Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 2 OCTOBER 1918

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

WEDNESDAY, 2 OCTOBER, 1918.

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

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT.

The SPEAKER announced that he had received the Auditor-General's report on the public accounts for the year 1917-18.

Ordered to be printed.

QUESTIONS.

COPPER FOR MUNITIONS.

Mr. SIZER (*Vundah*), for Mr. Corser, asked the Chief Secretary—

"How many tons of copper have the Government procured for the British Committee of Munitions in terms of the letter which he obtained from the committee during his last visit to England in 1916, under which the committee undertook to purchase up to 45,000 tons of copper in a period ending with September of the present year?"

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

"The hon. member must surely be aware that his friends in the Legislative Council, by their refusal on two occasions to pass the Chillagoe and Etheridge Railways Bill, seriously hampered the production of copper in this State intended for the use of Great Britain and her allies. This Bill is again under consideration of the Legislative Council, and it is hoped that the good sense of that Chamber will permit of the Bill passing during this session."

STRIKE BALLOTS.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mirani*) asked the Secretary for Public Works—

"1. In connection with what strikes were the results of ballots thereon communicated to the Industrial Registrar?

"2. On what dates in each case did the Registrar receive these communications regarding strike ballots?"

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

"1. The Registrar was notified of a ballot having been taken by the coalminers at Redbank on 27th March, 1918, the strike taking place on the same date.

"2. The Registrar was notified of the results of ballots taken in the following callings:—

22nd April, 1918—Retail butchers, Brisbane.

3rd May, 1918—Engineers, Bundaberg.

17th May, 1918—Stovemoulders, Maryborough.

10th June, 1918—Fellmongers, Brisbane.

2nd August, 1918—Engine-drivers, Metropolitan Water and Sewerage.

"No strikes followed in these cases."

REPORT OF AGENT-GENERAL FOR 1917-18.

Mr. SIZER asked the Chief Secretary—

"Upon what date was the report of the Agent-General for the year 1917-18 received by the Chief Secretary's Department?"

The PREMIER replied—

"Report for 1917 received on 9th August, after which sent to Government Printer."

HON. J. M. HUNTER'S NORTHERN TOUR.

Mr. SWAYNE asked the Premier—

"1. Has his attention been called to the following paragraph which appeared in the September number of the 'Australian Journalist,' the official organ of the Australian Journalists' Association:—

Mr. H. T. Beasley, general secretary of the Queensland branch of the Australian Journalists' Association, has been accompanying Mr. Hunter, Honorary Minister, on a tour of Northern Queensland. Mr. Hunter is expected shortly to proceed to England to take up the position of Agent-General for Queensland, and is seizing the opportunity of acquiring knowledge of the State at first hand. It is quite on the cards that Mr. Beasley will accompany him as his private secretary?

"2. Is there any truth in all or any of the statements contained in the paragraph, and, if so, to what extent are they true?"

The PREMIER replied—

"1. No.

"2. See answer to No. 1."

TOOWOOMBA HOSPITAL.

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*) asked the Chief Secretary—

"Has a decision yet been arrived at to my question of Thursday, 13th June—viz., 'In view of the published statement that owing to the financial strain the Toowoomba Hospital Committee will be compelled to refuse admission to patients outside the collecting area, will he place before Cabinet the need for a grant of at least £1,000 per annum, as previously urged by deputation to the Premier in 1917,' and to which he replied—'The matter will be considered?'"

The PREMIER replied—

"If the hon. member has any further representations to make, I shall give them consideration."

WESTERN MAIL TRAIN.

Mr. ROBERTS asked the Secretary for Railways—

"1. Is he aware Western mail arrived Brisbane yesterday morning one hour late?

"2. Will he ascertain cause of its delay at Grantham thirty-one minutes?"

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Fihelly, *Paddington*) replied—

"1. Yes.

"2. Yes."

HARBOURS BILL.

INITIATION.

The TREASURER, in moving—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to consolidate and amend the laws relating to the regulation, management, and improvement of harbours, and for other consequential purposes,"

said: The motion itself is fairly explanatory. It relates to the consolidation of the great many Acts which are on the statute-book regulating and controlling the harbours in Queensland. This Bill lays down a new policy with regard to the control of harbours, and it will have the effect of abolishing harbour boards and placing the control of the harbours under a commission. I think it will find acceptance, when it is discussed, with the other side of the House.

Mr. MACARTNEY: A commission appointed by the Government?

The TREASURER: Yes.

Question put and passed.

METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

COMMITTEE.

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

On clause 1—"*Short title and construction of Act*"—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Hon. members would notice that he had circulated a number of amendments in connection with the Bill. He wished to indicate to hon. members who were interested in this Bill that these amendments were the result of a conference which took place between himself and the members of the Ipswich Local Authority, who were necessarily keenly interested in the fate of the Bill, and the principles which it contained. They made quite a number of suggestions, some of them, he was sorry to say, quite impracticable, but some that were not only practicable but, no doubt, beneficial to the Bill, and those amendments he had got in the list which had been circulated. One related to the title of the Bill.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: You might tell us what you left out.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That, he thought, would unduly and unwisely delay the proceedings before the Committee. He moved the omission of the clause, and the insertion in lieu thereof of the following amendment:—

"In the title of the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Act of 1909 the words 'and its suburbs' are repealed and the words 'and of the city of Ipswich and their environs' are inserted in lieu thereof.

"In the short title of the last-mentioned Act and in the short title of the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Act Amendment Act of 1915 and in the collective short title of the said last-mentioned Acts, after the word 'Metropolitan' the words 'and Ipswich' are inserted.

Hon. E. G. Theodore.]

> "This Act may be cited as the Metropolitan and Ipswich Water Supply and Sewerage Acts Amendment Act of 1918, and shall be read as one with the Metropolitan and Ipswich Water Supply and Sewerage Acts, 1909 to 1915 (herein collectively referred to as the principal Act)."

The object was to bring in a reference to Ipswich, because, after all, they must admit that the metropolitan area could not be considered a fair description of an area which included Ipswich as well as Brisbane, and to that extent he was conceding the point raised by the Ipswich water authority—that their city should be mentioned in the title.

Mr. MACARTNEY (*Toowong*): The amendment of the clause seemed to raise the question of the position of Ipswich, and it would be particularly interesting to know as to how far the objections made by the Ipswich Municipality or the Ipswich Water Board were sustained by a very large number of residents and business people, and how far the same had been accepted or refused. If they referred to the lengthy petition presented to the House, the Ipswich people appeared to be very serious about the matter and still had objections to it. From what the hon. gentleman said one would gather that all the recommendations of Ipswich had been very largely acted upon, but he still had reason to believe that Ipswich was not satisfied. He took it that that was so. Amongst other things it appeared that the liability of the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board was so much greater than the liability of the Ipswich authority, per capita.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That is based on a fallacious argument on the part of the Ipswich water authority.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The hon. member might show how that was so, and he therefore suggested that he should give the Committee an explanation.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The hon. member had touched upon the chief point of objection raised by the majority of the members of the Ipswich water authority. Their chief objection—leaving out altogether their objection to the proposed franchise—was based upon a belief that the adoption of the scheme would somehow or other thrust upon the water consumers of Ipswich a proportion of the burden which at present fell upon the people of Brisbane, incurred by the establishment of waterworks. That was a fallacy. They had worked out some kind of a comparison under which they said that the loan indebtedness under the Ipswich scheme represented about £3 per head. The same calculation in connection with Brisbane, they said, worked out at a liability of about £8 per head. But the figures were arrived at under a misapprehension. For one thing, the Ipswich pumping plant and reticulation plant was old and out of date, and they had already got approval of the expenditure of a very large sum of money for the purpose of establishing a more up-to-date plant. When that was done it would practically double the per capita liability—and that was an immediate obligation for Ipswich. Then, in calculating the indebtedness in regard to Brisbane, they had taken into account not only the large expenditure incurred recently at Cabbage-tree Creek dam, Holt's Hill, and Mount Crosby, but also, apparently, the expenditure on the sewerage scheme. It stood to reason that any comparison of that kind must result in an erroneous conclusion, and he believed that an exact comparison, not only of the work actually done, but expenditure to which they were committed, worked out at twelve to eight in favour of the metropolitan loan indebtedness at the present time.

But they need not take that into account. Whatever the relative indebtedness at the present time, it was hoped that the water supply in both cities would be so developed as to give the best supplies to the people in both cities, and the obligation would be so distributed that they would pay a fair thing for it. The Ipswich people need have no fear that they would pay any more for water than in the past. It was likely that they would pay considerably less, and in addition they would get a much better supply of water, and certainly a supply of purer water, because it would be direct from the filtration works at Mount Crosby. That would be an immense advantage to the Ipswich people, and was not a matter which should be calculated in mere pounds, shillings, and pence. But he was quite convinced in any case that they would get their water more cheaply than at present.

Another objection which he had considered was that under the present relative systems of rating in Brisbane, the Brisbane scheme would operate harshly in respect of unoccupied lands. That was so, and it would be necessary, in his opinion, so soon as the new board was constituted and set about drawing up their by-laws, to take into account that there were large areas of unoccupied town lands in Ipswich that were unimproved, and it would serve no good purpose to unduly tax them through a water rate. It was a futile method of trying to force land into occupation by taxing it £1 per year for water rates more than it should otherwise pay. Consequently, the new board would have to take that into account, and whatever rate was fixed would have to be fixed so as not to throw on the unoccupied land too heavy a burden. There could be no injustice to Ipswich in that respect. Ipswich would be represented by two representatives on the board, and the outside metropolitan districts would be represented separately, and their interests would be identical with those of Ipswich. Further than that, the by-laws had to be approved by the Governor in Council, so that if there were any attempt to impose a harsh by-law the Government would have to keep an eye on it, and see that no injustice was done.

Those were the two principal points of objection. They had also an argument that under the scheme the actual cost of connecting Mount Crosby and Ipswich would be just as great as the cost of establishing a separate pumping plant on the Brisbane River. He did not think there was much in the argument. The cost of connecting Mount Crosby and Ipswich was £60,000 for a pipe line alone, but the president of the board in Brisbane informed him that it would cost well over that for Ipswich to establish a pumping plant to give the same supply of water as could be given by a pipe line costing that £60,000, and at the same time lay down a purification scheme. It would cost a very large sum of money, and they would not get a better service. In addition to that,

the separate Ipswich scheme would cost more to maintain. From every point from which they looked at it, the present scheme held out great advantages for Ipswich, and also for Brisbane. There was no reason why the whole of the area proposed to be comprehended should not be included, and the board constituted as they proposed to constitute it.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He was obliged to the Minister for the explanation he had given. It had simplified matters very much. The petition presented by the Ipswich Council had been read, and members were familiar with it, and would probably be able to form an opinion as to whether the hon. member had given a complete answer to the material points raised. But he had received a copy of a ratepayers' circular, which he presumed was sent to other hon. members, setting out probably in shorter terms the objections which the business people had, and he thought it would be well to call the attention of the Committee to some of it. They thoroughly endorsed the action which the Ipswich water authority had taken, and they did that, no doubt, because the petition which had been lodged contained only one signature—that of the corporation—and they feared it might be thought that it did not represent the views of the ratepayers. In their circular they opposed the amalgamation being forced on the ratepayers in these words—

> "We are opposed to an amalgamation being forced upon the ratepayers which, if accomplished, would, we feel certain, increase the water rates, and would empower the metropolitan board in February next to take over, without any compensation, the existing plant of the council, and continue to use it to supply the city with water, so that the suggested improvement of receiving filtered water does not seem to have any likelihood of early fruition.
>
> "In our opinion, the business aspect of the proposal lies in the statement that the loan indebtednes of the council and the metropolitan board is at the rate of £8 per capita for the board, and only £3 for the council.
>
> "If the result of the amalgamation was to lower our water rates, then consideration might be given to the proposal, but there appears to be no hope of this, and we cannot conceive of a partnership being offered or accepted under such conditions without some adequate compensation being made, or equitable terms provided for.
>
> "This in itself, we think, is sufficient justification for the attitude the council has adopted in regard to the proposal.
>
> "We are in entire accord with the council's statement that the citizens of Ipswich strongly approve of the Mount Edwards scheme for supplying water for irrigation purposes; for the wants of Ipswich and Brisbane, and also for the intervening districts between those cities. But we do not think, on that account, that this is the time for the amalgamation to take place, and the city council's waterworks taken over by the board, seeing that the Treasurer stated when introducing the Bill—'There was no desire or intention to enter immediately upon some expensive undertaking of that kind.'
>
> "We entirely approve of the attitude the council has taken up in regard to the franchise, believing strongly in the principle that only those who pay the rates should have the right to say how they shall be spent.
>
> "We therefore trust the council will continue to oppose the Bill, and do its utmost to conserve the interests of the ratepayers in the direction indicated."

