

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 7 AUGUST 1912**

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WEDNESDAY, 7 AUGUST, 1912.

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

### QUESTIONS.

#### MELBOURNE STREET REFRESHMENT-ROOMS.

Mr. BOUCHARD (*South Brisbane*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. Has the Commissioner for Railways received a claim from the late lessee of the refreshment-rooms at Melbourne Street (South Brisbane) Railway Station for damage sustained by her owing to the defective condition of the lavatory at that station?

"2. If so, has the claim been considered or dealt with, and what decision has been come to by the Commissioner with regard thereto?

"3. Will the Minister lay upon the table of the House copies of all correspondence, reports, and other documents relating to the said claim, and generally to the said lessee's tenancy at the said refreshment-rooms?"

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

"1. Yes.

"2. Litigation is now pending between the parties in respect of other refreshment-rooms, and it is thought advisable to treat all matters in dispute as sub judice.

"3. All papers are now with the Crown Solicitor."

#### RAILWAYS BUILT UNDER GUARANTEE ACT.

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Queenton*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. How many lines have been built under the Railway Guarantee Act?

"2. What number of these are paying?

"3. What number are not paying?

"4. In how many cases has the valuator been appointed under the Act?

"5. In how many cases have the deficiencies been paid by ratepayers in benefited areas, and the amount in each case?

"6. What number of lines have failed to make up the deficiency, and the amount due in each case?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

"1. Twenty.

"2. Four.

"3. Four.

"4. In every case where deficiency has been or is being defined.

"5. In two cases—Dalby-Bell to 30th June, 1909, £1,535 approximately out of £1,770; Caboolture-Woodford to 30th June, 1910, £475 13s. 7d.

"6. One—viz., Dalby-Bell, £235."

### STAMP OFFICE INQUIRY.

Mr. BOUCHARD asked the Chief Secretary, for the Attorney-General—

"1. Referring to the inquiry regarding the administration of the Stamp Office recently held before His Honour Judge Macnaughton, has His Honour made his report thereon?

"2. What is the substance of the report?

"3. Will the Premier lay a copy of His Honour's report on the table of the House?"

The PREMIER (Hon. D. F. Denham, *Oxley*) replied—

"1. Yes.

"2 and 3. It is not considered desirable to make the report, or any part of it, public."

### ST. DAVID'S DAY.

Mr. FOLEY (*Mundingburra*) asked the Home Secretary—

"Can he give the House any good reason why he omitted to include the first day of March (St. David's Day) in the New Holidays Bill now before Parliament?"

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

"This day has never been recognised as a public holiday, and no reasons have been advanced for its recognition as such."

### USE OF INQUIRY COURT ROOM.

Mr. RYAN (*Barcoo*) asked the Chief Secretary, for the Attorney-General—

"1. Has not the Government any authority over the purposes for which the inquiry court room may be used?

"2. For what purposes was the inquiry court room used on Monday, 29th July?

"3. Was not the inquiry court room closed to the general public on Monday, 29th July? If so, why?"

The PREMIER replied—

"1. Yes.

"2. A number of men called at the inquiry court room and requested Mr. Neilson, who presides there, to witness their signatures, and he complied.

"3. No."

### MINING FOR COAL AND MINERAL OIL BILL.

#### THIRD READING.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. J. G. Appel, *Albert*), this Bill was read a third time, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council by message in the usual form.

### TRADE COUPONS BILL.

#### INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING.

On the motion of the TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Bulimba*), this Bill, introduced in Committee, was read a first time. The second reading was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS ACT  
AMENDMENT BILL.

## INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING.

On the motion of the TREASURER, this Bill, introduced in Committee, was read a first time. The second reading was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES ACT AMEND-  
MENT BILL.

## INTRODUCTION.

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. G. Appel, *Albert*): I beg to move—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Local Authorities Acts, 1902 to 1910, and to repeal the Stage Carriages Act of 1835, certain sections of the Carriers Act of 1866, and the Carriers Act of 1866 Amendment Act.”

Mr. LENNON: No amendment of the Brisbane Tramways Act?

The HOME SECRETARY: That is not within my administration.

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*): I should like to know whether, in the proposed amending Bill, the hon. gentleman has provided that any officer or servant in the employ of a shire council, or municipal council, will be disqualified in future from being appointed as a valuator for that body. I think some amendment of that character has been sent by the local authorities to the hon. gentleman.

The HOME SECRETARY: No, certainly not, because in the greater number of cases the valuator is an officer permanently appointed and employed by the local authority. No such representation has ever been made to the Home Department in reference to that particular subject.

Mr. BARBER. I thought the local authorities sent you a recommendation that these officers should be appointed by the Auditor-General.

Question put and passed.

## FIRST READING.

The House resumed, and the resolution was agreed to. The Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the day for to-morrow.

## COMMONWEALTH DEPOSIT BILL.

## INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

The TREASURER moved—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to authorise the acceptance by the Treasurer of the State of Queensland of the sum of £1,000,000 from the Commonwealth of Australia as a fixed deposit for one year from the 5th March, 1912, bearing interest at the rate of £3 10s. per centum per annum.”

Mr. HARDACRE (*Leichhardt*) said he proposed to move an amendment substituting the word “validate” for the word “authorise”; and he thought that the amendment would appeal to the common sense of hon. members as being grammatically correct. More than that, there was no doubt

[*Mr. Barber.*

that the phraseology used in the motion was intended to slur over, or hide, or lessen the seriousness of the position in which the Government found themselves. It was evident that the action of the Government had to be validated. They had done an unconstitutional thing, an illegal thing; and unless their illegal action was made legal it would stand as an illegal action for ever. With the phraseology adopted, the motion really meant that the Government wanted authority to obtain another loan of £1,000,000 from the Commonwealth Government. He did not know whether the Treasurer wanted to get another loan in addition to the £1,000,000 he had already obtained.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: He would like another million on the same terms.

Mr. HARDACRE: What the Government did at the time was perhaps justifiable under the circumstances, because the country was then in a most deplorable condition as far as our loan funds were concerned, though the finances were in an exceedingly good position as far as revenue was concerned. The deplorable condition of the loan fund was brought about by recklessness and want of foresight on the part of the Government, and by their neglect to take the House into their confidence in the last session of the last Parliament. In a former debate he made charges against the Government in connection with the finances, and the Secretary for Agriculture, recognising the gravity of the charges, made a statement, and gave some figures; but those figures corroborated to the hilt everything he had said—they even made the position worse than he had pointed out—if that were possible. The hon. gentleman stated the amount of money they had in the Bank of England was £538,000; at call in the Queensland National Bank £915,000; extended deposits here amounting to £122,000; deposits with the Agent-General, £83,000; deposited with the Bank of England, £750,000. Altogether there was a total of £2,791,000, from which was to be deducted the £1,000,000 already obtained from the Commonwealth Government, leaving a credit balance of £1,791,000. And he said triumphantly that that was

[4 p.m.] an answer to my statement. Including the £1,000,000 borrowed from the Commonwealth, we had £1,791,000, including everything. Deducting the amount of £422,000 which was locked up in the Queensland National Bank on extended deposit for years, the deposit of £750,000 in London for payment of steel rails, and the £89,000, which was practically pocket money for the Agent-General in London for current expenses, and also deducting the £915,000 in the Queensland National Bank, which was required for current expenses, it left the Government in the most deplorable position of not having enough money to carry on authorised public works. In the Treasury statement published in the *Gazette* on 31st March, to which the Secretary for Agriculture referred him, he found the figures the hon. gentleman mentioned, and he found there a number of accounts which could legitimately be used for loan purposes. There was one significant item there. The amount to the credit of the loan fund on 31st March, was £1,037,000, after the Government had borrowed £1,000,000 from the Commonwealth Government.

The TREASURER: That is a misstatement—plus the £1,000,000, not including it. (Government laughter.) You're a nice fellow.

Mr. HARDACRE: It does not make very much difference.

The PREMIER: It makes all the difference. You don't understand it, and never will.

Mr. MAY: £1,000,000 is nothing!

Mr. HARDACRE: The Government had completed the Commonwealth loan on 23rd February, nearly five weeks before the Treasurer's figures were published, and therefore he had a right to assume that the later figures included the amount borrowed from the Commonwealth. If there was a mistake, it was not his fault, as he was quoting the official figures published in the *Gazette*.

The TREASURER: Have you not already told us that £750,000 had to be transferred to London?

Mr. HARDACRE: Yes. The figures he had quoted showed that the position was even worse than he showed it to be in his previous criticism. The Treasurer knew that £750,000 had been sent to London to pay for steel rails.

The TREASURER: I did not say anything about payment for steel rails. You made that statement.

Mr. HARDACRE: It was quite true the hon. gentleman did not say that the money was sent to the old country to pay for steel rails, but, all the same, it was, because the Premier said so.

The TREASURER: I don't mind what you say on your own account, but don't associate me with a statement I never made in this House.

Mr. HARDACRE: The Treasurer did not say it was sent to pay for steel rails, but it was sent for that purpose. The Premier told the three Brisbane daily papers that out of the £1,000,000 borrowed from the Commonwealth, £750,000 had to be sent to London for the purpose of paying for steel rails.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We had a million and a-quarter there to meet it.

Mr. HARDACRE: There was a total amount of £1,791,000 in hand all told, including the £1,000,000 borrowed from the Commonwealth.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: No—£2,791,000.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Then the Premier misled us.

The TREASURER: £1,000,000 amounts to nothing.

Mr. HARDACRE: He was giving the best side of things that the Government could put before them. The Commonwealth loan was obtained in February, and they were spending at the rate of £300,000 a month from the loan fund. They had four months to run before Parliament could meet, which meant a loan expenditure of £1,200,000 out of the £1,791,000, all the finances told, and here they were practically running themselves short of every penny they had in the world in all their accounts.

The TREASURER: That is not correct.

Mr. HARDACRE: According to the quarterly statement of the Treasury, it was correct.

The TREASURER: In your criticism, try to dissociate the Government from the country

If you want to damage the Government, that is all right, but don't damage the country. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. HARDACRE: It was the Government who were damaging the country. It was the Government who were not doing a fair thing by the country. The Opposition were doing the best thing for the country by bringing before the notice of the country the reckless financing of the Government.

The bell indicated that the hon. member's time had expired.

Mr. HARDACRE: He would take his extra time.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: No; save your time to speak later on.

Mr. HARDACRE: He would save his time until a later period.

The TREASURER rose to speak.

Mr. MURPHY: The amendment has not been put yet.

Original question stated.

Mr. MURPHY (*Burke*) rose to a point of order. Was the amendment moved by the hon. member for Leichhardt in order according to the Standing Orders?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Leichhardt moved no amendment.

Mr. HARDACRE and other OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Yes, yes!

Mr. MURPHY: He thought that the hon. member for Leichhardt moved his amendment. At any rate, he indicated it and said what it was.

The CHAIRMAN: He did not move any amendment, and that was why I put the original question.

Mr. HARDACRE: If he omitted to move the amendment it was a mistake. He moved the deletion of the word "authorise," with the view of inserting the word "validate" in its stead. He would take his second five minutes now, and refer to the statement of the Secretary for Agriculture. The Secretary for Agriculture stated that there was £1,791,000—

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: In addition to the Commonwealth loan.

Mr. HARDACRE: Yes; but it included "Miscellaneous Account," which could not properly be used for loan purposes.

The TREASURER: Of course it can. Don't you know that the Minister can use the Savings Bank moneys and other moneys? I will speak about it in a moment.

Mr. HARDACRE: He knew that the Treasurer would use anything at all.

The TREASURER: We do it legally.

Mr. HARDACRE: Anybody who looked through the figures would see that the Government had come to the end of their tether. Even supposing the Government were able to carry on with the loan money, there was such a narrow margin that if anything had happened by which they would not have been able to get a loan floated in London, they should have been in most deplorable financial straits in Queensland. It was no new thing for him or members of the Opposition to bring this matter before

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the Government, as they had pointed out session after session that the Government were going on in a reckless way. They warned them of the dangers that were ahead of them. They pointed out the disasters that had overtaken the New Zealand Government and also other Australian States, and they pointed out in the history of Queensland itself when the same kind of reckless policy was carried on. In spite of all those warnings, however, the Government went on full steam ahead bringing down a programme of public works, including many railway lines, without the slightest care or consideration as to what might happen on the loan market, and in that way they ran themselves to the last tether. Something was said about the majority of members passing the railways, but the minority did not vote for them. The minority only voted for some of them.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Only those which suited you.

The bell indicated that the hon. member's further time had expired.

Mr. HARDACRE: He would take his further five minutes later on.

The CHAIRMAN: Do I understand the hon. member to move that the word "authorise" be deleted and the word "validate" substituted instead?

Mr. HARDACRE: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Then I do not consider that the amendment is in order, and I cannot receive it. That amendment has already been dealt with by the House and cannot be accepted.

The TREASURER: The majority of the public outside would readily understand that some of the arguments which the hon. member for Leichhardt used that day were exceedingly unfair and were not according to fact, and he regretted to say that those remarks would leave an impression on the minds of some people, and create a feeling that would be disastrous to Queensland. (Opposition laughter.) He had nothing to say against the hon. member if he tried in a fair way to injure the Ministry, but when he got up and made statements which he knew would go beyond the four walls of the House, and made statements which would very materially damage Queensland, then the hon. member forgot his position as one of the leading men on the Opposition side of the House.

Mr. HUNTER: That is tripe.

The TREASURER: When an hon. gentleman said that what was being said was tripe it showed that he had a very poor conception of the situation.

Mr. HUNTER: It is pure tripe.

The TREASURER: The hon. member for Leichhardt was quite right in saying that the House endorsed the policy by which a certain amount of money was to be spent—and he would remind hon. members opposite that the Government party went to the country on a clear and distinct and defined policy—

Mr. COYNE: What was the policy?

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: The strike; the strike.

The TREASURER: The Government went to the country on a clear and defined policy.

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Mr. PAYNE (*Mitchell*) rose to a point of order. Was the Treasurer in order in talking about going to the country in dealing with the motion before the House. He was wandering all over the place. (Laughter.)

The TREASURER: He had to reply to the interjections that came across the Chamber, and he could say that "the fly in the ointment" was that the electors, in their wisdom, returned the Government to power again.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS dissenting and interjecting.

The CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. member for Kennedy to refrain from making disorderly interjections. He has been at it the whole afternoon.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: I only interjected once.

The TREASURER: One hon. gentleman, Mr. Adamson—he forgot the name of his constituency—(Opposition laughter.)

Mr. BOWMAN: He represents Rockhampton, the most important city in the Central district.

Mr. HUNTER rose to a point of order. Was the Treasurer speaking to the amendment which had been ruled out of order, or was he speaking to his motion?

The TREASURER: I am speaking to my motion.

Mr. HUNTER asked for the Chairman's ruling.

The CHAIRMAN: The Treasurer is speaking to his own motion, in reply to the hon. member for Leichhardt.

The TREASURER really could not conceive how any hon. member could object to the Minister in charge replying, especially when the hon. member for Leichhardt was allowed to proceed to the fullest extent in connection with the matter; and surely it was an indication of a weak case when a member got up to defend the Government, and Queensland, that they should try to put him down. The hon. member for Rockhampton, in dealing with matters of finance, complained that the Government had too much money in hand, and that they should have waited a certain time—until they really absolutely needed money—before they went on borrowing. He (Mr. Barnes) said at the time it would be an extraordinary thing to allow them to run right out before receiving further supplies of money. What was the real position? The House, on the one hand, were committed to the expenditure of a certain amount of money for the development of Queensland, and that policy was being carried out by the Government. What was the statement made by the Premier yesterday in connection with this very measure? The Premier stated that the finances of the country were in a satisfactory condition, and that with a view to looking ahead and making provision he (Mr. Barnes) was on his way to Melbourne to discuss financial matters with their representative in London, Sir Thomas Robinson, when the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth wired, offering the State a million of money. That amount of money was accepted, as the House knew, and as the Bill explained, and he discussed other financial matters with Sir Thomas Robinson. Was any hon. member acting fairly in getting up and making the statements which had been made when it had been

clearly demonstrated that the Government had at the end of March £1,791,518, plus the £1,000,000 borrowed from the Commonwealth?

Mr. HARDACRE: In the loan fund?

The TREASURER: To the credit of the loan and various funds. Members on the Government side had repeatedly made the statement that the amount on hand was over £2,000,000, and that was absolutely correct. Was a country with a credit of £2,791,518 9s. 6d. on the verge of insolvency? Was it a fair thing for any hon. member to get up and say that the country was in a desperate state, and that certain things had to be done? Now, as to the various funds. It was known by every hon. member that there were various credit balances from time to time in hand, and those credit balances might be used, and were used, in making the necessary provision as prescribed by Parliament. Everything was done legally, and yet they were told, notwithstanding they had those balances, which were clearly shown by the Secretary for Agriculture to be in hand—they had at call in the Queensland National Bank on 31st March £915,677 14s.; they had extended deposits totalling £432,550, and they had deposits in the Bank of England totalling £750,000—and yet the hon. member, apparently for the sake of trying to get some party kudos, was prepared to sacrifice his country.

Mr. COYNE rose to a point of order. Was the Treasurer in order in imputing motives to the hon. member for Leichhardt?

The TREASURER: Mr. Stodart—

Mr. COYNE: He wanted the Chairman's ruling. Was the Treasurer in order in imputing base motives to the hon. member for Leichhardt?

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think the Treasurer imputed any base motive to the hon. member.

Mr. COYNE: Yes, he did. He said the hon. member was prepared to sacrifice his country.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: It could not be baser.

The TREASURER: Was it fair that a statement such as that should be made in the House, which would, of course, damage Queensland? He had conclusively proved that the accounts on the 31st March disclosed the fact that there was between £2,000,000 and £3,000,000 available.

Mr. LENNON: Extended deposits are not available.

The TREASURER: Granting that the hon. member was correct there, still there was an amount of over £2,000,000, and therefore he was correct in saying that there was between £2,000,000 and £3,000,000 available. He hoped hon. members would rise above petty party politics, and not do anything that would injure the position of Queensland. Whilst other States just prior to the Government borrowing had to be content, apparently, to take amounts of money short dated, Queensland, their credit being so good on the London money market, was able to float a loan, and bearing in mind the position of the money market generally, they were able to float it on a very satisfactory basis.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: What was the term—twenty-eight years or forty years?

The TREASURER: Forty years.

Mr. HARDACRE: The Treasurer had made a very weak reply, and had evaded the very points at issue. He told them that the Government had between £2,000,000 and £3,000,000 to their credit on the 31st March, but that was after borrowing £1,000,000 from the Commonwealth Government, leaving only £1,791,000 on hand previously; and now the Treasurer admitted there had also to be deducted extended deposits leaving only £1,200,000 before the Commonwealth loan was secured. The Government were spending money at the rate of £300,000 a month, and they had four months to go before Parliament met, which showed the Government would either have to go on the market with another loan without authority—

The TREASURER: We had authority.

Mr. HARDACRE: Before they could get authority to borrow money to carry on public works.

The TREASURER: We had authority.

Mr. HARDACRE: There was something more than that. It was admitted that the Government had £750,000 to pay out of that million for steel rails.

The TREASURER: No.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The statement you read does not show that.

Mr. HARDACRE: They had to pay £750,000 for steel rails.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I say we had not.

Mr. HARDACRE: He was using the Premier's authority, who stated that the State had to pay £750,000 for steel rails.

The TREASURER: He never said any such thing. Read what he said.

Mr. HARDACRE: He had read it before. It was as follows:—

"In London a sum was required amounting to £750,000 to pay for steel rails."

Mr. KIRWAN: That is plain English.

Mr. HARDACRE: Therefore, he had a right to say that the Government were running the country into danger. The Treasurer had accused him (Mr. Hardacre) of using his position for party purposes. He had refrained from making any criticisms on these matters until after the Government had floated their loan in the old country, so that he should not do anything to injure—

The TREASURER: You said it in public at the opening of the Belmont line, before the loan was floated.

Mr. HARDACRE: The Treasurer's remarks had proved that what he (Mr. Hardacre) had said was correct. What he had said at the time was that if they got into any financial difficulties in the future it would be the duty of this party to assist the Government to get out of those difficulties.

The TREASURER: You said more than that.

