

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 26 AUGUST 1915

Electronic reproduction of original hardcopy

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

THURSDAY, 26 AUGUST, 1915.

The SPEAKER (Hon. W. McCormack, Cairns) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

QUESTIONS.**ATTENDANCE OF CHILDREN AT STATE SCHOOLS.**

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

“1. Is he aware that, in German populated districts, children of German offspring only attend the State schools on the first four days of the week, the fifth day they are attending instruction under the German pastor of the district?”

“2. Is it not incumbent for all children to attend the State school five days per week, unless absent from unavoidable causes, such as illness, etc.?”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. H. F. Hardacre, *Leichhardt*) replied—

“1 and 2. Before the war it was customary to recognise attendance by children of German parentage at a class of instruction one day per week under the German pastor for the district, as a valid excuse for absence from the State school for a corresponding time; but directions have already been issued by the department to head teachers of State schools concerned that such reason for absence is not to be regarded as a valid excuse in future.”

GOVERNMENT BUTTER TRANSACTIONS.

Mr. STEVENS (*Rosewood*) asked the Chief Secretary—

"1. What quantity of butter has been bought or commandeered by the Government since the wholesale selling price was fixed by the board?"

"2. From what companies or agents was the butter obtained, and what amount or quantity from each?"

"3. What price was paid for each respective lot purchased, and what price was obtained by the Government for each lot sold?"

"4. What was the date of each transaction?"

"5. Was the business done through a broker or commission agent or agents?"

"6. If so, who was the agent or agents so employed, what rate of brokerage or commission was paid?"

"7. What was the total amount (a) paid for butter bought; (b) received for butter sold; (c) paid as commission?"

"8. Can the Government yet estimate the profits made by speculators on the butter bought by them from the Government?"

"9. What profit, if any, has the Government made on their butter transactions?"

"10. What does the Government intend to do with such profits, if any?"

"11. Has a loss been made on any of these transactions?"

"12. If so, which and what amount?"

The PREMIER (Hon. T. J. Ryan, *Baree*) replied—

"1 to 12. All transactions as to butter will be disclosed at the proper time."

GOVERNMENT WHEAT AND FLOUR TRANSACTIONS.

Mr. PETRIE (*Toombul*) asked the Chief Secretary—

"1. What is the estimated quantity of wheat used or required as between 1st August, 1915, and the 1st December, 1915, for the consumption of the people of Queensland?"

"2. What was the estimated quantities of wheat, and wheat converted into flour, held in Queensland on 1st August, 1915?"

"3. What was the estimated quantity held by (a) millers; (b) bakers or other intermediate holders; (c) farmers?"

"4. What purchases of wheat have been made from New South Wales, by whom, and at what cost per bushel delivered Brisbane?"

"5. What shipments have been ordered towards meeting the deficiency, and when are such shipments expected to arrive, and from what place or places are such shipments coming?"

"6. For what cause in particular was the most recent increase in the price of flour recently made?"

"7. Is it expected that any flour can be obtained from the South in aid of the Queensland deficiency, and, if so, to what extent, and what price?"

The PREMIER replied—

"1 to 7. All transactions as to wheat and flour will be disclosed at the proper time."

PUBLICATION OF DAILY "HANSARD."

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

"In view of the unreliability of newspapers in general, will the Government take into consideration the establishment of a daily newspaper or the publication of a daily 'Hansard' to be distributed free to all Queenslanders on application?"

The PREMIER replied—

"The matter will receive consideration."

PIALBA-URANGAN COAL AREAS.

Mr. A. J. JONES (*Maryborough*) asked the Chief Secretary, for the Secretary for Mines—

"1. Has a geological report been prepared on the Pialba-Urangan coal areas?"

"2. If so, will a copy be available for members?"

The PREMIER, for the Secretary for Mines (Hon. W. Hamilton), replied—

"Two progress reports appear in the Queensland Government Mining Journals of December, 1912, and August, 1914."

PROPRIETARY RACE MEETINGS ON PATRIOTIC DAY.

Mr. LAND (*Balonne*) asked the Attorney-General—

"1. Is he aware that the proprietor of the Sandgate and Albion Park race-courses has cancelled the races proposed to be held at the former course on Saturday next with the object of holding the races at Albion Park on that day?"

"2. In view of the fact that the public of the metropolitan area and the State generally are making every effort possible to make the patriotic demonstration a public and financial success, will he endeavour, by interview with the proprietor, to have the races advertised for Saturday next cancelled?"

"3. In case the proprietor refuses to cancel the races, will the Attorney-General request him to donate the whole of the proceeds to the patriotic fund, less amount for ordinary working expenses, or, failing to secure a promise to that effect, will the Attorney-General take immediate action to compel the cancelling of the races?"

HON. J. A. FIDELLY (Assistant Minister for Justice) replied—

"1. I have no official knowledge of the matter.

"2 and 3. The Government has no power to interfere, and the question seems to be one for the committee of the patriotic fund."

Mr. LAND: I would like to ask the Assistant Minister for Justice, without notice—

"Will he cancel the permit given to the proprietor of the Albion Park race-course to hold a meeting on Saturday next?"

HON. J. A. FIFELLY: I realise that it is useless to ask the hon. member to give notice of his question, and I will answer it to this effect—

“That I will confer with the Attorney-General on the matter.”

FIRMS SUPPLYING GOVERNMENT GOODS.

On the motion of Mr. J. T. GILDAY (*Ithaca*), it was formally resolved—

“That there be laid on the table of the House a return showing the names of firms, companies, etc., supplying the Government with goods of any description, either under contract or otherwise.”

SALE OF INTOXICANTS IN PARLIAMENT HOUSE.

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*), in moving—

“1. That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that the sale of intoxicating liquor should be prohibited within the precincts of this House.

“2. That the foregoing resolution be transmitted to the Legislative Council, by message in the usual form, requesting their concurrence therein.”

said: I understand that the hon. member for Burke called “Not formal” to this motion. I do not know whether he did so for the purpose of getting information, as the leader of the Opposition does in connection with Government business. I suppose there are some hon. members who desire to state their ideas on this question. I understand that a motion similar to this has been debated in this House in previous sessions. Going back to 1895, the hon. member who represented the constituency which I now represent tabled a motion similar to the one which I bring forward to-day. Mr. Macfarlane was the member for Ipswich in 1895, and although his motion was not couched in similar words to mine, it was desirous of achieving the same object, which was to take away the sale of intoxicants from the precincts of Parliament House. From that time up to the present time this motion has been tabled in a good many Parliaments. In 1893 the motion was defeated by a large vote in the Assembly. We find then that as time goes on things have changed, and the last motion introduced in this Chamber in 1910 was carried. It was then submitted to the Legislative Council in the usual form. We find that we had not got a Labour Government in power then, and the Council rejected the proposal sent from the Assembly, and continued the bar in this House. I do not think it is necessary to go into this matter at any great length, and I do not propose for one minute to get up here and advise hon. members of this House as to what they should do in regard to the temperance question. Each member of this House has his own opinion in connection with the matter, and I take it that they will do as they think best in regard to this question. But what I would like to do is just to ask hon. members, at this time, to take into consideration what is being done in other parts of the Empire in this matter; and what do we see? At the commencement of the war we find that His Majesty King George V. issued an order abolishing from the Royal household all intoxicating liquors during the period of the war. We see that the Secretary of War in the House of Lords followed the

lead of the King, and abolished intoxicating liquor from his household. I would have thought that the House of Commons, as a House of Commons and as legislators, would have also followed the lead of His Majesty and abolished intoxicating liquor from the House of Commons. However, I have not been able to find any record of that having been done, but we have an opportunity now, in the Parliament of Queensland, to follow the lead that has been given to us by His Majesty the King in this connection, and abolish intoxicating liquor from this House. In looking over some of the arguments that have been raised for and against this proposal from time to time, I find that some hon. members have the idea that anyone who brings forward such a motion as this, or who supports such a motion, is really casting aspersions on the actions of other hon. members of the House. So far as that is concerned, there is nothing further from my mind. So far as I have seen, during my short term in this House, and on occasions when I had the privilege of visiting the House, members of this House, I can say with truth, have been a very sober lot. I have not seen any excessive drinking during my visits to the House, but we find that there are other Houses of Parliament which are not in the same position. We have a majority of members who believe in sobriety, and, therefore, we ought to give the lead to the other Parliaments of the Commonwealth, and of the Empire, by doing what the people of France have done in abolishing absinthe, and what the people of Russia have done in abolishing the drinking of vodka in that country. We, as a Parliament and as legislators, should follow those leads and abolish intoxicating liquors from our own House. By doing that we would be showing an example to the people of Queensland and the people of the Empire. Very many people say that during the present war the lack of munitions was due to the drinking habits of the workers. I want to give that an emphatic denial, and I take for my authority the Minister for Munitions in the House of Commons, who denied the statement, and said that there were no better workers in any country than there were in the British Empire, and the reason the munitions were short was because of the lack of organisation and not because of the drinking propensities of the workers engaged in making munitions.

Mr. STEPHENS: Don't you believe what Lloyd George said?

Mr. GLEDSON: I am giving you Lloyd George's statement. Lloyd George said that drink was one of the enemies, and he again said that drink was not the cause of the shortage of munitions. I claim that drink is a menace to any country, and I claim that those who drink most are not the working men at all. Those who drink most are those who employ men, the capitalist class, and I disclaim the statement that the working men are the hardest drinkers and the greatest drinkers. As far as the working man is concerned, he goes along to an hotel and goes into the bar and has his drink where everybody can see him, but the capitalist does not do that. He takes his champagne, his wine, and his brandies and whiskies into his own house, and has his drinking parties inside his own house. The working man does not consume all the drink, although he gets the blame for it. Other questions have been raised in connection with this matter. The

Mr. Gledson.]

Legislative Council, in refusing to accept the message from the Assembly, said it was a matter of precedent. They were tied down to what had been done in the olden days. For fifty long years we have had this privilege, and we are not going to break into the privileges and rights of hon. members because it is an old-time privilege. I take it that the words of the Minister for Agriculture yesterday, in moving the second reading of a Bill, are words that we are going to follow in connection with the life of this Parliament, and that is, that this Government and this House, for this session at any rate, are not going to follow along the old roads; they are not going to follow along the lines of precedent, but that they are out to make precedents. They are out to make new laws, and I take it we cannot, at the commencement of a new Parliament, make a better precedent than providing, so far as this House is concerned at any rate, that there shall be no intoxicating liquors sold within the precincts of the House. I find that there have been many phases of this question brought up. Some people say that hon. members have to stay here a good while, and on that account it is necessary that they should have something to stimulate them in their work. If we follow along that line, we might say that, at the present time, the workers throughout the British Empire are working twelve and fourteen hours a day—put in all the spare time they have got, just allowing themselves time to sleep—and yet, in those workshops, no drink is allowed to be either sold or drunk. It is just as feasible for us to say, "Look at the way the miners have to work—the hard toil they have to do." They work in the wet, in slush, dirt, and in dust, and it is necessary, in order to safeguard against the injurious effects of these things, that they should be supplied with intoxicating liquor. There would be more reason in that than there is in saying a bar should be kept in this House for the purpose of stimulating hon. members in their work. It may be that the past Government needed a stimulant, but I claim that the present Government need no such stimulant to carry out their work. We have the Labour platform behind us, and that is a sufficient stimulant to us to carry out our work and make that work effective. I hope that hon. members will carry this motion unanimously, so that it will be sent to the Legislative Council with the whole weight of this Chamber behind it, and so that this Parliament may give a lead to the people of Queensland and the people of the Empire in this matter of the prohibition of liquor in workshops. I have very much pleasure in moving the motion standing in my name.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): I have much pleasure in seconding the motion which has been so ably moved by the hon. member for Ipswich. I take it that the House will recognise that no more opportune time than the present could have been chosen for bringing forward such a motion, as this is a time which calls for self-denial and for setting an example as far as the thinking people of the State can set an example in any matter which pertains to luxuries. I think it will be generally admitted that intoxicating liquors are not necessities, but that they are luxuries, and that they are luxuries that, when over-

indulged in, produce injurious effects. The example of Russia in abolishing the drinking of vodka has been quoted. Vodka drinking was abolished in Russia at great financial loss, but that loss has been more than made up by the increased industrial and military efficiency of her population. According to the military experts of that nation, within four months of the abolition of vodka, the industrial and military efficiency of the people increased by at least 30 per cent.—some persons who have written since then say to a greater extent. A similar remark may be made with reference to the action taken in France. We have also the example of the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Kitchener, who recommended British troops when going over to France to leave the wine of that country alone if they wished to serve their country to the best of their ability. I do not wish to stress this point too much, but I would ask if it is a reasonable thing that we should expect from our people the highest efficiency and the closest application of their talents and energy to bring to a successful issue the struggle in which we are engaged, should not we in this House set an example as far as the consumption of intoxicating liquors is concerned? We have seen in our own town among a minimum of His Majesty's forces the injurious effects of drinking, and if we are going to ask our soldiers to steady up and reach the highest point of efficiency, it is a fair thing that we should set them an example. I admit that some men who drink intoxicating liquors do so without showing any ill effects from it, but there are men who cannot do that, and for their sakes we should set an example in this matter. Looking at the proposal from a business point of view, I find that this bar pays no license fee, but that, as a matter of fact, £150 per annum is paid to the manager for the services he renders in that bar, in addition to the profits which may accrue from the sale of liquor there. There is an impression outside that liquor is supplied free at this bar, and it is just as well to remark, for the information of people outside, that such is not the case. But what I wish to point out is that the licensee at the corner opposite has to pay a license fee of £40 per year, and that it seems very strange that we should have a private bar here for seventy-two members for which no license fee is payable. I do not think it is reasonable that the bar should continue as at present, and I therefore have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

Mr. BOOKER (*Wide Bay*): That a member in discussing a matter of this kind should raise a question as to the habits of supposed classes with regard to the drinking of intoxicating liquors is characteristic of a certain breed. When a man gets up to discuss a very grave question like that before the House, he should do it without reflecting on other people. No one questions the statement that in every walk of life there are men who take more liquor than is perhaps good for them, but it is not altogether helpful in discussing a matter like this to say that one class of people drink under certain conditions and another class under other conditions. When the members who have proposed this motion have been longer in the House, they will appreciate the fact that the members of both this and the other Chamber are a sober body of people. I venture to say that if an hon.

