching in primary schools was raised by the league twenty years since, I expressed my opinion upon it in no uncertain way, because I did not believe in the State teaching religion.

Mr. D. HUNTER: Then why did you vote for the referendum?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: I shall come to that by and by. There is a time and there is a place for teaching religion, but that place is not in State schools. Frederick Harrison, in his "Ideals and Realities," says—

The enforcement of a moral practice by legal coercion upon the vote of any majority whatever is of the essence of tyranny, and has in it all the evil of religious persecution. It is an attempt to effect by force and law a moral and social reform which can only be healthily promoted by moral and spiritual agencies. It involves that abandonment of moral effort for material penalties which is one of the most fatal tendencies of our age, a tendency which brutalises government whilst it discredits religion.

I am certainly of that opinion. Something has been said about the influence brought to bear on members in connection with this Bill. Members sitting opposite say that no influence has been brought to bear on them in connection with this matter. Well, I say that every influence that could possibly be brought to bear upon a member has been brought to bear upon me. The first time that I appealed to the electors for their suffrages I was asked whether, if I was returned, I would vote for the question being remitted to the people, and I replied that while I would vote for a referendum I was opposed to the Bill itself, and always had been opposed to it. But other influences have been brought to bear upon members since the matter was submitted to the country, though they have not induced me to change my opinion. I was against this measure from the commencement, and what has taken place since would not induce me to vote for the Bill. Some of the methods adopted by the people outside supporting this measure have done infinitely more to discredit religion than this Bill will to advance it. Letters and urgent wires were sent to members to extract a promise from them to vote for this Bill. They tried to extract such a promise from me, and, when they failed to do so, they sent wires to other people with the view of getting them to extract a promise from me. And let me say that these self-same people themselves—and they are advocates for the Bible in State schools—were disgusted with the methods that were adopted

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to try and get these promises, and I do not wonder. I am quite satisfied in my own mind that these methods will do infinitely more harm than good. A good deal has been said in connection with New South Wales, and if there is no more advantage taken of this measure in Queensland than in New South Wales, it can neither do much good nor harm. I met a man who had been a schoolmaster there for ten years, and he had never seen a minister in the school during that time.

**THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION:** Have you read the figures which have been supplied?

**MR. WINSTANLEY:** Yes; I have read the figures, and when you spread them over the State schools in New South Wales, and over all the men engaged, they are very insignificant indeed. The truth is that the church is trying to place what is really its own work on to the shoulders of the State—asking the State to practically subsidise sectarian teaching. As everybody knows, it is practically impossible for a man who is a sectarian himself to teach without giving it the colour of his own bringing up. (Hear, hear!) The Minister knows that he could not give a Bible lesson without giving it a Methodist colour any more than I could myself.

**THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION:** Your fault is this—you are knocking down something which does not exist. The lessons are to be taken without comment.

**MR. WINSTANLEY:** It will be sectarian. Another point: Religious people themselves are by no means unanimous in this matter. There are a number of ministers in this State, who, while they may be in favour of religious teaching, do not think that any minister has any right to go into the schools and teach his own particular brand of religion, and numbers of these men who advocate this Bible teaching are going a bit further than they care to go themselves. If I needed any evidence to prove that this would not be a good thing, is it not supplied by what has taken place in the old country during the past three or four years, where the ministers have gone to school rather than pay an educational rate which goes towards the sectarian teaching in the schools?

**THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION:** But you must surely know that the case is not at all analogous?

**MR. WINSTANLEY:** They are not analogous at the present time, but this is only commencing. If they are not analogous now, the Minister cannot tell where this is going to end. The people who have sufficient influence to get this, may have sufficient influence to get something else. Individuals in connection with a certain church have expressed the hope that the time is not far distant when the church would be recognised by the State. I remember quite recently where a prominent member of a church said, "We subsidise butter and meat and a host of other things, and why should we not subsidise religion?" I am opposed to religion of any kind or creed being subsidised. I think there should be perfect equality for every one to propagate their own ideas, but subsidy for none of them. There is another aspect which I do not like, and that is the minister going into the schools. While on the one hand we find the churches outside are trying to find a common ground on which they can agree, so as to bring about amalgamation—I believe it

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will be a good thing if there can be one church instead of twenty or thirty—while that is being done on one hand these ministers, on the other hand, if they do take advantage of their opportunities, and go into the schools, will divide the children who are not of any church into little groups, and instil into their minds that they are Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Seventh Day Adventists, and all the rest of it. I think the fact of separating them into little groups will have anything but a good effect on the minds of the children themselves, apart from the teaching they get. (Hear, hear!) I have always been of opinion that true religion is to teach the broad teaching of the Carpenter of Nazareth, and not the "isms," and even while that is a good thing I do not think the State school is the right place for it. Some of the things that have been said both about the parents and children in Queensland are entirely unwarranted. I believe that the parents and children of this State have been libelled in the comparisons which have been made with the other States, and if statistics could be got I am confident that the children in Queensland would be proved to be quite equal to those in any other State, either inside or outside the Commonwealth, measured by any standard you like to take. The Minister has admitted that 50 per cent. of the teachers, if they have the opportunity, will take advantage of the conscience clause—I believe 75 per cent. would take advantage of it. I know that some State school teachers at the present time, while they are under no obligation to teach religion, instil into the minds of their scholars, when the opportunity occurs, the view that they should be manly, upright, honourable, courteous, honest, and truthful; and if this is not teaching them the essential principles which we want them to be taught, I do not know what is. They give the scholars teaching in a healthy direction which is not included in the curriculum. The curriculum at the present time is quite heavy enough, and teachers scarcely know how to divide the time in order to get the various subjects through in the time allotted, and to take another hour for Bible teaching after the ordinary school hours increases the difficulty in this direction. I think it would have been fair and just to have accepted the amendment that the Bible lessons should be given during the last hour of the day. No harm could have come from that, and it is unjust to those who are not to receive such religious teaching to perhaps have to stand out in the burning sun while other children are receiving religious instruction. My vote will be given against the third reading of the Bill, let the consequences be what they may.

**MR. MAY (Flinders):** Not having spoken on the Committee stage, I wish to offer a few remarks at the present time. When the leader of the Opposition made his protest against this Bill at the commencement, he made several points which I think worthy of consideration. There was also several objections made by the hon. member for Croydon. He raised a technical point, which has not been solved up to the present time. I hope the Minister is taking particular notice of these technical points, as well as our general protest on the matter. I wish to point out that we may have half a dozen ministers going up at the same time to the State schools. I think that would be a good idea, as they could take their flocks into their different corners and give their instruction.

**MR. LESINA:** It might lead to a free fight. (Laughter.)



Mr. MAY: Never mind; that will come afterwards. If there were many Irishmen that would come about, but being a peaceable Englishman that would never eventuate if I were in the district. I say that the last hour in the day would be the best for the pastors to go there. We are spending something like £400,000 on our education system, and here it is proposed that a fifth of that shall go into sectarianism. I have been in Queensland for something like twenty-two years. I admired the educational system as soon as I crossed the border, about Barrington and Wooroorooka. It was a matter I had always taken an interest in from my youth up. I noticed that everyone was living happily together, no matter what sect they belonged to. I passed further on to Cunnamulla, and found the same there. By this Bill we are trying to raise the sectarian devil, and bringing up matters that have no occasion to be brought in. What was the reason for altering this Bill? Nothing, except that an agitation has been worked up from outside. I believe that this agitation started when I first came to Queensland twenty-one years ago. I find that a few of those who started that agitation are living now. They point to the fact that Queensland has more cases of misdemeanour or insubordination than what there are in the other States; but we know, as statistics will prove, that Queensland is the most moral country in the whole of Australasia. There is also this conscience clause. I cannot understand why the Minister would not accept it. Why should I, if I am in the public service as a State school teacher, be compelled to give these Bible lessons? I may say that I have been a Sunday school teacher in the Church of England, and I am not ashamed of it; I am proud of it, in fact, though I have fallen from grace lately. (Laughter.)

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: That is since you got into Parliament; you were good before. (Laughter.)

Mr. MAY: But why should I be compelled to teach children certain religious lessons, if it is against my principles to teach them? I may be a good Church of England man, a good Roman Catholic, or a good Presbyterian; but why should I be compelled to inculcate certain instruction to these children which the parents do not wish them to be taught? I also wish to bring forward a certain matter which has recently come before my notice; that is, by introducing this Bible teaching into State schools we are introducing in a form the union of Church and State. In England, before I left there, at [5.30 p.m.] a great number of people, mostly Nonconformists, and a great number of churchmen believed in the disestablishment of the English Church. The disestablishment of the Church in Ireland has eventuated, and they are still fighting for the disestablishment of the Church in Wales.

Mr. LESINA: It is coming.

Mr. MAY: In my day—that is a good many years ago—I have been here twenty-one years and I left England thirty years ago—a vast number of churchmen of the Episcopalian Church of England in conjunction with a large number of Nonconformists tried to bring about the disestablishment of the English Church. Now it is brought particularly before our minds in an article which appears in a recent issue of the *Brisbane Telegraph*. The article, which is not a very long one, throws

a lot of light and good sense upon the whole of the argument in regard to teaching the Bible in State schools. It commences—

The keynote of the Portuguese republic is heard in the proposed absolute separation of State and Church.

By this Bill we are trying to cement the Church and the State, which we do not want. The article goes on—

The State will be limited to its proper duties, and it will be free to discharge them. The churches will be relegated to their proper sphere of work in spiritual affairs. Their civil interests, as with those of all other voluntary associations, will be protected by the State.

That is all we want. We want protection by the State if you will, but we do not want to tax a large number of the community for the benefit of the few. It goes on—

In saying that the Church is to be separated from the State, we have to understand that hitherto the churches included the monarchy, and in particular it has included certain spiritual orders. Therefore, to complete the separation of State and Church, it has been found necessary to ban and bar the late reigning dynasty.

It will come in time. If we try to bring about this thing, the time will come when we shall have to cut the silken cord which binds us to the mother country—if we bring about this matter of the Church and the State by giving religious instruction in State schools. The article goes on—

And the new Minister for Portuguese Interior Affairs has declared that the new Government will expel all members of spiritual orders.

It would be a good thing if they expelled them from England—

In sooth, they are to depart within twenty-four hours. This will not include the regular clergy. In Portugal there have been, as once in England there were, two orders of clergy. There were the cloistered clergy, and there were the parish clergy. Sometimes the latter were regarded as being not very different from laymen. In the early days they were travelling preachers, under the direction of their respective bishops. As stated in one of our cables to-day, churches under the administration of the ordinary clergy are open as usual to divine service. At least a commencement is to be made on those lines. Whether or not the ordinary clergy will accept the situation when the cloistered clergy have been banished, remains to be seen. It is a mark of the clerical mind to believe that even the ordinary clergy have a divine call for spiritual things, and also to believe that this call to spiritual things embraces a good many temporal affairs.

It appears that the clergy in Queensland are taking up a lot of temporal matters which do not belong to them. If the clergy were to mind their own business and leave the politicians to deal with the affairs of the country they would be all the better for it—

In this country, there was a time when clergymen and ministers of religion were the only registrars of births, marriages, and deaths, for they publicly officiated at baptisms, the celebration of marriage contracts, and the conduct of funeral rites. They felt it very badly when the State insisted on registering births instead of baptisms, on registering marriages as civil contracts, and on registering deaths, whether or not any religious ceremony was observed at burials. Signs are not wanting to show that the clergy very unwillingly still submit to this order of things.

We are going back to the olden times, when everything must be submitted to the clergy. We believe, as an enlightened nation, that we can do, if we have free consciences, according to the doctrines which we have imbibed from our youth up—that we can do without this particular sectarian instruction from either Roman Catholics or Protestants. We can see that the clergy are trying now to obtain a

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dominant interest in this State. I think Archdeacon Garland and others at the present time have a very great influence in the State. I may say this: Ever since I have been in Queensland I have studied this question of Bible teaching in the State schools. When I first put up for Parliament I was told that I would have to obey a certain section of the community in my electorate—that I would have to give a promise that I would not go against them. I said, "That's all my eye." I have been amongst the workers of Western Queensland for years, and I found that all they wanted of religious instruction was that taken from the mother's knee or from the itinerant visits of the parson when he went round the country, or from the bishop when he went round his diocese. The article goes on—

The ultimate object of ecclesiastics, as such, is to obtain a dominant influence in the State. We, in this country, now are witnessing an endeavour of that class. We are told that it is being done on the "will of the people."

Now, that "will of the people" has been the only thing that they have had on the other side which they could bring forward with any reason.

Mr. FORSYTH: A very important point.

Mr. MAY: It is a very important point.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: It is all important.

Mr. MAY: Excuse me, it is not all important. If the hon. member were to make a great mistake, and hang a man, they could not bring him back again.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: They might see him in the next world.

Mr. MAY: I suppose you think you will see Archdeacon Garland in the next world. I do not think you will. (Laughter.) I do not want to be drawn off the track. I want to elaborate on this article. I think it is very pertinent to the third reading of this Bill. We are told that it is the will of the people. The will of the people has been against us in a certain direction, but still it has been proved from the—I will not say diabolical, but from the demoniacal attitude of members on the Government side, they did not give those who were going to vote a true idea of what they were voting about. I am well aware that a vast number of people recorded their votes in favour of the proposal simply because they thought there would be a few Scriptural texts, and the teacher would merely read them out.

Mr. FORSYTH: That is all.

Mr. MAY: It is not all. What we are given to understand now is that the parson will be allowed in the schools. We did not anticipate that when the referendum was taken. There were hundreds of people in Brisbane who never dreamed that the parsons of the different denominations would be allowed to go into the schools to teach religion.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Why, it is stated on the ballot-paper.

Mr. MAY: It might have been stated on the ballot-papers, but how many women looked at the ballot-paper? I ask the hon. gentleman did he explain to every young lady the whole question on that ballot-paper when he took them up to the ballot-box?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I had not the privilege.

