

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 22 DECEMBER 1916

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

FRIDAY, 22 DECEMBER, 1916.

The SPEAKER (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*) took the chair at 10 a.m.

SUGAR EXPERIMENT STATIONS ACT
AMENDMENT BILL.CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL'S
AMENDMENTS.(Mr. Bertram, *Marce*, in the chair.)

On clause 5—"Grub-infested areas"—

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. Lennon, *Herbert*) moved—That the Council's amendment on line 14, omitting the words "less than one penny" and inserting the words "more than one half-penny" be disagreed to.

Mr. SWAYNE: Under the original Act, power was given to rate up to 1d., but mostly the rate levied was ½d. He did not know about last year, but during the three previous years the rate collected was ½d., and that was found to be ample and to leave a credit balance in the fund. This measure gave the Minister power to assess the canegrowers without any limit, and that was undesirable and unnecessary, even though a highly paid official was to be appointed to deal with the pest, as the Commonwealth Government were to contribute £1,000 per annum towards his expenses for at least two years. He considered that the amendment was a reasonable one, and should be accepted by the Minister.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: The particular industry on which this special taxation was to be imposed bore more than its fair proportion of taxation, and that was unjust. The sugar industry gave employment to a very considerable number of mechanics and working men, and this legislation would place a burden on the grower of sugar-cane which was calculated to render less his ability to give employment to working men. This was sectional taxation, and that was undesirable. The burden should be distributed over the whole community, and the Commissioner should endeavour to assist the sugar industry, as by doing so they would benefit the State. He agreed with the views of the hon. member for Mirani respecting the amendment, and trusted that the Minister would see his way to assist the sugar industry by accepting the amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He proposed to refuse this amendment and all the other amendments made by the Council in this particular Bill, for the reason that he knew that the amendments did not come from the sugar-growers, but came from the millers, or the Australian Sugar Producers' Association, which was doing the work of the millers. They desired to alter the whole scheme of the Bill, and to make the Minister who administered the Bill a mere debt collector. He would have to wait the pleasure of the local boards to be appointed, and when those boards issued what would practically be a precept on the Minister, he would have to make a levy throughout the State and collect the money and hand it

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over to the various boards to distribute as they might decide. That was a position the Government could not accept. The Government desired to retain their control over the administration of the Act, and that was why he moved that the Committee disagree to the Council's amendment.

Mr. SWAYNE: The question was whether the Minister should have unlimited power to tax. He thought some safeguard should be imposed, and it was his intention to move in that direction. The Minister's references to certain organisations did not apply.

Question put and passed.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE moved—That the amendment of the Council omitting lines 32, 33, and 34, be disagreed to.

Mr. SWAYNE: The disagreement with this amendment would not interfere with his right to move an amendment on the next clause in regard to the same subject.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE moved—That the amendment of the Council inserting new clause 6 be disagreed to.

Question put and passed.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE moved—That the amendment of the Council inserting a further new clause be disagreed to.

Mr. SWAYNE asked the Minister if it was his intention to administer this Act entirely from the department?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: This will not become an Act.

Mr. SWAYNE: What was the Minister introducing it for?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I am sending it back to the Council; I must observe the usual procedure.

Mr. SWAYNE: He was dealing with the measure on the assumption that it would become an Act, and that it should leave the Assembly in the best possible shape. The amendment of the Council dealt with local control, in regard to which he had had some experience, and it was most desirable that there should be local control. Was it the intention of the Minister to do away with all local control whatever?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I will make no alteration in the present circumstances.

Question put and passed.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The Council had inserted another new clause to follow the one last mentioned. He moved—That it be disagreed to.

Mr. SWAYNE moved—That the Council's amendment be agreed to, with the exception of subclause (3), 35, 36, and 37, referring to endowment. It was only a fair thing that the community should provide some endowment by way of assistance to those directly concerned in the primary industries; the burden of destroying these pests should not be thrown entirely on the shoulders of those concerned in the industry. Hitherto there had been a proportionate endowment to the amount levied, but now the amount of endowment was restricted while the power to levy was increased. He hoped that the Minister, even at this late hour, would reconsider his ultimatum that he was not going to give any assistance towards coping with these pests. The Government had already

reduced the endowment for marsupial destruction, and their policy all through was to deprive the man on the land of any assistance from the consolidated revenue in dealing with pests.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will see that his amendment is out of order, as it is a direct negative.

Mr. SWAYNE: Will he be in order in moving the omission of those lines with the view of substituting others?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member may vote against the motion of the Secretary for Agriculture.

Mr. SWAYNE: Would he then have the right to further amend? He desired to retain the new clause with that exception.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member would be in order if the clause is retained in further amending it, but if the clause is not retained he will not be in order.

Mr. CORSER: The most serious trouble was the fact that the Government were now attempting to do away with any subsidy at all for the destruction of these pests.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is not so.

Mr. CORSER: Many of these pests were propagated on Crown lands, and from the roots of shrubs. The canegrowers wanted assistance to destroy not only their own pests but those propagated on Crown land. The hon. member for Mirani sought to protect the sugar industry, but unfortunately the Minister could not see eye to eye with the sugar farmers, and was going to deprive them of the assistance which was never denied them under past Administrations.

HON. W. D. ARMSTRONG: He did not like to raise any factious objection, but he thought the dictum laid down by the Chairman was open to question.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE rose to a point of order. The hon. member for Lockyer had missed his opportunity. He should have objected to the Chairman's ruling before the hon. member for Burnett had spoken.

HON. W. D. ARMSTRONG: As he had said he did not rise factiously or in any bellicose spirit, but to put the House right. The Chairman would understand that he had no ulterior motive in raising this question. He was just giving some information on the position that arose.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It is hard to know what your motives are.

HON. W. D. ARMSTRONG: He raised the question because if the Council's amendment were carried it would stand and could not be amended. He just rose to explain the position so that similar action could be taken in regard to similar actions in future. He was within his rights in speaking on the question, no matter what the Secretary for Agriculture might do.

* The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He could not understand the statements of the hon. member for Mirani and the hon. member for Burnett with regard to the intentions of the Government. It was pro-

vided under the Bill that the Government would not contribute more than it already contributed, that was half of the total sum. That would continue as it was at present. Hon. members would see the point absolutely. He therefore moved—That the amendment of the Legislative Council be disagreed to.

Question—That the amendment of the Legislative Council be disagreed to—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 22.

Mr. Armfield	Mr. McMinn
„ Barber	„ McPhail
„ Collins	„ O'Sullivan
„ Dunstan	„ Payne
„ Gilday	„ Pollock
„ Gledson	„ Ryan, D.
„ Hunter	„ Ryan, H. J.
„ Jones, A. J.	„ Ryan, T. J.
„ Kirwan	„ Smith
„ Lacombe	„ Stamford
„ Lennon	„ Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. Gledson and Mr. McPhail.

NOES, 12.

Mr. Armstrong	Mr. Gunn
„ Bebbington	„ Hodge
„ Bell	„ Morgan
„ Bridges	„ Swayne
„ Corser	„ Tolmie
„ Grayson	„ Vowles

Tellers: Mr. Bebbington and Mr. Corser.

Resolved in the affirmative.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The Council proposed another new clause which would subordinate the Government to the local board. He moved—That the new clause be disagreed to.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had disagreed to the whole of the Council's amendments in the Bill. The report was adopted, and the Bill ordered to be returned to the Legislative Council with the following message:—

“ Mr. Presiding Chairman,—

“ The Legislative Assembly, having had under consideration the Legislative Council's amendments in the Sugar Experiment Stations Act Amendment Bill, beg now to intimate that they—

“ Disagree to the amendments—

“ Because there has been no general wish expressed by the growers for the organisation proposed by the amendments and because the amendments, if accepted, would, by their operation, impose subordination on the Government.

“ W. McCORMACK,
“ Speaker.

“ Legislative Assembly Chamber,
“ Brisbane, 22nd December, 1916.”

WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT
AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

HON. J. A. FIELLY (*Paddington*): This Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Bill really completed the Workers' Compensation Act which became law last session. I do not propose to make a long speech on

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the measure, or to describe the different hardships suffered by those unfortunates who become afflicted with diseases of an occupational nature. Some little time before I entered Parliament I was greatly impressed by a speech made by the present hon. member for Kennedy, Mr. O'Sullivan, when he went into detail about the different diseases that affected miners in his electorate. I was struck very much by the helplessness of the wives and families, by the sufferings of widows and orphans, and by the invalids themselves. More recently these facts were brought directly under my notice by mining members sitting on this side of the House. I must thank them for the assistance they have given me in formulating the Bill. The Bill is necessarily of a most complex nature. It gave the Ministry and the insurance actuaries a good deal of trouble, and it would have been introduced last session or early this session but for the utter impossibility of arriving at something definite as a basis to go on. I referred to the helplessness of the families of those afflicted by the different diseases, and when I emphasise that hitherto the families of those people have been dependent upon voluntary effort or chance charity, members will understand that something of this nature should have been introduced and placed upon the statute-book years ago.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. J. A. FIELLY: I am glad to say that the mining members in Parliament prevailed upon the Government last session, pending the passage of this Bill, to give direct help to those who are afflicted, and the Home Secretary has been supplementing the Commonwealth invalid pension by a substantial amount, and through the State Children's Department he has also given very generous allowances to the children of those concerned.

The Bill itself is a simple one of a few clauses, although, as I have mentioned, the subject-matters are unusually complex. If I just bracket together the principles underlying it, and then dwell for a moment upon the main points, I think I will be giving sufficient information to the House to satisfy members. First of all, I will deal with the diseases themselves, and, secondly, with the compensations or benefits given to disabled workmen or the families of disabled workmen. I will then touch upon the system of revenue, how we propose to finance a fund, and following that I will show how that fund will be worked, and lastly, just in passing, I will mention the provisions dealing with newcomers in the industry. I think it must be recognised that any newcomers in the different industries concerned cannot possibly be allowed to come in on the same terms as those at present engaged in the industry.

First of all, the diseases dealt with are those mentioned in the first table. These include—

“Wool-combing.

“Wool-sorting.

“Handling of hides, skins, wool, hair, bristles, and carcasses.

“Any manufacturing or other process involving the use of lead or its preparations or compounds.

“Any manufacturing process involving the use of mercury or its preparations or compounds.

“Any manufacturing process involving the use of phosphorous or its preparations or compounds.

“Any manufacturing process involving the use of arsenic or its preparations or compounds.

“Any work involving the handling of meat or the manufacture of meat products or animal by-products in connection with the trade of a butcher or slaughterman.”

The individual affected by this table will have all the compensations provided in the present Act. There will be no system of pension or allowance. The present Act will be applicable in every way to them. It is considered that that will be a practicable scheme. The same difficulties are not encountered in these occupations as are encountered in the mining industry, but provision is made so that any other occupation can be added. If the Insurance Commissioner in his annual analysis of insurance facts and workers' compensation facts finds it necessary to include some other occupation he can do so by simply promulgating a regulation including it amongst these occupations. The second table of diseases deals with persons engaged in mining, quarrying, stone-crushing, or cutting. We have quite a different scale of compensation for persons who are suffering from diseases contracted while engaged in those occupations, and I will read the provisions for the benefit of hon. members. For those suffering from miners' phthisis, and those who die from miners' phthisis, the scheme is rather elaborate. Where death results, there will be a funeral allowance not exceeding £20, and the widow will receive £1 per week, and 10s. per week on account of each child under fourteen years of age. It is provided that the maximum allowance shall not exceed £2 10s. per week, which is exceedingly generous for new legislation, and yet only fair and equitable. The subclause dealing with this matter says—

“Provided that the total amount payable shall not exceed fifty shillings per week or the sum of four hundred pounds in all, less any amount paid as compensation under provision B hereof during the incapacity of the worker within ten years prior to the date of death.”

Subclause (B) provides that—

“Where total or partial incapacity for work is the result—

(i.) To the worker a sum not exceeding one pound per week during the incapacity, with such necessary medical comforts and medicines as the Commissioner may consider reasonable.”

Total incapacity is infinitely worse for a family than the actual death of the sufferer, because it means that they have to support the invalid, finance him, and supply him with various delicacies and medicines. While on this point, let me hope that this measure is only the forerunner of a general nationalisation of what may be placed under the heading of health. It is a commentary upon our present-day system that while we make ample provision for education, the health of the child is neglected. We do not care for the child while he is at school. We compel him to go to school, but we do not see that the child is nourished or that he has good health so that he may absorb any

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learning that comes his way. Provision to meet cases of this kind may very well form the basis of a scheme which will come later for insuring the worker against sickness and disease, but such a scheme cannot be introduced at present on account of lack of funds. It is further provided that for each child under the age of fourteen years a sum of 10s. per week shall be payable during the incapacity of the worker or until the age of fourteen is reached. The total allowances to any worker are not to exceed £2 10s. per week, or the sum of £400 in all, irrespective of the period during which the incapacity may continue. Unfortunately, we have no means of ascertaining an actuarial standard for this fund. The Government will subsidise the fund very liberally, but while trying to be as generous as possible up to a limit we may appear to be niggardly. That is why the total amount payable to a worker is limited to £400, or a maximum allowance of £2 10s. per week. Subclause (3) provides that—

“Where a medical practitioner (or, on appeal, a medical referee) certifies that the worker's condition is capable of cure or mitigation by special hospital or sanatorium treatment, the Commissioner, in lieu of paying to the worker the compensation provided in provision B (i.) above, may arrange for the worker to be removed to a hospital or sanatorium for such special treatment.”

The reason for that subclause must appeal to hon. members. Where an individual can be cured, we propose to reserve to ourselves the right to elect what shall be done with him. Under paragraph 19 of the schedule to the Workers' Compensation Act a lump sum may be paid and accepted as a reasonable compromise for an ordinary industrial accident. Unfortunately, under the old Workers' Compensation Act the Insurance Companies would not give a lump sum, or if they did they would cut the amount down materially. They would cling to the £1 per week as long as possible, in order to obtain profits from the transaction, as their profits might be materially increased in the event of the injured worker dying, whereas a lump sum settlement might mean a distinct loss to the company. The State Department has decided to do the fair thing with regard to accidents, and we pay a lump sum in every case, and the referee or magistrate can decide what that lump sum shall be. We cannot apply that policy to miners' phthisis, because the worker must be protected. A person afflicted with the disease might desire a lump sum of £200 or £300, and it might be against his best interests to give him anything but an allowance of £1 per week. If he has a chance of recovering from the disease, the Insurance Commissioner may find it necessary to send him to a sanatorium in order to bring about his recovery.

Now, I come to the system of revenue. The premiums to be paid by employers in the different industries affected will not be loaded very much—comparatively only a trifle—and the Government, for the first three years, will subsidise the fund to the extent of £10,000 per annum, or as one-third to two-thirds.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Will the premiums be paid by all employers?

HON. J. A. FIELLY: No; only the employers engaged in the particular industries enumerated in the tables.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Have you any idea of the degree of loading?

HON. J. A. FIELLY: No. I think it will be so light as to surprise the employers in those industries.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: They stand in need of surprises in that direction.

HON. J. A. FIELLY: I recognise that employers in the mining industry do, at the present time, stand in need of some sort of a surprise of that nature, and I think we are giving them that surprise, because the Government are providing £10,000 per annum out of the taxpayers' pockets for the first three years, and £5,000 per annum for the next three years. Another important point is the provision which deals with men who are not at present in the industry, but will hereafter come into the industry. Men who go into the industry after the 1st January next will have to be examined, and obtain a certificate showing that they are not suffering from the disease and are not predisposed towards the disease. It is well known that many persons are particularly susceptible to this disease, and so we have provided that no new employee shall enter the industry until he receives a certificate such as I have mentioned. That will be a protection to the fund, and it will also be a protection to those who will receive benefits under this Bill. We hope that in eight or nine years we shall have the mortality rates reduced considerably under this provision. If it were possible to have the young men at present engaged in the different industries examined, it would be a good thing for them and for the country, but I am afraid that is beyond the scope of this Bill.

I conclude by saying that this measure is an advance step, and one that should be welcomed by the members of the community generally. We are taking upon ourselves the burden of providing for a large section of the community whose welfare has been absolutely disregarded in the past, and who have been left to chance charity or voluntary effort or to certain tottering funds. Sometimes a fund has become fairly robust, but it is a tottering fund because it depends upon a levy on the workers, and the workers cannot afford to contribute to such funds.

Mr. CORSER: That is a libel on the worker.

HON. J. A. FIELLY: The worker is never afraid of being told the truth, and any fund which is built on the voluntary system is a failure, just as an effort on the part of the Commonwealth to endeavour to get money to carry on the war under the voluntary system would be a failure.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: You are doing that in Queensland now.

HON. J. A. FIELLY: We are not doing that. At any rate in matters of this kind it does not do to leave the employees at the mercy of the moneyed classes. The old age pension is justified because the old people were neglected, and this scheme is justified because these workers [11 a.m.] were neglected, and every other scheme for the benefit of the worker can only be properly justified on a

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taxation basis and when taken away entirely from dependence on voluntary contribution. I have much pleasure in moving the second reading of the Bill. (Hear, hear !)

Hon. J. TOLMIE (*Toowoomba*): I do not intend to detain the House very long in considering this Bill. We on this side are all in sympathy with the measure, which will give great benefit to a number of individuals. I hope that those who are likely to benefit by the measure are not as numerous as the hon. gentleman seems to think they are. The measure takes in all those classes of employment, which, at the present time, tend to injure the health of those who are engaged in them. I am pleased to hear the Minister state that the scope of the Bill is so wide that the Commissioner will be able to add further classes of employment if it becomes necessary.

The scheme for taxation for providing the funds is, in my opinion, a very good one. The hon. gentleman says that he is going to put the burden upon those people who are engaged in the industries, and that is a very reasonable provision to make. I would not have taken exception to it if the hon. gentleman had stated that he was going to make the application general, because the health of the community must be our very first consideration.

Hon. J. A. FIDELLY: I think that at the end of a few years, we will be able to do that.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: Any means that can be devised for improving the health of the people ought to be adopted by the Government. I do not think the taxation is likely to be very heavy, but, in any case, it is taxation which ought to be imposed, because we have no right to ask persons to engage in an industry that is going to be injurious to them.

There is one clause dealing with the restriction on employment. The object seems to be a reasonable one; that is, to make such provisions as can be devised for the restriction of the number of those annually engaged in the industry. Taking the Bill all round, it is one which we can pass quickly through the Chamber. I think the advent of the Christmas must have softened the hearts of the Government in this direction.

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*): On behalf of my electors, many of whom suffer from this complaint, I desire to congratulate the Government on the introduction of this measure, and the leader of the Opposition on the kindly assurances he has given for its speedy passage. I am sure that no measure has ever been introduced in this Assembly that will give more needed relief to the mining community. There are many gloomy homes in Queensland which will be brightened with the knowledge that this measure is passing through the House. Not only that, but we will be able to make the Christmas of these sufferers more happy, and every member will have a brighter Christmas in the knowledge of the happiness that this Bill will bring.

Mr. STOPFORD (*Mount Morgan*): When we consider what it has cost the mining companies to provide proper machinery to allay the dust in the mines under legislation introduced for that purpose, I think we can say that the mining companies have nothing to complain of if we ask them to pay a little

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extra premium to make the end of these unfortunate sufferers a little easier than it was before.

Hon. J. A. FIDELLY: Mining companies would be paying private companies more under the Workers' Compensation Act than they would under this measure.

Mr. STOPFORD: No matter how great the compensation is, it is no real compensation for the injuries of these men. The companies in my electorate will welcome this measure although it will mean for the first year or two an added premium. I hope the measure will pass through all its stages as quickly as possible.

* Mr. O'SULLIVAN: This is a great measure of improvement which we have been asking for in season and out of season. When we were in opposition, we urged that it was the duty of employers to sustain those who were prevented through this disease from following their employment. I congratulate the Minister on the introduction of the Bill, which will be appreciated throughout the mining community. I was glad to hear the kindly expressions of the leader of the Opposition. I hope that the Bill will have a speedy passage, and that it will be the precursor of other beneficial measures, both in this State and in the Commonwealth, and that now that the workers have come into their own, their best interests will be looked after. In the past we were looked upon as dreamers when we asked that those workers who were injured or victims to diseases of their occupations should be a first charge on the State.

Question put and passed.

COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. Bertram, Maree, in the chair.*)

The whole of the clauses of the Bill were agreed to without discussion.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill without amendment.

THIRD READING.

The Bill was read a third time, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council for their concurrence by message in the usual form.

POSTPONEMENT OF ORDER OF THE DAY.

Hon. J. A. FIDELLY: I beg to move—That consideration of Order No. 3 be postponed until after the consideration of Order No. 4.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: We ought to have some information as to the reason for this.

Hon. J. A. FIDELLY: It is merely because the Minister in charge of item No. 3 is engaged elsewhere for the moment. He will be back in a few minutes.

Question put and passed.

HEALTH ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

* The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. Huxham, *Buranda*): I feel very satisfied that hon. members will give the same consideration to the Health Bill as they have

given to the Bill introduced by the Minister for Justice. This Health Act Amendment Bill is very comprehensive. We have gone over a number of years and we find that there are weaknesses in the Health Act which are necessary to amend at the earliest possible moment. I have to admit that the Bill has come late in the session, but I feel satisfied that hon. members will grip the situation and recognise that we are doing the right thing in adopting the important suggestions brought forward by the Commissioner of Public Health. The consensus of medical opinions throughout the State is that it is necessary to have a measure on our statute-book which will be effective for many years to come. I am not so optimistic as to believe that what we are doing now will answer for all time. As circumstances arise, which require to be dealt with, we will deal with them. At any rate, everything that can be done so far as protecting the health of the community is concerned will be done by the present Administration. We are not opposed in a matter of this sort. We recognise that the health of the community is the one important fact to care for. We recognise that the people who have not the necessary medical attention should be cared for by the State or the local authorities. It is far better to let them be a burden upon the community rather than that the wellbeing of the community should suffer through the spread of any disease. I am sure that members on both sides will recognise the importance of this Bill and give it the kindly attention it deserves. It is a matter which the Commissioner of Public Health has given a great deal of consideration to. Since I have been in the chair at the Home Department I have been frequently asked when an efficient Health Bill was going to be brought in. I have discussed the matter with members of the medical profession generally, and they are of opinion that this Bill will grapple with many evils that we are faced with and will go far to remove them. The most important amendment of this Bill deals with what is known as the "red plague." We know what a great amount of concern the red plague has given to the general community throughout Australia. In New Zealand also they have tackled the matter. At no time in the history of the world has the subject of venereal diseases been brought so prominently in front of the people as it is at the present time. It is the most insidious and most awful scourge we have in the community. We know that one of the medical practitioners in Brisbane, and an important member of that profession, said that he would rather sleep in the same room as a leper than be in the same room with one who suffered from either consumption or venereal disease. That is very striking evidence from a man of that experience. I know from my own experience when I was a youngster that one boy in the school, as a result of using a dirty towel, lost an eye. I know other cases where this disease has been communicated to innocent persons through using a towel or some instrument. I know where innocent people drinking out of a cup that had just been used by a person suffering from this disease also contracted the disease. I know that there are a number of people in the community who may be quite honest in their views on this question, but who are misguided enough to say that we should not grapple with this disease as we are doing.