[Mr. Gladson.]

member went into any part of Brisbane and picked out haphazard seventy-two men and forty-two men—the number of members in the other Chamber—he would not find among them the same number of men who are temperate in their habits as are to be found in the Assembly and in the Council. I should have liked the hon. member, in preparing his notes, to have gone to the trouble of consulting the caterer, Mr. Williams, and of ascertaining from him the number of cups of tea and coffee and the number of glasses of soft drinks, as against the number of glasses of spirituous liquors and beer sold inside the refreshment-rooms. I venture to say that it would be a revelation to the hon. member to observe the preponderance of tea, coffee, and soft drinks, as compared with hard drinks.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOOKER: I am one of the committee of management of those refreshment-rooms; I pass through them sometimes half a dozen times a day, and it is the rarest thing possible to see a man in the bar. But, recognising that, I might hear it suggested by the hon. member that as there are so few men there it might easily be dispensed with. I, however, take the view that it is very much better for any man who desires a drink to be able to go to that bar and have that drink than to have to go outside—to go to the bar outside the corner gates of Parliament House or anywhere else. Then, there is the element of intolerance, the old element of intolerance. But, because a man, according to his lights and desires, is satisfied with a cup of tea, then he has no right to prevent another man, whose state of health probably demands that he have a stimulant, from having that stimulant, any more than the first man from having his cup of tea. I go further than this motion. I think that if the hon. member used his influence with the Cabinet, and with the strong body occupying the Government benches, towards their taking the most drastic action throughout the State in the direction of restricting the sale of liquor to our soldiers, he would be doing more good. I will give an instance of the gravity of the position as it is to-day. Only last Tuesday morning, a friend and myself were walking down Queen street at half-past 9 o'clock, and we saw a soldier lying drunk and asleep on the steps of one of the best known hotels in Queen street, and I understand from another hon. member of this House that he was lying there unprotected at 8 o'clock the same morning. Do hon. members not think that we would be spending our time more usefully and more honestly, and with a great deal more sincerity, if this House this afternoon were dealing with a drastic amendment of the Liquor Act to guard a state of things like that? I say, "Yes"; emphatically "yes." To me, discussing this academic question this afternoon is a tragedy; it is a reflection upon our sense of obligation to our men, and a reflection on the hon. members of this Chamber and the other Chamber. We would be very much better employed this afternoon, or at the very earliest possible moment, in passing legislation to restrict the sale of liquor to our soldiers in uniform in the city and other parts of the State. There is no sadder thing than to see things as they exist to-day. Every hon.

member must see them every day—from the earlier hours of the morning till the latest hours of the night—men about the city drunk. Then, again, if there were not this unlimited sale of liquor at all hours of the night, would there be these disturbances, which are a reflection upon the city of Brisbane, and, what is far worse, a reflection upon the splendid men who are going to fight the country's battles? If the sale were restricted, both as to hours and conditions, then we would not see the sad and deplorable sights which we do see, and the civic police would not have their time occupied largely in attempting to suppress city riots. That is the position, and we would be more honest this afternoon and be doing infinitely better work for our people, and probably bringing credit upon ourselves as well, if we spent our time, not in an academic discussion on a motion upon the lines of that proposed by the hon. member, but on a motion asking the Government to take drastic action at the earliest possible date. If he would move such a motion, then I would be with him whole-heartedly and right up to the hilt. Then, there is a remarkable circumstance about this motion—that a plank of the Labour party's platform is the nationalisation of the drink traffic. This is only what you might term a State bar in the State of Queensland.

Mr. GLEDSON: It is not a State bar at all.

Mr. BOOKER: It aims at suppressing the liquor traffic in this building under State control.

The PREMIER: Our objective is nationalisation, with a view to abolition.

Mr. BOOKER: It is controlled by this House and the other House. Why does not the hon. member start at the other end, and nationalise the liquor traffic right away? Why does not the hon. member start down in Queen street and the off streets, where all the damage is done? I am pleased to see that my honourable friend appreciates that fact.

Mr. COOPER: Oh, yes.

Mr. BOOKER: Let the hon. member urge that upon the Government. Do not reflect upon hon. members of both Houses, but do something that will bring about better conditions for the men we are under an obligation to do the right thing by. If a motion were submitted in this House this afternoon, restricting the sale after 6 o'clock, I would support it straight away, but I object to a motion of this kind for more reasons than I have time to state—and I am probably just as keen in the interests of the sobriety of hon. members of this House as the hon. member who moved the motion.

Mr. McPHAIL (*Windsor*): I do not desire to give a silent vote on this question. And I also want to say at the commencement that I do not consider this subject is an academic one. Personally—whether hon. members of this Chamber are prepared to accept my statement or not—I feel very strongly on the question, and although there may be differences of opinion as to how we are to achieve our object of controlling the liquor traffic, and eventually prohibit it, I say that we have every right at every opportunity to do all that we can to hasten the coming of that time. I believe that every man has a right to his own opinions,

Mr. McPhail.]

and I do not say that I am always right in the opinion that I hold and express, but I do say this—that I believe that it is essential for the good of the community that the liquor traffic should be controlled and eventually abolished.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MCPHAIL: Then the hon. member for Wide Bay has stated that this is an academic discussion. I do not think so, because, as we have been sent here by the people to legislate on their behalf, it follows essentially that we should lead the way in anything that is done. The people who have sent us here have not sent us simply to be dummies or merely to tell them what they should do, while we are not prepared to do it ourselves. And that is why I rise to support this motion—because I feel that we are doing the right thing by starting at the right end. Here in the precincts of this House we have a bar for the purpose of supplying those who come here with liquor. I have never objected to a man having a drink. I am not a fanatic on this point, but when we find that men sometimes cannot control themselves, we have to make laws so that they are kept within the limits of those laws.

Mr. COYNE: Is that not a distinct accusation against members of this House?

Mr. MCPHAIL: No; I am making no accusation at all.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Only an implication?

Mr. MCPHAIL: But you have to make laws for the government of the country, and everybody has to observe those laws, and I say the same thing applies here—that we want to make even ourselves amenable to the law. Now, it has been stated this is only a small matter. The hon. member for Wide Bay has stated that it is a tragedy that we should be dealing with these little things, when greater subjects should be receiving consideration. I maintain that little things will eventually lead to big things, and, if we tackle the small things one by one, we shall eventually get exactly what we want. The hon. member for Wide Bay also referred to the members of the Labour party having in their platform a plank dealing with the nationalisation of the liquor traffic, but he did not mention the further words in that plank—“with an ultimate view to prohibition.” If we set an example by doing away with our own bar, we are making a start, and, when the Government have time, they will bring in a comprehensive measure. I believe they will do so, for I am one of those who realise that the Labour party's planks are not simply put there to be quoted during the recess, but that they are things of reality which we intend to carry out, and I am hoping that I shall live to see the day when we shall be able to nationalise the trade. Meantime we are working on right lines in trying to do away step by step with the evils that exist. It has been stated by some that this is a matter which also concerns the Upper Chamber, and that, even if we carry the motion, we shall only be wasting our time as the other House will have to deal with it. Now, we are not concerned as to what the other Chamber may do in the matter. They must accept the responsibility for their own action. That is the attitude that we adopt; and, if we

think a thing is right, then we must agree to it and let the other House do as they think fit in regard to it. If they, in their wisdom, throw it out, the responsibility rests with them and not with us. If we carry the motion, our responsibility ceases. It has been stated that the doing away with the bar here will not stop drinking. I do not say that it will, but I want to lay stress upon the value of example. The fact of this House agreeing to do away with the bar is an evidence of our desire eventually to control the liquor traffic. As regards its being a question of State control, I think there is nothing in that argument at all. The bar is here, and I understand the gentleman who runs it gets the profits arising out of it, so that the State has really nothing to do with it. The hon. member for Wide Bay referred to the fact that, if the bar was not here, hon. members would go across to the corner, and he spoke as if it was not right to expect hon. members to do that. Now, if men think they are perfectly justified in having a glass of liquor in an hotel, then they should be perfectly prepared to walk manfully over and get it in the hotel, and I would have nothing at all to say against it. If hon. members wanted a glass of beer, they would go over there whether the bar was here or not. The hon. member said it was tragic to see the number of men wearing the King's uniform going about our streets in an intoxicated condition. I do not know what that has to do with the question before the House, but it is only another evidence that it is necessary for the Government to take out of the hands of private enterprise the control of this traffic, and it is also evidence that we are going on right lines when we are asking for the abolition of the bar here, so that it will be a first step towards greater things. I heartily approve of the motion. I feel very strongly indeed on the matter, and I realise that other countries have benefited as a result of taking over the control of the liquor traffic and practically abolishing it during the present time of strife among the nations. The example of Russia has been quoted this afternoon, and I say that Queensland also should control a big question like this. Posterity will bless the men who are prepared to undertake this work even in the face of opposition, in the face of private enterprise, and in the face of those who are out for personal gain.

Mr. COYNE (*Warrego*): I do not wish to give a silent vote on this matter either. (Hear, hear!) We used to regard this motion, a short time ago, as a good old hardy annual. (Laughter.) It used to be brought forward every year.

Mr. MURPHY: And every man who moved it was defeated at the next election. (Laughter.)

Mr. COYNE: It used to be moved every year, with the pious hope that something would be done, but nothing has ever been done. It appears to me that the bringing in of such a motion casts a great reflection upon hon. members of this House. I have been here nearly eight years, and I have never seen an hon. member become intoxicated by reason of the fact that he obtained refreshments at the bar attached to this building; and anyone who consulted the manager of the refreshment-rooms would find that, if he was dependent for his living upon the bar, he would go very

[*Mr. McPhail.*

hungry indeed. We have heard a good deal about the soldiers being intoxicated in the city. That is ascribed to the fact that they are supplied with liquor in the city, which, of course, is absolutely correct. But I remember only about a week ago seeing where the heads of the Christian churches of Queensland came to the Premier and asked him to use his influence with the Commonwealth Government to have the remedy for this state of affairs provided—that is, by the establishment of a wet canteen at the camp, where the men would be under the control of their own officers. There would be no intoxication at the camp, because the man who would supply the men with liquor would be a paid servant, and he would have no incentive to make them intoxicated. Besides that, if the officers in charge were vigilant, they would see that no man became intoxicated there, or, if any should get into that state, then the man who supplied them with the intoxicants could be sacked.

Mr. MURPHY: The only way to prevent men becoming intoxicated is to wipe out the liquor trade, but it is not proposed to do that.

Mr. COYNE: This does not propose to do anything at all. It is like going to shoot an elephant, and, instead of doing so, shooting an ant. (Laughter.) We have also heard about the grand results that have followed from the wiping out of vodka in Russia. Well, the Russian armies are being driven back miles and miles every day in their own country by men who drink every sort of intoxicating liquor, and who never make any bones about it, and rather admire themselves because they drink intoxicating liquors, so that I do not think that argument is too much in favour of wiping out the use of liquor. (Laughter.) I have been a temperate man all my life, and I think I am right in saying that I can deal with this question in an impartial way. The people of Victoria, a month or six weeks ago, set themselves out to remedy this so-called evil by shutting up the hotels at half-past 9 p.m. They reckoned that by that means they were going to do away with this terrible evil of drink; but what has happened? Anybody who read this morning's paper will see from a return brought down by the Government that there have been more arrests for drunkenness and a greater consumption of liquor in Victoria since the hotels were shut at half-past 9 at night than when they were left open till half-past 11. They are open two hours less, and yet there is a great deal more liquor consumed in the shorter time than in the longer period. We are told that, if we wipe out the refreshment-room in Parliament House, we will remedy all the evils that are alleged to exist here in regard to drink. I have already stated that there are no evils here, to my knowledge, in regard to drink from the fact that we have in this building a refreshment bar.

Mr. H. L. HARTLEY: Let us set an example.

Mr. COYNE: I would rather have a better example to set than that. During the time I have been here I have seen occasions when it would have been rather a serious thing for a man who thought he required a glass of whisky or beer to have to go down the street for it. We know that men go to the hotels where they can get the

particular liquor they have a taste for, and they would travel half a mile to get the liquor they wanted. If a man felt that he could do with a nip of whisky, he would probably go to the hotel where he thought he could be supplied with the best whisky. Even if a man only went across the road from Parliament House to have the drink that he required, and a division took place during his absence, the fact of his being away might be a very serious thing for the country.

Mr. BOOKER: One vote would not make much difference just now.

Mr. COYNE: No, it would not just now; but if you multiplied it by ten or twenty it would.

Mr. FREE: Can't you get all brands in the House, without going away?

Mr. COYNE: I do not know anything about the brands in the House at all. (Laughter.) I think it is rather a pity that a reflection should be thrown on the sobriety of the members of this House by bringing up a motion of this description. If it were carried to-day, it would do absolutely no good at all. As to the so-called example, it would set no example. If you shut up half the hotels in Brisbane it would have no effect, because the people would flock to the remaining hotels. Of course, I do not think anyone would get a great harvest out of the members of this House. I have always voted against a motion of this kind when a division was called, and if a division is called to-day I shall vote against the motion. This House is probably as sober and more sober than any in Australia, and I venture to say that it is as sober a House as any in the world. Why should we reflect upon ourselves by bringing up a motion of this kind? The people outside will ask themselves as to what is the meaning of bringing down this motion so regularly. They can only come to one conclusion, and that is that the members of this House are not a sober lot. I say that it is a great pity that we should reflect upon ourselves in that way when there is no real cause for the reflection. I am going to vote against the motion, although I would not care for one moment if there was not a drop of intoxicating liquor anywhere tomorrow. I think I am justified in expressing my opinion in this matter.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Adamson, *Rockhampton*): I desire to speak on the motion, but I have not had much time to think very much about this subject the last few days—and particularly to-day—still I have always had something to say on a question of this kind, and I would be a cowardly man, having been an abstainer for forty-two years, if I allowed a motion of this kind to go through without saying a word or two personally in favour of it. I think it would be a good thing if there were no intoxicating liquors sold within the precincts of the House at all; not because I am of opinion that this is a drunken House, or that the shutting up of the bar would be a reflection on any members because of what they drink—I am not going to argue from that standpoint at all—but I say it would be a good thing, because drink is no good to anybody, because I believe it is a great curse where it is sold as it is sold in this nation. I believe that the Russians, in prohibiting vodka, have taken a course that is most likely to benefit the Russian nation; in fact, it has already been proved

Hon. J. Adamson.]

that it has benefited the Russian nation. The hon. member for Warrego said that the Germans, who drank everything, and boasted about their drinking, were beating the Russians. I want to say that the Germans, who boast about their drinking, and do their drinking in a very undesirable way, have committed some of the worst excesses and some of the worst cruelties which have ever been perpetrated in the world, because they were maddened by drink.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: If drinking can produce such scenes as were seen in Belgium, and can make men who under other circumstances are not ready to do the cruelties which have been committed there, and if drink can make men into wild beasts, cruel and bloodthirsty, it surely ought to be done away with. That is not only true in regard to Belgium, but it is true everywhere. When a man becomes a victim to drink and comes under the power of alcohol, he neither cares for his wife and children nor anybody else. As to the argument that drink has enabled the Germans to win victories over the Russians, it has also enabled the Germans to do a great many cruel things to the Belgians, who are as brave as the Germans and a great deal braver. However, that does not touch this particular motion. I want to say that the best men, those men who endure most, whether they are explorers at the North Pole, whether they be athletes in the stadium, or men who are athletes on the course and go in for bicycle racing or foot racing—it is the men who abstain from drink who accomplish the most and gain the most advantage. If the physical and social life of a nation is better for abstinence from drink, then it is a good thing for the House to carry a motion of this kind, and show that, as far as we are concerned, we will take the side of the men who are the best socially and physically. I believe that, so far as intellectual needs are concerned too, the man who does without alcohol is the man who can do the best intellectual work, and anyone who knows anything about the arguments in relation to temperance, so far as working men are concerned, knows that the temperate man is the most efficient man and can do the best work. If I had thought about this motion I might have brought Philip Snowden's book, "Socialism and Temperance" along and quoted from it. Philip Snowden says that to do without alcohol means efficiency for the worker, means that he will be better able to fight the economic battle for better wages than he is getting at the present time, that drink helps to do more to prevent him from getting better conditions and wages than almost anything else. I would not go in for the argument that drink is the only cause of poverty. I know that there are other causes—economic injustice. Some men exploit the workers and get from them more than they ought, instead of paying them the right wages grinding them down as far as they possibly can. That is one of the great causes of poverty. While drink is not the only cause of poverty, I say it is a great cause of poverty, and the man who gives way to drink—and sometimes the best-natured men give way to drink— forgets his home, his wife, and children. If I were to give some reminiscences this afternoon in relation to my own life—the life in my boyhood's home—I could tell how

[Hon. J. Adamson.

a good woman, and good children, too, were simply ruined and their chances blighted for life because of the foolishness of a man who, in his sober moments, was one of [4.30 p.m.] the best of men, and yet because of the curse of drink neglected those that he ought to have cared for in every way. Now, as to what the effect of the passing of this motion will be in this House, I say that I do not think that the effect will be very great, because members of this House who want a glass of liquor will have it whether there is a bar here or not. I am not going to say what effect drink will have on members of this House.