Mr. MAY: The hon. gentleman did not have the privilege. He did not have the

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time, and he did not have the desire, so long as he got his way. The article goes on—this is very good—

It reminds one of the patriarch Isaac, when he was old and blind. It was possible often to deceive him. The wily Jacob put the skin of kids on his hands to make them feel like the hairy hands of his brother Esau, whom their father wished to bless as his first born. Said he, when the dainty dish was offered to him, "The hands are the hands of Esau; the voice is the voice of Jacob." The hands now stretched out to the public appear to be the horny hands of the people; but the voice undoubtedly is the voice of the "church." But is the great body of the people of this country made up of folk who are as blind as was the patriarch Isaac? If blind, they have the sense of touch and the sense of hearing, and they know, for they cannot but know, that the people are against this reactionary sectarian movement.

I think you will agree with me that this is one of the finest expositions given with regard to bringing forward this movement, or rather against this teaching of the Bible in the State schools. The article goes on—

From English newspapers lately to hand, anyone may learn that this new republic in Portugal is not the creature of a day. It reminds one of Hallam's observation on what he termed the setting in of modern British history. He said it was the fruit of centuries. This Portuguese revolution, if not the work of centuries, is the work of many years. It came very near to being evolved two years ago, when the reigning Sovereign and the heir apparent were assassinated. But the best men engaged in formulating the revolution must have been horrified at the situation. Evidently they shrank from and shuddered at founding the republic on a dastardly crime. But a long forward step was taken at the last general election in Portugal. The Government was left without a working majority. Republicans had command of the parliamentary situation. The first item on their programme was the overthrow of the dynasty. Public men in Portugal, as elsewhere, are grouped into parties almost irreconcilable. One party is called the Conservative Clerical "bloo"; one party is called Liberal Radical. It was in office at the time of the last general election. Then there is the Republican party proper. It was impossible to carry on business in Parliament. It then was said that King Manuel intended to dissolve that Parliament, to appoint a Clerical Conservative Government to carry through fresh elections, and afterwards to set up a military dictatorship. It was said that he intended to cover these proposals by accepting the resignation of his impotent Ministry. But there were some outspoken men, not republicans, loyal to the nation, who declared that should the Chamber be dissolved they would cross over to the Republican party.

But the members of the Government party here would not cross over to the Opposition benches and vote against the third reading of the Bill.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAY: It goes on—

It was seen, thereupon, that a revolution was inevitable. Dr. Costa, who now is Minister for the Interior, declared that the elections then held were the last that would take place under a monarchy. No secret was made of the King's purpose to hold another election, and that it should take place in the traditional manner so that it would be sure to yield an obedient Ministerial majority. So far back as a few days after the last general election, the Ministry then in office, termed the Liberal Radical Ministry, prepared certain measures relating to religious orders, promising in due course to promulgate the same. One of the lessons of this revolution may be read in every line of its history. The State is to be the State.

I draw the attention of the Secretary for Public Instruction to this phrase—

The State is to be the State, and churches are to be churches.

But if we introduce the Church into our State

schools, we will not know where our schools commence and where our churches end. Then it goes on—

Churches are to be churches. The State is not to interfere with their spiritual affairs; they are not to interfere with the affairs of the State. Do the people of this country require a sharper lesson? It may be given to them. When they see clergymen and ministers of religion banding themselves together for the purpose of terrifying Parliament, easily they may guess that these same conglomerations may soon attempt to dominate other public affairs. It is unlike any bodies of persons, carrying on aggressive movements, to stop at a first stage. The history of nations that have come under clerical dominance is in proof to show that such dominance rests not until it is absolute, where that is possible.

After reading that article I cannot understand how any member on that side can vote for the third reading of the Bill. That is one of the most conclusive arguments ever brought forward to keep the State entirely free from sectarian influence. I have been in this State for twenty-one years. I have been in Australia a little longer, but I have been in the State for twenty-one years and I have seen the working of our Education Act. I have seen everything going on in the country, and I find that the children here are as moral and the general tone of the country is as good as anywhere else. As I mentioned when speaking before, there is an occasional instance where a child has not heard the word of God, and while I admit that that is a very serious affair, I can say that in the slums of London, in the slums of Birmingham, in the slums of Sydney or Melbourne the children are in the same category, so that that is no criterion at all. It was brought up not many weeks ago in Brisbane, where a child did not know what an oath was; but you will find more of that sort of thing in the congested centres of the world than in Queensland. We have a natural openness of mind in the bush, and a propensity to tell the truth when you are knocking about in the back country. We have more open-air life in the back country than in the coast districts, and a different environment altogether. Their surroundings are so much better than those in the congested areas. Ninety-nine per cent. of the children out there know the teachings of the Bible, whether they receive it from the Roman Catholic source, from the Presbyterian source, or from the Anglican source. And you never know a mother in the West, bar an odd exception, who does not hear her child say her prayers before she goes to bed, which she has learned from one sect or another. And yet, as the hon. member for Mitchell says, we are told that we in the bush are white pagans. I was driving out in the bush one day with a parson, and he said to me, "Mr. May, why do you make use of so many cuss words?" (Laughter.) I will not give the name of the reverend gentleman. He is a friend of mine. I said to him, "You must not take any notice of what emanates from the mouth in regard to a bushman. He is possibly, through circumstances, a little bit rough-mouthed." Naturally, the children are also rough-mouthed. "You must take it from his heart. Does the man really believe what he says?" And I also said, "If you ask anyone for a subscription to the hospital or to an accident, or for anything else, who is it that always comes forward with his money? It is the bushman." (Hear, hear!) I pointed out that although a little coarse-tongued at times, the bushman always contributed to the hospitals to the extent of 10s. or 11s. per capita, while in the towns it was 9d. or 10d. per capita.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member has exceeded the time allowed under the Sessional Order.

Mr. COLLINS (*Burke*): I intend to offer my protest against the third reading of this Bill. I suppose this will be the last opportunity we will have in this Chamber of protesting against this Bill. So far as I am concerned, through the light of latter-day knowledge, through the observations which I have been able to make, I am opposed to Bible lessons being given in our State schools at all. I object to that on the ground that most people agree that the children have none too much time now, so far as secular education is concerned, without being burdened, as it were, with Bible teaching during the five hours they have to attend the State schools. In entering our protest against the third reading we are entering a protest on behalf of the rising generation throughout the State. (Hear, hear!) So far as I am concerned, I think it is all important that our children should be given a sound secular education. I am one of those who believe that when you have got to fight the battle of life and get your livelihood in the world you will not find that the Bible lessons which you have received will help you. I am prepared to say that if the Minister for Education were going to engage a clerk for his business to-morrow morning it is not the Bible lessons he would examine him on, but what he knows in connection with the secular education he received at school. I enter my protest as strongly as I possibly can on behalf of the children—especially the young children—and the working classes which I represent here against this religious teaching in our schools. We are only emerging from the darkness into the light of day after centuries of oppression and centuries of suffering in which we were deprived of the right to be educated at all, owing to the influence of the clerics of that time, who dominated the civilised world. They dominated the world at different periods of history, and they dominate it to-day in some countries of the world, and you cannot point to me in history where they assisted to educate the masses of the people. It has been left to men who hold secular ideas to complete the system of secular education. I deplore the fact that we have to waste time—and it is the greatest waste of time since I have been in Parliament—discussing this Education Act Amendment Act.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Who is responsible for that?

Mr. COLLINS: The Minister is responsible for introducing it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Not responsible for wasting time.

Mr. COLLINS: We should have spent our time in discussing matters of far more importance. I said when speaking on the Address in Reply that the people asked for bread and the Government gave them a stone. The stone is in the shape of an amendment of the State Education Act. That is really what it amounts to. You are placing a stone in the mouths of the rising generation. You are doing something which will help to retard human progress. We have suffered enough in the past, but in this Bill you are having the whole of religious troubles revived again. You are going to have the children in the playground playing in different parts because of their religion, and we do not want that system introduced at all. We have done without that in days gone, thanks to men like Sir Charles Lilley, who could see the dawn ahead

*Mr. Collins.]*

—the dawn of the emancipation of the workers. That was what they saw when they gave us that splendid Education Act. And it is a splendid Education Act, and we know from our thirty-five years' experience of it that it has been beneficial to the people of Queensland. They never expected when they passed that Act that in so short a time it would be altered to include religious teaching in the schools. So far as I am concerned, I deplore it, and for this reason: In the other countries of the world we have a party like ourselves—the Labour socialists—who are trying to separate the State from the Church, but here is an attempt made to link the State with the Church. I agree with the leader of the Opposition when he said that it is an attempt to start a State Church. There can be no doubt about it. It is the thin end of the wedge. Another reason why I am opposed to this Bill is that an unchristian attitude has been taken up by members opposite in order to get it passed. Just as the people of old crowned the Nazarene with a crown of thorns, so hon. members opposite used a crown of thorns in the shape of the gag to get this measure through this Assembly.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION:  
No.

Mr. COLLINS: It is an unchristian attitude. If I know anything about the teaching of the Nazarene, I should say that if He was on earth to-day He would regard the attitude of those who are supporting the Bill as unchristian. The masses of the people have emerged from darkness into light, and, just as the sun is about to commence to shine in all its glory, we are asked to take a step backward. That is another reason why I enter my protest against this measure. We know that old beliefs die hard, but we also know that, as Tennyson says, "The old order yieldeth to the new." I have faith in the future, knowing that in the interests of humanity it is necessary, not only in this State but in every country in the civilised world, that we should have a system of secular education. Some of us know—at least I know from personal experience—what it is to be under clerical domination, and I object to clerical domination in any shape or form. I object to clerics going into our State schools. We have in this twentieth century too much churchianity and too little christianity. If we had more of the spirit of the founder of christianity, and less of the spirit of churchianity, we should be a better community than we are to-day. We hear of men professing to follow the lowly Nazarene denouncing us for daring to be free men and to assert our rights in opposing this Bill. Surely it does not follow that if the whole of the people vote in favour of a particular religion I should worship God according to that religion whether I like to do so or not. I object to this Bill because it will be an infliction on the rising generation, and will deprive them of their rights. I object to it also because it will compel State school teachers to do the work that the clergy ought to do. The clergy in Queensland number hundreds or thousands, and having failed to do their own work they now ask the State to do what which they have failed to accomplish. If they had put in the same amount of work that some of us have put in in connection with the cause of humanity, there would be no necessity for this measure. I suppose that if we were to talk from now until to-morrow morning we should not influence a single vote on the other side of the House. They do not attempt to give any reasons for the position they have taken up on this measure, but simply come in and record their votes. Not more than half a dozen members on that side of the

House have spoken on the Bill, and they have not attempted to answer our arguments, and yet they endeavour, with the assistance of the gag, to put the measure into operation. That is an unchristian attitude to take up, and if there are any members on the other side who profess Christianity and claim to be followers of the Nazarene, they should be ashamed of themselves.

The PREMIER: The people of Queensland answered your arguments once and for all.

Mr. COLLINS: No less than 150,000 people did not record their votes, and it is on behalf of those 150,000 people that we are making this protest. They did not think that we were going to allow clerics to go into our schools.

Mr. WIENHOLT: Why didn't they vote then?

Mr. COLLINS: Because at that period they had other big national questions to deal with. The Premier mentioned the fact that we have a Land Bill to discuss. This is a more important question than a Land Bill, because in the future this country will be known, not by the number of Land Bills it has passed, but by the intellectual development of its people, and I do not think this Bill tends towards their intellectual development.

Mr. MULLAN (*Charters Towers*): Before this question goes to a vote I think it only right to enter a final protest against it. On the Address in Reply when the policy of the Government was disclosed, and again on the second reading of this Bill, I gave my reasons for opposing it. I also gave reasons at the committee's stage, so that I do not intend to go into the subject at any great length on the present occasion. I should like to refer to one or two remarks made by the Premier this afternoon. The hon. gentleman said that the speeches made this evening were made at the wrong time. That is, of course, his old gag when members on this side of the House wish to speak. But I should like to point out to the hon. gentleman that this is the only opportunity that many members on this side have had of speaking on the measure. The Premier cannot be very conscientious in supporting Bible reading in State schools, because he has, on the floor of this House, questioned the right of even the parent to teach his own child religion. That is going it pretty strong, and I am quite sure that those people who eulogise the Premier and call him a great democrat and their defender, will regard it as remarkable that he should tell them that he would not allow parents to teach their own children religion.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: He said something more than that; he said the will of the people must prevail.

Mr. MULLAN: The hon. gentleman can get up after I have finished, and tell the House what more the Premier said. I am endeavouring to show that he questioned the right of a parent to teach his own child religion. The Premier also told us this afternoon what time he had allowed for the consideration of this Bill. Considering that the Bill will vitally affect our whole system of national education, we have not been allowed such a very large amount of time. We had only a couple of speeches one afternoon, then there was one whole evening given to it, and on the next evening he gagged us. At the same time the hon. gentleman has given this Bill a great deal more time than he gave to the Mines Regulation Bill. I do not know why he attaches more importance to this measure, in view of the fact that the Mines Regulation Bill affected the health and lives of a great number of men.

[*Mr. Collins.*]

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: You were not prepared to take the whole time that was offered you for the consideration of that measure.

Mr. MULLAN: We were prepared to take more time to consider that Bill, but we were not prepared to submit to the measure being gagged and guillotined through the House.

The PREMIER: It was not more time you wanted. You wanted to be made martyrs.

Mr. MULLAN: We wanted full time for the discussion of that measure, as we want full time for the discussion of every measure submitted to the House. Why should that Bill suffer martyrdom, if I may use the expression of the Premier, when this Bill is allowed every consideration, comparatively speaking?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I thought you said we were not giving you any opportunity to consider it.