We have done much in the last eighteen months. We have made provision to see that each case is properly handled and not in a public fashion. Even the lowest women in the town can have their cases properly handled, and they will not be held up to public scorn in any way. Any unfortunate girl who comes to the doctor for medical treatment will have her case dealt with without being shown up in any way. Dr. Moore's activities up to the present moment, so far as this scourge is concerned, have been highly commended. We have been fortified by the views of Dr. Moore, and we have had the benefit of his experience and his activities in finding out the weaknesses of the present Act, and we are endeavouring to alter them in order to grapple thoroughly with this question. We are making provision that any person suffering from a venereal disease shall be compelled to report himself and remain segregated until he is cured. The whole thing will be done quietly. That will appeal to hon. members generally. It will be done quietly, but it must be done deliberately. There must be no "monkeying" with the question. Those who contract the disease by openly soliciting will be dealt with in the same way as those who contract the disease in an innocent manner. They must all be segregated and put in a position where they will be cured of the fell disease. If they are not segregated and attended to, it might have the effect of them losing their lives. It is not only the individual who has the disease who is concerned; it affects those who follow for many generations. They also have to be considered. If I were addressing a community that was not seized with the facts of the case I would say that it would be downright cowardice on the part of anyone if they did not attempt to get a drastic remedy for dealing with this matter. Last year a commission was appointed by the Federal Parliament to deal with this question, and they brought up a very fine report and submitted certain recommendations. This Bill is based on the recommendations in that report. Similar legislation to this has been adopted in Western Australia. We recognise, after we place an Act on the statute-book, that certain weaknesses become disclosed. When these weaknesses are pointed out then subsequent legislation is introduced which remedies that which is lacking. The commission appointed by the Commonwealth to inquire into this matter consisted of Mr. James Mathews, M.H.R., chairman; Professor Sir H. B. Allen, Dr. J. H. L. Cumpston, and Dr. A. Jeffreys Wood. The opinions of those medical gentlemen cannot be gainsaid. They had ample opportunity to investigate this question before they brought up their report. The report was presented on the 24th May last. The Bill we have before us re-enacts a number of the provisions in our existing Health Act of 1911. The provisions of the Health Act of 1911 were before the Federal Commission. We are virtually the pioneers in dealing with this matter, because our Health Acts on the subject were largely used by the gentlemen engaged in inquiring into the matter on behalf of the Federal Government. They incorporated much that we have already done, and we in turn are taking something of what the commissioners recommended themselves. Western Australia followed on the lines recommended by the commission.

The main principles of the 1911 amendment which are embodied in this Bill are as follows:—

- (a) By making venereal disease a notifiable disease.
- (b) By providing free treatment by means of dispensaries where persons would be enabled to get the necessary attention and medicine for the purpose of effecting a cure.
- (c) By making provision for the treatment of venereal disease at hospitals.
- (d) By providing for clinical and bacteriological examination of persons, whether male or female, suspected of being infected, and requiring such persons to submit themselves to examination.
- (e) By making it a punishable offence to convey the infection to another person by a person who is known to be diseased.
- (f) By detaining any person suffering from venereal disease, whether male or female, in a hospital or other suitable place until such person is no longer infectious.
- (g) By detaining a person undergoing imprisonment, even though the sentence has expired, until such person is no longer infectious.
- (h) Requiring prostitutes to submit themselves for examination.
- (i) By preventing the treatment of persons, whether male or female, suffering from venereal disease, except by a medical practitioner or a person acting under his direction or a registered chemist, a chemist or person who, respectively, has a permit from the Commissioner of Public Health to dispense a prescription, prescribe any medicine or drug, or sell any proprietary medicine or drug.

The new features of this Bill relating to venereal disease are as follows:—

- (a) By requiring every person, whether male or female, who is suffering from venereal disease to consult a medical practitioner and undergo treatment until he or she receives a certificate of cure.
- (b) By requiring every person under treatment who changes his medical adviser to inform his new adviser of the name and address of his last previous adviser, so that the latter may advise the patient's former adviser.
- (c) By requiring every medical practitioner to report to the Commissioner of Public Health the names and addresses of any of his patients who have not consulted him for four weeks, where he has not received a notice from another medical practitioner of the transfer of the case.
- (d) By requiring every medical practitioner to warn their patients, by written notice, of the dangers of venereal disease, the legal consequences of infecting others, and against marrying before they have received a certificate of cure.
- (e) By privileging a bonâ fide communication of a medical practitioner in

attendance on an infectious patient, who persists in his intention to marry, to the parent or guardian of the person to be married.

- (f) By requiring medical practitioners to give a certificate of cure, in prescribed form, when a patient becomes cured of the disease.
- (g) By making provision for the Commissioner of Public Health to conduct bacteriological and other examinations for medical practitioners free of charge.
- (h) By providing that the act of any person, whether male or female, who marries while suffering from venereal disease without informing the other party before marriage, will be ground for decree of nullity of the marriage if action is commenced within twelve months after marriage and without resumption of marital intercourse after discovery.
- (i) By empowering the Commissioner of Public Health, on evidence received by him, to call upon any person, whether male or female, who is reported by the informant to be suffering from venereal disease, to consult a medical practitioner and to produce a certificate showing whether he is or is not suffering from the disease, and, if the certificate is not produced, the Commissioner may, by warrant, authorise any medical officer of health or any medical practitioner to ascertain if the person is suffering from the disease.
- (j) By requiring hospitals subsidised by the Government to make effective provision for the examination and treatment of persons suffering from venereal disease, and in the case of any hospital defaulting, providing that the Governor in Council may withhold the whole or any portion of the subsidy payable during the next financial year. Patients to pay for cost of treatment, if able. If there is no hospital, examination and treatment by a medical practitioner will be paid for by the Department of Public Health if patient is unable to pay.
- (k) By requiring that all proceedings in any court in connection with offences must be heard in camera, and prohibiting newspapers publishing reports of the proceedings in court under a penalty for the first offence of £100 and a second offence of £500.
- (l) By prohibiting the advertising of cures for venereal and other allied diseases.

I think that this is pretty comprehensive. I do not think that hon. gentlemen will demur very much at the provisions of this Bill. I am sure there will be no hesitation in passing it at the present time. I may say that we are supplying "salvarsan" or "606" absolutely free of charge.

At half-past 11 o'clock a.m.,

Mr. BRIDGES said: I beg to draw your attention to the state of the Committee. This is an important Bill, and there are not many members in the House.

Quorum formed.

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The HOME SECRETARY (continuing) said: As I have said, the provisions of the 1911 Act were the first of their kind in Australia. As they were considered to be experimental, they were only put in force in the metropolitan area. Regulations were made; an enthetic diseases ward and free dispensary were established at the Brisbane General Hospital; as also was an examination room for the examination of prostitutes and other suspected persons. Hospitals have been required to admit venereal cases, and salvarsan has been supplied to them free. Since the regulations were put into operation 4,714 notifications, 4,297 in respect of males, and 417 females, have been received. This figure does not mean separate persons. For last year, the notifications numbered 1,946, including 1,105 from military camps, 214 were in respect of married persons, 1,724 in respect of single persons, and 8 widowers; 1,867 were in respect of males, and 79 females. There have been 9,281 attendances at the free dispensary since it was opened in April, 1913. There are at present 238 women on the books at the examination room. Last year there were 884 examinations of 193 women. Under the compulsory detention clauses, 156 persons, 15 males (mostly prisoners), and 141 females (principally prostitutes) have been detained in gaols or hospitals until they were cured. It will, therefore, be seen that considerable work has been done under the provisions of the 1911 Act.

Under the new Bill, which, it will be noted, will operate throughout Queensland, hospitals will be required by law to receive and treat venereal patients, and treat them free (excepting in cases where they are in a position to pay). Places of detention, free dispensaries, and places of examination will be established at principal ports. Bacteriological tests will be made free. The Commonwealth have submitted a scheme of assistance to the States, but negotiations have not been concluded; however, with the further assistance from the Commonwealth, more extensive work will be undertaken. In turn, the State Government will have to consider the question of additional assistance to hospitals, at any rate, at the principal ports and centres.

The provision for the prohibition of the use of white (yellow) phosphorus in the manufacture of matches is included at the request of the Commonwealth Government. The Commonwealth Government has prohibited the importation of matches containing white phosphorus in terms of the Berne (Switzerland) Convention.

Mr. VOWLES: What about present stocks?

The HOME SECRETARY: We might be able to make arrangements under which those stocks may be sold within a reasonable time, or destroyed if not sold after the expiration of that time; but there will be no hard and fast rule with regard to the matter.

Footwear: In the Amending Act of 1911, in connection with the new Food and Drug provisions, certain provisions were enacted relating to footwear. These provisions were found to be unworkable in practice, as although it prevented a local retailer selling boots and shoes in contravention thereof, the purchase of such articles from mail order firms in other States was still possible.

Its repeal is asked for in order to permit of the introduction of a measure drafted upon uniform lines, as decided by Premiers' conferences, with those obtaining in the other States of the Commonwealth.

The proposed new measure is of a simple character, requiring only that boots and shoes, the soles of which do not consist entirely of leather, shall have the fact legibly stamped upon or impressed into the outer surface of the sole of each boot or shoe.

The existing provisions of the Health Act have been suspended from time to time. The new provisions are satisfactory to the trade.

The provisions relating to overcrowding of premises, overcrowding of land by structures, and regulating the extent of backyards, have long been foreshadowed. It is proposed to give the Commissioner power to make regulations to deal with these matters; such regulations being subject to the approval of the Governor in Council by a general provision in the Health Acts. No new building is to be erected on low-lying or swampy land. That provision is contained in clause 17. Another new provision provides that every room or place of habitation shall have a capacity of not less than 800 cubic feet, and walls of not less than eight feet from the floor to the ceiling; and be adequately ventilated and lighted.

At a quarter to 12 o'clock,

The SPEAKER resumed the chair.

The HOME SECRETARY: The drainage provisions of the existing Acts have been considerably amended. Under the existing provisions, drainage is restricted absolutely to drainage into a sewer or a sump pit or covered place on the owner's land. Prior to 1911, the definition of a "sewer" included a formed water-table, and owners had the right to drain into the water-table. The amending Act excluded the formed water-table from the definition of "sewer," with the object of taking away the right to drain into the water-table. Thus, in places where there is no sewerage system, the only means of drainage is by means of the covered sewer, and this, in some places, on account of the nature of the soil, is impracticable. There is also considerable difference of opinion as to whether the right of drainage into the water-table acquired before the passing of the 1911 Act was taken away from persons so draining into the water-tables. The provisions of the Bill restore the position existing before the passing of the 1911 Act, but give the Commissioner much wider and more elastic powers of dealing with the complicated drainage questions which continually arise. Additional provisions have been added giving the Governor in Council power, by Order in Council, to prohibit any drainage, or such drainage as may be specified, into any natural water-course or stream into which sewerage is received and discharged or in which sewerage flows, into any open water-channel or water-table on any road, or into any open or underground channel intended to be used for carrying off storm water only, and upon the issue of the order it will be the duty of the local authority to cause to be made such other provision as is specified in the order for the effectual sewerage and drainage of the area or part of the area concerned. This gives the Governor in Council power to declare sewerage areas and to compel the installation of sewerage systems.

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A further provision is included, whereby the Governor in Council may, by order in Council, regulate the condition of all other existing drainage, whether it be into covered places, water-tables, storm water drains, or otherwise.

A provision providing for the closing of polluted wells or other source of water supply is included. The local authority, before it can close the source of water supply, must have the consent of the Commissioner.

There are also several amendments of the sanitary provisions of the Health Acts which the Commissioner has asked for.

Other matters to be dealt with are food and drugs, restriction of advertisements, and registration of nurses. I would be very pleased to deal more fully with these matters if hon. members wish, but I do not want to delay the House unnecessarily.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: The Bill is too obscure, inasmuch as you have to go to the Act to find out a thousand and one things. It would be much better if you were to explain the provisions.

The HOME SECRETARY: I will be very pleased to give all the information I can.

Several amendments of the food and drug provisions of the Health Acts are included. These all have been asked for by the Commissioner, and have been found to be necessary in connection with the work of the Department of Public Health. I do not propose to explain all these provisions. One important new provision has been included. This provision, which is to be found in clause 33, provides that no person shall use for trade purposes as an advertisement any communication or correspondence from the Commissioner, or any officer of the Department of Public Health, relating to any food or drug or article or any other matter coming within the Act and regulations. Another important provision is that providing power to abolish the general guarantee. A resolution was passed by the Premiers' conference, agreeing to the abolition of the general guarantee. It might also be mentioned that the general guarantee has been abolished in the United States. The reason for its abolition is that it gives the public the false impression that the goods are guaranteed by the Department of Public Health. The general guarantee will be abolished, and all serial numbers cancelled by the Governor in Council, by Order in Council. The general guarantee gives the public a false impression of the articles sold and of the conditions under which they are sold.

Then we come to the restriction of advertisements. The Commissioner is given a new power to make regulations to regulate and control, and where deemed necessary, to prohibit or restrict advertisements, circulars, etc., relating to food and drugs, and to prohibit the use in such advertisements, etc., of any statement, claim, design, or device, etc., which is false or likely to mislead.

The Sale and Use of Poisons Act is being repealed, and the control of the sale of poisons transferred to the Commissioner of Public Health. Under the provisions of the Bill, the Commissioner will be empowered to make regulations for regulating and restricting the sale and use of poisons and licensing dealers in poisons, and registering their

premises. The licensing of dealers in poisons is at present in the hands of clerks of petty sessions. It is considered that this work more naturally belongs to the Department of Public Health.

There are also some amendments to the infectious diseases provisions. These have been asked for by the Commissioner.

Typhoid carriers: The Bill provides that instead of two practitioners, one practitioner will be required to certify that a person is a typhoid carrier. This amendment has been rendered necessary by reason of the difficulty in many parts of Queensland of obtaining certificates from two medical practitioners.

The definition of private hospital in section 152 of the Act is altered so as not to include premises used as general nursing homes which are managed by a committee elected by subscribers who provide at least one nurse registered as both a general and midwifery nurse. The Commissioner is empowered to issue an annual permit to such nursing home, provided he is satisfied that the building is suitable. Provision is also made in the Bill that persons only registered as midwifery nurses are not entitled to hold certificates of registration for general private hospitals. The existing Acts provide that only registered nurses are entitled to apply for private hospital registration certificates, and do not prohibit midwifery nurses from having charge of a general private hospital. It is considered that only registered general nurses are competent to control general private hospitals.

Nurses registration: The training qualification necessary before a general nurse or a mental nurse may pass the prescribed examination, is altered from three years in a hospital recognised by the Nurses' Registration Board to—

- (a) Three years in a general hospital or mental hospital recognised by the board, with forty occupied beds daily;
- (b) Four years in a general hospital or mental hospital recognised by the board, with twenty occupied beds daily;
- (c) Five years in a country district or suburban hospital or mental hospital recognised by the board, with ten occupied beds daily.

Power is also given to make regulations prescribing the qualifications necessary for general nurses, midwifery nurses, and mental nurses who hold certificates issued by hospitals outside the State. At present there are several qualified nurses from Great Britain, who cannot be registered. A general nurse who has been registered as such by examination, is eligible for registration as a mental nurse after two years' training in a mental hospital recognised by the board and passing the prescribed examination and vice versa.

The 1911 amendment of the Health Act provides that the Minister may dispense with such certificates, examinations, and other conditions as to him may seem just, in favour of any person who has been employed in the calling of a nurse during the three years immediately preceding 1st January, 1912.

This provision has been found in practice to operate rather harshly in cases where nurses have not followed the calling of a

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nurse throughout the years 1909, 1910, and 1911, but who may, nevertheless, have had experience in nursing for periods of years ranging, perhaps, from five to forty years. A provision has been inserted in the Bill whereby it will only be necessary for nurses to produce evidence that they have acted in the capacity of a general, midwifery, or mental nurse during any three years prior to 1st January, 1912.

General private hospitals since March, 1912, and lying-in hospitals since June last, must be registered with local authorities, and, consequently, be in charge of a nurse registered under the Health Acts. The Bill provides the next step in this direction by empowering the Governor in Council, after 1st January, 1917, to declare, by Order in Council, that in certain localities in the State no registered person may follow the calling of a nurse. Of course, this provision will not apply to unregistered nurses who are undergoing the course of training prescribed by the Act. One thousand eight hundred and thirty nurses have been registered to the end of last year.

Those are the general outlines of the Bill, and I commend it to hon. members, feeling perfectly satisfied that they will give it their most earnest consideration, and put it on the statute-book at the earliest possible moment. I have much pleasure in moving that the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. J. TOLMIE: We have listened with a great amount of attention to the Minister who has introduced the Bill, and we recognise the importance of the measure, but the point which seems inexplicable to hon. members on this side is why a Bill should be introduced at all at this stage. This is a Bill that is admittedly of the very first importance to the health of the community of Queensland, and yet within a very few hours of the end of the session we are asked to give full consideration to the Bill, not only on the second reading, but also in the Committee stage. I cannot understand the reason why the Government have delayed their action in this direction. We can only form conclusions, and that is that the Government do not propose to deal with this Bill during the present session. As a matter of fact, I had a discussion with the Chief Secretary a day or two ago in relation to the business which it was actually necessary to get through, and I must say that he has certainly gone beyond the limit of the arrangement suggested. I do not know why that departure has been made. However, we have the Bill before us, and we must endeavour to give consideration to it.

It was with considerable difficulty that we followed the Minister in the explanation that he made, owing to the intricacies of the Bill. The Minister adopted the principle that the Chinese have adopted in regard to their writing. They start from the right-hand side of the paper and proceed in the direction of the left. The hon. gentleman started off with venereal diseases, and went back through footwear and other sections of the Bill to the beginning, and then he finished up with the end of the Bill dealing with the question of nurses. To follow him in his big jump from one part to the other somewhat taxed the ingenuity of members on this side who are not quite familiar with the provisions of the Bill, and certainly not as familiar as the caucus must be.

The Government claim to have a distinct regard to the health of the people of the community, but they do not seem to have any special regard for the health of those who work in this Chamber. The officers of the Chamber have been working something like 250 to 300 hours overtime since the session started.

Mr. McPHAIL: It is your own fault.

HON. J. TOLMIE: Certainly the work has been done under considerable strain at the expense of the health of the officers of the Chamber, not to say anything about the health of hon. members. I say that to show the hollowness of the Government [12 noon] ment in regard to some of its professions, more particularly as to the health of the community. The Government do not put into practice some of their own precepts.

In regard to this measure, one thing that strikes me is the extent to which the local authorities are being usurped by the Health Department. It is not a good thing to have legislation carried out by two bodies. Where there is a chance of two bodies coming into conflict, the legislation should be so devised as to take all the powers away from one body and place it in the hands of another. If a second authority is allowed to intervene and upset those provisions laid down by another authority, then friction is bound to take place. This Bill seeks to interfere with the local authorities too much. I notice that there is a provision here which says that the provisions of this Act relating to all matters affecting the public health shall have effect and be enforced, notwithstanding anything contained in any other Act, and the provisions of any other Act relating to any such matter shall be deemed to be in addition to and not in derogation of the operation of the provisions of this Act. The local authorities deal with the question of public health under the Local Authorities Act, and they incur considerable expenditure in carrying out the provisions necessary to ensure public health. It is carried out after due investigation in other communities. Now, on top of that work, they have the Health Department. The Health Department intervenes for the purpose of abrogating that work, and if that continues trouble is sure to arise. It might be that the Health Department is not as efficiently staffed as the local authorities. I am not going to say that the Health Department in Queensland is not efficiently staffed, but probabilities may arise in the future. It may only lead to muddle if the Health Department interferes unnecessarily with the work to be carried out by the local authorities. It must lead to confusion. It would be much better if what I stated were to be adopted. If the Health Department is going to interfere with the local authorities in matters affecting the public health, then the Health Department should undertake the whole work and allow the local authorities to drop out altogether. I recommend this to the Home Secretary for his very careful consideration during the recess, because I am sure he does not anticipate that this Bill will become law during the present session. There is another provision laid down in the Bill with reference to the appointment of an inspector, and it is provided that no such appointment shall be cancelled. It is also provided that the medical officer of health or public analyst or public inspector cannot be removed from his

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office or have his salary reduced without the approval of the Commissioner. I am satisfied that if that provision is put into operation, then there is no local authority from the metropolis down to the smallest local authority that will not be pulled up with a round turn by the Commissioner for Public Health.

Mr. MCPHAIL: Some of the local authorities want stirring up.

Mr. MURPHY: Some of the medical officers want stirring up too, when you consider the way they take down the little local authorities.

HON. J. TOLMIE: I am surprised at such a discussion taking place at this season of the year. (Laughter.) If the Commissioner for Public Health is allowed to have the powers laid down in this Bill, then I am sure the local authorities will be placed in a very awkward position indeed. Neither the inspector nor the medical officer can be dismissed without the consent of the Commissioner for Public Health. It is only another instance of the insidious way in which we are being brought, as a people, under the domination of commissioners and bodies who abrogate to themselves the powers to look after individuals instead of looking after the interests of the people. It is one of the ways in which our activities are seriously destroyed by hon. gentlemen opposite. I am not going to deal with that question at any further length, because there are other matters I wish to refer to.