That was signed by a very large number of the business people of Ipswich and ratepayers, and it seemed to him that unless there were some very strong reasons which could be urged by the Treasurer, there might be some reason for delaying the passage of the Bill and endeavouring to bring the parties intimately concerned to an agreement in the interval between the present session and next session. That suggestion was prompted by the statement of the Minister that the works would not be immediately entered upon.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Not the Ipswich works, but the connection between Mount Crosby and Ipswich will have to be immediately undertaken.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Apparently it was thought by the Ipswich authority that a month or two did not make any difference, and it might be possible to bring the two parties to an agreement in the meantime. It was hardly a fair thing to expect a Chamber like that to adjust differences between the metropolitan board and the Ipswich board.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It seems that Parliament often has to settle these matters.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Yes, but it should only be done in the last resort, when it had been shown that they had been unable to come to an agreement. It seemed not an unreasonable suggestion to make, but he was prepared to leave the matter at that.

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*): He wished to clear the air, so far as the objection from Ipswich was concerned. He would like the leader of the Opposition to realise that the opposition did not come from the people of Ipswich, or any considerable portion of the people at all. If the hon. member would count the names to the circular which he had received, and which other members had received, he would see that there were eighty-six. There were concerned in the water supply of the district something like 22,000 people, and they had got eighty-six to sign the petition out of 22,000! He would like to tell the leader of the Opposition also that the objection was really the objection of the city council, and he was going to show that by a newspaper report of a meeting of the city council, where the following occurred:—

> "Alderman Hefferan: Is it a fact that the city inspector has been taking a petition round getting signatures against the proposed new Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Board?
>
> "The Mayor: Yes.
>
> "Alderman Hefferan: Is he paid for it? Has he not sufficient work without doing that?
>
> "The Mayor: He is taking it round in conjunction with his other occupations.
>
> "Alderman Hefferan: It seems to me that he has not got too much work when

he can take it round in the course of his official duties. I trust the matter will be looked into."

He wanted also to read from the "Queensland Times" of the next day.

[4 p.m.] He did not think that hon. members would say that the "Queensland Times" was by any means a Labour paper. He thought it was one of the strongest anti-Labour papers that they had in Queensland. It said—

"Regarding our civic affairs, the greatest step now being taken, or about to be taken, is in respect to the water supply. The scheme for the amalgamation of the Ipswich area with the metropolitan area has met with some opposition, but that, perhaps, is due more to distrust of the party which is attempting to make the change than to disbelief in the broad principle of the scheme. Whatever comes out of the proposal, Ipswich must get a better and greater supply than it has now, and our members in Parliament should not tolerate any suggestion of further temporising. Ipswich must certainly be included in the Mount Edwards scheme when it is established; but the present need for increasing the supply of water is urgent, and for that reason no time should be lost in getting the city connected with a greater source of supply, pending the carrying into effect of the Mount Edwards scheme. If this is not done without delay under the proposed amalgamation, then the opponents of the scheme are certainly justified in the action they have taken to defeat it. Whatever is done, every precaution should be taken to see that the best interests of the ratepayers of the city are safeguarded."

If the leader of the Opposition would consult any of the principal business people in Ipswich, he would find they were in favour of this scheme, and would say they must have a supply. Taking the report of the Ipswich Chamber of Commerce, they found that they had a say in the matter. In this report of the Ipswich Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Dangerfield, one of the vice-presidents, stated—

"During the absence of the president, he had been asked by the mayor if he would consent to take round a petition for signature dealing with the action of the council in regard to the proposed amalgamation of the Brisbane and Ipswich water authorities. After consulting with the secretary and other members of the chamber, he had informed the mayor that he could not do as desired.

"The president expressed the view that Mr. Dangerfield had done the correct thing. The chamber, he thought, should not have been asked to take a petition round at all."

He thought that would show the leader of the Opposition that the amalgamation of these two authorities, which was proposed under that clause of the Bill, was the desire of the people of Ipswich in order to obtain a better water supply. They had a plant there which was not able to supply their present consumers. They could not get the pressure. In fact, one gentleman coming down in the train that morning—a member of the Chamber of Commerce—said that while he was drawing some water to have a bath the girl could not get water to put in the kettle to make his breakfast. That was the position there. To do anything at all meant installing a complete new plant at the Ipswich works in order to supply that district with water. It would be wise if the members of that House and the other House were to visit the Mount Crosby works and see what they had there, and then visit Ipswich. They would see that there was a complete pumping plant at Mount Crosby which, without any additional machinery, was capable of supplying the whole of Ipswich and Brisbane with water. There was no sense in any water authority putting down a new pumping plant which would be obsolete again within one or two years if they were prepared to go into that amalgamation under the Mount Edwards scheme. There was a certain number of aldermen constituting the water authority now who were raising opposition, and they were doing that for certain reasons. Half the upkeep of the office now was being paid out of water rates. If the water board carried on the work, those rates would not go into the council. The Opposition would do well to assist the Government in that matter in the interest of the whole of the people, instead of attempting to block it in any way. If they did not, the people of Ipswich would be in a bad way in the course of a month.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The Committee was indebted to the hon. gentleman for the information he had given. As far as that side of the House was concerned, there was no particular desire to oppose anything upon which the parties concerned were agreed. There might be matters of principle later on in the Bill, upon which they might have something to say. It appeared that a large section of the Ipswich people was in favour of the scheme, although he took it that the endorsement did not go to the whole of the details of the Bill.

Mr. GLEDSON: It may not.

Mr. MACARTNEY: They wanted light on the matter. In the case of two bodies like that, they might be informed of the extent to which they had agreed and the points upon which they had failed to come to an agreement. They then would have an opportunity of approaching the Bill in a reasonable way. The information which the hon. gentleman had given was of assistance in that particular direction. He, of course, recognised that if the position was such that the alterations must be made at once and the expenditure must be incurred at once, that altered the position and did away with the ground which one could urge for the purpose of delay.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: There is no doubt that the improvement of the Ipswich water supply is an urgent matter.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Was the hon. gentleman able to tell them whether, up to any particular point, the Ipswich water authority and the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board had been able to come to an agreement?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Not so far as any joint control of this kind is concerned.

Mr. MACARTNEY: It was on that aspect of the thing he thought it was a pity the House had not got information. He was prepared to leave it go at that.

HON. W. H. BARNES: He would like to ask the Minister whether there was any linking up of this in any direction with lighting, as far as the Ipswich people were concerned? Were they taking exception to any innovation as the result of that Bill in connection with any arrangements they themselves had made?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No, he did not think so. When some statements were made at the deputation, there was some misunderstanding with regard to clause 16, wherein they conferred upon the new authority the power to establish a hydro-electric scheme for the purpose of generating electricity. They wondered whether power was being given to go ahead and establish in Ipswich or somewhere else in the area electrical schemes not connected with water supply, and compete with established companies or other concerns. There was no intention of that. This was to give the new authority power to utilise the hydraulic power which might be conserved at Mount Edwards, for the purpose of generating electricity and supplying it to users anywhere in their area. Of course, clause 16 was subject to the existing Act controlling the manufacture or supply of electricity. The board would have to get an Order in Council and comply with all the conditions laid down in the Act. He could relieve the hon. gentleman's mind on the point that there was no intention of giving them power to compete with private companies or anyone else in Ipswich or elsewhere.

Amendment agreed to.

On clause 2—"*Electoral franchise*"—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He had an amendment in clause 2 which affected the division of the area into districts. He had better explain that the scheme of the Bill, as originally framed, was to give proportional representation in the metropolitan area and to Ipswich, and it worked out in the proportion of six to two. The Ipswich water authority raised the objection that although they got what might be considered fair proportional representation, nevertheless their representatives would always be outvoted by the six representatives of Brisbane. They suggested that the area should be further divided, in order that if there were any clash of interests between the city of Brisbane and Ipswich, they might be able to rely upon the support of the representatives of outside districts. This was to meet that. It seemed to be a fair and workable scheme. He was sorry to say he now noticed he had been going a little ahead and getting on to the wrong amendment. He hoped the Committee would take this explanation as the explanation on the amendment when it came along. He moved that, in the definition of "board," after the word "metropolitan" the words "and Ipswich" be inserted. It was a consequential amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS moved that, in the definition of "district," after the word "metropolitan," the words "and Ipswich" be inserted.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Clause 2 was the first clause of the Bill which, he took it, dealt with the item of the franchise. It proposed to substitute the electoral franchise for that at present in use by the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board, which was based on something in the nature of occupation. That was a matter that could not altogether be agreed to. It was a franchise which was unsuitable to the undertaking, it was unsuitable to the interests that were involved, and it was one which should not be pressed by the Government, realising the advantages of the present franchise. There might be certain minor grounds of objection to it, but apart from that the franchise was a reasonable one—very much more reasonable than that contemplated in the present measure.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It is very costly to compile.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He did not think that was sufficient excuse. They were being asked to go too far in extending the franchise in connection with what, after all, was purely a local government matter to the same extent as the parliamentary franchise. If they agreed to that they might as well agree straight away that the parliamentary franchise should be applied to local government. That would be a misfortune and a mistake. He, for one, was not prepared to lend assent to the proposal.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Do you agree that the present franchise of the Water and Sewerage Board should be extended to ordinary local government?

Mr. MACARTNEY: He did not say so. The argument was there, certainly, but he was not prepared to assent to the statement that it was a reasonable franchise for local government. He could not for the life of him see what right a person had to vote in local government matters or on a matter of that sort who had no local interest or no local knowledge.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He would be a consumer of water, would not he?

Mr. MACARTNEY: He might be one who drank water; he might be one who did not believe in 6 o'clock closing. Nevertheless, unless he had some knowledge of the areas involved in those elections, unless he had some knowledge of the position and circumstances, and unless he had some responsibility, he could not see what claim he had to a vote in the matter.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He is a resident.