Mr. HARDACRE: He merely mentioned it in that way; but the Treasurer, with his hyper-sensitiveness under the present circumstances, breathed out something about disloyalty. He contended that he was acting in the best interests of Queensland in trying to prevent the Government getting into the former financial difficulties. They had warned them before where they were going

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to, and they were doing it now, in order to put a stop to this headlong policy, and to go fairly slow so far as their public works policy was concerned. He did not object to introducing loan money, but there was too great a danger in a loan policy of that kind. It inflated all kinds of security, and values were placed on a fictitious basis which was likely to be undermined the moment there was a depression on the loan market.

The bell indicated that the hon. member's time had expired.

The TREASURER would like to make another remark in reply to the hon. member, who had been pursuing in his second speech a statement which also was incorrect. Those listening to him might have imagined that the Government had no power to borrow any money until the House met.

Mr. HUNTER: Nothing of the sort.

The TREASURER: The hon. member distinctly said so. As a matter of fact, the Government had then, and had now, and had prior to the passing of the money Bills which were introduced at the commencement of this session—they had two Loan Acts passed, the 1910 and perhaps one earlier, which then authorised, and still authorised them, if necessary, to borrow up to about £10,000,000. The hon. member said they had no power to borrow except they came to the House; hence he wanted to make the country believe that they had to bring in a Bill to authorise certain actions.

Mr. FORSYTH (*Murrumba*): The hon. member for Leichhardt was discussing the question of the public balances up to the end of March, and had said they were spending about £300,000 a month from loan fund. What was the position at the end of July? The Government had a large amount of money lying at call. There was a huge sum of money in the Savings Bank.

Mr. HARDACRE: You cannot use every penny of it.

Mr. FORSYTH: They could not use every penny of it. Would it be a wise thing to hold £2,500,000 of money doing nothing at all in the bank? Surely the hon. member knew that one advantage the Savings Bank was for was to help the Government when they wanted money. The Treasurer must use two-thirds of that money, and he had also power, under the Act, to partly utilise the other third. He believed there was far too much money lying in the Savings Bank. Why should they not use it? If the Treasurer could not use it, it should be placed on fixed deposit. There was too much money lying idle in the banks. The Queensland National Bank had nearly £1,000,000, for which we only got 1 per cent. interest over the first £100,000. If the hon. member for Leichhardt was Treasurer, would he keep between £2,000,000 and £3,000,000 lying idle in the Queensland National Bank? He had complained about this when Mr. Hawthorn was Treasurer, and said it was a great mistake for the Government to deliberately take deposits out of local banks and put the money into the Queensland National Bank, for which they were only to get 1 per cent. interest over the first £100,000. He had felt

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annoyed at it, because the Treasurer did not want the money, and it was better to get 2½ or 3 per cent. on fixed deposit than to take it away from the local banks and put it into the Queensland National Bank. As a matter of fact, when he pointed this out, the then Treasurer went and put some of the money into other banks on fixed deposit. They had a trust fund in which there was over £1,000,000, and that money is coming from our public balances. They had advanced money from that fund for agricultural settlement and workers' dwellings—all the money taken from that fund was money that we did not want.

Mr. HARDACRE: Savings Bank money.

Mr. FORSYTH: Savings Bank money or public balances—they might take it from loan fund or consolidated revenue, if they liked. It was a wise thing that they should utilise that money under fair conditions. While it was a correct policy for the Treasurer to keep sufficient money, under ordinary conditions, to do current business, it was a great mistake to keep large sums of money idle.

Mr. HARDACRE: They have not enough margin—that is what I was pointing out.

Mr. FORSYTH: Suppose, for the sake of argument, the loan fund was getting low—and the Government had no less than £666,000 to the credit of that fund on 1st July—it did not necessarily follow that the whole of that money was lying at call at the bank for the loan fund, because it was not. The money was pooled, and they simply took something from each account, and it was entered in the books.

Mr. HUNTER: They did not have enough of it.

Mr. FORSYTH: The hon. member for Maranba would not like to have a thousand or two in a bank from which he was getting no interest; he would take it out, and use it in business, and wisely so. It would be most unwise for the Government to let money lie idle in the bank. Let them utilise it. Even the hon. member for Leichhardt admitted that, as far as revenue was concerned, we were in an exceedingly good position. While he agreed with that hon. member that the public account should not be allowed to get too low, on the other hand, the Government should not keep too much money lying idle or only earning 1 per cent. interest. Something had been said about sending this money home to pay interest due on our loans; but there was no need to remit money to London to pay interest when the Government had money lying in London.

Mr. HUNTER: This £1,000,000 was borrowed for the purpose of paying £750,000 interest in London.

Mr. FORSYTH: If there was a liability of £750,000 in London, and it suited the Government to remit that amount to London, they were wise to do so. All this talk about the public loan fund being in a serious state was all nonsense. After all, there was £1,500,000 in hard cash lying to credit, which would keep us going for some months, at all events.

Mr. HARDACRE: That is because of the Commonwealth loan.

Mr. FORSYTH: If they did not get money from the Commonwealth, they would have to get it somewhere else. Very likely, if the Government found they wanted more money, they would have issued debentures on the Savings Bank funds.

Mr. HARDACRE: They had already done that, and they could not do it again.

Mr. FORSYTH: The Savings Bank deposits were all the time increasing; and, as they increased, the Government could issue more debentures. Last year they increased by £1,000,000; and out of that £1,000,000 the sum of £566,000 must go into Government debentures. He repeated that the Government should not have too much money lying idle, but should keep sufficient in hand for necessary requirements.

Mr. ADAMSON (*Rockhampton*) said the Treasurer was wrong in saying that he made a certain statement. What he said was that the Secretary for Agriculture made the statement that the Government had plenty of money at a given time, and he said that if they had plenty of money at that time, what need was there for them to act illegally in borrowing £1,000,000 without the authority of Parliament? That was the important thing in this discussion, not the talk of the hon. member for Murrumba. He believed the reason the Government asked for this to be validated was because they were told that unless this was done, something would appear in the Auditor-General's report. Now, the Treasurer said that authority was given under the 1910 Act. If the Government had authority under that Act, why did they ask for this to be passed? At the beginning of the year the Government were moving men from one railway works to another, and were delaying at one point and another, and it was known that they were in "Queer street" for want of money.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Absolutely nothing of the sort.

Mr. ADAMSON: He was sorry to hear the hon. gentleman say so, because the hon. gentleman knew why he was sorry.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I do not.

Mr. ADAMSON: If there was no shortage of money, why was there any necessity for getting this money from the Commonwealth so hurriedly?

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: It was offered.

Mr. BOWMAN: You wanted it, or you would not have accepted it.

Mr. ADAMSON: The Government were on the horns of a dilemma. They said they had plenty of money, and they took a loan from the Commonwealth that they did not want to accommodate the Commonwealth Treasurer.

The TREASURER: No.

Mr. ADAMSON: If they had not plenty of money, why were they now saying that they had plenty of money? The thing resolved itself into this:—That the Government had committed an illegal act, and they were now asking Parliament to validate what they had done without making any protest; and, if hon. members did that, they would not be worthy of their positions. Everyone knew that a loan should be authorised by Parliament before it was floated, and he had an idea that, if the Bill were not passed, there would be a paragraph in the Auditor-General's report calling attention to the fact

that the Government had acted unconstitutionally. He was certain that a part of the money was spent in paying interest, and not in paying for steel rails.

Mr. FORSYTH: What difference does it make?

Mr. ADAMSON: The important point was that the Government had acted unconstitutionally; and then for the Treasurer to tell him that he had made a misstatement—

The TREASURER: I did not say that.

Mr. ADAMSON: That was the inference. What he said was, that the Secretary for Agriculture said they had plenty of money, and he (Mr. Adamson) said, if they had plenty of money, why did they want to borrow this £1,000,000. The Government had acted illegally, and now they tried to make out that they had authority to borrow under the Loan Act of 1910, and there was no need to validate the loan now. All he could say was that it was sometimes a pity they could not say what they knew.

The TREASURER: A Loan Act had been passed authorising the Government to borrow a certain sum of money at a certain rate of interest, and they had ample power at the present time, without coming to Parliament at all, to borrow millions of money under the Acts they had passed. Would any hon. member on the other side deny that statement?

Mr. HUNTER: Not for one year.

The TREASURER: They had that power now, but previously they had not the power which some of the other States had to borrow for one year. Generally speaking, he regarded short borrowing as being very unsatisfactory. Apart from the loan from the Commonwealth, brokerage charges on short-dated loans mounted up in such a way that financing of that kind was not that financing which any Treasurer should adopt. The hon. member for Rockhampton evidently misunderstood the reference he made to the hon. member's speech on the motion for the suspension of the Standing Orders early in the session. He said that the hon. member implied that it was a mistake to have too much money on hand. The hon. member said that he misquoted him, and he would now quote what the hon. member said, which would be found on page 37 of *Harvard*—

Mr. BOWMAN: Are you in order in quoting from a previous debate of the same session?

The TREASURER:

"I admit from the Treasurer's statements that the position of Queensland is a very desirable one, but I will not say that the way the finances have been manipulated is the best way.

"OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

"Mr. ADAMSON: I know if I go too far in that direction you will pull me up, Mr. Speaker, and I do not intend to transgress. What I want to say is this: That if this is an inopportune time to go to the money market, and if, as the Treasurer tells us, there is money in the Queensland National Bank and there is money in England that is available, I hold that it is desirable to exhaust that money before going to the money market."

Mr. ADAMSON: It was a supposititious statement.

*Hon. W. H. Barnes.]*

The TREASURER: He appealed to the Committee as to whether the hon. member or he was right.

Mr. ADAMSON: I only said if there was plenty of money in the Treasury, and that has not been proved.

The TREASURER: There had been a great deal of bandying words that afternoon about money being sent to London for the payment of interest. Any hon. member who said that the Government had to borrow money to pay their interest bill in London was doing an absolute wrong to the State.

Mr. FORSYTH: And it is not true.

The TREASURER: He challenged any hon. member to take the figures for the year ended 30th June, 1912, and prove such a statement. On the expenditure side there was a charge for the interest for the full year.

Mr. MURPHY: Why, there was a complaint made that you paid away too much.

The TREASURER: He was glad the hon. member had given him that reminder. It was pointed out by the hon. member for Murrumba, for instance, that they had transferred to revenue account an amount for school buildings which was previously paid from loan, and he (Mr. Barnes) thought that was a legitimate thing to do. Every penny of interest that was due was paid by the taxpayers of Queensland, and was accounted for in the balance-sheet issued at the end of June.

Mr. ADAMSON: You are side-stepping, and are not explaining the illegality of your action.

The TREASURER: He did not deny that it was necessary to put this Bill through, and it was the straight and honourable thing to do it at the first opportunity. Some remarks had been made about bal-

[5 p.m.] ances, but what was the position?

Anyone in the position of Treasurer would know that the question of exchange was a fairly big matter, and sometimes it was very convenient to remit money from Queensland to the old country, or from the old country to Queensland. In connection with the loan from the Commonwealth, it was very convenient for the Commonwealth people themselves, and equally for the Queensland Government—he did not wish for one moment to say that it was not convenient for them to get that £750,000 sent home at a very low rate. He could draw the attention of hon. members to something that had happened only this week. Their bankers approached them, and made a suggestion by which they could get money out from the old country on certain favourable terms. He was sure that any business man would adopt the method, which would mean that the State would be the gainer, and that was what he did. Surely that was the common-sense way of dealing with these things. If hon. members would only look up the returns they would see that every brass farthing of Government expenditure for the twelve months ended 30th June last was paid for out of revenue.

Mr. MURPHY: Whether the action of the Government in borrowing £1,000,000 from the Commonwealth Government was illegal or unconstitutional or anything else, it was certainly a very sensible action.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

[*Hon. W. H. Barnes.*]

Mr. MURPHY: They knew that at that time the money market was hardening, and the Government knew from the reports of their financial advisers in London that it was impossible to raise money at 3½ per cent., which was the amount of interest stated in the Loan Act that had been passed by the House. The Commonwealth Government had £1,000,000 to lend, and wired to the Premier, or the Treasurer, saying they had the money to lend, and the Queensland Government very sensibly took that £1,000,000 as a loan for twelve months at 3½ per cent. That did not show that the finances of Queensland were in a bad way. The finances of Queensland were equal to those of any State in Australia. (Hear, hear!) All the other States were borrowing, and they experienced the same difficulty that the Queensland Government experienced in getting money at 3½ per cent. They all had to increase the rate of interest. But that did not prove the finances of Queensland were in a bad state at all. The Government were spending a lot of loan money, and last year no less than £5,000,000 was spent from loan fund, and they would spend the same amount this year if they could raise the money easily. (Laughter.) The Premier had come down and stated that certain railway works had to be postponed for some time.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: He did not say that previous to the elections.

Mr. MURPHY: When they went out electioneering they did not tell the electors anything that was going to count against themselves. (Laughter.) The candidate who told all the bad points against himself was a silly candidate. (Renewed laughter.) Those of them who knew the Premier did not think he was likely to get on the platform and mention all the bad things about the Government. (Laughter.) Under our system of party government the Opposition would take good care to put all the bad points about the Government prominently forward, so there was no necessity for the Premier to do it. (Laughter.) If the Premier had told the people that he could not raise any money, and was not going to build any more railways, the electors would have said, "Well, we want a railway, and we will put the Labour party into power," thinking that they would possibly get their railway from the Labour party. The Government had brought down a Bill to validate or make legal their action for borrowing £1,000,000 from the Commonwealth. The Government were not hiding anything from the House at all. The amendment of the hon. member for Leichhardt, who wanted "validate" substituted for "authorise," was merely a play upon words. They had to pay interest on the money, and they would have to pay the £1,000,000 back by next March, or else the Commonwealth would send up their warships and collect it themselves. (Laughter.)

The PREMIER: The Commonwealth owe us a million and a-half.

Mr. MURPHY: There you are! That was the way the business of the world was carried on. They gave cheques here and there, and signed promissory notes, and had to meet them; and everything would come all right when the Commonwealth handed over half a million to the State next March. That would be satisfactory to Queensland,

and it was much better than if the State owed the Commonwealth a million and a-half. They passed a Loan Bill this session, and criticised the finances of the country. There was no doubt that good finance was good Government. It was very nice to have a spirited public works policy when there was a railway going into your own electorate, but during the many years he had been in Parliament he had never had the pleasure of voting on a railway into his electorate. (Laughter.) The hon. member for Leichhardt pointed out the necessity for the Government to go slow, but so far as the Burke was concerned, this Government and every other Government who occupied the Treasury benches of Queensland had been absolutely slow. (Laughter.) Now that they had got this £1,000,000, and had floated a £2,000,000 loan, he hoped that the Government, and those who supported them, would look kindly on the long neglected Gulf country, and do something to develop it. The Minister for Railways went up there some time ago.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

Mr. MURPHY: When he heard that this £1,000,000 had been borrowed from the Commonwealth he was under the impression that most of that money was to be devoted to building railways in his electorate. (Laughter.) The best thing would be to allow the Bill to be introduced and passed, in order to legalise the action of the Government, and give the Commonwealth an opportunity of getting the 3½ per cent.

Mr. HUNTER did not think any member questioned that it was necessary for the Treasury to obtain this money to carry on. At one time the Treasurer told the House that he wanted the money, and he took it. Now, when the hon. member for Leichhardt, in his criticisms, told the House that the Government were in financial troubles, the Treasurer said they were not.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: When were they in financial trouble?

Mr. HUNTER: Either the Treasurer was wrong when he said they needed the money, or he was wrong now when he said they did not want the money. If he could do without the money, why did he borrow the £1,000,000 from the Commonwealth on short terms? The Treasurer also stated in a flamboyant style that the Government had full authority to borrow what they liked under the 1910 Act. Nobody denied that fact. It was only part of the shuffle that had taken place on the front Treasury bench during the whole discussion.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HUNTER: It was financial quibbling. They knew very well that authority was given under the 1910 Act for the Government to go where they pleased and borrow money at 3½ per cent. on long terms, but there was no power given to borrow money for twelve months. But, because the Government needed the money, they borrowed it, and there was nothing criminal in that, since it was necessary to carry on public works. Nobody said the Government were not justified in borrowing the money when they came down and openly stated they wanted the money, and that they could not borrow the money under the terms of the 1910 Act, provided, of course, the House would validate their Act; but why not say they wanted to validate it?

The PREMIER: That was dealt with yesterday, and ruled out of order to-day.

Mr. HUNTER: Quite so; but it had been dealt with over and over again, and even a bit of special pleading was put in by the hon. member for Murrumbidgee on the question. Take the Treasurer's statement alone. The hon. gentleman, in his grandiloquent style, said that there was £1,500,000 on the 30th June, and that £1,500,000 included the £1,000,000 that was borrowed from the Commonwealth Government.

The TREASURER: No; plus that.

Mr. HUNTER: He was talking about the 30th June, not of the 31st March. On the 30th June, counting all the balances in connection with trust funds, which included the Agent-General's money, current account, deposits in the Bank of England, deposits in the Royal Bank, deposits in the Bank of New South Wales, the Bank of Commerce, extended deposits in the English, Scottish, and Australian Bank, and the London Bank of Australia—counting all those balances, and taking into account all the loan money in hand and abroad, and the £1,000,000 borrowed from the Commonwealth Government, on the 31st March, the Government had £2,791,000. On the 30th June the Government had £1,500,000. Now, take away the £1,000,000 borrowed from the Commonwealth, and they found the Government had £500,000 on the 30th June to pay for all commitments for that period, and £300,000 of loan money had been expended on public works that would be due on the 31st July. That would leave the Treasury with a bare £200,000, and nothing to look forward to.

The TREASURER: That statement is entirely incorrect.

Mr. HUNTER: He was taking the Treasurer's own figures.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Carry it on till August.

Mr. HUNTER: There was no need to do as was suggested by the Secretary for Agriculture, because that would be a stupid thing.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You are very stupid now.

Mr. HUNTER: If there was any stupidity shown, it came from the Government side. (Hear, hear! and Opposition laughter.) When the House met an amending Loan Bill was passed authorising an increased interest to be paid—up to 4 per cent.—and that had to be cabled to London in order that money might be obtained there to enable the Government to carry on.

The TREASURER: No. There was another reason, which was explained.

Mr. HUNTER asked what was the other reason.

The TREASURER: The other reason was that we did not wish to lose the proper time for borrowing.

Mr. HUNTER: Because some gentlemen were going away to the Continent. They took that statement in the same way that they took a number of other statements. That showed that the Government clearly needed the money to enable them to carry on, and they were wise in borrowing the money, otherwise there was a danger of some delay taking place in obtaining money from London under the 1910 Loan Act, and the Government would clearly have been in

*Mr. Hunter.]*

trouble. As a matter of fact, £200,000 stood between them and their obligations due in the following month.

The TREASURER: That is not so.

Mr. HUNTER: He was taking the Treasurer's own figures.

The TREASURER: What had we done with the £1,000,000 in the meantime?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He does not count that.

Mr. HUNTER: The hon. gentleman again tried to side-track the question, just the same as he had side-tracked the real question right through. The hon. member for Leichhardt had stated that when the Government borrowed the £1,000,000 they were in trouble. If that £1,000,000 had not been borrowed then they would have been in trouble.

Mr. E. B. C. COSER: They were not dependent on the Federal Government for that money—they could have gone elsewhere.

Mr. HUNTER: They could not have gone elsewhere. They would have had to call Parliament together.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: No, no!

Mr. HUNTER: Or else accept a very low price for the loan. The whole thing showed that financial trouble was facing the Government. Why did they not openly say so?

The PREMIER: Because it is not proved.

Mr. HUNTER: It was clearly proved that if the Government decided to go to the country and meet Parliament on the 30th June, it was necessary for them to replenish the Treasury by borrowing money which they were not able to get under the 1910 Loan Act, except at a disastrous rate that would have exhibited even greater financial incapacity on the part of the Government than this unconstitutional act had done, and they therefore found it necessary to borrow this money to carry them along and go to the country.

The PREMIER: It shows his capacity in arranging the business.

Mr. HUNTER: The hon. gentleman admitted that it showed his capacity. He gave the Premier credit for doing the best thing that he could—he did the best thing for his party if he did not do the best thing for the country.

The PREMIER: The country knew about it all the time; it was public property.

Mr. HUNTER: The country knew nothing about it; the public were misled about the financial position. He admitted that the Treasurer judged their financial position very well, and that the Treasurer faked his finances very well.

The TREASURER rose to a point of order. Was the hon. member in order in stating the Treasurer had faked his figures?

Mr. HUNTER: He said his finances, not his figures.

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. gentleman said that, he is not in order.

Mr. HUNTER: He had said the Treasurer had faked his finances.

The TREASURER asked that the words be withdrawn.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: You have imputed bad motives to the hon. member for Leichhardt.