I quite approve of the action that the Home Secretary has taken in regard to the housing of the people, more particularly the housing of the people in the large cities. I don't say that he should stop at the large cities. The question of housing should apply to all towns throughout the community. In all towns we should carefully watch the way the houses are built. I hope that the provisions of the Bill will be such that no subdivision of the areas of land on which houses are erected will be allowed to take place. I know the Minister is aware of what has taken place at South Brisbane, or I would direct his attention to the way a number of houses are crowded together in one of the principal streets of that city. I was passing through one of the streets some little time ago, and I was surprised and shocked to see a number of wooden houses built so closely together that there was scarcely 1 foot of space between them. There was no room in the backyards to breathe any fresh air, and altogether the space provided for each house was of a very meagre kind. Accommodation of that kind ought not to exist. I think that the time has arrived when action should be taken by the Health Department in the direction of seeing that the Local Authorities Act is put into force. We should have a proper building Act in the State, and have a standard of building which might be erected in the different portions of the State. In the Western districts of Queensland a building with hessian walls or calico walls would be the most comfortable. In Western Australia they have been proved to be the most comfortable in the inland districts. Of course, calico walls would not do for Queen street, Melbourne street, or Stanley street, and if an Act of that kind is introduced different conditions should be laid down for different parts of the State. Pending an introduction

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of that measure, I am glad that action has been taken in regard to this matter. It appears to me that most insanitary conditions must prevail in a climate like this when the houses are built close together, and there is a danger of overcrowding. With regard to those houses at South Brisbane, it must be unfortunate for the people who live there to have absolutely no freedom of discussion in its family, because all conversation must be heard between the flimsy walls, not only by the people next door, but by the people in the houses further on. This Bill makes special provision with regard to housing, and also deals with overcrowding. It is a bad thing to have overcrowding in a climate like Brisbane. I do not wish to say anything about the climate in Brisbane. We know that during part of the year the weather is exceedingly hot, but in many respects there is no better climate than Brisbane in any part of the world. All the same, in the hot weather overcrowding must be very uncomfortable, and I hope that the Commissioner will be able to exercise these Czar-like provisions of the Act which are imposed in him.

The HOME SECRETARY: He will be a benevolent despot.

HON. J. TOLMIE: We shall see. With the sections dealing with boots and footwear, I am quite in accord, and so must we all be. If we go to the bootmakers to buy a pair of boots, and pay a good price for them, we expect to get boots; we do not expect to get brown paper. Unfortunately, that has been the case—that brown paper has been substituted for boots; and it generally happens that those who can least afford to buy brown paper are the persons who do buy it, and in the long run they have to pay more than double the amount for their boots than otherwise they would have to do. It does not matter much for the wealthy man. If he likes to go about in tissue paper boots, that is all right—he can afford to do it. But the man who earns only a decent wage to support himself and family cannot do that, and there should be no consideration for the person who sells to me, Mr. Speaker, or sells to you, an article that purports to be what it is not. If they indicate to us plainly what it is, we know what we are purchasing, but if they desire to take advantage of our ignorance—and on a great many questions, although we may have considerable wisdom, on a still larger number our ignorance must be colossal—we ought to be protected from those persons who take advantage of our ignorance.

What applies to the question of footwear also applied to foods and drugs. The restrictions that are to be made, I think, are salutary—they are all in the right direction—and if the law be rigidly enforced—and I feel certain I would be treading on dangerous ground if I was to infer for a moment that the Home Secretary would not administer the law to the fullest extent—then, I say, under those conditions the advantage must be with the people. It is no use supplying the people with food or drugs which are not those they purport to be. In my time I have known a great many persons who have derived more advantage from a tablespoonful of burnt sugar and water systematically given than all the other medicine they had taken from doctors, and I have known cures to be effected under those conditions. Nevertheless, we should not allow simply the

infrequency of such cures to operate against the man. I am pleased to note that there is an intention to do away with the general guarantee; and, under good treating conditions and thorough inspection through the Department of Health, I am of the opinion there will be brought about a better condition of things.

I also approve of the provisions with regard to advertisements, and the restrictions placed thereon. We have seen how a letter signed by the Department of Public Health very often has been used for the purpose of boosting along an article which certainly was worthy of the letter which was sent, but subsequent articles, purporting to be the same kind, did not contain the same ingredients, and people have been able to build up a lucrative practice in some cases in medicines, and certainly a very sound business in the case of commodities, because of letters they have received from the Health Commissioner or some like public functionary, and others, who have traded in these things. These letters have induced other people to purchase from those who make the advertisements, and very often those people are taken down. Now the department is going to intervene, and it is not going to allow any statements that emanate from the office of the Commissioner of Public Health to be utilised for the purpose of business gain or other advancement.

The question of poison is one, of course, of very great interest and must always appeal to us as being a matter which must receive great consideration. We ought to put all restrictions possible in the way of persons securing poison; and yet those poisons are so very necessary in connection with many arts that are practised in States such as Queensland that there must not be a restriction that will prevent the arts being carried out.

The HOME SECRETARY: There will only be a guarantee by the Commissioner, who will issue licenses.

HON. J. TOLMIE: I was going to point out that I hope the Commissioner will, in dealing with this particular matter, give consideration to the requirements of the settlers in the back country. The poisons should not be easily available, and yet they ought to be available. There are some poisons which it is laid down we must get from a chemist or a doctor. In some cases the doctor and chemist are so far away that the lonely resident in the bush can only hope to get them through the medium of some outback store.

The HOME SECRETARY: The Commissioner for Public Health will issue the licenses.

HON. J. TOLMIE: I was only drawing attention to the fact so as to give those people who are entitled to seek for poisons for the purpose of carrying out the arts in which they are engaged an opportunity of securing them without undue restrictions being placed upon them.

The question of carriers of diseases opens up a very wide area, and I trust the legislation we are now proposing to introduce will be the means of preventing disease being carried by pigeons, as has been the case in the past, to an extent of which we had no knowledge until within recent times. It is only within the last few years that this question of the carriers of diseases has

taken such a large place in the public purview. I know that it is a question that people themselves have not settled in their own minds, because of the possibility of the restriction of liberty. Nevertheless, this matter is of so much importance that the individual liberty must to some extent be subordinated to the general good. It may be said of typhoid that it is a carrier which operates to the greatest extent, because the disease is so insidious in its attack, and the people may become subject to it under what they regard as the highest possible conditions of maintaining health; nevertheless, through the medium of the carrier, the disease may be introduced into homes which not only are cleanly themselves, but have the most cleanly surroundings. I was astonished to see in one of the metropolitan papers the other day that here in the city of South Brisbane diphtheria was very rampant, and an investigation showed a very considerable number of carriers in the school. I know that this disease has broken out on the Downs, and in what might be regarded as one of the healthiest and a very sparsely populated area under conditions where you would think no disease could have occurred at all; and yet family after family has gone down with diphtheria—to a great extent, I believe, through the presence of carriers. Now the Government are undertaking to deal with this question, and I hope it will be dealt with in a satisfactory way—that is, satisfactory in maintaining the general health of the community, and satisfactory in regard to those persons whose liberties must necessarily be circumscribed through the action of the House.

The question of nursing is naturally one that is associated with public health, and the scheme of instruction laid down in the Bill, I think, is a good one. It lays down that a nurse must be qualified for a certain number of years, and qualification to a very great extent lies in the number of cases which she is able to treat, the number of cases treated in a hospital, the number of cases that come under her personal supervision during the time she is being trained. In a large hospital the cases naturally are likely to be numerous, and they are likely to be very diverse—that is, they embrace a very wide range of subject. That gives her an opportunity of becoming thoroughly qualified in such cases. The time of her training is limited to three years, and passes on down to a period of four years and five years, by which time a nurse is likely to be thoroughly qualified and able to play a very important part in maintaining the general health of the community. I have differed somewhat from the Home Secretary in the method I followed in dealing with this Bill, inasmuch as I have treated most of the other subjects before I have come to the question of venereal disease. I did so for the reason that venereal disease is a very important subject, and further, it is a subject of which I know very little.

The HOME SECRETARY: I am very glad to hear it. You will know more before the Bill is through.

HON. J. TOLMIE: The hon. gentleman seems to be very well informed, and probably will give me that instruction which I lack. Necessarily, as a public man, it is very desirable that one should have such instruction. The question is one that has excited a very considerable amount of attention in

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the public Press within recent years, and it is a question upon which there is a very great difference of opinion. Therefore, I think it is a subject that ought not to be dealt with unless we are sure of the ground on which we are standing. I don't know that the public of Queensland—and that informed public of Queensland to which we naturally look for guidance—has yet determined what is the right course to pursue in regard to legislation of this kind. Quite recently—since the introduction of this Bill—I have had the opportunity of perusing a large number of letters from medical men, and it pained me beyond measure, not only a divergence of opinion with regard to what is the right course to pursue, but these medical gentlemen did not show that same kindly relation of feeling towards each other that is shown by hon. gentlemen on the Treasury bench towards myself. This is a question on which there is a very great division of opinion, and it would be an unwise thing, to my mind, to take any decided action unless the department is thoroughly well satisfied that the step which it is about to take is a wise one. We had certain legislation in Queensland some few years ago, and that legislation was, by Order in Council, abrogated. The course pursued by the Government [12.30 p.m.] caused a considerable amount of controversy at the time, though the action taken was similar to the action taken by those who had control of the British army, and similar to the legislation in force in other parts of the world. Nevertheless, opinions on the subject differ very widely. I remember some few years ago discussing the matter with a detective in New South Wales, who had been in the service of the Commissioner of Police in Queensland. That officer knew the conditions operating in Queensland, and the less restrictive conditions operating in New South Wales, and he said he was perfectly certain that New South Wales was less subject to the disease than the State of Queensland. I have in my hand a copy of the "British Medical Journal," dated 28th October, 1916, probably the latest number of the journal that has come to this State. It speaks for the profession, and as it knows what it talks about it speaks in a way to command confidence in what it says. In the issue to which I have referred there is the following article:—

"THE RESULTS OF ABOLISHING THE REGULATION OF PROSTITUTION IN COPENHAGEN.

"The much debated problem whether the registration and systematic medical supervision of prostitutes has any effect on the incidence of venereal disease is still unsolved; and the most recent evidence shows how difficult it is to arrive at the truth of statistics. It was anticipated that the incidence of venereal disease before and after the abolition of the regulation of prostitution in Copenhagen in 1906 would be a valuable index to the influence, if any, of the regulation of prostitution. Some figures now available are not interpreted alike by the two parties, regulationists and abolitionists. In his report to the British Royal Commission on Venereal Disease Dr. Svend Lomholt answered the question, Has the abolition of regulation aggravated matters? with an emphatic "No." To the question, Has the new system proved advantageous, notably

from the sanitary point of view? he replied with an unequivocal "Yes." In support of these contentions he quoted the weekly notification lists of venereal disease, which have long been employed by both parties in support of diametrically opposite opinions. In a letter to the journal of the Danish Medical Association, *Ugeskrift for Læger* (May 4th, 1916), Professor Pontoppidan has challenged this confident verdict on the benefits of the legislation of 1906. He considers the evidence afforded by the weekly notification lists so faulty as to be practically useless. He has relied on the statistics showing the number of cases of venereal disease treated in the communal hospitals before and after 1906. He has collected the figures for the seven years 1900-1906, and for the following seven years, 1907-1913. He admits, however, that the following table is misleading as far as the incidence of venereal disease in women is concerned for, with the sudden cessation of the systematic examination and compulsory treatment of prostitutes in 1906, the number of women treated in hospital was found to fall, even if the actual amount of disease among the women of Copenhagen remained as before.

Men.

	1900-1906.	1907-1913.
Total number of cases	6,048	9,196
Gonorrhoea	2,851	4,597
Epididymitis	1,070	1,351
Syphilis	2,600	5,629
Primary syphilis ...	1,404	1,961

Women.

	1900-1906.	1907-1913.
Total number of cases	13,167	5,270
Gonorrhoea	4,701	2,072
Syphilis	2,938	2,703
Primary syphilis ...	1,256	1,269

"The great increase in the number of men treated in the seven year period after 1906 is noteworthy. Professor Pontoppidan has given the figures for epididymitis separately because, whereas patients suffering from uncomplicated gonorrhoea may often refuse to avail themselves of hospital treatment, the subjects of epididymitis among the hospital-seeking classes almost invariably submit to hospital treatment. Professor Pontoppidan argues that the total number of cases of gonorrhoea must be directly proportional to the number of cases of epididymitis in the two periods. He concludes with the guarded opinion that, though the effects of the old system were unsatisfactory, those of the new are no better."

The same number contains a leading article on the "alleged advantages of the compulsory notification of venereal disease." After referring to a letter signed by a large number of women calling on the mothers and wives of the Empire to demand the compulsory notification of the disease, the journal arrives at the same conclusion of Professor Pontoppidan and Doctor Svend Lomholt, of Copenhagen, namely, that there is nothing which warrants them in assuming that a departure from the old conditions is likely to lead to any better results—that both conditions are unsatisfactory. I think it is desirable that that information should be placed at the disposal of the Chamber.

Personally, I have always leaned in the direction of the views advocated by the Minister in charge of this Bill—that there should be systematic treatment for the men as well as for the women. Nevertheless, it is a very great responsibility to take upon oneself to lay down definitely what should be done in a matter like this, when men who have attained to the highest degree of excellence in their profession have come to the conclusion, after careful investigation of the matter, that it is not possible to say whether a departure from the old system is desirable or not. I hope that members will give the attention to this Bill that its importance warrants. There may be experts in the Chamber who are able to deal with this question in a much more efficient manner than I have done, and who will be able to place some of their knowledge at the disposal of the House, so as to enable members to arrive at a right conclusion and to do the thing which is best in the interests of humanity.

Mr. McMINN (*Bulimba*): I hail with a great deal of satisfaction the introduction of this measure, even at this late stage of the session. Anyone who has studied our Health Act must have come to the conclusion that it needs a great deal of amendment in order to bring it up to the standard of Health Acts in other countries, and the standard that is necessary in the interests of the people of Queensland. Among the various subjects dealt with in this measure are overcrowding and the supervision of health by local authorities. With regard to the objection raised by the leader of the Opposition to the provision declaring that the medical officer of a local authority cannot be interfered with without the sanction of the Health Commissioner, I think that provision is a very necessary one in the interest of the officer himself, and in the interest of the health of the community. We have known of cases where a zealous health officer has come under the ban of different members of his local authority, and has been punished for expressing his opinions, or has been prevented from carrying out what he considered necessary, because if he did so, that would endanger his own position. We want to safeguard health officers against that kind of thing, and to see that they are able to take what action they consider necessary without any fear of the consequences. That safeguard will be provided in this Bill, and I think such a provision is absolutely necessary if we are going to deal with the health of the community on a proper basis. There is another important matter that I am pleased to see is dealt with in the Bill, and that is the overcrowding of dwellings and the subdividing of areas on which dwellings are to be erected, also the places in which dwellings shall be allowed to be erected. At present we in Queensland are not suffering to any great extent from overcrowding, but we can see that there is a danger of the evil becoming more extended, and with a climate such as ours it is most necessary that we should take steps to see that the health of the community is not injured by overcrowding of land or of dwellings. While we have every sympathy with the man who is inclined to put up with some little hardship for the purpose of getting a home of his own, we are compelled to see that the conditions under which he lives are such as are conducive to the health and welfare of his children.

This Bill also fills a long-felt want in the way in which it deals with the adulteration of food and drugs. We have a haphazard system of dealing with food, and our system has been very lax in dealing with drugs.

Dealing with the venereal clauses of the Bill, I notice on page 19, subclause (i.) the words—

“Being a prostitute, or known as or reputed or suspected to be a prostitute.”

We have no definition of the word “prostitute” in the Bill. This has been the weakness of the regulations under which we have been working for some considerable time past. There has been a difficulty in defining what a prostitute actually is, and in compelling such persons to submit themselves to examination. I am very pleased that this Bill is making some attempt to deal with one of the most serious evils that confront the people of Australia to-day. It is a problem that is confronting not only the people of Australia, but the people of the whole civilised world—I refer to the problem of venereal disease. While there are differences of opinion as to the best method of regulating this disease, there can be no difference of opinion as to the fact that it exists amongst us, and is spreading with a rapidity which is appalling, and that it requires some drastic remedy or cure. I had an opportunity of visiting, only lately, the hospital set aside at Lytton for the treatment of venereal diseases amongst our soldiers. These young men are the flower of our manhood, and have responded to the call for service. When we see nearly 500 of them laid aside by this disease and prevented from serving the country, we must recognise that it is time some steps were taken to deal drastically with the disease. The origin of a very large percentage of venereal disease—and I make this statement fully conscious of its gravity with a due regard to the consequences—can be traced to private sources, and we must recognise that, affecting as it does the future mothers of Queensland, the disease is one that we ought to grapple with as expeditiously as possible. In going through our different institutions where I have seen cases of disease in children, I have taken the opportunity of consulting with the medical officers of those institutions and asking their opinion as to the source of the disease, and when we are told that 80 per cent. of these cases can be attributed to the existence of syphilis in the parents, it is time that the public of Queensland realised the extent to which it is affecting the population. I recognise that this disease is one that cannot be cured by legislation; it is one that can only be cured by instilling into the minds of our young people a sense of personal honour and a knowledge of the degradation which prostitution brings upon the women of our race.

Mr. BRIDGES: What about the men?

Mr. McMINN: I am also pleased to think that, under the regulations which I trust will be framed under this measure, there will be a means of dealing with men as well as with women. This is not a one-sided affair, but one which can only be effectually dealt with by including the two sexes. Of course, it is an interference with the liberty of the subject, but our health is an interference with the liberty of the subject for the

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benefit of the community, and I consider that this is an interference which is legitimate in every particular. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. MURPHY: We ought to lay down in the Bill how far we are going to interfere. We ought not to leave it to any Minister or Cabinet to issue regulations to please themselves.

Mr. McMINN: I would go the full length with the hon. member for Burke. I would like to see the most drastic provisions included in the Bill for dealing with this subject from the standpoint that the hon. member has taken up, but I do not wish to delay the passage of the Bill.

Mr. BRIDGES: We should not hurry over a Bill like this.

Mr. McMINN: I trust the Bill will go through, and that the public of Queensland will be awakened to the danger that is menacing us. I hope that the old idea of ostrich-like hiding our heads, and pretending that this evil does not exist, because we wilfully shut our eyes to it, will be shaken off, and that the people of Queensland will rise to a sense of their responsibilities.

Mr. KIRWAN: And likewise the Press.

Mr. McMINN: That the Press of Queensland will rise to a sense of their responsibility, and that the medical profession of Queensland will also rise to a sense of the responsibility and the duty they owe to the public and to the rising generation in Queensland.

One of the provisions of the Bill which I hail with the greatest delight is the fact that the patients suffering from this disease will have thoroughly competent medical treatment. It has been proved, as our own records show, that out of 385 men over 235 have been pronounced as cured of this disease, and have been shipped to the front. In the past the patients have been left to the tender mercies of the quack, and too often the disease has been allowed to get such a hold that cure was absolutely impossible. I am pleased that the Government are compelling the medical profession to recognise their responsibility, and that the Government are alive to their own responsibility in the establishment of clinics for the treatment of these diseases. I trust that the Bill will have a speedy passage through both Houses of Parliament, and that hon. members will realise that this is a question which should be grappled with as expeditiously as possible, and that every facility will be given to the Government and the Health Department to grapple with this disease, as experience has proved can be done.

Mr. MACARTNEY (*Toowong*): It is rather amusing to hear the serious fashion in which the hon. member for Bulimba deals with the Bill, the carrying of which, it appears to me, the Government have not the slightest idea of during the present session. As members on this side understood, the practical business of the Government ended here last night. It appears to me that we are only filling in time, and dealing academically with certain matters.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is not correct.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I quite agree with the importance of the subject to which the hon. member for Bulimba has been referring

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so seriously, and when the hon. member for Fortitude Valley spoke on the Address in Reply in the early part of the session I was in hopes that a Bill dealing with the subject would have been introduced at an earlier period. However, since that speech was delivered we have heard nothing more about it. Personally, I intended to refer to the hon. member's remarks on the Address in Reply and support him in those remarks. One cannot, however, look at the Bill at present in a serious way. I cannot understand just now why we are discussing it. If the object of the discussion is simply to hurry the Bill through to another Chamber and hoodwink the people by saying the fault is at the door of the other Chamber, that excuse is a little too thin. I suggest that the most that can be done with this Bill is to send it to the Upper Chamber with the realisation of the utter impossibility of the Upper Chamber dealing with it this session.

It seems to me that it would be [2 p.m.] unfair to ask members of that Chamber to deal with a measure of this magnitude, dealing, as it does, with a very large number of different subjects. It deals amongst other things with the most important subject which has been emphasised during the course of this debate so far as it had proceeded. It would be unfair to suggest, as may be suggested, that this measure was passed through the Lower House and sent on to the Upper House and that the Upper House are standing in the way of passing important legislation. It is not fair to make a suggestion of that kind, although it may take place in time to come. It is not fair to this Chamber, and it is not fair to the other Chamber. An understanding has been come to in this Chamber that all the work required to be completed this session should be put through in a certain time. That understanding has been faithfully carried out by this side of the House. Last night we dealt in a hurried fashion with very important matters to facilitate the movements of the Government, and to keep hon. members to-day, on the eve of Christmas, when many matters require attention, is unfair to hon. members. Personally, I think that the Government are hypocritical so far as the passage of this measure is concerned. It has been suggested to me during the interval that we might pass the second reading of this Bill, and, by reason of the Standing Order passed last session, we could take it up at the place it was dropped when we meet again and so save valuable time. That may be all very well. That Standing Order has, no doubt, a good purpose and would be beneficial in regard to measures which have been introduced here under ordinary circumstances, when hon. members have had an opportunity of fully considering and delivering their views upon it; but who can say of a Bill which is propounded on its second reading to-day, and discussed in the meagre fashion that this Bill is going to be discussed, and has been discussed, that it would justify its being introduced into Committee at an early stage next session, probably some eight months from now, when the subject-matter of the Bill has passed from the minds of members? Personally, I would decline to attempt to discuss many provisions in the Bill under those circumstances. It is not a fair thing to hon. members, and it is not a fair thing to the House. It is only playing with the question. I quite agree that the

question that has been particularly emphasised, that relating to venereal disease, is a subject that is crying for immediate attention. While I admit that I think that the manner in which the hon. gentleman is dealing with it, and the way that the subject has been played with, is really contemptible. I quite agree with the remarks that have been passed by hon. members, but I think the attention of the House might have been well directed during the early part of the session to the consideration of this important matter. It is not one that assists in catching votes for either side of the House, but it is one that deals deeply with matters in connection with the welfare of the people. I suggest to the Minister that even now it would be a wise thing to eliminate the provisions of this Bill so far as they relate to the treatment of venereal diseases, and submit them to the House as an urgent measure. If the hon. member thinks that the measure is necessary so far as that disease is concerned, and that these provisions are sufficient to cope with the evil, then I suggest to him to do that.