Mr. BRIDGES: Widen the scope of it.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: How?

Mr. BRIDGES: Make it apply to the whole State.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: So far as I am concerned, we know that the platform of our party provides for the nationalisation of the drink traffic with the view of total prohibition. I know that that is a big question, and will take a lot of arguing and a lot of fighting to bring it about; but I am ready to fight for that and ready to work for that in every way when the time comes to deal with it. But here we have something that we can deal with straight away if Parliament is desirous of dealing with it. If this bar is any good to Parliament, and if members are any better for it being here, and they are able to legislate better because there is a bar on the premises, then let us keep it. But does it make better legislators? Every one of us knows that we are sent here not to go to the bar, but to sit here and legislate for the benefit of the country which sends us here. I am not going to say how many members go to the bar. Every man pleases himself so far as that is concerned. I do not go to the bar, at any rate. No one has ever seen me go to the bar and take a drink there, because I have never been there. I have been in the refreshment-room and had my dinner there, and paid for it at the bar. Members have asked me to go to the bar and have a drink, and I have said, "I won't." (Laughter.) If any man ever says that he saw John Adamson going to the bar and having a drink he tells lies.

Mr. MURPHY: Nobody would think of saying that. (Laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I know that members have asked me to go to the bar and have a drink, because I suppose they wanted to have a bit of fun. I really do not think that any member wishes to see me go to the bar. I think that every member of this House admires a man for sticking consistently to his principles, and I do not think anyone would like to see me going to the bar.

Mr. MURPHY: You would go to the bar for a ginger ale? (Laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No, not even for ginger ale. (Laughter.) I know one member did ask me to go to the bar for a glass of ginger ale, and I said, "No; I will have it in the dining-room." (Loud laughter.) I am not an unsociable man, and this member, who was a kindly man, and who has been kindly disposed towards me, asked me to have a drink. I said,

"I will not have it at the bar, as I object to the bar, but I will have a bottle of ginger ale with you in the dining-room." (Laughter.) Some men say that there is more alcohol in ginger ale than there is in the other liquor. Whether that is true or not, I do not know, as I have never analysed it. At any rate, that is as far as I go—ginger ale. I say that if the bar helps us in our work, and if it helps us to do better work than we would do otherwise, then we should keep it. Everything that alcohol can do in the direction of medicine can be done equally well by other things. Although I do not say I would not take alcohol as a medicine, still, as a beverage it is no good. In fact, it does a great deal of harm. It does not help us in the work we have got to do, and I understand that the bar does not pay. Some men repudiate the idea that they take too much. If they do not take very much, and if the bar is of no use to them as legislators, then for the sake of example to the soldiers who have been referred to, and who are going about the streets of Brisbane and drinking too much, we should close the bar in Parliament House. I have seen these men going about the streets of Brisbane, and it has been a sad sight to see them. When I see men who are going to sacrifice their lives, and make the supreme sacrifice for their country, and they have not the power to control themselves so far as this drink is concerned, it makes me think whether these men in some places might not become maddened with drink and be guilty of cruelty just because they have lost control of themselves. Anything that makes a man less efficient, and anything that makes social life less kindly than it ought to be, is the first thing that this House should set itself against altogether. Because I believe that drink is no good here or elsewhere, I am going to vote for the motion.

Mr. McMINN (*Bulimba*): I am surprised at the attitude taken up by some hon. members who have spoken against this motion. It would seem that they consider that the member who introduced it and those who are supporting the motion are reflecting upon the sobriety of this House. The mover disclaimed that idea, and we who are supporting him also disclaim that we make any reflection on the morality or sobriety of members of this House. If we were introducing this motion for the benefit of members of this House, then we would have kept within the sacred walls of this building all knowledge of the fact that such a thing was necessary. It is because we do not see the necessity of the bar that we are supporting the motion. No member who has spoken has attempted to show that the bar is a necessary adjunct to the work carried on within its walls. True, in the days when Parliament was looked upon as a kind of social club to which members were gathered together, and, incidentally, to amuse themselves by legislating for the welfare of those who sent them here, it may have been a necessity. We look upon Parliament to-day as a workshop. We look on the men who are sent here as men who are sent here to work out the destinies of this country and to work for those who sent them here. As the mover of the motion said, while in some workshops where the most strenuous work is carried on such a thing is not necessary, it should not be necessary in this workshop either that we should have this stimulus to our efforts. It

is said that we should be tolerant, and we are tolerant to every man's ideas. We do not preach that every man should follow our lead in respect to temperance, because we hold that any man who has come to the years of discretion and reason has a right to please himself. We take our stand on the utility or necessity of the bar in Parliament House. If you can point out the necessity for it, we would be inclined to support it. So long as we consider it is not necessary, we should abolish the excessiveness from our system. The hon. member for Wide Bay said if we adopted the broader principle for abolition of the liquor traffic, he would be with the mover. How can we, as consistent men, attempt to abolish a thing when we nurture it within our own precincts? If we are to ask the men gathered in the military camps to desist from intoxicating liquors, then we should set them an example here and lead the way. We do not reflect on members of this House. It is because we recognise that, as constituted, this House does not require the bar that we intend to support the motion.

* Mr. BAYLEY (*Pittsworth*): I listened to the remarks of the Secretary for Railways with a very great deal of pleasure, as the hon. member put his views very nicely, and I can substantiate every word he said. His ideas are my ideas exactly. We must all agree that alcohol is the curse of any country, and when we come to consider that in Great Britain the cost of the alcohol which is consumed year by year is very much in excess of the amount that is spent on education; when we come to consider that the amount that is spent on drink year by year throughout the United Kingdom is very much in excess of what is spent on bread—the staff of life—we can see at a glance to what an enormous extent the traffic has grown, and it is high time that all civilised countries made a very strong attempt to deal with this traffic. We know perfectly well that more crime is committed in the country because of drink than from any other cause. We know that our gaols and our lunatic asylums are filled to a very great extent because of the excessive use of strong drink.

Mr. BERTRAM: We are all agreed on that point.

Mr. BAYLEY: We are all aware that drink is a curse to the country, and we should not ask others to leave it alone unless we are prepared to do likewise. It seems to me it would be a cowardly thing to insist upon other men not being allowed to get drunk unless we are prepared to follow suit. For instance, the hon. member for Wide Bay has suggested that we should not allow intoxicating drink to be sold in our cities or towns—that the soldiers should not be allowed to be served with drink in the hotels. They are allowed to come into our city when they are off duty, but they should not be allowed to get strong drink. It would be absurd to impose such restrictions upon our soldiers, who are amongst our finest men, and not impose similar restrictions upon ourselves. We know full well that many of our soldiers are in the habit of taking too much drink; they have, in many cases, brought discredit upon the uniforms which they wear, and we should do all that lies in our power to prevent this sort of thing. The very least we can do is to show that we have our hearts in the matter, and to say that we are willing to abolish drink

Mr. Bayley.]

from our own House. If we do this, the moral effect upon our soldiers will be very great, and the moral effect upon the citizens of Queensland generally will also be very great. Our soldiers are going away—perhaps, to die for us; they are leaving their homes and relatives; in many cases men are leaving their wives and children; and when they are doing this the least we can possibly do is to show that we are willing to do without drink within the precincts of this House, in order that our moral example may be felt throughout the country. We cannot do better than follow the example of the King. We know what steps he has taken in this matter; we also know what Earl Kitchener has done in the same direction, and it is impossible to estimate the results which have accrued because of the example set by the King and by Earl Kitchener. We should set a similar example to the citizens of this State. If we refer to other countries, we will see what they have done in this regard. We are told by people who are competent to judge, that the people of Russia have become from 30 per cent. to 50 per cent. more efficient because the drink traffic has been abolished from their country; and, what has been done in Russia can, to a very great extent, be done in Queensland and in other parts of Australia. If strong drink were necessary to enable us to do our work, then I would not say a word in favour of abolishing it, but we know we are more efficient if we do without drink. We know that the leading men in politics, and in many other walks of life, are men who never touch strong drink. Then, if we go to the field of athletics, we see that the finest athletes—the men who put up records—are the men who are very abstemious, and, in fact, men who are almost total abstainers. If we come here with clear heads we can do very much better work for our country than if our brains are muddled through the use of alcohol. I do not mean to say for one moment that any member comes here the worse of drink, as most of them are very abstemious. The hon. member for Wide Bay has said that the mover of this motion wishes to interfere with the liberty of the subject. But it seems to me that we are continually interfering with the liberty of the subject. How many subjects in Queensland would very much like to have their opium now and again; but the law stepped in and has absolutely prohibited the use of opium throughout the State. How many of our Chinese friends and those of other nationalities are very hard hit in this respect; but, for the good of the community, opium is not allowed to be used. Then, we find that it is against the law to sell strong drink on Sundays. That is interfering with the liberty of the subject, and, of necessity, the laws of any country must interfere with the liberty of the subject in order that the greater number may benefit—in order that we may live on a higher plane. I do not intend to speak at great length, but I would like to propose, as an amendment to the motion, that all the words after “prohibited,” in paragraph 1, be omitted, with the view of inserting the words “in Queensland.” Many hon. members have this afternoon expressed a wish that something of this sort should be done; and, being a keen temperance advocate, I have very much pleasure in proceeding on the lines thus suggested in this regard. I am sure that all those who have spoken in favour of the motion will be only too pleased to support the amendment. We can do without drink, as

[*Mr. Bayley.*

it is doing absolutely no good, and is doing as much harm as the use of opium has done in other countries. We know that we would be richer and more prosperous; we know the people would be living on a higher plane; that our women and children would have a chance of living happier lives, if we put our shoulders to the wheel on this occasion and make up our minds that for once in our lives we shall be whole-hearted for the public good, and abolish the drink traffic. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. BRIDGES (*Nundah*): I rise with great pleasure to second and support the amendment which has been so ably moved by my friend, the hon. member for Pittsworth. I have a great amount of sympathy with the motion in its original form, but it has been before this House almost every year since I have been a member of the Chamber, and on two or three occasions it has been passed by the House, and nothing has come of it. If I thought that by passing the motion in its original form it would be given effect to, then, for the sake of example, I should be one to support it; but, having carried a similar motion on more than one occasion and nothing having come of it, I am of opinion that it is about time we showed our true colours, and set an example to the people outside. I am a prohibitionist, not only as regards the sale of liquor in this House, but as regards the sale of liquor in Queensland. Therefore I support the amendment.

Mr. MAY: Abolish the Upper House, then.

Mr. BRIDGES: We are not at the present time discussing the question of abolishing the Upper House. We are discussing the question of abolishing from the country what is a temptation to many of our young men, and even to some of our old men, and I am going to support the amendment to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors throughout Queensland. I hope the amendment will be carried on the voices, and that it will be carried unanimously, so that the Government will see fit to bring in legislation to give effect to what I believe is the real wish of everyone in this House. We know that the Labour party are pledged to prohibition, but they go about it in a very slow way; they say they believe in taking one step at a time. I want to do the whole thing at once.

Mr. BERTRAM: Will this motion do it?

Mr. BRIDGES: If the motion is carried unanimously this afternoon, I think it will do it, because prohibition is one of the planks of the Labour platform, and it is strongly supported by many members on this side of the House.

Mr. BERTRAM: You know the amendment is proposed in order to defeat the motion.

Mr. BRIDGES: It is all very well for my friend to say that the amendment is proposed with the object of defeating the motion, but I hold that it has a much wider object. My friend knows that I have been a prohibitionist ever since he has known me, and that is a long time. I am a thorough prohibitionist, and will support prohibition whenever and wherever I have the opportunity of doing so.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Will you go for nationalisation?

Mr. BRIDGES: No. I will not go for nationalisation. I do not think the Govern-

ment of the country should traffic in an evil. Therefore I am against the nationalisation of the drink traffic. Like the Secretary for Railways, I have never taken a drink, even of water or ginger beer, at the bar.

Mr. McMINN: They will bring it to you in the visitors' room.

Mr. BRIDGES: Yes. I look upon the visitors' room as a greater evil than the bar as far as intoxicating drink is concerned, because my experience is that there is very little intoxicating drink consumed at the bar. Let us go the whole hog in this matter. If we close the bar in the House, let us close the bar at the corner and in every licensed house in Queensland. Thursday afternoon is not a time when party matters are discussed. Let us drop party in this matter, and let each member vote according to his conscience, and then I am sure the amendment will be carried, because the Labour party believe in prohibition, only they are afraid that we will not help them to carry it. We will help them to carry it. I will vote for it, just as I voted for the nationalisation of the sugar industry. (Government laughter.) Members opposite may laugh.

Mr. COOPER: You are consistent.