Mr. MULLAN: Most of the time given to the consideration of this Bill was time when there was no report of the proceedings being taken—when the Premier was frightened to have the arguments advanced by this side against the Bill recorded in *Hansard*—that is from 12 o'clock on Thursday night until the House resumed on Friday, when we practically got no report.

The PREMIER: What are you discussing now?

Mr. MULLAN: I am discussing the attitude of the hon. gentleman.

The PREMIER: That is not the question before the House.

Mr. MULLAN: The question before the House is for me to answer the hon. gentleman's very vague arguments this afternoon. The Premier deliberately misled the country in connection with this measure when the Bill was before the House on a former occasion. At that time he told us that he was going into the country to fight the question himself, that he was going into the highways and byways to show the people they would do wrong if they voted for this Bill. But, as he himself would say, he then had other fish to fry. I will now quote what he said in 1908. The remarks will be found at page 410 of volume ci.—

The PREMIER: But to those who think that the community ought not to settle this question, I would point out to them that, as a matter of conscience, they ought not to vote on the referendum. They ought to abstain from voting on the referendum altogether.

Mr. LESINA: Who ought?

The PREMIER: Those who think that the community should not settle this question.

The Premier advised the people of Queensland not to vote on the question. The deduction from that would be that he would naturally consider the votes of those who so refrained, and if he did consider those people, the result would be very different from what it is. Just to repeat those figures—the people who did not vote, a great number of whom were misled by the hon. gentleman, numbered 121,499 votes; those who said "No" on the question were 56,681. The total number of those who refused to vote, possibly on the advice of the Premier, and those who voted "No" totalled 178,180, whilst those who voted in favour of the question was 74,238. It may be said, Why should we consider those who did not vote on this question, when we do not consider them in a general election? The reason is obvious. In this case there was only one party to the fight. We were engaged in the Federal election, otherwise we would have been on the platform in opposition to this. So there is no parallel

between the position of this fight and other fights, and therefore, in this fight, those who did not vote have more reason to be taken into consideration than on any other occasion. The party which was opposed to it was not organised; if they had been, the result would have been very different to what it is. I think that this Bill, if carried, will be a blot on the educational system of Queensland. It is a regrettable thing that it should have been introduced at all, particularly in view of the fact that the Minister right throughout the Committee stage of the Bill consistently refused to accept the fair amendments of this side.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: You wanted us to accept amendments which would wreck the Bill.

Mr. MULLAN: Surely the conscience clause, giving the teachers of Queensland a right to decline to teach religion unless they believed in it, would not have wrecked the Bill!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: They are not asked to do it.

Mr. MULLAN: It would be better to wreck the Bill than to do a gross injustice to men who have entered into a contract to teach secular education and not religious instruction.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Did you not say on the second reading that you would do all you could to wreck the Bill?

Mr. MULLAN: As far as I am concerned, if I could wreck the Bill I would do so, but seeing the Bill was going through, it was the duty of those who were opposed to it to make it as fair a Bill as possible. I make no excuse about my attitude, but in Committee our duty was to make it as fair as possible. There was no sound reason for the Minister refusing to accept the conscience clause moved by the junior member for Ipswich. Then we asked that the religious teaching should come on at the period of the day preceding the breaking-up of the school, so that those who did not want religious instruction could go home, and would not be in any way interfered with. This would have at once removed the great difficulty about one-room schools and the separation of the children. Those who did not want religious instruction would have gone home, and those who wanted it would have remained, and the matter would have been simplified. But the Minister, in his obstinacy, buoyed up by the brutal and servile majority which is now behind him, has seen fit to refuse our most reasonable amendment. I did not rise to speak at length on the matter.

At 7.20 p.m.,

The PREMIER: I beg to move—That the question be now put.

Opposition dissent.

Mr. MURPHY: Before you put that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to ask you if this has been sufficiently debated. I am privileged to ask that under the Standing Orders.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member has spoken.

Mr. HAMILTON: I have not spoken. Many hon. members have not spoken on this question. I was waiting until the hon. member who was speaking had sat down. I ask if this has been sufficiently discussed.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I find that twelve members have spoken on the question. I think the matter has been sufficiently debated.

*Mr. Armstrong.]*

Question—That the question be now put—  
put; and the House divided :—

AYES, 30.

Mr. Allan	Mr. Gunn
" Appel	" Hawthorn
" Barnes, G. P.	" Hodge
" Barnes, W. H.	" Hunter, D.
" Bouchard	" Kidston
" Brennan	" Macartney
" Bridges	" Paget
" Cottell	" Petrie
" Cribb	" Philp
" Denham	" Roberts
" Forrest	" Swayne
" Forsyth	" Thorn
" Fox	" Tolmie
" Grant	" Walker
" Grayson	" Wienholt

Tellers: Mr. Wienholt and Mr. D. Hunter.

NOES, 22.

Mr. Blair	Mr. Lennox
" Breslin	" Lesina
" Collins	" May
" Crawford	" Mulcahy
" Douglas	" Mullan
" Ferricks	" Murphy
" Foley	" McLachlan
" Hamilton	" Payne
" Hardacre	" Ryan
" Hunter, J. M.	" Theodore
" Land	" Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. Murphy and Mr. Collins.

PAIR.

Aye—Mr. Morgan. No—Mr. Mann.  
Resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the Bill be now read a third  
time—put; and the House divided :—

AYES, 33.

Mr. Allan	Mr. Gunn
" Appel	" Hawthorn
" Barnes, G. P.	" Hodge
" Barnes, W. H.	" Hunter, D.
" Blair	" Kidston
" Bouchard	" Macartney
" Brennan	" Mulcahy
" Bridges	" Paget
" Cottell	" Petrie
" Crawford	" Philp
" Cribb	" Roberts
" Denham	" Swayne
" Forrest	" Thorn
" Forsyth	" Tolmie
" Fox	" Walker
" Grant	" Wienholt
" Grayson	

Tellers: Mr. Cottell and Mr. Walker.

NOES, 19.

Mr. Breslin	Mr. Lesina
" Collins	" May
" Douglas	" Mullan
" Ferricks	" Murphy
" Foley	" McLachlan
" Hamilton	" Payne
" Hardacre	" Ryan
" Hunter, J. M.	" Theodore
" Land	" Winstanley
" Lennon	

Tellers: Mr. Theodore and Mr. Ferricks.

PAIR

Aye—Mr. Morgan. No—Mr. Mann.  
Resolved in the affirmative.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC IN-  
STRUCTION: I beg to move that the Bill do  
now pass.

Mr. LESINA: I do not wish that we should  
pass this Bill now. We see what has happened  
to another Bill of equal importance  
[7.30 p.m.] in another place. It is an important  
Bill dealing with the mining in-  
dustry, and it has been referred to a Select Com-  
mittee, because it was not discussed—had not  
been deliberated upon in this Chamber.

Mr. MULLAN: Neither was it.

[Hon. W. H. Barnes.

Mr. LESINA: Are we going to welcome this  
kind of thing in every Bill passed through this  
Chamber? Even at the eleventh hour I ask the  
Premier does he want this Bill referred to a  
Select Committee or bundled out altogether  
because it has not been sufficiently discussed?  
These are good reasons why the Bill should not  
be passed at the present time. In fact, those  
opposing the Bill, if they are worth their salt,  
would take every opportunity of opposing it—  
every possible opportunity of putting up some  
fight in regard to it. If it is worth fighting  
at all, it is worth fighting all the way,  
fighting boldly and determinedly, and not doing  
anything half-hearted. I say I am just  
as strongly opposed to the Bill at this  
stage as I was when the Bill was first intro-  
duced. Nothing has transpired in the meantime  
to alter my views. During the discussion on the  
third reading some hon. members never had an  
opportunity of speaking at all. That is a further  
indication to me that the Bill in its present form  
will not pass the Legislative Council, or will not  
pass without long deliberation. To some extent I  
must commiserate with members on the Govern-  
ment benches who do sincerely believe in this  
Bill—men like the hon. member for Bulimba, the  
hon. member for Warwick, the hon. member for  
Nundah, and the hon. member for Bundamba. I  
say I commiserate with those hon. members  
because they sincerely believe in this reli-  
gious instruction; they sincerely believe our  
educational system is a farce, that it is godless,  
and produces immoral and degenerate children;  
and believing that, they are perfectly justified in  
supporting the Government in introducing this  
Bill. I commiserate with them because they  
have not had an opportunity of discussing the  
Bill. Who has heard the hon. member for  
Nundah on this matter? That hon. member  
might have given convincing reasons which  
would have compelled me to believe in the pas-  
sage of this Bill. Under those circumstances, I  
am forced to this conclusion—that those hon.  
members were prevented by the Government  
from expressing their opinions on the matter.  
Or take the hon. member for Toowoong. I  
ask is there a solitary member of this Cham-  
ber who would not have listened spellbound  
to the eloquence falling from that hon. member?  
That is another pleasure that has been denied us  
in connection with this matter, and I say for  
these and many other reasons I desire to com-  
miserate with those hon. members. The leader  
of the Government has not gagged members on  
this side; the hon. gentleman has gagged his  
own supporters in a measure of this description.  
I know the Secretary for Public Instruction is  
animated with very sincere and most earnest  
sentiments regarding religious instruction in  
State schools, and, being in charge of this Bill,  
it is his duty to move "That the Bill do now  
pass," and then to move that it be sent to  
another place where it will be further dis-  
posed of effectively. I would like to see it dis-  
posed of once and for all. The hon. gentle-  
man believes in religious instruction in State  
schools, and this Bill, to some extent, covers his  
idea. Perhaps it does not go as far as he would  
like it. It does not teach any particular creed—  
but it is sufficient to go on with. Only the other  
day, in hunting up information on this Bill in the  
library, I discovered an old print dealing with  
an event which happened 400 or 500 years  
ago. A number of persons were gathered  
together round the martyr's fire, and in the  
midst of the flames was a person who had de-  
clined to agree to the creeds of the time, and  
dancing round the flames were a number of men,  
three of whom at least might be taken out of  
this Chamber—the Secretary for Public Instruc-  
tion, the hon. member for Warwick, and the hon.



member for Nundah. (Laughter.) They wore the same sad theological expressions, the same deadly earnestness, the same sincere fanaticism, the same abhorrence of the religious rights of others, and the same solid determination to achieve one end, even if they had to go through fire and brimstone to secure it. We are now asked to pass the Bill, and later on we shall be asked to agree to the title, and then a further resolution sending it to another place, and on each of these resolutions I propose to protest just as strongly as I have opposed every other stage of the Bill, and I hope a division will be taken on each resolution.

Mr. HAMILTON: Like the last speaker, I wish to give reasons why the Bill should not pass. On the second reading some hon. members had not an opportunity of speaking, neither on the third reading of this Bill have some members had an opportunity of speaking, and I can only re-echo the remarks of the previous speaker, when he hopes that when it goes to another Chamber this Bill will be considered on its merits. There are good, valid reasons why I do not think we should pass this Bill without protest, because it has been gagged through nearly all its stages, and I say the guillotine, or the gag, should not be applied to a Bill of the importance of this one.

The PREMIER: We have to consider other business.

Mr. HAMILTON: This is very important business, and we should have met earlier in the year, and when the hon. gentleman knew there were other important measures coming before the House he should not have taken up three weeks of the session in discussing the new Sessional Orders. How are these new Sessional Orders regarded in the House? How are the old Standing Orders regarded here? When it suits the Government they are set aside.

The PREMIER: I did not take up the time.

Mr. HAMILTON: The hon. gentleman introduced these Sessional Orders, and what has he gained by it? He has gained nothing, because we know very well, if we wish to, we can get round these Sessional Orders and talk just as long as we like, so that the discussion on those Sessional Orders was a whole waste of time. Apart from that, since the Bill was dealt with in the House last week, I see the Rev. Garland and a few others of his own sort have been holding meetings in Brisbane criticising the members of this House, and not only criticising, but threatening members of this House what they are going to do when the next election takes place. I want to point this out to hon. members: That Parliament is coming to a pretty pass when every time there is an election a pistol is held to their heads from all directions. I know at the last election that took place, when I was in Winton, I got from the Bible in State Schools League a copy of the papers that were read out here by the hon. member for Clermont, and I had also letters from the Licensed Victuallers' Association pointing a pistol at my head if I did not do what they wanted, and I also had the temperance bodies pointing a pistol at me if I did not do as they wanted. There were five or six of them; and I say it is coming to a pretty pass when a member is standing for Parliament, all the different sections of the community should hold pistols at his head. I say a man is not getting freedom of conscience or freedom of thought.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I would ask the hon. member to connect his remarks to the question before the House.

Mr. HAMILTON: I think I was getting away from the question. I would like to ask those members of the Women's Bible League who are criticising members of Parliament, how much effort have they made in order to see the children in the community in which they live receive Bible teaching? How many of those people have assisted in establishing Sunday schools in the districts in which they live, and how many of them have given their time to teach the Bible on Sunday afternoons?

The HOME SECRETARY: A great many of them.

Mr. HAMILTON: I say if there was half as much energy put forward in the establishment of Sunday Schools, and to seeing that the children were taught the Bible, as there has been in holding out threats and in criticising members of Parliament in doing what they are sent here to do, I think it would be very much better. As far as this question is concerned, I was reading the remarks the other day of the Minister for Education when the Kidston Government defeated the Philp Government, of which the hon. member was one, and in speaking in the House the hon. gentleman said that as far as any measure that might meet with the approval of the party to which he belonged he would give it his best support, but any measure that he did not approve of he was going to do his best to oppose it. That is what this party is doing. Any measure that we think is fair and in the interests of the community we will give it of our best, but any measure introduced here which we think is detrimental to the best interests of the community, then we are going to oppose it.

Mr. THORN: What about the referendum?