Mr. HARDACRE: Much worse than that.

[*Mr. Hunter.*

The CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. member for Maranoa to withdraw.

Mr. HUNTER: He had no intention of meaning that the Treasurer's figures as published here were faked. What he intended to convey was that the Treasurer fixed up his finances in the way he did so as to enable the Premier to carry out the conception he had—that it was the right thing for his party to go to the country at that particular time. (Laughter.) All he asked him was to openly admit it, and not come in the shuffling way he did. He said he wanted money, and in the next breath said that he did not want money, and he had side-tracked the whole thing. Why did he not say that the money market was tight at home, and they were not able to borrow money—that they did not want to meet Parliament before the 30th June, and, under the circumstances, as money was short they borrowed it, and they now wanted to validate the arrangement? Why not be honest and say so? If the Treasurer had done that there would not have been the time taken up this afternoon.

The PREMIER: Oh, yes; you are playing to the gallery.

Mr. HUNTER: If there was one thing he detested above another, it was this shuffling of the Treasurer.

The PREMIER: You are the biggest shuffler in the House.

Mr. HUNTER: There could be no bigger shuffler than the hon. member.

The PREMIER: Nobody could equal you.

Mr. HUNTER: The hon. member had perhaps shuffled more than any other man in the Chamber.

The PREMIER: Your reputation is well known.

Mr. HUNTER: The reputation of the hon. member in that respect was very much better known, and surpassed anything that he (Mr. Hunter) possessed, or any other member in that Committee. His own career had been too short to compare it with that of the hon. gentleman. However, that was beside the question. They were dealing with something very different. This was purely and simply a Bill to validate something done by the Hon. the Treasurer that was illegal and unconstitutional. For a good while the Treasurer had been collaring all the money in the Savings Bank that he could get—collaring all the trust funds and public balances he could get—money from all sources had been raked together to keep things going.

The TREASURER: That is an absolute misstatement.

Mr. HUNTER: There had only been a sheet of paper between him and financial disaster on the 31st of last month. The financial statement to the 30th of June, published in the *Government Gazette*, proved that beyond doubt, notwithstanding the Treasurer's denial. They might as well own up to it and have done with it. He did not want to say that the credit of Queensland was not good—he knew it was as good as any State in the Commonwealth—

The bell indicated that the hon. member's time had expired.

Mr. HUNTER (continuing): He would admit that. It was financial incapacity and the party exigencies of the Government that brought about this state of things. If they

had but seen that it was desirable for them to go to the country in April, this position would not have happened. It would not have happened if that £1,000,000 had not been borrowed. Again, he would say that Queensland's credit was as good as that of any State in the Commonwealth.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Better.

Mr. HUNTER: But he did not give the Government credit for that—that credit was due to the people of Queensland—who were an industrious people—and to our great resources. Under those conditions, the worst Government in the country—even this Government—could not get the finances wrong. He hoped that the next time the Treasurer came with a similar motion to this he would be honest, and not shuffle, but admit the position. He admired the man who came truthfully to the Chamber and stated his case, and let it be dealt with on its merits.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. J. Tolmie, *Toowoomba*) said the hon. member for Leichhardt had spoken of Queensland being on the verge of financial ruin in February last, but he (Mr. Tolmie) had pointed out at the time that Queensland was then in credit to the extent of £1,750,000. The hon. member this evening admitted that Queensland was in credit to the extent of £1,750,000 on that date, but he had shifted his ground from 31st March to the 30th June, and said if they had not borrowed the £1,000,000 from the Commonwealth, and had spent £300,000 every month, they would have been in difficulties. When the hon. member spoke about the country being in financial difficulties, there was no question that at that time they had a very large credit balance—as much money as they wanted at that time.

Mr. HARDACRE: You are mixing it all up.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He was going to tell the hon. member why they got the £1,000,000 from the Commonwealth. The hon. member for Maranoa contended that on the 30th June they had a credit balance from all sources of £1,500,000, including the £1,000,000 borrowed from the Commonwealth Government, and that if they went on spending £300,000 per month in carrying on the railway policy, at the end of July they would have only had £200,000 to their credit. They made particular provision that they would not be in that position. What was their position in regard to borrowing when they took the money from the Commonwealth Government? They were authorised by the House to borrow a very large sum of money at 3½ per cent., and they could have gone on the market if they had felt so disposed at the usual time when borrowing took place—about March or April.

Mr. HUNTER: You could not get the money.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The Government could have got the money; but supposing 4 per cents. in the home market were at par, they could only get £87 10s. for a 3½ per cent. loan, and the [5.30 p.m.] country would have lost £125,000. They saw the opportunity to get £1,000,000 at 3½ per cent. at par, and they took the opportunity. Was not that a common-sense thing to do?

Mr. HUNTER: You have been shuffling all the time.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The density of the hon. member was so great that he could not realise the Government had done the best thing to conserve the interests of Queensland when they borrowed that money from the Commonwealth Government.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Do you mean to say you did not need that million?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If the Government had not borrowed from the Commonwealth Government, they must have gone on the loan market; and if they had gone on the loan market at that time it would have been disastrous.

Mr. HARDACRE: That is what I said all the time.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That was exactly where the Government showed their foresight—in not leading Queensland into a disastrous position, as the hon. gentleman probably would have done if he had been on the Treasury benches.

Mr. HARDACRE: I say, you should not have got into those difficulties.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Why? Would the hon. member have stopped the construction of railways? He thought he had put the matter plainly before the hon. member for Maranoa.

Mr. HUNTER: You are blundering worse than ever.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If the hon. member had not the capacity to see that the best thing had been done, nothing could be done with him. It was their desire to save the country from being in the position of New South Wales, New Zealand, and West Australia; and in doing that, they had done a good thing for the State. If the hon. member had not been so befogged, he would have realised that from the beginning.

Mr. KIRWAN (*Brisbane*) said it was amusing to hear the Secretary for Agriculture tell the Committee that if the Government had gone to the London market instead of borrowing from the Commonwealth Government they would have been courting disaster. On every platform during the election campaign, members of the Government stated that if they wanted money, all they would have to do would be to go on the London market with their gilt-edged securities, and they would get as much money as they wanted. People who were in the habit of making contradictory statements such as were made by members of the Cabinet, should have better memories. This afternoon, members of the Cabinet had stated that this money was not used for railway construction; and he would ask, who was to be accepted as the member of the Cabinet that was telling the truth in the matter—the Premier, the Treasurer, the Minister for Agriculture, or the Home Secretary? On p. 29 of *Hansard*, where the hon. member for Barcoo was speaking, he found this—

“When the Prime Minister during the election pointed out that the financial position of Queensland was unsound—

“The PREMIER: He was wrong, absolutely wrong.

“Mr. RYAN: The reply the hon. gentleman gave was that he could easily

*Mr. Kirwan.]*

arrange for the renewing of loans falling due in the future, and that the financial position of the country was good.

"The PREMIER: Absolutely true.

"Mr. RYAN: When I stated during the election that that £1,000,000 was being spent for purposes not authorised by Parliament, the Minister for Instruction told the people that it was being spent on railway construction.

"The PREMIER: So it was.

"Mr. RYAN: If it is, why did the hon. gentleman tell us this afternoon that he may have to come to Parliament later on to make legal what was an illegal act?"

"The HOME SECRETARY: A mare's nest."

The CHAIRMAN: Is the hon. member quoting from *Hansard* of this session?

Mr. KIRWAN: Yes.

Is the CHAIRMAN: Then the hon. member is not in order.

Mr. KIRWAN: He had got all he wanted into *Hansard*, anyway. There was sufficient to prove that some members on the front bench opposite knew very little as to what was legal and what was illegal. The Home Secretary said it was a mare's nest. If so, then the Government invited the Committee to discuss a mare's nest this afternoon. They had been told that they were wasting time; but if the Government had said in a straightforward manner that they required the money at the time to keep public works going, though they had not been authorised to borrow it, and they wanted the House to validate their action, he believed the necessary enactment would have been passed with very little discussion. Instead of that, they were trying to prove that they did the right thing, when it was evident that they had done wrong. When supporters of the Government, in the shape of the daily Press, were, to use a vulgarism—poking borack at them for asking the House to authorise the borrowing of this money, the Opposition were perfectly justified in criticising their action. This was what appeared in to-day's *Telegraph*—

"The measure authorising the Government to borrow a million from the Commonwealth Treasury raised discussion as to whether it should not be a validating measure. Seeing that the million was handed over so far back as in March, and probably by now has been all expended, it is somewhat in the nature of a grim joke now to seek authority to borrow it."

When they had Ministers saying that the money was not borrowed to keep the railways going, it showed there was dissension in the Cabinet on the subject.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER (*Maryborough*) thought a great deal of time was being wasted. As the Premier pointed out clearly, the Government were about to arrange to borrow money in England, and the Treasurer went down to Melbourne to meet the Agent-General for the purpose of fixing up the final details, and while he was so engaged an offer came from the Federal Prime Minister to lend the Government of Queensland £1,000,000. If, as was alleged by hon. members on the other side, it was illegal

for the Treasurer of Queensland to borrow the money, then it was equally illegal for the Federal Treasurer and Prime Minister to lend it to a Treasurer who could not legally receive it. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. HUNTER: That is the best joke of the session. (Renewed Opposition laughter.)

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: The Government of Queensland were committed to certain works, and they were proceeding with those works, and they could have got the money they wanted at home, and would have got it.

Mr. FOLEY: At what price?

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: Perhaps at a higher price than they got it from the Commonwealth Treasurer, but they could have borrowed it in England for a longer period. He held that it was good business on the part of the State Government to take the money at a lower rate of interest. This validating Bill, or whatever they chose to call it, was intended to authorise something that was done on 5th March last. What was the use of wasting so much time as to whether this was a validating Bill or whether it was a Bill to authorise the acceptance—as it was—to authorise the borrowing of this money for the benefit of this State?

Mr. HUNTER: It is like your Industrial Peace Bill. It is not true to name.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: They would see. However, the effect was just the same whatever they might call it, and he considered that the Government were perfectly right in taking the money from the Commonwealth Government in the interests of Queensland.

Mr. FOLEY: Nobody says they were not.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: Then what are you complaining of?

Mr. PAYNE thought the *Telegraph* put the matter very clearly. It said exactly what he (Mr. Payne) said when leave was asked to introduce the Bill. It was a grim joke to hear—

The PREMIER: You speak on finance.

Mr. PAYNE: It went without saying that he might know quite as much about finance as the Premier. (Laughter.) The hon. gentleman had never proved that he was a heaven-born financier. When they were discussing the motion for leave to introduce the Bill he stated that the thing was not put in an honest way, and it was a grim joke, even to the intelligence of ordinary commonsense men who did not want to be financiers at all, to ask Parliament to give the Government power to borrow money which they had borrowed months ago and spent. Why, the thing was ridiculous! He had been very much interested in listening to the speeches of members sitting on the front Treasury bench. Every one of them said time and again that the finances of Queensland were always sound during the whole history of their reign. Did their action in borrowing this £1,000,000 unconstitutionally prove that they were financiers? The cry came from the other side that hon. members on his side were crying "stinking fish." He had been over more of Australia than any man on the front Treasury bench, and, as an Australian native, he said that Queensland was the best State of the lot. They were not complaining of that, but they were complaining about the action of the Government. If the finances were so sound during the whole reign of the present Government, why did they borrow this money unconstitutionally,

[*Mr. Kirwan.*

and why did they send a Bill to London some weeks before Parliament met to enable them to borrow money there? He was not saying that the country itself was not financially sound; but the action of the Government proved to anyone of a business turn of mind that they had been managing the affairs of Queensland very badly indeed.

Mr. FORSYTH: It is financing.

Mr. PAYNE: He did not know whether it was financing or not, but he would ask that financial genius, the hon. member for Murrumba—(laughter)—the hon. member did know something about finance—if he managed his affairs in the same way as the Government financed the country? Did he manage those big properties in the country that he was interested in that way? He knew that the hon. member did not. The cry of "stinking fish" was only cant. It was a miserable thing to do in reply to honest criticism. The most of the members of the Opposition were Australian natives, and they believed in Australia.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Are you the only Australian natives?

Mr. PAYNE: There were more natives on the Opposition side, comparatively speaking, than there were on the other side. The actions of the Government proved to any reasonable and intelligent body of men that their ideas of managing the finances of the State were very weak and bad indeed. They borrowed the £1,000,000 unconstitutionally. Instead of waiting until Parliament met, they sent away a Bill to England, and, when it was brought into that Chamber, they could not alter a letter of it because it had to be letter for letter the same as the Bill which was sent home weeks before Parliament met. The Treasurer, by the way he spoke, must imagine that he was not talking to commonsense men, when he said that the House authorised the Government to borrow ten millions of money in 1910. The Treasurer said they could borrow as much as they liked. Of course they could, but they were restricted to 3½ per cent. The Opposition knew that it was not possible for them to float loans at 3½ per cent., and told them so. So that the power the Government had to borrow money at 3½ per cent. was no good. He (Mr. Payne) was always able to carry on his own business and pay 20s. in the £1. He had never been insolvent, although he did not pretend to be a heaven-born financier.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. PAYNE: But the arguments of those who were managing the finances of Queensland were very weak indeed for commonsense men.

Mr. RYAN: It appeared to him, as was quite natural, that the hon. members for Toowoomba and Maryborough, the heavy-weights of the Government side, had sunk deeper into the mud. (Laughter.) If they had left the matter to the Treasurer, perhaps their case would stand much better than it did. The hon. member for Maryborough, in explaining the matter, called it a validating Bill.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: I said you can call it so if you like.

Mr. RYAN: That was just what the hon. member called it—a validating Bill.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: The hon. member went further, and said it was a Bill to give authority to do something that was done on the 5th

of March. (Opposition laughter.) They had only to put that sentence from the hon. member for Maryborough before the people of Queensland to understand the difficulty in which the Government was tonight. The motion was introduced with the view of getting them to validate an unlawful act on the part of the Government. The Treasurer would not deny that.

The TREASURER: That is not so.

Mr. RYAN: Well, an unconstitutional act.

The TREASURER: That is right.

Mr. RYAN: It was to validate the action of the Government for doing something which the Government had no authority to do. Without any party feeling at all, they should approach the question to see if there was any necessity for the action before they did away with the illegality or unlawfulness of it. He came to the conclusion that there was some necessity for the action of the Government, and that necessity existed, as explained by the hon. members for Leichhardt, Maranoa, and other members on the Opposition side, owing to the fact that the State was in financial difficulties.

The TREASURER: That is not correct.

Mr. FORSYTH: How could that be so?

Mr. RYAN: The State was in such a position financially that it was necessary to get that money from the Commonwealth, or else the State would suffer considerably. The Treasurer said it was not necessary to get the money at all. If he thought that it was unnecessary for the State to have got that money from the Commonwealth, then he for one would not vote for the validating Bill, as he did not believe in validating an action on the part of the Government which was not necessary. But it was necessary, because the financial position, so far as the loan fund was concerned, was in such a state that they required more money. He wanted to know more than that. He wanted to know why the Minister and the Cabinet did not take the steps which were necessary for them to take in order to get the proper authority from Parliament. He unhesitatingly said that the Government did not do its duty in not calling Parliament together when members of the Opposition asked the Premier to call Parliament together to deal with another important subject.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: Why did not the Government call Parliament together when they were asked by the Labour party?

The TREASURER: Because we did not want to let you fellows have a blow about the strike.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear! and laughter.

Mr. COYNE: We have drawn the badger.

Mr. RYAN: He thanked the Treasurer for that admission. It was frank, but it was honest. He did not want the Labour party to have a blow about the strike, and why? Was he afraid to hear what the Labour party had to say about the strike?

The TREASURER: No; but we went to a higher tribunal.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: Was it because the Government thought the Opposition would ventilate

*Mr. Ryan* <sup>7</sup>

the strike so much in the House that the people of Queensland would have come to a different decision to what they did? Was it because the Government were afraid that the people of Queensland would have come to such a decision as the electors of Brisbane came to when they knew all the facts.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: The Government should have called Parliament together sooner than they did, and not carry out a policy of suppression, as they did. There was no doubt that the Government suppressed the financial policy from the people of Queensland in order to enable them to come back to power. (Hear, hear!) That was not a policy which the Government should put forward when they had to come to the House and ask the House to validate what they had done.

Mr. FORSYTH: Do you blame the Government for taking that money?

Mr. RYAN: No. (Government laughter.) It was necessary to have that money, owing to the difficulty in which the Government found itself. The Government did not take the steps they should have taken to put the question before the people of Queensland, and in that they failed in their duty as a Government, and they failed in their duty to Parliament. He knew that the Government had the majority behind them, and they could carry the motion. They had the numbers behind them, and they could legislate anything, but it was their duty, as the constitutional Opposition, to show what the real position was—to show how wrongful was the action of the Government, in the hope that the people of Queensland would wake up and not give the Government a similar opportunity in the future. The hon. member for Maryborough referred to the action of the Commonwealth Treasurer being illegal if the action of the Queensland Government was illegal. He did not know by what process of reasoning he came to that conclusion. The position was analogous to the position of the State Treasurer when a local authority borrowed money from the Government without first getting the authority of the ratepayers to do so. They would be doing an illegal thing to borrow the money.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: Don't you think the Commonwealth Treasurer should have found out all that before he lent the money?

Mr. RYAN: His duty was to the Commonwealth.

The TREASURER: Doesn't the State Treasurer find out if the local authority is in a financial position before he lends them money?

Mr. RYAN: The local authority sometimes borrowed money from a bank without the authority of the ratepayers, and that was illegal. He had no doubt the Commonwealth knew that they could get their money back easily enough from the State. They could issue execution against the State of Queensland, whether the Government was authorised or not to borrow the money.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They hold enough of our money.

Mr. RYAN: He had no doubt the Commonwealth Treasurer knew that when he lent the million of money. (Opposition laughter.) He knew he could hold back a million of the money that belonged to the

[*Mr. Ryan.*]

State when it became due. The Government had failed to establish a good case for the passing of a validating Act on that occasion, and it was the duty of hon. members to so ventilate the matter that no Government would act in that way in future.

Mr. COYNE: Don't you think it was generous of Fisher to lend that money when he saw the financial condition that Queensland was in?

Mr. RYAN: He thought the Commonwealth Prime Minister was generous to his own State when he came to the assistance of the Government and lent them that money.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Question—That leave be given to introduce the Bill—put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the resolution, which was agreed to.

#### FIRST READING.

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

[7 p.m.]

#### RAILWAYS BILL.

##### INTRODUCTION IN COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. J. Stodart, Logan, in the chair.*)

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS moved—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to consolidate and amend the laws with respect to the construction, maintenance, management, and working of the railways of the State, and the appointment, promotion, discipline, and regulation of the railway service, and for other purposes connected therewith.”

\* Mr. BOWMAN: When notice was given of this Bill in the House yesterday he had brought up the matter of the dismissal of a railway employee named Welsby, a fitter in the Ipswich railway workshops, for having taken a part, politically, in the recent elections when Mr. Cribb and Mr. Hefferman were contesting the Bremer seat. He then asked the Minister whether any notice had been taken of a motion that was introduced some years ago by the late member for Ipswich, Mr. Ryott Maughan, and which was carried by the House.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It was among the “slaughtered innocents.”

Mr. BOWMAN said it was not among the “slaughtered innocents.” The motion was introduced on a Thursday afternoon, and quite a number of members then sitting behind the Government supported it.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It was carried on the 23rd December, 1910.

Mr. BOWMAN: It was discussed on Thursday afternoons, and was carried. When a resolution was passed by the House, was it the duty of the Government to take any notice of that resolution and act upon it? Of course, the hon. gentleman might say they were not bound to take any notice of motions passed by the House, but there was

a clear expression of opinion that afternoon, and the motion was passed by a fair majority.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: There was no vote.

Mr. BOWMAN: There was a vote. He thought the late Premier, Mr. Kidston, was one who voted against it, and that the then Home Secretary, Mr. Airey, voted for the motion. Why should this particular individual be singled out as having acted against the regulations because he supported a Labour man? He had in his hand a list of six railway men engaged in the workshops who took a part in connection with Mr. Cribb's candidature. He was not going to read the names, because he would not do anything to injure these men, but the hon. gentleman could have this letter now if he liked. (Mr. Bowman then passed the letter to the Minister.) Why should this man be singled out for this treatment, while others were allowed to go scot-free? He might say that the late Commissioner, Mr. Thallon, made the statement that so long as any employee did not go in his uniform, he would not offer any objection to it, so that he really waived regulation 18.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: In a certain direction.