The HOME SECRETARY: There are other matters in the Bill which are important too.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I feel bound to confess that I regret that the Contagious Diseases Act was repealed some years ago. I think that was a mistake. That was a step carried out by the late Government on the recommendation of the responsible head of the Health Department. It was recommended to the Government that the methods propounded by the medical conference which was then sitting, or had been sitting, were quite sufficient to take the place of the proclamation under the Contagious Diseases Act. A feeling exists in the minds of some people that the new provisions have not proved sufficient. It seems to me that, under this Bill, the Government propose to revert, indirectly perhaps, to the old condition where the examination of prostitutes will be insisted upon.

The HOME SECRETARY: And others.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Yes; and others. Their examination will be insisted upon.

The HOME SECRETARY: There will be no discrimination between the sexes.

Mr. MACARTNEY: That is only a vote-catching way of looking at it. I am not arguing that men who are affected with venereal disease should not be examined. I do not suggest that anything that is necessary to stamp out the disease should not be carried out. Everything should be carried out to stamp out the disease irrespective of what Government is in power or whether it brings votes or not. (Hear, hear!) I think that the repeal of the proclamation under the Contagious Diseases Act was only brought about by the agitation of persons many of whom did not understand the subject at all. Many of them did not go into the matter and only looked at it from a superficial, political point of view. Looking at the matter seriously, I think that the opinions of the medical men expressed at that time in opposition to the repeal of the proclamation under the Contagious Diseases Act should have received greater consideration than they actually received. Although I was a member of the Government that did it I am prepared to make that confession. I regret

very much that that proclamation ever was repealed. As this Bill contains provisions which are equivalent to that proclamation, I suggest that it might be an easy thing to do to make a special measure of it and attempt to deal with it as urgent. The subject is one of very great seriousness. It is a question of greater seriousness at the present time than any other. It is a subject that the population generally do not understand. There has been too much hypocrisy in connection with the whole subject. (Hear, hear!) If this Bill will help to make people look at the subject from a proper point of view then, perhaps, some little good may result therefrom. I recently read a play called "Damaged Goods." Perhaps a few years ago, such a play as that would not have been permitted production in any part of the British Empire. It was played in the Southern States, and it was very generally approved because it contained lessons which might be of incalculable benefit to the people of Australia. (Hear, hear!) That play is circulated in printed form and any hon. member can obtain it. I should certainly recommend hon. members who have not already seen it to make a point of seeing that book. It can be seen from that book the way in which the lesson can be applied, and the way in which the lesson can be put before the people of Queensland with advantage to the people themselves and to the State generally. (Hear, hear!) I have no desire to deal with the measure at all in a flippant or unreasonable way, but the hon. gentleman who introduced it must realise what the position of the session is. We must realise what is before hon. members when we are dealing with this measure at this particular period. Christmas Eve falls on Sunday and this is Friday. Hon. members have many calls that ought to be attended to, particularly at a time when the country is under the shadow of war. Calls are made on people now under circumstances which did not exist before, and it is unfair to keep hon. members here.

The HOME SECRETARY: I am not taking it beyond the second-reading stage.

Mr. MACARTNEY: I understand that that is so, but I think that the arrangement which was come to between both sides of the House should be given effect to. I urge the hon. member to make a special measure of that particular portion of the Bill that deals with venereal diseases. If he does that I will be glad to stay back and see legislative effect given to the measure, which may, perhaps, be of the greatest possible advantage to the people of the State. Assuming for a moment that this Bill may not pass or that any portion of it may not be brought into legislative effect during this session, I would suggest to the hon. gentleman to look into the question of the Contagious Diseases Act and see whether it would not be possible to re-proclaim the proclamation under that Act. I remember that at that time that proclamation was repealed that legal opinion was expressed that there was no power to repeal it because the Act in its terms enabled the Government of the day to proclaim it as applicable to certain districts, and once it was so proclaimed it was not in the power of the Government to repeal it. All I can say is that if there was power to repeal it the same power as gave the Government the authority to repeal it gives them the same power to re-proclaim it. If the provisions under that Act are still existent, then I

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commend them to the consideration of the hon. gentleman as a means whereby the gap might be filled between this and next session. Personally, I hope that at the earliest opportunity such provisions as can be enacted will be enacted, and that they will tend to rid the State of the vile disease and save the people from its effect. I hope that action will be taken to do that without any delay whatever. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. McPHAIL (*Windsor*): I can say that all members on the Government side realise the importance of this measure. I quite agree with the hon. member for Toowoong that an important measure such as this ought to have been introduced earlier in the session when full discussion could have been given to it. The provisions of the Bill are of such an important character as affecting the whole status of the race and the people of the State that we as legislators should be prepared to give it very serious consideration so that we may at least give some measure to the Health Department to deal with the disease—we may call it a plague—which is practically ravaging the race. I do not agree with the hon. member for Toowoong that the Government are hypocritical in bringing the measure in and have no desire to see it pass. I am quite satisfied that the Government are in earnest in connection with this Bill and desire to combat, so far as they are able, this awful plague that is raging throughout the land. The provisions of the Bill deal not only with older life but with younger life. The Bill deals with the question in a broad, comprehensive manner, and it puts the Health Department in a position to deal with those individuals who are affected with the disease, and to some extent prevent it from spreading. In the Bill provision is made not only for examination, but for compulsory notification. It compels both men and women to be examined, and examined by a proper medical practitioner.

Mr. BRIDGES: Should not they be isolated??

Mr. McPHAIL: The Bill provides that they have to go into hospital to be dealt with. It is hardly likely in connection with cases of that description sent to hospital that they would be placed in the general ward. I take it that the medical officers in charge of any hospitals to which these patients are sent would see that they are isolated.

Mr. BRIDGES: They need not go to any hospital.

Mr. McPHAIL: I was touching upon the question of individuals who were suffering from this disease being examined by proper medical practitioners. We know very well that there are many people who go to these quacks whom we can find down the street promising remedies for all kinds of diseases, and promising speedy remedies. We must be aware of the fact that many of these individuals who are simply out for the purpose of making money out of poor creatures who go there, striving to keep concealed the fact that they are diseased, while they are simply spending their money for no purpose whatever. The Bill will prevent the quacks dealing with the disease, and with the danger which cannot be dealt with by those who do not know the circumstances.

Then there is also another provision in the Bill dealing with the same matter, and that

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is the prohibition of advertisements offering remedies—offering cures—for diseases about which the people who are advertising know very little, as far as cures are concerned. This Bill will prevent that kind of thing.

I feel that here in Queensland, where the ravages of venereal disease are being observed more to-day than ever they have been in the past—and in the rest of the Australian States also—that it is a wise provision that the people should be brought face to face with the danger. We are told that the Egyptian form of syphilis is, perhaps, the vilest form that is known. We are also told by medical men, and those who studied the question in Egypt, that the form of the disease there, when passed into a white man, is almost incurable. Now, if we are going to have that form of venereal disease introduced into Australia, then it is going to be a serious thing for the community, if some effort is not made to try and stamp it out; and this Bill moves along the line of striving to keep the stamina of the race in Australia up to a high standard. I think that every effort should be made by the Opposition, as well as the Government, to come to some arrangement whereby this Bill could be passed through and become the law of the land, giving the Commissioner and the department the power to deal with this particular disease. As far as the Bill is concerned in the other particulars there are very many fine provisions. It enlarges the scope of usefulness of the Commissioner and of his department; it gives him more power to act along certain lines and in certain directions; it is preventing—or at least protecting—the people against those who would supply them with articles which are not value for the money; it is laying down a standard whereby articles of food and drugs shall be given to the people in such a condition that they will have confidence in taking them, knowing that they are not going to be deleterious; and altogether I think that the Bill is one which is worthy of the attention of the House even at this late hour. Much has been made of the fact that it comes at a late hour. Even if it does, I think the day would be well spent in passing the Bill through all its stages if there were a possibility of getting it through the other Chamber. I do think that the importance of the Bill warrants the serious consideration of this House, so that its provisions could be put upon the statute-book to enable this Government and its official head in the Health Department to act along the lines laid down and thus procure for the individual members of the community safeguards in the directions which are laid out in the different clauses of this measure.

Mr. POLLOCK (*Gregory*): I think this is one of the measures introduced into this Chamber which deserves the very fullest discussion, and it is one of which the public cannot know too much. I know that the other day it was found necessary to make a raid on a portion of Brisbane—Spring Hill—in which a big number of prostitutes were quartered, who would not come up for examination. They had been there for years and had not come up for examination at all, and the health officer, I believe, sent down orders to twenty or so that they should come along and be examined. A good many of them, when they were brought along, were found to be suffering from gonorrhoea and syphilis in an advanced stage, and are

now in the hospital. This shows, at any rate, the necessity for some legislation to deal with this matter. I believe that compulsory notification is going to go a long way towards obviating many of the evils existing under this disease. I know that the disease, unfortunately, is not confined to cities. I had occasion to speak when the Health Estimates were going through, in respect of the insanitary conditions prevailing out West. I know that in Croydon—some years ago—thirteen or more school boys were found to be suffering from gonorrhoea as a result of cohabiting with black gins. Now, I think if the Health Department made a regular examination, and a compulsory examination, too, of all those black gins in the West and Northern parts of Queensland they would find results which would surprise them. I hope that the Home Secretary will take up this matter in all earnestness. One matter I think on which the House should have been given some information is the way in which men are affected by this disease. I know, from consulting many of the camp authorities at Enoggera, that the licensed women in Brisbane who are always under examination every three weeks and report themselves, are women from whom there is less danger of contagion than from the girl who knocks about the streets. The hon. member for Mackay and I went out to Enoggera one day and had a talk on the matter with some of the officers, and one of them informed us that no fewer than thirty men were found to be affected by this disease from one small girl who was not actually on the streets at all, had no fixed place of abode, and was never examined. Now, the compulsory notification, I think, will just about meet the case here. In any case, I think the very fact that there were 600 men in Lytton camp at one period suffering from venereal disease is sufficient evidence that it is time drastic measures were taken to deal with it. I know that many men, unfortunately, particularly in the Northern and Western portions of Queensland, are too prone to adopt quack remedies, and the result is that this disease goes on and on and obtains a firm hold of them, and eventually, the pity of it is, that these men marry decent white girls. It may not be that they have so much to suffer themselves from the disease, but when this disease has been implanted in children they might think it time the State woke up.

The HOME SECRETARY: Hear, hear!

Mr. POLLOCK: And take some serious steps to counteract the spread of the disease. I think, too, that this Bill should be given the fullest publicity. I think that the Minister and the whole House should welcome the whole controversy—if there is a big controversy—arising out of this Bill; and the greater the controversy the bigger chance there will be that people will be educated up to the standard of knowing just how dangerous this disease is. Further, I believe with the hon. member for Toowoong that no work of modern years has done more to wake people up than the work called "Damaged Goods," and if only for that purpose it is a worthy publication. Further than that, I believe that the proper education as to the danger of this disease is the only way in which the spread of it can be effectually counteracted. I think that a Bill

should also be introduced, if provision cannot be made in this Bill, to deal effectively with those persons who drive women to prostitution.

The HOME SECRETARY: Hear, hear!

Mr. POLLOCK: To deal effectively with these warehouse and other employers who, by paying such a small wage to girls employed by them, really drive them on to the streets in order to get enough money to make a living. It is a blunt way of putting it, but I am satisfied that this is a matter that should receive ventilation. I know that there are plenty of warehouse employers in the city who are working their girls for from 15s. to £1 per week, perhaps 15s. would be the minimum—which does not give them sufficient to enable them to dress and live in comfort; but, on the other hand, they are compelled to go on to the streets at night and pick up every Tom, Jack, or Harry, and accordingly they get affected with this disease. Some steps should be taken to deal with those men who are just as much, in the true sense of the term, "bludgers" on women as is any man who lives on prostitution in Albert street.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: I think it would have been very much better if this Bill had come on earlier in the session, when we would have had time to discuss it. It is a very much more important Bill than a lot of the Bills that have gone through. Here is a Bill which, so important to the public health, is brought in on practically the last day of the session. I am quite sure, as far as the Opposition are concerned, that they would be willing to do anything to deal with this Bill, even if it meant coming back. At the same time, it would appear that it is not the Government's intention to go on with it.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is more a Committee Bill than anything.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: It ought to have been possible to bring it in earlier, and, perhaps, the Council would have given a day or two to have got it through. Now, the last speaker referred to low wages paid for women in warehouses in Brisbane and different places. Where are our wages boards and arbitration courts under the Industrial Peace Act? Is there no remedy for that? How is this allowed to be so? I would be one of those who would certainly put the foot down very firmly on anything like that. I have watched these things a great deal, and I say it is a sin to ask any woman or man to work for anything that is under a living wage.

Mr. POLLOCK: There is a member of Parliament doing it—compelling women to work for from 10s. to 15s.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Who is it?

Mr. POLLOCK: I am not going to mention names. There is a member of Parliament—not of this House—doing it.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: In any case, where is our Industrial Peace Bill? Where are our arbitration courts and Factories Acts? Why should these things be allowed? I know something of the conditions of workmen in the old country, and in England I suppose they are better off than in any European country. There is nothing wrong here if we carry out our factory laws. We are a long way ahead of any other country so far as that goes, and I am one of those who do the best I can to raise our standard of living

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and to uphold that standard of living. With the laws that we have in Queensland there is no need, nor is there a right, for the existence of the conditions of which the hon. member spoke. If he knows that such conditions exist, he should certainly

[2.30 p.m.] report them to the factory inspector. I have been told by doctors that they have seen the reflection of the drunkard and other things in the faces of children when they were born. We have, therefore, to consider those who are coming into the world and will have to carry through life burdens for which they are not responsible. I am sorry that this measure was not brought in earlier in the session. If the Government had any serious intention of placing the measure on the statute-book, they would have introduced it long before now, instead of losing weeks and weeks debating a measure like the Meat Works Bill, which nobody wants, which nobody has asked for, and which will be of no use if it is passed. It is a farce to bring in this measure on the very last day of the session, but it is one that I think should become law at the very earliest possible moment.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I also regret that this Bill has been introduced so late in the session, because it contains several provisions which are urgently needed. One of those provisions is that which deals with the definition of a "house," and states that it includes "a tent." One of the most serious problems that we are up against in the country districts as far as the enforcement of sanitary conditions are concerned arises from the fact that some people live in tents, and that they refuse to comply with the sanitary conditions; and we cannot get at them. In two cases we have had slight outbreaks of typhoid fever owing to the fact that a tent is not included in the term "house," and that the people living in tents do not observe the sanitary conditions imposed by the local authority. I know one particular case which is likely to cause serious trouble in the wet season, and there is at present no way of dealing with that case. I am pleased to note that power is given by this measure to enforce upon local authorities the establishment of a joint board. Under the old Act the Governor in Council could force local authorities to band together for the prevention of infectious diseases, but under this Bill a joint board may be established for the purpose of dealing with any case the Governor in Council thinks fit. That is a wise provision. For the last two or three years we have been endeavouring to get certain local authorities to establish a joint board to deal with health matters, so that we might have a proper medical officer and proper sanitary inspector to make the necessary arrangements for the preservation of the public health. The smaller shires are unable to provide sufficient funds to pay the salary of a proper medical officer or inspector. An amateur is no use as an inspector. The duties of a health inspector are technical, and you must have a thoroughly trained man for the work. In the district which I represent we have got a man with proper knowledge to send out to see that dwellings are thoroughly disinfected. We have tried to get different shires to join together and appoint such an officer, but one shire says, "We have a man, and he is all right," and another says, "We never have an outbreak of disease in our district." We know what happened in connection with an

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outbreak of diphtheria at Nanango, at Chinchilla, and at Kingsthorpe. Such things could be obviated by the exercise of the power which is granted by this measure. The disinfection which takes place in some houses is an absolute farce. They simply scrub out the room or spray something on the floor, but that does no good as far as disinfecting is concerned, and it might just as well be left undone. I know of an hotel where there was a case of diphtheria, and all they did was to scrub the floor with a little "dip." By good luck nothing happened, but the opportunity for an outbreak of the disease was there. Clause 44 of the Bill provides that the word "wilfully," in section 125 of the principal Act, shall be repealed, and the word "knowingly" inserted in lieu thereof. That section applies to persons who wilfully expose themselves in public conveyances when affected with an infectious disease. In many cases people in the country do not know that the person concerned has got an infectious disease until that person is sent to the hospital. I remember one case, only about a fortnight ago, in which a child got out of the train and was absolutely black in the face. That child was suffering from diphtheria, but the parents did not know of the fact at the time, and this clause would not deal with such cases. When a child gets sick the parents do not think anything of the illness until the child is near death's door. That is particularly the case in outside districts, and very often they do not know that the child is suffering from an infectious disease until after it has been visited by the doctor. There is a very grave source of danger in such cases, and I do not see how it can be obviated by merely substituting the word "knowingly" for "wilfully," because the persons concerned act unwittingly. It might be obviated if a proper medical officer was employed by a joint board to go out and examine suspicious cases.

There is one provision in this measure which will have to be amended, and that is the provision which enacts that every ditch, or watercourse, or convenience for holding water which is likely to be a breeding-ground for mosquitoes, shall be dealt with in a manner that is calculated to lead to the destruction of the mosquito pest. Water troughs will come under that provision, and it seems to me that that is going a little too far.

As far as venereal diseases are concerned, I quite agree with the proposal contained in the Bill. I would even like to see the Government go a little further and provide for isolation. Patients suffering from such a disease ought to go into a hospital for infectious diseases, but the trouble is that local authorities will have to maintain those hospitals as they are not subsidised by the Government. Nevertheless, where there are infectious diseases, they should be treated in hospitals established for such diseases, and not in the general hospitals. I do not see any advantage in a person getting a certificate that he has been cured of the disease, because no man would frame such a certificate and hang it up, nor would he wear a badge on his coat to show that he has been cured of the disease. I notice that the Government are going to do away with all advertisements relating to these matters. That will deprive the newspapers of a good deal of matter which is interesting to some people. I remember on one occasion reading a piece

from a London newspaper and being very much interested in it, and I did not find until I was about half-way down that it was an advertisement. There are quite a number of people who think they can diagnose their ailments by reading these essays on disease which are published in newspapers, and who buy at half a crown a bottle of medicine which costs about a penny, and believe that they are cured by taking that medicine. I do not think it does them much harm to get such medicine. There is a provision here which states that any person who, "being a male person, knowingly lives wholly or in part on the earnings of prostitution," shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding £50 or six months' imprisonment. That might apply to a landlord, who might be placed in a very awkward position if he let his house to certain persons.

The HOME SECRETARY: He is a very funny landlord if he does not know who is in his house.

Mr. MOORE: That might be so. With regard to the provision dealing with a person who lives in a house frequented by prostitutes, if that provision were law at the present time I might be in gaol, because not long ago there were three living in a fashionable hotel when I was there.

The HOME SECRETARY: Did you know them? (Laughter.)

Mr. MOORE: As far as putting these prostitutes off the streets is concerned, I do not agree with it. I think that one of the greatest moral lessons that one can have is to walk up Albert street in the direction of Parliament House. If I had a son who was old enough, I would take him along the street to see those people who are sitting about there in the middle of the day in their true condition; and it would certainly cure him of any tendency to go astray in that direction.

I am sorry that the Bill has not been brought on earlier, because there are some provisions in it which are vitally necessary to enable local authorities to carry on their work in an efficient manner, which cannot be done at the present time. When the Bill gets into Committee I hope to have an opportunity of also suggesting some things which have been omitted; but some of the provisions which it contains are absolutely necessary to enable local authorities to check disease when it comes along. At the present time they have the onus of checking disease cast upon them, but have not got authority to take the steps which are required. I know two shires which applied to the Home Department, and the health authorities admitted that they had not power at the present time to deal with matters they brought forward. Every power should be given to local authorities to cope with these things, and to enable them to protect themselves. I hope the Bill will go through as early as possible next session, because the difficulty at the present time of contending against an outbreak of disease is too great unless we have the provisions of the Bill to help us.

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*): This Bill deals with many phases of the health problem. There are many things which require alteration at the present time which the Bill will

enable the Health Department to grapple with, but which they cannot do now owing to the limitation of the present Act. We have in some districts general hospital boards which deal with infectious diseases throughout their areas, and which have provided hospitals for the treatment of infectious diseases. We find that only infectious diseases like scarlet fever are treated in these hospitals, and that the other infectious diseases are treated in the general hospitals. At one time people were kept away from typhoid fever patients, and not allowed to go near them in case they should contract the disease; but now we find typhoid fever patients in hospitals where other patients who are in a weak state would be likely to contract it. Then, diphtheria and other infectious diseases are treated in the general hospitals. If the Health Department had the power to confine the treatment of these patients to epidemic hospitals, and segregate cases which would be likely to spread disease, it would be much better for the people. The Bill also deals with drugs and poisons. The Health Department should have more power than they have had to deal effectively with these matters. The proper description should be put on the labels, so that the people will know what they are buying. At present they often buy medicine and find that it contains other ingredients than what they intended to buy. Then, the Bill goes into the matter of footwear, and provides for the manufacture of boots and shoes wholly of leather, and deals very fully with the health of the citizens from that standpoint.

The main discussion has been in connection with venereal disease, and as to the power of the Health Department in regard to that matter. The hon. member for Toowong said that he hoped the Government would again issue a proclamation to bring certain areas under the Contagious Diseases Act. I hope that the Government will do nothing of the sort. When the proclamation was in operation there was nothing but trouble, a great outcry was made against it, and it did not deal effectively with the disease; in fact, it was only licensing and accentuating the disease rather than preventing it.

Mr. MURPHY: The objection was that it was licensing immorality.

Mr. GLEDSON: That was one objection, and it did not do anything to prevent the disease. Some writers say that we should go further than what this Bill goes, that we should get to the root of the matter and take away the cause of prostitution, so that the evil would be stopped altogether. I believe that the fullest power should be given to the Health Department to segregate any individual, either male or female, who contracts the disease, and to keep them isolated until they are clear from it. The hon. member for Aubigny tried to get some amusement out of a certificate, and said that anyone ought to have a certificate that they are free from the disease, but it is not the community's fault that they have contracted the disease, but their own. In some cases persons may have contracted it through no fault of their own, as it is hereditary, and sometimes it is not the fault of the person who contracts it through contagion; but in some cases it is the fault of the person who

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contracts it, and they should be given a clean bill of health when they are free from the disease.