Mr. HAMILTON: I never voted for the referendum on this question. We have been consistent all through. We have no right to break up the grand system of secular education which has been in vogue in this State for many years, and I think we are justified in doing our best in order to defeat this measure if we possibly can. I think we are justified in opposing it at every stage, and, when it goes to another place, I hope those hon. gentlemen who are opposed to this measure will do the very same as we have done here. A measure of this kind should never have been gagged through the House, but the Government depend on the gag. We know very well that this measure would have been gagged at 4 o'clock this afternoon if the Government had had one more member. They had twenty-nine members and had to wait till they could get thirty. I will vote against this motion that the Bill do now pass, and if one vote of mine will wreck the Bill, I would wreck it in spite of Garland, in spite of William Kidston, and in spite of all the ladies' Bible leagues in Queensland. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. LENNON: There are a good many reasons that might be urged to show that the Bill should not pass, but I do not propose to trouble the House with many. I should be glad if the Bill were passed into oblivion. I would like to say that an extraordinary feature in connection with this little Bill is that the Education Department have a large staff of something like 5,000 teachers who will be very seriously affected by this Bill. They have been referred to as they should not have been—as to whether they are in favour of this measure or not. Just picture to yourself, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Government—or any other Government for that matter—asking teachers who have been employed to teach secular education in the schools to teach religious lessons! What would be thought of a Government that asked the members of the police

*Mr. Lennon.]*



force to make their own boots? It would be quite as fair a request to make, and quite as logical as to ask the teachers to teach religious lessons in State schools, because you are asking them to teach something they may not believe in, or something which they dislike absolutely. It is a perfectly unfair position to put them in. With regard to the unfair comments which were made by the gentlemen at the meeting in the Albert street Church the other night, I may say that they have just as much effect on me as if a gramophone were turned on and gave utterance to the same words. What the ladies did and what the ladies think is a very different matter.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: "Ah!" and laughter.

MR. LENNON:

A candid woman never shrinks  
From saying what she thinks she thinks.

(Laughter.) Indeed, there seems to be something of Mrs. Caudle in every woman, and those who have no husband to lecture feel they must lecture someone, and in connection with this Bill their lecturing has been directed against members of this House. Many of them are not in the same positions as members of this House, and do not know as much about it as we do. I sincerely hope that this Bill will be passed into oblivion.

MR. MURPHY: When this Bill was introduced the Premier said it was to be a non-party measure—that every member on that side could vote for it just as he pleased.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY: What do we find during the consideration of this question? As soon as the Premier rises to move "That the question be now put," they all come in and sit behind him. We know that it was never intended to have any free discussion of this Bill. The Premier adopted the same attitude with regard to this Bill as he did with regard to the Mines Regulation Bill. He said it would have to go through by a certain div. He threw down the gauntlet as soon as the Bill was introduced. It was the same with the Mines Regulation Bill. He said we would have to take it whether we liked it or not, and that he would allow a day for discussion.

THE PREMIER: What speech are you quoting from?

MR. MURPHY: I am quoting from the Premier's speeches and from the Premier's actions. If I were to take all the hon. gentleman's speeches I would find him on one side one day and another way another day. (Laughter.) But he does not require anything I might say to judge him, as the people know him well enough. It is a difficult matter, and I have no desire to judge him. "Judge not, lest ye be judged." (Laughter.) I do not propose to judge the hon. gentlemen, or any other hon. gentleman, with regard to this Bill. What I do say is, that it was introduced as a non-party measure, and from the very time it was introduced we were gagged and bludgeoned, and the thing was forced through without any consideration or without a great amount of consideration at all. I am not so much in favour with hon. members who ask the Legislative Council to deal harshly with this measure. I am in favour of the abolition of the Legislative Council, and the Legislative Council have really no right to interfere with legislation passed through this Chamber. (Hear, hear!) But on this question members of the Legislative Council must realise that the members of the popular Chamber have been gagged into submission in this matter. They realise that the Government do not intend to allow the discussion of an important question like this. Yester-

[Mr. Lennon.

day afternoon the Miners' Association—I will not go into details in that matter as I will be out of order. I am against this Bill passing until we see the reading books which it is proposed shall be introduced into the schools. The Bill might well stand over until we hear from the teachers on this matter. The conscience clause was not fully discussed in this Chamber, and there was no opportunity of getting a true vote on the matter. Before we compel our teachers to work in connection with this vile measure we should obtain some opinion from them. I am against introducing anything into our legislation that is likely to create strikes amongst those who are employed to teach in our schools. There is a teachers' association, and it is possible that some agitator amongst them might strongly resent the action of the Government in teaching religion in the schools.

MR. LESINA: All the teachers throughout Queensland may go on strike.

MR. MURPHY: Yes, and it is a thing members should take into consideration, as it would be a sad thing to see the teachers go on strike. If such a state of things were to occur, we would have the Premier imitating the Premier of New South Wales, and putting through a Coercion Bill in one sitting.

THE PREMIER: I would not have the slightest scruple about it.

MR. MURPHY: We might have the same thing occurring here in connection with our teachers as occurred in New South Wales with the miners. It would be a sad thing to see the head teacher of the Normal School going down to St. Helena in irons because he vigorously protested against the introduction of this system, and the Premier tells us that he would have no scruple whatever in introducing such a vile thing. This is a matter which members opposite might consider, and even at this eleventh hour give us a chance of defeating this Bill.

MR. FERRICKS: I desire to have just one last word of protest against what I call this iniquitous proposal. I express my disapproval of the action of the Premier in gagging this measure through at the three stages of the measure. There has been a lot said, and truly said, about the action of the ladies and gentlemen around the metropolitan areas of Brisbane who have taken on themselves to intimidate Parliament, and to intimidate the Government to take up this proposal and put it into effect by the instrumentality of the gag, aided or put into force by their servile majority behind. I think that those energetic ladies and gentlemen who have gone to such extremes as they have in this connection would be much better employed if they devoted their energies and labours to improve the moral life of Brisbane in the way of preventing little girls going about the streets at night selling flowers, especially selling flowers at the hotels to half drunken men and giving the proceeds to parents who are not always of the best habits. I think if those ladies were to form themselves into a vigilance committee and move in that direction, they would be doing better work than their misdirected efforts in this direction. One of the most astounding arguments that emanated from the other side was that it would not be necessary for the teacher to impart any colour to the religious education, as he would just have to read the lessons. That would be nothing more than being mere phonographs. That is not teaching. Anyone who knows anything about teaching at all knows that mere reading like that would have no effect whatever. It is the most ridiculous argument I ever heard advanced. There is another aspect of this

matter. Reference has been made to the suavity of the obliging manner of the hon. gentleman who introduced this Bill. I think he has been on his usual demeanour, but he has been very obstinate, in that no matter what argument was put forward from this side it was never of any use, as he would not accede to it. That was not a good attitude to adopt. Although we are in a minority, we represent a good proportion of the people, and it is only right that these people should have a voice in the deliberations of Parliament. The Government accept nothing from this side, and listen to no arguments from this side at all. It is only reducing parliamentary proceedings to a farce, and the twenty-six members of the Labour party, or the thirty members of the Opposition, might just as well be outside altogether. I hope that there will soon be an appeal to the people, and we can let the people in the electorates represented by members opposite know how parliamentary government was carried on. For myself, I am prepared to go to the country advocating free, secular, and compulsory education in our State schools.

At 8 p.m.,

The PREMIER: I beg to move—That the question be now put.

Mr. LESINA: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—Do you think the question has been sufficiently debated?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is a growing inclination on the part of hon. members to rise and ask whether it [8 p.m.] my opinion that the question has been sufficiently debated. I have before stated that the fact of my rising to put the question is sufficient evidence that I think the question has been sufficiently debated. The question is—"That the question be now put."

Question—That the question be now put—put and the House divided:—

AYES, 30.

Mr. Allan	Mr. Gunn
" Appel	" Hawthorn
" Barnes, G. P.	" Hodge
" Barnes, W. H.	" Hunter, D.
" Bouchard	" Kidston
" Brennan	" Macartney
" Bridges	" Paget
" Cottell	" Petrie
" Cribb	" Philp
" Denham	" Roberts
" Forrest	" Swayne
" Forsyth	" Thorn
" Fox	" Tolmie
" Grant	" Walker
" Grayson	" Wienholt

Tellers: Mr. Allan and Mr. Swayne.

NOES, 23.

Mr. Blair	Mr. Lennon
" Breslin	" Lesina
" Collins	" May
" Crawford	" Mulcahy
" Douglas	" Mullan
" Ferricks	" Murphy
" Foley	" McLachlan
" Hamilton	" Payne
" Hardacre	" Ryan
" Hunter, J. M.	" Theodore
" Keogh	" Winstanley
" Land	

Tellers: Mr. McLachlan and Mr. Winstanley.

PAIR.

Aye—Mr. Morgan. No—Mr. Mann.

Resolved in the affirmative.

1910—4 R

Question—That the Bill do now pass—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 33.

Mr. Allan	Mr. Gunn
" Appel	" Hawthorn
" Barnes, G. P.	" Hodge
" Barnes, W. H.	" Hunter, D.
" Blair	" Kidston
" Bouchard	" Macartney
" Brennan	" Mulcahy
" Bridges	" Paget
" Cottell	" Petrie
" Crawford	" Philp
" Cribb	" Roberts
" Denham	" Swayne
" Forrest	" Thorn
" Forsyth	" Tolmie
" Fox	" Walker
" Grant	" Wienholt
" Grayson	

Tellers: Mr. Cribb and Mr. Forsyth.

NOES, 20.

Mr. Breslin	Mr. Lennon
" Collins	" Lesina
" Douglas	" May
" Ferricks	" Mullan
" Foley	" Murphy
" Hamilton	" McLachlan
" Hardacre	" Payne
" Hunter, J. M.	" Ryan
" Keogh	" Theodore
" Land	" Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. Breslin and Mr. Douglas.

PAIR.

Aye—Mr. Morgan. No—Mr. Mann.

Resolved in the affirmative.

TITLE.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I move that the title of the Bill be, "A Bill to amend the State Education Acts, 1875 to 1900, by making provision for religious instruction in State schools during school hours, in pursuance of an affirmative referendum poll taken under the Religious Instruction in State Schools Referendum Act of 1908."

Mr. LESINA: One of our Standing Orders provides that the title of a Bill shall state clearly the principle of the Bill. Does this title really state the principle of the Bill? Is it a Bill merely for religious instruction in State schools? I think the word "religious" should be deleted, and the word "sectarian" inserted in its place, because the Bill really relates to sectarian instruction in State schools. Hitherto our State schools have been inculcating secular instruction, and the opposite of secular is sectarian. It is hard to give religious instruction that is not sectarian. Many persons say that all religious instruction is sectarian, and I do not think that can be disputed. To the Jew all Christian teaching is sectarian, and, apart from that fact, it does not matter from what point of view you place religious teaching before the community, it must necessarily take on a sectarian hue. On this question some time ago in New Zealand, where the question came up for discussion, some important pronouncements were made by some of the parties over there. I will just read the following:—

It is proposed to introduce this scheme of sectarian "religious instruction," with only "some slight verbal alterations," into the public schools of New Zealand. It is, moreover, proposed to force this "emasculated caricature" of the sacred Scriptures into the schools on a sectarian doctrinal basis: (a) on the dogmatic principle of "the Bible and the Bible only, interpreted by private judgment; and (b) on the comparatively new-

Mr. Lesina.]

fangled theory which assumes that the living body of Christian truth may be cut into sections, sorted out, and retained, mutilated, ignored, or surrendered to suit supposed social convenience or political expediency." This theory—mis-called "Undenominationalism"—represents, in reality, an unsuccessful attempt to formulate a Pan-denominational Protestantism.

That is what the Government will have to do if they adopt the title of the Bill as proposed by the Minister, and I believe that the Minister knows that just as well as anybody else. There are members sitting behind the Minister who do not know the fact, but he never shows his hand. There is a good deal of the wiliness of the serpent about that hon. gentleman. Although at times he is mostly a political sucking dove, there are occasions when he can show the wisdom of the serpent, and this is one of those occasions. There are innocent members behind him who are being misled in this matter—trusting innocent members, like the hon. member for Cunningham—(laughter)—who have not the faintest conception of what he intends by adopting a title like this—"for giving religious instruction in State schools." That looks very harmless. I do not desire to read more into the language than there is in it—like Sergeant Buzfuz, in "*Bardell v. Pickwick*." I do not desire to belabour it, but I maintain that there is no such thing as religious instruction apart from sectarian instruction. We do not want this Bill to be a sectarian Bill. All the members who stood up and expressed their opinions on the other side—there were only a few, but we must give them credit for being independent enough to express their opinion—declared that they had no desire to give sectarian instruction, and the Minister himself said he had no such desire; but if you cannot give religious instruction without sectarian instruction, then the purpose of the Bill is made clear, and our opposition is justified. In the little pronouncement I just quoted, point (b) insists on this significant fact, and when you take into consideration the promise made by the Minister that five gentlemen who are sitting are to be instructed with the preparation of undenominational lessons, you will see at once there is a screw loose somewhere. If these books are prepared in accordance with the instructions given, or if no instructions are given, and they are sent out by a majority vote, then the preparation of the lessons being left to these five laymen, it devolves upon them to cut up the whole body of Christian truth into sections.

At 8.20 p.m.,

The PREMIER: I beg to move—That the question be now put.

Opposition dissent and laughter.

Mr. LESINA: Has the question been sufficiently discussed?

Question—That the question be now put—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 30.

Mr. Allan	Mr. Gunn
" Appel	" Hawthorn
" Barnes, G. P.	" Hodge
" Barnes, W. H.	" Hunter, D.
" Bouchard	" Kidston
" Brennan	" Macartney
" Bridges	" Paget
" Cottell	" Petrie
" Cribb	" Philp
" Denham	" Roberts
" Forrest	" Swayne
" Forsyth	" Thorn
" Fox	" Tolmie
" Grant	" Walker
" Grayson	" Wienholt

Tellers: Mr. Gunn and Mr. Grayson.

[Mr. Lesina.

NOES, 23.