Mr. BRIDGES: Yes; I am certainly consistent on the drink question, and my constituents believe that I am consistent politically. When the hon. member who made that interjection has been in the House as long as I have, it will be time enough for him to throw stones across the Chamber. My constituents have returned me from time to time, because they believe that I am consistent in what I advocate, and one of those things is prohibition. I have advocated prohibition ever since I have been a child, and I shall continue to advocate it. I believe that if the question goes to a vote the amendment will be carried, and if we carry it, then we may expect the Government to give effect to it, as there are men on the front Treasury bench who are believers in prohibition. Well, let them vote for the amendment, and do away with the proposal to nationalise the drink traffic. The carrying of the amendment only means promoting that which the Government are afraid to tackle.

Mr. GLEDSON: I ask your ruling on the amendment, Mr. Speaker. I claim that it is out of order, because it does not amend the motion, but deals with a new question altogether. The motion is, not that the sale of intoxicating liquors should be prohibited in Queensland, but that their sale should be prohibited within the precincts of this House.

The SPEAKER: The amendment is quite in order. Once a motion has been submitted, it is within the province of the House to alter it or do what they like with it.

Mr. GLEDSON: Well, I refuse to accept the amendment, because it is only introduced for the purpose of defeating the motion.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: No, no!

Mr. COOPER (*Bremer*): I do not speak on this motion with any idea of avoiding giving what has been called a silent vote. I confess that a "silent vote" is somewhat of a mystery to me, because, in my opinion, the most eloquent testimony a man can give

on any question is to vote on it one way or the other. If a man wishes to be silent when a vote is given, then he should step outside the bar of the Chamber. But I presume that what a member means when he says that he does not wish to give a silent vote is that he desires to explain the vote he is going to give. I am not speaking now to explain the vote that I am going to give, but because I wish to draw attention to one or two things which have been said in the course of this discussion. I was somewhat astonished that the hon. member for Wide Bay should have been so pained at something of the nature of a party statement being introduced into the discussion, and that he should then have immediately attacked the soldier for his drinking habits, and have asked that the soldier, of all men in the world at this time, should be prohibited from enjoying the right that all other citizens enjoy. I think in that respect he was most inconsistent:

[5 p.m.] He took the hon. member for Ipswich to task for introducing a debatable subject—as to who was responsible for the greater part of the drinking, and then he said, "I will be with him heart and soul if he will do something to stop the soldier getting the ncurishment and stimulant that I as a citizen am able to get." I know that in that the hon. member was most unfair.

Mr. BOOKER: Do you desire to see soldiers drunk in the street?

Mr. COOPER: I do not desire to see soldiers drunk in the street, nor do I desire to see anybody drunk in the street, but I want to say that the public-house is there at present for the reason that it is for our convenience. We say that the publican must open at 6 o'clock, and that he must not shut until 11 o'clock; that he must keep so many rooms, and that he must have so many other things. He is, therefore, there for our convenience. Why we should debar one section of the community and not another I fail to see. Then the hon. member said, "Why do you not go out into the highways and into the byways and close up the hotels there?" And because I agreed with him, he said, "I am glad to see that there is one hon. member in sympathy with me." He said, in effect, "We are the only white ones; we are the pure merino. Come to us last. Let us have our little bar, because we do not use it. Close up the bar of the man who does use it, but leave us alone, because we do not need our bar. Leave us our bar." The argument was to me inconsistent. I am in favour of its being closed, and I am in favour of all the bars in Queensland being closed.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COOPER: And I am prepared, when the time comes, not only to vote for it, but I also am prepared to work for it for all I am worth, in the interests of the people, and that, in my opinion, will be assisted by closing the whole of the liquor bars in Queensland. Now, whether the soldier gets his drink in the camp or in the street is an open question, but this I know: I know that a big number of people objected to the drink at the camp, not because the soldier would be able to get a drink, but because it would be a co-operative effort, and the soldier would be profiting by this horrible trade. We have seen the fallacy of that now, and we have seen that it might be

Mr. Cooper.]

better for appearance sake for the soldier to get liquor in camp. And I am going to give the House an idea of what some people regard as moderation. I was talking to a man who keeps an excellent hotel, a well-conducted house, and he said, "Had I the management of the canteen, I would let a man have it in moderation. I would give him a rum and milk when he gets up in the morning, because most of them are used to it, and I would give him a pint when he goes to drill, and after he comes off drill I would give him another pint, and then he would not have another before tea time. I would give him one then when he is in the habit of taking it as an appetiser when going home from work, and one after tea, and I would give him one when he goes to bed. I am sure no one could object to a moderate programme of that description." (Laughter.)

Mr. TOLMIE: What about his afternoon drill?

Mr. COOPER: He would do without one then altogether, to show his moderation.

Mr. TOLMIE: The afternoon drill is the most severe they have to go through.

Mr. COOPER: The one for that is the appetiser before tea. (Laughter.) Then something, as the hon. member for Brisbane says, to build him up—(laughter)—and then there was the nightcap before going to bed. That was that gentleman's idea of moderation in the matter of drink for the soldiers. I have not counted it up, but if hon. members care to do so they may. All I know is that, if the soldier could do all that, and then feel all right, well, he is pretty good in that respect. I would not like to take the rum and milk when I got up, and I would not like to try the pint before tea, nor the nightcap before I went to bed. But I do not think that this question is to be settled by argument as to what is being done elsewhere, or what horrible example we have somewhere else. The hon. member for Warrego, in referring to Victoria, did not make much impression in his argument. He said that there are more arrests for drunkenness now that the hotels close at 9.30 p.m. than when they closed at 11. If the hon. member had been down there he would know that the hotels did not close at 11 o'clock; they closed at half-past 11. At half-past 11 the average policeman was snug in bed, and the drunk was emptied out from the hotel to meander on his way home unmolested. (Laughter.) At the present time he is turned out at 9.30, when the policeman is on the beat, and for decency's sake he is not allowed to go unnoticed, and to frequent the streets. (Laughter.) I make bold to say that there is no more drunkenness in Melbourne now than there was when the hotels did not close till 11.30. The only difference is that he comes more under the eye of the policeman, and he, for the sake of appearance, has to take notice. I am glad to know that the hon. member for Nundah has been consistent in his advocacy of this motion. I understand that it is a hardy annual; that it crops up year after year, and I believe that there are hon. members who have voted for it year after year, and I understand, too, that the hon. member is quite consistent, because I think, in "Hansard," we will find that he has voted on this question both ways—(laughter)—he has voted

[Mr. Cooper.

for it and he has voted against it. He is therefore consistent in his inconsistency. I am going to vote for the motion if it comes to that. If the amendment comes first for the abolition of the drink traffic, I am going to vote for it.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COOPER: I am not going to hedge in the matter. I believe we will get along better without it, and whilst I have an opportunity of giving a vote in that direction, why should I not do so? The hon. member for Wide Bay mentioned the Labour platform. I am sorry that he did not consult the hon. member for Toowoomba. He ought to know that that hon. member has studied that little red book with great attention. No one has studied the Labour party's little red book more than the hon. member for Toowoomba, and if he had consulted him he would not have fallen into the error of accusing this party of being a nationalisation party alone, so far as the liquor trade is concerned. We are out on the liquor trade with a view to total prohibition. And this is the only State bar we have in Queensland. The hon. member for Wide Bay said so. And if it is our only State bar, let us, for the sake of heaven, go the whole hog and abolish it. (Laughter.)

Mr. GUNN (*Carnarvon*): I do not intend to give a silent vote on this question. (Laughter.) The hon. member who has just sat down gave us a lecture on the mistakes that some members make. He said that when you want to vote silently you should go outside the bar. I do not intend to go outside the bar, so the best thing I can do is to speak. I do not think there are many members more temperate than I am. I do not drink liquor, not because I have any very conscientious scruples on the matter, but simply because I have not got the appetite for it. I do not care for it, and if everyone were situated the same way as I am, we would all be sober. I do not take any credit to myself for being sober; but, on the other hand, I recognise that there are people who do fall to the evils of drink, and if I could assist them in any way by closing the bar I would do so at once. Closing the bar at the other end of the building, in my opinion, will not make anybody in Queensland or Australia more sober than they are to-day. I think, if anybody is so inclined, he would walk across the street, which is a few steps closer to this Chamber than the bar.

Mr. COOPER: Have you stepped it?

Mr. GUNN: I have stepped it—(laughter)—so that I know. I cannot see the utility of carrying a motion of this sort, and if it were for total prohibition all over Australia, well—if I thought it would be brought about by this motion—I would vote for it. But I do not think it would. If you go in for total prohibition, it will only mean that there will be any amount of sly grog-selling and sly grog-making all over the country. I have yet to learn that those countries which have gone in for total prohibition have become any more sober, but if I did learn that they had, I would be quite willing to follow their example. In New Zealand, some time ago at any rate, the consumption of liquor was just as great as it was before prohibition came into force.

Mr. KIRWAN: It is greater per head.

Mr. GUNN: The only difference prohibition made was that, instead of going into a bar and getting a drink, you now buy it wholesale and keep it in your locker. Well, I would not like to see a member of this House go over to the hotel across the way, and come into this Chamber with a bottle sticking out of his pockets and put it into his locker, and go out every now and then and take a nip. That would not be any advantage to the House. Under the circumstances, I think that I must vote against both the amendment and the motion, because I do not see the utility of closing this bar any more than any other bar. If it would make the people of Queensland or of Australia more sober if this bar were closed, or if any other bar were closed, I should be only too happy to support the motion. I have thought lately that it would be a good thing if a canteen was opened at the Enoggera camp. I have seen a great many soldiers, I am sorry to say, in the streets of this town the worse for liquor. Perhaps they meet their friends from the bush or from other places, and they are always welcomed and treated. It would be better for them if there was a canteen at the camp, and if the publicans in the city of Brisbane were prohibited from supplying them with liquor. It would put them out of their trouble, as they do not like to refuse their friends. As for the countries that do not consume liquor, I do not know that they are any better than the countries that do consume liquor. For instance, the Turks, as far as I know, are a very sober nation, but they are no more humane and no cleverer than other nations. The Hindoos are a very sober nation; I do not think that they are any better than any other nation. The Chinese are another sober nation; I do not think they are any better or any cleverer than any other nation. As a matter of fact, the nations that do take liquor seem to be more virile and better able to hold their own in this world than countries that do without liquor. It is a very moot question, and I would very much like to read up the question better than I have done before having to give a vote upon it; but, if it goes to a vote, I shall vote against the amendment and also against the motion.

Mr. DUNSTAN (*Gympie*): I was strongly tempted to give a silent vote on this matter, not because I have any hesitation in declaring my opinion on a subject like this, but because, personally, I am not addicted to talking very much at any time; but the plea has been put forward by the hon. member for Wide Bay that most of the supporters of the motion are those who do not drink at all. Personally, I am not a teetotaler, yet at the same time I heartily believe in this motion; and, if it goes to a vote, I shall support it. I hold that there is no real necessity for a liquor refreshment-bar amongst the general scheme of the comforts and privileges that are granted to members of this House. I think we can do without it, and there are good arguments for abolishing what may be a danger to certain members who have a weakness for liquor. We know that where a large body of working men are engaged—for instance, say, at Mount Morgan—no member of this House would agree to the establishment of a refreshment-bar in their midst to enable them to obtain liquor during their period of industry. Now, I think the same thing applies in regard to this Chamber, because, after all, we are not a superior class of

persons. The hon. member for Wide Bay referred to the spectacle of a number of members of our Defence Force lying in an intoxicated condition on the steps of an hotel, and he used that as an argument for broadening the scope of our efforts so as to abolish liquor outside for the good of the soldiers. Well, I would say that if we translate that spectacle in imagination to the steps of our own refreshment-bar, if we saw one of our own mates lying in that condition, I think the hon. member himself would be found voting for this motion to abolish that bar. That is one of the reasons why I support the motion. I would not like to see continued in this Chamber anything that would be a danger to a mate of mine. As for the amendment, I have been amused, even during my short time in Parliament, to notice the adroitness with which members of the Opposition bring forward certain amendments in order to catch the members of this party, and in order to avoid the necessity on their own part for voting straight out on the substantive motion. We know that the plank in our platform is "Nationalisation with a view to prohibition," and, in my opinion, nationalisation would come first, so that we shall abolish the incentive to private profit and conduct the hotels closely, so that we shall gradually abolish "shouting," for instance, and promiscuous drinking, and ultimately bring about a lessened desire for liquor at all. For that reason, I have no hesitation in opposing the amendment, while I give my full vote for the motion moved by the hon. member for Ipswich.

Mr. GILLIES (*Eacham*): I do not intend to waste the time of the House to any extent this afternoon, because I feel that this is not the time to discuss the whole of the liquor question. We all realise that over indulgence in intoxicating liquor is a curse. Any man who is worthy of the name of a reformer must recognise that. I often wonder to see men who talk about reforming the working classes shutting their eyes consistently to the great evil that liquor is, but I do not think this is the time to discuss that great question, because the Labour party have a clear and definite proposal in their platform for dealing with the question. After having been associated with the temperance movement for a quarter of a century, and having been a total abstainer all my life, I have come to the conclusion that the proposal of the Labour party to deal with this great question is the only sane proposal, because we realise that the great obstacle in the way of temperance reform to-day is the money power of the brewers and the publicans. (Hear, hear!) Therefore, I say the first step is to get free from the money power which opposes genuine temperance reform. The first step is for the State to nationalise, not only the sale of liquor, but its manufacture—start at the bottom and go right to the top.

Mr. MAY: Start at the breweries and work down.

Mr. GILLIES: Start at the breweries and work down, as the hon. member says. Seeing that the Labour party has a clear, definite, and sane proposal in its platform for dealing with this great question, I see no need to waste the time of the House this afternoon. I believe that the object of the mover of the amendment, whether he did it consciously or otherwise, is to defeat the motion.

Mr. BAYLEY: Not at all.

Mr. Gillies.]