Mr. MACARTNEY: That was the only qualification that he had got.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He has a sufficient qualification to vote for members of this House.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The water board did not touch on the general politics of the country and on the general conditions under which people lived, but were limited to raising money in the area for the purpose of providing conveniences within the area. He thought that before a person should be given a vote he should be a responsible person residing in the area, or a ratepayer. The hon. gentleman said it would cost more if the parliamentary roll were not adopted. It might be a little more expensive, although he did not know that it would be if it were properly organised and managed. He did not think the parliamentary franchise should be used for the purpose of extending to persons a voice in matters that they were not interested in at all. They were interested in the consumption of water, and perhaps

it might be said that they were interested to that extent. The residents of the district and the ratepayers were just as interested as these persons were, and as they had to pay the price it could be safely left in their hands, so that the others who were not ratepayers would not be deprived of any material voice in the matter at all. He trusted that the Minister would be satisfied to let the franchise stand.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS pointed out that it would be a saving to use the ordinary electoral rolls for the purpose of electing members to the board. The rolls had to be compiled for ordinary electoral purposes, and copies of these rolls could be obtained at any time from the electoral registrar for the districts delineated in the schedule. The only extra expense would be the printing of the extra names to go on the rolls just before an election. The rolls had to be set up by the Government Printer from time to time for the Electoral Department, and hon. members could see the saving it would be to have those rolls ready for any elections in connection with the board. At the present time the compiling of the rolls for the Metropolitan Water Board cost £3,000 for every election, which took place every two years. It would presumably cost £5,000 when the Ipswich district was included, if they adopted the same franchise. If the parliamentary rolls were accepted, then that amount of money would be saved. There was nothing wrong in allowing the adult franchise in connection with the election to the board, because everyone was directly interested in the supply of pure water in the area comprised in the Bill.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: It does something more than that.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It might take in a few others, such as the settlers on the outskirts of the district, who might not come within the influence of the reticulation scheme, but, generally speaking, all the persons who had a vote were directly interested in the water supply of the area in which they lived. It was true that the disability, if it could be called a disability, existed where people only lived temporarily in a district, but that applied to the parliamentary franchise as well. He thought that the ordinary electoral roll should be used for constituting the water board, seeing that the same people were entrusted with votes for the State Parliament and also for the National Parliament. They were directly interested in the control of the water supply schemes within their district, and to that extent they were entitled to have a vote. It would have the effect of purifying the rolls. Notwithstanding the good intentions of the Government of the day which in 1910 laid down the principles that now prevailed in regard to the constitution of the present Metropolitan Water Supply Board, the scheme was not a wise one, as experience had shown that it led to the evil of plural voting, or rather the evil of duplicate enrolment, in regard to the holders of certain pieces of land. At the present time a great number of persons were enrolled on the water board rolls for one piece of land, and that was a departure from a well-recognised democratic principle. A householder should be given a vote, and no more than one vote, but at the present time it was possible for a person to have as many as twenty votes.

[*Mr. Macartney.*

Hon. W. H. BARNES: That is not correct.

Mr. SIZER: You can easily alter it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They could alter it in a manner that would safeguard the situation by adopting the parliamentary electoral roll. They knew persons living in England were on the present roll for the Water and Sewerage Board.

Mr. KIRWAN: Members of the British peerage.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No one could uphold a system that permitted that sort of thing.

Mr. VOWLES: Why should he not be on the roll if he pays rates?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Why should not the absentee taxpayer be enrolled on the Queensland parliamentary roll if he paid taxes? If the hon. gentleman could answer that question he could answer his own question. If they wanted democratic control of the authority that was going to be responsible for the water supply then they should adopt the parliamentary franchise. It was not the desire of the Government to give any particular party more representation than another. Nothing was further from their thoughts. Hon. members opposite assumed that the Labour party would win every seat if the parliamentary franchise were adopted. That was a tribute to the good sense of the residents in the area.

At half-past 4 o'clock p.m.,

Mr. FOLEY took the chair as Temporary Chairman.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Bulimba*): The Minister stated that if the parliamentary rolls were used for constituting the water board they would cost less than the present system. He did not know that they would.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Oh, yes; they will cost very much less.

HON. W. H. BARNES: He would be able to show that was not the case. The rolls had to be printed, and they knew the method that had to be followed in the direction of purging the rolls for the different districts concerned, such as adding the necessary names of people who came to the district between the interval of the last preparation of the roll and the day of voting. The Minister admitted that that would have to be done, and that would cost a certain amount for preparation. It would have to be done if they wanted to make it an absolutely perfect roll. He admitted there was a good deal of expense attached to the preparation of rolls at present, but it had one merit, and that was that it gave votes to those entitled to them. The provision introduced by the Minister was absolutely unfair, as it would give votes to those not entitled to them. It would give votes to people who really had no right to them from the standpoint of residence.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Don't they drink water?

HON. W. H. BARNES: If they were good people like the Minister they would drink water. They knew that people would get on the roll and leave the district, and when an election came round they would be whipped up for their votes when they had no interest in the district at all. If he (Mr. Barnes) were a candidate for the water board election and he saw these names on

the roll what was to prevent him from whipping up the people to vote for him? The proposal was to give votes to people who were really not entitled to them. The Minister said it was a democratic proposal, but it was nothing of the kind. The Minister asked why Tom Jones and John Brown who were tenants in a district should not be allowed to have a vote, seeing that they paid the rates through their rent, but if they were not residents in the district they were not entitled to a vote. He believed that there was a duplication of votes in the way the Minister mentioned. The hon. member for Fortitude Valley would be able to tell them more particularly that the water board were very careful not to allow any individual to have his name down as a voter for more than one particular piece of land. In other words no one was entitled to two votes in connection with an election to the water board, so the Minister was wrong in the statement he made that afternoon about people having more than one vote. The Minister said it was a democratic principle to allow all these people to have votes, but it was not a fair thing to place the control of the board in the hands of any section of the community, especially when they did not pay for the cost of the works, and were not contributors in that direction. It was a different thing altogether voting for Parliament and voting for the water board. The Parliament affected the whole State, but the water board merely affected the local area. The proposal which the Minister made was an absolutely unfair proposal. It was unjust, and in some directions was going to defeat the very object the Minister had in view.

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*) protested against any extension of the franchise in this Bill or in any other local authority Bill. (Hear, hear!) When the Minister talked about the question of expense he was merely sidetracking the subject. It was the policy of the Government to introduce the franchise proposed in the Bill, and it was the policy of the Government as framed by an organised section of the people.

Mr. KIRWAN: The Farmers' Union in Sydney frame their own policy.

Mr. MOORE: It was not a fair thing that an organised section of the people should frame the policy for the Government in connection with local authority matters, and when they did such a thing they were committing a flagrant injustice.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: What about the Farmers' Union?

Mr. MOORE: The Farmers' Union did not commit a flagrant injustice to the community like the Bill proposed to do. There were men attending the Local Authorities' Conference of widely different politi-
[4.30 p.m.] cal opinions, yet, on this particular question, they were almost unanimous. Surely, representatives should be elected in the public interests, and not in a class interest, as was likely to be the case if they adopted this wider franchise. It was only right that the resolutions passed at that conference should have some weight with the Minister. He would like to quote from "Mill" on "Representative Government." On page 169, "Mill" said—

> "It is also important that the Assembly which votes the taxes, either general or local, should be elected exclusively by those who pay something towards the taxes imposed. Those who pay no taxes, disposing by their votes of other people's money, have every motive to be lavish and none to economise. As far as money matters are concerned, any power of voting possessed by them is a violation of the fundamental principle of free government; a severance of the power of control from the interest in its beneficial exercise. It amounts to allowing them to put their hands into other people's pockets for any purpose which they think fit to call a public one; which, in some of the great towns in the United States, is known to have produced a scale of local taxation onerous beyond example, and wholly borne by the wealthier classes. That representation should be coextensive with taxation, not stopping short of it, but also not going beyond it, is in accordance with the theory of British institutions."

A little further on, in the same book, dealing with local government representation, he said—

> "The proper constitution of local representative bodies does not present much difficulty. The principles which apply to it do not differ in any respect from those applicable to the national representation. The same obligation exists, as in the case of the more important function, for making the bodies elective; and the same reasons operate as in that case, but with still greater force for giving them a widely democratic basis; the danger being less, and the advantages, in point of popular education and cultivation, in some respects even greater. As the principal duty of the local bodies consists of the imposition and expenditure of local taxation, the electoral franchise should vest in all who contribute to the the local rates, to the exclusion of all who do not."

He did not think anyone could accuse "Mill" of being a Tory. He laid down a clear definition.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You would not accuse him of being a democrat either.

Mr. MOORE: He should think so, judging from his writings. He thought "Mill" had laid down a fair and square proposition as to the people who should pay the taxes.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Do you know the year that was written in?

Mr. MOORE: It did not matter when it was written, the conclusions he drew at that time from what he saw going on worked out to-day. He pointed out that the abolition of piecework would come about under caucus Government, so that a man should not get paid for what he did. That was the sort of thing they saw going on. Under the Marsupial Bill the people who paid the rates towards the destruction of marsupials were the only people who were going to have votes. The Government had recognised the principle in one Bill, and why should they repudiate it in another? The principle was laid down under that Bill that the people who paid the taxes should have the voting power, and that was what should be done under a Bill like this. Everybody in Queensland benefited by the destruction of marsupials and dingoes.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Under the present Act there is a lot of persons who do not pay the rates who get a vote.

Mr. MOORE: They were occupiers.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: In many cases they are not.

Mr. MOORE: They were nominated by the people who were owners. Why should they not vote, under those circumstances, instead of the owner? Were they going to allow the people to put their hands into somebody else's pockets? He would like to remind the Minister what happened under the Local Authorities Bill in 1915-16 as reported in "Hansard," page 2602. The hon. member for Dalby was speaking—

> "Mr. VOWLES: "Create your own employment, create your wages, and get your representatives on the board, and do as you like'—that is what they call socialism. That simply deals with the first phase of the question, the definition of 'elector,' in subclause 2 of the Bill. I think that when we have got those admissions from the hon. member none of us need, in all conscience, go any further. That is quite enough for me. That is good enough for anybody. That is the principle behind this business—tax the other fellow, and get your own wages. You are in charge.
>
> "Hon. J. Huxham: Do not get hysterical.
>
> "Mr. VOWLES: I never get hysterical. I am simply taking the hon. member at his own words.
>
> "Hon. J. Huxham: I do not deny them.
>
> "Mr. VOWLES: You cannot.
>
> "Hon. J. Huxham: I do not want to."

When a responsible Minister said that those were the sentiments he believed in, surely it was unfair to extend the franchise in a Bill such as this. He did not think it had even been contended that the ordinary elector outside had greater civic ability or greater civic conscience than the people who already voted for the board. It was not a difficult thing to become an occupier and secure a vote. Why should an ordinary elector be able to vote for the election of a board when he did not pay rates?

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Is he not a resident?

Mr. MOORE: He might be a resident, and if he became an occupier he could have a vote, but if he was not an occupier he should not have a vote. Directly they did away with the present franchise, as was proposed under this Bill, they would do away with the public interest and get down to a class interest. They would get the caucus principle in electing various delegates to the board. They would have parliamentary election tactics brought into operation at municipal elections.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: The National party in New South Wales recommend the entry into municipal matters.

Mr. MOORE: He (Mr. Moore) did not recommend it. If the franchise was extended in the way proposed under the Bill, they would set up a class interest which would be paramount to the public interest. He would like to quote from "Fawcett," who said—

> "It doubtless frequently occurs that, as a matter of individual predilection, they would prefer to put some worthy and capable man, not a member of the organisation, in a political position; but it cannot be done because it would 'demoralise' (make less faithful) their followers, for the self-same reason that a commander-in-chief would not dare to appoint a foreign officer, however great his merits, in command of an important division of the army."

When they adopted caucus methods of government they did not get the best men.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Do you say that is the result of the party system?

Mr. MOORE: That was the result of the party system as carried out by caucus. The old Italian toxicologists used to work on a different principle. They were said to have always arranged their discoveries in a series of three terms. They first of all found a poison, then an antidote for the poison, and then a drug which neutralised the antidote. The same principles could be applied to modern democracy. The antidote to the fundamental infirmities of democracy was representation, and now they had the drug which neutralised that in the caucus. The caucus was the one thing which was now dominating everything.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Your own caucus or our caucus?

Mr. MOORE: The hon. member's caucus; members on this side had not got one. The caucus dominated everything. He remembered reading a speech of Mr. Ryan's, in which he took up the attitude—

> "We are not divided;
> All one body we;
> One in hope and doctrine,"

and so on right through. The caucus would not only dominate in politics, but in municipal matters also. Then they would have the position that a candidate would not be selected by virtue of his capacity, but owing to his political condition. That state of affairs would not be good for the people of Queensland. If it could be shown that the people who at the present time have not a vote could improve matters by having one it would be different.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You must admit that the electors of Queensland improved matters at the last election.

Mr. MOORE: He did not think so, and he did not think this was going to improve matters in connection with the election of the board. The Government said they believed in day work, and that policy would become the policy of the local board, irrespective of whether it was going to be economical or efficient. They knew that if a member elected by the caucus went against the policy of the Government he had to go out, irrespective of whether it was going to be for the public benefit or not. This might possibly be for the benefit of one class, but it was not going to be for the public benefit.