Mr. BOWMAN: This man, he believed, took a prominent part in Mr. Heffernan's candidature, and he had been dismissed. He appealed against this, but the appeal was dismissed. He hoped the Minister would take steps to alter regulation 18, and provide that so long as a man did nothing against the interests of the Government, he might vote and canvass, and, if he thought fit, also speak. He thought the Government gave a free hand to Commonwealth servants to take part in elections, so long as they did not give away any secrets of the department they were in.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: The same right is given in New South Wales and Western Australia.

Mr. BOWMAN: When the Bill was before them there was a big fight to give the same freedom here to take part in an election. It was ridiculous to say that because a man differed in politics from the Government he was serving he should not have the freedom to exercise his opinions as he thought best.

Mr. COYNE: In his own time.

Mr. BOWMAN: If this man had been doing this during the working hours of the department, there would be just cause for complaint, but he had done it in his spare time after he had performed his work for the State. No matter what their politics were, the men should be free to ventilate their political opinions without the fear of losing their bread and butter, the same as this unfortunate man.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The leader of the Opposition had stated his case very plainly, moderately, and calmly; at the same time he would point out that the regulation prohibiting railway men from taking part in politics because they were supporting a political opponent of the Government also applied to the whole of the public servants of Queensland—it did not matter to what side of politics or to what religion they belonged. Section 55 of the Public Service Act also debarred public

servants from taking an active part in politics. That should apply to all public servants, irrespective of their politics. There was no reason why a bar should be put upon any man to prevent him from exercising his franchise in the fullest and freest manner; but was it advisable in the interests of the public servants that they should actively mix up with candidates of whatever side of politics during any general or by-election?

Mr. BOWMAN: Why not?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: There were 9,000 employees in the Railway Department, and some 6,000 or 7,000 in the other branches of the service, and if they were to actively mix up in the political life of the State at election times, further than by exercising the franchise which was undoubtedly theirs, they might come to a state of things which existed in the United States of America. He was speaking purely in their interests.

Mr. LAND: Give them a chance, anyhow.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No member of the Opposition could say that he had ever tried to prevent anyone in the Railway Department from exercising his vote. They could not say that anyone had not been given the fullest opportunity, even to the extent of a free railway pass, to get to polling-places to record their votes.

Mr. KIRWAN: A general order is issued at every election.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Mr. Welsby, who had been referred to, was a fitter.

Mr. BOWMAN: In the shops.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He found that Mr. Welsby was written to in connection with his having appeared on the platform of a parliamentary candidate in Ipswich in March last, and he was asked whether a certain statement which he was reported to have made was made by him. Mr. Welsby was at a meeting on the 26th March at North Ipswich, and this was taken from the report of the *Queensland Times*—

“Mr. A. E. Welsby supported the candidature of Mr. Heffernan. He had dreamt, had wakened up, and become a supporter of the Labour platform, and, more, of socialism. He was there under pain of dismissal. He was testing the position, and, if he lost his job he would lose it honourably. No power would gag him. Who was going to win in this class war? They would see on April 27.”

On the 27th March, the Secretary to the Commissioner was written to by Mr. Pemberton, Chief Mechanical Engineer, as follows:—

“*Breaking of Rule 18—Staff Regulations—A. E. Welsby.*”

“I beg to draw attention to remarks made by Fitter A. E. Welsby, who spoke at a political meeting held by William Heffernan, a candidate for the Bremer seat, last night. Welsby is evidently aware from his remarks that he was violating the Regulations, and claims to be testing the position. I shall be glad to know if there is any objection to me taking action at once.

“Copy of this day's issue of the *Queensland Times* attached hereto.”

*Hon. W. T. Paget.]*

Mr. Pemberton was written to on the 29th March—

“With reference to your memo. of 27th instant, will you please draw Fitter Welsby's attention to the following words in his speech, as reported in the *Queensland Times* of 27th instant, viz. :—

“Mr. A. E. Welsby supported the candidature of Mr. Heffernan. He had dreamt, had wakened up, and become a supporter of the Labour platform, and, more, of socialism. He was there under pain of dismissal. He was testing the position, and, if he lost his job, he would lose it honourably. No power would gag him—”

and ask him if he has been correctly reported.”

There were no points taken on Mr. Welsby, who wrote in reply to the Works Manager on the 2nd April—

“Referring to the report of my speech as recorded in the *Queensland Times* issue of the 27th ultimo. All is correct excepting the sentence which reads, ‘I am testing the position.’

“Trusting that you, sir, are not relying upon the veracity of the aforementioned paper.”

Mr. PAYNE: Hear, hear! A brave man! (Laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The next information he had was that on the 25th June the following letter was addressed to Mr. Welsby:—

“Breach of clause 18 of Staff Regulations.

“Referring to your letter of 2nd April last, and also to your two interviews with me on the 10th and 17th instant. At the first interview you declined to give assurance that you would not similarly offend again, but asked for time. I accordingly granted you a week, and on the 17th instant, you still adhered to your former attitude.

“It now devolves upon me to give you notice that your services will be no longer required after the 27th proximo.

“Should you in the meantime give me the desired assurance, I will arrange to cancel this letter.”

On the 28th June, Mr. Welsby wrote as follows to the Secretary to the Commissioner:—

“Sir,—In accordance with regulation (75), paragraph (9), of the ‘Staff Regulations,’ I hereby appeal against the decision of the ‘C.M.E.’ in giving me notice of dismissal from the Railway Service. The grounds upon which the appeal is made are: First, that the said breach of rule (18) was no breach at all, and, secondly, that I did not refuse to comply with the regulation in so far as I believe it can apply.”

Mr. Welsby was asked by the Chief Mechanical Engineer whether he would adhere to Regulation 18, and he said he would not; and he was given another week to consider the position. As he still refrained from saying he would conform to the rules under which he was supposed to work, the Chief Mechanical Engineer gave him a month's notice. Mr. Welsby appealed, and the decision went against him.

[Hon. W. T. Paget.

Mr. THEODORE: Why should any discrimination be made?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He would like hon. members to allow him to explain this case first. He considered that Mr. Welsby's case was sub judice at present. As a matter of fact, he had appealed to the Commissioner, who was away in the North and would not be back for a fortnight, and it would be wise to leave any further discussion of Mr. Welsby's case until the Commissioner came back. He wished to impress upon hon. members that so far as he was aware there was no reason why Mr. Welsby, under the regulation, should not have been called upon for an explanation, because he distinctly broke a certain regulation in going on the public platform.

Mr. BOWMAN: That's no worse than canvassing for the other candidate.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No. Seeing that the matter appeared in the public Press and was brought under the notice of the head of his department, he did not see that anything could have been done other than was done by the head of the department.

Mr. RYAN: The offence was in being found out.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Mr. Welsby found himself out. When he went on the platform at the meeting he did not keep within the rules of the service; but he did not think personally that it would have done very much harm if he had said he believed in what he did, but would abide by the regulations.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Surrender his manhood.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It was not a question of surrendering his manhood; it was a question whether men in the public service were going to abide by a rule that was in existence.

Mr. BOWMAN: Which was repealed by this House.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Not repealed by this House.

Mr. BOWMAN: At any rate, it was voted against by this House.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member was referring to a resolution prior to the one which he (Mr. Paget) was referring to. The motion he (Mr. Paget) was referring to was discussed on Thursday, 11th August, 1910.

Mr. BOWMAN: The one I was referring to was some years ago.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: There was quite a lengthy debate on the motion to which he was referring, and he then said that the regulation did not debar a public servant from exercising the franchise to the fullest degree. The motion did not specifically apply to the Railway Department. It read—

“That in the opinion of this House, regulations curtailing the political and civic rights of employees in the public services of the State should be forthwith repealed.”

On 21st December, it came up in the “slaughter of innocents,” and was passed without further debate and without a division.

Mr. LENNON: And no further notice has been taken of it.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No. What was the use of the hon. member trying to work up an indignation about this? because they knew perfectly [7.30 p.m.] well that for a number of years

Thursday afternoons were very often devoted to what were termed academic debates, and before the present Government came into power, there was not very much chance of private members getting motions passed on Thursday afternoon, because they were always talked out. Last Thursday afternoon, however, there were no fewer than four motions passed or knocked out, and there was nothing academic about them—they were downright business. He was glad that the leader of the Opposition brought the matter up. When he (Mr. Paget) found that Mr. Welsby was appealing to the Commissioner, he said he thought it was advisable that the appeal should be made—not to the Deputy Commissioner, who was now acting as Commissioner—but to the Commissioner, when he returned in the course of two or three weeks. The hon. member also quoted the opinion expressed by Mr. Thallon some time ago. He (Mr. Paget) absolutely agreed with what Mr. Thallon had then said. It arose out of a deputation to Mr. Thallon at the Ipswich workshops. In the official papers this was what he found—

“The official report of the deputation, however, gives more than Mr. Eastercabb or the *Railway Express*, and was as follows, viz. :—

“Mr. Thallon said he was not going to have railway officers on public platforms for political purposes, or indulging in propaganda work.

“Porter Sherry said they thought that when off duty they had the right to do as they pleased, so long as they did not interfere with the department's business. They wanted the rule defined.

“Mr. Thallon replied that if the rule were deleted, undue advantage would be taken by some men of the freedom allowed. So long as they did not take an active part in platform work, and did not use their uniforms, he did not think anyone would interfere with them. The railways were vested in the Commissioner, and were supposed to be kept free from politics. The rule would not be deleted.”

The interview took place on 17th May, 1910. Hon. members would agree that the late Commissioner was a very clear-headed man, and one who had a very great regard for the men in the railway service, and the railway men had an equally great regard for him. So far as he was aware, Mr. Welsby's was the first case that had arisen in the department. He had not had time to read the letter which the hon. member had given him privately, and he would treat it as confidential. So far as the Commissioner and he were concerned, it mattered not what platform any member of the service was on, provided he was breaking the rule, he should be called to book for it.

Mr. BOWMAN: Seeing that Mr. Welsby had appealed to the Commissioner, he was quite willing to let the matter drop until Mr. Welsby had placed his case before the Commissioner. He did not think there was any more harm in a man going on to a candidate's platform and advocating the

principles in which he believed, than in acting as a scrutineer or as a canvasser, or handling a cab, as was done by some of the men whose names were mentioned in the note he handed to the hon. gentleman.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That should not be done either.

Mr. BOWMAN: He did not care what a man's political opinions were—

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Neither do I.

Mr. BOWMAN: He should be free to express those opinions on any platform, so long as he did not give away the secrets of the department to which he belonged. He would not expect Mr. Welsby to be anything else than a socialist, seeing he was working in a socialistic institution—in works that were controlled by the Government, and of which they were all proud. Even the Secretary for Railways was proud of them.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: Yet the hon. gentleman thought Mr. Welsby had been guilty of an indiscretion in going on to the platform and saying that he was a socialist.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I did not say that.

Mr. BOWMAN: The hon. gentleman inferred it.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No, I merely read what Mr. Welsby said. I made no comment at all.

Mr. BOWMAN: He was quite prepared to let the matter rest, so that they would not prejudice the case against either the Commissioner or Mr. Welsby.

Mr. PAYNE: He did not want to prolong the debate. He would be sorry to hear that any man would lose his position because he got up on a public platform and expressed his views, no matter on what side of politics he spoke. He considered that the railway staff, who were responsible for the running of the railways in Queensland, right from the highest officer to the humblest man, were really a fine body of men, and it seemed humiliating to him that because a man was in the railway service that he should lose his rights as a citizen. The Minister for Railways said it would not be wise to permit the public servants of Queensland to interfere in politics. Why did not these remarks apply to Commonwealth servants? They had more Commonwealth servants than State servants, and it did not have a bad effect on them.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They don't seem satisfied. They are very dissatisfied, although they have a Labour Government.

Mr. PAYNE: They were allowed the same freedom in New South Wales as in the Commonwealth. Why should Queensland be picked out as the State in which it would be disastrous to allow public servants to have a full and free opportunity of expressing their views which they should have in a free country? From the way the Minister spoke it seemed that those who worked in the railway should feel themselves under a compliment that they got a day's work. Did not they give full value for their services? Why should they be debarred from having the same right as he (Mr. Payne) or any other man had? He always

*Mr. Payne.]*

thought that that regulation had been wiped out long ago. The Minister for Railways was a fair-minded and considerate man, so far as any man politically was concerned, and it was up to him to put the Queensland railway servants on the same footing as the public servants in Western Australia and in the Commonwealth.

Question—That leave be given to introduce the Bill—put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a resolution, and it was agreed to.

#### FIRST READING.

The Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

### INDUSTRIAL PEACE BILL.

#### SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

\* Mr. BOWMAN (*Fortitude Valley*), who was received with Opposition "Hear, hear!" said: This Bill, which was introduced by the Secretary for Works last Wednesday, is, according to the hon. member's speech, and according to its title, a very peaceable Bill. And from the hon. gentleman's speech he seemed to think that this Bill was going to be the "be-all and end-all" of industrial disputes. The hon. gentleman, in dealing with the Bill, said that its chief object was to prevent strikes, and I want now to ask the hon. gentleman whether he or any other hon. gentleman sitting on that side of the House thinks that this Bill—however drastic it may be when it passes this House—goodness knows, it is drastic enough on its introduction—I want to know how the hon. gentleman came to the conclusion, silently and peacefully, that it is going to end strikes. The hon. gentleman must know, as well as any other hon. gentleman in this House, that to-day industrial conflicts are not confined to this State, nor yet to this country. (Hear, hear!) Every country in the world to-day has its industrial trials and industrial disputes. There is an unrest from one end of the world to the other. Anyone going to the old country, or taking up his daily paper during the last twelve months, could not help noticing that there was one continual fight against the unfair conditions under which people have been working. I remember the remarks the Premier made on this Bill. He said it was a novel Bill. It is a novel Bill; it is the most novel thing Australia has ever struck.

The PREMIER: And the best.

Mr. BOWMAN: It is the worst, the most tyrannical, and most coercive Bill that has ever existed in any State in any part of Australia.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: I will try to prove that before I conclude my address to-night. This is what the Secretary for Works said—I will quote his exact words—

"One of the objects of a measure of this nature is to make the conditions for the worker more satisfactory, and, in addition, to make it possible for those who are engaged in commerce to feel some sense of security in connection with

[*Mr. Payne.*

their operations. It will have been noticed by those who have gone through the Bill that the definitions in the interpretation clause are considerably widened."

The hon. gentleman, in dealing with that, wanted this House to believe that the first thing was to secure peace, and also that commerce would not be disturbed. There is no member on this side of the House that is not just as anxious as any hon. member sitting on the Government side to have industrial peace in Queensland.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: I have been connected with trades unionism ever since I was eligible to join a union, and I am still a member, and I have always regarded strikes as perhaps the most barbaric way that we could possibly have of settling disputes, and it would be much more preferable if we could get a system by which both parties could be brought together and have matters adjusted to the satisfaction of both sides. (Hear, hear!) But this Bill will never accomplish what the hon. gentleman desires it to do.

Mr. PAYNE: It is not possible.

Mr. COYNE: It will have the opposite effect.

Mr. BOWMAN: The hon. gentleman, I notice, has copied a good deal of the New South Wales Act which was recently passed, and whilst he was speaking on the Bill I interjected that he had copied a good deal of the provisions of the New South Wales Act, and he politely told me that he claimed, on that account, my support for the Bill. I can assure the hon. gentleman, and those sitting behind him, that so far as I am personally concerned—and I speak for every member sitting behind me—(hear, hear!)—that we will fight this measure "to the last ditch" rather than let it pass in its present form.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: We know the hon. gentleman has power—we know the Government have a majority sitting behind them to-day that will enable them to do practically what they like, but we are not going to sit down and take it calmly. We are going to fight every clause of the Bill, and try and make it something better than it is now. The hon. gentleman copied all the penal clauses out of the New South Wales Act, and all the worst possible features of that Act. There was one thing that struck me, and that was that there are certain provisions in the New South Wales Act that the hon. gentleman and those associated with him have discarded altogether.

Mr. COYNE: They were carefully dropped out.

Mr. RYAN: All the good features of that Act are left out.

Mr. BOWMAN: Now, what have they left out? They have left out the rural workers, and the hon. gentleman stated that he felt sure that a majority of the members of this House would feel that they had done the right thing. I remember, when the Wages Boards Bill was before this Chamber some few years ago, the hon. gentleman, and also his leader, were sitting in the cold shades of Opposition, and I remember the anxiety of the hon. gentleman when we succeeded in getting a provision inserted

in that Bill giving the right for any farm employee to apply to have a wages board. But why is it knocked out now? Why have they deleted that provision from the Wages Boards Act? Is it because the two leading gentlemen sitting on the Treasury benches are the champion middlemen of Brisbane? Is it because they fear something is going to be done that may affect their personal interests? Is it because they have behind them, on those back benches, a number of farmers' representatives, who can either make them or unmake them any day they like?

Mr. MORGAN: The people put them there.

Mr. BOWMAN: I am not saying they did not send them there, but there is one thing very evident to my mind, and that is that the hon. member, as well as every farmer's representative, probably realise that if this Bill were passed in the same form as the New South Wales Act—had it included rural workers, whether they be farm labourers, whether they work in connection with dairying, horticulture, or viticulture—as the hon. gentleman said, when introducing the Bill, that he felt we have to consider the export markets of our produce, but the leader of the present Government said the same thing when we were fighting to get those workers included in the Wages Boards Act. He asked on that occasion, "How can our farmers compete with the farmers of Siberia if they are brought under this Bill?"

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Quite right. How can they?

Mr. BOWMAN: I ask the hon. member for Drayton whether he wants the Australian farm labourer to be brought down to the level of Siberian serfs?

Mr. BEBBINGTON: No; we treat them fairly.

Mr. BOWMAN: The hon. member says "No." He is like his leader; he did not mean it when I brought him to task on the very same question. But I will tell the farmers' representatives how I think they might be able to allow these men to come under the provisions of this Bill. They may say that the present markets do not enable them to pay higher wages. What has been done in New South Wales? I remember meeting the New South Wales Minister for Public Works, the Hon. Mr. Griffith, on a certain occasion within the walls of this Chamber, and he pointed out what his Government were doing for the farmers, and I hope the farmers' representatives will take notice of this: That the Government had realised that it was their duty to take the farmers' cream, make their butter, find a market, and give them an advance on their products.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: But they cannot do it any cheaper than we can, nor as cheap.

Mr. BOWMAN: We have evidently got one hon. member here—

Mr. PAYNE: A middleman.

Mr. BOWMAN: I do not say he is a middleman. I think he is a *bonâ fide* farmer. I do not want to do the hon. member any injury. I believe the hon. member has taken a very great interest in co-operative works. I want to point out to the hon. member for Drayton, and others who are with him or who think with him, that if they can make or unmake—and this has been asserted by some members who are sitting behind them—if they can make or

unmake the Government whenever they like, then now is their opportunity of seeing whether some better conditions cannot be got for the farmers, and I promise any hon. member who cares to do anything in that respect that they will have the support of every member on this side of the House.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: We will take it sitting down.

Mr. BOWMAN: Of course, the hon. member will take it sitting down. I find also that Government servants are excluded from the provisions of the Bill. Did the hon. gentleman see a copy of the New South Wales Bill when he was drafting his? There the Government railway employees, the Government tramway employees, the harbour boards, and other industries in connection with the public service—they all come under the provisions of the Bill. Yet these Liberal gentlemen say that this particular Bill is going to bring about all that is hoped for in the way of peace.

Mr. PAYNE: Unionists and non-unionists to work together—just fancy!

Mr. BOWMAN: I am just going to refer to that. In New South Wales, the Act provides that only unions can be registered. Here we have the shandy-gaff Government kind—the non-unionist and the unionist—the Government which are prepared to let the non-unionists come in and reap the benefit of unionism; and there is no man in this Chamber who will deny that the unionists to-day, not only of this country but of every country, have kept up wages all over the world.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: I do not think there is one hon. member opposite who will refute that argument. It has been the unionists who have fought—

Mr. KIRWAN: And suffered, too.

Mr. BOWMAN: The hon. member for Fitzroy told his teachers at the beginning of this year that he gloried in their being unionists—he hoped they would all be in the ranks of unionists. And yet he sits on that front bench and joins in the deliberations of the Cabinet—

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: And there are only 300 out of 1,500 in the union.

Mr. BOWMAN: And you are a poor organiser if you could not get the lot of them in. (Opposition laughter.)

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: We are doing a fair thing to all, although we have no preference to unionists in our department.