Mr. GILLIES: No reason has been advanced this afternoon by any speaker why the bar of this House should not be closed. We are told that we are a temperate lot of people, and I endorse it; I have not seen anything since I entered the House to make me believe otherwise. If we are a temperate people, and do not require that bar, does it not occur to some speakers who have said that it would be a reflection on the morals of the people of this Chamber to abolish the bar, that it would be a reflection on the morals of the people to allow the bar to exist, because people outside will assert that the bar would not be there unless it was patronised by members of this Parliament? Strangers are not allowed to return the compliment when members "shout" for them. If we are a temperate body of men—and I agree that we are—there is no reason why we should not set a good example, especially in this hour of the nation's trial, when we should economise in every way, and close the bar of the House. I would do away with the disposal of liquor altogether in this State if I had my way, and if I could do away with it by a stroke of the pen, I would do so this afternoon. I do not think that the mover of the amendment had any real business in moving the amendment, because it would be a simple matter for the House to carry the motion and abolish the parliamentary bar. There is no occasion to discuss the whole of the liquor question this afternoon, but at a time like this when we want all the money we can raise, it is a disgrace to Australia that we spend 14,000,000 sovereigns every year in grog. We can imagine what good could be done with that £14,000,000, or even half of it. I venture to say that the half of that money represents the profits which are going into the pockets of the publicans and brewers. If we nationalise and control the liquor traffic we could do a great deal to alleviate the suffering in the country. The aged people are paid only 10s. per week pension while we are spending £14,000,000 in intoxicating liquor. This is not the time to deal with that question. The Labour party have it in their platform, and are going to deal with it at the right time and in the right place. I am satisfied that there will be no shirking of responsibility so far as this party is concerned. There is no occasion to waste any more time as far as I am concerned. I have never hesitated to make my position clear. I believe that every man worthy of the name of a reformer must realise that one of the greatest obstacles to the progress of this country is the liquor traffic. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I was not in the Chamber during the whole of the discussion, but I was here when the hon. member for Nundah seconded the amendment, and I was astonished at the revolutionary attitude taken up by that hon. member. I am pleased to think that to some extent he is progressing in his old age. (Laughter.) I am satisfied that if the hon. member is consistent in his attitude, when we bring forward our proposal for the nationalisation of the liquor traffic, he will be sitting on this side of the House. I am surprised at the attitude also of the mover of the amendment. I want to tell him that this party is an evolutionary party. We believe in going step by step to bring about reform. One of the first steps, in my opinion, is the motion moved by the hon. member for Ipswich. Some people say they will follow the King. Personally, I have no desire to

[*Mr. Gillies.*

follow the King, because I believe there have been a good many better men who have lived on this planet, especially in connection with the temperance movement, than the King. Many men have fought to bring about a better state of society, and one of the steps to bring about a better state of society is to do away with the drink evil. I am like my friend, the hon. member for Gympie, I am not a teetotaler, and I do not sail under false colours, but, at the same time, I am going to support the motion. I notice that the hon. member for Toowoomba is studying that little red book. (Laughter.) I am satisfied that as time rolls on and this party progresses—because it is a progressive party, it will have to keep moving on, because a standstill means death to any party—even the Liberal party will be very pleased to adopt some of the ideas in the little red book. We can speak to the amendment as well as to the motion. Personally, I am against the liquor traffic. My experience as an organiser in the various parts of the State has taught me to be opposed to the liquor traffic for all I am worth. I realise that the consumption of liquor is not altogether the cause of poverty, but I realise that it is one of the things which blocked me as an organiser in organising my fellow-workers, and I am satisfied that if the whole of the liquor traffic was wiped out, not only in this State, but right throughout the Commonwealth, it would not be in the interests of members sitting on the Opposition benches as representatives of the capitalistic class. The hon. member for Nundah knows that one of the best friends they have had in the past was the liquor traffic.

Mr. BRIDGES: It was your best friend at the last election.

Mr. COLLINS: I never hesitated when the question was put to me to define my attitude on the liquor question. I said that my attitude was the plank of the Labour party's platform, and that is my attitude this afternoon.

Mr. BRIDGES: The amendment gives it to you.

Mr. COLLINS: The red herring which has been drawn across the trail this afternoon is somewhat similar to the red herring drawn across it the other afternoon by the hon. member for Burke. We are not to be caught by chaff.

Mr. BAYLEY: There is no attempt to do it.

Mr. COLLINS: There is an attempt to do it. The hon. member is quite within his rights; we have been accustomed to these things being done before. We should commence in this House, and wipe out the bar here if we think the bar here has a tendency to destroy one man—and we cannot deny facts. We know that in the past men have come into this House fairly sober men, and have left this House not being as sober as when they came into it. I claim that, as the majority of the people of the State have to work and get their livelihood under the laws that we pass, that those laws, at any rate, should be passed by sober men. I want sober men to make the laws. (Hear, hear!) I have no time for men in a muddled state having anything to do in making the laws under which the people have to get their livelihood. Law-making is a very serious thing—the most serious thing we have on the face of the earth—and therefore we should have serious minds brought to bear on the mak-

ing of those laws. I can speak from experience. For fifteen years of my life I never tasted drink. For another fifteen years I was what is termed a moderate drinker. I suppose I can be classed as a moderate drinker, because I have had two spoonfuls of whisky during the last six months. (Laughter.) I have worked in the farthest north of the State. Some people may say I never worked at all, but I was one who helped to construct the Pine Creek Railway in the Northern Territory in 1886. Having worked in the northernmost part of the Commonwealth, I say that there is no need for drink to enable men to do their work. (Hear, hear!) I have had experience in the sugar districts, and I am pleased to say that the sugar districts have improved wonderfully during the past few years in the increased wages granted to the men. I know that some seven or eight years ago, when it was my lot to visit the sugar districts of Queensland, and wages were low and conditions bad, I used to deplore the fact that there were such a number of men hanging round the hotels looking for drink. I know that in the sugar districts last year the principal complaint of the publicans was that the men did not drink. I am very pleased to be able to give that testimony in this House—that the increased wages in the sugar districts has brought about a more sober class of men. (Hear, [5.30 p.m.] hear!)

In fact, I am prepared to say that, if we had our way, and if we had our native-born in the cane-fields, we would have a more sober class of men than we have there now, owing to there being so many foreigners in our cane-fields to-day. I have a great admiration for the native-born Australian, because he is not addicted to drink in the same proportion as the imported man. I am very proud of that fact. Therefore I shall have much pleasure in recording my vote for the motion. I would like to say to the mover and seconder of the amendment that this party intends to put the planks of its platform on the statute-book in their own way, and not in the way the Opposition propose to do.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COLLINS: I was a member of this Parliament in 1909, 1910, and 1911, and I was hurled out in 1912 owing to misrepresentation, and so forth. (Laughter.) When we were sitting in opposition when I was a member of this House, no matter how we used to reason the different questions the Government would not allow us to alter a single word in the different Bills they introduced. I am certain that this party, when it comes to deal with the liquor question, as it affects the whole of the people, will deal with it in its own way, and carry out that plank of its platform, and by doing so we will help to solve one of the biggest problems of modern society. We are an evolutionary party, and the hon. members for Nundah and Pittsworth have become revolutionary. I shall watch their career in this House, and when this party introduces some revolutionary or evolutionary legislation, I shall claim their support when we are dealing with big questions. In reference to the remarks that have been made about the soldiers walking about the streets in a state of intoxication, there is no one deploras that more than I do. I have seen it since I have been in Brisbane, and I

recognise that they would be better if they were sober. I also realise that these men are, to a certain extent, in a state of excitement, inasmuch as they are going to the front to fight the battles of the Empire, and they know that this will probably be the last opportunity they will have of walking up and down the streets of Brisbane.

Mr. McMINN: Staggring, you mean.

Mr. COLLINS: Who is responsible for the fact that they are staggering up and down the streets? The Liberal Governments have had control of the government for the past fifty years, and they have done nothing to prevent men from staggering up and down the streets. I am sure that if the Labour party had been in power we would have done something to prevent it. We would have made provision that no person in a bar should serve a man who was under the influence of intoxicating liquor. If these hon. members who suddenly become converted to the idea of doing away with the liquor traffic had done something before it would have been all right, but it is too late for the hon. member for Nundah to do anything now. He should have urged on one of the many Governments which he supported that they should do away with the liquor traffic; but he cannot do anything now, as he is in opposition. He had his opportunity before and did not avail himself of it, but now, with one stroke of the pen, he wants to do away with the whole liquor traffic.

* Mr. TOLMIE (*Toowoomba*), on rising, was received with Government cheers and laughter.

Mr. KIRWAN: I notice you have got the little red book.

Mr. TOLMIE: I am glad that members opposite show that they have a very kindly feeling towards me. I think that perhaps that is justified, because I am personally aware that I have always endeavoured to meet them with the utmost kindness in any matter I have been in communication with them. Even now I am disposed to help them to carry out their platform. (Government laughter.)

Hon. J. HUXHAM: Why didn't you think of that earlier?

Mr. TOLMIE: Well, I have made a start, and surely you ought to appreciate that. I can understand that we should hear expressions of pleasure from the hon. member for Bremer and the hon. member for Bowen—both B's, by the way.

Mr. COOPER: Beauty.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Brains.

Mr. TOLMIE: Perhaps I will be able to give some information to hon. members sitting on the other side, who, since they have become members of this House, have forgotten all about their platform to which they have been pledged. I may say that I have been a total abstainer all my life, and I have been a total abstainer from choice. I do not belong to any temperance organisation in Queensland or elsewhere. If it were possible to make men sober—and I believe to a great extent that it would make them wise thereby—I would be only too delighted to assist in doing it. I may say that I have voted for this motion before in this House, and I have also voted against it. (Govern-

Mr. Tolmie.]

ment laughter.) I made up my mind I would never vote for this motion again, because it was introduced year after year by an hon. member whom I thought was consistent in his advocacy of temperance, but on one occasion when he had an opportunity of taking a vote on it and having it carried in the House—everyone was anxious to pass it, and there was a full body of members present who were prepared to pass it—on that occasion the hon. member talked the motion out for the mere pleasure of having the opportunity of bringing it forward on some subsequent occasion. (Laughter.) I was so dissatisfied with his conduct on that occasion that I considered it was only done for the purpose of—well, I will not say what, as the hon. member is not in the House now, and I do not believe in saying anything about a man who is not here to defend himself. However, on that occasion I said I would not vote for the motion again, and the next year when it was brought up again I voted against it. So hon. members opposite are now aware that I have voted for the motion and I have also voted against it.

Mr. KIRWAN: What are you going to do this time?

Mr. TOLMIE: To use the language adopted by another hon. gentleman this afternoon, that will be disclosed in due course. (Laughter.) If we vote for the amendment moved by the hon. member for Pittsworth—

Mr. FOLEY: Don't be sarcastic.

Mr. TOLMIE: I could not be. I am too sweet natured to be sarcastic. (Laughter.) If we vote for the amendment, it gives the party opposite an opportunity of putting into effect a very important part of their platform. If hon. members sitting on the Treasury benches know that they have behind them the voice of this Chamber, then they will have an opportunity of proceeding—I won't say courageously, because I am not going to characterise them as lacking in courage—an opportunity will be given to them to go straight forward and put into operation the principle laid down in their platform here to nationalise the liquor traffic in all its branches. If, on the other hand, we do not pass the amendment, but we agree to the original motion, then we will have to send the motion to another Chamber, and they may not feel disposed to accept it and then the Government will be powerless. They will say, "What is the use of us doing it when the other Chamber has decided that we must not close the bar here?" But vote for the amendment, and then there is no necessity that the motion should go to the other Chamber at all. Here is a direction given to the Government by the members of the Assembly, and having given that direction all good Governments have listened to the voice of the Assembly, and it is for hon. members on the other side to say, if the voice of this Assembly is in favour of the amendment, whether there is a good Government there to carry it out. What is the use of beating about the bush and saying I am a temperance advocate, if I am only going to vote temperance just at the particular time that it suits me to do so, or perhaps when it suits my party? I feel that one or two hon. members who have spoken on the other side have taken their courage in their hands and have said that

[Mr. Tolmie.

even though "I am not a total abstainer I recognise what is the principle of our platform and I am going to see the platform carried through whether it is favourable so far as some people are concerned or whether it is not." You have had two classes of men speaking in this Chamber this afternoon. A class of man who says that it is part of the Labour platform to do away with the sale of liquor by private enterprise, and here we have an opportunity to put into force a very important part of the platform. We are told here in this book of yours with regard to socialism that "It is something that cannot be obtained all at once, that we must go forward step by step, and when we get an opportunity to get a quick step or many quick steps in succession, then it is up to us to take those steps." For instance, here it says—

"But we are also aware at the same time that although socialism is inevitable and cannot be prevented its accomplishment can be quickened or retarded by our actions."

Just think of those last few words. Now is the chance, now is the opportunity for those persons who believe in the truth of this little book to which I have given so much study during the course of the last week; studied so that I may be able to correct hon. members on the other side when they make misstatements. Not correct them in a spirit of harshness, but to set them on their feet and keep them in the right direction—

"Its accomplishment can be either quickened or retarded by our action."

Hon. J. HUXHAM: You have been a schoolmaster, you know.

Mr. TOLMIE: So has your leader been a schoolmaster, and the position of schoolmaster is a very honourable one, indeed—

"That is why the Labour movement should be class-conscious—that we may, by our deliberate effort and our calculated enthusiasm, accelerate the process of transition from private ownership for private profit to common ownership for the common good."

Do you believe in this objective of yours? Are you anxious to see carried into effect the proposals that are here before you? If you are, then I can see no reason but that you should support the amendment. It says here that the process—that is, in this case, the securing of the nationalisation of the liquor traffic—

"The process will be a gradual one, but it need not be a slow one. It will proceed step by step, but the steps may follow quickly upon one another, if so we are minded."

Here is an opportunity to give that impetus to it that is necessary to send it along. The question that appeals to me is: Are hon. members on the other side minded to carry out the objective laid down here in this little red book?

Mr. T. L. JONES: The amendment does not do it.

Mr. TOLMIE: The amendment does do it.

Mr. T. L. JONES: No.

Mr. TOLMIE: The amendment brings them to the ultimate conclusion of the proposition laid down here.

Mr. MURPHY: That is a quick step.

Mr. TOLMIE: It is a quick step. The objective is—

“State manufacture, importation, and sale of intoxicating liquor with ultimate view of total prohibition.”

It is in the forefront facing them. That is the objective that hon. members opposite have in view—total prohibition; and here by a very simple process the hon. member for Pittsworth wants to give them an opportunity of arriving at their objective. We do not want to be like Moses and keep the temperance people forty years in the bush before they come to the promised land. That will be the position of the Labour party. They can carry out their objective by carrying the amendment, and it will bring about total prohibition in the State of Queensland.

Mr. MURPHY: Do you think total prohibition would be a good thing?

Mr. TOLMIE: That is a question that I am not called upon to discuss. The idea that has entered into my mind is that when they see their objective so easy of accomplishment, these good men are not anxious to take all these good things. They want to see the whole of Australia brought into the movement at once, and it is, perhaps, because the other States of Australia are not so far advanced in regard to temperance ideals as we are here that though their objective is so closely within their grasp they want to hesitate. I would ask them in all seriousness to make up their minds in this matter and not hesitate any longer; to seize the opportunity given them by the hon. member for Pittsworth and vote for the amendment.

Mr. LARCOMBE (*Keppel*): It seems to me a remarkable instance of political duplicity to find the hon. member for Toowoomba giving expression to the remarks he has just made.