I welcome the Bill, and hope that the Home Secretary will push on with it, and thus give his department power to deal effectively with many of the evils which they have not the power to deal with now.

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*): In the first place, I would like to congratulate the Home Secretary and the Commissioner for Public Health on the great interest they have displayed in endeavouring to place on the statute-book a Bill which, I believe, will be the most up-to-date measure in the world for dealing with certain diseases.

Before I make any reference to that one particular disease, I would like to refer to the portion of the Bill dealing with overcrowding. I remember that years ago when I first came into the House, certain members took pleasure in condemning the conditions which obtained in certain parts of Bundaberg and the other sugar districts. They used to point out that the humpies there in which the Chinese and Kanakas congregated were a disgrace to civilisation. To a large extent in the sugar centres those conditions no longer obtain. I must say that in various parts of Brisbane I have come across more overcrowding, and a more disgraceful set of conditions than I ever saw in any of the sugar districts. Reference was made to a crowded district on the other side of the river, and I have in my mind in the same locality a certain area of land the depth of which is of no greater dimensions than the length of this Chamber, and on which there are built sixteen houses, which are practically so close together that people in one house can tell what their neighbours are having for dinner by the sound of their teeth grating on their food. (Laughter.) I think it is about time, not only that the Health Department, but the local authorities in Brisbane, took up a very decided stand in these matters. Similar places also existed in other parts of Brisbane, not [3 p.m.] only in the central parts of the city, but also in the suburbs. I know some buildings which have been in existence for five or six years that are a standing disgrace to the city of Brisbane. I might mention one matter in connection with the powers of the Commissioner. I have always held the opinion that the local health inspectors should be directly appointed by the Health Commissioner himself, and not left to the tender mercies or caprices of the various local authorities. Many cases have come under my notice where the local inspectors have been placed in an awkward position. Under our Local Authorities Act it is a difficult matter for anyone to be elected on the various local authorities. Unless one happens to be a big property-owner, he stands a thousand to one chance against the propertyless man being elected. I know a case where there were a half a dozen ramshackle buildings, and their sanitary condition was absolutely rotten, to use a vulgarism. When the local health inspector visited them he strongly recommended that certain receptacles be abolished, and new buildings erected. He immediately found himself at loggerheads with the man who owned the property. The men in the local authorities happened to be the men to whom the

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inspector has to look for his position. Three or four landlords on the council can organise and get a man the sack for doing his duty in that way. The inspector, therefore, should be under the direct authority of the Commissioner for Public Health. I come now to the principal portion of the Bill, that dealing with the question of venereal diseases. Anyone who reads at all and knows what has been going on, not only in Queensland, but also in the other States, must admit that the question of venereal diseases is one that should have the most serious and immediate attention of every statesman and every Government, and of the best medical and scientific talent that we can obtain. In the past, I have always held that the people who were responsible for the spread of this disease were those who wished to keep it in the background. I still hold that opinion. Instead of tackling the subject in a straight-out manner, as they should have done, they, through mock modesty or prudery, refused to make any attempt to legislate on the matter or even to discuss the evil. They contend it is the result of sin, and therefore they wash their hands clean of the whole thing. While a statement like that might be reasonable enough if the individual who contracted this disease suffered himself only from the effects of the disease: still, when we consider that the effect of the disease does not stop with that individual, then it is our duty in the interests of the whole community to take some steps to deal with it. We know that right throughout Australia cases have been brought under our notice where this disease in all its evils and awful consequences is being spread not only amongst the male population but also to a very large extent amongst the female population of Australia. It does not stop with the adult. Quite recently I sent to Sydney for a copy of the report issued by the Royal Commission appointed by the New South Wales Parliament to inquire into this matter. The commission have been engaged in considering the question for the last twelve or eighteen months. Some members of this House seem to deal with this question with some levity, and, in my opinion, in a too jocular manner, but if they would take the trouble to read the report issued by this commission, and see the evidence given by the medical superintendents of the various hospitals, both male and female, the medical officers of the quarantine station, the heads of the insane institutions and different gaols in New South Wales, they will come to the conclusion that the state of affairs in regard to this matter is absolutely appalling. Evidence was given by the Chief Inspector of Education in New South Wales (Mr. Board), and he states that mere children of seven, eight, and nine years of age, who attended school, had contracted this disease. That is enough to make any serious-minded man think carefully over the matter, especially those men who are married and have families of their own. I could go on reading from this report, because the information contained in it would be a great lesson, not only to members of this House, but also to the people of Queensland generally. If the evidence were given by an ordinary layman like myself, I would feel disposed to question some of the statements and answers given in reply to the members of the commission. With the exception of Inspector Board, all the witnesses were men who held the highest positions as medical officers in

New South Wales and other parts of the Commonwealth. I think, therefore, that some notice should be taken of the remarks made by those gentlemen. I obtained from London another report dealing with the results of the three years' investigation made by the Royal Commission appointed in Great Britain. Although the English commission were not asked to inquire into or investigate the wisdom or otherwise of the reintroduction of the Contagious Diseases Act, they inserted a paragraph in their findings wherein they point out clearly and plainly that they were not prepared to recommend its reintroduction. This is an interesting report, containing a review of the three years' work, accompanied by diagrams, tables, and statistics, and it furnishes very instructive reading for anyone who desires to learn just how far this awful disease has extended in the old land. The commission in their report say that they are precluded by the terms of their commission from considering the policy of the reintroduction of the Contagious Diseases Act. They point out—

“Although the commission are precluded by their terms of reference from considering the policy of the Contagious Diseases Acts, they wish to place on record their view that the evidence they have received, which includes that of several Continental experts, points to the conclusion that no advantage would accrue from a return to the system of those Acts. So far from this being the case, it is to be noted that the great improvement as regards venereal diseases in the navy and army has taken place since the repeal of the Acts.”

I remember many years ago when this Act was in operation in all the large garrison towns in the old world. Anyone acquainted with the naval ports knew very well that the women had to submit themselves to examination, and it was well known that venereal disease was rife in spite of the Contagious Diseases Act. There was an opinion amongst men who thought that the Contagious Diseases Act was a guarantee of protection, but I would like to call the attention of hon. members to a report appearing in “Hansard” a few years ago, containing the evidence of the gentleman who was largely responsible in those days for examination of prostitutes. The evidence was given in the Upper House, and he mentioned two or three concrete cases where women who had tickets suffered from this disease. It was thought that any prostitute who held a ticket as a clean bill of health was free from disease, but this gentleman who gave evidence in the Upper House mentioned the cases of several men who contracted the disease from these women. At the last Brussels Conference of Medical Men the Surgeon-General of the German Army gave evidence. We know that he is the officer who is largely responsible for looking after the health of the whole of the German army. When he was asked for his opinion about the issue of certificates to women, he said—

“You can write ‘absolute failure’ across the face of every ticket granted to these women, because we cannot guarantee immunity for twelve hours.”

That official of the highest medical attain-
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ments in his statement was supported by his assistant, and their statements in turn were supported and backed up by the experts from Italy and France, Dr. Blasko from Vienna, and the delegate or delegates who attended the conference from Russia. To those men who consider that the Contagious Diseases Act was a perfect and absolute safeguard against the disease, all I can say is they cannot have read the evidence given by the leading experts and authorities on these matters. I know that at that conference one man said he saw some little good certainly in that Act, but there were also a great many disadvantages. I want to remind hon. gentlemen that I have gone very carefully through this report from New South Wales and the evidence taken there from thirty-five to forty medical men, some of whom have studied on the Continent at the different universities, and one or two of whom have had practical experience as medical men in the United States. I cannot in this report find that a solitary one of these medical officers advocated the introduction of the Contagious Diseases Act into New South Wales. They have been questioned on this matter, and have answered just as plainly that they did not favour it. Probably the gentleman in New South Wales who, more than any other medical officer of that State, was responsible for stirring up public interest in this matter was Dr. Mackellar, who, about 1910 or 1911, moved a resolution in the Legislative Council there and delivered one of the most stirring speeches on this matter that probably was ever delivered or listened to in any of the Assemblies of the Commonwealth. In those days—in 1910 or 1911—he pointed out that he did not favour the introduction of the Contagious Diseases Act there; and when a few months ago, after the lapse of five years, the question was put to him, he said he was not in favour of the introduction of the Contagious Diseases Act then. I consider that the Government or individual who considers that the introduction of the Contagious Diseases Act is the be-all and end-all of all this business should be placed in the same category as I place the wower who refuses to touch this matter simply because the contraction of this disease is the result of sin. On the one hand we have people who refuse to touch the subject because it is dirty, or wicked, or the result of sin; on the other hand we have the people who place the whole of their confidence in the Contagious Diseases Act, leaving everything at stake in a pharisaical kind of way—they thank God they are not as other people; they have the Contagious Diseases Act, and everything in the garden is lovely. Only a few weeks ago this matter was being discussed in London, and a bishop there suggested that to meet and to try and stem the awful tide of this evil, they should inaugurate a spiritual campaign. Of all the most absurd things, that is about the limit. It is something like meeting a fellow dying with thirst in the desert of Sahara, miles away from where he can get a drink of water, and offering him a Sunday school tract. The only method, in my opinion, of dealing with this business is to carry out what we advocated here some years ago—that both male and female should be subject to inspection. There has been too much of the throwing the whole of the blame on the weaker sex of the community; that has gone on too long, while man is just as much responsible for the spread of this disease (and in my opinion, more responsible) than is the

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female. He escapes inspection however much infected. It is about time that he was taken in hand and made to submit himself to inspection in the same way as has the weaker sex. I am pleased that the Bill has a provision which, if placed on the statute-book, will deal with that trouble. In my opinion it is just as much the duty—and the righteous duty, if anything can be a righteous duty—of the married man to take up this matter and do his best to see that the legislation is passed, and after being placed on the statute-book that its provisions are carried out and every effort made to cope with this evil.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Why are you so vehement about it at the end of the session?

Mr. BARBER: We have not had time to deal with it before. Perhaps I should have replied to that question by asking the hon. gentleman why his Government put it off until the closing days of the session of 1911-12 when a certain amendment was sent back from the Legislative Council. On that occasion you will remember that the Bill was sent up to another place and was coralled there about five weeks, and then came back here on the eve of the closing of Parliament with certain additional amendments in it; and we had to accept them or lose the Bill. There were some good features in the Bill, and so we accepted the amendment. That was only the starting point in dealing with this evil, and a very small starting point it was. Five years have elapsed since that Bill was passed. I have always been a strong advocate for a measure of this kind. I would like to deal with some extracts from reports, as I am sure that the evidence adduced at those investigations and inquiries both in New South Wales and Great Britain would do hon. members a lot of good if they would read them. There were two or three provisions here that might seem to be perhaps a little too drastic for some people, and perhaps for some hon. members. I contend that if we are going to deal with this measure in a thorough scientific manner, and with any idea of coping with this evil, it requires the drastic remedy. I think that the provisions in this Bill, if the Bill becomes law, will make Queensland the most advanced and the most progressive in regard to this class of legislation than any other part of the Commonwealth or the world. This legislation, I might say, is largely similar to the legislation which the New Zealand Parliament is just about to introduce. I hold in my hand a speech delivered a few weeks [3.30 p.m.] ago by the Minister for Health in the New Zealand Parliament, and he dealt with the various phases of the subject at considerable length. The provisions which will be incorporated in the Bill which it is there intended to introduce are largely on a par with those which we have before us to-day. I congratulate the Home Secretary and the Cabinet for introducing this measure, and I hope it will very soon be placed on the statute-book and give to the Health Commissioner, who is willing and anxious to effectively deal with this evil, an opportunity of dealing with it in a proper scientific and sanitary way.

Mr. COLLINS: I move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed.

The resumption of the debate was made an order for a later hour of the sitting.

[*Mr. Barber.*]

QUESTIONS.

CABLEGRAM TO ANZACS IN EUROPE.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*), on behalf of the hon. member for Murilla, asked the Premier—

"1. Will he lay upon the table of the House a copy of cablegram addressed to the Queensland Agent-General, signed by P. J. McDermott, on behalf of the Premier, containing a message to the Anzacs in Europe?

"2. Was the cablegram in question sent on behalf of the Anti-Conscription Committee?

"3. Who is defraying cost of such cablegram—viz., £13 19s. 6d.?"

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

"1. It is possible the honourable gentleman refers to a cablegram sent to Mr. Philip Snowden, M.P., through the Chief Secretary's Department and the Agent-General, a verbatim copy of which I now table.

"2. Yes.

"3. The sum of £13 19s. 6d. was paid to the Chief Secretary's Department by the Anti-Conscription Committee to meet the cost of the cablegram. That money is still held by the Chief Secretary's Department, the Postal Department having so far made no claim for it."

CASES REGARDING MEAT FOR IMPERIAL USES.

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*) asked the Premier—

"1. Will he inform the House whether a writ has been issued against Laura Duncan and Fitzroy Clarence Trotman, who were plaintiffs in recent cases before the High Court regarding the meat for Imperial Uses Act?

"2. If so, will he inform the House of the nature of such writ?"

The PREMIER replied—

"1. Yes, on the 19th December, 1916.

"2. A writ of *caus ad respondendum*, claiming—

1. For a refund of £8,921 7s. 6d. due under an agreement dated the 27th July, 1916.

In the alternative;

2. For a declaration that the defendants are not entitled to tender or to require acceptance of any cattle under the terms of the said agreement, and a refund of £8,921 7s. 6d. due thereunder.

In the alternative;

3. For rectification of the said agreement in order to express the true intent of the parties, and a refund of £8,921 7s. 6d. due thereunder.

In the alternative;

4. For damages for fraudulent misrepresentation, and such inquiries as to damages as may be necessary."

IRRIGATION SCHEME AT INKERMAN.

Mr. COLLINS asked the Treasurer, with-out notice—

"What definite steps have been taken to establish the irrigation scheme at Inkerman?"

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*) replied—

“The surveyor is now on the ground and is commencing the required contour survey and fixing of well sites. This work will be carried on continuously until completed.

“Some of the preliminary plans and specifications have been prepared.

“The executive engineer is proceeding to Inkerman on or about the 26th instant to definitely decide on a site for the power-house and other necessary matters required for the preparation of working plans and specifications for the works.”

POLICE UNION.

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*) asked the Home Secretary, without notice—

“Has his attention been called to a letter in the Brisbane ‘Observer’ entitled ‘Is the Police Union a Secret Society,’ and practically saying that it is a danger to the community?

“Will he use his influence to keep it free from the politics of either side of the House?”

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. Huxham, *Buranda*) replied—

“I will give consideration to the hon. member’s questions.”

ATTENDANTS AT RACE MEETINGS AND BOXING STADIUMS.

Mr. BEBBINGTON asked the Home Secretary, without notice—

“1. Has the Minister or the police any record or estimate of the number of persons attending race meetings or boxing stadiums?

“2. If so, is the report correct that among the visitors at one meeting were 3,000 men of military age, while farmers could not secure men to harvest crops at from 10s. to £1 per day and food?

“3. Will he give all possible information to the Recruiting Committee?”

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

“I have given consideration to that matter, and have asked the Commissioner to furnish me with a report.”

PAPER.

The following paper, laid on the table, was ordered to be printed—

Regulations dated 15th December, 1916, under the Health Acts.

DISCHARGED SOLDIERS' SETTLEMENT BILL.

MESSAGE FROM COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Council returning this Bill with amendments, in which they requested the concurrence of the Assembly.

Ordered that the consideration of the message be made an Order of the Day for a later hour of the sitting.

SUGAR EXPERIMENT STATIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

MESSAGE FROM COUNCIL, No. 2.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of the following message from the Council—

“Mr. Speaker,—

“The Legislative Council, having had under consideration the message of the Legislative Assembly, of date 22nd December, relative to the Sugar Experiment Stations Act Amendment Bill, beg now to intimate that they—

“Insist on their amendments in clause 5, because on the conclusive evidence before the Select Committee the amendments are in the best interests of the growers, and, with the Federal grant for two years, it will provide ample means for the purposes of this clause—

“Insist on the insertion of new clauses 7 and 8, because local boards afford the best means of dealing with the pest, and the constitution of the board is on the fairest and most democratic basis; and

“Insist on the insertion of new clauses 9 and 10, because the clauses make no call on the public purse, and allow those most affected by the pest to shoulder their own burden, and also allow those who contribute the money to administer the fund.

“W. F. TAYLOR,
“Presiding Chairman.

“Legislative Council Chamber,
“Brisbane, 22nd December, 1916.”

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I move—That the following message be transmitted to the Legislative Council:—

“Mr. Presiding Chairman,—

“The Legislative Assembly, having had under consideration the message of the Legislative Council of this day’s date, insisting on their amendments in the Sugar Experiment Stations Act Amendment Bill, to which the Legislative Assembly have already disagreed, beg now to intimate that the Legislative Assembly being unable to agree to the said amendments, the Bill, in the terms of the Parliamentary Bills Referendum Act of 1908, is now lost.

“W. McCORMACK,
“Speaker.

“Legislative Assembly Chamber,
“Brisbane, 22nd December, 1916.”

JAPOON TRAMWAY BILL.

RETURNED FROM COUNCIL.

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

MINING FOR COAL AND MINERAL OIL ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

MESSAGE FROM COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Council disagreeing with the amendments made by the Assembly in this Bill.

Ordered that the consideration of the message be made an Order of the Day for a later hour of the sitting.

Hon. W. McCormack.]

HEALTH ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Mr. COLLINS: I was in the House in 1911 when we passed the Health Act of that year. We were told then that that Act was going to do away with venereal disease and prostitution. Unfortunately, we find that such has not been the case. According to the Health Officer's report, there were nearly 2,000 known cases of venereal disease in this city last year. That is a very serious position. With all our boasted progress, it seems that we are not progressing in the right direction. It is not the present generation that is going to suffer from this disease. It is future generations that will suffer, and no nation can become great unless it pays some regard to the future. If venereal disease is going to spread in the State, or in the Commonwealth, there is a very poor outlook for Australia in the future. In my opinion, to some extent, although these proposals may be very well in their way as far as we can go at the present time, they do not get down to bedrock, so as to abolish prostitution. Prostitution rests upon an economic cause.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Drink has a good deal to do with it.

Mr. COLLINS: Drink has not so much to do with it as poverty. So long as we have at one end of our social scale people receiving large incomes, as they do in Queensland—we have larger incomes here in proportion to our population than they have in any other part of the Commonwealth, which shows that they have been allowed to exploit the people more than in any other part of the Commonwealth—so long as we have the exploiters on the one hand and the exploited on the other—

Mr. BEBBINGTON interjected.

Mr. COLLINS: The State has got more wealthy people, in proportion to its population, than any other State in the Commonwealth. The cause which brings about prostitution is low wages and poverty. That is the doctrine of some of the best thinkers throughout the world, and they agree with me on that point; and that is the case in Queensland. Of course, we cannot right all wrongs in one or two sessions; but we are going in the direction of wiping them out.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: But you created the wrongs.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. COLLINS: We have a state of society which has been built up by the very rich on the one side, and the very poor on the other; and it is from the people we term "poor" that, as a rule, the prostitutes are drawn. This is a very important question to the working classes in Queensland, because prostitution has been brought about by the low wages which have been paid in so many cases to factory employees. The hon. member for Bulimba stated that the source of infection has been traced outside what we know as common prostitutes. That shows that these people are not paid sufficient to keep body and soul together, and that is one of the causes of prostitution in Brisbane and in Queensland. We have any amount of evidence to prove our case, but I only intend to quote one or two authorities. I am quoting from Mr. Stead's work entitled "If Christ came to Chicago." That

[Mr. Collins.

ought to suit the hon. member for Drayton. Mr. Stead was recognised as one of the greatest social reformers the world has seen. After he wrote "Modern Babylon" he served a term in gaol for exposing the prostitution which existed in the United Kingdom. I am quoting from "The New Encyclopædia of Social Reform," by Bliss, an extract from Mr. Stead's work on "If Christ came to Chicago," in which he gives the testimony of Dora Claffin, the "madam" of a house of ill-fame. She says—

"Prostitution is an effect, not a careless, voluntary choice on the part of the fallen. Girls do not elect to cast themselves away. They are driven to the haunts of vice. The more distinctively womanly a girl is—and I mean by that the more she has beauty, delicacy, love of dress and adornment, feminine weakness—the easier a mark she is for the designing. And the designers are not wanting.

"Girls—and I say this emphatically—are not seducers. They have innate delicacy and refinement. I say honestly that I do not believe that one woman in 10,000 would cast herself at the feet of lust except under duress or under the force of circumstances.

"The recruiting grounds of the bagnio are the stores, where girls work long hours for small pay; the homes that have few comforts, and practically no pleasure; the streets where girls are often cast, still unknown to sin, but in want, and without shelter; in a word, places outside the levee, where distress and temptation stand ever present as a menace to purity and rectitude; behind every effect there is a cause. In the case of prostitution, the real cause lies not in the girls who fall, but in the social conditions that make the fall easy, and the men who tempt to the step and furnish the money to support degradation after the step has been taken. Before reform in the levee is possible, there must be reform in the home, on the mart."

That is where the reform has to come from. Not only from the home, but in connection with our big factories and shops where these girls are employed at wages which are not sufficient considering the age we are living in. It seems to me we are not making the progress we thought we were going to make in 1911. The militarism which we have in Queensland and Australia, and which some hon. members wish to be dominant, to a large extent has helped to make more prostitutes in Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane, and the rest of the Commonwealth, than anything I know of. If we go forward to militarism we can look for prostitution by bringing people here from their surroundings.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Can you win the war without militarism?