Mr. BOWMAN: That reminds me of a Bill passed last session—the Health Bill. We heard a good deal during the Address in Reply—I am not permitted to discuss it now—but the badge question came up. The nurses who come under the Health Act have to wear a badge, and the nurses who are registered under the Act have to get preference.

THE HOME SECRETARY: Because they have the qualification.

Mr. BOWMAN: You have admitted the principle of preference to competent workwomen. During my experience in connec-

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tion with industrial matters, I have invariably found that the unionists in all trades were the most competent.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is not so.

Mr. BOWMAN: Of course, the hon. member speaks of a place which, I suppose, has been at a lower ebb than any part of Queensland—that is Toowoomba.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: The fact that the lowest possible wages are paid in the foundries there has been drawn attention to time after time.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That does not strengthen your argument at all.

Mr. COYNE: Are you a unionist?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I have employed unionists and non-unionists, and continue to employ them.

Mr. BOWMAN: On looking over the Bill I find provisions, particularly in the penalty clauses, which are a disgrace for any Government to introduce into a deliberative Chamber. A man who violates this law under certain conditions can be fined up to £1,000. If a person, an industrial organisation—

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: Not a person—an employer.

Mr. BOWMAN: I will find the clause and read it.

The HOME SECRETARY: Look at the way the Commonwealth have imposed penalties in connection with Royal Commissions, up to £2,000.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Is that why you have retaliated?

The SPEAKER: Order! I must ask hon. members on my right to refrain from interjections. The leader of the Opposition is making an important speech, and I hope he will receive the courtesy of the House.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: A man may be fined anything from £1,000 down to £10—that is for violation of certain sections which are in the Bill. Do hon. gentlemen sitting on that bench opposite really think that the imposition of a fine of £1,000 is a fair thing for a person who may either knowingly or unknowingly—

The PREMIER: You misinterpret it. That is the case of a person who performs a lock-out—that is the employer who performs a lock-out.

Mr. BOWMAN: I do not care whether he is an employer or not, I think it is too stiff a penalty for anyone to pay. I find the provision is contained in clause 39, which says—

“If any person enjoined by any such order, after service thereof, disobeys the same, he shall, if an individual, be liable to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for any period not exceeding six months, or, if a company or industrial association, it shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding one thousand pounds.”

That applies just the same to a strike as to a lockout.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: No! no! Read the interpretation clause.

Mr. BOWMAN: There is one thing no hon. member can deny—that there are penal-

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ties under which an individual can be fined £1,000 for doing something contrary to the Act.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: An employer.

Mr. BOWMAN: An individual or a member of an organisation can be fined from £500 down to £10; and those penalties are too great to impose on men who are endeavouring to bring about an adjustment between themselves and their employers. This Bill is introduced with the specific object of crippling unionism. (Hear, hear!) If a member of a union has not the money if he is guilty, if he happens to be a trustee, or is associated with trustees who have property, that property can be confiscated by the Government.

Hon. J. W. BLAIR: What clause is that?

Mr. BOWMAN: The hon. member knows as well as I do. He addressed the miners of Bundamba the other night, and he knows that they totally disagree with the Bill.

Hon. J. W. BLAIR: No—as framed.

Mr. BOWMAN: That is the Bill as we have it.

Hon. J. W. BLAIR: No; it is not total disagreement.

Mr. BOWMAN: The hon. gentleman knows as well as I do that the *Worker* newspaper can be mulcted in damages to the extent of the fine if it says one word in reference to a strike before the fourteen days' notice has expired. The trustees may be had up for any property they possess for doing the same thing. It is monstrous to think that in this twentieth century we have a body of men who are prepared to bring in such a Bill. The hon. gentleman opposite, who always preaches peace—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: And practises it.

Mr. BOWMAN: I am not speaking disparagingly of the hon. gentleman when I say he is a man who makes certain professions and knows his Bible fairly well. We read there of one who said, “Peace on earth, good-will towards men.” Is this Bill going to bring peace on earth and good-will to men? It will do nothing of the sort; and you will have to build bigger goals than there are now if the Bill passes in its present form.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: I would be the last man to stir up strife if I thought there was any possible chance of having a decent Bill whereby we could get peace in this State, because I am as anxious to see peace as any other man; but it is absolutely impossible to make this Bill a peaceful Bill. The provisions are altogether too stringent. The hon. gentleman made it his boast during the election campaign that he was going to put a stop to strikes. From the time of Moses down to the present time there have been strikes, and lockouts, too. I was listening to a sermon on Sunday night when it was stated that Moses advised the men to go on strike because they had not straw to make their bricks with under old Pharaoh; and from that time to this there has been a succession of strikes. I do not wonder at strikes taking place in many parts of the world. I was privileged to be in the old country last year; and I found the condition of affairs such that any man who would not resent them I do not think could be called a man.

Mr. MORGAN: Those conditions do not exist here.

Mr. BOWMAN: The hon. gentleman has not been many years in Queensland; but I can tell him that since I have been in Queensland I have seen the sweating carried on here by employers, especially in connection with the seamstresses; and the hon. gentleman should know that in Victoria, before wages boards were instituted, a disgraceful state of affairs existed.

Mr. MORGAN: I admit that was so many years ago; but it is not so now.

Mr. BOWMAN: We have in this Bill fourteen days' notice to be given before a strike can take place or before any trouble can take place in an industry. That fourteen days' notice is not asked for in the New South Wales Bill; and I do not think that in a good Bill here it would need to be asked for. Even under the Wages Boards Act most of the men who have had their awards have stood by them; and I do not know one award given under the Commonwealth Arbitration Act that has not been obeyed. The hon. member for Gregory a week or two ago pointed out that when the shearers and labourers had their case before the Arbitration Court under Judge Higgins, though the labourers did not get as satisfactory an award as they expected or as they were entitled to, yet they did not complain or violate the provisions of the award, but contented themselves for three solid years, and had their case brought up again for readjustment. When we have evidence that an Act has given satisfaction in that way, surely the Government would be wise in doing something to emulate it, if not in every particular, at least in its best provisions, which has been done elsewhere, and bring forward a Bill that would give more satisfaction than this Bill does. The hon. gentleman who introduced the Bill also stated—

“I should like to ask if the time has not come when, instead of widening disputes, the best thought and the aim of those who occupy public positions should be, not to widen disputes, but to bring men together with the view of settling their disputes in an amicable manner?”

Of course, we believe in that, but this Bill will never do it.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: Why?

Mr. BOWMAN: Because it is too stringent, and because of the one-sided and biased clauses in it.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: Which are the one-sided clauses?

Mr. BOWMAN: The hon. member can tell me when he gets up to speak.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: I cannot find them.

Mr. BOWMAN: I know that the Bill in its present form will give general dissatisfaction to the unionists throughout Queensland. Even the miners, whom the hon. member for Ipswich represents, disapprove of the Bill. I have a letter in my pocket from the secretary to their union, Mr. Gledson, to that effect.

Hon. J. W. BLAIR: “The wish is father to the thought.”

Mr. BOWMAN: It is nothing of the kind. The hon. member knows quite well that there is a great deal of dissatisfaction over the Bill as introduced. There must be a reason for the introduction of the Bill, and I believe that reason is to be found in the late general strike in Brisbane. I believe

that is the reason that actuated the Government, supported by the Federated Employers' Union of Queensland.

Mr. COYNE: The Employers' Federation dictated it, and it had to be carried out.

Mr. BOWMAN: I do not know what the Employers' Federation did, but I am satisfied that the Bill as introduced is not going to give satisfaction to a solitary unionist in Queensland. Why this industrial unrest? It is because the labourer feels that he has not been getting his fair share of the wealth he produces, and that he should get. It is because some men are growing extremely wealthy, while others are kept just on the verge of living without being able to save anything. If the average workman in Queensland, even with the wages he is now receiving, has a week's sickness, he is thrown back for six or eight months, and he cannot pull it up. While wages have increased, the cost of living has increased infinitely more.

Mr. MORGAN: That is only natural.

Mr. BOWMAN: It is not natural. But whether it is natural or unnatural, it is one of the causes of the present discontent. Men do not strike just for the fun of it. Men do not strike because they want to be idle. I believe the three principal causes for men striking are, that they want an increase of wages, or shorter hours, or they go out in sympathy with a body of men who are fighting for a principle. Some may ask me if I want to perpetuate strikes. I do not. I hope that we have seen the last of them.

Mr. COYNE: Do you think you can prevent them?

Mr. BOWMAN: I believe we can go a long way towards preventing them if we have the proper machinery for doing so. But, honestly, I do not think this Bill will ever give the satisfaction which the hon. gentlemen sitting on the front Treasury bench think it will. Mr. Knibbs, in his latest “Year Book,” points out that neither wages boards nor arbitration courts have finally settled industrial troubles. The Secretary for Works says that the Bill is going to debar paid officials of unions from appearing before the boards or before the court to represent their unions. Now, I would ask the hon. member why he thinks these men will not give satisfaction? The hon. member for Enoggera is a warm supporter of the Government. I ask him whether the two men who have acted as secretary to the Butchers' Union have not rendered him and the other master butchers good assistance in conferences? I think the hon. member will admit they have. I think it is fair that the permanent officials of unions should be permitted to appear on behalf of the men, and it is not the duty of any Government or of this House to deprive unions of the very best assistance they can get in the proper representation of their case. Some of the best tradesmen, while they know a great deal about their trade, are unable to debate the question before a tribunal.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Does that not apply to the employers also?

Mr. BOWMAN: Certainly. What I want is, that the very best men connected with a union should be able to go and give the very best evidence obtainable, with a view to bringing about a settlement in quick time. I will take Mr. Crampton, of the Butchers' Union. He opposed the hon. member for

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Windsor at the last election, and I am sure that hon. member does not think that Mr. Crampton is a man who would not be able to give satisfaction in advocating the claims of the men of his union. Why deprive the wharf labourers of Mr. McCabe's services, or the bootmakers of the services of Mr. Harris? I do think that no member of Parliament should be allowed to appear before the tribunal; but I think that a union is entitled to be represented by any of its officials if it has confidence in them. It seems to me that the Minister is endeavouring to favour the employers by not allowing the best men to represent the men's interests. That is the only conclusion that I can arrive at. Whether I am right or not in thinking that remains to be seen. I do not see how I can think anything else after the way the hon. gentleman has spoken. He said that probably after a man has been away from it a few years he would have forgotten the technicalities of the trade. We know that there is to-day a complete evolution so far as industry is concerned. The machinery in use is totally different to what it was twenty years ago. Take the trade that I was brought up to—bootmaking. I know that in that particular trade they have machines that almost make the whole boot through, and which are manipulated sometimes by a youth, or perhaps one man, with three or four boys. Machine-sawn boots to-day are made almost as well by the Goodyear machine as what they can be made by hand. Yet, will the hon. gentleman tell me that because there have been such wonderful strides in the trade, so far as machinery is concerned, that the secretary who happens to be out of the trade for two or three years does not know the technicalities of the trade? He may be an able advocate. He may be like the hon. member for Windsor and my colleague the hon. member for Barcoo. They plead as barristers, but they always have solicitors by them, probably to give them points, and in that way the workman in the trade can give points to these men who, I say, have the right to appear and advocate the claims of the men instead of cutting them out because they happen to be members of the union.

[8.30 p.m.]

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: I have no objection at all to the secretary of the Employers' Federation, Mr. Ranson, appearing. He is a capable man, and I have no objection to him acting on behalf of the employers. But I claim as a right that every man who has the confidence of his fellow-unionists should not be debarred from occupying any position at all under this Bill.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: Even if he is not a tradesman.

Mr. BOWMAN: From my experience of secretaries of unions to-day, I can say that they are generally secretaries of the trade that they have been brought up to.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: That is not the experience that I have had.

Mr. BOWMAN: I know that the bulk of the unions to-day who have officials, and particularly those who are permanent men, that those men have been *bonâ fide* workers in connection with the industry which they represent.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: In many cases.

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Mr. BOWMAN: In all cases that I know of. If that is so, then those on this side of the House are not asking too much in asking this right for these men so long as they are qualified, and so long as their unions think they are qualified—and they are the best judges. Why should this House dictate to the unions and say, "You shall only have a certain class of man that we are prepared to give you. We will not let you pick the smartest man." Do you not think that that union would be at a disadvantage if they were not allowed to pick their smartest man to meet the smartest man on the employers' side in the industry they are engaged in? Personally, I think they would be at a disadvantage. Dealing with strikes, there is a paragraph from a work here which I wish to read. This is a book entitled "Political Economy," by Mr. F. A. Walker, and on page 379 of his book he says—

"What is the failure of a strike?—Nor must it be thought that because strikes often, perhaps we might say commonly, fail of their immediate object, they are, therefore, nugatory. Many an insurrection has been put down speedily, perhaps with great slaughter, which has been followed by remission of taxes, by redress of grievances, by extension of charters and franchises. It may be considered doubtful whether the successful or the unsuccessful insurrections of England have done more to advance English liberties. Of the rising of the peasantry against Richard II., which was suppressed in a few days, Prof. Thorold Rogers says, 'The rebellion was put down, but the demands of the villeins were silently and effectually accorded. As they were masters for a week of the position, the dread of another servile war promoted the liberty of the serf.' Even an unsuccessful strike may make employers more moderate, considerate, and conciliatory, as they recall the anxieties, the struggles, and the sacrifices of the conflict."

Apart from the statement he has given, I do not say I have a desire to foster the continuance of strikes. I have made it perfectly clear that I do not want strikes.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: When we think of the strikes that have taken place in the past—we have only to go back to 1890 in our own State, when we had the big maritime strike right along the coast of Australia. Coming a little later to 1891, we had the shearers' strike in the West of Queensland. We know what that cost the Government at that time. But those strikes were not without their lessons. These lessons were to this effect—our members, who were in the House shortly after that, were told, and even advised, by the late Sir Hugh Nelson, "Why don't you carry out your work in a constitutional way?"

Mr. COYNE: That was Sir S. W. Griffith.

Mr. BOWMAN: No, it was Sir Hugh Nelson. He said, "Why don't you have your representatives in this House?" The result was that they took his advice. Shortly after the 1890 strike, there were thirty-odd Labour members returned to the New South Wales Legislative Assembly. And after the 1891 strike here—in the 1893 election—there were

fifteen Labour men returned to this side of the House, and they will be remembered by some hon. members who are here to-day. We have gone on from that time up to the present. We have tried wages boards. The Minister has admitted that even from the experience he has gained as Minister administering that particular department, he has learned a good deal in the way of going ahead, so far as legislation is concerned. He admitted that in his speech.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I am always trying to learn.

Mr. BOWMAN: You are slow to learn on this particular question. I well remember the London dock strikers of 1889. What was the result of that strike? The two leading newspapers of Brisbane—the *Brisbane Courier* and the *Daily Telegraph*—both contributed large sums of money as a donation towards that strike. They were striking at the time for what in England was known as a “tanner” a day, and those two newspapers contributed handsome sums of money towards the dispute. I remember being in a church in Brisbane one evening while the London dock strike was on, and the clergyman spoke on behalf of the men, and a collection was taken up. But under this Bill, if a man speaks in support of a strike, or if he offers one word about a strike taking place, he is subject to the penalties contained in this Bill that we are now considering.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: There are other remedies.

Mr. COYNE: There are no other remedies.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: There are other remedies, and conditions are all right.

Mr. BOWMAN: The hon. member's condition may be all right. Mine is all right, but I am not speaking for myself; I am speaking for the wage-earners of Queensland.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: And I am thinking of the wage-earners of Queensland.

Mr. BOWMAN: The hon. member thinks that he is speaking on behalf of the wage-earners of Queensland.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: I have as much right to do so as you.

Mr. BOWMAN: The conditions to-day are not as good as they might be. Will the hon. member admit that?

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: Perhaps not.

Mr. MORGAN: They are better than they were.

Mr. BOWMAN: I remember the time when they had slavery in America. They have abolished slavery there, and things are better than they were, but the conditions are not as good there as they might be even in that great country. Do hon. members opposite want peace? Do they desire to have a peaceful solution of the difficulties that naturally will arise between employer and employee?

Hon. J. W. BLAIR: Most decidedly, yes.

Mr. BOWMAN: If they do, then I tender a little advice to the hon. gentleman who introduced this Bill—that he should withdraw the Bill, remodel it, and introduce a Bill on which he can get the support of every member of this side of the House to assist him in trying to preserve industrial peace in Queensland.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: Utterly impossible.

Mr. BOWMAN: We also realise that this fight is a fight, not only in our own great country of Australia, but it is a fight in almost all the civilised parts of the world. I was saying just a few moments ago that when in London I saw conditions there which were such that I consider if a man would not strike there you could not call him a man. Take, for instance, the railway works of that country—a first-class porter, with a wife and six children, was paid 17s. a week, out of which 9d. was deducted for insurance. While I was in Wales I saw miners on strike who had been out for eight months at that time, and for ten months altogether. These men were not averaging more than 2s. a day for working down in the bowels of the earth bringing out that wealth. What for? To simply give increased profits to the men who owned that mine. In going through certain parts of Britain, particularly the East End of London—the wonder to me was not that there were strikes, but that there was not a revolution there. After going through that East End, I came home and told my wife: “Well,” I said, “after what I have seen to-day, I am a rebel.” Why? To see the conditions that existed there was enough to make any man feel so. There were men who could ride in their carriages, who could write their names to tremendous cheques, and yet those unfortunate creatures were right on the eve of destitution and starvation. Those are the conditions that exist there.

Hon. J. W. BLAIR: There is no parallel in this State.

Mr. BOWMAN: I admit that in Australia we have, at any rate, the machinery by which we can do something to help ourselves, but in Great Britain they have not got it. If a man shifts from a place where he resides he is disfranchised for eighteen months. They talk about the Brisbane strike, and also the lawlessness of men. Hon. members, I suppose, have read something of what has taken place—not by the working women of England, but by some of the titled ladies, by some that are very well educated, and yet those women are fighting for political liberty.

The PREMIER: We are not discussing that.

Mr. BOWMAN: I am just giving this to show that there is a spirit of unrest politically, and what exists politically exists industrially. While in Wales I saw conditions in connection with iron moulding—men getting as low as 2s. 3d. a day—first-class moulders. I say such conditions as that are altogether unfair, and the wonder to me is that there have not been strikes; but there is a body of men trying to bring about a change of affairs in that great country. It is slow. There is no doubt about that, but still the work is going on. In Ireland they have been fighting for years to get their rights—that is, Home Rule—there has been persecution there, and we know the Government have imposed the sternest possible penalties on these men for what they have done, and there are men there who are regarded as being the heroes of this great fight in the old country: some of them have visited this State, and yet to-day, after all the years of democratic legislation that we have had from one end of the continent to the other, we have the Government coming down with a Bill that to-day has no equal in any part of Australia, and I question very much whether

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it has any equal in any other British-speaking country in the world. There is a freedom given to-day in the old country to unions that the hon. gentleman said he would not give in Queensland.

The PREMIER: Peaceful picketing?

Mr. BOWMAN: Not peaceful picketing at all. That is included in it, but I refer to the protection of their funds. The hon. gentleman says "No." He has seen enough of what has taken place in the old country recently for him not to introduce it here. I saw there men who could lose him politically and economically, and they realise that these men have rights, and that they are human beings, and deserve to be treated as such; and I ask hon. members sitting on the front Treasury bench to calmly consider whether they are doing the right thing—whether they be their supporters or whether they be not—I know that a number of unionists do vote for the Government. What we want to consider is whether it is necessary to stop the industrial warfare that is going on. Every man in this House will say "Yes." How can we best bring that about? The hon. gentleman says by this Bill.

Mr. COYNE: By coercion.

Mr. BOWMAN: Yes, by coercion.

The PREMIER: No. By political freedom.

Mr. BOWMAN: Nothing less than coercion. I saw a placard during the election reading, "Peace and plenty in the home, and the liberty of the people." The hon. gentleman who is leading this Government is doing nothing in the way of liberalising what ought to be liberalised to-day—that is, a progressive industrial law that will settle disputes.

The PREMIER: The most progressive ever submitted to any Parliament.

Mr. BOWMAN: The most tyrannical ever submitted to any Parliament.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: In conclusion, all I can say is that I hope before this Bill is long discussed the Government will see fit to withdraw it, and give us something that, at any rate, savours of fairness. This is not fair; it encroaches upon the liberties of the people more than anything I have yet known. A man can hardly call his soul his own under this particular Bill. A man is simply penalised on the day he enters a union until he dies, if this Bill becomes law, and I think the time has arrived when we should take into consideration the very best steps to bring about a measure that will give the fullest satisfaction. Not merely to the Government who are in greater numbers to-day—they are only a small part in my mind—I say the bulk of the wage earners.