Mr. TOLMIE: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member justified by the Standing Orders of this House in saying that I am showing duplicity?

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order, and I must ask him to withdraw.

Mr. LARCOMBE: I do withdraw, but have I not an opportunity of proving my charge? I do not wish to disobey your ruling, Sir, but I would point out that the hon. member has spent his whole political life in denouncing the principles of nationalisation, and he is now urging the Labour party to put them into operation. If that does not justify my charge, then the English language has no significance.

Mr. MURPHY: But there is a difference between nationalisation and prohibition.

Mr. LARCOMBE: The hon. member's speech was directed wholly to this side of the House, with the view of showing that we are neglecting our duty on this occasion. The party on this side of the House know what their duty is and what their obligations and responsibilities are, and they are answerable, not to the hon. member for Toowoomba, but to the electors of the State for the way in which they discharge their obligations, and I have no doubt that when the time arrives we shall be able to show

that we have discharged our responsibilities logically and honestly. The hon. member seems to take a fiendish delight in quoting from the Labour bible, but he does not assimilate the philosophy and the ideals contained within the covers of the little red book. If he did, it would be better for himself and for the State, and he would come over to this side of the House and become a member of the reforming party, and do a great deal to abolish the evils that result from the drink traffic.

Hon. J. HUXHAM: He will be wearing a red tie to-morrow.

Mr. LARCOMBE: It is quite evident that, although the hon. member for Toowoomba has the little red book in his possession, he does not understand what is contained within its covers. The little red book deals with the liquor question in this way—

“State manufacture, importation, and sale of intoxicating liquor, with ultimate view of total prohibition.”

Mr. TOLMIE: With the ultimate view of total prohibition.

Mr. LARCOMBE: Exactly; with the “ultimate” view, not the immediate view. (Laughter.) There is a very wide difference between the two, and, surely, the hon. member can appreciate the difference. There is a reason for that word “ultimate.” That qualification is inserted because the Labour party realise that all reforms must be of an evolutionary nature.

Mr. TOLMIE: You will understand that, probably; I do not thoroughly understand it.

Mr. LARCOMBE: I understand that the hon. member does not understand it. (Laughter.) The hon. member put two and two together, and thought he had made a great discovery—a wonderful discovery—but, as a matter of fact, the Labour party are sticking to this platform in its entirety. We have to consider the evils of a matter and the best way of dealing with them.

Mr. TOLMIE: Is that what caused the row on Monday?

Mr. LARCOMBE: The hon. member will have an opportunity of telling us what occurred in the Liberal caucus a short time ago. He knows quite well that there was some great dissension there, and he also knows that there is nothing but peace, concord, and harmony among the members of the Labour party. There is no inconsistency in members on this side opposing the amendment, because we have a platform which proposes immediate nationalisation with a view to ultimate prohibition. That platform has been through the fiery furnace of experience, and it has proved eminently successful. In Western Australia, the Government have tested the policy of State control of the liquor traffic, and the result has proved a financial success as well as a success in other ways. It has not placed any burden on the community, and the money made from the running of hotels has been spent in providing reading-rooms and various forms of recreation and entertainment for those who visit those places. In houses where drink was supplied which sent men raving mad, the Government have

Mr. Larcombe.]

abolished that wild drink and supplied a splendid unadulterated article.

Mr. TOLMIE: I can quite understand that you have had some practical experience.

Mr. LARCOMBE: My practical experience with regard to the State working of hotels in Western Australia is what I have read in "Hansard" and other journals.

Mr. TOLMIE: I saw them in operation.

Mr. LARCOMBE: Yes; but the hon. member saw very little. If he will look up the State journals and the Auditor-General's reports for the last few years, he will find confirmation of my contention that the State management of hotels there has resulted in a profit, and that there has been considerable improvement in the entertainment provided for their customers. By the method we propose, by a gradual, scientific, and evolutionary progress, the people will be accustomed in time to the idea of total prohibition; but if the Government stepped in and brought about absolute prohibition immediately, the probabilities are that sly grog-shops would spring up and that other evils and objectionable practices would occur. If the policy of the Labour party is carried out, the matter will be placed on a sound basis, and will not result in any of those evils which would perhaps occur from a precipitation of this reform. But hon. members on this side of the Chamber realise that there is very little sincerity in the amendment; we realise that it has simply been moved in order to embarrass members on this side of the House.

Mr. BAYLEY: No such thing.

Mr. LARCOMBE: If members opposite are so deeply seized with a desire for prohibition in this State, why have they not introduced a specific motion dealing with the subject, instead of coming along and tacking on an amendment to a sensible motion moved by a member on this side of the House? The amendment is simply an attempt to place members on this side in somewhat of a difficulty or a quandary. The hon. member for Pittsworth should have submitted his proposal by a specific motion. I have my views as to the relevancy of the amendment, but the Speaker has already given his ruling in the matter, and I shall not discuss that aspect of the subject. If one refers to the great drink reformers, like Frances Willard, Robert Blatchford, and others, one will find that they state that economic conditions are of vital importance in dealing with the drink question. Miss Willard has said that if she had her life to live over again, she would devote it to socialism, because socialism is to bring about the reformation of the human race, and the abolition of drink and other evils will follow. Remarks made by our industrial judges confirm that statement. Mr. Justice Higgins has time and again pointed out that sobriety and family life depend upon economic conditions, and that is one reason why he has given the awards he has done in the Australian Arbitration Court. That is a view we can all understand. We can understand that when men are overworked and underpaid, they have no encouragement to engage in the study of science, or literature, or sculpture, or painting, or any of the ennobling arts which other people better situated pursue.

[Mr. Larcombe.

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

INSPECTION OF SCAFFOLDING BILL.

INITIATION.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*), in moving—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirability of introducing a Bill to make better provision for the inspection of scaffolding,"

said: The intention of the Bill is to separate that part of the Machinery and Scaffolding Acts which relates to scaffolding from the other part, and deal with it under a separate measure. Certain alterations have been made, but they are not of any great importance. Hitherto this part of the Inspection of Machinery and Scaffolding Act has been administered by inspectors having entirely different qualifications from those who administer the provisions relating to machinery. Another notice of motion deals with the question of the amendment of the Act so far as it deals with the inspection of machinery, and there are more important alterations taking place in regard to that.

Question put and passed.

INSPECTION OF MACHINERY BILL.

INITIATION.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS, in moving—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirability of introducing a Bill to make better provision for the inspection of boilers and other machinery,"

said: The intention of this measure is to confer on the department greater powers in relation to inspection and to bring under the provisions of the law certain machinery which at present is not subject to inspection. For instance, certain machinery which is used by the contractors for the sewerage works is not under the control of the inspectors, and the department has no power to see that certificated men are employed to watch the safety of the men. That particularly applies to plant working underground. It is also intended to extend the provisions of the measure to bring in other descriptions of machinery which is not now liable to inspection. That, practically, is the gist of the measure.

Question put and passed.

WORKERS' ACCOMMODATION BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(Mr. Coyne, *Warrego*, in the chair.)

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. Lennon, *Herbert*), in moving—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to provide for the proper and sufficient accommodation of workers,"

said that he thought it would be a proper thing for him to give a brief outline of the objects and scope of the measure at this

stage. It was well known that the legislation of this character had been applied only to shearers and sugar-workers. There had been very great complaint—and very justifiable complaint indeed—right throughout the Western district of Queensland, and other places, that legislation of that character should exist for only two favoured classes. Nobody could justify at all, on any grounds, why sufficient and suitable accommodation should be provided for shearers, and no care should be taken to provide for station hands generally. So the object of the Bill was to bring in many other sorts of workers. To enumerate them briefly, they were—sugar-workers, all employees on stations, sawmills, meatworks, docks, bridges, railways, tramways, and such other occupations as the Governor in Council might direct. As the title of the Bill implied, it was very wide in its scope. By Order in Council it could be extended to include workers in practically any walk of life, but it was especially designed to deal with rural workers, using that word in its primary sense—workers in the country. There were some difficulties in the way so far as meatworks were concerned. Nobody would think of providing accommodation at the meatworks in Brisbane and other large cities and towns; and, consequently, they were not included except so far as they might be by the Governor in Council. Another very important feature of the Bill was also, he thought, justified by circumstances. Hitherto they had had only three properly constituted inspectors under the Act. Nobody for one moment would argue that they could do the work, or half the work, and as a result it had been neglected. The Bill would provide for the appointment of additional inspectors, whilst they were making a departure in appointing as many as might be required of officials who would be styled honorary inspectors, who he thought would be sufficiently interested in the duties they performed to do the work faithfully and well. Another very important feature in the Bill was that it did away with all limits. Under the old Act there was a limit of nine employees; it was inoperative unless the employer had nine shearers or sugar-workers in his employ.

Mr. TOLMIE: It will apply if a man employed only one person?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: If he considered it necessary to have his case inquired into, the employer could be required to provide the accommodation.

Mr. TOLMIE: Will that include agricultural homesteads—farmers?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It would if the Governor in Council so desired, but the Bill did not itself bring agricultural employees under its provisions. Of course, it would be readily understood that it might be necessary to apply the provisions of the Bill to cities and towns, because he understood that at places such as Longreach and Barcaldine and Winton there were large woolscours, and in some cases many men lived there. In such cases it would be necessary—and desirable, too—to apply the Bill to those places, but towns and cities were specially exempted from the operation until the Governor in Council, moved by the necessities of the case, extended the provisions of the measure to them.

Mr. SWAYNE: Does it deal with selections?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It did not deal with selections, but as the name—Workers' Accommodation Bill—implied, the Governor in Council could apply it to practically any class of employees.

Question put and passed.

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

FIRST READING.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE, the Bill was read a first time, and the second reading was made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

REGULATION OF SUGAR CANE PRICES BILL.

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I have to congratulate the Secretary for Agriculture on the very clear exposition which he gave when making his second reading speech in connection with the Bill now before the Chamber. He dealt very fully with the subject, though, perhaps, on some matters he did not lay very great stress, and these may be alluded to as the debate proceeds. The hon. gentleman first laid emphasis on the great importance to Queensland of the sugar industry. About that there cannot be any doubt, either as to the amount of production, the number of people engaged in the industry, or in many other ways. The importance of the industry was very clearly stated by the Royal Commission which was appointed some years ago, and the statement of the commission is well worth reading now, and is one with which we can all more or less agree. The commission say, on page 21 of their report—

“While the social aspect of the sugar industry is more important than the industrial, the political aspect is perhaps more important than either. Unsettled areas in the tropical parts of Australia are not only a source of strategic weakness. They constitute a positive temptation to Asiatic invasion, and may give to the white Australian policy a complexion which must inevitably weaken the claims of Australia to external support. As we have already remarked, the ultimate, and in our opinion the effective, justification of the protection of the sugar industry lies beyond questions of industry and wealth production. It must be sought in the very existence of Australia as a nation.”

That is a very serious statement as to the industry, and I believe it is one that we must generally admit. Not only is the industry of national importance, but it is of very precise importance to Queensland from the point of view of the amount of money that the State itself has invested in it. Something like £600,000 has been invested in the direction of central mills, and it may be well to look at the Bill from the point of view of its effect upon the investments of the State in respect thereof. I understand, as was stated by the hon. gentleman, that the Bill will apply equally to central mills and to other mills; that is to say, boards will be appointed to deal

Mr. Macartney.]

with the price paid for cane by the central mills as well as with the price paid by private mills

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is so.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The hon. gentleman did not say what differentiation will take place between the prices to be paid by central mills in view of the investments that have been made by the Government. There is nothing to show under what heading in clause 12 the matter will be taken into consideration. It may be under the last general heading, "Any prescribed matters." If that is so, it would be desirable that some further light should be thrown on the matter as the debate proceeds. There will, of course, be differences of opinion in connection with the Bill. I do not think this side will be altogether unanimous with regard to it. The subject-matter was before the Chamber in 1913, when opinions were freely expressed from both sides of the House. Some hon. members then on the Government side of the House and now on this side were in favour of the Bill introduced at that time by the hon. member for Burrum. The Bill now before the Chamber is pretty much the same as the Bill before the House on that occasion. I have a copy of the Bill of 1913, and, on comparing it with this Bill, I find that it is pretty much on the same basis. Perhaps the cardinal difference is the provision in this Bill for a central board instead of a court of appeal.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: This Bill deals with the price of cane, and the other Bill did not.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I see the point the hon. gentleman tries to make; nevertheless the results in either case are practically the same. Perhaps the only other difference is that under the Bill of the hon. member for Burrum a board could only be called into existence on the request of two-thirds of the cane suppliers, whereas twenty can make the request under this Bill. To all intents and purposes the two Bills are the same, and I think the hon. gentleman must admit that.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The other Bill did not propose to appoint check chemists and weighers.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I am quite free to admit that there may be some minor differences.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, very important differences.

Mr. MACARTNEY: They may be important; nevertheless, the Bill is built on the framework of the Bill introduced by the hon. member for Burrum.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The whole thing is built on the recommendations of the Royal Commission.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The hon. gentleman says the Bill is built on the recommendation of the Sugar Commission. If it were built on the recommendation of the Sugar Royal Commission, I do not suppose we would be discussing it here to-night, because the recommendation of the Sugar Royal Commission was that not only should the cane prices be fixed but that at the same time the price of raw sugar should be fixed.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Yes; but it was a power to fix prices just the same.

[Mr. Macartney.

Mr. MACARTNEY: That is beside the question. The hon. gentleman says it is a recommendation from the Sugar Royal Commission, but it is not a recommendation from the Sugar Royal Commission; and that was one of the objections raised by the late Premier when the Bill was at its second reading stage in 1913, because the recommendation of the Royal Commission was that the prices of cane as well as the prices of raw sugar should be fixed, and that practically it was only competent for the Federal Government to do it. I think the argument of the hon. gentleman on that case was sound. But the objection I take to the Bill is this—and I do not depart in the slightest degree from the attitude I assumed on a previous occasion—I object to it on the ground that it is contrary to the well-recognised principle of freedom of contract.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It departs from the Liberal platform?

Mr. MACARTNEY: Yes, it departs from the Liberal platform, as we knew it then.

Mr. SMITH: It "splinters every plank of the platform."

Mr. MACARTNEY: The hon. member can use any language he likes. I say it is contrary to the principle of freedom of contract; it is contrary to the right of citizens to control their business, and it operates as a restriction on private enterprise. It also takes us a long distance along the road to nationalisation of our industries. I know that my opinions from that point of view are not going to seriously affect the result; the majority of the House is to be found on the other side. They have adopted the Bill which has been put forward by an hon. member on this side, and it is going to get some measure of support from this side of the House. I say, therefore, that I would only be beating the wind if I were to enter into a long debate on the point of view I have raised. I say, nevertheless, that if the principles which are contained in this Bill are to be passed into the law of this State, then there is no industry—there is no product of the State—that may not be subject to the same treatment. It seems to me that in course of time we may have a board dealing with every product of the State—that we will be a board-ridden country. The provisions in this Bill seem to me to provide unnecessary boards.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Surely members of your profession find appeal boards very useful at times?