Mr. KIRWAN: Don't you remember your predecessor being carpeted over the via recta by the Farmers' party?

Mr. MOORE: He remembered two members on the hon. member's side who were carpeted, and one was kicked out because he dared to speak according to his conscience. He was strongly opposed to the extension of the franchise in connection with local authority boards. The people who had to pay the rates should have the spending of

their own money, and not the men who had no interests, or only a passing interest, in the locality. There had been no reason given by the Treasurer except on the ground of expense, and that was only put in at the last moment. They knew that that was not the real reason. The real reason was the fact that it was brought up as the policy of the Government. If they looked at the Premier's policy speech at Townsville they would not see a single word about the extension of the franchise in connection with local authorities. If the Government thought the people wanted the franchise extended, was there not an opportunity of submitting the matter to the people under the Parliamentary Bills Referendum Act? The Government knew that it would have been blown out if it had been submitted. It was no use the Government saying they had a mandate from the people to extend the franchise because they got in at the last election. Because the people approved of two or three of the things put before them, it did not say that they approved of them all. That could be seen from the fact that, at a conference of the local authorities at which there were 300 delegates elected by all the ratepayers throughout Queensland, they were unanimous on this question, and it was only reasonable to suppose that they represented the feelings of the people of the district they lived in. The Government were trying to force this franchise in by a side issue. It was only reasonable that the general body of ratepayers in Queensland should be considered. He could remember on one occasion being kept in school and having to translate a couple of lines from Horace—namely—"Delirant reges Plecturitur Archin," meaning that when Governments play the fool the people have to pay for it. That was what would happen in this case. The people would have to pay if they adopted this wide franchise. He thought it was a mistake, and he strongly objected to it.

Mr. F. A. COOPER (*Bremer*): He would like to say a word or two on the franchise proposed under this Bill, and he thought it would be well if the Opposition would advance some arguments for the attitude they had assumed. The leader of the Opposition advanced as his main argument against the franchise that it was unsuitable to the undertaking—nothing further. There had been nothing advanced to show that wider franchise had been detrimental to the interests and wellbeing of the people. He should like to ask the hon. member for Aubigny in which country he would prefer to live—in a British Dominion with the broad, liberal franchise that we had here; in Germany, with its restricted franchise, or in China, where there is no franchise at all? If the hon. member went into the history of the franchise; if he would just examine it with his friend, Mr. Orchard, and see where the franchise came from, and what its result had been, he would find that the broader and wider the franchise the higher the intelligence of the people, and the better Government the people had. A restricted franchise had never done anything for any community; but a broad, extended franchise gave the people that trust and confidence that should be reposed in them, and had a wonderfully good effect on the whole community. There had been a cry years ago—and that same cry was used not so very long ago—that there should be no taxation without representation. And there were people who fought those battles that they would not have taxation thrust upon them unless there was representation. To-day it was impossible for any section of the community to escape taxation. From the baby in the cot, to the gray-haired old man tottering to the grave, all had to bear their share of taxation. Owing to the scientific business methods of to-day, taxation—and particularly indirect taxation—was very judiciously spread, and fell upon the big business firms, the owners of properties and houses; it was spread over the whole of the community. If the payment of taxation was the only stumbling-block to this franchise, then that stumbling-block was immediately removed.

Mr. VOWLES: What about existing leases?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: That was merely—to use a phrase that seemed to be pinned up over the Opposition door—"Sidetracking." He had never come across so much sidetracking as was done on the Opposition side. There was a great big signal over that side, "This way to the sidetracking." He was astonished at a member having the legal knowledge possessed by the member for Dalby venturing to put up such a proposition as that. Government members might be weak; they might not have the necessary knowledge of all the intricacies of the law, but they had sufficient intelligence to know that a proposition such as that was not going to hoodwink them.

Mr. VOWLES: You are talking about spreading taxation. I say you cannot do it in certain cases, and you know you cannot.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred they could do nothing else but spread the taxation. The very keen up-to-date business methods demanded it, and it was all—what you might call "Fudge," to say that such a thing could not be done, or was not being done. He hoped the Opposition would withdraw their objection to the franchise in this case, and let them put up a proposal, and make an offer. There was nothing like experience; it was the greatest teacher the world had. Let hon. members take the franchise contained in this Bill as a little experiment. Here was a very vastly restricted area where they might try the franchise in a local authority matter for ten years, or for five years. If it proved to be a failure, then all the troubles of the hon. member for Aubigny, as president of the Local Authorities' Association, were gone for ever. They would have proved that it was a failure, and that he was right; or that it was a success, and Government members were right. If the hon. member for Aubigny had any faith in the words he used, he would be only too pleased to convince them by experiment that they were wrong in those matters. Hon. members on the Government side were quite content to put the matter to the test. They were quite content to let municipal franchise stand or fall by that experiment—at any rate, he was. They should have an experiment of that kind to find out if the people had any decency—if they had any belief in themselves or not. He could conceive of nothing of more importance to the people than the small local government of themselves. What was the best Government in Australia at the present day? Unquestionably, the State and Federal Government, with its broad, wide franchise. What

Government to-day in Australia was sneered at, and held up to ridicule, and laughed at from one end of the country to the other? Municipal government—the "old fossils," the "greybeards"—all these expressions were heard. The average citizen—not the extreme citizen—laughed when one mentioned an alderman. He might put on a bit of a smile when a member of Parliament was mentioned; but, when an alderman was mentioned, he fairly went into fits, and thought it was the finest joke put upon the community for many years. Why? Because of the restricted franchise, and the little interest that the people had in municipal government, because they had no representation. The franchise must be widened, and the whole of the people given an interest in the business. What greater interest could the people have than an interest in pure water? Pure water helped to keep away disease, to keep the people healthy. The mother was as much interested in pure water as the father. Upon her head and shoulders fell the weight of sickness. She had the anxiety of the illness of the little one. She had to keep the house sanitary and clean, and she could not do all that without a good, pure water supply. He wanted to ask the Committee if they thought that by giving her a vote she was going to do anything to prevent the children she loved having a good, pure water supply? The hon. member for Ipswich—or the leader of the Opposition—speaking upon the first clause, referred to a petition that was signed in Ipswich. He (Mr. Cooper) believed every licensed victualler in Ipswich signed it. What were they scared of? Were they afraid that pure water would reduce the beer consumption? (Laughter.) Under the proposed scheme they were going to get pure water; the people wanted it, and the best thing they could do was to see that the whole of the people concerned had a voice in the election of the board which could control that supply. He was not afraid of extending the franchise, and of giving it an experiment, and the Opposition would be well advised to give it a trial. Let them see if the people were so dead to their own interests that they were going to chop up that fine scheme like this, simply because they had been given a vote. If they trusted the people on the matter of municipal government, they would get a better and wider government, because the whole of the people would be watching it, because they had an interest in putting the people there who controlled it. Reference to caucus methods had no weight with them; it had no weight with the community. The days had gone by when the word "caucus" scared anybody. Certainly, caucus put the member for Aubigny in that House. The members of the Farmers' Union caucus put out Mr. Luke, who was the member for Aubigny, and selected the present member. But all parties had their caucuses; they were a common thing to-day. If the Opposition could produce any decent, honest reasons why the franchise should not be widened, members on the Government side were prepared to listen to them; but, if they were afraid to trust the people, let them say so. If they could not trust the people in the matter of municipal government, they could not trust them in the broad affairs of the State; and the party that would not give the people a vote in the municipal affairs would take the vote from them in the Federal and State affairs. If they would not give them a voice in the municipal affairs, he would like them to be honest, and say, "Not only do we deny the people a voice in the municipal affairs, but we deny them also a voice in the State and Federal affairs." If they could not trust the people in the small matters, they could not trust them in the great matters. The Opposition would do well to ponder over those things, and accept the franchise in that Bill as an experiment.

Mr. VOWLES: The hon. member for Bremer, instead of dealing with the Bill and the merits of the question before the Chamber—namely, the question of representation that was to be considered under the measure—had diverted to a very great extent. He had made an attack on the hon. member for Aubigny. He had castigated members of the Opposition who had already spoken, and had given a little bit of a lecturette as usual on caucus methods. He told them that the member for Aubigny was elected as the result of a caucus, and that he supplanted the Liberal member, Mr. Luke. They knew that to be so. But if caucuses were to be—and they knew they did exist—perhaps the hon. gentleman might tell them why members of the Government caucus sat in solemn conclave on that Bill, and did not attend the public celebrations which were held that day on account of the peace proposals.

Mr. KIRWAN: Our representative who went down there was insulted.

Mr. VOWLES: One man went down, and all the others stayed away and attended the caucus. Caucus was evidently of more importance than the peace proposals and the public meeting held that day. He noticed that the member for Brisbane, who should have been there, seeing that the celebration was held in his constituency, was indignantly leaving the Chamber.

Mr. KIRWAN: It is manners to wait until I am asked.

Mr. VOWLES: He thought the general public were asked to be there—the loyal section of the public—they were there.

Mr. KIRWAN: Our representative who went there was howled down.

Mr. VOWLES: Did you hear him howled down?

Mr. KIRWAN: I take the "Observer's" report that he was howled down.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member to speak to the clause.

Mr. VOWLES: He was making reference to caucus, to which reference had been made by hon. members of the Government. There was a representation in caucus, and they were dealing with representation. However, the hon. gentleman might explain himself on some other occasion, not to him, but to the electors of Brisbane.

Mr. KIRWAN interjected.

Mr. VOWLES: The hon. gentleman was a very good general; they would leave it at that. They might let that little incident pass. He thought the hon. member for Bremer must have been looking at the subject-matter through coloured glasses, or had a wrong view, he did not know which.

Mr. F. A. COOPER interjected.

Mr. VOWLES: He descended from pathos to bathos. That was exactly the height of his argument in every case. When he was dealing with a matter of such vital importance

to his constituency of Ipswich as this was, he should leave that little funny business out of it and come down to concrete facts and business.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Answer the facts that I gave.

Mr. VOWLES: The hon. member never gave any facts at all. The only attempt the hon. gentleman made to get on to local matters was to say that the publicans of Ipswich were interested in a certain petition, and that they were interested in it because they were in favour of pure water. Those publicans probably paid more—or would, under this scheme—than the hon. gentleman, and they were represented on the
[5 p.m.] petition, and their views were expressed. Surely the views should be recognised of those people who had to "carry the baby"! There should be taxation, and representation for taxation. There should be no representation without taxation. Hon. gentlemen on the other side were accustomed to saying that every person indirectly paid towards taxation. Every person who patronised a business, whether in a wholesale direction or one such as they were now dealing with, if he paid towards it in any direction at all he should have representation, according to the argument of hon. gentlemen opposite. He did not agree with that. He had always taken the stand that if a man went into a shop—say, for instance, a rag shop in Brisbane—if he bought a pair of trousers, was not he in the same position as the man who used water? Why should not he be represented, because he was helping to pay the wages?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: He has a representation in the management.

Mr. VOWLES: In what direction?

Mr. F. A. COOPER: In this direction: that if the management is not to his liking he does not deal there.

Mr. VOWLES: He would get it somewhere else in the same area, and he had a representation there. It came back to the same thing exactly. His contention was that, in matters like that, they should not be altering their franchise from day to day. They had a basis of franchise adopted already, and they were now going to alter it, because probably it suited to a certain degree the Government of the day to create the parliamentary franchise so far as the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board was concerned. If they wanted to look for the test, they would get it in an interjection made by the Minister when the hon. member for Bulimba was speaking. He asked Mr. Barnes if he would like to be a candidate, and then said: "If you are a candidate we will win."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I did not ask him if he would like to be a candidate.

Mr. VOWLES: No; but suggested that he might be a candidate.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He himself suggested that he might be.

Mr. VOWLES: The hon. gentleman had suggested it, and said: "We will win."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Of course, we would win.

Mr. VOWLES: Who were "we"? Was it the Government?

Mr. HARTLEY: The progressive party.