The PREMIER: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: Not only the unionists, but even the non-unionists, will live to curse this Government for introducing such a Bill.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: The hon. gentleman thinks that he is going to introduce this. Let me tell him one thing—that force begets force—

Mr. HODGE: A threat!

Mr. BOWMAN: It is not a threat. The hon. member may take my word 'hat if some hon. members on this side had been inclined to use force during the recent strike

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in Brisbane, it would have taken place. But there are some of us here to-night who took a stand and warned the men against doing anything that would bring them within the pale of the law. I will say this to-night—I have never said it before on the floor of this House—I venture to say that on that Friday, had it not been for the appeal that myself and the hon. member for Warrego made to those thousands of men who were there ready to crush all that came before them, there would have been a riot that day. (Government laughter.) I am not saying that to get any credit for what I have done—I did my duty on that occasion as I have tried to do it every time.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: All I can say is, that when we are discussing this Bill, we should realise that the wage earners of this State have a claim. After all, where would any of the hon. gentlemen opposite be without the efforts of the wage-earners of this State? This is going to affect every man and woman in the State, and it is going to do something more. I think it is a cowardly thing on the part of the Government to introduce a provision that if a man cannot pay he has to go to gaol; and if he does not go to gaol, then they are going to garnishee his wages. What becomes then of the women and children depending on the breadwinner? Does the hon. gentleman then express the sympathy I have heard him express on many occasions in this House, or is it a sham profession that he has been making? According to this I can draw no other conclusion, that the hon. gentleman does not care, so long as he can exercise that power, so long as he can be associated with a Government that has forced this Bill upon the people, which some day before very long will be resented by them. Within the next six months probably there will be a Federal election, and I say to the hon. gentleman, who wants to still have Home Rule for Queensland, if they pass this Bill in its present form they are giving to the Commonwealth Parliament the grandest weapon they ever had to fight and carry their referendum appeal with.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: I, for one, will do my very best to see that carried if this Bill passes through in its entirety. I would advise every union in Queensland to become federated with their fellow unions of Australia, and come under the Federal arbitration law, and discard the rotten law that is sought to be imposed upon this State by the present occupants of the Treasury benches. (Opposition cheers.)

The PREMIER (who was received with Government "Hear, hears!") said: I thought by placing the Bill before the House several days before the second reading was proceeded with, hon. members might get to know the contents of the Bill, and to appreciate its provisions. (Opposition laughter.) After the lucid introductory speech of the Secretary for Public Works, I had confidently hoped that at least something of the Bill would have been understood. The hon. member who has just resumed his seat has no conception whatever of the nature of the contents of the Bill. His remarks have largely been in the nature of a travesty, and to some degree he has dilated on the condi-

tion of affairs in England, which has no parity with the condition of affairs here. The hon. member said that industrial conflicts are not confined to this country, and argued that because that is so, our efforts to avert such conflicts will fail. I hold, on the contrary, that with this Bill on the statute-book of Queensland there will hereafter be little, if any, justification for industrial upheaval—(Opposition laughter)—because we put it entirely in the hands of the employees to discuss the matter of wages, conditions, and hours with their employer. The hon. member has entirely, from first to last, missed the spirit of the Bill. During the Address in Reply, more than once reference was made to this Bill, and it was hoped that it might be in the nature of conciliation and arbitration. The Bill, from start to finish, is nothing other than a conciliation and arbitration measure.

MR. THEODORE: Coercion!

THE PREMIER: Under the Standing Orders, my time is limited to forty minutes, therefore, I cannot traverse all the statements which the hon. member has made, nor do I intend to follow the line taken by the introducer of the Bill in going somewhat into the details thereof, but I want to make clear what is the object of the Government, and how it can be accomplished by the acceptance of this measure. The hon. member has entirely misunderstood it in regard to the penalties, both as applied to the award and to other items. It is in no sense a penal measure. I think that the whole secret of his distress is that he had anticipated a Bill of reprisal, a Bill in which there was "the mailed fist," and that he found there is nothing of reprisal in it; there is no singling out the unionist as he was expecting, though he is distressed because we will not put the unionist upon a pedestal of superiority to the non-unionist. There is the same road of approach open to the unionist as there is to the non-unionist, and the hon. gentleman, in his second-reading speech, has not been able to show, nor when the Bill gets into Committee will he be able to show, that there is anything in the nature of discrimination. I shall show before I sit down that the employer is under the same conditions precisely as the employee.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Not at all.

THE PREMIER: It will suit my purpose better to refer in the proper time and place to the clauses that bear that out, so that I may make the best use of the time at my command. The Bill is truly designated an Industrial Peace Bill.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: Peace at any price.

THE PREMIER: Anyone who will peruse the Bill will see that it has peace—peace that may be secured in the sense expressed by England's greatest poet, when he says—

"A peace is of the nature of a conquest;  
For then both parties nobly are subdued,  
And neither party loser."

The object of the Bill is not peace at any price, but peace with honour, both to employer and employee. The employer and the employee under this Bill have

[9 p.m.] their equal rights, and must recognise mutual obligations. I ask any unprejudiced person to peruse the Bill and to say whether he can come to

any other conclusion than that the whole object and desire of the Government is to secure industrial peace. We have here the principle of conciliation, and in some cases compulsory arbitration, and conducted solely by the interested parties, on the one hand by the employees, who know their business, and on the other hand by the employers, who know their business, meeting round a common table, so as to arrive at what is a fair price, what are fair conditions, and what are reasonable hours. And provision is made that if the award does not give satisfaction, an appeal can be made, not to the Minister, but to an industrial court, equal in every respect to our Supreme Court. And no one yet has been able to say that the Supreme Court of Queensland does not dispense justice, or is in anywise partial. Here we have arbitration and conciliation, under which parties can get an award; and if the award is not appreciated, or is considered to be unfair, there is an appeal. Right through the Bill there is justice and fair play. It makes no distinction amongst the workers; it gives unionists and non-unionists equal claims to go before the board or before the court. The hon. gentleman said I referred to the Bill as being in some degree novel. It is novel in this particular—that we recognise all workers, and not merely the members of unions; that the non-unionist has as free access to the board and the court as the unionist. The important question is, not whether a man is a unionist or a non-unionist, but what is right and what is just. Here we have the open door, not the closed door, not the caucus—the open door to all workers to settle their differences. Just as in our land legislation all men are equal—

MR. FOLEY: The big man has the best chance.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member is as ignorant of our land legislation as he is of this Bill. Everyone knows that when land is thrown open, every person, whether newcomer or old resident, whether rich or poor, has the same chance. And just as it is in our land legislation, as it is in our civil courts, where there is not one law for the rich and another for the poor, so in regard to industrial matters which concern wages, conditions, or hours, we say there shall be the freest and fullest means of having all these matters considered. I thought the hon. gentleman was going to discuss the cause of industrial unrest. He seemed to lead up to it, but he did not deal with it. That is too big a problem for me to deal with in the time at my disposal; but one of the principal causes of that unrest takes its rise in the question of wages or remuneration; and if there is one thing this Bill will accomplish, it will enable the men or the women engaged in any industry to have their claims fully investigated and impartially adjudicated on. There are not a few who have expressed to me their surprise that the Bill makes strikes legal; but how useless it would be for us to say, "Thou shalt not strike!" You can no more compel a man to work than you can compel a capitalist to invest money in any particular form of investment. But we have provided in this Bill that before a strike occurs, fourteen days must elapse, during which time all the workers engaged in the industry—not unionists merely, but all the workers in the industry—a register of them will be kept—will have the opportunity of

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knowing the cause of the trouble, and also the opportunity of declaring whether they will strike or not.

Mr. FOLEY: Who will keep the register?

The PREMIER: There will be a registrar, and there will be a register; but I am not going to discuss that point. In recent years there has been a distinct swing of the pendulum. Even now in the old land they have no industrial legislation such as we have, and such as will be on our statute-book when this Bill is passed. I admit that before the era of industrial legislation, the conditions of labour were particularly hard. For many years the labourers were subjected to a large degree of injustice and, I regret to say, indifference on the part of employers; but now in our Australia, in our Queensland, where we have industrial legislation, and the adult franchise, surely there is no need to rely upon the barbaric method of strikes. The pendulum has swung; and the organisations of labour have attained a position of unexampled power. I may remark that the tyranny of labour is as inimical to the public interest as the tyranny of capital ever was.

Mr. BOWMAN: Or your Government.

The PREMIER: The object of this Bill is to prevent either order of tyranny from reasserting itself. It will enable men to get what is fair and just and right. Anybody who thinks otherwise of this Bill has not realised its contents. Up till recent years the war has been against capital. Now it appears that the war is against society. To remedy the grievance of a few men there are those who would plunge the whole community into turmoil and attack the whole State, and subject the public to inconvenience and intimidation. The leaders—not the rank and file—of the workers are to-day as selfish in their object as ever capital was at its worst. They are now carrying on a class fight; and the short-sightedness of the leaders and their intolerance must recoil upon the workers. The object of this Bill is to protect the workers from that recoil. We are not concerned with the professional agitator and Mr. Walk-about. All we seek here to do is to deal with the worker.

Mr. BOWMAN: Haven't you got some professional walk-about?

The PREMIER: We seek to protect the worker against the short-sightedness and intolerance of his leaders.

Mr. FIDELLY: Like the wolf protecting the lamb.

The PREMIER: The limitations imposed on the workers are equally imposed on the employers. This is what is provided in clause 33—

"If an employer dismisses any employee from his employment by reason merely of the fact that the employee is a member of a board or has given evidence before a board or the court, or has made any application or appeal to the court, or has endeavoured to secure the creation of a board, or is or is not an officer or member of an industrial association, or is entitled to the benefit of an award or of an industrial agreement, he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding fifty pounds.

"If any employee ceases work in the service of an employer by reason

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merely of the fact that the employer or any other employee is a member of a board, or has given evidence before a board or the court, or has made any application or appeal to the court, or has endeavoured to secure the creation of a board, or is or is not a member or officer of an industrial association, or is entitled to the benefit of an award or of an industrial agreement, he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding ten pounds."

Then it is proposed in the next clause that no person shall be discriminated against on account of his membership or non-membership of any industrial association—

"No person shall be refused employment or in any way discriminated against on account of membership or non-membership of any industrial association.

"No person who is an employer or employee shall be discriminated against or injured or interfered with in any way whatsoever on account of membership or non-membership of any industrial association."

Mr. THEODORE: Protection to scabs.

The PREMIER: The object is to see perfect fair play as between employer and employee, and as between unionist and non-unionist. Every man can please himself whether he will work or not, but it does not follow that the law will sanction men combining to bring about a cessation of work, or what is known as an organised stop. During the past few months the magazines have been largely occupied in discussing industrial problems.

Mr. FIDELLY: Have you read all that has been said in the magazines about strikes?

The PREMIER: The point I want to make was put thus in one magazine—

"A baker may refuse to sell me bread, but if all bakers similarly act, I should starve, and the State must protect me against such an outbreak."

What may be permissible in the case of a solitary individual or in the case of a solitary institution is criminal when done in combination. We can imagine cases in which partisans, not satisfied with the conditions under which they find themselves, strike; but because a blacksmith strikes it does not follow that the carpenter should also strike. There must be found a way out of the difficulty in regard to industrial conditions, and my contention is that this Bill provides fully and amply that way out. The hon. member opposite, during the course of his remarks, referred to the Trade Disputes Bill and also to the condition of affairs in Great Britain. I think his reference was rather unfortunate. During the last few weeks we have been noting the cablegrams coming through, and if the free use of weapons—even of pistols and of batons—be the outcome of peaceful picketing, which is such a prominent part of the Trade Disputes Bill—then I say we do not want that kind of thing introduced into this State.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The object of peaceful picketing is to enable men to prevent other men from taking employment. It will be seen that the notion of some people is that nobody should be permitted to take the place of the man who strikes. "If we cannot get

our own way, then nobody else shall do the work." In this Bill we place at the command of workers an industrial court with a judge. What does he do?

Mr. BOWMAN: Who is he to be?

Mr. FIHELLY: Some good servant.

Mr. FORSYTH: The hon. member for Barcoo, I expect. (Laughter.)

The PREMIER: This is what the judge may do—

"The judge may act as a mediator in any industrial matter or industrial dispute, whether or not it is within the jurisdiction of the court, in all cases in which it appears to him that his mediation is desirable in the public interest."

He is to act as a mediator, even if a matter is out of the jurisdiction of the court—

"The judge may, whenever in his opinion it is desirable for the purpose of preventing or settling an industrial dispute, summon any person to attend, at a time and place specified in the summons, at a conference presided over by himself.

"Any person may be so summoned, notwithstanding that he is not connected with the dispute, if the judge thinks that such person's presence at the conference is likely to conduce to the prevention or settlement of the dispute."

Everything that can reasonably be done to bring men together is sought to be done. Then, what happens on appeal? That is set forth in clause 44—

"The court or any board, in the exercise of any jurisdiction, duty, power, or function conferred or imposed upon it, shall be governed in its procedure and in its awards and decisions by equity, good conscience, and the substantial merits of the case, without regard to technicalities or legal forms or the practice of other courts; and

"The court or any board, in the exercise of any such jurisdiction, duty, power, or function, shall not be bound by any rules or practice as to evidence, but may inform its mind on any matter in such manner as it thinks just."

Everything is done to secure an equitable adjustment and to bring the parties together on fair lines. If men refuse to accept the terms which the court—not the employer—has said are fair, and which the court has said are all that the industry can afford to pay, and if there are other men who are willing to take up the work, is there any valid reason why they should not take it? Is there any common sense or any justice in forbidding them so to do? This Bill, I emphatically repeat, is explicitly for the worker. It places in the hands of the worker the control of his own affairs. We have here full conciliation and full arbitration, and complete protection for both employer and employee.

Mr. BOWMAN: Why did you exclude Government employees? Will you tell us that?

The PREMIER: Yes; I will tell you that. It is because they have, it may be said, in the Parliament itself a good wages court. They have in Parliament a court which can look after them and see that they get justice.

Mr. FIHELLY: Why don't you give them a minimum wage?

Mr. HARDACRE: Why do you allow non-unionists to vote in the ballot?

The PREMIER: The whole industrial life of the community cannot be subject to the caprices of any section of the community. There are provisions made with regard to public utilities. They will be found in clause 35.

Mr. RYAN: The Brisbane tramways comes under that.

The PREMIER: Some occupations have more pressing connections with the public than others have. For instance, it may be said that the leg is more important to the individual than the arm, or that the cylinder is more important to the locomotive than the spokes of the wheel. Some industries are more vital to the community than others, hence special provision is made in regard to them. Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that the intervention which this Bill provides fails, and that the men are dissatisfied and will not work, and decide to go on strike. Are we to be deprived of our public utilities? Is the community to be starved? Are we to go without light? Are we to be deprived of fuel? If portion of a machine breaks down at once seek to repair it. If the driving-rod of a locomotive breaks, we at once put in another driving-rod, and the machine goes about its work. Is the machinery of the industrial world to have no replacement? Anyone who seeks to restore the services to the industrial world is called opprobrious names. Industrial life is far more complex than a machine, yet while we may replace a broken part of a machine it is said by some that we must not replace portion of an industrial machine. I say once more that we cannot say to the men, or to any section of men, "You shall not strike," but we do say, "Before you strike you must exhaust all reasonable means to effect a settlement, then if you will not accept the conditions and hours but quit work, then there is no reason why others should not be taken on to fill your places." (Hear, hear!) Men are often dissatisfied with the finding of a court, and they appeal from the Supreme Court to the Full Court. They are sometimes dissatisfied still, and appeal to the High Court; and, when the finding is arrived at, they are still dissatisfied, but they have to accept that finding. What do we seek to do here? We seek to provide every reasonable and practicable means of coming to a sound conclusion. First of all, the principle of wages boards is continued or renewed, so that the employer and employee may discuss in a quiet and business-like manner all the matters incidental to their trade. Then, if either party is dissatisfied, there is the opportunity to appeal. I think when that is done, that it will be found that practically all our difficulties may be adjusted and settled. The whole principle of the Bill is that equity and common sense should prevail, and that all men, no matter whether they belong to an organisation or not, shall be consulted before a strike or industrial upheaval takes place. It is most deplorable that our community should at any moment be liable to disruption. Is there no way out? I say that there is, and I believe that this Bill provides a

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full and ample way of getting out of our difficulties. If there is no alternative to strikes on the one hand and lockouts on the other, if there is no recognised legal and peaceful way of solving our industrial problems, then the State may as well resign its authority. But it is because we want to maintain parliamentary rule, and it is because we desire to see the industries of the State progress, and because we desire to protect the workers of the State, that we are bringing this Bill before the country, and, in my opinion, it will do all that we are hopeful it will accomplish. It is a Bill to secure for the employee and employer a complete *modus operandi*, and it vindicates the authority of Parliament and the State. It is our desire to break down antagonism. It is our desire to bring about an identity of interests between various sections of the community.

Mr. BOWMAN: You will never do it with this Bill.

The PREMIER: It is a fair thing we are seeking to do in this Bill. We do not want anyone to profit by another's misfortunes. What can an industry bear? The parties are called upon to confer, and they can decide for themselves exactly what they desire to do. If the interested parties are dissatisfied, then they can refer to the industrial court. Industrial peace is begotten more or less of forbearance. There must be some spirit of forbearance. I do not say by any means that this Bill is the last say in industrial law, but it is a great step forward in industrial law.

Mr. BOWMAN: It is a most backward step.

The PREMIER: I think this Bill will accomplish its purpose. It will bring about security in employment and ensure a reasonable return for the capital invested. The workman is worthy of his hire, and a good day's work for a good day's pay is a principle that we want to see adopted and carried out, and it is provided for in this Bill.

Mr. BOWMAN: Why don't you apply that to rural workers?

The PREMIER: Any man or woman, whether unionist or non-unionist, can secure a recognition of his or her claims equally. Unions have undoubtedly served a good purpose, and will still continue to serve a good purpose. This Bill is not levelled at unions. It is not necessary in order to get justice under this Bill to be a member of a union. So long as a man is a worker, when this Bill becomes statutory law, he will be able to get that full measure of justice which every British subject should get in a free country like Australia.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: Instead of people being in armed camps—instead of employers on the one hand and employees on the other hand being in armed camps, their only methods being to bring about the destruction of one or the other, we aim at the inception of true profit-sharing and the principle of mutual co-operation. How is it to be brought about? By the employer paying the employee as much as the industry will bear. It is folly to ask him to pay more. How is it that to-day so much goods are being imported into Australia? Because in other parts of the world they are able to produce those goods at a much lower rate. Either

something must be done—either the tariff must go up—and perhaps that may not be a bad thing—or there will be a continued introduction into the State of increasing quantities of goods, if the wages paid here do not bear some relation to the price obtainable for the article produced.

Mr. FITHELLY: It is because of this Industrial Peace Bill.

The PREMIER: I say by the introduction of this Bill we are making it possible for the two great parties—the employers and the employees—to mutually co-operate [9.30 p.m.] and to so have wages fixed that the employees shall get a fair portion of the profits. I honestly hope and desire that they may get it, and this Bill simply lays down a principle under which they may get it, and the employer also shall have protection, in that there shall not be prescribed conditions which the industry cannot afford.

Mr. FOLEY: That is your new protection.

The PREMIER: To digress on new protection would be rather a serious proposition just at the present moment. I do wish to see a wage paid absolutely in every producing industry and in every manufacturing industry that can be paid by such industry. There is no reason in the world—and this Bill safely guards against it—why an employer, or man who invests his capital in any industry, shall get from that industry more than he is entitled to get; and we provide here that the employee may discuss the whole proposition with the employer, and secure to himself that which he is justly entitled to. I know quite well—I know the principal reason why hon. members opposite are so antagonistic to this Bill. It is because we are dealing with all workers.

Mr. BOWMAN: It is not.

The PREMIER: It is because we are making it possible for all workers to get justice for themselves without having the intervention of the union secretary or any other union official. All the worker need do now is to apply for a wages board, and that board will be granted to him, and without the intervention of the union secretary or any other person who exists through the imposition of tithes or fees, he will be able to get all the justice that the law of this land can give unto him. Here we have the means of providing adequate and full compensation for every man employed in every industry.

Mr. FITHELLY: Except public servants.