Mr. MACARTNEY: I do not know that that enters into the question of the present Bill in any way. But it is going to interfere very largely with enterprise, and I think the hon. gentleman will yet find that there is some foundation for the objection when it is looked upon from the point of view of settling and building up the business of the State. (Hear, hear!) This is not altogether the time to too much interfere with private enterprise. However, as I have said, I am not going to beat the air from that particular point of view. I may say that the hon. gentleman—fairly as he has dealt with the second reading of the Bill—failed entirely to make out a sufficient

case for the change which this Bill proposes to make. I do not think that a sufficient case was made out on the prior occasion.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Are you aware that the farmers of the State have been desiring it for years past?

Mr. MACARTNEY: I cannot say that I am aware of it. I understand that the sugar industry from the farmers' point of view is a profitable one, and I do not think that that would happen if the conditions had not been favourable. I met an official of considerable intelligence when I was visiting the North, and he voluntarily offered the opinion to me that he thought that one of the greatest troubles in connection with the industry was the fact that the profitable nature of the industry attracted men who had not sufficient experience of farming, and the result was dissatisfaction in many cases, and very largely contributed to the claims which were made for the introduction of a measure like this. I do not know that there is not something in it, because we know that those men who take up land in North Queensland and go in for canegrowing have done remarkably well, and that the prices of their land have gone up to fabulous figures, at any rate in comparison to the value of the other farming lands of the State. If that is so, it seems to me that it is at least a part explanation of the demand which has been made; and if I remember aright, when the Bill was last before the House, the dissatisfaction was particularly centred in one mill—that was the Doolbi Mill. I thought then, and I think now, that sufficient attempts were not made to bring about a reasonable understanding between the millowners and the canegrowers before this drastic legislation was introduced. I think that ought to have been done, and I think it could have been done.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: This party are looking to this Government to rectify that.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The hon. gentleman may or may not be right. There is no doubt that human nature has to be considered. I think that the weakness of human nature was stimulated by the suggestion which was offered to the sugar-growers by the introduction of this Bill in 1913. The hope of getting something more than they have been getting in the past is stimulated, and I have no doubt that they have demanded the Bill at the present time in the hope that the industry is going to be still more profitable than it has been in the past. What does the sugar-grower expect?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Like "Oliver," he will ask for "more."

Mr. MACARTNEY: He will take it, and probably ask for more. That does not make the system which it is proposed to establish any the more wise, or any the more acceptable. The Bill seems to me in principle to require practically two awards, and I think that one award might meet the case. The local board has to make an award, and that award is to be made before a certain part of the month of April in every year. It was pointed out—and, I think, very forcibly—by the late Minister for Railways, that it was really impossible in the month of April to fix a fair price, and he gave his reasons in the following words:—

"I fail to see how any board, however

it may be constituted, can possibly carry out the principle of this measure and fix any given price for cane on the sugar contents of the cane on such a date, because the cane is then in the last stage of growth and is arrowing, and at that time the sugar contents are at their lowest."

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: 21st April?

Mr. MACARTNEY: If that is so, then any award which the local board may make in the month of April can only be guess-work. I notice that the Bill provides in subclause (5) of clause 12—

"Every award shall be deemed to contain the following provision:—

"The base price fixed by this award may from time to time be changed, whether by increase or decrease, by a decision of the central board, if they are satisfied upon an application made to them by the local board or any party bound by the award that the circumstances or conditions existing when the award was made have so changed that a change in price is fair and just. And the base price fixed by this award shall thereupon be changed in accordance with such decision."

That will mean that in every case there must be a second award, because as the months go by the sugar markets may change up or down, and then the price—it must be argued—ought to be also altered, and the consequence will be that you will have two awards in every year. It appears to me that a provision which provided for an equitable advance in the first instance would have much simplified the position, and probably saved a considerable amount of expense in the administration of the Act—because I notice that the administration of the Act is going to be expensive. There is to be a central board, the members of which will have to be paid fees; there will be a secretary—a permanent officer, who will have to be paid a substantial salary—and other provisions of the Bill provide for chemists and a variety of other officers, not including the weighmen, which the hon. member referred to last night. This entails a large army of officers to carry out the administration of the Act, in addition to the local boards, which will involve the payment of fees, and necessary officers.

In Committee, perhaps, some of [7.30 p.m.] these points may be elaborated.

Now, I notice in the Bill that unusual powers are given to the Governor in Council. The hon. gentleman said last night that they were entering upon a somewhat new undertaking, and the effects of it might not be understood just now, and it might be possible to enlarge the functions of the board and their powers; and, instead of making provision in the Act, it was proposed to give the power to the Governor in Council to do it by Order in Council or by regulation.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Is not that a sensible thing to do?

Mr. MACARTNEY: It may be a sensible thing to do, but it is not a usual thing for this House to extend its powers of legislation to any great extent to the Governor in Council. Some subsidiary things are usually

Mr. Macartney.]

left to the Governor in Council, but it is not usual for the Governor in Council to be able to extend—and largely extend—the operations of the Act under power such as is comprised in subclause (6) of clause 4, which provides—

“For the purposes of this Act, the central board shall have and may exercise all the powers, authorities, and jurisdiction vested in them from time to time by the Governor in Council by an Order in Council.”

That is practically giving the Governor in Council full legislative authority to extend the provisions of the Act. I think it is a wise practice which leaves in the hands of the House the enactment of its own legislation, merely giving to the Governor in Council the ordinary administrative powers. Again, I do not think it is wise for other reasons. There are matters of a contentious nature that ought to be discussed on the floor of this House before they are carried into the form of an Order in Council. I mention, in passing, that I asked the hon. gentleman last night if it was proposed to add to the cane price fund in any other way than by the levy which is referred to in one of the provisions of the Bill. The hon. gentleman apparently did not grasp what I asked him, because he answered in the negative, whereas I find a provision in subclause (6) of clause 12 that is rather interesting in a way, and it is one that requires an amount of looking into. It provides—

“The regulations may provide that, notwithstanding any award, a lower price than that fixed by such award shall be payable to the canegrower in any case where the labour conditions under which the sugar-cane is grown, harvested, or delivered to the mill are in any respect unsatisfactory to the Minister, and that in such case the difference between such lower price and the price fixed by such award shall be paid by the millowner to the central board, to be by them placed to the credit of the sugar-cane prices fund.”

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Does it not naturally follow that any funds must relieve them of the previous levy?

Mr. MACARTNEY: It may naturally follow that the canegrower would be relieved of the levy, but this clause provides a certain addition to the funds which may enable them to do without a levy. That goes without saying, else what is the object of this? Is the object of this clause to pay for the administration of the Act itself at the expense of the cane grown by black labour?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is regulating the conditions of labour.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The hon. gentleman says that it regulates the conditions of labour, but the conditions of labour are regulated by other Acts which have been passed from time to time by this House. This clause seems to be handing to the Minister who will be administering the Act a special power to differentiate between the grower of cane whether the growers are aliens or white men or whether they employ aliens or white men,

[Mr. Macartney.

and thus provide, perhaps, for the administration of the Act in toto at the expense of those differentiated against.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Hardly probable, surely?

Mr. MACARTNEY: The hon. gentleman says it is not probable. I point out that when I raised the question last night the hon. gentleman did not touch the clause at all, consequently we are entirely without any explanation as to what is the principle covered by this clause.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The principle is the same as in other Acts which you assisted in passing.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I do not think so; I do not see the analogy at all.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Your Chillagoe Act, for one.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I do not remember anything particular in connection with that Act. It is because it gives general power to the Minister administering the Act—the power to differentiate—and we have not had the slightest expression of opinion from the hon. gentleman as to what might happen under that particular clause. There are many important aspects in a provision of this sort. It looks as if the fund is to be increased at the expense of coloured labour, or alien labour—labour lawfully in the country under the laws of the Commonwealth, of which, so far as I can understand, there is only 5 per cent. engaged in the sugar industry. I may not be quite right in those figures, but those are the figures I have obtained, and I would like to ask, is it necessary—

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Is it necessary to preserve the industry?

Mr. MACARTNEY: Is it necessary to differentiate in the growing of cane by aliens, seeing that the wages are the same? I understand that the coloured alien gets the same wages as a white man. It cannot be for that reason. Is it because they are not lawful citizens? It cannot be that. When “White Australia” was established I am rather inclined to think that Queensland got the worst of “White Australia” from that particular point of view. The coloured aliens came to Queensland, but, being here, I think the least we are entitled to do is to treat them humanely. Is this provision intended to starve them out of the country although they are here lawfully?

The PREMIER: Who do you want to starve out of the country?

Mr. MACARTNEY: I am talking about the men who are lawfully here. Surely if the subject has got to be tackled, it ought to be tackled in a straightout way instead of in an indirect way like this.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You know that that is not a right thing to say.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I can see no objection to saying so. When we were dealing with the Sugar Acquisition Act a few weeks ago, in which there was a similar provision, I particularly pressed the Treasurer to say whether it was proposed to make a certain differentiation in regard to cane already grown and forming part of this

year's crop, and the hon. gentleman said most distinctly that it would not be just, and that we might be sure it would not be done. Yet, in a proclamation which was published shortly afterwards—it was published on the 5th August—authority was given to the Treasurer to apply that very differentiation, so far as I can read, in regard to the crop of 1915.

The PREMIER: That is not being made retrospective.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The crop of 1915 was the crop planted last year, and certainly would be the crop dealt with in April of this year if this Bill were in force. Is that not so?

The PREMIER: What did the proclamation say?

Mr. MACARTNEY: The proclamation says—

“1. The price of the raw sugar acquired under my proclamation dated the thirtieth day of June, 1915, ratified and confirmed by the abovementioned Act, payable to the late owners of such raw sugar respectively, shall be as follows:— At the rate of £18 per ton 94 per cent, net titre, upon the Treasurer being satisfied that the said raw sugar has been produced and manufactured by labour and under conditions approved by him; or at such rate per ton not being less than at the rate of £13 per ton 94 per cent, titre as the Treasurer may fix in cases where the Treasurer is not so satisfied as aforesaid.”

That is giving an authority to the Treasurer to differentiate to the extent of £5 per ton, notwithstanding the fact that the Treasurer stated it would be unjust to take any retrospective action under the clause contained in that Bill.

The PREMIER: It is not intended to operate that proclamation retrospectively.

Mr. MACARTNEY: That is the difficulty we are in. A Bill was passed including a clause containing some definite powers, to which I took exception at the time, such as I am referring to now.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Don't confuse that with this. This Bill is retrospective as regards its operations.

Mr. MACARTNEY: It cannot be retrospective in the same sense as the other. I am only pointing out the necessity for an explanation in connection with the intention of the clause. Without entering too fully into the matter for the moment, I ask, why should the Premier seek at the present time to introduce matters of this sort into the legislation brought before the House? We have had it suggested that this is not the time for controversial legislation. I know that hon. members on the other side do not agree with that. The fact that they are going on with this legislation shows that is so. There is a class of legislation upon which this very closely impinges, and it is well worth considering whether it should be proceeded with at the present juncture or not. Although the Opposition here is pledged and ready and willing to help the Government in connection with all matters

that appertain to the war, yet it is our manifest duty to the country, when measures are brought forward, to see that they are sufficiently explained, that they are understood, and that justice is done to the people of the State.

The PREMIER: Whom do you think will be done an injustice?

Mr. MACARTNEY: I think that this Bill contemplates what will be an injustice.

The PREMIER: To whom will the injustice be done?

Mr. MACARTNEY: An injustice will be dealt out to those who are growing cane by coloured aliens, and to those who are growing cane with the assistance of coloured aliens.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You think we should look after the interests of the coloured aliens?

Mr. MACARTNEY: I do not think the interests of coloured aliens should be specially looked after; but I do say that, whether a man is black or white, humanity should be recognised, and mere justice done to him. (Hear, hear!)

The PREMIER: That will be done.

Mr. MACARTNEY: These men are lawfully in this country and lawfully employed; and, unless the clearest of cases can be made out to the contrary, they should be treated as law-abiding citizens of the country.

The PREMIER: That is exactly what we are doing.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The hon. gentleman says so, but I am not quite so clear that it is so, because that proclamation that I have just read—in face of the assurance I obtained from the Treasurer—is enough to make people think. The hon. gentleman says it is not a matter that will be put into operation. What is the use of promulgating a proclamation if it is not intended to be put into operation?

The PREMIER: I said it was not intended to be put into operation retrospectively. There is every intention to put it into operation.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Then the hon. gentleman is going back on what he said a few minutes ago in regard to an injustice.

The PREMIER: I said that it would not be retrospective.

Mr. MACARTNEY: If the proclamation is not going to be used to do an injustice retrospectively, do I understand that it may be done otherwise?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Don't the Commonwealth propose to discriminate?

Mr. MACARTNEY: I am not here to justify the Commonwealth; I am only here to deal with this particular Bill. I do not wish to extend the argument at the present moment, but perhaps when we get into Committee we shall be able to speak a little more plainly.

The PREMIER: I will disclose something later on which will expose some of your friends.

Mr. Macartney.]

Mr. MACARTNEY: The hon. gentleman is perfectly at liberty to let the truth out, whoever it applies to.

The PREMIER: I am not at liberty to let the truth out; that is the trouble. There are certain things that I am not at liberty to let out, and the hon. member knows it quite well.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I understood you to refer to some of my friends.

The PREMIER: There are some things you cannot disclose, holding a position such as I do, and you know that.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I have not had experience in that regard. Perhaps, if the hon. gentleman took me a little more into his confidence, I would understand how it is.

The PREMIER: You know that there is such a thing as a secret despatch, and that sort of thing cannot be disclosed.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I am not asking the hon. gentleman to disclose anything of a secret nature.

The PREMIER: No; but you are touching on matters that makes it almost necessary, if it is necessary to explain.

Mr. MACARTNEY: If that is so, I can assure the hon. gentleman that, if he can give me any explanation without going into secret despatches, I will respect his confidence. I can only deal with the Bill in the light of its provisions and statements made by Government members in this Chamber and in the country. There is another principle to be found in clause 17 dealing with the right of intervention by the Crown, and I would like to know just what that "right of intervention" means. Does it mean that the Crown can appear on matters before the central board or a local board on behalf of any of the parties? Because, if that is so, we, at any rate, ought to place some limit to a provision of that sort. Perhaps the Committee stage will be the proper time to discuss that, but I invite the consideration of hon. members to that phase of it. I do not propose to take up the time of the House at any greater length. It seems to me that the sugar-growers will have to "pay the piper" for the administration of this Bill, and it is just a question of whether the advantages to be gained thereby will be as great as are expected. The Government keep the matter entirely in their own hands, and yet apparently contribute nothing towards its expense.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We contribute largely through the experimental stations.