Mr. VOWLES: It was the Government who would win—the caucus party; the party for whom this Bill and the franchise were modelled, in order to try and create a board for themselves that they would rule.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Do you think we will rule?

Mr. VOWLES: No, he did not think they would. The public were beginning to waken up and see the strength of the hon. gentleman and the party which supported him. When he gave the show away like that and said, "If you are going to be a candidate, then we will win" it was "we as a political party."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The great Labour movement.

Mr. VOWLES: If that was so, they had the reasons why this franchise was being altered. They had the reason why the whole Bill was being remodelled; probably why the districts were being remodelled. Was it being done on an electoral basis so that there would be a controlling power of votes? He did not know what the voting power was. There was a suggestion that they were going to carry the day by an alteration in the franchise, by making provision for the popular vote.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: There is no ulterior motive.

Mr. VOWLES: If it were so, it would be a nice change as far as this Government were concerned. At any rate, he was not very much concerned about the merits or demerits of this scheme. As a country member it was one that did not interest him, other than that he objected on principle to this franchise which they were attempting to import into every class of legislation they were bringing forward. They had attempted to bring it into the Local Government Act and they were trying to bring it in here. He objected to it. He moved as an amendment that they delete the definitions of "Elections Act," "elector," and "electoral district," on pages 1 and 2.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): It seemed to be a thousand pities that a measure that had been conceived with the idea of introducing greater economy and efficiency into their water supply in Brisbane and Ipswich should have been spoiled—he said spoiled advisedly—by introducing this question of adult franchise into the control of the water board. He did not hesitate to lend his support—for what it was worth—where measures were, in his opinion, deserving of it; but this was a matter where the Government were making a grave mistake and creating a grave injustice, in asking for adult franchise in the control of those water boards. If they studied the Greater Brisbane scheme—which, no doubt, would be brought before that Chamber at a later stage—they would see that this water undertaking was to be embodied in that scheme—it was to be submerged. They could also notice, from the remarks of hon. members opposite, that this introduction of adult franchise into this particular measure was merely the forerunner of the same step being taken with regard to all local authority work. That was clear and patent on the surface. The suggestion of the hon. member for Bremer—that this might be taken as a trial for five or ten years—was a kind of sop which did not go

Mr. Elphinstone.]

down. In the first place, if such an idea was to be seriously considered it should emanate from the lips of the Minister in charge of the Bill. Secondly, they were so imbued with the intentions of the Government in that particular direction that they were certain this was going to be forced for all it was worth with all local authority control. The crux of the whole matter, as previous speakers had said, was that there should be no representation without taxation. He could not, for the life of him, see how any argument could be advanced in connection with the matter of the sale and control of the supply of water, other than that if a man was going to have representation on that board he should pay taxation to maintain that board.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Would you give no votes to ordinary residents for parliamentary elections unless they paid direct taxation?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The position there was entirely different. The questions which came within the scope of Parliament were of a social and every other description. They had to deal with all questions appertaining to the general requirements of the State, whereas in the matter of the water board they were dealing only with the supply and control of water. To use the argument for one as applying to the other was, in his opinion, sidetracking the whole thing altogether.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The old familiar argument.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: It was not; it was merely giving justice to the men who paid for the maintenance of the water board and paid rates for the supply of water—that they should be the persons to control that particular institution. The landowners and occupiers were those who paid rates at the present moment. It was proposed by this measure to give to what might be called nomads, lodgers, and irresponsibles generally the control of this board.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No; residents.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: It simply meant adopting the parliamentary franchise. They knew that perfectly well. They knew how simple it was to get on the parliamentary roll. It seemed to him that it was a totally unfair proposition. The danger to Queensland lay in that particular nomad, the irresponsible, who had no home and no responsibility except that covered by his hat. The man who was the best citizen in Queensland and the one whom they wanted to encourage was the man who had a roof over his head and the rearing of a family as one of his obligations. They had no objection to encouraging that man to have all the voting power to which he was entitled; but they did object to the irresponsible who wandered about from one place to another, disturbed all meetings, created uproar in all the districts that he favoured with his company, enjoying the privilege of a vote in a matter of this description. There was one question that had not been touched upon very seriously in that matter, and that was that the person who was a voter in connection with the proposed amended franchise would also be entitled to represent ratepayers upon the board. He contended that one of the great weaknesses of the control of the water boards had been that they had not had qualified men occupying seats on the board. In making that statement he did not want to single out any particular individual. When the last election of water board members was before the people, they went out of their way to select men who were qualified to occupy that position—men who had had water board experience, men who had had years of experience in the laying of mains and in the supply of water generally. In at least two of those members put on at the last election they would find that the men were thoroughly and absolutely qualified to occupy the positions of directors and controllers of the water board. In advancing that argument he was still prepared to admit that there was in the water board control, and in a lot of their local government control, a lot of old redtapism, which was a drag upon the institution instead of an assistance to it, and which should be wiped out. One great danger in this broadening of the franchise—and they had seen it sticking out a mile—was that this Government seemed to think one of its missions was to find billets for those who had rendered services to it in previous elections, or had rendered political service in some other direction. Where it was a matter of confining the voters to Ipswich and Brisbane, they knew perfectly well what the result would be. He would go so far as to admit that if that franchise was adopted there would be none other but Labour supporters on that board.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Do you say that?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: He said that emphatically, because all their power and all their strength were concentrated in those areas.

Mr. WILSON: If your argument is correct we would have a Labour member for Toowong, for Toombul, and for Nundah.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: No. It was not divided into areas. The vote was taken on the whole district, and one could not be set off against the other. He was quite satisfied that if that became law the constitution of that board would be Labour right through. He had no doubt the Minister thought that would be a great acquisition and an improvement of the control, but he did not. He contended it would be a huge mistake. What they wanted to secure on that board was not men who were placed there as a reward for services rendered, but men who were best fitted by their knowledge of water and water supply, so that they could get that efficiency which the hon. member for Bremer was quite in order in pointing out as being the necessity. They had not had great efficiency in times gone by. There were many things to which one could take great exception in the control of the water board at the present moment, and he was looking for an improvement, seeing that the Bill was being introduced in the interests of efficiency and economy. The hon. member for Bremer called attention to the necessity for clean water and efficient supply. He pointed out how every father and mother was looking for such a supply. He (Mr. Elphinstone) joined him in that issue, and he also joined him in the issue that just as it was necessary for them to get water so it was necessary to get electric light. But where it was a matter of asking for permission to introduce electric light into the homes at Brisbane and Ipswich, it was

turned down simply for the reason that it had not received the approval probably of the local workers' political organisations. It was all very well to say that it was in the hands of people to introduce the system, but they knew that that was out of the range of possibilities at the present time. Yet, where they had an institution prepared to give them the benefits of electric light, which was almost as necessary as water, the proposal was turned down because it was not so helpful in the matter of finding billets for gentlemen who had rendered them service in days gone by.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: There are no additional billets under this Bill.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): He thought that the Minister and the Government missed a splendid opportunity when proposing an alteration of the Water and Sewerage Board by not introducing something similar to what the Minister suggested that afternoon when he moved a resolution in connection with harbours and rivers, which, if carried out, would have the effect of substituting for the present boards a commissioner appointed by the Government. Instead of doing that, they had brought forward a proposal which neither the Treasurer nor any other member could dispute was simply bringing into existence another political machine. Had the Government brought forward a measure providing for a commission in conjunction with the present President of the Water Board to carry out what was essentially the work of experts, there would have been very little criticism. He contended that it was a matter in which there should be no franchise at all. The work was work for a commission which should be appointed by the Government. No matter how good an ordinary layman might be—and in spite of all the talk about bumbledom and bumble-headed aldermen, and gray-headed aldermen, and all that kind of thing, still they were good men, and they had done good work in Australia—nevertheless, he contended that the whole work in connection with the Water and Sewerage Board was work that should be carried out by experts, and if the Government had moved in that direction, they would have made a move in the way of progress.

Hon. members on the other side made light of the contention that the taxpayer should have representation. But they knew perfectly well that in all their organisations they recognised the power of money, and if a member was not financial he could not vote or have anything to do with the inward working of them. Yet they said that the people who paid the taxes counted for nothing at all. You could brush them on one side.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Nobody ever said any such thing on this side.

Mr. TAYLOR: He certainly thought they should count, and a franchise on the present electoral roll would inflict a very great injustice on the people who were responsible for finding the cash. It was not a bit of use to say that because a man washed his face in somebody's house or yard he had an equal interest in the district with the person who paid the rates. You might just as well argue that the single man who had no responsibilities was equally as good an asset to the State as the man who had a wife and family. If there were any privileges to be given to any people in connection with the payment of taxes, surely they should be extended to men who had wives and families, and not the men who were here to-day and gone to-morrow. Notwithstanding that in quite a number of instances those men probably did good work in their respective walks of life, the fact remained that they had not shouldered the same responsibilities as the taxpayer, the occupier, the householder, who was rearing a family and helping the country on to the best of his ability. Everybody in the Chamber knew the effect, even under the present franchise, in connection with the water board. An election was simply a struggle between the two parties. Was that going to work for efficiency and economy in a big department such as the Water and Sewerage Board? Hon. members knew perfectly well, if they would only speak the truth, that it did not work for either efficiency or economy, and, unfortunately, they did not get the results they should get. The measure was put before the House as a measure of economy and efficiency—and he thought it was—but he did not think for one moment that in actual operation, if the proposed franchise were carried, they would have either efficiency or economy. It was a big administrative board. It was not a board that required him or anybody else to vote upon it at all. In smaller matters, such as harbours and rivers, they found the Minister proposing to do away with the elective boards. On the other hand, in a big matter of the water supply, a question was being submitted to the people which could only be carried out by experts.

The TREASURER: Do you say that the harbours are smaller than the Water and Sewerage Board?

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Balimba*): The hon. member for Windsor was quite correct in his contention. Take a Labour paper at the time of the last Water and Sewerage Board election. Both in the "Worker" and the "Standard" they had their candidates earmarked. What happened on the other side? A meeting was called in the city of Brisbane, where candidates of absolute worth were selected. That would be all very well—and he wanted to say he was not reflecting on gentlemen on either side of the board—if they got the men who were most suitable. But he ventured to say that very often a person who was put up was not put up by reason so much of the fact that he was suited for the position as because the party to which he belonged had selected him. And how was that brought about? Influence was used in that direction, not to get the individual with ability, but the individual who had a large number of supporters.

The TREASURER: I see you know something about it.

HON. W. H. BARNES: As a matter of fact, there was a beating up in order to get votes. They knew that that beating up was done on the Labour side and on the other side, and the result was that very often someone was put on the board who was absolutely unsuited to the work. Was it in the interests of the community that that kind of thing should be done, because, after all, as the hon. member for Windsor had pointed out, it was a business quite apart from any other business? It required men of special ability. He could understand an engineer being there. He could understand a strong financial man being there. He could not

understand a man being there because he was a man of a particular brand, whether he was a good Nationalist or a good Labour man. It might be a man who was selected at a caucus like that held that morning, when they were so busy that they could not attend even to the national rejoicing, where even the hon. member for Brisbane found himself so busy that he could not attend. That was the kind of thing that happened in connection with the machine that was used for the selection of candidates, and he agreed with the hon. member for Windsor that it would be absolutely very much better if such a matter were put in the hands of some person or persons who thoroughly understood their business. He did not know whether a single commissioner would not be almost better than a lot of men controlling it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You had the opportunity of appointing a single commissioner, and appointed a board.

HON. W. H. BARNES: He thought it was suggested by the Minister, when the Bill was introduced, that there had been requests from Ipswich that instead of the whole area being grouped it should be divided into districts. He was inclined to think that, when speaking on the second reading, he himself had suggested it would be better if the strength of voting power was more widely distributed. The proposal was not going to work any more economically. It was going to be unsatisfactory, and going to create simply a rush to get in political supporters on either side, not by reason of their ability to administer the affairs of the water board, but by reason of their particular brand. It was absolutely against the best interests of the water board, and he hoped the amendment would be carried, because the condition of things that existed to-day was very much more satisfactory than the proposals sought to be introduced by the Minister.