Mr. Blair	Mr. Lennon
" Breslin	" Lesina
" Collins	" May
" Crawford	" Mulcahy
" Douglas	" Mullan
" Ferricks	" Murphy
" Foley	" McLachlan
" Hamilton	" Payne
" Hardacre	" Ryan
" Hunter, J. M.	" Theodore
" Keogh	" Winstanley
" Land	

Tellers: Mr. Payne and Mr. Ryan.

PAIR.

Aye—Mr. Morgan. No—Mr. Mann.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the title of the Bill be "A Bill to amend the State Education Acts, 1875 to 1900, by making provision for religious instruction in State schools during school hours, in pursuance of an affirmative referendum poll taken under the Religious Instruction in State Schools Referendum Act of 1908"—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 33.

Mr. Allan	Mr. Gunn
" Appel	" Hawthorn
" Barnes, G. P.	" Hodge
" Barnes, W. H.	" Hunter, D.
" Blair	" Kidston
" Bouchard	" Macartney
" Brennan	" Mulcahy
" Bridges	" Paget
" Cottell	" Petrie
" Crawford	" Philp
" Cribb	" Roberts
" Denham	" Swayne
" Forrest	" Thorn
" Forsyth	" Tolmie
" Fox	" Walker
" Grant	" Wienholt
" Grayson	

Tellers: Mr. Tolmie and Mr. Bouchard.

NOES, 20.

Mr. Breslin	Mr. Lennon
" Collins	" Lesina
" Douglas	" May
" Ferricks	" Mullan
" Foley	" Murphy
" Hamilton	" McLachlan
" Hardacre	" Payne
" Hunter, J. M.	" Ryan
" Keogh	" Theodore
" Land	" Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. J. M. Hunter and Mr. Land.

PAIR.

Aye—Mr. Morgan. No—Mr. Mann.

Resolved in the affirmative.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I beg to move that the Bill be transmitted to the Legislative Council [8.30 p.m.] for their concurrence, by message in the usual form.

Mr. LESINA: I think this motion ought to be amended.

The PREMIER: I beg to move—That the question be now put.

Mr. LESINA: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—Do you think this proposal has been sufficiently discussed? (Laughter.)

Question—That the question be now put—  
put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 30.

Mr. Allan	Mr. Gunn
" Appel	" Hawthorn
" Barnes, G. P.	" Hodge
" Barnes, W. H.	" Hunter, D.
" Bouchard	" Kidston
" Brennan	" Macartney
" Bridges	" Paget
" Cottell	" Petrie
" Cribb	" Philp
" Denham	" Roberts
" Forrest	" Swayne
" Forsyth	" Thorn
" Fox	" Tolmie
" Grant	" Walker
" Grayson	" Wienholt

Tellers: Mr. D. Hunter and Mr. Roberts.

NOES, 23.

Mr. Blair	Mr. Lennon
" Breslin	" Lesina
" Collins	" May
" Crawford	" Mulcahy
" Douglas	" Mullan
" Ferricks	" Murphy
" Foley	" McLachlan
" Hamilton	" Payne
" Hardacre	" Ryan
" Hunter, J. M.	" Theodore
" Keogh	" Winstanley
" Land	

Tellers: Mr. Foley and Mr. Mullan.

PAIR.

Aye—Mr. Morgan. No—Mr. Mann.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the Bill be transmitted to the  
Legislative Council for their concurrence, by  
message in the usual form—put; and the House  
divided:—

AYES, 33.

Mr. Allan	Mr. Gunn
" Appel	" Hawthorn
" Barnes, G. P.	" Hodge
" Barnes, W. H.	" Hunter, D.
" Blair	" Kidston
" Bouchard	" Macartney
" Brennan	" Mulcahy
" Bridges	" Paget
" Cottell	" Petrie
" Crawford	" Philp
" Cribb	" Roberts
" Denham	" Swayne
" Forrest	" Thorn
" Forsyth	" Tolmie
" Fox	" Walker
" Grant	" Wienholt
" Grayson	

Tellers: Mr. Crawford and Mr. Hodge.

NOES, 20.

Mr. Breslin	Mr. Lennon
" Collins	" Lesina
" Douglas	" May
" Ferricks	" Mullan
" Foley	" Murphy
" Hamilton	" McLachlan
" Hardacre	" Payne
" Hunter, J. M.	" Ryan
" Keogh	" Theodore
" Land	" Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. Collins and Mr. Keogh.

PAIR.

Aye—Mr. Morgan. No—Mr. Mann.

Resolved in the affirmative.

## LOCAL AUTHORITIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

### SECOND READING.

The HOME SECRETARY: In rising to move the next Order of the Day, as the measure which is now before the House is one

entirely for discussion in Committee, it is not my intention to enter into a long history concerning local government in this State.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: The principle of local government has been affirmed, and it is now simply a question of passing such a measure as will enable the local authorities of the State to more effectively deal with those matters which come before them and by which they have to regulate the conduct of the affairs of their different local authorities. It will suffice to say that local government has now been established for some thirty years in this State—thirty years before the establishment of local authorities in the mother State. And undoubtedly the effect of that establishment in this State has been to make men more self-reliant, to depend more upon themselves, in carrying out those public works which are necessary in the different portions of the State which they represent. As hon. members are aware, at the inception of local government the portion of the taxation which had to be borne by the local taxpayer was but one-third of the whole, the State contributing two-thirds, or £2 for every £1 which was raised by the local government. Undoubtedly at that particular period it was necessary that the State should so assist the local bodies—when there were a considerable number of works to be undertaken to give access to the different portions of the State. You are aware, Mr. Speaker, that when that subsidy was withdrawn there arose a great outcry from the different local authorities, and from time to time efforts were made to induce the Government to renew that subsidy. Although it undoubtedly inflicted a certain amount of hardship upon the local authorities, yet to my mind it was a wise thing that that subsidy ceases to be paid by the State, because more and more it threw on the local authorities the obligation of raising the necessary funds to carry out works in their areas; and, that being so, it became necessary for them to exercise the greatest care in the expenditure of the money which they had to raise. In many instances, I think I am correct in saying, the effect of the receipt of that subsidy from the State caused different local governing bodies to be extravagant—to expend money on works which were not altogether for the benefit of the general body of ratepayers, and undoubtedly if that subsidy had continued, works of that kind would have continued to be constructed, and in the end very serious injury would have been inflicted, not alone upon the respective local authorities, but upon the ratepayers, who would ultimately have had to pay the bill by an increased amount of taxation being put upon them. From time to time different measures have been before this House whereby amendments were made in connection with local authority legislation. We have had something like twelve measures before the House since the inception of local authorities in the State of Queensland. The last Act under which the local authorities have been operating has been in operation for something like eight years. During the years 1906, 1907, and 1908 different measures amending legislation were before the House, although they never became law. The amending Bill introduced in 1907 was passed through this House, but was not passed by the Legislative Council, owing to the dissolution of Parliament which took place at that time. The measure now before the House contains many of the clauses which were contained in that particular Bill, and in

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addition several amendments which were subsequently suggested to the Home Department by conferences of local authorities, and which, as a result of their experience in the administration of local government, the officers of the department considered to be necessary.

MR. THEODORE: Have all these amendments been embodied?

THE HOME SECRETARY: Practically the whole of the amendments which were carried at the conference of local authorities are embodied in the measure before the House, with additional clauses which were considered necessary by the officers of the Home Department, which administers matters connected with local government.

MR. LENNON: The resolutions asking the State to renew the subsidy, are they embodied?

THE HOME SECRETARY: No. If the hon. member will recollect, at the last conference of local authorities no reference was made, nor any resolution passed, asking the State to revert to the system of endowment previously in force.

MR. LENNON: They did at previous conferences.

THE HOME SECRETARY: Yes; but I am referring now to the final conference at which suggestions were adopted, and these suggestions are now embodied in the Bill before the House. As this is purely a Committee Bill, I will just mention one or two of the principal alterations which are embodied in it, and where they differ from the previous measures before the House and from the legislation which is now in force in the State. I mention the clause dealing with the legislation by which the council, on the motion of one-fifth of the ratepayers, might be dissolved. There are cases—although not frequent—where local authorities have so mismanaged their affairs and have acted contrary to the desires of the ratepayers, that it was considered necessary to give power whereby the executive, upon a motion of one-fifth of the ratepayers, would be enabled, by mandate, to cause the whole of the representatives of that particular local authority to go before the ratepayers for re-election.

MR. MURPHY: Don't you think that that is rather arbitrary?

THE HOME SECRETARY: I do not know from what point of view the hon. gentleman regards this, but from the experience of every man interested and engaged in local authorities we are aware that, although there is an annual election, whereby one-third of the members retire, yet it is impossible to get any reformation of a local authority body which is not carrying out the wishes of the ratepayers as a whole, whereas if the representatives of that local authority, as a whole body, come before the ratepayers, it would be possible to obtain at the new election representatives who would more truly represent the ratepayers. Hon. members will see that there is a new clause which, by providing for the incorporation of the Local Authorities' Association, will give it greater power. This is a proposal that the local authorities have for many years desired shall be carried into effect, as by this incorporation they will be able to establish a fidelity and indemnity fund. This, to my mind, is a legitimate matter, and comes within the scope of local government. It is contended that by giving them the power of establishing such a fund very

considerable saving will be effected. Under present conditions local authorities are compelled to guarantee their servants, and also to take out the necessary policies for indemnifying them in cases of accident; and, as members are aware, in connection with both of these funds the rate is a fairly high one. Local authorities are of opinion, and I quite agree with them, that by banding together, as they have the power to do under this measure when it becomes law, a very considerable saving will be effected. In connection with the limitation of the voting power, under the existing law a company or corporation which has three directors is entitled to three votes for each director, or nine votes in all. Thus, while it would only be possible for the individual ratepayer to have three votes for the same property, the directors have nine votes. The clause in the present Bill limits the voting power to three votes, two votes, or one vote, so that the property will stand in the same position as that of an individual ratepayer. Then we have another clause which casts upon local authorities the liability to furnish returns if required by the Home Department. As members are aware, recently I required, as administrative head of the local authorities in Queensland, the local authorities to furnish me with certain returns, which I considered necessary and indispensable. As hon. members are also possibly aware, there were many cases in which I did not get the information, because the local authorities seemed to think that I required the information for the purpose of assisting the Commonwealth Government.

MR. LENNON: That is because your Government poisoned their minds against the Commonwealth Government.

THE HOME SECRETARY: I fail to find any indication of that, because the present Government of Queensland have only been too ready, at all times to assist the Federal Government in obtaining any information they require to carry out their functions.

MR. J. M. HUNTER: Quite right too.

MR. LENNON: You previously poisoned the public mind against the Commonwealth Government.

THE HOME SECRETARY: Even if I required the information for the purposes in question, it was the duty of the local authorities to furnish that information. (Hear, hear!) If the Commonwealth Government, by a majority, pass certain legislation, then it is the duty of any department of the State to assist in furnishing any necessary information which the Central Government may require. In the measure here it becomes obligatory on the part of local authorities to furnish any information when it is

[9 p.m.] required by the Home Department for any purpose for which they think it is necessary to have that information. Under the amending Act prickly pear is declared to be a pest. I think it will be admitted that this was a very necessary provision to make. Furthermore, there are clauses in this Bill whereby if an area is only affected to such an extent with prickly pear that it is possible to clear it, then, by executive minute, it may be declared to be a clean area; and thereupon it becomes obligatory on the local authority to take the necessary action to see that the ratepayers' lands and their own roads and reserves are kept clean. It is generally admitted that the prickly pear is not only a pest, but that it is a national danger. Under

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the provisions of this amending Bill the Government may give certain monetary assistance to local authorities to enable them to cope with the pest and to clear the roads and reserves of prickly pear.

Mr. GRAYSON: Is that by loan or as a grant?

The HOME SECRETARY: It is a subsidy.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: What about Government land?

The HOME SECRETARY: That is included in reserves. The Government are prepared to give monetary assistance to local authorities to enable them to cope with the pest on Government reserves and their own roads.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: What about Crown lands?

The HOME SECRETARY: They are included in reserves.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Oh, no!

The HOME SECRETARY: Well, I am unable to deal with them, as they do not come within the scope of the measure before the House. I have simply taken the necessary power to deal with matters which come within the scope of the measure before the House. Furthermore, members will find that power is given to local authorities to subsidise omnibus services to the extent of £200 per annum. Power is also given to local authorities to subsidise any philanthropic institution or institutions which have for their object the carrying out of charities for the benefit of the ratepayers of the area. There is also a provision in connection with alien labour, which affects all persons who may be concerned in any service that has been instituted by the local authority. There is a further provision in connection with the financial separation of wards or divisions of a local authority. As members, or some members, are aware, under the present provisions a local authority has practically power to take funds from one ward or division and spend them in another ward or division without it being obligatory on them to return at a future time the money so taken from the particular ward or division. Possibly those members who are interested in local authorities will recollect that recently certain ratepayers who desired to see this question settled brought a case before the Full Court, and that eventually an appeal was made to the Privy Council. But the result of that appeal practically left the matter in a state of uncertainty. Hon. members will find that the provision in this Bill which deals with that question deals with it in such a way that there can be no mistake as to the relationship between the respective wards or divisions of a local authority.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Financial separation.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes; financial separation.

Mr. COTTELL: What clause?