The PREMIER: If this Bill becomes statute law, the industrial worker will go marching along the national highway of prosperity, progress, and peace. (Government cheers.)

Mr. THEODORE: After having been accustomed to the usual perfervid oratory of the hon. gentleman who has just resumed his seat, it is somewhat disappointing to hear his rambling and disjointed utterances on the present Bill. It seems to me that the hon. gentleman recognised that he has a very poor case indeed at the present time, and he finds the greatest difficulty in justifying himself or his Government in introducing this piece of legislation. It seems to me, for the last half-hour at least, the hon. gentleman has been stringing on his speech, and

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floundering for arguments which were not available. At one stage of his speech the Premier said that, in his opinion, the Bill was wisely designated. Let me remark that I consider the title of the Bill an attempt at irony. The title of the Bill is entirely a misnomer. The Bill cannot produce peace. It has, in fact, in itself elements which will be a constant menace to industrial peace, and will, in itself, provide material for prolonged industrial dissatisfaction. The Premier said there was no intention on the part of the Government to show unfair discrimination in the matter so far as persons will be concerned who come under the jurisdiction of the Bill. To my mind, and to the minds of all unionists, I think this Bill is evidence of an attempt to show the most partisan discrimination against unionists. The whole object of the Bill—if one can arrive at the true purport of the Bill—the whole object of the Bill seems to me to aim at industrial unions, and is an attempt to crush the power of industrial unions. There has not been wanting evidence of the attitude of the Government party towards unionism. Whenever they have had an opportunity of showing their true relationship to industrial unions, we have had a demonstration of bitter hostility to that movement. The Premier said that peace was in the nature of a conquest. Perhaps he was thinking of the lines of Byron, in one of whose poems are the words—

“Mark! Where his carnage and his conquest cease

He makes a solitude and calls it peace.”

Is that not entirely applicable to this Bill? The hon. gentleman responsible for its introduction desires to create peace. He is going to do it by annihilating the unions. He may create peace. He may accomplish that which has not been accomplished in any civilised part of the world, and bring about industrial peace, but will it be a peace that is desirable? Will it be a state of things of which we shall be proud? I maintain, if peace is brought about in the way the hon. gentleman desires, it will be a dishonourable peace, and something of which we will not be proud. Let me emphasise that this is an attempt on the one side of unjust interference with a very great industrial problem at the present time. I would not mind if the Government were inspired with an honest desire to bring about better relations between the employer and the employee; but the provisions of this Bill indicate that there is no such desire actuating them. They merely desire to give the employer a better opportunity of suppressing anything in the nature of discontent, and, whilst there remains unsatisfactory conditions, whilst there remains unadjusted grievances and harsh conditions in connection with employment, always will there be dissatisfaction, and it is a dissatisfaction that should exist while these bad conditions remain. The Government realise that these conditions do exist. The bottom of all the industrial unrest in the world to-day can be found in the fact that the conditions of the employees are not what they should be. Whilst we recognise that, and whilst it is absolutely irrefutable, the Premier and the Government seem to think the only thing necessary is to give the employers sufficient power to prevent the employees getting a fair deal, and to penalise them heavily if they seek to depart from the drastic laws which they impose. I should like to call

the attention of the Secretary for Public works to the spiritual injunction which says—

“Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn.”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You want to prevent the other ox from treading out the corn.

Mr. THEODORE: I think the other ox is mostly an ass. A statement was made by the Premier, which called for an interjection about the injunction that “Thou shalt not steal.” I may say at the time I recollected the statement of the late Thomas Carlyle, where he said that he would ask the workers to always remember the injunction, “Thou shalt not steal,” but at the same time never to forget its corollary—thou shalt not be stolen from. In this Bill the Government are going to put it in the power of the employers to enable employees to be stolen from, without giving them any power to resist that encroachment. Although there is here the skeleton of a measure providing for arbitration, the conciliatory provisions are being used just merely as a pretext, to my mind, to crush unionism. How else can they explain the provision in the Bill which prevents industrial boards, or industrial courts, from having any regard whatever to the victimisation of unionists? How else can they explain the prohibition, as far as the court is concerned, from having any regard for preference to unionists? The hon. gentleman knows that in certain trades and industries both employer and employee desire that there shall be a rule prescribing preference to unionists. Some employers desire it; almost always the employees desire it; yet in the Bill there is a tacit prohibition against the board from prescribing anything in the nature of preference to unionists.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No; we say all men should have equal opportunities.

Mr. THEODORE: There is a provision in the Bill which is a distinct departure from anything in force in any part of the world; it allows an industrial court to deal with all kinds of matters except the two I have mentioned—the question of safeguarding the interests of the worker so far as victimisation of unionists is concerned, and the question of prohibiting boards from granting preference, even though preference may be highly desired. Those two things demonstrate my contention that the Bill is aimed at industrial organisation. The statement of the Premier that there is no unfair discrimination, that penalties are imposed on the employer as well as the employee, carried no weight with me, for the reason that they will never catch the employer, even though he may most flagrantly break the conditions of the Bill. He has all sorts of devices in which to escape any punishment that may be provided; and whilst we have such a Government as we have now sitting on the Treasury benches, there will never be any action taken against the employers to enforce the penal clauses of this Industrial Peace Bill. The Hon. the Premier talks about the tyranny of labour. That is merely an empty phrase. There are certain individual cases wherein certain persons who may be employees do something in the nature of an act of violence against someone else, but how that can be construed into an act of tyranny on the part of organised labour, only the im-

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agination of the hon. gentleman could explain. As the right of organisation is attacked by this Bill, and as there is an evident desire on the part of the Government to carry this into force, in order that strikes may be entirely prevented in future, I desire to touch, if somewhat briefly, upon the question of strikes in the past, and upon the question of their justification. In the meantime, I want to quote from an article appearing in a recent number of the *World's Work*, by Humphrey Edwards, dealing with the question of trades unions and the justification of their existence. He says—

“The trade union is generally described as having started life as an organisation purely economic. The theory of the early nineteenth century had laid it down, with callous brutality which seems now beyond anyone's belief, that a working man had his labour to sell, and that it was desirable for employers to be left free to buy this commodity as cheaply as was possible. If the Government interfered in this process it was guilty of economic heresy; if the workers combined to resist it, they were rightly punished for unlawful conspiracy. Whatever wage a man could be induced by the miseries of hunger to accept from a cold-blooded employer, that wage was right and proper.”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: But did he not say something more than that?

Mr. THEODORE: He said something more than that, and if the hon. gentleman can use what else he has said to bolster up his argument he is at liberty to do so; but so far as that particular argument is concerned he will find nothing that will suit his case.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Yes, I will.

Mr. THEODORE: The matter that Humphrey Edwards refers to there, and the prevailing opinions in the nineteenth century, so far as unions were concerned—the question of the right to buy labour commodity in the open market—are the principles which are evidently inspiring the present Government, and which underlie this measure, and the recognition of the principle that whatever the miseries of hunger will induce the workers to do, should be done without any question as to its right. Unions may be described as voluntary associations of working men, banded together for mutual protection and for the purpose of getting the most favourable conditions of employment, and I maintain that those are two legitimate objects. Unionism set out to accomplish this end by various means. The two leading methods are those described as direct action and as political action. Both those are perfectly legitimate, though the members of the Government party never admit it; they never admit the right of unions to secure their object through political action. Regarding strikes, my personal opinion is, that in past years in Queensland, and in most countries of the world, strikes have been highly beneficial. By means of strikes great improvements in the conditions of employment have often been accomplished. I do not say that strikes have been always successful, but what they have not secured by battle, unions very frequently secured by the threat of battle, both tacit and im-

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plied; and because there has been no industrial legislation which made the relationship between employers and employees of such a nature that they could agree to conciliate and redress grievances, strikes have been necessary in past years, as they will be necessary in future years, if we have nothing better than the Bill which is offered us. In my opinion, strikes are necessary to the times in which we live. The conditions of employment are bad, and for some years past there has been a tendency for the cost of living to increase, making the purchasing power of wages smaller than it was previously; therefore, there has been an agitation for increased wages to compensate for the increased cost of living, and there has been a tendency to resist that upward movement. Unions never act so unwisely or precipitately as the Premier, or the members of the Ministry, would lead us to believe on the question of strikes. Every circumstance bearing on the question at issue is always thoroughly investigated by the unions, and they have also regard to the effect on the community of such action. I am speaking as one who has had considerable experience of strikes as a union official; and I may say that these are things that are discussed before a strike is entered upon. They consider, first of all, what are the resources of the union to carry on the action they contemplate. They consider also the unanimity or otherwise among the members of the union; the state of the labour market, particularly in their own industry; what is the public opinion on the question at issue—a matter that is never overlooked; also the possibility of failure or of success in the action they contemplate. These considerations are carefully weighed, and subsequent action decided accordingly. While we have faith in our compatriots, we can rely on them not to take action that would result in the terrible evil some people seem to think would be brought about if this Bill is not passed. We can always rely upon the common sense of working men to do the fair thing; and while they have to come into conflict with employers we should not cripple their powers of defence, but allow things to go on in the present way, unless we can have some measure which will not unfairly give the advantage to one side to the dispute.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: This Bill still gives them that privilege.

Mr. THEODORE: According to my reading of the Bill, any industry except those specially exempt, such as the rural industries, can be brought under the jurisdiction of the Bill by the mere application of one employer, or the intervention of the Minister or the registrar; and once an award is made, they are bound by heavy penalties to abide by the award. If they persist in adopting some other attitude, there may be an injunction, and the most drastic penalties, including imprisonment, may be imposed. Now I want to refer to a matter that was touched on by the Secretary for Works—namely, the cost of strikes and the heavy losses involved. While it may be conceded that the cost of strikes often amounts to a considerable sum, particularly if the struggle is a long one, an estimate of the cost is of no value unless we also take into account the benefits that accrue from strikes. Workers do not incur great losses by striking without the hope of getting some corresponding advantage; and almost in all cases

they do get that advantage in the shape of increased wages, reduced hours of labour, and the betterment of the conditions of labour.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Apparently you are a great believer in strikes.

Mr. THEODORE: I have been for many years; and until we get something better than the hon. member offers I shall continue to believe in strikes. On the question of strikes I desire to quote from a work entitled "Conflicts of Capital and Labour," written by Mr. George Howell, a well-known authority on the trade union movement. He says—

"There is, in fact, absolutely no comparison between the cost in pounds sterling and the gain, material and moral, which has accrued to the working classes from some of those labour struggles, comprehended in the term 'strikes.' The whole question resolves itself into one of sociological statics and dynamics. The full value of this or that force or movement must be estimated, if at all, by results which are not seen, and therefore cannot be calculated, and not merely by those partially seen, even by the closest observers."

The Hon. the Secretary for Public Works goes on one-sided investigations and partial reports regarding the cost of strikes from inspectors under the Factories and Shops Act, and uses them as an argument why we should have this Bill which will repress strikes. Who can estimate the value to the men of the strikes that have taken place in the mining industry, the sugar industry, and on railway construction works in this State during the last four years?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Do you include the Brisbane strike?

Mr. THEODORE: The advantages even in the case of the Brisbane strike may prove to be very great. The hon. gentleman has at different times shown great solicitude on behalf of the women and children. "I pity the poor women and children of the strikers," he said. What member is there who does not pity the poor women and children if they labour under adverse circumstances? Who pities them more than the worker himself? Does the hon. gentleman, with his smug hypocrisy, think he pities them more than we do? The women are just as brave as the men; and the women supply the greatest encouragement to the men in times of industrial conflict: and it is often because of the attitude of the women that the men are encouraged to stand out as long as they do. This writer, speaking on the same question, says—

"There is, however, another phase in connection with strikes, which will help to throw a light on what has been before stated—it is, that the women are often as unbending as their husbands, and as cheerfully share the poverty and misery entailed upon them, if they are persuaded that the men are in the right. Many a wavering man has been strengthened in his resolution to 'stand out,' by the sympathy of his wife. She will work, rather than he shall desert his colours and give way. The writer is

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not drawing on his imagination for these statements; they are veritable facts, attested by the experience of thousands of men, who have gone through the terrible ordeal of a long strike or lock-out."

Mr. FIDELLY: Have you got a penalty for the wives, too?

Mr. THEODORE: I need only refer hon. members to the bravery and fortitude and the noble feeling displayed by the women of Tonypandy, in Wales. Had it not been for the women, who undoubtedly themselves

suffered the greatest hardships [10 p.m.] during the prolonged strike that took place there, and had it not been for the encouragement they gave their husbands to remain loyal to their principles, that strike would not have been so prolonged as it was, nor would the men have put up such a great fight. The workers always have to fight for every advantage they have gained. They have never gained an advantage without putting up a fight, nor will they in the future. But, apparently, the Government desire to cripple their power to fight, in order that they may prevent them gaining the advantages to which they are entitled. It has been said in this Chamber that, despite unions, wages would have been as high as they now are, and those are the principles upon which the party opposite act—that unions are unnecessary. If there were anything at all in the argument, why on earth are they taking up this attitude of hostility to unions? The Premier made some references to picketing in England, and it is not the first time the hon. gentleman made such references. He also made some sneering references to our advocacy of a Trade Disputes Act, or some provision for embodiment in such a Bill as we have here for the protection of trade union funds and trade unions. He said that after the experience of England in these matters it was not likely they will do what we desire in regard to these matters. There is a great deal of misunderstanding in regard to peaceful picketing. It seems to be believed by a great number of people outside—I do not think that Ministers deceive themselves upon the matter—that this action on the part of unions, which is termed picketing, is a kind of desperate coercion. This misunderstanding has, no doubt, been created by the distorted reports of the doings of unionists by the newspapers. Picketing is the means adopted by unionists during an industrial conflict, whether it be a strike or a lockout, by which the unions inform strangers who may be applicants for work in the industry affected of the circumstances of the case, and of the particulars of the dispute, and so on.

The TREASURER: I am very glad you said, "and so on." It embraces a great deal.

Mr. THEODORE: The interjection of the hon. gentleman shows me that he also is ignorant upon the question. When a dispute occurs, the union concerned desires to acquaint all and sundry, who are likely to be applying for work at the place where the strike has taken place, of the facts, and pickets are told off to watch the works. Those pickets consist chiefly of men who have been at work in the particular place they have been set to picket. They inform all strangers looking for work of the particulars of the strike and of the issues that

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are involved, and the question of terrorism or the question of violence is the very last thing that enters their thoughts.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They are perfect angels.

Mr. THEODORE: They do not claim to be perfect angels, but it is because of the misrepresentations of men like the hon. gentleman and of the newspapers that people are led to believe that pickets are animated with a desire to intimidate and coerce and terrorise those who are seeking work. Nothing of the sort.

Mr. WILLIAMS: You said yourself it was the last resort.

Mr. THEODORE: I did not say it was the last resort. The hon. member may attempt to distort what I said, but if he can justify his attitude with regard to this Bill, he will probably do something which nobody else will be able to do. The Government desire to restrict the rights of workers in regard to picketing; but what is their attitude with regard to picketing by employers, who frequently adopt methods which are despicable, and a hundred times more objectionable than the actions performed by unionists? The chief objection to picketing of those who oppose it is that they suppose it gives the power to men to prevent workers from securing work, or from remaining at work when they have secured it. Now, do employers never do anything of that kind? Do they not frequently blacklist men because they are unionists? Do they not victimise them, and hunt them entirely out of the district? Do they not follow them from place to place and prevent them getting work? If a man makes himself prominent in a union, do they not pursue him relentlessly and prevent him from obtaining work, and very often force him into a position of absolute starvation?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: And do not unionists do the same thing?

Mr. THEODORE: No; they do not. There have, no doubt, been acts of violence and differences of opinion between workers, but those are not the actions of industrial unions. There are unions which adopt the most despicable methods and pursue relentlessly their members if they break their rules. One of those unions is the union to which the hon. gentleman belongs. (Opposition laughter.) There have been scores of men at Gympie, Charters Towers, and Mount Morgan, who have been driven from the places where they have resided for many years because their views on unionism did not coincide with the views of their employers. And yet we hear this outcry against picketing. Have hon. members never heard of what is called the "document system"? Have they never heard of the system which enables employers to get their employees to sign a document declaring hostility to unionism, and if they do anything against the interests of their employers, do they not pursue the worker to any part of the State? We know that something of that nature was done recently in Brisbane in connection with the tramway employees. I will quote again from Howell's book on "Capital and Labour," and we shall see how apposite his remarks are to what

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recently occurred in Brisbane in connection with the tramway employees. Howell says—

"The attempt made by employers to introduce what is termed the 'document system' was an effort to systematise, and render permanent and universal, the power to follow a workman from place to place, to set the mark of Cain upon him, and to reduce him to slavery or to beggary. The 'document' drawn up by the employers required their workmen to sign a declaration to the effect that they were not members of, and would not join, any trade union; and that if they were, they would cease all connection with it, and would not contribute towards the furtherance of any of the objects of such trade union. This document was numbered, and the counterfoil contained a corresponding number, together with the name and description of the workman. When he was discharged, or left his employment, the name was sent round to other employers in the trade, with a statement of the reasons for which he was discharged or left his work."

That system, pernicious as it is, and pernicious as it must ever be, is adopted in Brisbane.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You have not quoted an instance yet.

Mr. THEODORE: The hon. gentleman knows quite well what happened at the inquiry court in Brisbane last Monday week. On Monday week last, the employees of the Tramways Company were asked to sign a document declaring that they were either not members of a union, or, if they were members of a union, that they would immediately cease to be members of a union, and that they would not afterwards join a union. That document contained a signature, and no doubt some reference number which may be used as an instrument against the member who signed it. We know that in connection with the pastoral industry this system was adopted and carried into force for years, and it was nothing but the strength of the Australian Workers' Union that broke down that pernicious practice. Yet they ask us to agree with them in their hostility to peaceful picketing—a system of peaceful persuasion which is adopted by men to persuade workers not to accept employment while a strike is going on. And we saw a member of the Ministry, who was interested as an employer, who took a great partisan interest in connection with the sugar strike of last year.

The TREASURER: That is not correct.

Mr. THEODORE: If anyone looks at what happened, they will see that it is correct. The hon. gentleman who interjects was a nominal employer in the sugar industry and was a party to that strike, but what did he do in connection with the demands made by the men? I understand, Mr. Speaker, that you are indicating that my time has expired. I do not think that I have quite exhausted my time.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member has exceeded the time allowed him by the Standing Orders.

Mr. THEODORE: I regret that, Mr. Speaker, because I have several other references to make, and I would like to ask for an extension of time to complete what I have to say on the matter.

Question—That the hon. member for Chil-lagoe be granted an extension of time—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 23.

Mr. Adamson	Mr. Land
" Barber	" Larcombe
" Bertram	" Lennon
" Bowman	" May
" Coyne	" McCormack
" Fihelly	" Murphy
" Foley	" O'Sullivan
" Gillies	" Payne
" Hardacre	" Ryan
" Hunter	" Theodore
" Huxham	" Winstanley
" Kirwan	
Tellers: Mr. Fihelly and Mr. Kirwan.	

NOES, 32.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Mackintosh
" Barnes, G. P.	" Macrossan
" Barnes, W. H.	" Morgan
" Bebbington	" Paget
" Booker	" Petrie
" Bridges	" Rankin
" Caine	" Roberts
" Corser, B. H.	" Stevens
" Corser, E. B. C.	" Swayne
" Denham	" Tolmie
" Douglas	" Trout
" Gunn	" Vowles
" Hodge	" Welsby
" Luke	" White
" Macartney	" Wienholt
" Mackay	" Williams
Tellers: Mr. Caine and Mr. Macrossan.	

PAIR.

Aye—Mr. Gilday. No—Mr. Cribb.

Resolved in the negative.

Mr. ADAMSON (*Rockhampton*): Before I go on to discuss this Bill I should like to say a word or two in reply to something that has been said by the Premier. The Premier made us clearly understand, just before he sat down, that the object of this Bill is to kill the union secretaries, to kill the paid agitator, and I just wish to say that the men who, in the past, in British industrial history, have done the most for the working men, and to-day are filling some of the highest positions in the British House of Commons, were paid secretaries. Thomas Burt, who is perhaps the oldest member of the House of Commons to-day, was a paid secretary. Henry Broadhurst was also a paid secretary. The reason, in my opinion, why the Government are so strong against the paid secretary is because he is able, in an intelligent way, to put the case for the unionists. They do not want them. They want someone in those courts representing the unions who are not able or who are afraid sometimes to take the stand they ought to take.

Mr. BOWMAN: Mr. John Burns was a paid secretary.