Mr. WILSON (*Fortitude Valley*): He had listened very attentively to the arguments adduced on the other side of the House, and, like the hon. member for Bremer, he must say they had not advanced a solitary argument why the franchise should not be broadened. If it were good enough to send members both there and to the Federal Houses, surely it was good enough to send people to represent a definite area. Mostly the criticism on the Government side of the House had been with regard to their caucus methods. He did not know whether it was any information to hon. members or not, but the party of members opposite were the very first to introduce those methods at the first water board election. He happened to know that. All the local governing bodies within a definite area met to select candidates, precisely as they did at the last election.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: But local government bodies are not such as we have described this afternoon.

Mr. WILSON: They met, at all events, for the express purpose of choosing candidates to run for the Water and Sewerage Board.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: By reason of their ability. (Government laughter.)

Mr. WILSON: That appeared to him to be the main argument adduced by members opposite. The hon. member for Oxley had spoken on the amendment. He (Mr. Wilson) generally paid a good deal of attention to what that hon. gentleman said, because he was always inclined to be fair.

[5.30 p.m.] (Hear, hear!) The hon. member for Oxley said it was a great pity to spoil a good Bill of this description by interfering with the franchise. The hon. gentleman went on further to say, in connection with the ratepayers and property-owners, that they were the only ones who should have a vote. He would point out to the hon. member for Oxley that he (Mr. Elphinstone) was put on the water board roll himself, although he was not a ratepayer, but merely a representative of a bowling green.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Ah, ah!

Mr. WILSON: There were nine names sent in in connection with a bowling green in Brisbane, and those nine names included the hon. member for Oxley (Mr. Elphinstone), and Mr. Bolland, one of the present members of the water board. He had nothing to say against Mr. Bolland, as he was a most estimable gentleman, but he was not a ratepayer and his name was sent in as a voter at the same time as the whole nine names were sent in for the bowling green. There were hundreds of names put on the roll as representatives of various companies and firms.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: That can be remedied.

Mr. WILSON: He only pointed out that it was not democratic to put all these names on the water board roll. It was not right to put on all the names belonging to mushroom clubs like the Ivy Tennis Club, and all other clubs that existed for two or three months only. It was never the intention of the framer of the original Act that names could be put on the roll like that. The hon. member for Bulimba was one of the framers of the Act, and he was certain that he never intended that. If a house was in the name of the wife as owner, and the husband lived there, too, they could both get a vote, one as occupier and the other as owner. There were so many anomalies in connection with the present voters' roll that it was time it was remedied, and the best way to remedy it was to adopt the parliamentary roll. If members opposite were not frightened to trust the people, why did they not adopt the adult franchise straight away? They knew that the occupiers were directly or indirectly responsible for the rates, so why not give them all a vote? Suppose the hon. member for Bulimba owned ten houses and lived with one of his tenants. He would not have a vote himself, although he owned the ten houses, while his ten tenants would all have votes.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: That shows how democratic the Act is at the present time.

Mr. WILSON: The hon. member was a member of a Government which framed that Bill, and he allowed those anomalies to exist. Where was the objection to a general parliamentary franchise? There was no doubt that it would save a good deal of expense to adopt the parliamentary franchise. It took a lot of trouble to collect the information to compile a roll for the water board. Every street had to be inspected and they had to keep a check on people moving from one district to another. If they adopted the adult franchise it would be better, but that was against the principles of

hon. members opposite. The arguments of hon. members opposite were very weak, indeed. One weak argument was raised by one hon. member opposite on the second reading when he said that the Bill was introduced only for the purpose of putting out the four members who were returned to the board at the last election.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: It may be true, all the same.

Mr. WILSON: When they heard hon. members opposite talk like that, it made them wonder what would happen if they got back on to the Treasury benches. It looked as if they would alter the parliamentary franchise to suit themselves. It was said that if the Bill went through with an adult franchise the board would consist of nothing but Labour members. What about the seats held by the hon. member for Toowong, Toombul, Nundah, and others? Members opposite were elected for those constituencies on the broad franchise, so that it would be impossible for Labour members to gain every seat. In the interests of fair play it would be better to adopt the parliamentary franchise, because it would give all the inhabitants in a district the right to vote.

Mr. FREE (*South Brisbane*) supported the clause as it stood because of the abuse the rolls of the Water and Sewerage Board were submitted to. In a previous speech he showed how duplicate voting took place in connection with the Water and Sewerage Board. He had since taken the trouble to go through the new roll, with some assistance, and he found there were 3,031 voters on the roll who had no right to be there. According to the Act, the principle of one vote for each person was supposed to exist. There were 2,590 names which were on twice. That was 2,590 names too many. There were seventy-six numbers that were on three times, or 152 too many. There were thirty-two names on four times, or ninety-six too many. There were seven names on five times, or twenty-eight too many. There were three names on six times, or fifteen too many; three names on seven times, or eighteen too many; four names on eight times, or twenty-eight too many; two names on nine times, or sixteen too many; one name on ten times, or nine too many; two names on eleven times, or twenty too many; one name on twelve times, or eleven too many; one name on fourteen times, or thirteen too many; one name on fifteen times, or fourteen too many; and one name on twenty-two times, or twenty-one too many. That meant that there were 3,031 names on the roll that had no right to be there.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: Read it from "Hansard." It is the same speech as you delivered before.

Mr. FREE: He would read from the roll and show the names that were on the roll that had no right to be there. There were twelve names on for the Brisbane Industrial Home. The names were Mary Abrahams, M. E. Atkinson, Mary Dunbar, Flora Goodey, Helen Hislop, A. M. E. Howling, Isabel Justelius, Jane Kerr, Lizzie Kingsbury, Mrs. Martin, H. M. Shorter, and Clara Wareham. All those twelve ladies got their names on the roll for that institution. Talk about roll-stuffing! What sort of business was that? The Labour party agreed with the principle that if anyone paid 10s. a week rent they should be entitled to a vote, but no one could argue that those ladies paid 10s. a week rent each in connection with the Brisbane Industrial Home. Then there was the Young Women's Christian Association. The members of that association would not steal anything. They would not steal a vote, they would not steal a privilege against any poor person who had only got one vote, yet they found thirteen names down for that association. The names were Kate Baynes, A. Bennett, A. Carvosso, Mary Hiron, S. Johnson, S. Martin, Mary B. Ord, Mary Roberts, H. Robertson, J. Wilkie, Sara Wilson, E. M. W. Wilson, and Mrs. Young. Just fancy thirteen voters on the roll for the Young Women's Christian Association! Then Gibbs, Bright, and Company had eleven votes, the Queensland Art Society had nine votes, the Brisbane Rowing Club four votes, the Country Sawmills' Association eight votes, the Lady Musgrave Lodge five votes, the Queensland Women's Electoral League eight votes, the Young Women's Electoral League three votes, the Queen Alexandra Home seven votes, the Queensland War Council seven votes. None of the members on the War Council paid any rent. Then the Brisbane Female Refuge had seven votes and the National Political Council ten votes.

Mr. MACARTNEY: How many votes for the Trades Hall?

Mr. FREE: Every one who had a vote for the Trades Hall paid over 10s. a week rent.

Mr. MACARTNEY: How many votes altogether for the Trades Hall?

Mr. FREE: There were twenty-two altogether, but they occupied twenty rooms and paid the rent and every one was a voter. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. KIRWAN: How many are on for the "Courier" Building or "Telegraph"?

Mr. FREE: He had not got the figures for those buildings. There were fifteen votes for Hallenstein and Company, five votes for Monteith Brothers, six votes for Cameron, Cordelia street, six votes for the National party, six votes for Simpson Brothers, five votes for the City Girls' Club, five votes for the Lutwyche School of Arts, five votes for the New Farm Croquet Club, five votes for the Ivy Tennis Club, and four votes for the Nundah Cricket Club. Then he noticed T. Bridges and three ladies of the same name, making four votes for Mr. T. Bridges's property. They did not all pay rent for the one premises. He also found something worse on the roll, and that was that a number of votes were on for the Brisbane Dental Hospital rooms. There was no rent paid for that, because it was given free of charge by the Government. Yet there were six names placed on the roll.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Who are they?

Mr. FREE: There names were Parker, Walker, and others. At any rate, he (Mr. Free) was not one of the number. (Laughter.) They took good care to keep him off.

Mr. CORSER: That is why you are growling.

Mr. FREE: He saw the name "Corser" on the list in connection with the Young Men's Christian Association. (Loud laughter.) He would give the particulars. Corser, E. B. C.—Oh, no, he begged pardon; it was the Liberal Association. (Loud laughter.) They knew that the intention of Parliament

was not that people should be stacked on the roll like that. The intention was that a bank or an association had a right to nominate one of their number to represent them and exercise a vote. That was in the Act, but they found it had been abused in that way and every one of the directors had been placed on the roll. Mr. Blocksidge was to blame for that. He believed the compiling of the roll was in that gentleman's hands. No hon. member could say that there was anything wrong with adult franchise. When they found that people abused the roll in this way, the sooner they did away with the present qualification and adopted manhood suffrage the better.

At a quarter to 6 o'clock p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He had listened to the speeches of the hon. member for Fortitude Valley and the hon. member for South Brisbane. As far as he could judge from the interjections on the other side, both parties were tarred with the same brush; that was to say, that the franchise created under the Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Board had permitted the things which had been done by both parties.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Yes, but the opportunity has only been exploited by the Liberals. (Laughter.)

Mr. MACARTNEY: That was the statement made by the Minister. The more honest interjection was from the hon. member for Brisbane. From the various names which were read out by the hon. member for South Brisbane they must come to the conclusion that a large number of them would be likely to support the Labour party. The hon. member for South Brisbane did not mention the Trades Hall until the query was put.

Mr. FREE: No, because they paid rent for their room, and they would be entitled to the vote under the Act.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Taking it for granted that both sides made use of the opportunity which the Act permitted, that was no argument for altering the franchise. He was not quite sure that the substitution of the adult franchise was going to prevent that sort of thing altogether, because he had in his mind the fact that a large number of people voted at parliamentary elections who had no right to do so.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Not under this Government. They did under the previous Government.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Unfortunately, he was led to believe that it was done more particularly under the present Government. He thought the history of the last election showed many instances of that. It was very difficult to check the qualifications under the parliamentary franchise, and they knew it was very much abused. He was not sure that there was not a good deal of impersonation.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Whatever impersonation takes place is reported to each member.

Mr. MACARTNEY: If impersonation was reported to the members, it was not likely that those who had been successful were going to complain about it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: But it is reported to every candidate.

[*Mr. Free.*

Mr. MACARTNEY: He had had a report himself in connection with his own electorate showing that impersonation took place there. He did not think that people knew the extent to which adult suffrage had been actually abused. It was not the place here to discuss what took place in the shearing or sugar electorates, as they were not altogether analogous to a district such as was mentioned in this Bill, and he was not going to go to outside conditions. The point urged by the hon. member for Windsor showed that the franchise under the present circumstances was absolutely an unsuitable one. During the last ten or fifteen years they had had Harbour Board Bills introduced containing franchises differing in extent, and they found the Government to-day notifying the introduction of a Bill which was going to wipe those franchises out, and put the harbours of the State under the control of a commission, which was a very wise thing to do, because the election of harbour boards on a popular franchise had led to waste of money. What the Government did in the case of harbour boards, as stressed by the hon. member for Windsor, was equally good in regard to a water supply board. The Government would be wise in appointing a commission of three men—or only one man, if it came to that—to regulate this matter. He knew that the hon. member for Bulimba was responsible for the franchise which they were discussing. He (Mr. Macartney) sat on the same side of the House at the time, and he certainly was not in favour of it. He was one of those who realised that it was not a good one, and he was prepared to say to-day that he did not think the franchise had been a good one for Brisbane. He did not want to be personal or to hurt anyone's feelings, but he said deliberately that the administration of the present board had not been one of economy. The report they received from the expert who visited them from the South the other day had demonstrated beyond doubt that the business of the board had been managed in an extravagant and reckless fashion. The ordinary control that ought to be exercised in connection with the expenditure of the money by the men who controlled the Water and Sewerage Board had not been exercised, and they knew the reason why. A political use had been made of the board. The elections had been conducted on party principles. Their friends opposite had taken advantage of the opportunity.