Mr. MACARTNEY: That is quite another matter. I can only say, speaking for myself, that should by any chance the second reading go to a division, I shall be found, if the only one in the House, voting against it.

Mr. COLLINS (*Bowen*): I have much pleasure in rising to support the second reading of this Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Bill. Anyone who knows the electorate that I have the honour to represent knows full well that it is one of the largest sugar districts in the State of Queensland. One of the questions before the electors in that district at the last election was that of

[*Mr. Macartney.*

a Sugar Cane Prices Bill. In fact, the hon. member for Burrum, who has been credited this afternoon with being the father of this proposal, was sent to the Bowen electorate with the object of defeating me in my candidature; but I may inform the House that the mere fact of his visiting the electorate meant 200 or 300 votes to me, because the sugar farmers there, of whom there is a large number, were very anxious indeed that a measure dealing with the fixing of the price of sugar-cane should be passed by Parliament. I am satisfied that I got a fair percentage of their support, owing to my advocacy of a measure similar to the one now before the House. We do not say that this measure is going to be a solution of all the troubles of the canegrowers. It is an evolutionary measure, and is something new. The leader of the Opposition stated that it does away with freedom of contract. I should like to know whether there was freedom of contract in the fixing of the prices to be paid for cane in the past. Was there freedom of contract in the Colonial Sugar Refining Company's districts? The position in those places was that the company said to the canegrower, "This is the amount you are to receive for your cane," and the grower had to accept that amount. Where did freedom of contract come in there? Where there is freedom of contract the canegrowers as well as the millowners should have a voice in fixing the price to be paid for the cane. The leader of the Opposition also said that this measure goes a long way towards nationalisation. As time goes on it may be that the sugar industry will have to be nationalised, but we on this side believe in going one step at a time. We are a new party, we are out to make history, and we shall have to make new departures. I was surprised to hear the leader of the Opposition say that sugar-growing is profitable to the farmer.

Mr. MOORE: So it is.

Mr. COLLINS: I am sorry to hear that statement, because it is evidence that the hon. member has not studied the income tax returns for 1913. In that year only 2,040 farmers in the whole of Queensland paid income tax—

Mr. MOORE: They were all sugar farmers.

Mr. COLLINS: And we have nearly 5,000 sugar farmers in Queensland. The majority of the sugar-growers for a number of years have not been in a position to pay income tax, and that shows that they are not well off. I have travelled about among the farmers as well as the sugar workers—especially in districts where the Colonial Sugar Refining Company operates—and I found that they were anxiously looking forward to the passage of this Bill. I hope that the measure will pass through this House, and that we shall get the support of the Country party. Of course, I understand the attitude of the leader of the Opposition; he is going to oppose the measure. If he did not, he would be very inconsistent, because when a similar measure was before the House in 1913 he used these words—

"I say, unhesitatingly, that this Bill splinters every principal plank in the Liberal platform and adopts straight out to the same extent the platform of the Labour party."

I thank the hon. gentleman for using those

words, because they are responsible for my return to this House. Hon. members will know that the Mulgrave Mill in the past has paid high prices for cane. Last year I happened to be in the Herbert River district when the Victoria Mill and the Macknade Mill crushed over 200,000 tons of cane. If the growers of that cane had been paid the same prices as were paid to the growers for the Mulgrave Mill, that would have meant £50,000 to the farmers for that one season alone; and, what is true of the Herbert River district is true of other districts. This measure proposed to give to the farmers to a large extent that which they produce, and that is what this party stands for.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Give it to us, then.

Mr. COLLINS: We shall deal with you later on—one step at a time. We are at present dealing with the regulation of cane prices. This Bill proposes that there shall be a local cane prices board, and that the sugar-growers shall elect a representative on that board. Is not that democratic? For the first time in the history of Queensland the sugar-cane growers will have the right of saying what value shall be put on their product. As I said years ago, the sugar farmer has been in a very peculiar position, as he has been forced to accept what value other people put on his cane. Now, we are out to change all that, and my friend, who claims to represent the farming interest, seems to object to it. I am satisfied that there is not a sugar-grower in Queensland

who will object to this proposal. [8 p.m.] As I told my friend, he will learn, as I have learned, that we are an evolutionary party—one step at a time. This is a very big step. The leader of the Opposition said it was a very big step, and that it was going a long way towards nationalisation. Still, if a step towards nationalisation means better conditions for the sugar-growers in Queensland, why should we not go that step towards nationalisation? (Hear, hear!) My friends of the Country party from time to time think that they represent the farming industry of Queensland. But the men on this side of the House—who represent the sugar industry right from Bundaberg to the Mossman—represent the most important farming industry in the whole of the State; because we know, as the Minister for Agriculture told us last night, that over 20,000 persons are employed in the sugar industry in Queensland. (Hear, hear!) And do hon. members think that we are likely to introduce legislation that is going to ruin that industry? Nothing of the kind. At any rate, that is not the opinion of the farmers I represent—and I can claim to represent them, too, because there are centres in the electorate of Bowen which consisted of nothing but farmers, where I polled over a two to one majority, owing, as I said before, to the visit of the hon. member for Burrum, who introduced the measure and then ran away from it. I am pleased to see that this measure includes all the mills in Queensland—even the central mills. I know that sometimes some of our friends who believe in private enterprise tell us that the central mills are not doing as well as they ought to do. I know that is true in respect to many of them, and that there is any amount of room for improvement in connection with the system, inasmuch as if we have £100,000 invested in a mill, and the capacity of that mill is 100,000 tons of cane annually, and

they are only passing through 40,000 or 50,000 tons, how can we expect that mill to pay? That is the position of many of our central mills; and the Government, I am willing to admit, will have to take action in districts where those central mills are. They will have to step in and grow cane themselves in order to keep the mill going.

Mr. FORSYTH: If you do not get the rain, how are you going to get the cane to grow?

Mr. COLLINS: That is so; but there are districts, as the hon. member for Murrumbidgee knows, where there is any amount of rain. Any amount of rain falls in the Mossman; but, if my memory serves me right, on only one occasion has that mill crushed to its full capacity—otherwise, to 100,000 tons. For many years it has put through 36,000 or 40,000 or 41,000 or 51,000 tons, where it should crush 100,000 tons. But, while I say that they must take the necessary steps to cultivate the land, I am satisfied that under this proposal—that is, by giving to the grower a good price for his cane—production will be stimulated. That is what is going to happen when the farmer finds that he is going to get from 5s. to 7s. or 8s. more per ton for his cane. The hon. member for Murrumbidgee shakes his head, but I say that I have read in the newspapers already, even in my own electorate, that that is so. I was reading the other day that owing to the Government having fixed the price of sugar at £18 per ton—and I suppose owing to the fact that they know we are a party who keep our promises, and are going to carry the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Bill—men who have got land under irrigation on the Burdekin—and the hon. member knows that more land is irrigated on the Burdekin than in any other part of Queensland—all those men who have irrigated fairly large areas are planting more cane in anticipation of this measure being placed on the statute-book.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COLLINS: I know all the canefields of Queensland, from Nambour to Mossman; I have walked over most of them, and, therefore, I claim to know something about the sugar industry, and I am satisfied that when this measure is passed the only people who will complain will be the large mill-owners and the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, which has six mills in Queensland. They have had this "freedom of contract" that the leader of the Opposition referred to ever since they have been growing sugar in Queensland, and no doubt they will resent, as all private enterprise does, any legislation that tends to limit their profits. But we are going to live in a new age altogether. A new time is coming, and we are approaching the fixing of prices all over the world. The old schools of political economy are being swept on one side. They have outlived their usefulness, and mankind is finding that all that is required is a little common sense, and not a lot of high falutin' in works on political economy. (Hear, hear!) They have learned that, and they are looking to this party—as a party of common sense—to do something for them.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: It will stick to you as long as you live—collaring our butter.

Mr. COLLINS: I wish the hon. member for Drayton would leave butter alone. (Laughter.) We are dealing with something

Mr. Collins.]

far sweeter than butter now, and something far more important, maybe, to the people of Queensland.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: No.

Mr. COLLINS: With all due respect to the dairying industry, it does not employ nearly as many people as the sugar industry, and I am satisfied that it does not pay the same rate of wages.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Question!

Mr. COLLINS: I remember that one of the largest sugar-growers in North Queensland—the second largest sugar-grower—who was crushing 4,000 or 5,000 tons of cane, told me that he was voting Labour at the forthcoming election. I asked him why, and he said, "Why would I not? I am a grower for the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, and over the way is another mill paying from 4s. to 5s. more per ton for their cane than I am getting from the Colonial Sugar Refining Company." I am sure that the hon. member for Drayton, if he were a sugar-grower, would be strongly in favour of this Bill—in fact, he would be one of its best supporters.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Certainly. I am going to support it.

Mr. COLLINS: My electorate is one of the biggest sugar districts in Queensland, and, in my opinion, it is capable of producing sufficient sugar for the whole of Australia when it gets going properly, and here is a letter which the secretary of the Lower Burdekin Farmers' Association wrote to me—

"Lower Burdekin Farmers' Association,
Limited,

"Ayr, 16th August, 1915.

"Dear sir,—Your letter of inquiry re prices. A letter has been posted to you to-day on the present situation. And in addition I give you the prices asked for the last ten years:—1905, 19s. 8d. per ton, including 4s. 8d. bounty; 1906, 18s. 8d. per ton, including 4s. 8d. bounty; 1907, 19s. per ton, including 7s. bounty; 1908, £1 per ton, including 7s. bounty; 1909, £1 per ton, including 7s. bounty; 1910, £1 per ton, including 7s. bounty; 1911, £1 5s. 10d. per ton, including 7s. bounty; 1912, £1 4s. 11d. per ton, including 7s. bounty; 1913, £1 5s. 11d. per ton, including the Government 9s. 2d.; 1914, £1 4s. 1d. per ton, including the Government 9s. 2d.

"Yours faithfully,

"J. H. THORNTON, Secretary.

"Chas. Collins, Esq."

As most hon. members know, Mr. Drysdale owns two very large mills on the Burdekin—the Pioneer Mill and the Inkermann Mill—and those are the rates received by the growers for those mills. Then they forwarded me the following letter:—

"Lower Burdekin Farmers' Association,
Limited,

"Ayr, 12th August, 1915.

"Dear sir,—As the all-important subject, 'the price of sugar-cane,' is now occupying the attention of the Govern-

[Mr. Collins.

ment, my association thought it would be useful to you, and probably helpful to us, to give you a little information as to how the recent acquisition of the raw sugar for the coming crushing was likely to affect the growers in this district.

"Enclosed herewith is some tabulated information from which you will be able to ascertain the relative position of the growers and millers as regards the crushing just begun; but before you consider the figures it would be as well for you to understand the system under which we have been paid for the past four years and under which we will be paid, I presume, this year unless the Government dictate otherwise, which is as follows:—

"With raw sugar at £12 per ton we receive 16s. 6d. per ton of cane with 1d. rise or fall per ton of cane for every 1s. rise or fall in the price of raw sugar; to this, of course, has to be added the 3s. 2d. per ton in lieu of bounty.

"Now, dealing with line 1, from this you will see that last year raw sugar, having been worth £14 15s. 6d. per ton to the miller, we received £1 4s. 1d. per ton for our cane; on a 7½ tons basis the millers paid us £9 0s. 7d. for cane sufficient to make 1 ton of raw sugar, which left him (the miller) a gross profit of £5 14s. 11d. per ton of sugar, or 15s. 3d. gross profit per ton of cane.

"Now, unless other arrangements are made, we will receive as per line 2 £1 9s. 5d. per ton of cane with raw sugar at £18; the miller will pay us £11 0s. 7d. for cane to make a ton of raw sugar, which will leave him £6 19s. 4d. gross profit per ton of sugar, or 18s. 7d. gross profit per ton of cane. On comparing the two lines you will find that the growers will get an increased price of 5s. 4d. per ton of cane, whilst the miller will benefit to the extent of 3s. 4d. on every ton of cane crushed.

"Probably you may be under the impression that the growers here are well off as regards the price they are paid for their cane as compared with prices elsewhere; this is not the case, for wherein as a district supplying cane under the Colonial Sugar Refining Company's p.o.c.s. system we should have received last year at least £1 6s. 8d. instead of £1 4s. 1d., and the chances are £1 8s. or £1 8s. 6d. would have been nearer the mark.

"Sugar-cane, like every other produce, varies greatly in quality, and consequently varies greatly in value. The cane here is, however, on the average absolutely the richest in sugar of all the cane grown in Australia, and consequently should command the highest price obtainable. Here it only takes 7½ tons of cane to make a ton of sugar, whilst in other centres it runs as high as 9½ tons to 10 tons. In view of this fact it is quite possible that whilst growers in other parts may have received £1 1s. or £1 2s. per ton, they were really receiving a better price than we in proportion to the value of the cane supplied.

"Had the Government not taken the steps they have, and had our price for cane been regulated as heretofore by the

progress at all. I am proud that this measure was left to be introduced by the hon. member for Herbert. Although I represent a large sugar district, I believe he represents one far larger, and one of wonderful expansion, owing to having the heaviest rainfall in this State, while I have the honour to represent the place that has the second heaviest rainfall. In the hon. member's electorate at Innisfail a fair amount of rain has fallen, and at the Proserpine end of my electorate there has also been a fair amount. I am pleased that I have lived to see a Bill introduced to do something for the primary producer. I have said for years that the only hope for the farmers of Queensland was by joining hands with the Labour party. (Hear, hear!) They joined hands with us last year, and, with the exception of the Mirani sugar district, the Labour party represents every sugar district north of Bundaberg. (Hear, hear!) Does anyone imagine for a moment that, as a party, we are likely to introduce legislation to destroy that industry—an industry in which the leader of the Opposition told us we had over £600,000 invested in our central mill system? The Secretary for Agriculture told us there was over £6,000,000 invested in the industry. "Knibbs" tells us that in 1912 there were employed in the sugar industry in the Commonwealth 27,380 white persons, [8.30 p.m.] and 1,383 coloured persons. We know that the bulk of those persons are employed in Queensland. I am satisfied that, within a short time after this Bill is placed on the statute-book, it will so stimulate the sugar industry in Queensland that there will be a demand for more mills, and that in the space of two or three years instead of having 27,000 employed in the industry in the Commonwealth we will have from 40,000 to 50,000 employed in it.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*): 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 Tuesday next.

The House adjourned at half-past 8 o'clock.