Mr. ADAMSON: Yes, John Burns was a paid secretary, and he is now a Cabinet Minister. There is another thing I want to refer to before I commence to speak about the Bill, and that is the fact that the Hon. the Treasurer made so much about the cost of the Brisbane strike. All strikes are costly,

and they are costly to no one so much perhaps as to the unionists—to the strikers. When you begin to talk about liberty; when you begin to think about the rights of humanity to higher and better conditions, whatever price is paid, it is cheap if you are going to get increased opportunities of bettering the conditions for humanity in the future. I say the Brisbane strike was a strike for the right to combine, the right to be a unionist, and whatever hon. members on the other side of the House may say, in this Bill there is a deliberate and set purpose to do what they can to disintegrate the unions and do away with unionism if possible. I would like to say that I am thoroughly disappointed with the Bill. I expected the Government would take a wider, a juster, and a more generous and a more humane view of the cause of industrial unrest in the world to-day. I thought they would not allow the prejudices born of the recent upheaval in Brisbane to warp their mind and blind their judgment, and make them take as a remedy for this unrest one of the most drastic measures that has ever been sought to be placed on any statute-book in the world. It appears to me that they have learned nothing at all. They have remembered everything that they ought to have forgotten, and they have forgotten everything that they ought to have remembered. They have learned nothing at all from the industrial history of the past, and they have allowed a local dispute, which they magnified beyond all proper proportions, to blind them to what is going on in other parts of the world. I want to read something from the *English Review*, which tells us what is taking place in the other parts of the world, and I am going to quote something about syndicalism, the bogey they are raising now in place of socialism, the bogey the *Courier* is making so much of, while anyone who reads the latest reviews must know that the best thinkers, both in Europe and America, are realising that in syndicalism there is some hope of settling industrial unrest.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: What does Ramsay Macdonald say about it?

Mr. ADAMSON: Ramsay Macdonald does not condemn syndicalism on the whole. However, I will leave Ramsay Macdonald alone for the present. This is what the *English Review* says—

“The gist of syndicalist theories and action lies in their dogma. The social revolution is a practical problem. It is a practical problem, and a vast practical work, which changes men and institutions, succeeding in proportion as men and institutions change nationally and internationally. For though some organisations of workers may be more advanced than others, though some may even begin to put their powers in motion, the syndicalists claim that the movement will realise itself completely only when it becomes international and universal.

“Accordingly, they endeavour to make their work international. They have a practical programme; first, to secure national industrial unionism, the amalgamations of trade unions into industrial bodies capable of taking action at all points of an industry; secondly, to bring into closer relations the different industrial organisations of every country, and

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at the same time to bring about an international affiliation and co-operation.

"Then there are the open fights, through which, whether they win or lose, the workers learn their powers and their shortcomings, and how to extend or counteract them.

"Out of all this intense continuous activity comes the formulation of the syndicalist theory of social progress: that the world of the future is for the workers, and that to prepare for this future world the workers must organise themselves into harmonious, compact, professionally conscious unions, individually increasing their technical knowledge and efficiency, collectively fitting themselves for the successful arrangement of their industries. They maintain that the problems of social evolution reduce themselves to problems of organisation; that progress does not operate independently of man's will but is created by virtue of his conscious desires and organised action. According to the syndicalist, progress towards his ideal society will only be realised by the organised will of the working class."

And yet here is a Government who pretend to be an intelligent Government setting themselves against legitimate unionism, and trying to penalise every man who seems to be a unionist, and seems to work in a true way for the uplifting of his fellows. There is another thing I want to say, and it is this: This Bill simply deals with the incidental and the external causes of labour disputes. It never gets down to the real, the internal, and the principal causes of the labour unrest of to-day, and so the remedies which it brings forward to remedy this unrest are altogether inadequate and altogether unjust. Here again I want to quote from this article in the *English Review*, and I particularly ask the hon. member for Drayton to note what is said here, because here is the salvation of the farmer; not in the middleman whom he backs up so much. Here is the salvation of the farmer—

"In agriculture, the basic industry of Italy, the same factors are at work on a much larger scale. Here some 200,000 acres have passed into the hands of the farm labourers organised into unions and co-operative societies. Through industrial organisations and socialist education the agricultural labourers acquired the power, the technical capacity, and the moral energy to fight for, obtain, and run their industry. They do not, however, own their lands themselves, but lease them from the landowner.

"The land owners were confronted, and are still confronted, by a situation from which there seems no other peaceful way out than the leasing of the fields to the co-operative societies of the labourers. The labourers, having through their unions obtained in many localities practically a monopoly of farm labour, struck for higher wages and shorter working hours. The land owners, on the one hand, claimed that the profits from farming would not allow this increase in the cost of production; and the unions, on the other hand, insisted, and indeed proved with exact figures, that the granting of their demands would

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not necessarily impair the profits of the land owners. After many prolonged strikes and boycotts the contending parties finally came to the following settlement:—

"The unions of the labourers legally organised themselves into co-operative societies, and leased the farms from the landowners on the same terms that had been usually agreed between landowners and the tenant farmers. These co-operatives, now leasing a couple of hundred thousand acres, have not only satisfied the landowners by prompt payment of rent, but have so improved the land that the landlords, after the expiration of the first leases with the co-operatives, have usually been glad to renew them.

"Space does not allow to go into the details of the working of this system. Its chief features are as follows:—The land owners are protected from strikes; they are getting their former average income, and at the same time their farms are being technically improved—therefore, growing in value. The workers have a greater control over their own industry, and so their desires are satisfied. They are responsible for the management of the farm, but at the same time the results of their efforts to produce more efficiently are entirely their own.

"They are also in a position to regulate employment, since they are not looking for dividends; they can, and actually do, eliminate the former brutal sacrificing of the unemployed, of the old and less fit workers, by organising work so as to give employment to all of the union, and in many cases even to the non-union workers. Thus, under this system, a high principle of solidarity is realised through the moral force of collective control necessarily obtaining in an organisation with so wide a scope, the workers become alive to the problems of industry, and hence become more efficient, and they educate themselves to active solidarity by obliging themselves to work more intensively in the interests of their fellow-workers."

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Why don't you work it as we have done?

Mr. ADAMSON: In the smallest country in the world, in America, in Great Britain, in France, in Germany, this co-operative principle in unionism which is known as syndicalism, and which is hated by some members opposite because of that name, because they always try to put the worst things of syndicalism before the people—this co-operative unionism is going to solve the industrial unrest. If the Secretary for Agriculture thinks this Bill will solve the labour unrest in the world to-day, like others, he will find he has made a very big mistake. A better title for this Bill would be "The Industrial Strife Bill," or "The Unionist Assassination Bill."

It would seem that the Government [10.30 p.m.]ment have a set purpose to destroy free unionism, and to promote false and servile unionism. The Government are up against preference to unionists, but this Bill proclaims preference to non-unionists.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Oh, no; justice to all.

Mr. ADAMSON: I have read the Bill as carefully as the hon. member, and I have come to the conclusion that it has been born of hatred to unionism, and is intended to destroy unionism. Clause 34 may well be called the non-unionist's protection clause, or the servile unionist's protection clause. I do not think that in any similar Bill in the world to-day could be found a clause like that. In my opinion, the Bill is framed in a manner which shows a total disregard of the history of industrialism and unionism in the past. The Government forgets that the men it has to deal with are men of British ancestry, and just as their fathers struggled and suffered for industrial freedom, there are men in the unions in Brisbane to-day who will struggle to retain what their fathers won so hardly, and to get something better for humanity in the future. It is not unionism which is causing the unrest, but greed on the part of the middle men, who want to get more than they earn, and allow men to sweat and suffer and die for all their care. Therefore, unless something is done to alter the system under which we live, there will continue to be this unrest, and a Bill like this will not make any alteration. I think about the men I was born amongst, and about the struggles they made right from the beginning of the last century. I think of the great strike of 1810 that I have heard and read about, which was carried on by an oath-bound union recruited by the practice of "brotherhood," so named because the members of the union bound themselves by a most solemn oath to obey the orders of the brotherhood whatever might come. They felt they were suffering wrong, and bound themselves together to right the wrong, and to-day the workers still—notwithstanding the cynical smile of the hon. member for Warwick—(Government laughter)—the workers are still suffering from the injustice inflicted upon them by men of this class—the middle class. The unionists of Queensland will fight to alter the conditions, so that the middleman will not have what he unjustly gets, and the workers will get more than they do at the present time. Between the years 1869 and 1875 the principles of conciliation and arbitration became firmly established in Great Britain. Alexander McDonald, the Scottish labour leader, and, I think, the first Labour M.P. in the British House of Commons, said in 1875—

"Twenty-five years ago, when we proposed the adoption of the principle of arbitration, we were laughed to scorn by the employing interests. But no movement has ever spread so rapidly or taken deeper root than that which we then set on foot. Look at the glorious state of things in England and Wales. In Northumberland, the men now meet their employers round the common board. In the county of Durham, a board of conciliation and arbitration has been formed, and 75,000 men repose perfect confidence in the decisions of the board. There are in Yorkshire 40,000 men in the same position."

They fought to get conciliation and arbitration then.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We give it you in this Bill.

Mr. ADAMSON: You have given coercion. (Hear, hear!) I have read the Bill as carefully as the hon. member. These men fought for these better conditions, and

got them; they are out to fight for better conditions to-day, and if the members of the Government could see the signs of the times, and realise that what they should stand for is economic justice to the workers, and frame this Bill so as to try and get it for them, they would do a great deal more to get industrial peace than by the Bill which is before the House. To my mind the Bill is not based on the best industrial legislation of the present time. The worst things in the industrial legislation of the past and the present are huddled together higgledy-deggledy in this Bill. Take two or three Bills which have been passed, and which are now in operation in the Australian colonies. I want the Premier to notice one or two points in which this Bill is not so good as the New South Wales Bill and some others which I will mention. The employees of the Crown are treated differently in this Bill than in the New South Wales Act. In New South Wales it is provided that whatever wages are determined by the boards or the courts shall be paid, not only to the Crown employees, but to metropolitan employees, and ever so many more. Why did the hon. gentleman not incorporate a clause like that into this Bill? If he is anxious that the railway servants should be loyal, why did he not see to it that they got as good wages as the men who are outside the railway service? There are other differences, I notice. The conditions under which the machinery of the court and boards are, or may be, in operation are more drastic in this Bill than in New South Wales, West Australia, or the Commonwealth Acts. In New South Wales the employer or employers' associations which are registered as an industrial union of employers must employ 50 men; in West Australia, 50; in the Commonwealth, 100. In Queensland it is 20. A registered union of employees under the New South Wales Act can appeal to the court or board; in West Australia the union must have 50 members; in the Commonwealth Act, 100. But in Queensland twenty employees, whether non-unionist or unionist, can put the machinery in motion. You will see there is a difference here. This Bill gives preference to non-unionists. It is framed in hatred of unionism. The New South Wales Bill gives preference to unionists, and shows that they appreciate the work which unionists have done in the past in bettering the conditions of men and making industrial life brighter for the workers than it was in years past. The non-unionists have not done that, and nobody knows that better than members on the front Treasury bench, and yet they tell us that by putting everybody on an equality—unionists and non-unionists—they are doing the just thing. They are putting men who are prepared to sacrifice everything to help others on the same level as the men who are not prepared to make any sacrifice at all, but will take everything they can get—men who think only about themselves. Why do members opposite like that kind of man? Because they are men of that kind themselves. The arrangements for conciliation in this Bill are not anything like as good as in the Canadian, the New Zealand, the New South Wales, or the Commonwealth Acts. The Government talk about conciliation! Let me read something on this question from the speech of Mr. Beeby, in the New South Wales Parliament—

"I will give the hon. member a statement by Mr. William Millar, Minister for

*Mr. Adamson.*]

Labour and Industry in New Zealand, in regard to an amendment in the New Zealand Act in 1908:

"During the last two or three years it has been apparent to the whole of us that the present machinery is not effective. That has been proved conclusively. With the object of finding out whether I could get any satisfactory machinery to achieve the object we all desire, I have studied the different forms of settling industrial disputes adopted in the different civilised countries of the world. I have found defects in them all. I have endeavoured to keep in front of me the preservation of unionism, both for employers and the employed. Under our present system of conciliation, boards were the first stage at which any dispute could be settled. Those we propose to abolish. Conciliation boards have become a lower court—not conciliation boards at all. There you had your advocates fighting for each side as if they were in a court of law, and there was not a possible hope of conciliation at any time. The best solution, as far as conciliation was concerned, was to provide machinery whereby we will get both parties to come together. We repeal the existing conciliation boards, and in their stead it is now proposed to appoint two conciliation commissioners—one for the North Island, and one for the South Island. Whenever any dispute takes place, it will be the duty of that Commissioner to proceed at once to the scene of the dispute, to inquire into the facts, and endeavour to effect a settlement. If he fails to effect a settlement, he calls upon the parties to appoint three assessors. They then endeavour to settle the dispute, the chairman, who is the commissioner, having no vote at all. There is no element of compulsion in any part of the proceedings. If both parties do come to a settlement, an agreement has to be drawn up, duly filed, and is to have all the force of an award of the Court of Arbitration.

"Mr. WADE: He says there is no compulsion. Does that mean he cannot force them to come together?"

"Mr. BEEBY: It can only mean that. All I can say is that I have gone one better than Mr. Millar, and given our commissioner power to force them to come together. I quote this only in support of the contention that, though the benefit may be little, a provision of that nature can be safely incorporated in the measure without seriously interfering with any of its other vital principles."

That is in advance of anything in this Bill. They appoint a conciliator, whose duty it is to go about the country and see where disputes are likely to take place and bring the parties together. Then the unionist representation before the court and on the boards is not as good in this Bill as it is in the New South Wales and Commonwealth Acts. In those Acts men who have been employees, as well as men who are employees, in an industry can represent the unionist on the boards or before the court. Women can have boards of their own. If employers or employees refuse to act, the Minister can appoint men on the boards and before the board as representatives whom he knows have a knowledge of the industry. And these differences condemn this Bill as

[Mr. Adamson.

one taking from the unions the advantage of having the most intelligent men they could get to put their case before the court. Wages that have been awarded can be recovered after thirty days' notice up to sixty days; but in New South Wales the period is six months; so that in this respect also the Bill is not so good as the New South Wales Act. Again, there is nothing in the New South Wales Act like clause 47, which is one of the worst clauses in this Bill. I have been almost breaking my neck to get through what I wanted to say, because I did not want members on the other side to miss their trains. I noticed that when the Premier sat down, and the hon. member for Chillagoe got up, there was an exodus of members from the other side. That is the kind of fairplay they mete out.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We always listen to you.

Mr. ADAMSON: As far as that is concerned, I think members on this side show a good deal better example than a good many members on the other side.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Members on your own side do not seem to appreciate you.

Mr. ADAMSON: There are one or two on our side who are sick. There are more members present on the other side than when the hon. member for Chillagoe was speaking.

Mr. MORGAN: We appreciate you.

Mr. ADAMSON: There are some members on the other side who do not appreciate what I say. I want to close my remarks by saying that the Bill does not recognise the fundamental principle of the Labour movement throughout the world, which is the unity of the interests of human beings—of humanity. The Government does not seem to recognise that Karl Marx called upon the proletarians of the world to unite. It does not seem to know the motto of unionism—"The unity of labour is the hope of the world," and "An injury to one is an injury to all." The members of the Government, and the Minister in charge of the Bill particularly, have not realised that the workers of Queensland have adopted and adapted the cry of Kossuth when he struggled for the freedom of Hungary—"The Solidarity of Humanity." Nor have they remembered the words of Christ—"All ye are brethren."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I am afraid you have been forgetting that to-night yourself.

Mr. ADAMSON: In the conflict of ideals on the floor of this Chamber, we are sometimes apt to say things that do not appear to show a feeling of brotherhood. But I will tell hon. members one thing: I never forget my brotherhood to the woman who is down, to the man who is down. I never forget what I owe to those who can help themselves the least. The brotherhood that is talked of on the other side is to get as much as you can out of the men who can help themselves the least.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: You know that is not so.

Mr. ADAMSON: At any rate, that is the opinion of the workers, and the cause of the unrest that exists to-day is because they believe it, because they believe that the middleman fleeces them, and the landlord robs them.

Mr. E. B. C. CORSER: They ought to know better than believe a man like you.

Mr. ADAMSON: And they also believe that the wine and spirit merchant and the brewer degrade them. The Government prefer to favour men who act in an unbrotherly manner—"taking where they have never given, reaping where they have never sown." They forget the words of the Great Master, "Freely ye have received, freely give." They say, "We give preference to non-unionists, to the man who never sacrificed anything, and down the men who have sacrificed and gone down for the welfare of humanity."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You have forgotten something else: "Judge not that ye be not judged." (Laughter.)

Mr. ADAMSON: I have not forgotten that, and I will tell the hon. gentleman something else that I have learned in the same chapter as that from which he has just quoted: "By their fruits ye shall know them," and "Beware of those who come among you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves." (Laughter.)

The SPEAKER: Order! The House is very unruly. It is time that these remarks across the Chamber, both Biblical and otherwise, should cease, and that the hon. member for Rockhampton was allowed to conclude his speech.

Mr. ADAMSON: I regret if I have said anything at variance with the rules of procedure. I want to bring my remarks to a close by saying that the Government, in my opinion, have misread history, do not know the spirit of the times, and are not prepared to act in harmony with the best teaching of the day in economic science and industrial thought. I want to give this little quotation. Fred. Henderson says—

"The structural weakness of the existing social order in the face of the democratic idea is self-evident. With the masses of the people educated, and in the possession of political power, a social organisation which does not produce economic equality and work to a general standard of common well-being is a social organisation in a condition of unstable equilibrium.

"The labour unrest exhibits such a social organisation in its final stage of top-heaviness, reeling over by the pressure of human life against the deprivations which it necessarily imposes upon the masses of men. Necessarily imposes, because a mass of property-less men in the labour market is an essential condition of capitalist production; and the continual existence of a mass of property-less men is no longer a permanent possibility once education and political power become widespread among them. No longer even thinkable. Whoever believes a stable order of society to be possible upon a basis of educated and politically powerful human lives deprived of their full human satisfactions, is a fool and blind."

This is what most of the toilers feel, after having become educated, after having become politically powerful, realising that there is not a just distribution of wealth, recognising that they are contributing a great deal more to the production of wealth

than they are receiving; and, if there had been time to-night I should have proved that up to the hilt, but perhaps I may have a chance to-morrow afternoon. If the Government tried to realise that unionism is simply seeking to work for the betterment of the workers as a whole and of the community as a whole, they would do well. In Italy the Government are realising that, and they are encouraging the workers to manage, not only matters of land, but other industries. They are encouraging them to manage the railways, and it is held that there will be a scientific management of the railways which will save a great deal of money to the country and give the workers better wages, shorter hours, and will in every way make the life of the whole people better so far as railway work is concerned. This is a coercive measure—a measure that is not based upon the best political and industrial thought in Australia, let alone in Great Britain. And that just brings to mind what the Premier said about the industrial unrest in Great Britain. Why, with all the industrial unrest in Great Britain, neither Mr. Asquith, nor Mr. Lloyd George, nor any of the leading statesmen in Great Britain, are proposing to do what this Government are seeking to do. They say they are going to reverse the Osborne judgment, and they are telling men like Lord Devonport that he is not doing the square thing, and that he will have to do the square thing; and the King and the Queen have shown their sympathy with the dockers and those who have suffered in the last great strike. Personally, I would like to see strikes done away with altogether. I would give my right hand almost if I could see that. I believe they are things that ought to be relegated to the limbo of the past. But I am as sure as I live that men of the British breed having come to recognise that private ownership of land is wrong, that combines are inimical to the welfare of humanity, and that private ownership in other things is based upon injustice, having come to the conclusion that, just as they have struggled for better things in the past, so they will struggle for better things in the future. Whatever comes to me, I will stand by the side of the worker. I will go down with him if he goes down. If he goes up, I will rejoice with him, and will do everything in my power to make his lot better. I think I have given good reasons for "the faith that is in me." It is not as good a Bill as the New South Wales Bill, and it is not as good a Bill as the Commonwealth Arbitration Bill, neither is it as good a Bill as the Western Australian Bill. The Government should have got the best things out of these measures and not the worst things. If they had got the best things out of these Bills then they would have made it a better Bill than it is to-day. And I honestly say that I think it is a worse Bill than the Industrial Acts of the other States that I have mentioned.

Mr. McCORMACK (*Cairns*): 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 one minute past 11 o'clock.

[*Mr. McCormack.*]