The HOME SECRETARY: Clause 30, subsection (3), deals with financial separation. Briefly, the scheme is—(a) general rates to be credited to the division in which they are raised; (b) all revenue other than general rates to be credited to each division in such proportion as the local authority shall direct; (c) expenditure, except as otherwise provided, to be charged against the division in which it was expended; (d) salaries and office expenses to be charged against divi-

sions in proportion to the annual value of rateable land in each division; (e) payment of interest on drainage and similar works to be charged to one or more divisions in such proportion as the local authority directs; (f) balances, whether to debit or credit of the respective divisions, to be carried forward from year to year; (g) the Treasurer or any debenture-holder to have the security of the local fund or the revenues of the local authority; (h) any twenty ratepayers of the area may appeal to the Minister against any resolution of the local authority under this section. Those are, briefly, the provisions contained in that clause. There is also a provision in connection with plumping. Under the existing Act plumping is permissible, but under this measure it will be prohibited, each ratepayer being required to vote for the full number of members required to fill the different vacancies. Those are the principal amendments which differ from the measures which have been before the House at previous times. As I have already stated, this is entirely a Committee measure. I have not mentioned certain matters with respect to which I understand notice of further amendments has been given—for instance, there is one dealing with the franchise—because those are matters which can be discussed and dealt with in Committee. But I have just in a general way given an indication of what the measure is, and what is its purpose and object. It is a measure which is absolutely necessary in the interest of the local authorities, and should become law this session, and I have every confidence that with the assistance of hon. members on both sides of the House it will become law. It will improve the position of local authorities, and will assist them very materially in the interests with which they are charged. I now move that the Bill be read a second time.

Mr. LENNON: This Bill has made a very belated appearance in this House. It has been promised for fully three years—more than three years. A Bill of this kind has been discussed ever since I came into the House, and was discussed and promised before that time again and again.

The TREASURER: It was carried through this House on one occasion.

Mr. LENNON: Yes; I am aware of that. I think the hon. gentleman who has introduced this Bill is to be congratulated upon at length presenting it to the House, with, I believe, an honest intention of passing it. I think it must also be admitted that the hon. gentleman who introduced the previous Bill did so with an honest intention of passing it, but that was not to be. With regard to this Bill, when I took it up and read it this morning—which was the first time I could find leisure to peruse it—I was seized with alarm because I could not find a particular amendment in which I was interested. I at once approached the Home Secretary and made inquiries about the matter from him, and he was good enough to inform me that the omission was accidental, and would be supplied by an amendment proposed by himself. It is only due to the hon. gentleman that I should make that statement, because he allayed my alarm, and I am quite sure that no member on the other side would like to see me alarmed. (Laughter.) The Bill, no doubt, shows a great deal of labour on the part of the various conferences of local authorities. Those conferences are of more or less value—chiefly less value, in my

Mr. Lennon.]



opinion. They provide a splendid outing for the delegates, who have a real jolly good picnic.

Mr. COTTELL: You have been a delegate.

Mr. LENNON: Yes; I have been a delegate. On one occasion I was appointed a delegate by no less than three shires, and yet I did not get swelled head. I participated in the functions, and very pleasant gatherings they were. Still, as far as those things settled by the conferences are concerned, I think that in the main the conferences have not been a very great success. However, I am glad to see that something has resulted from them, inasmuch as the Minister has told us that this Bill embodies, with some slight exceptions to which I shall call attention, the whole of the recommendations made by those conferences. The Minister referred to the fact that when he called for certain statistical information from the various local bodies he was not met in a proper spirit, and in that I entirely agree with him.

Mr. COTTELL: He was.

Mr. LENNON: I say he was not.

Mr. COTTELL: He was in the bulk of the cases.

Mr. LENNON: The hon. member interjecting evidently does not read the newspapers.

Mr. COTTELL: I do not agree with what the newspapers say.

Mr. LENNON: The hon. member does not agree with the newspapers because they say nothing at all about him. I say it is a matter of public notoriety that my statement is borne out by fact—that various local authorities throughout the land did not take kindly to the request of the Home Secretary's Office that they should supply certain information. The statement is absolutely incontrovertible, and is justified by the newspapers throughout the State. It was an unwarrantable presumption on the part of local authorities to refuse to supply information to the department which is charged with the administration of local government, which may institute inquiries concerning them, and may put in the bailliff at any time. I say again, as I said by interjection, that this Government had so poisoned the public mind that these local authorities were suspicious that possibly the statistical information was required for the Federal Government, and why should they supply anything to the Federal Government? That was the feeling engendered by the gentlemen sitting opposite towards the Commonwealth Government. But that does not justify the attitude of the local authorities. They did not show a proper appreciation of a real duty in responding heartily to the call of the Home Office in giving information.

Mr. COTTELL: I say the bulk of them did.

Mr. LENNON: I am not saying they did not. I say that at first they did not give a response to it, and I challenge the hon. member to the contrary. I understand that in the end they all furnished information. If I am misquoting what the hon. gentleman said he will correct me.

The HOME SECRETARY: Some of the local authorities undoubtedly complied with the request at once, but a large number of them did not do so.

Mr. COTTELL: Nine-tenths did.

Mr. LENNON: I do not care how many did. I am simply quoting the Home Secretary, and I [Mr. Lennon.

know of my own knowledge, from having been written to by clerks of local bodies inquiring whether they should supply the information—showing that they did show strong disinclination at the outset to comply with the call.

The HOME SECRETARY: Hear, hear!

Mr. LENNON: I am glad to see that wiser counsels prevailed, and they did furnish the information. With regard to throwing upon the various local authorities the responsibility of keeping clear of noxious weeds the roads and public reserves, I think that is the only way in which the work can be done. Even if the Government decide to do it themselves, they would very likely have found, as has been found by the Lands Department in dealing with the public estate improvement fund, that where they ask these people to open up roads in isolated localities, they have to ask the local authorities to supervise the work. They would still have to make use of the local authorities for that purpose. But what I want to point out to the Home Secretary is that he will have to be prepared in the near future—probably next year—not only in the area of local authorities infested with noxious weeds, but probably in the whole of the areas of the various local authorities of the State, to meet demands made by them for assistance, by way of grant, to clear the various noxious weeds away from the public thoroughfares of these shires. I trust that the Treasurer is working together with the Home Secretary, and that they will be prepared to find sufficient money to provide for these grants already sketched out by the Home Secretary. Clause 7 deals with the franchise, in connection with which the Opposition has given notice of an amendment. I thought it possible that we might have got through the second reading to-day, and the Committee stage be reached to-night, and consequently we would not have been able to get the printing done in the evening; consequently the printing was done earlier than necessary. That is the explanation of it, as it should only have taken place immediately prior to the Committee stage of the Bill. I notice a clause providing for the incorporation of local authorities' associations. That may or may not be a good thing. It will certainly give them great powers. That is in clause 26. It reads as follows:—

The Local Authorities' Association of Queensland (hereinafter called "the association") shall be a body corporate, and by that name shall have perpetual succession and a common seal and be capable in law of suing and being sued, and shall have power to compound or to prove in any competent court all debts or sums of money due to it, and of doing and suffering, subject to this Act, all such other acts and things as bodies corporate may by law do and suffer.

That is the ordinary phraseology to give power to corporate bodies, and this body will have some very important functions to discharge, amongst them some to which I take exception. For example, each of the local authorities which become members of that association will have to contribute a membership fee, and the association may make rules for the governance of the institution, and for the fixing of the amount to be paid annually by each local authority. That is a good thing probably in a district within 200 or 300 miles of Brisbane, accessible by rail. They may derive advantage from this. They will be able to make much stronger representations to the association under this plan than if they were only a disconnected lot of people. But what I want to point out is that in the remote districts in the North and West there are a lot of shires, very large in area but small in income, only enjoying a paltry income, sometimes not more than £400 or £500. From my own point of view, I think all these shires should be done away with. I think



that any shire which cannot justify its existence by being able to show that it has a decent income ought to amalgamate with the neighbouring shires.

The TREASURER: They can withdraw from the association at any time; there is nothing to compel them to remain in the association.

Mr. LENNON: Yes; but once people fall into the habit of becoming a member of a body—lots of individuals continue paying up to a club, for example, or some lodge, and very likely these local bodies will go on paying when they cannot afford it, and it is a very heavy drain on a local authority with a total income of £500 a year to contribute to this, because the remote shires will get very little benefit—the benefit will chiefly accrue to those within easy distance of Brisbane. That is why Northern members made such a stand, not only in regard to the Mines Regulation Bill but to the Redistribution of Seats Bill. Now they can be compelled to pay their contributions. The hon. gentleman says they can withdraw. What clause is that?

The TREASURER: The contribution itself is not compulsory. Any local authority may contribute under subsection (5).

Mr. LENNON: Under this arrangement, I understand that every shire, once it joins, cannot get out of it. Tell me under what clause they can withdraw?

The TREASURER: Section 26. There is nothing in the Act to make it compulsory for them to join any association.

Mr. LENNON: You cannot compel them to join, but they mostly will join, because I notice that it was stated at the conference that there were 145 local authorities in Queensland, and they have all become members except four or five. They may not all care to subscribe in the same proportion, but a very large number will join. Those are some of the things I consider want pointing out, and members who are more intimately connected with local authorities—I have in the past spent a short time in connection with a divisional board—but members who are taking a live interest in connection with local government will have something to say regarding this measure. It is very properly described by the Minister as practically a Committee Bill, and it will receive practical attention in Committee. With regard to valuations, I think it is a very good thing that there is no need to send out valuation notices where the valuation notice has not been altered. I think that is an unnecessary expense. I am not sure whether it is wise, although it is only a small matter, after all. In clause 32, page 16, it says—

Where the valuation of any parcel of land is the minimum, no notice of valuation shall be required to be given.

It is hardly necessary to give notice when only the minimum value is placed on the land—in the case of shires £20, and in the case of municipalities £30.

The HOME SECRETARY: There is no appeal from it.

Mr. LENNON: There is no appeal from it, I know. The only thing is that some people have to be reminded that they have to pay.

The HOME SECRETARY: They get the rate notice.

Mr. LENNON: I am not acting on behalf of any council in saying whether it ought to be carried out or not—I merely call attention to the fact that it is a departure. There is a clause which wants considering, and that is 43, with regard to a poll being taken. It says—

Such ratepayers shall with such requisition deposit with the chairman or clerk a sum of

twenty-five pounds to cover the expense of taking such poll, and the said sum shall be forfeited and paid into the local fund unless at the poll at least one-fourth of the ratepayers voting thereat give their votes against the proposition to borrow money; but in all other cases it shall be repaid to the ratepayers requiring the poll to be taken.

I think that might serve very well in the metropolitan area, where there is a large income—

Mr. COTTELL: No, not in the metropolitan area.

The HOME SECRETARY: If there are not more than a quarter of the ratepayers objecting, it is hardly necessary.

Mr. LENNON: Twenty-five pounds is an exorbitant sum. I think there should be no deposit at all; but, if a deposit be necessary, why not make it £5?

The HOME SECRETARY: That is to pay something towards the expenses necessitated by the taking of the poll.

Mr. LENNON: I am aware of the whole of the paraphernalia required.

The HOME SECRETARY: If only a small number of ratepayers require it, it is simply obstruction, and they ought to pay it.

Mr. LENNON: My opinion is that since the Act is to contain such a provision whereby a poll may be demanded, the local authorities might facilitate the taking of this poll as far as they possibly can. Of course, the fixing of a deposit of £25 shows an apprehension that a frivolous demand will be made for the taking of a poll—on something of little or no importance. I think that is not a well-grounded apprehension.

The HOME SECRETARY: That has been the experience.

Mr. LENNON: I think, generally speaking, that people in dealing with local authorities take things seriously. They want a poll on matters of very great importance to them—it may be a local option poll, or in connection with a loan, and I think the penalty is too heavy.

The HOME SECRETARY: In a local option poll they have to make a deposit.

Mr. LENNON: We will not labour the question too much. I just call attention to that matter as one of the items to which, [9.30 p.m.] personally, I take exception, and I hope, when we get into Committee, some person more familiar with the work of the Local Authorities Act will move an amendment to that provision. I come now to an innovation—an innovation so far as local government is concerned—and that is the prohibition of plumping. I think that is very much better than plumping. It is a modern innovation, and has become popular. It is the system adopted in connection with the Federal elections. It is not approved of in the State elections, but it is generally observed in committees and all that kind of thing, and I think it is a good thing to adopt it here. I think the plumping system is a bad system, and its prohibition is a wise act on the part of the gentleman in charge of the Bill. I think that also is a recommendation of the conference.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes.

Mr. LENNON: Following down the provision, I see the 2nd paragraph of subsection (7) reads as follows:—

The words "four o'clock in the afternoon" are repealed, and the words "eight o'clock in the forenoon" are inserted; also the words "four o'clock aforesaid" are repealed, and the words "eight o'clock aforesaid" are inserted in lieu thereof.

Does that mean that the poll shall be carried on from 8 o'clock in the morning until 8 o'clock in the evening?

*Mr. Lennon.]*

The HOME SECRETARY: If the hon. member will look at clause 54 of the third schedule of the principal Act, he will see it is in connection with the removal of ballot-boxes. If the hon. member will permit, for his information I will read the provision.

Mr. LENNON: Thank you.

The HOME SECRETARY: The clause to be amended in the present Act is as follows:—

At four o'clock on the day appointed for the closing of the poll, the returning officer shall demand the ballot-box from the postmaster, and, if required to do so, shall give to the postmaster a written receipt for the same, and shall forthwith convey the ballot-box to the place appointed as hereinbefore provided for examining the votes and ascertaining the result of the election.

These periods were too short, and it is with that object that the amendment is proposed.

Mr. LENNON: Thank you. I am sorry no provision is made for extending the time for the polling in connection with local government. At the present time it commences about 8 o'clock in the morning and lasts until 4 o'clock in the afternoon. I think that is too short.

The HOME SECRETARY: It may be later than that.