Mr. COLLINS: Houses of ill-fame spring up which are supported to a large extent by militarism. We all know that in countries where militarism is dominant, especially in big cities where the military congregate in great numbers, the result is an increase in the number of prostitutes. Therefore, we must seek to stop the growth of militarism, or else it will destroy the nation, which we are helping to do at the present time by the spread of this foul disease. We know that some of the men who have returned from

abroad have not all been wounded, they have other ills, and many be others will feel the effect of them for generations, and that is far worse than a man receiving a bullet in any part of his anatomy. That is what we have to dread. I do not fear a close examination. If I thought it would stamp out the disease, I would favour examination of the whole of the community till it is stamped out. It should be stamped out in the interests of the future of Australia. When I walk through the city streets and see men, not in human form as it were, not the strong, able-bodied young men that they should be, when I look into their faces I see what is the cause of their being namby-pamby, pious hypocrites, as it were, instead of being men and women. No matter how drastic the measure might be, I would support it if I thought it would stamp out this awful disease which exists not only in Brisbane, but right away in the far North. In many parts of the North we have the disease just the same as in Brisbane, and we should not hesitate to pass drastic legislation if by doing so we can build up a type of men and women who would be not only the pride of Australia, but the pride of the whole civilised world. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. BRIDGES (*Vundah*): One can scarcely sit here the whole of the day and understand why such warmth is put into the discussion on this Bill, and such importance is attached to it when it is brought down at the very last hour of the session. I cannot understand anyone crying out so much about "wowsers" and "hypocrite" without thinking that they are practising some of the things that they are so adept at throwing at other people.

Mr. COLLINS: Nobody said anything about wowsers.

Mr. BRIDGES: The word "wowsers" comes very often from that side. I do not know that it is not better for us to look within ourselves and see if we can afford to treat others as hypocrites and wowsers. I may inform the hon. member who talks so much about wowsers and hypocrisy that the old religious families are the ones which reared healthy families, and not the class of people the hon. member was speaking of just now. I believe that this is a Bill of far-reaching importance, and it should have been brought in at least a couple of months before the close of the session and not at this time, when we understood that no measure of very much importance was going to be brought in, and after we had allowed some of our men to go home to be with their families at this time of the year, where we would all like to be. The Bill should have been brought in when we could have had a full House to discuss it, and not when it is difficult to get a quorum. We did not think we were going to have an important Bill of fifty-nine clauses jumped upon us this afternoon. This Bill goes all round the compass; it goes in for morality and health and everything else; I think it also includes the birth rate; and still we are supposed to swallow it without discussion. We know that the reason it has not been brought forward before is because hon. members opposite could not agree among themselves. It has been before the caucus three or four times, and they understand fully what is in it, and I do not suppose it matters much to them whether we understand it or not; but I claim it is not fair to introduce such an

important measure in the dying hours of the session. Surely the Government has not just now only woke up to the fact that we have such a terrible disease in our midst, and that the doctors recommended that a Bill of this kind should be brought in. If the Premier would take my advice, there is a little Bill which I think would apply considerably to this matter, and it would not clash with the Upper House; that is the Six o'Clock Closing Bill, which is unfortunately at the bottom of the paper. That Bill has already passed the other house, and if we pass it here it would do a lot to prevent

the spread of this terrible disease [4 p.m.] and also prevent the spread of other terrible diseases. However, I do not suppose my opinion will be asked or that my voice will be heard in this matter. The Premier should take some notice of me because we are both named "Tom." (Laughter.) There is no other similarity between us. I consider that this is the most important measure that could come before any Parliament. How can we expect the other House to deal with it at this stage of the session? If the other House does not pass it hon. members opposite will try to make political capital out of it. This is too important a Bill to make political capital out of it. After reading all that the doctors have got to say about this Bill, it makes us think that we ought to put our families in glass cases. According to the doctors we are not able to go down and drink out of the same cup that a diseased person drinks out of. I have my doubts about that. However, if it is one-tenth as bad as what the doctors say it is, then we should not allow men and women suffering from the disease to walk about our streets and practise their misdeeds and spread the disease still further. Those who suffer from it should be put under lock and key, so that they cannot spread the disease any further. I want a drastic Bill to deal with this question, as I consider that anyone who spreads disease of this kind should be locked up. If anyone suffers from diphtheria they have to be isolated. In fact, if anyone is regarded as a diphtheria carrier he has to be isolated, and he has to submit to treatment until all fear of contagion is got out of his system. I want to see a comprehensive measure introduced so that we will be able to wipe the disease out altogether, then there will be no need for us to lock up our children. The hon. member for Bowen says that there is more disease caused through poverty than drink, but I think that drink is the cause of a lot of the trouble. Queensland is the only State in Australia that has not done something to curtail the hours for selling liquor. We should pass the Six o'Clock Closing Bill and send it up to the Council, and then there would be rejoicing in all classes of the community. We know that when a man from the country comes into Brisbane he is tempted because the hotels are open at night. We know they all think well of the soldier and ask him to have a drink, and when he has had two or three the finely dressed young ladies meet him and lead him astray, and we are sorry that he falls. I advise the Premier to drop this Bill and bring in a Bill dealing with that one dire disease. It need only be a Bill of a few clauses. If this disease is as bad as everyone says it is—and I think it is—then it cannot be painted too bad. This is a big, comprehensive

Mr. Bridges.]

measure, which deals with all sorts of houses. It says what sort of house I shall live in. I am not sure whether I shall be allowed to pitch a tent for a holiday this year. It prevents me from buying an allotment of a certain area. It treats with overcrowding and morality and other things. I consider that every house should have a-quarter of an acre of land. Our business-sheet is crowded enough now on the last afternoon of the session without going on with this Bill. Even if we pass this Bill of fifty-nine clauses, are we then going to send it up to the Upper House and say to them, "Pass this or it will be another nail in your coffin"? I respect members of the Upper House and consider that they have done some good work. Very often we have to meet them in conference and then fall in with their views.

The PREMIER: They have not passed the pay of the public servants yet. I am getting telephone calls all the afternoon about it.

Mr. BRIDGES: I am sorry for that. One of my girls was going to get her pay to-day and go for a holiday. I suppose she will be coming to me for a loan now. (Laughter.) We certainly understood that we were going to treat certain Bills and then adjourn. We rushed through a lot of Bills last night, and as soon as we create a blank along comes this other Bill. I hope that the Government will withdraw the Bill and bring it in again early next session.

Mr. GUNN (*Carnarvon*): I think this is one of the most, if not the most, important Bills of the session. It should have been brought forward earlier in the session if there was any business in it. I could quite understand the Minister moving the second reading, and then allowing it to drop, so that in the meantime the people of Queensland would have some months during which they could discuss the question. The Bill could be brought on again next session, when we would have a good comprehensive measure before us. It is most indecent to jamb this measure through at the last moment.

Mr. GLEDSON: You heard the Home Secretary say that he would only take the second reading.

Mr. GUNN: I have got no assurance of that. Instead of going on with this Bill, the Premier should adjourn the House and wait until the other Chamber has passed the Appropriation Bill. Instead of wasting our time here and talking about a measure which hon. gentlemen on the other side say is not going to be passed, we should adjourn for a few hours. It is only farcical going on with this Bill, because it is not going to be passed this session. However, as the Bill is before us, I will have a few words on it. A great number of people have talked about infectious diseases, and how they are contracted. Members of the Government seem to be too anxious to pass laws in the interests of evil doers. The sentiment is all right to correct people and try and make them do good and go straight. But there are other people in the community who are always respectable and decent, and they want looking after just as the people who misbehave themselves. There are plenty of ways to benefit the people of the community. So far as the mental defectives are concerned, we do not want to encourage them to multiply and become a power in the land.

[*Mr. Bridges.*

We should do more than is provided for in this Bill and endeavour to preserve a good race for the future. We should prevent people who suffer from a loathsome disease from getting married. It often happens that two people of opposite sexes fall in love with each other, and intend to get married, yet neither of them know anything about the health of the other. Either the man or the woman may have consumption in the early stages. They should find out if they are both in good health before they get married and have children, who will inherit the disease the parent is suffering from. Instead of that, we allow them to marry and breed a lot of weaklings. Something should be done to stop those people who suffer from consumption and cancer and other infectious and contagious diseases from getting married and handing it down to their children. When people are about to get married they should go to a properly qualified medical practitioner and get examined and procure a certificate of health. The man should pass his certificate over to the woman, and the woman should give hers to the man. They could then get married, and they would know what they were doing. At the present time marriage is a lottery. Very often it turns out that the man or the woman is mentally defective, and subject to consumption or cancer. We know that plenty of people should never have got married at all. Something ought to be done to prevent the breeding of weaklings in this way. We have the criminal lunatic and other lunatics, and they are allowed to walk about the streets because they are harmless. They can get married if they like and breed a lot of weaklings. We know that many healthy people who understand fully the responsibilities of married life hesitate about getting married and having children, yet those who are mentally defective do not hesitate at all. In fact, those are the sort that desire to get married and perpetuate their species to the world. This Bill might go further in the direction of preventing these people from getting married. It would be a good thing to make medical examination compulsory before marriage, so that both parties would know just what they were doing.

Mr. KIRWAN: That is the law in Norway.

Mr. GUNN: It is a good law, too. If a man or a woman knew that they were likely to have children who were predisposed to consumption or cancer or some other disease, they would hesitate very seriously before they got married.

I am quite convinced that numbers of marriages would never have taken place if the parties who were contracting them knew the condition of one another. It would be a very good idea if certificates could be interchanged by people who are about to get married. I throw out the suggestion, because the Bill probably will be brought up again next session, and something in the direction I have indicated ought to be included in it.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed.

The consideration of the Bill in Committee was made an order for a later hour in the sitting.

At 4.16 p.m.,

The SPEAKER retired and resumed the chair at 7.30 o'clock.

After a pause,

DELAY OF BUSINESS.

HON. J. TOLMIE: I would like to ask you, Mr. Speaker, what is the cause of the delay.

The PREMIER: Seeing that the leader of the Opposition has invited me to give the cause of the delay, perhaps I may be permitted to say a word in explanation, with the permission of the House.

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the Chief Secretary be allowed to give an explanation of the cause of the delay?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: It was intended that we should close the business for the year when the Appropriation Bill was passed through, but the Legislative Council, for some reason or other, have taken up the attitude that they will not allow the Appropriation Bill to pass through, and allow the public servants of the State to be paid, unless and until another measure which deals with insurance has been passed by this House to their satisfaction. (Government dissent.) Certain negotiations are taking place with regard to the provisions of that measure—the Insurance Bill—and if it can be passed through within a reasonable time I understand the Appropriation Bill will then be allowed to pass; but in the meantime we are caused delay, and unfortunately the public servants are caused great inconvenience—they should have been paid to-day—by the fact that we are unable to pay them until the Appropriation Bill is passed.

Mr. MACARTNEY: How do you spend a million of money without the consent of Parliament?

The PREMIER: I can inform the hon. member, as he well knows, that it is not possible for the Treasury to make payments to the public servants until the necessary warrants are signed by the Governor. We cannot get those warrants signed until the Appropriation Bill is passed. The whole of the afternoon I have been having rings on the telephone from different public servants asking the cause of delay. I have explained that the matter is delayed by the Legislative Council. I am sorry, not only for the public servants, but for the large number of business people in Queensland who will be affected by this in connection with their trade. The delay is unfortunate, but seeing that the leader of the Opposition has asked for the explanation, I have been bound to give it.

Mr. FORSYTH: When do you expect the Bill.

The PREMIER: Within a few minutes, I should think.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT
AMENDMENT BILL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Legislative Council, returning this Bill with amendments, in which they invited the concurrence of the Assembly.

CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF LEGISLATIVE
COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS.

(Mr. Bertram, Maree, in the chair.)

HON. J. A. FIDELLY: The first amendment was in the title by inserting after "provision" "for a period of two years from

the 1st day of July, 1917." Then a new clause had been inserted to follow clause 3, as follows:—

"This Act shall cease to have effect on and after the first day of July, one thousand nine hundred and nineteen, except as to any right, claim, privilege, obligation, penalty, or liability then acquired, accrued, or incurred."

The real alteration was to limit the operation of the Act, when it became law, to a period of two years. He did not know the motive actuating the Council in that regard, because, if the measure was a good one, it ought to be put on the statute-book in the ordinary way. As he had previously explained, the Bill was framed with a view of affording relief to a large body of people who, at the present time, were dependent on charity or voluntary effort—men who had been afflicted with occupational diseases, who very often were invalids and whose wives, when their husbands were invalided, were in an almost helpless condition and whose children also were in a deplorable condition. Although the Bill was limited to two years' duration, the Government had no alternative but to accept the amendment of the Legislative Council. He moved that the Legislative Council's amendment be not disagreed to, knowing that once the Bill was on the statute-book it would never be removed therefrom. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. MURPHY: He took it that the amendment of the Legislative Council was the result of the statement made by the Minister, who pointed out when introducing the Bill that it would probably not be necessary to subsidise this fund for more than three years.

HON. J. A. FIDELLY and GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Six years.

Mr. MURPHY said he thought it was two years, and he took it that the Legislative Council had decided that the Bill should only be in operation for that period in order that the Government might review the position at the end of that period with regard to the subsidy.

HON. J. A. FIDELLY said he would make it clear to the Committee that the proposal was to give a subsidy to the fund for the first three years of £10,000 per annum, or a subsidy of one-third of the contributions. Two-thirds would be contributed by the employers in the various industries and one-third by the Government. For the following three years the subsidy would be £5,000. He could not explain the attitude of the other Chamber; probably they had good reasons. The fund was a difficult one to find a secure actuarial basis for. The Government did not know where they were in regard to it. They had no statistics to guide them as to how prevalent the diseases were, but all they knew was that the State Children's Department was heavily handicapped by the payments it had to make in regard to this matter, and the Home Secretary's department spent about £3,000 every year in giving compensation to widows and invalids, and if there was one Bill which should have a fair trial for six years it was this particular Bill. The Government intended to try it for six years, with a subsidy each year, and there was no justification at all for the Legislative Council adopting the attitude they did.

Hon. J. A. Fidelity.]

Mr. GLEDSON: If it was intended by the amendment to prevent the Bill from becoming law until July of next year and continuing for a period of two years—

Hon. J. A. FIDELLY: The Bill provides that.

Mr. GLEDSON: Considering there was so much at stake, he supposed they would be compelled to accept the amendment on behalf of the miners and their wives and children. The Bill was worked out on a basis of six years. It had been gone into for considerable time, working out the payments and subsidies for six years, and the Legislative Council came down with an amendment limiting it to two years, but he supposed it would be necessary in the interests of the wives and little ones waiting for the measure to accept the amendment.

Mr. STOPFORD (*Mount Morgan*) said he thought the Minister had been wise in accepting the amendment of the Upper House rather than wreck the Bill. It puzzled him why the Legislative Council had introduced such an amendment. The miners of Queensland must recognise that if the Legislative Council had not appeared to them to be something that should be wiped out, their attitude to-night supplied ample evidence why the miners throughout Queensland should brighten up their armour and be prepared for whatever fray might come in the near future. (Hear, hear!) The Legislative Assembly was being kept back: the public servants throughout the State were being kept without the possibility of taking a well-earned rest, while the men who had the right of the miners throughout Queensland at heart and wished to give them some measure of protection by a measure that would brighten their homes during this Christmas—while they were fighting for the monopolies and insurance companies of the State in another Chamber—were being blocked by that Chamber. He sincerely trusted that the mining communities would take note of the attitude of the Committee, which was forced to accept the will of the other Chamber, not because they desired to give way to them, but because they desired that, sooner than wreck a good measure, they would take the best the Council would offer them. But he sincerely trusted that when the opportunity was afforded, the miners would pay back to the representatives of the monopolies and combines something which they had handed out to the afflicted miners of Queensland to-night.

HON. J. TOLMIE thought the Government had shown wisdom in accepting the amendment of the Upper House. As had been pointed out by the Minister in charge of the Bill, it involved questions of very serious consideration, which, even with the actuarial assistance available, the Government were unable to say how it was going to affect the revenue of the State, or how it was going to affect the employees. Consequently, it was reasonable to make some provision, and he believed the Council were actuated by the wisest and best motives in endeavouring to see how the Act was going to affect the general community. In the meantime, if the Bill went on the statute-book, and it proved a measure of advantage to the citizens without placing too great burdens on the employers, he thought when the time came to extend the Bill it would pass all right. But as a lot of noise had been made about the enforced condition

[*Mr. Gledson.*

in which the public service was placed through the action of the Upper House, he would ask hon. members to throw their minds back through all the years they had been in the Chamber, and they would come to the conclusion that the public servants were no worse off this year in regard to salaries than in any previous year. (Government dissent.) It was just about the same time that the Appropriation Bill was passed, and the salaries could be paid just the same as they were always paid.

Mr. PETERSON said he trusted the Minister would accept the amendment of the Upper House, not because he thought the amendment was a fair one, but because in the interest of those unfortunate people he thought the Government should accept the amendment. If they failed to accept it, it would mean that the Bill would not go on the statute-book, and the result would be that all the fighting which had taken place in that Chamber, particularly by the member for Mount Morgan, who had interested himself so much in the matter, would be all thrown on one side. He would like very much that a deputation of representatives of the Upper House should go round to the homes wherein these men are afflicted. He thought then, instead of blocking an important measure like this in the way they had done—what might be termed the most humane measure introduced into Parliament—after the opportunity of seeing those unfortunate men, they would have been only too pleased to have passed the Bill without amendment. It was remarkable, in the case of a measure which made better provision for workers afflicted by diseases, they should find every step taken by the other Chamber to deprive those men of their right; but when it came to standing up in the interest of monopolies, combines, and so on, the Legislative Council were very quick to come to their rescue. Hon. members in this House had been trying for months past to get the Bill on the statute-book, and he regretted very much that the gentlemen in another place had not seen fit to accept the Bill as it stood. The miners throughout Queensland, the men who were working in quarries, stonemasons, the men working in lead and paint works, those men when appealed to as to whether the action of the other House was justified, he was convinced, would say it was time that the people's representatives were trusted with such Bills.

Mr. DUNSTAN (*Gympie*): The deep solicitude that had been shown by the members, in another place for financial institutions, trusts, and combines, and the earnestness with which they sought to entrench vested interests in the State, compared with the attitude they had taken up on this measure, which had been admitted by the leader of the Opposition to be a humanitarian one, furnished yet another instance and another proof that the workers of the State would never get all the justice and all the measure of good protection they deserved until that other Chamber was swept away into political oblivion.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. DUNSTAN: It only showed that, while the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly were ready to view these measures with some amount of respect and decency, hon. members had really to look behind them to the Tory power that was entrenched

in another Chamber for the true attitude of the Liberals of the State. It was a shameful thing towards the industrialists of the State when the hon. members of another place, who spent most of the day conferring with the Minister for Justice in trying to entrench the insurance companies, limited this Bill to a paltry period of two years, and he trusted the representatives of the workers in mining centres would see that at the next election there was the utmost necessity of having representatives in the Legislative Assembly to get true legislation not only for miners but for the industrialists throughout the State of Queensland.

Mr. WALKER (*Cooroora*) said: While he could not see the object of the other Chamber in putting a limitation on the Bill for two years, he could not understand hon.

[8 p.m.] members on the Government side getting themselves into a heated passion, knowing that the Bill went through the Legislative Assembly particularly quickly and right through the other Chamber quickly, and no harm was going to be done. The Government might have good information inside the next two years, which would probably enable the Government to amend the Act and make it a more useful measure at that particular time.

HON. J. A. FHELLY: Full provision is made to amend rates, premiums, and everything else in the Bill.

Mr. WALKER: Hon. members knew that as soon as this Bill became law all the mineowners in Queensland would insist on a medical examination of every man who went below.

Mr. STOPFORD: No. The Bill provides against that.

Mr. WALKER: They would simply say to a man, "Before you are employed in this mine you must bring a medical certificate."

Mr. STOPFORD: The Bill provides that they have to give a man a medical certificate before they discharge him.

Mr. DUNSTAN: They won't do that, because they cannot escape their responsibility by doing it.

Mr. WALKER: That might be so, but every mineowner, in his own interests, would insist that every miner must come forward with a certificate.

Mr. STOPFORD: It would not make any difference to a mineowner whether he had fifty phthisis cases or only one, the premium is the same, so that is no incentive to that.

Mr. WALKER: When they were bringing in a new Bill, naturally the mineowners would create new conditions for the workers, and there might be any amount of men refused employment for the simple reason that mineowners would have to increase their insurances. It would be wise to see how the measure worked for two years, because they would have to provide work for these men who might be afflicted in other avocations of life, as they would have to live. In the meantime, no harm was going to come to the miner or his wife and little children, as the Bill would come into operation in July next just the same, the amendment did not alter that. He thought the Minister had been wise in accepting the amendment.

Mr. COLLINS could not understand the reasoning of the hon. member for Cooroora. No one opposite had made a similar proposal

to the amendment of the Council, and, therefore, the hon. member was taking up a very peculiar attitude, for he was in effect saying that the Opposition had to depend upon the intelligence of the other Chamber, which was part of the Opposition, because he was defending the attitude of the Council. In other words, what they lacked in brain power on the opposite side was made up in the Upper Chamber, which was part and parcel of the Opposition.

Hon. J. TOLMIE: That is all nonsense.

Mr. COLLINS: It had been left to a Labour Government to introduce this measure for the benefit of miners who had been afflicted with phthisis through working in dusty mines. As one who had visited nearly all the mining centres in Queensland, he was satisfied that the miners would not forgive the Opposition for what they were doing to-night.

Mr. WALKER: What are we doing?

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member had not the courage to propose an amendment himself, and very likely inspired the amendment in the other place. The Council were taking away the principle of representative Government from the representatives of the people in this Chamber. It was scandalous that the operation of the Bill should be limited to two years, through the action of irresponsible, fossilised old creatures who occupied the other Chamber. (Government laughter.) The Opposition through the hon. gentleman for Cooroora had practically endorsed the attitude of the other Chamber.

Mr. WALKER: We allowed the Bill to go through without discussion.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member might have inspired the members of the other Chamber. He got up and defended the action of the Council.

Mr. WALKER: Not at all.

Mr. COLLINS: While they might have to accept the amendment, owing to the peculiar conditions which existed in Queensland, where they had two branches of the Legislature, one of which was responsible to the people for placing them there, and the other responsible to no one but themselves, it humiliated him as one of the representatives of the people to think that in the twentieth century they had to tolerate conditions like these.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The speech of the hon. member for Bowen was an object-lesson of the illusions which were passing through the minds of the hon. members opposite. It was no wonder that they had all this trouble and that people did not understand things. They were like the moving pictures, false illusions were passing through their minds. (Laughter.) The hon. member for Cooroora was a firm friend of the working man, and a working man himself, and every word that the hon. member for Bowen said about him being practically in collusion with the Upper House was a deliberate lie.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member for Drayton to withdraw that expression.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: He would withdraw it because it was unparliamentary. The hon. member for Bowen knew perfectly well that the hon. member for Cooroora would not do such a thing. The hon. member knew that the Bill had the approval of every member of

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the Opposition, and if they could have done anything to improve it they would have done so. Such a measure ought to have been brought in years before. In some things when they could not get all they wanted they had to take the best they could get. It was acknowledged that the amendment did not affect the men who were sick, as the Bill would come into operation just the same. For that matter, another Bill might be brought in next session if it was found necessary. All the talk on the other side was only kite flying, and the miners outside would get the true position from "Hansard."