Mr. WILSON: The majority of your supporters were on the board when that money was spent which you are talking about.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He was not going to differ in details; he was speaking generally. He thought the remarks that he had to make applied more particularly to the last two or three years. He was not going back into the earlier history of the board.

Mr. WILSON: What has happened during the last two or three years has been the fault of the two contractors who caused the board to spend an enormous amount of money in law cases.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He failed to see in anything which had taken place that their friends on the water board had taken hold of the position and endeavoured to economically manage the expenditure of the people's money. The huge indebtedness which was gathering up indicated that

financial trouble would arise in time to come. He was sorry it was so. In the public interest their public utilites ought to be managed in the same way as any other undertaking, on business principles, and not for the sake of spending money for the benefit of any particular class of persons. There had been too much consideration of that sort. There was too much politics in the whole affair, and too little business. It had been said that the men who stood in the so-called Liberal interests had followed the tactics of the Labour party in holding plebiscites. He admitted that was so, and he condemned the political side of the business altogether. They knew what the practice of the other side was. They had a ticket, and it did not matter a dump what the characteristics or qualifications of these men were, they were going to receive the wholehearted support of the voters behind the Labour movement. That position had to be met by something like the same practice, but the selection of candidates on the Liberal side was carried out on a different principle. They were selected as far as possible from the point of view of their special qualification, and the best men were selected. There was that difference between the two cases. He trusted that the Committee, in its good sense, would accept the amendment. He would rather see the Treasurer take his courage in both hands and do what he was doing with regard to the harbours—place the Water and Sewerage Board under a commission, and not under the control of the general body of electors. The business of the board would then be very much better done, and there would be a saving of money to the districts involved

Mr. BELL (*Fassifern*): He desired to support the amendment. He rose more particularly to ask the Treasurer what the position of certain areas in Fassifern would be under this board. What franchise would be declared in that irrigation area. Part of Fassifern would be affected under this board—he referred to the Mount Edwards scheme. This was originally introduced from the Fassifern district with the idea of having an irrigation area. He had the pleasure of introducing a deputation to the Minister on the question. If the water was to be used from that mountainous area for domestic use, then the irrigation area in Fassifern would be cut out in years to come as the supply increased and a call was made on this area for domestic purposes. He asked the Minister if he could not place in the Bill a provision declaring the portion which was affected, and have a water board appointed.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: In the amendments I circulated I provided for the formation of a trust under the Rights in Water and Water Conservation Act.

Mr. BELL: He would like to know the franchise on which the board would be elected.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The Act provided for the creation of a trust, and members were appointed by the Governor in Council from the administrative persons.

Mr. BELL: It would only be a fair thing that the people in the area affected should have representation on that board. They would have to raise the money to pay for the scheme, and those who paid the piper should call the tune. If the board was appointed by the Governor in Council, the members might not altogether know the requirements of the district. In an irrigation area it would not be possible to sell water to the farmers by measure, and their interests would possibly clash with the board appointed for the metropolitan area, which would be primarily concerned in the water required for domestic purposes. In an irrigation area the board would have a supply of water for that purpose only. This was a matter of very great importance to a portion of the Fassifern district.

Mr. PETRIE (*Toombul*): He favoured the amendment moved by the hon. member for Dalby. They were all agreed on the main principles of the Bill. It was [7 p.m.] necessary for Brisbane and Ipswich to have as good a water supply as it was possible to give them; also, that not only Brisbane and suburbs, but he hoped other towns, would get a good sewerage scheme. A lot had been said with regard to the franchise. That he considered was one of the most vital points in the Bill. Personally, he had always been against either a board nominated by the Government or an elective board. Unfortunately, as had already been pointed out that afternoon, the Government he was supporting had introduced that measure.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Were you whipped up?

Mr. PETRIE: No; he had not been whipped up. The department was a very important one to the citizens of Brisbane and also of Ipswich, and other parts that it might be later on applied to. It was very necessary that that department should be under Government control. They had had examples that afternoon, given by the Treasurer in introducing a measure that was going to wipe out all the harbour boards and bring them under Government control. He thought that was a very proper thing, and he was very glad to know that the Treasurer was taking that action. He would like to see the matters placed under one or two heads and put outside of political influence—just under the Government—and the water and sewerage supply of Ipswich and Brisbane carried out in that way

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must confine himself to the amendment.

Mr. PETRIE: He did not think every elector, whether he or she was a ratepayer or not, was entitled to have a vote, and also to a position on the board. He thought that was a very wrong principle. It had already been pointed out that, if the old doctrine was correct that there should be no taxation without representation, then conversely there should be no representation without taxation. The hon. member for Dalby had referred to a man purchasing a pair of trousers from a draper, who might just as well claim to have a say in the management of that establishment, and the hon. member for the Bremer interjected that he had, because he could go elsewhere; but he would point out that if a man or woman could get an article cheaper in another shop, it would be purchased at that shop; so he did not think the arguments that had been adduced by the hon. member for the Bremer stood for much. He had no reflection to cast on any members of the board. He

believed, as the board was now constituted, there was a very fair representation. But he did say that it was impossible to get away from the fact that there was political influence on both sides. As far as the rolls were concerned, he did not believe in the roll that was used at the last election or even in the election before. The hon. member for South Brisbane had said they were stuffed, but under adult suffrage, as proposed now by the Bill before them, there was just as much danger—even more so—of corruption being used. They had had experience of it in the last election. They knew in country places that there had been many names on the roll which had no business to be there. People who had charge of elections had all sorts of ways of getting support.

Mr. COLLINS: Tell us something about it. Let us have the whole truth about it.

Mr. PETRIE: If the hon. member wanted to know, the truth was that people who had left the district for a considerable time, and who had gone probably to other States or elsewhere, still had their names on the roll when they had no business to be there.

Mr. COLLINS: Did they vote?

Mr. PETRIE: And there was no means under the present electoral machinery for removing those names. Yes; he believed that in many cases they had voted, more particularly for hon. members on the other side of the House. Why did the Government have polling-booths in the other States? The Government said it was for the benefit of the soldiers, but they knew the polling-booths were there particularly for other people's benefit—people who were not entitled to a vote. Many of the electors who were entitled to have a say could not get near the booth to vote.

Mr. GLEDSON: You recommend it to be done away with next time?

Mr. PETRIE: No. He recommended that those who paid their water rates should have a vote and no one else. He did not believe in double voting. He believed in a fair and square go, and he believed if a man paid a water rate he was entitled to say whom he would have representing him on the board. Under the adult suffrage scheme they would get persons who had no interest whatever, who paid no rates, not only having a vote but being able to get on to the board and spending ratepayers' money simply as they pleased. He hoped wiser counsels would prevail, and that the Treasurer would either wipe out the board altogether and substitute in its place the commission referred to already by the hon. member for Windsor——

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

Mr. PETRIE: Reference had been made to the experience of political interference as far as the Water and Sewerage Board was concerned, with regard to the construction work that had been going on. He knew the hon. member for Fortitude Valley had referred to the trouble that had occurred with the contractors. He quite agreed with the hon. member that they had caused a lot of trouble and extra expense, and the board had done their best towards remedying that. They had had to pay a lot of legal expenses, which amounted to a lot of money. But it would be worse if the franchise were extended. That was only the thin edge of the wedge, because, in all the measures the Government were bringing in, that extended franchise was going to be put in. It had been forecasted in the greater Brisbane scheme, and it would appear in any other Bill to be introduced for electing representatives to the various authorities. He hoped the good sense of the Committee would prevail, and that the Minister would accept the amendment moved by the hon. member for Dalby. He thought it was only a fair thing. It was a very unjust thing to extend the franchise in the way indicated in the Bill. The Committee had already been told of the action of the local authorities against the extension of the franchise so far as adult suffrage was concerned, and the Treasurer should take it into consideration and give it some weight in deciding a matter of that sort. He hoped the Treasurer would see his way clear to accept the amendment and substitute something else, either in the way of appointing a commission of an expert or experts, or getting it under the control of what might be called the water supply department. He did not wish to let the clause pass in which an amendment had been moved before entering his protest against the franchise as proposed in the Bill.

Mr. GLEDSON: He hoped the Opposition would not press their amendment. He thought most people would agree that the Bill, which provided for a broad franchise, would be a step in the right direction. If the Opposition pressed their amendment, and if it happened by any means to be accepted, it would be a retrograde step. The member for Dalby had moved an amendment to take out the provision for electoral franchise and substitute for it the present franchise governing the Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Board, but that would be going backward altogether. Members of the Opposition admitted that the roll was not good. The same argument had been put up in the House when the attempt was made to introduce the adult franchise for electoral purposes for that House. The same argument had been used as now—that men who were irresponsibles and did not pay taxation would have a vote. He thought that argument had been exploded long ago, and that, in an enlightened community such as this, the argument should not be used that any worker of the age of twenty-one years in this community did not pay taxes. Everyone paid taxes. If he did not go direct to the municipal council and pay his rates, so far as the local authority rates were concerned, he had to pay indirectly, because he had to pay either in rent or as a boarder. Take the number of cases that would be boarders, and compare that with the number who would be occupiers; it would be very small. If they took the arguments of the Opposition and cut out those people, not direct owners of land or occupiers, there would be very few cut out, and then they would have to find a new roll altogether. Taking the new areas comprised within the district, he found they went right out from Fassifern down to the coast, and all were fairly treated. It was provided that the clause would take in all of those people, and they saw the difficulty there would be in compiling a roll of only those who would pay water rates. He did not think anyone looking at it broadly would say that the Bill was not for the benefit of

practically the whole of Southern Queensland. They should allow it to be passed. They found that where the restricted franchise was in operation, damage was being done to the health of the community. It was in operation in their local authorities, and in yesterday's "Courier" hon. members would find certain medical recommendations with regard to South Brisbane which were astounding.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. GLEDSON: That showed that there should be a broader franchise, and that everyone was concerned in the matter. The medical report dealt with the Kingfisher Creek and other places that bred disease. They were dealing with the supply of pure water to the people for the purpose of cleanliness and health, and keeping out disease, and yet hon. members wanted a restricted franchise to protect a few persons and compel everyone in the community to live under conditions made for them by the water board. The Government said, he thought rightly, that the people who lived under those conditions should have a say as to how the board should be constituted, so that it would be able to look after the interests of the people as well as the interests of those who were directly paying rates. They must remember that a man, even if he were not an owner or an occupier, required water, as the hon. the leader of the Opposition said, to wash himself with, and that everyone required water for household purposes, for making tea, and other things, and if they used the water they should have a say in the appointment of the board. The Opposition had even objected to the appointment of a board at all; they said that the Government should appoint a body of experts. That might be all right, but in the next breath they said that the people who were paying the taxes should have representation on the board. The Government were not altering the system. Whether it was a good or a bad one, he supposed time would tell. At any rate, the board had been working in the interests of the district, and they should ask the Opposition to withdraw the amendment and allow the Bill to go as it stood, for it would be a step in the right direction and make for the benefit, not only of the metropolitan area, but also of Ipswich.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted (*Mr. Vowles's amendment* in clause 2) stand part of the clause—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 32.

Mr. Armfield	Mr. Lennon
,, Collins	,, Lloyd
,, Cooper, F. A.	,, McLachlan
,, Cooper, W.	,, Mullan
,, Coyne	,, O'Sullivan
,, Dunstan	,, Payne
,, Finelly	,, Riordan
,, Foley	,, Ryan, D.
,, Free	,, Ryan, T. J.
,, Gilday	,, Stopford
,, Gillies	,, Theodore
,, Gledson	,, Thompson
,, Hardacre	,, Weir
,, Hartley	,, Wellington
,, Huxham	,, Wilson
,, Kirwan	,, Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. Free and Mr. Hartley.