Mr. LENNON: That is the trouble. It may be later. In connection with local government, the returning officer, who is generally the mayor or chairman of the shire, has the option of fixing the time at 4 o'clock, 5 o'clock, or 6 o'clock, according to his judgment. I think it is very desirable to make it a fixed time. Make it 6 o'clock, and thereby give an opportunity to men who may be working in warehouses in the large cities, or driving horses, or in working about wharves—they may be ratepayers, and will not be able to vote without losing some of their valuable time. I think if the time were made 6 o'clock it would be a great improvement, and if the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill agrees to that appeal, I would be very pleased if he would add to the amendments he already has under consideration, one for the extension of the time to 6 o'clock—that is, making the time compulsory, and not leaving it optional according to the whim of the returning officer of any district. Taking it all round, I think this Local Authorities Bill is one that ought to meet with pretty general acceptance. It has been demanded a long time and promised a long time, and I think it will be welcome to the House. There are one or two things that might be put into it to give satisfaction to this side: I do not run any risks in saying the Bill is not one that altogether pleases this side, but I dare say if the hon. gentleman will give fair consideration to some of the amendments that we will move later on—we have already circulated one, and there may be one or two others—and they will be moved with the idea of making the Bill more democratic. There is one thing which has been recommended for many years by this party, that is that we should have adult suffrage. Some people say that is an absurdity—why should a man have a vote on a ratepayers' roll when he pays no rates—he occupies no house, nor owns any property in the shire or town. If so, it is a preposterous idea that he should have a say in the management of the affairs of the shire or town as he contributes nothing to the upkeep of the town in the way of rates. That is a very shallow view to take. I will give an illustration. A man living in a suburb of Brisbane may be paying 10s. or £1 a week for a house, and the sanitation may be very defective—there might be some foul drain running past causing sickness in his family. The thing occurred in my own neighbourhood, and caused serious illness—diphtheria—and the owners of the property

live away on the heights or out of the city altogether—they are the owners and the ratepayers, and they are the only people who have a say in local government; although a man may be living in the area and his own health and the health of his wife and family may be in danger, yet he has no word to say in connection with local government. I say that is a preposterous condition of affairs, and the men and women who have to endure these objectionable conditions should have the vote and not the absentee landlord. That is one of the reasons why this side has, for years past, desired to have adult suffrage—that is, the parliamentary roll in the local authority area. That should be the basis of voting, and if we do not get it this time we know the time will come when we shall get it, and it is our duty to ask for it now. Another thing has been demanded by the Labour party for many years past, and by others as well as the Labour party, owing to the force frequently perpetrated—I think it has occurred in South Brisbane to a marked extent—I know frequently there is a terrible squabble over the election of mayor. Why, they come to a deadlock in many instances, and the aid of the Governor in Council has to be sought to select a mayor, because they are unable to select one themselves. It is perfectly absurd. It has occurred here in the city of Brisbane; they have wrangled for weeks and weeks and a real deadlock has set in, and the Governor in Council has had to elect the mayor. It seems to me almost incredible that a dozen men cannot elect one of their number to act as mayor. The proper way to elect the mayor is by the ratepayer at the ballot box. I am quite certain they would never have a deadlock. It would be absolutely impossible, because, if necessary, it would be decided by the casting vote of the returning officer. But here they wrangle once year after year, and it draws better than Fitzgerald's circus—they draw big crowds in local council chambers every year to see the mayor elected, or rather to see him not elected, to speak more correctly. I hope the Home Secretary will act wisely—he professes to be a democrat—professes it very frequently and always in a very loud tone of voice in order to make it more impressive—if he is democratic he should certainly adopt some of the suggestions I am making, and I hope when he goes home to-night he will think it over, and when we get into Committee some of the democratic ideas I have mentioned will find a place in the Local Authorities Bill. I have nothing further to add, but in Committee I shall have something more to say.

Mr. GRAYSON (*Cunningham*): This Bill, to my mind, as the deputy leader of the Opposition stated, is a Bill that should be considered in Committee; and I may say at once that I do not intend to take up much time on the second reading. I presume the reason why the Minister had this Bill drafted was to embody resolutions and suggestions from the Local Authorities' Association.

The HOME SECRETARY: Hear, hear!

Mr. GRAYSON: I contend the time has arrived when those resolutions should be put into practical legislation. I was for about twenty years a member of a municipal council, and I think that if there is a body of men deserving of praise for their work it is the gentlemen conducting the shire councils and municipalities of Queensland. I notice in clause 15 that it is intended to compel the local authorities to supply the Government with statistical information. I think this will be a bit rough on local authorities, and I contend that, if the Government particularly want this information, they

[Mr. Lennon.]

should send their own officers to get the information, which it is hardly fair to ask a town clerk or shire clerk to supply, considering that it will entail a good deal of time and trouble. Clause 27 is one on which I think there will be a good deal of discussion in Committee. It deals with the clearing of noxious weeds off roads, and it is intended to compel private owners to clear the roads of prickly pear and noxious weeds. There is a great diversity of opinion in regard to this matter in shire councils and municipalities on the Darling Downs. I have had letters from three shires in my electorate who are opposed to private owners clearing the noxious weeds off the roads abutting on their properties; and I have had two letters from two other local authorities who are in favour of it. I think it would be much better for the local authorities to eradicate prickly pear and noxious weeds, and make a charge on the whole shire or municipality, as the case may be. Again, I notice that provision is made in the Bill to give grants to local authorities for the clearing of prickly pear off roads and reserves. This will be very pleasing information to local authorities in country districts, and I think it is a very wise provision. I contend that grants should have been given to local authorities many years ago with the view of assisting in eradicating noxious weeds and prickly pear off Government reserves. The Rosenthal Shire Council, in my electorate, expended nearly £3,000 in the eradication of prickly pear from roads and reserves. They made application some twelve months ago to the Minister for Lands to have certain reserves in their shire sold and the proceeds handed to the shire council to assist in clearing the prickly pear off other reserves. The Minister granted their request, and other reserves were disposed of, and the proceeds of the sale handed to the local authority, with the result that nearly all the Government reserves in that shire are now clear of prickly pear.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: I suppose the reserves there are not big enough to swing a cat in.

Mr. GRAYSON: The Glengallan shire and the Clifton shire are acting almost in the same way. The Glengallan shire struck a special rate of 3d. in the £1, with the result that nearly all the roads in the shire are clear of prickly pear at the present time. I notice that it is intended to do away with plumping at the elections of local authorities, and I am entirely in favour of the clause which proposes that. The deputy leader of the Opposition spoke very emphatically about his intention of trying to alter the franchise so as to allow only one adult one vote in municipal and shire elections. I must say at once that I am opposed to the hon. gentleman in that matter. The present system has worked well for many years, and I see no reason to alter the franchise. It is a difficult matter to get candidates to be nominated, and I know several extraordinary vacancies that have taken place within the last twelve months. I know of three particularly which had to be filled by the Government. The fact is that now there is no endowment there is great difficulty in financing shires and municipalities, with the result that very few men care to take the position. My opinion is that in the case of persons with a large amount of property it is not too much to allow them to record three votes. There are financial institutions and corporations that were allowed nine votes under the old Act, but are now limited to three votes. I contend that is sufficient, and I shall oppose any proposal to alter the franchise to one adult one vote. Again, provision is made in the Bill that no member of a shire council shall retain his seat

unless his rates are paid by the 21st December. There was a very serious omission in connection with this matter in the old Act, as a clause was inserted in that Bill whereby a shire councillor or alderman could hold his seat if his rates had not been paid for years previously. That was a very bad system. No man should be allowed to hold a seat in a shire or municipality unless his rates are paid. With reference to the clause closing the poll at 4 o'clock, I think that in the country districts that hour is too early.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. gentleman is mistaken. There is no such provision in the amending Act.

Mr. GRAYSON: Yes, there is. I think the present closing hour of 5 o'clock has worked very well. I do not wish to take up the time of the House any further, except to say that there will be two or three amendments circulated when the Bill is going through Committee, and it is very likely that I will support one or two of them. I congratulate the Minister in bringing this Bill forward. This measure has been promised for years. To my knowledge it has been promised for four or five years, and the Home Secretary deserves praise in bringing this matter forward. When it has passed through the Committee stages it will be found that there is very little alteration in it.

Mr. THEODORE (Woothakata): I was surprised to hear the hon. member in charge of this measure acquiesce in a statement made by the hon. member for Cunningham. The hon. member said that he believed that the primary reason for the introduction of this Bill was to embody the amendments suggested at the local authorities' conferences. Now, while there may have been some good amendments suggested at those conferences—I know that there were some good amendments suggested—still that should not be the sole reason for introducing a measure such as this. There have been other bodies equally interested in local authority government who waited on the hon. gentleman with suggested alterations in the Local Authorities Act, and he has evidently not embodied them in this measure nor given them much consideration. I was on a deputation representing a large portion of the community of Queensland who made certain suggestions to the hon. gentleman in reference to broadening the franchise. This was quite recently. The hon. gentleman spoke to them courteously but gave them no hope of getting their suggested amendments embodied in this measure. I attended one local authorities' conference, and came in contact with the delegates there, and I can say that it was the most conservative body of men I ever had the misfortune to be among.

Mr. COTTELL: You were one of them.

Mr. THEODORE: There were certain radical suggestions made at that conference, but they absolutely refused to consider them at all. I tried to carry a resolution broadening the franchise. I gave very good reasons why the resolution should be adopted by that body, but the suggestion was received with howls of disapproval.

The TREASURER: The majority were against it.

Mr. THEODORE: Yes, the majority were against it. They were a very conservative body, and probably represented conservative opinion throughout the country, but fortunately they did not represent the people of the country. Fortunately they only represented a percentage of the people in the districts they

*Mr. Theodore.]*

came from. They did not represent the rate-payers even. In my district a ratepayers' association was formed to protect themselves against their own council.

Mr. COTTELL: Why didn't they bump the council out?

Mr. THEODORE: Because, with the aid of plural voting and those other devices which the hon. gentleman is aware of, they have a majority at the ballot-box. The only question I intend to deal with at this stage is that of franchise. The most serious thing that can be said in connection with this measure is that it has failed to provide anything in the matter of broadening the franchise. Some of the amendments embodied in the Bill are right enough. I have nothing to say against them. The hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill made certain utterances in regard to the franchise, and always he has expressed himself against any broadening of it. He is of the opinion that there should be no representation without taxation. And that is a good stand to take up so long as he is supported by fact. I hold that there are a good many who contribute to the revenue of a local authority who have no representation. There are numbers of people throughout Queensland who indirectly contribute to the revenue of a local authority, and who have no say in the deliberations of that body or in the election of representatives to that body, nor any say concerning the local authority government.

Mr. COTTELL: The tenant can get a vote by paying the rates.

Mr. THEODORE: That is so.

The HOME SECRETARY: He can pay the rates and take it out of the rent.

Mr. THEODORE: There are numbers of people living in the city and in the country who at present have no votes. It may be said that they can claim to be put on the roll of ratepayers, so long as they undertake to pay the rates.

The HOME SECRETARY: They can first pay the rates, and deduct it from the rent which is payable to the landlord.

Mr. THEODORE: We know that the rents are so adjusted that the tenant has to pay the rent and the rates also. We know that every person, whether he is a lodger at a hotel or a tenant paying rent, has to contribute to the revenue of the local authority through various channels. In some countries the franchise is so broad that every man who is entitled to vote for a member of Parliament is entitled to a vote for the local authority, and this should be brought about in Queensland. The very fact that persons consume commodities produced in a district, and the local authorities rate the producer of those commodities, is evidence that the consumer is contributing in an indirect manner to the revenue of the local authorities. Every man and woman in a community contributes either directly or indirectly to the revenue of the local authority. In many cases it operates harshly against workers, who, although they do not appear to be paying rates or contributing anything to the local authority, do so just the same. They pay rates when paying for the commodities they consume or when paying rent. Much unnecessary taxation can be removed when the municipalities themselves take control of many things that are now controlled by private enterprise. We see a general tendency in every country to municipalise many of the public utilities, such as street car service, water supply, artificial lighting, electric power, transportation facilities, and abattoirs, and if that is brought about it

[Mr. Theodore.

will be even more apparent that every person in the community contributes to the revenue of the municipality. Then why should not every person in the community have representation on these bodies? In the city of Brisbane

[10 p.m.] there is a tendency now on the part of the people to extend the functions of the local authorities, and there is not the slightest doubt that later on there will be less and less rates levied and collected, and a large share of the revenue of the local authorities will be derived from profits from concerns that are now controlled by private enterprise. When that comes about, it will be inevitable that the general public will have better representation, and there will be a broader franchise. We may as well meet it now, and there are many good reasons why it should be done. It is my opinion that, when we are prepared to trust the people, and when we are prepared to extend the functions of local authorities, we shall attract better men to take seats upon these local authorities. The hon. member for Cunningham spoke of the difficulty there is now in getting members of local authorities to stand for re-election. I can quite understand that under the present system there is no particular inducement for the best men in the community to offer their services for local authority purposes. When we trust the people, and give everyone a voice in selecting the representatives, better men will offer. That is why I think the franchise should be given to "the common people," as they are called. I have had a little experience in this matter quite recently. One of the local authorities in my district, the Douglas Shire Council, has adopted most doubtful methods—Tammany-Hall methods, they may perhaps be called. The people in the Port Douglas and Mossman district have absolutely no redress. A corporation in the district—the Mossman Central Mill Company—exercised such an influence that they have control of the council, and they so arrange things that the mill gets the advantage of the tramway which is owned by the shire council, and has secured other unfair advantages. The freights are so arranged on the tramway that the mill gets a preferential tariff. It is most unfair to the general public, and the local people have had to form an association to protect themselves against the council, which should be looking after their interests. The council is corrupt, and this is a state of affairs which should be borne in mind when the Government is framing a measure such as this. I claim that on a popular franchise such things could not happen. The people would be able to elect representatives who would protect their rights and their privileges. I know very well that the Home Secretary will not consider the suggestion I have made in regard to broadening the franchise, as he gave a definite answer to a deputation of which I was a member. Still, sooner or later he will find that the franchise must be broadened, and that will be indicated more forcibly when the local authorities assume full control of the public utilities of which I have spoken.