Question put and passed.

"Title"—

HON. J. A. FIELLY moved—That the title of the Bill, as amended by the Legislative Council, be agreed to. He would like to correct some impressions that were somewhat strained. The hon. member for Cooroora made reference to the matter of examination. The Bill provided that no worker employed in any industry on the 1st January should be subject to examination, but newcomers from that date on, which was very reasonable, should be subject to examination. As the hon. member for Mount Morgan had pointed out, it was immaterial to a mine-owner whether 90 per cent. of his employees were suffering; it was just the same to him as if 90 per cent. were not suffering from any disease, because the premium was uniform and the whole community of employers were assessed on the present workers' compensation figures. Another argument adduced by the hon. member for Cooroora was that in two years they could improve the Bill. There was machinery in the Bill for readjusting the rates at any time—they were automatic. The Bill was really as perfect now as it could be in two years' time. The only possible alteration which could be made in two years' time would be something more stringent with regard to the eradication of the disease by taking away those who were predisposed towards it and settling them on the land somewhere else. That was the only possible alteration. He would simply add that the same Act on the same lines had been in force in England since 1906. It was passed by the House of Lords without any time limitation at all. The House of Lords was considered to be the most Conservative Chamber in the world.

Mr. GLEDSON: No. It is not as bad as the Queensland Legislative Council.

HON. J. A. FIELLY said that the House of Lords was considered to be the most Conservative Chamber in the world, but they knew that that was not so. He just mentioned that to emphasise the impossible attitude of the members of the Council. He formally moved that the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had agreed to the Council's amendment in the Bill, and amendment in the title of the Bill. The report was adopted, and the Bill ordered to be returned to the Legislative Council with the following message:—

"Mr. Presiding Chairman,—

"The Legislative Assembly have this day agreed to the amendment made by the Legislative Council in the Bill intitled 'A Bill to amend the Workers' Compensation Act of 1916 by making

better provision for compensation in respect of certain industrial and mining diseases, and for other consequential purposes' and to the amended title.

"W. McCORMACK,
"Speaker.

"Legislative Assembly Chamber,
"Brisbane, 22nd December, 1916."

INCOME TAX ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL'S MESSAGE, No. 2.

The TREASURER: The Council, in considering the last message that went up from the Assembly, insisted on the amendments that they proposed earlier in the session, which were, of course, unacceptable to the Assembly, because the effect of the amendment would be to destroy the Bill. He moved that the Committee further insist in disagreeing with the Legislative Council's amendments.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had further insisted on disagreeing to the Legislative Council's amendments. The report was adopted and the Bill ordered to be returned to the Legislative Council with the following message:—

"Mr. Presiding Chairman,—

"The Legislative Assembly, having had under consideration the Legislative Council's message, of date 19th December, relative to the Income Tax Act Amendment Bill, beg now to intimate that they—

"Insist upon their disagreement to the amendments for the reasons previously assigned.

"W. McCORMACK,
"Speaker.

"Legislative Assembly Chamber,
"Brisbane, 22nd December, 1916."

REGULATION OF SUGAR CANE PRICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: With the permission of the House, I would like to make a statement with regard to the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act Amendment Bill.

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the Secretary for Agriculture be allowed to make a Ministerial statement with regard to the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act Amendment Bill?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Mr. Speaker, it will be within the memory of hon. members of this House that after full debate here, the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act Amendment Bill was passed by this Assembly and forwarded to another place about five weeks ago. There are many people outside this House, particularly cane-growers throughout the length and breadth of the State of Queensland, who have been making persistent inquiries as to the fate of that amending Bill. They have been looking forward to it with anticipation, but it has evidently got into the limbo of forgetfulness.

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As there appears to be no prospect of the Bill coming back here, I would like to say that this measure is regarded as of most vital importance by the sugar-cane growers of Queensland. Everyone knows the Bill was introduced originally in furtherance of a promise made by the Premier in his policy speech at Barcaldine about two years ago, when it was promised that a Bill of that character would be introduced, and would establish impartial tribunals for the purpose of arriving at a fair price which the canegrower would receive for his cane. That was the primary object of the Bill. Of course, there was no intention, in bringing in that measure, to do an injury to the millers; but the millers evidently have so much power in this State that they have exercised very considerable influence in other quarters, and we find that the Bill has been attacked in a most unusual way, not only before it reached another place, but also in the course of a case in the Supreme Court. It is well known that the Central Cane Prices Board consists of a chairman (His Honour Judge O'Sullivan, who was Attorney-General in the Denham Government for many years, and who had the necessary qualifications for the office); the growers' representative (Mr. Marshall), chosen by the canegrowers of the State; the millowners' representative (Mr. John Smith), a very able official in the employment of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company; two experts—a public accountant and a chemist—the latter being Mr. O'Brien, an ex-employee of the Mulgrave Mill at Cairns. It is unnecessary to emphasise the fact that the Colonial Sugar Refining Company objected to the establishment of any tribunal which could free canegrowers from absolute dependence on the will of the company in regard to prices to be paid for sugar-cane. The company was strongly opposed to the Sugar Cane Prices Act. They were bitterly opposed to the Sugar Cane Prices Boards Bill which was introduced in 1913, as will be seen from their attitude detailed in Colonel Rankin's speech in "Hansard" of 1913, page 2490. Naturally their opposition to the effective measure introduced by the present Government was even more vehement; for not only did it establish the tribunal mentioned above, but also it makes it an offence punishable by law if either the mill or the grower fail to comply with an award. The mill must take the grower's cane and must pay for it at the price fixed.

THE COMPANY'S CHANGE OF PLAN.

When the Sugar Cane Prices Act became law, the utility of parliamentary opposition ceased for the time being, and the company turned its attention to other means for the attainment of its ends.

NATURE OF COMPANY AND ITS EFFECTIVE HOSTILITY.

It is well at this point to point out that the public must recognise the great power possessed by this wealthy monopoly, for it has the sole control of the refining of sugar and it is excellently organised. It employs the ablest of officials, employs the ablest lawyers, and spares no expense in gaining its ends. When any Legislature passes legislation inimical to the interests of this great corporation, the public must know and understand that the attacks made upon that measure will be clever, bitter, and relentless. If it fails in Parliament, the company merely

turns to others of its varied resources to continue outside Parliament the attacks on the unwelcome measure. The best tribute that can be paid to the effectiveness of the Cane Prices Boards is the open hostility of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. The bitter hostility of the company to the local boards, and to the Central Board, has increased, and is evidenced in the recent elaborate statement of Mr. Knox before the Select Committee of the Legislative Council, and also by the almost innumerable objections, obstructions, and appeals, which have from time to time been put forward by its representatives, legal and political, as well as by the officer of the company, who was selected by the mills as their representative on the Central Cane Prices Board.

THE COMPANY'S AGENT ON THE BOARD—MR. SMITH —ONE OF THEIR BEST OFFICERS.

The sugar-mills elected as their representative Mr. John Smith, an important officer of the Colonial Sugar Refinery. This step ensured that the company would have its interests closely watched by one whose knowledge of the sugar industry, from the manufacturers' point of view, can hardly be surpassed. That Mr. Smith has well fulfilled the trust reposed in him by the company is shown by the elaborate dissenting memoranda, which he has from time to time prepared, some of which appear in the "Government Gazette," and others of which have been made public through the columns of the public Press.

THE COMPANY'S ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF PROCEDURE.

It is to the interests of the company that unless it obtains an award favourable to itself there shall be no award at all.

The following alternative courses of action therefore present themselves to the company:—(1) To endeavour to obtain an award in favour of the company; (2) to prevent any award from being made; (3) to delay the making of awards; (4) to set aside any award on technical grounds; (5) to render an award impossible of performance; and (6) to induce the canegrowers to fail or refuse to supply cane. (This last-mentioned alternative need not be dealt with here, but there are grounds for believing that the millowners use the canegrowers' discontent with the Dickson award to help them in their opposition to the Central Cane Price Board's decisions.)

EMPLOYMENT OF SKILLED COUNSEL—TECHNICAL OBJECTIONS.

In proceeding to examine the tactics of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, it will be remembered that they employed *Mr. Mitchell*, a *Sydney barrister*, to appear before the local boards and the Central Cane Prices Board in order to set forth at great length, not only the view point of the company as to the price of cane, but also numerous technical objections which will be referred to later on.

APPLICATION TO TAKE THE COMPANY'S MILLS TOGETHER.

The first move of the company and its astute counsel is that referred to in the first charge against the board, made in Mr. Knox's statement before the Select Committee. The

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company made an application to the Central Board to take the six mills of the company together. Mr. Knox himself gives the obvious reason why this could not be done—namely, that the Act required each mill to be dealt with by itself. The board refused an application which it had no promise to grant. Mr. Knox states that the application was thrown out at once on a technical point, “although the board had agreed to hear it on our undertaking to pay a bonus of £60,000 on the crop of 1915, our promise to do this having been voided by the above Act.” The reply to this is that the company were bound to pay the bonus of £60,000 under their agreement with the canegrowers. They contended that the Act let them out of this liability, and they used this argument as a threat to force the board to make an order, which Mr. Knox himself points out the board had no power to make.

OBJECTIONS TO CONSTITUTION OF LOCAL BOARDS.

The Colonial Sugar Refining Company put forward objections to the constitution of the local boards, contending that, though fresh representatives had been elected to the boards in accordance with the regulations, this was not sufficient—a new board had to be constituted in each year. This objection, if upheld, would prevent the making of any awards valid in law during the year 1917, and, moreover, would prevent the Central Cane Prices Board from making any award. The objection was of a purely technical nature, because millowners and canegrowers had in fact elected their representatives. The objection, however, was persisted in by the company in proceedings before the local boards and the Central Board. In both cases, however, the objection was overruled. Not satisfied with this the company appealed to the Full Court, where again their contention was regarded as fallacious in law. Still unsatisfied, the company appealed to the High Court, and thus the matter will be delayed until the High Court sits in Brisbane in July next. If the High Court decides adversely to the company, no doubt they will appeal to the Privy Council.

NOTICE OF AMENDING BILL—WHY COMPANY DESIRES TO DELAY IT.

The amending Bill now before Parliament contains a provision which will declare the local boards to have been validly constituted (clause 18). Naturally the company objects to this provision because it frustrates their intention to obstruct the Act by continuous litigation. Mr. Knox, in his memorandum, says—

“Actions have already been instituted about certain awards, and an important decision has been given by the Supreme Court, which showed beyond doubt that the court considered the Central Board has acted improperly in a most vital particular, and any proposal such as is involved here that would have the effect of setting on one side the principle laid down by the court ought to be rejected. The Government are responsible for blunders made in the administration of the Act, and the parties should not be barred from the redress.”

THE FULL COURT—COST OF PRODUCTION.

The only point on which the Full Court considered the Central Board went wrong was in not taking into consideration the

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cost of production, and the court was prepared to issue a mandamus to the board to take this matter into consideration, but at the same time intimated that they did not think that the mandamus would be of any use to the company. The company's lawyers asked for the mandamus, then subsequently, after having considered the matter, came to the conclusion that the mandamus would be of no use to them, and accordingly the mandamus did not issue. *The reason for the company's action* is not far to seek. The cost of production has, according to their own showing, been largely increased by the Dickson award, and had the mandamus issued the board, taking into consideration the increased cost of production, would probably have awarded the canegrowers a higher price for their cane.

From the above it will be seen that the Colonial Sugar Refining Company's real objection is to that provision of the Act which declares that the Full Court's decision that the boards have been properly constituted is correct in law.

MR. KNOX AS OBSTRUCTIONIST—HAMBLEDON MILL.

Mr. Knox, in his statement, makes an attack upon the Central Board in connection with the Hambledon Mill. When Mr. Knox was called to give evidence he obstructed the board by *refusing to give evidence as to the capital value of the mill* which the board had adjourned their sittings to hear. He complains that the board did not accept his estimate of the capital value of the mill as £170,000 and that the net profit in 1915 was £4,250. Mr. Knox's statement of the capital value was on a purely arbitrary basis, and he refused to give the board any information as to the actual value of the mill. *The same remarks apply to his statement about the profits.* So far from the board limiting the mill's profits as suggested to £4,250, the award of the board, which was published in the “Government Gazette” of the 23rd June, 1916, shows that the company were allowed a percentage on the estimated capital value of the mill assets and the whole surplus arising from any extra efficiency attained over the standard of 90 coefficient of work. It is well to note that Mr. Knox, when stating that the net profit was £4,250, refused to produce any figures or statements in support of this contention to show how this figure was arrived at. Also, as no information in connection with the cost of manufacture could be procured from Mr. Knox, the board were forced to take into consideration the costs of a somewhat similar mill in the same district, treating similar cane, and estimate what this cost should be taken at. It might be pointed out that the result of Mr. Knox's attitude was that the board had to estimate the value of the mill in the best way they could. The following extract from the award published in the “Gazette” of 23rd June, 1916, shows the liberal rate of profit which was allowed the mill:—“For the 1916 season the millowners have been allowed a reserved profit, by way of a percentage on the estimated capital value of the mill assets, based on 8 per cent., together with the surplus arising from any extra efficiency attained over and above a standard of 90 coefficient of work. Thus, the millowners receive the benefit of the extra efficiency obtainable through, inter alia, the increased

capital cost of extra machinery, together with the percentage on such increased capital cost. The board have endeavoured, with the limited data made available by the millowners, to secure to them a fair return on the capital involved, and in this connection it should be noted that the capital of the company contributed in cash is considerably less than the total value of the assets disclosed."

FUTILITY OF MR. KNOX'S CHARGE IN RE REFUSAL TO TREAT FARMERS' PROPERTY AS AN ISSUE.

Mr. Knox's next charge is that the chairman of the board at the next district visited refused to take into account the profit made by the farmers as an issue in the case. The bona fides of this objection is indicated in the action taken by the company, and when, as above pointed out, the Full Court expressed its willingness to issue a mandamus to the board to take into consideration the cost of production. Moreover, Mr. Knox omits to point out the reason why the chairman and a majority of the board took the view they did. The reason will be found in the award of the Goondi Mill in the "Government Gazette" of the 23rd June, 1916, on page 2372. The following are extracts from the award:—

"Up to the time of hearing the Hambleton inquiry in May, 1916, the Central Board had held nine inquiries, at all of which they accepted evidence as to the cost of production of sugar-cane, with a view of ascertaining what such cost would be in an average season, and what would be a reasonable standard of cultivation and a reasonable tonnage of cane to be harvested. Evidence of the cost of production was also called at the Hambleton inquiry and several days spent by the board in hearing this evidence. Similar evidence was called before the Goondi Local Board, who had examined about fifteen witnesses, and had been engaged on making their award from 6th April to 9th May, 1916.

"This board decided that the information they required as to cost of production was not obtainable, and that, even if it were, it was not a factor which the board would be compelled to take into consideration to enable them to make an award.

"The evidence hitherto obtained by the board as to the cost of production was unsatisfactory and useless, and it would be needless waste of time to prolong taking evidence on this point. One of the reasons for the unsatisfactory nature of the evidence was that the farmers kept no books. The evidence given by them differed amongst themselves, and differed very considerably from their own returns."

MR. KNOX AND INDIVIDUAL ANALYSIS—
MACKNADE AND VICTORIA MILLS.

Referring to the action of the board in connection with the mills on the Herbert River (Macknade and Victoria) Mr. Knox's complaint appears to be that the board adopted the system of individual analysis for determining the price of cane after he had stated that it was very doubtful if his company could provide chemists for analysing the cane. The system of

individual analysis for payment of cane has been in use by the Colonial Sugar Refining Company for many years, and it was adopted unanimously by the board in the first award made by them for the 1916 season—namely, in the Hambleton award. It is hardly necessary to point out that the millers' representative on the board is a gentleman holding a high position in the employ of Mr. Knox's company. The board might have thought it would be quite possible to have individual analysis carried out in the company's mills as it had been carried out for years up to this season, and is now being carried out by some other Queensland mills. Seeing the persistently obstructionist attitude taken up by Mr. Knox, the board may have had some doubt as to the bona fides of his statement that there would be difficulty in providing chemists to analyse the cane, and may have considered that the real difficulty was not a shortage of chemists but Mr. Knox's hostile attitude to every action taken by the board.

THE COMPANY UPSETS REGULATIONS UNDER THIS
ACT.

In view of the danger that the board's awards would be defeated by the failure to analyse cane, a series of regulations was framed, providing for analyses by Government check chemists. The company refused admission to these chemists, and brought an action to test the validity of the regulations. They were successful in having the regulations declared ultra vires. The Government were taking steps to appeal to the High Court from this decision, but were forestalled by the action of the Legislative Council, which, on the motion of Mr. O'Shea, annulled the regulations. A similar resolution proposed by Mr. Booker in the Legislative Assembly was lost.

DANGERS POINTED OUT BY FULL COURT.

From the judgment of the Full Court, it is clear that, by reason of the failure of the mills to provide chemists and to take analyses of cane delivered, the canegrowers are in danger of losing the benefit of the awards, unless the Bill now before the House enabling the board to vary the awards becomes law.

MR. KNOX'S ALLEGATIONS OF VIOLATION OF
SECRECY.

Mr. Knox also complains that particulars were furnished to the board in regard to the capital invested in the two Herbert River mills and of the working expenses in 1915, and that the information thus placed before the board under the section of the Act relating to the secrecy of such returns was, despite the protest of the company's counsel, handed over to the solicitor for the growers. This information was evidence given at an inquiry to which the canegrowers were a party and by which their rights were to be determined. The chairman informed the company's counsel before the evidence was tendered that the board would only accept it on condition that the other side had an opportunity of testing it by cross-examination, and the company were at liberty to keep back the evidence if they so desired. The evidence was rendered necessary to supply defects in the returns furnished by the company under the regulations.

It is appropriate here to quote Mr. Marshall's memorandum published in the

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"Government Gazette," page 2370. (Mr. Marshall, the canegrowers' representative on the Central Cane Prices Board)—

"Before giving my reasons for dissenting from the majority award of the board in the case of the Hambleton Mill. I wish to remark on the attitude taken up by the general manager of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company in giving his evidence. He refused altogether in some cases to reply to the board's questions; in others stated the information was not available. It is my opinion that the chairman would have been justified in using the power vested in him as a District Court judge to compel answers to the questions asked. On the other hand, Mr. Mitchell, agent for the company, called nine farmer witnesses, and when the evidence given by them did not suit him subjected them to severe cross-examination, disclosing their most private affairs. The chairman several times drew Mr. Mitchell's attention to the unfairness of this course and to the fact that he was departing from the usual practice in a court of law by cross-examining his own witnesses.

"I dissent from the award on the ground that the capital value of the mill and plant is assessed at too high a figure."

STATEMENT BY MR. KNOX RE MACKAY MILLS.

1. Mr. Knox next refers to the Mackay mills and points out that the board's decisions were nearly always by a majority. However, he omits to point out that the Colonial Sugar Refining Company's representative was never one of the majority when the board differed. He says that the majority decided that the mills should be taken together, notwithstanding that, as above stated, it had been held in March that the Act did not allow of this being done. This is simply untrue. The mills were all dealt with separately and separate awards published in the "Gazette" for each mill.

2. He also says that no adequate reason was given by the board for determining that a higher price should be paid for this cane than for the cane in other districts. This, again, is untrue. The reason will be found in the general statement published with the Mackay awards in the "Government Gazette" of the 7th August, 1916, page 440.

The following is an extract from that statement:—

"1916 PRICES.

"As to the 1916 prices, the board have made their calculations on the system already adopted by them as to the Northern mills, and have drawn up a scale of prices for the Mackay district which is slightly higher than the highest scale yet fixed for any other district. This is partly owing to the fact that the cost of manufacture in the Mackay mills is lower than in any other district for which the board have fixed the 1916 prices."

MR. SMITH'S ATTITUDE.

The attitude of Mr. John Smith, the mill-owners' representative and Colonial Sugar Refining Company's employee, is worthy of note. Mr. Smith had some difference with the chairman of the board in regard to the publication of his

dissenting memorandum in regard to the Mackay awards. Having arranged to forward his dissenting memorandum to the chairman as usual, he forwarded it to the secretary, specially requesting the secretary to send it direct to the Government Printer for publication. The secretary handed the memorandum to the chairman, who found that it contained what he regarded as incorrect and misleading statements as to the views and reasons of other members of the board. He therefore decided not to send it on to the Government Printer for publication. Mr. Smith requested the Attorney-General to intervene in the matter, and on being informed that the Attorney-General did not propose to interfere, he tendered his resignation, on the 8th September, 1916. *Judge O'Sullivan, as chairman of the board, made the following announcement at Childers on that date:—*

"I have to intimate to those present and to the public generally that Mr. Smith, the millers' representative, has sent the board a notification that he has sent his resignation to the Governor in Council. Intimation of that has been received by me this morning. There appears to be no provision in the Act for a quorum, and it seems to me the board is unable to discharge any of its functions.

"I regret this very much, as it will be very inconvenient to the persons interested in both mills—Childers and Doolbi. I know many persons have come here with very great inconvenience and a long way to be present to-day. This resignation will also cause great inconvenience to the Bundaberg millers and growers. We have dealt with six mills there, and we have five awards to make. Under those circumstances, I requested Mr. Smith to hold over his resignation until the completion of the work in hand, but Mr. Smith feels he is unable to comply with that request. This may mean a rehearing of the Bundaberg business and a delay in the rest of the business this board have to deal with for the rest of the year. There seems no alternative, and the board consequently will be unable to carry on its work at present. Therefore, it is my duty and it is done with very great reluctance, to state that we will be unable to carry on the business set down."

Mr. Smith published a long letter in the "Courier" setting out his position, but, if he hoped to obstruct the proceedings by resigning, he must have been disappointed, for the Government refused to accept his resignation—and, moreover, passed regulations fixing a quorum, thus enabling the board to act even if he continued to refuse to sit.