Mr. FORSYTH (Moreton): The burden of the speech of the hon. member who has just sat down was a wider franchise. I hope the Home Secretary will pay no attention to the remarks of the hon. member. To give a wider franchise, or to give the franchise to everybody in a local authority, would mean that the people who find the money would be controlled by people who pay no rates, and that is a state of affairs that I hope will never come to pass in Queensland. There is a great deal in the statement made by the hon. member that the man who finds the money should

have the vote. It is only just that the people who find the money to carry on local government should be the only people who should have the vote.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Are you trying to intimidate the Home Secretary?

Mr. FORSYTH: I am not trying to intimidate the Home Secretary. If such an amendment is proposed, I can assure hon. members that it will have my most strenuous opposition.

Mr. FERRICKS: Your crowd used the very same language twenty years ago with regard to adult suffrage.

Mr. FORSYTH: The people who find the money are the only people who should have the vote.

Mr. LAND: That is all we want.

Mr. FORSYTH: The people who find the money are the ratepayers, and nobody else. There may be many places where a large number of people are living who do not pay rates, and who would control the local authorities without any responsibility at all, if the franchise were extended as suggested.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Who are the ratepayers?

Mr. FORSYTH: The people who pay the rates.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Who are they?

Mr. FORSYTH: The people owning the property in the local authorities.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: The people living in their houses.

Mr. FORSYTH: I do not think the hon. member understands the matter very well. Suppose you have an individual who pays £1 or £1 10s. a year in rates, and he has six or eight people boarding with him, it would take a little bit of calculating to decide exactly who should have a vote. I think the fairest proposal is that the people who have to find the money—and many of them have to find very large sums of money—should be the only persons to have the vote. To take the voting out of the hands of the people, for instance, who pay very large sums in rates in Brisbane, and give the power to people who do not pay a single shilling in rates, would be one of the most unfair proposals that could possibly be made. The deputy leader of the Opposition said that a man might have no vote at all, and an epidemic might break out in the place in which he lives. Does the hon. member mean to say that, if such a thing occurred, the local authority would not be forced to take action at once? It does not require persons who pay no rates to make the local authorities do their duty in such a case. As a matter of fact, in the case of an epidemic, the people who pay rates protect the man who does not pay anything. I only hope that this pet scheme of the Labour party to have popular representation in local government will not find a place in this Bill. The members of the local authorities are men who give their time for the good of the community for nothing. My experience is that these men spend a great deal of their own time and their own money in connection with local affairs, and that they do it for the good of the country, and I hold that men who do that and get no payment for their services are deserving of every consideration. The Local Authorities Act is one of the finest Acts that have ever been passed in Queensland, and it has done a great deal of good, because under its provisions the money collected in various parts is collected by the people themselves and spent by the people themselves—and you could have no better system for carrying out local works. With regard to the question of plumping, I think that anyone who votes should be forced to vote for the full number of members to

be elected. With respect to clause 43, which deals with the £25 deposit in the case of ratepayers demanding a poll, at first sight it appeared to me that the sum was rather large, but, on the other hand, we must bear in mind that some people may ask for a poll without sufficient justification and put the local authority to a great deal of expense.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Have they ever done that?

Mr. FORSYTH: I do not know that they have, but in any case I think the amount is too high and that it might be reduced in Committee. Possibly it is desirable that some deposit should be required, because some people may get up a scare and demand a poll if there is no deposit to be made. It is true that a certain number of ratepayers must request a poll before a poll is granted, but that certain number may put the local authority to considerable unnecessary expense. With regard to the clearing of prickly pear off public streets, I think it advisable that that should be done, and if that is done by the local authorities, it appears to me that the Railway Department should be compelled to keep clean the small reserves at railway stations.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: They will have their work cut out.

Mr. FORSYTH: That does not matter. If the local authorities are required to clear away prickly pear, it is only right that the Government should assist them by keeping those small reserves of about two acres at stations clear of the pest, otherwise they may become breeding grounds for the dissemination of the pest over roads which have been cleared by the local authority. I also think it is a good thing to give the Auditor-General power to make a special audit of the accounts of local authorities where that is considered desirable, because although, as a rule, the majority of such accounts are fairly well kept, circumstances may arise which will render a special audit necessary. With regard to the Local Authorities' Association being incorporated, that is a wise thing to do. It is also a good thing that they should undertake the management of a fidelity guarantee fund. As the Bill is really a Committee Bill, I shall say no more about it now, except to repeat that I hope that under no circumstances whatever will there be any alteration made in the franchise, but that we shall give the man who pays the rates the right to vote, and no one else.

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Charters Towers*): While this may be a Bill principally for Committee, I should like to make a few remarks on the second reading. My opinion with regard to the extension of the franchise is that it is the pivot on which the whole Bill should work. Without an extension of the franchise, the Bill may be anything but a good Bill for the ratepayers as a whole. I can quite understand the hon. member for Moreton being opposed to an extension of the franchise, because that has always been the attitude of the party to which he belongs. The arguments used against the extension of the local authority franchise are the same as the arguments advanced against the extension of the parliamentary franchise. There is no doubt that the worker pays the rates, if not directly, then indirectly, and he should therefore have a vote. The present franchise is neither a good nor a sound franchise. The previous Home Secretary practically admitted that it would be a right thing to extend the franchise to ratepayers. I know that ratepayers have the franchise now—that any tenant paying the rates within thirty days after the service of notice can deduct it from the rent, and thus become a voter. But how many ratepayers will do that? Is it a fair thing to ask a tenant to

*Mr. Winstanley.]*



put his hand into his own pocket to pay the rates for the purpose of getting a vote? From what I have seen, I believe that in a very large number of instances if the tenant of a cottage took it upon himself to pay the rates and deducted the amount from the rent, he would find himself turned out of his cottage before the time to exercise his vote came round. I hold that the tenant of a cottage indirectly pays the rates, and, therefore, he should have the franchise. At present practically a handful of people in some places have the ruling of the community. Financial institutions, mining companies, and manufacturing institutions, having nine votes each, have a preponderating power in elections for local authorities. I have known instances where they had practically 120 votes in the shape of double and treble votes before the votes of the general ratepayers counted at all. I contend that the franchise should be extended to everybody in the community, and that all on the parliamentary roll should have a vote in local authority affairs. It has been said that those who pay should have votes. But that is not the case at the present time. Many shire councils have a wheel tax, but it does not matter how much a man may pay in the shape of a wheel tax, unless he is a property-owner, he gets no vote. I maintain that such a person is entitled to have a voice in the election of those who levy the tax. Is not that man entitled to some representation for his taxation? Then again, the local authorities have a dog tax; they charge 2s. 6d. or 5s. to a man who has a dog, but he would not get any representation for that; and the same with regard to goats. Under existing conditions, it is not a sound argument to say that the people who pay taxation have a vote, because they have not. The very least that ought to be done is that the man who is a householder should have a vote. There is another point in connection with the Bill—it is proposed to place all the reserves and town commons in the various shire councils under the control of the shire councils, and, of course, they are expected to keep them clear of noxious weeds and other pests, and that will be a good thing, but I am in accord with the opinion expressed that the Railway Department should keep their reserves clean.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: How do you know that they do not do it?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: I know they do not do that on Charters Towers, where the reserve simply swarms with weeds which have been declared pests under the Act, and the shire council is expected to eradicate them. I think that something more specific ought to be stated in regard to the control of these commons than is given in the Bill. They are simply going to be placed under the control of the local authorities, who can practically do just what they please with them.

The HOME SECRETARY: The provision is that they have to keep them clear of noxious weeds.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: That is only one condition. They might lease them to some of their friends, to the exclusion of those who have been making use of them. There is a considerable area at Charters Towers.

The HOME SECRETARY: There are some people who are depasturing 1,000 head of cattle on some of these reserves without paying anything.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: The hon. gentleman who interjects is to blame for that. Under the Mining Act, they are only allowed to depasture fifty head of stock, and for any over that number they have to pay 3d. per head; and if the hon. gentleman had administered the Act

the probability is that a large number of people who are depasturing stock would have been paying the department for the use of their land.

The HOME SECRETARY: I am now dealing with it.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: No. The hon. gentleman is not dealing with it at all; he is simply placing it in the hands of the local authorities, who may choose, as they probably will, to let these people do the same thing as they are doing at the present time, while they will look after the small man who has half a dozen cattle quick and lively. The Bill proposes to hand over these reserves to local authorities, but, under the present franchise, the bulk of the people have no say in the election of a council, so it is very doubtful whether it is going to be a good thing or not. There is a new departure in one or two directions—it is proposed to allow local authorities to subsidise omnibus services, but I am somewhat doubtful whether this partnership business between local authorities and private individuals is going to be a good thing. I think it would be in the interests of the community that a local authority should take complete control of omnibuses or trams. Then there are provisions with reference to milk and pure food. I am wondering whether, if the local authorities go into the milk business, they will get the same treatment as the milk institute in Brisbane. I think that no distinction should be made in this respect. Then I think it is simply ridiculous to ask people who demand a poll to put down £25. The present Act has been in operation for eight years, and I do not know how many polls have been asked for under it, but I do not think a mean advantage has been taken, or that any abuses have arisen in connection with the polls. The present provision is that twenty ratepayers must sign a requisition for a poll and make a deposit of £10, and I think those provisions are quite hard enough. A deposit of £25 would practically prohibit a poll being taken. It seems to me that this is not intended to facilitate the taking of a poll where in all probability a poll is necessary. Then I think something could have been done in relation to the valuation of different kinds of property. The maximum of 3d. in the £1 has been removed, and there is practically no limit. At the present time the large poor mines which happen to be making the least money, and are the least able to pay, have to pay the greater tax, while the small rich mines, which are making the most money, and making the most use of the roads and cutting them up, are let off scot-free.

The HOME SECRETARY: Oh, no; they have to pay a wheel tax.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: The carter has to pay the wheel tax, but the rich mining company, which probably owns a small area, practically gets off scot free. Yet it is [10.30 p.m.] the company which does the damage, while the company with the large area, and perhaps making no profits, is heavily rated, and is not in a position to pay. So that under these circumstances the basis of the valuations of these properties on goldfields is not a sound one, and is anything but equitable. The mineowners have admitted it. On one occasion—I think at the Local Authorities' Conference—they suggested that a kind of tribute should be paid—so much per ton of stone crushed—but the Government said they would have to introduce an amending Bill and the whole thing fell through, but it goes to show that the mineowners themselves recognise that the conditions which exist are not fair. For instance, some local authorities spend one-half of their rates on one piece of road, and after the

[Mr. Winstanley.]

office expenses are paid, there is very little left for the upkeep of other portions of the division. Therefore, I think something ought to be done in connection with the valuation clauses of the Bill. We notice changes are to be made in one or two connections. Under the old Act the councillors were not permitted to supply goods to shires. I think that is a very good thing. It has been said that the councillors give their time and their service to the local authorities, and they deserve every credit, but under the provisions of this Bill the shire councillor will be able to get the whole custom of the council. In times gone by in Charters Towers we passed a motion in reference to produce, that each storekeeper in the shire should get his turn in supplying produce for the horses of the shire, and those on the shire were practically debarred, because the law prohibited them doing business with the council, and I think it is a good thing. Under the present provision a man on the council, if he is a produce merchant, will be able to get the whole of the business. It is a well-known fact, not only in Queensland, but in other parts of the world, that a good deal of fraudulent dealing has taken place in connection with the supplying of goods to shire councils, not only in ordinary business, but in connection with contracts, and the ratepayers have not got a fair deal for their money. There is also a new provision in connection with the separating of the finances of the different divisions. Although it is not laid down in the previous Act, it is one of those things which has been practised ever since the Act came into force, and I know of one shire council where every ward is credited with the rates collected, and debited with its share of the expenditure. Also, in connection with the practice of sending valuation notices out, the notices are not to be sent when the valuation is not altered. They send the rate notice when it is due, and that has to suffice. Of course that is sufficient in most instances. There is another point that I think needs consideration. It is a rather difficult task at times for the working people who own their own cottages to pay the rates. They have their water rates, sanitary rates, general rate, health rate, and special loan rate all coming in on top of one another, and if a man is not in constant work and receiving regular wages, he often has a rather difficult task to meet his rates, and I think it is anything but fair that a man should be disfranchised simply because he cannot rake the money together before the end of the year.

The HOME SECRETARY : We are giving them another month now.

Mr. WINSTANLEY : A month is something. Of course, most of them pay up before the end of the year, but I have known instances where it has been practically impossible for the people to rake the money together to pay the rates, and if they cannot pay them they are liable to be summoned in the small debts court and have to pay all the legal expenses incidental thereto, and they are also deprived of the right to vote if an election should take place.

The HOME SECRETARY : If they cannot pay one year's rates it is absolutely impossible for them to pay two.

Mr. WINSTANLEY : That is not sound.

The HOME SECRETARY : It is perfectly sound.

Mr. WINSTANLEY : There are numbers of men working on tribute. Perhaps in June they enter into tribute and work three or four months, and at the end of that period they have not enough to pay the grocer and butcher, and

the rates have to stand over. Perhaps they have to work two or three months before they are in a position to pay the rates, and it is only adding penalty to penalty in not only rendering them liable to be summoned but also in sacrificing their vote if an election should come on, and the Government might make it easier instead of more difficult for those people to give their votes. I certainly think the franchise, after all, is one of the main things in connection with this Bill, and if the Home Secretary takes up the same attitude in connection with the Bill as he has taken up with some other Bills, and refuses to accept amendments, the Bill will not be satisfactory. I certainly think that household suffrage is the very least that should be offered at the present time. I am confident that while this amending Bill may suit the representatives of the Local Authorities' Association, it will not satisfy a large body of the people of Queensland, and they will be greatly disappointed with it. We will have an opportunity of submitting our amendments and giving reasons why they should be adopted when we reach the Committee stage, and for that reason I will resume my seat.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER (*Maranoa*) : I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed.

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

The House adjourned at twenty-one minutes to 11 o'clock.