That the company has been successful in delaying the issue of an award in regard to their mill at Childers is indicated in the memorandum attached, written by the secretary of the Isis Primary Producers' and Canegrowers' Association (a memorandum which unfortunately has been marked "Confidential").

MR. KNOX ALLEGES CONFUSED ADMINISTRATION OF ACT.

Mr. Knox next alleges that considerable confusion has arisen in the application of the Act, and claims that this is shown by the

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present position of Childers. *This confusion has been largely due to the action of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company themselves*, but the reason no award has been made up to the present is that both parties on the 26th September requested the board to hold over the award, the Dickson award being then sub judice. The company (following its usual obstructionist tactics) instructed their counsel, Mr. Mitchell, to object to the jurisdiction of the board, and goes on to say: "The board reserved its decision on this point, and it has not yet been given." This is again untrue. The board gave its decision on the jurisdiction point, and communicated the result to the company on the 16th November. It is hardly worth while discussing all Mr. Knox's inaccuracies. His present attack is simply a continuation of the policy his company persistently maintained against the board from its inception.

COMPANY'S APPEAL TO FULL COURT.

Notwithstanding all the company's efforts awards as to four of their mills were made by the Central Board, and therefore to carry out their purpose it became necessary to appeal to the Full Court. Accordingly *five actions* were instituted against the Government, and *four applications for prohibition certiorari and mandamus* were made.

THE COMPANY'S GROUNDS FOR TRYING TO UPSET AWARD.

As already indicated the company were unsuccessful, but nevertheless it is interesting to note the grounds on which they sought to upset the awards. Certain of the objections have been considered above, namely, those relating to the constitution of the board, the cost of production, and the question of analysis. The other objections raised to the awards were: (a) that the decision of the board was not unanimous. This objection found little favour with the court, as law and common sense alike dictated that a majority of the board should decide; (b) Payment to groups: This was a technical objection, because the award recognised the group system which had been in force at the mills, and provided for payment to growers for cane supplied under the group system. The objection, which was purely technical, failed. (c) Retrospectivity: An objection was raised that on account of the retrospective nature of the award, it was invalid. Had this objection succeeded, it would have put a premium on obstruction, because, according to the company's contention, if the season had partly advanced before the award was made, payment at the rate prescribed by the award could not be insisted upon in respect of cane already crushed. This objection throws light upon the tactics of the company in endeavouring to call numerous witnesses on the cost of production, just as the objection to a *majority decision* may throw light as to the reason which actuated Mr. Smith in resigning.

THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

It only remains to refer to the appointment of a Select Committee on the motion of the Honourable E. W. H. Fowles when the motion for the third reading of the Sugar Experiment Stations Act Amendment Bill was before the Legislative Council. Mr. Nielson, who was a prominent supporter of

this motion, stated that his action was due to communications received by him from growers who objected to certain principles in the Bill. It may be pointed out that Mr. Nielson appeared before the board as representative for the following mills:—Bingera, Fairymead, Millaquin, Qunaba, Invicta—Bundaberg mills. For the Doolbi Mill in the Childers district; for Maryborough mills; for some of the Northern mills; and for the Farleigh Mill at Mackay. Mr. Nielson is moreover a millers' representative on the Select Committee, and these facts, in addition to the attached letter from the secretary of the Isis Primary Producers and Cane Growers' Association, show how little value may be attached to Mr. Nielson's claim that he supported the Select Committee in the growers' interests.

I have a number of letters in addition to the letter just mentioned—letters from various canegrowing associations—and telegrams, all dealing with this matter, which, with the permission of the House, I will proceed to read. The first is a letter, dated 4th December, 1916, addressed to myself. It reads as follows:—

"Dear sir,—With reference to the appointment of a Select Committee by the Legislative Council to consider and take evidence from growers on the Cane Prices Amending Bill passed by your Assembly, our Executive have carefully considered this matter and consider no good purpose can be served by taking evidence in the manner suggested, and I am wiring you as follows:—

'Re Select Committee appointed by Legislative Council to take evidence amending Cane Prices Bill, amendments passed by Legislative Assembly were carefully considered by all our branches, and have our endorsement. We consider no good purpose can be served by taking evidence from small and irresponsible body of growers.'

"This wire I now confirm. I beg to point out that our association now numbers 965 financial members, and as there are some thousand odd growers in the Mackay district, it is difficult to understand that statement made by the Hon. C. F. Nielson, as reported in the local Press—viz., that he had received numerous communications from Mackay, etc.'

"The amendments sent to you from our association were carefully considered by all our branches, and were arrived at after one year's experience with the original Act.

"We note with satisfaction that a large number of the amendments sent by us are embodied in the amending Bill, and which we consider a great improvement on the original measure

"We note from your wire of the 1st instant that the Bill, as amended, will have your strenuous support, which is very satisfactory to us, and we trust that the Bill as amended will be placed on the statute-book, and be given another year's trial.

"Yours, etc.,

"H. E. Turner.

"President."

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The next is a telegram from the growers' representatives on the local cane prices board at Goondi, as follows:—

"Dear sir,—Messrs. Stevenson and Job, who are to give evidence before your Select Committee on amending Cane Prices Act, are not representatives of majority of growers of this district, and growers resent not being given an opportunity to select representatives.

"WILCOX MCGOWAN."

There is a further lettergram from Mr. Dunworth, the secretary of another cane association at Mackay. He says—

"According Press reports we note amendment moved by the Hon. C. Nielson relative Cane Prices Amending Bill favouring appointment Select Committee for taking evidence from growers in this and other districts. The Pioneer River Farmers and Graziers' Association, consisting of 965 financial members out of some thousand odd growers in Mackay district, suggested amendments as proposed in amending Bill. We have not communicated with Mr. Nielson on this matter, and challenge his statement that body Mackay farmers have done so. We strongly protest against any alterations to amending Bill, and furthermore we consider that Mr. Nielson, having acted as legal representative for millers before Central Board, should not be on such Select Committee without growers' nominee being present likewise.

"DUNWORTH, Secretary."

[9 p.m.]

A further telegram was received from Mr. Turner, of the Pioneer River Farmers and Growers' Association, on same date—

"Re Select Committee appointed by Legislative Council to take evidence amending Cane Prices Bill, amendments passed by Legislative Assembly were carefully considered by all our branches, and have our endorsement. We consider no good purpose can be served by taking evidence from small and irresponsible body of growers."

A further communication was received by wire from Mr. Wrench, of the Childers' Association, dated 16th December, 1916—

"Executive this association just heard that deputation consisting of J. Broadhurst and J. Clayton, ostensibly representing growers but at instigation Colonial Sugar Refining Company, unknown to this association, have gone to Brisbane to interview you on sugar matters. These men not representative of majority growers here. This association favours amended Act."

A further communication from the Isis Primary Producers and Canegrowers' Association dated 16th December, and addressed to myself, reads—

"Acting on instructions from the president of this association I have just wired you as follows:—

Executive this association just heard that deputation consisting of J. Broadhurst and J. Clayton, ostensibly representing growers but at instigation Colonial Sugar Refining Company, unknown to this association, have gone to Brisbane to interview you on sugar

matters. These men not representative of majority growers here. Association favours amended Act.

"We have not yet been able to ascertain their exact mission, but we believe from what we have heard that it is in connection with the Cane Prices Board, and its award.

"It is over two months now since this association asked for an award to be issued, and from that moment the Colonial Sugar Refining Company has been endeavouring to prevent the award being issued; how far they have succeeded in this we do not know, but the fact remains that we have not yet got an award for cane for 1916 season.

"The facts are these: Arrangements were made that the Childers Mill would start to crush on 30th August; farmers were notified of this; on 22nd August the Colonial Sugar Refining Company advertised the mill could not start, as the terms of the purchase of cane had not been determined; at this time the Dickson award became known and the farmers here held a meeting on the 23rd August, and decided that the Dickson award was such as to preclude them from continuing operations, and the mill were notified of this determination. Generally speaking, the events in connection with this Dickson award are past history known to us all. However, the Central Cane Prices Board sat here early in September, and evidence was given by both sides in respect to the award; the growers, however, stipulated that the award be not issued for the present. On 21st October we instructed our solicitors (Foxton, Hobbs, and Macnish) to apply at once for an award to be issued, and we subsequently withdrew the letter that we had sent to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company on 23rd August; on 24th October the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, becoming aware that we had asked for the issue of the award, began to lay up the Childers Mill for the season, and on being asked by us how soon they could be ready to crush replied, "Not for some time." Well, ever since it seems to us that they have been endeavouring to prevent the award being issued, and we have repeatedly asked our solicitors to endeavour to push on the award. You see the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, in the first place, declined to start until a price was fixed for cane, and, in the second place, the grower felt that he would be working in the dark if he did not know what he was going to get for his cane. The circumstances of this season were such that most of the cane would stand over, but if the price proved to be such a favourable one to the grower as we expected, it would have paid the grower to cut such cane as he intended to let stand over. The reason of our wire to you as above was that in connection with all these matters we had just heard that the two growers mentioned went to Brisbane at the Colonial Sugar Refining Company's instigation; the only growers that appear to have known anything about it were the Colonial Sugar Refining Company's tenants and a few favoured growers of theirs. Their action is not endorsed by

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this association, which represents three-fourths of the growers to the Childers Mill.

"In connection with the Regulation of Sugar Cane Prices Act Amendment Act, we do not view with pleasure the appointment of a Select Committee in the Upper House to deal with this Bill, as we feel that such a move is at the instigation of the millers and the object undoubtedly is to render, if possible, the Bill ineffectual. I have been instructed to say that we consider the amended Act a vast improvement on the original measure, and hope to see it pass through."

A further communication dated 18th December, from the same source to myself reads—

"I have the honour by instruction from the executive of this association to write and say that since I wrote the letter of 16th to you, we have found that the deputation referred to therein was to give evidence before the Select Committee of the Upper House on the Amended Cane Prices Act.

"This deputation was selected from a few growers favoured by the Colonial Sugar Refining Company at a secret meeting held at the mill at the instigation of the millers, and only represented those growers who are tenants of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company and a few others who are favoured by them. The bulk of the growers who are members of this association, together with the executive thereof, did not know anything of the matter. We understand a further lot are to go down representing the Isis Central Mill here. We have no hesitation in saying that the whole thing has been worked up by the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. We also heard that a petition was got up by them (Colonial Sugar Refining Company). No one representing this association, so far as we know, was asked to sign it.

"It is a move designed to destroy the Bill which we said we were in favour of. Can you checkmate this move, and give us an opportunity of being heard? The whole matter is secret from us."

The following telegram, dated 19th December, was also received by me:—

"Just received wire from Nielson to say evidence before committee Cane Prices Act closed, this association has not been given any opportunity to appear, only millers' evidence taken from here."

I think that what I have said shows conclusively in whose benefit the Regulation of Cane Prices Act Amendment Bill was primarily introduced, namely, the growers, and the whole of the people opposed to them have been welded together in their opposition. I regret having had to take up so much of the time of the House, and I am very much disappointed, as I am certain the whole of the canegrowers of Queensland will also be at the action of the Council, with regard to the Bill.

Hon. W. D. ARMSTRONG: How much over £18 per ton are we going to get for sugar?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That depends on the War Precautions Act of the Federal Government.

At 9.10 p.m.,

The SPEAKER announced that he would resume the chair at twenty-five minutes past 9 o'clock.

The House resumed at the hour named.

INSURANCE BILL.

COUNCIL'S MESSAGE, No. 2.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of the following message from the Legislative Council:—

"Mr. Speaker,—

"The Legislative Council, having had under consideration the message of the Legislative Assembly of date 19th December, relative to the Insurance Bill, beg now to intimate that they—

"Do not insist on their amendment in clause 3, page 2, line 15, after 'of,' but offer the following further amendments:—

On line 17, after 'of' insert 'marine or';

On line 19, after 'of' insert 'marine or';

On line 23, after 'Queensland' insert 'marine or';

On line 25, after 'any' insert 'marine or';

On line 26, after 'any' insert 'marine or';

On line 52, after 'on' insert 'marine or';

On line 52, after 'general' insert 'or marine and general';

in which further amendments they invite the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly.

"Do not insist on their amendments in clause 3, page 2, lines 33 and 34 and lines 34 to 37, and agree to the new definition of 'Director' proposed by the Legislative Assembly.

"Insist on their amendment in clause 3, page 3, lines 9 to 12 (now 14 to 17), but offer to insert on line 26, after 'losses,' and on line 27, after 'risk,' the words 'not being in respect of human beings,' and on line 46, after 'any,' the words 'marine insurance risk or.'

"Do not insist on their amendments in clause 10 (now 11), subclause 2, to the end of page now 7, and do not insist on the insertion of the first three paragraphs on now page 8, but offer in lieu thereof the following words:—

In the event of the Governor in Council granting in his absolute discretion any approval under section seven of the Workers' Compensation Act of 1916 the prescribed amounts deposited under such Act shall be received as part of the deposit made by the insurer for the purposes of this section and conversely any money deposited under the provisions of this Act shall be reckoned as a deposit or portion of a deposit under the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act of 1916.

"And insist on the insertion of the fourth paragraph on now page 8.

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"Do not insist on their amendment in clause 11 (now 12) to which the Legislative Assembly have disagreed, but offer the following further amendments:—

On line 10, after 'of' insert 'marine or,' and on line 16, after 'under' insert 'marine or.'

In which further amendments they invite the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly.

"Insist on their amendments in the first paragraph of clause 13 (now 14), and offer to transpose the first three paragraphs on page 10 to Schedule I, clause 7, line 52, before the words 'The Commissioner,' and to omit from the second paragraph the words 'or by any insurer.'

"In which transposition and amendment they invite the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly."

"Insist on their amendment in clause 15 (now 16), line 16 (now 37), and agree to the amendment proposed by the Legislative Assembly, but offer the following further amendment:—On line 45, after 'Commissioner,' insert 'and a representative of the insurers.' Insist on their amendment on lines 48 and 49, but offer the following further amendment:—On line 50, after 'computed,' insert 'on the first day of January.' Insist on the remainder of their amendments in the clause, and disagree to the omission proposed by the Legislative Assembly after the word 'direct,' on line 4, page 11, but offer the following further amendments:—On line 1, omit 'twenty' and insert 'nineteen'; on line 4, omit 'five' and insert 'three'; on line 5 omit 'binding upon' and insert 'the standard rates in accordance with this Act'; on line 6, omit 'and all insurers'; on line 21, omit 'parties in difference' and insert 'Governor in Council'; and omit lines 23 to 26.

"In which further amendments they invite the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly.

"Do not insist on their amendments in clause 16 (now 17) to which the Legislative Assembly have disagreed, but propose the following further amendments:—On page 12, line 25, omit 'of,' and insert 'or the retiring allowance of'; and add to the clause—

"(9) For the purposes of any employment by or on behalf of the Commissioner any officer of the public service shall be deemed to have been duly licensed under this section and also clause 3 of Schedule I. hereof";

"In which amendments they invite the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly.

"Do not insist on their amendment in clause 17 (now 18), omitting lines 26 to 31 (now 45 to 49); and agree to the insertion therefor proposed by the Legislative Assembly.

"Do not insist on their amendment in clause 18 (now 19), page 10 (now 13), omitting lines 20 and 21 (now 50 and 51), and insist on their other amendments in the clause.

"Do not insist on the omission of subclause (1) of clause 21, and agree to the amendments proposed therein by the

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Legislative Assembly, but offer the following further amendments:—

On line 49, before 'any,' insert 'subject to';

On line 50, omit 'to the contrary notwithstanding';

On page 15, line 3, omit 'in writing'; and

On line 4, after 'reinsured' insert 'except by treaty'; and agree to the substitution of new clause 20 for subclause (2);

"In which further amendments they invite the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly.

"Do not insist on their amendment in clause 26 (now 25), page 12 (now 16), line 9 (now 1), and insist on their other amendments in the clause.

"Insist on the omission of clause 27, and on the insertion of new clause 26.

"Insist on the insertion of new clause 27, but offer the following amendment therein:—On line 45, after 'regulations,' insert 'provisions or Orders in Council';

"In which further amendment they invite the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly.

"Insist on their amendments in Schedule I, clause 3, subclause (2), but offer, on line 18, to omit 'upon being duly licensed and'; and in clause 4, lines 28 and 29, to omit 'and every agent of the Commissioner.'

"In which further amendments they invite the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly.

"Insist on their amendment in subclause (1) of clause 19 of Schedule I.; do not insist on their amendments in subclause (2), but offer to amend the said subclause to read as follows:—'Such report and opinion, if any, shall be laid before the Governor in Council, and any sum recommended for division in such report may be divided amongst holders of current policies, in accordance with the scheme approved by the Governor in Council'; and do not insist on the insertion of subclause (4).

"In which further amendment they invite the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly; and

"Do not insist on their other amendments in the Bill to which the Legislative Assembly have disagreed.

"W. F. TAYLOR,
Presiding Chairman.

"Legislative Council Chamber,
Brisbane, 22nd December, 1916."

CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS.

HON. J. A. FIELLY: Before this message left the Legislative Council, the Assembly made suggestions for a reasonable compromise in certain clauses, and the message that has arrived from the Council meets with the approval of the Government. I propose to move that all the amendments inserted by the Council be accepted. It would be rather cumbersome to go through each of the amendments clause by clause, and

as the leader of the Opposition was prepared to abide by the decision of the Government, he had no objection to putting the whole thing en bloc.

HON. J. TOLMIE: I will go more than half-way to meet you in a spirit of "sweet reasonableness."

HON. J. A. FIELLY: With the consent of the Committee, he moved—That the Committee approve of the whole of the amendments inserted by the Legislative Council, and do not insist on the amendments of the Assembly.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had agreed to the Legislative Council's amendments. The report was adopted, and the Bill ordered to be returned to the Legislative Council with the following message—

"Mr. Presiding Chairman,—

"The Legislative Assembly having had under consideration the message of the Legislative Council relative to the Insurance Bill, beg now to intimate that they—

"Do not insist on their disagreement to those amendments upon which the Legislative Council have insisted; and agree to all the further amendments offered by the Legislative Council.

"WM. MCCORMACK,

"Speaker.

"Legislative Assembly Chamber,
"Brisbane, 22nd December, 1916."

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER: From the information I have got from the Legislative Council, they have practically now agreed to the balance of business, and it only remains for us to receive the messages from them dealing with the Appropriation Bill and the Insurance Bill. We have reached the end of the business for the year, although, unfortunately, not the end of the session. I do not think it will take us very long—not much more than a week, I should think—to finish the balance of the business. We were, unfortunately, prevented through the lamentable death of Sir Arthur Morgan from getting through as much business as we anticipated this week. Other circumstances, too, prevented us from getting through as much business as we anticipated, and, therefore, I have to move that the House, at its rising, do adjourn till Tuesday, the 30th January. It is not the present intention of the Government to do anything when Parliament re-assembles except to deal with business which is already on the business-sheet; and if the same spirit is shown as has been shown latterly in this House in regard to discussion of measures, I have no doubt that we shall complete that work in a very few days. And I think the adjournment between now and then will give hon. members the opportunity of having a well-earned rest. (Hear, hear!) In moving this motion, I desire to take the opportunity of thanking you, Mr. Speaker, and the other members of this House, the "Hansard" staff, the officers of the House, and also the gentlemen of the Press for their courtesy and assistance during this session, which has been a strenuous one, and I wish them the compliments of the season.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: At this time one cannot forget that the number of grief-stricken houses in Queensland have been considerably increased from what it was last Christmas, through the death of husbands, brothers, and sons at the front; and I am sure it will be some comfort and consolation to the grief-stricken friends to know that we are not unmindful of them, because at this time their grief will be more accentuated by the remembrance of former happy gatherings on such an occasion. (Hear, hear!) I am sure it will be a comfort to them to feel that Queensland grieves with them, and that Queensland recognises a great honour which they have brought upon themselves, and upon their country, by being prepared to offer their lives in their country's call. I think the recent news that has come from enemy countries—the recent happenings there and pronouncements, the peace-feelers which have been sent out—are evidence that our enemy is weakening, and of a breaking down of the resistance which he may offer to the armies of Great Britain and her allies. I think we may express the hope that in the not far distant future, by keeping up our efforts, Great Britain and her allies will be able to achieve a glorious victory, and bring about the consummation of an honourable and lasting peace.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. J. TOLMIE: I desire to offer to the officers of the House, including yourself, Mr. Speaker, and hon. members, felicitations on the work of the year having been completed, even though the session may not have been, and to wish you all the compliments of the season. I also do that to the various officers of the House, to the messengers, and the girls in the refreshment-room, who have all endeavoured to do the best they could for hon. members during the session. Certainly, it has been a very arduous session. I do not think myself that the work that has been accomplished is such as will make for the welfare of the State in many cases. Of course, I have expressed that opinion here before. In a few weeks we shall meet again for the purpose of finishing the work on the programme. I trust that by that time the House will be in a better frame of mind than it has been during the past session, because in all my experience in this House I do not remember it being in such a critical frame of mind as it has been this session, and added to the strenuousness of work perhaps the feeling of members have been overstrained to some extent. However, I trust that that will all pass away, and that by the time we do assemble again—30th January—for the transaction of public business, quite a different aspect will prevail, not only in the State but in the Empire. I feel that we are passing through a very critical time just now. I quite reciprocate the expressions which fell from the Premier in regard to those people who have suffered sad bereavements during the last twelve months. I sincerely hope that the war will pass away very quickly, and that the Empire will be able to reconstruct itself. I am sorry to have to meet again on the 30th January, because there has been a request made that both sides of the House should endeavour to do as much as they possibly could for recruiting. However, the Government will be able to set the pace in regard to that, and point out to us the best way in which

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it can be done; and I am certain the Opposition will collaborate with them to the fullest extent. I have nothing further to add other than that I hope members will enjoy the festive season, and that we will enter upon a new year of prosperity and happiness to all in the State of Queensland and in the Empire.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SPEAKER: On behalf of the Chairman of Committees, the "Hansard" staff, the officers of the House, the Press, and myself, I desire to thank the Chief Secretary and the leader of the Opposition for the seasonal greetings which they have extended to us, and to reciprocate on my own behalf. I wish the members of the House "A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year."

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Question—That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until Tuesday, the 30th day of January, 1917—put and passed.

APPROPRIATION BILL, No. 3.

RETURNED FROM COUNCIL.

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

The House adjourned at eight minutes past 10 o'clock p.m.