NOES, 16.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Petrie
,, Barnes, G. P.	,, Roberts
,, Barnes, W. H.	,, Sizer
,, Bayley	,, Somerset
,, Bebbington	,, Swayne
,, Grayson	,, Taylor
,, Hodge	,, Vowles
,, Macartney	,, Warren

Tellers: Mr. Sizer and Mr. Warren.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause 2, as amended, put and passed.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS moved the insertion of the following new clause, to follow clause 2:—

"In section six of the principal Act, after the word 'Metropolitan' where it twice occurs, the words 'and Ipswich' are inserted."

It was a consequential amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 3—"*Amendment of section 7*"—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS moved the omission of lines 22 to 33, page 2, with a view to inserting—

"Brisbane division of the district—Brisbane, Fortitude Valley, Ithaca, Merthyr, and Paddington.

"South Brisbane division of the district—Bulimba (Wynnum and Bulimba electoral divisions only, and exclusive of the islands of Moreton Bay), Buranda, Kurilpa, Logan (Coorparoo electoral division only), Maree, and South Brisbane.

"Suburban Brisbane division of the district—Enoggera, Nundah, Toombul, Toowong, and Windsor."

This was to carry out the idea of further dividing the district in order to make four more or less well-balanced divisions. In order that members might see how the scheme would work out in the matter of proportional representation, he had had the present enrolment compiled of the various divisions. In what was known as the Brisbane division there would be about 33,000 electors—that was, that number was at present enrolled in those electorates. In the South Brisbane division there would be about 59,000. In the Suburban Brisbane division there would be about 43,000, and in the Ipswich division there would be about 23,000. That showed that the representation was not disproportionate. It so happened that the electorates could be grouped as to serve identity of interest as far as possible, and, at the same time, maintain a fairly well-balanced district. Of course, the numbers might fluctuate from time to time, but so long as they fluctuated only within a few thousands, no injury was done to anybody. If they fluctuated beyond that limit, it might be necessary to alter the divisions by including in one part excised from another, or make another alteration. He thought it was a very good thing that the district could be allocated on the lines he had suggested in the amendment.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The amendment was a complete alteration of the scheme embraced in the Bill as originally tabled. The hon. member had given them an explanation which, after all, did not take them very far. He had told them that there was some identity of interest amongst the various electorates in the divisions. As to what that

identity of interest was, the Treasurer was silent. He was one of those who, rightly or wrongly, thought that the political aspect of the matter appealed to hon. members, and that the new election was one of
[7.30 p.m.] the features which recommended the Bill to a section of the House. The hon. member might shake his head as much as he liked, but the fact remained. They had an election in the early part of the year for the local board, and the question was settled rather opposite to the interests of the party on the other side. It was not unnatural that that feeling should exist, and that the proposition for a new board should arise, with the hope that, at any rate, a change in political opinions might attach to the new board.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: We never gave it any consideration.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Did the hon. gentleman say that matters of that sort never got any consideration from his party?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I can certainly say that that matter never got any consideration.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Did the hon. gentleman claim that politics did not count in that matter? Why, every Act of the Administration, and every Bill which the Government introduced, is coloured in that way when there is an opportunity to do it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: This amendment was suggested by the Ipswich authorities themselves.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He was talking about the Bill itself. Every proposition put before the House was coloured, and it would be a wonder if the party opposite became so virtuously unconscious of what was happening that they did not notice the political significance. The clause which had been substituted for the original clause only accentuated the position, because there was a cold-blooded calculation going on as to what the result of the election would be. He did not accept the Minister's point of view at all. He would like to know what the Minister meant by identity of interests.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The Ipswich people had asked for the amendment. The water authority at Ipswich pointed out that according to the division made in the original Bill six representatives were allotted to Brisbane and two to Ipswich, and it was pointed out that it was likely to be unfair to Ipswich, because the interests of Ipswich as a separate city would clash with the interests of Brisbane, and the two representatives from Ipswich would be outvoted every time. The Ipswich authority suggested that the outside Brisbane districts should have separate representation, and then the Ipswich representatives might be able to rely on their support, on the grounds that their interests would be identical on questions submitted to the board. That was the sole reason that inspired the Government in making the change. The question of politics did not enter into the matter one whit.

Mr. MACARTNEY: There might be something in the suggestion that the outside Brisbane districts might have some identity of interest with Ipswich, but when the hon. gentleman was speaking he referred to the different groups as grouped together. So far as he (Mr. Macartney) could realise, the division of districts, as shown in the amendment, could result in only one thing. Assuming the political colour of the districts remained, there would be a majority of the Labour party on the water board. The hon. gentleman disclaimed that that affected the matter in the slightest degree, but he (Mr. Macartney) would point out what was likely to happen, and it would make the hon. gentleman's protestation appear a weak one. If they looked at the component parts of the Ipswich division of the district, they would find that it included Bremer, which at present was Labour, Ipswich was also Labour, while it also included Rosewood, which was Labour, as against Fassifern (Ipswich electoral division only) and Oxley, which were not Labour. That meant three electorates to one and a-half, so to speak, in favour of Labour, and they could take it that the two representatives elected to the water board would be Labour. He could quite understand why the hon. members for Ipswich and Bremer were so heartily in support of the Bill. It would perhaps give a new foundation for the possibility of their return from time to time in future.

Mr. GLEDSON: We have doubled our majority each time.

Mr. MACARTNEY: It might enable the hon. gentleman to cease from troubling. If they looked at the Brisbane divisions, they would find that the Brisbane division of the district included Brisbane, Fortitude Valley, Ithaca, Merthyr, and Paddington. That was most extraordinary indeed. There was an identity of interest politically beyond question, and only a certain amount of contiguity. There were five Labour electorates.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They are all contiguous. It shows how sensible the people are in the heart of the city.

Mr. MACARTNEY: There would be two Labour members from Ipswich and two Labour men representing the Brisbane division, so that half of the board was absolutely fixed as Labour beyond any question whatever. If they looked at the South Brisbane division of the district, they would see that it included Bulimba, which, fortunately, was National, and likely to remain so, but it was in the bad company of Buranda, Kurilpa, Logan, Maree, and South Brisbane.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: What has the hon. member for Kurilpa done?

Mr. MACARTNEY: It was five Labour electorates as against one Liberal.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: What about Kurilpa?

Mr. MACARTNEY: He begged the hon. member for Kurilpa's pardon. There were four Labour electorates and two Liberal electorates, with the chances very strongly in favour of Labour.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I don't know how you are going to cure it.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Yet the hon. gentleman said that politics had nothing whatever to do with the framework of the Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Tell us how we can distribute the districts so as to secure a return of all Liberals.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He was not anxious to do that.

Mr. GLEDSON: Read the next division.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The remaining division was the suburban Brisbane division of the district, and included Enoggera, Nundah, Toombul, Toowong, and Windsor.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It is almost certain that three of those will be Labour after the next election.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He was not there to make any forecast, but he thought that even his own arguments that night would be upset after the next election. There were four Nationalist electorates in that division and only one Labour electorate, which showed that there would be two Nationalists on the board. Coming to the question of identity of interests, he wanted to know why Toowong had been worked into a district which included Toombul and Windsor instead of being included in the first division with Paddington and Ithaca, which it adjoined. Toowong geographically, and as far as population was concerned, belonged to Ithaca and Paddington, yet it was cut off from those electorates. He had represented that area for years and understood it thoroughly. The only way they could connect Toowong with Windsor was by going a long way round the hills.

The TREASURER: It adjoins Enoggera.

Mr MACARTNEY: Speaking for himself, he could not see any advantage in the change, and unless he heard something different in favour of it he was against it.

Mr. SIZER: The figures for the different divisions were rather significant. There were 33,000 votes for the Brisbane division, 31,000 for South Brisbane, and 43,000 for the suburban division. The suburban division had 10,000 more than the Brisbane division. There was something in the argument that the boundaries should be altered to make them better than they were at present.

Amendment (*Mr. Theodore's*) agreed to.

On clause 3, as amended—

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS, a consequential amendment was made inserting the following words after line 42:—

> "In the last paragraph of the said section seven, after the word 'Metropolitan' the words 'and Ipswich' are inserted."

Clause 3, as amended, put and passed.

On clause 4—"*Elected members*"—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS moved the omission of all the words from line 45 on page 2, to line 15 on page 4, with a view of inserting the following amendment:—

> "[10.] The electors of the district shall elect eight electors to be members of the board. Each division of the district shall return two members of the board.
>
> "For the purposes of the election of members by the electors, the following provisions shall apply:—
>
> "(1.) Subject to this Act, any male elector shall be qualified to be elected a member of the board.
>
> "(2.) Every elector who is enrolled on the voters' roll for a division of the district shall be qualified to vote at any election of a member or members for such division.
>
> "(3.) Every elector shall be entitled to give one vote only at an election.
>
> "(4.) A fresh election of all members of the board shall be held on such day in the month of February, one thousand nine hundred and nineteen, and at such places within the district, as the Governor in Council shall appoint.
>
> "At such election two members for each of the divisions of the district shall be elected by the electors of each such division respectively.
>
> "At the conclusion of such election all the existing members of the board other than the president shall go out of office.
>
> "(5.) Subject to this Act, all members elected shall hold office for four years, except in the case of the fresh election referred to in the last preceding subsection hereof, in which case one of the two members for each division of the district then elected shall go out of office at the end of two years; and the member who shall so go out of office shall be that member who received the least number of votes for his division at such election. If two members elected for the same division have received the same number of votes, then the question which of them shall go out of office shall be decided by lot.
>
> "(6.) An election of members for each such division shall be held in the year one thousand nine hundred and twenty-one and in every second year thereafter, on such day in the month of February and at such places within the district as the Governor in Council shall from time to time appoint.
>
> "At every such election one member shall be elected for each division of the district, and at the conclusion of every such election one member for each division shall go out of office; and, subject to this Act, the member for each division respectively who shall then go out of office shall be the member for that division who has been a member for four years.
>
> "(7.) Every election of members shall be held by and before such returning officer as the Governor in Council shall from time to time appoint.
>
> "(8.) For the purposes of every election, it shall be the duty of the Principal Electoral Officer, under the Elections Act, when and so often as he is required by the returning officer so to do, to compile a voters' roll for each division of the district, or one or more of such rolls, as the case may require, and in doing so he shall observe the following rules:—
>
> The voters' roll for the Brisbane division and the suburban Brisbane division of the district shall respectively consist of the names of all electors enrolled on the latest electoral rolls of the electoral districts comprised within those divisions respectively, as hereinbefore provided.
>
> The voters' roll for the South Brisbane division of the district shall consist of the names of all electors enrolled on the latest electoral rolls of the electoral districts and electoral divisions comprised within such South Brisbane division as hereinbefore

provided, excluding in the case of Bulimba the islands of Moreton Bay."

This was a consequential amendment rendered necessary by the alteration of the districts. Unless it was moved in this form it would necessitate moving six different amendments.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He had pointed out at a previous stage that the effect of this Bill was to cancel the election which was held last year at the large expense indicated by the Treasurer.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It does not cancel the election; they continue in office.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The results of that election would cease to operate after February.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Some time next year.

Mr. MACARTNEY: All the money spent on the election in the early part of this year would be thrown away except for the present year, and the expense of a fresh election would have to be incurred in February next.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Surely it is no argument against the Bill to say that it might shorten the term of the present board!

Mr. MACARTNEY: The hon. gentleman had talked about cost as one of the factors in connection with the system they were adopting under the Bill. Why, then, have the elections in February next?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The cost of having an election is not a tithe of the cost of compiling the roll—that is the chief cost.

Mr. MACARTNEY: One of the effects of the Bill was practically to cancel the membership in February of men who were elected in February last. He had not looked the matter up, but it would make a difference of twelve months.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: More than that.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The men who were elected last February would ordinarily remain in office for four years, and they would lose twelve months of that period. But the board which would be elected this year would have a four years' period of office.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It shows how impracticable it is to meet that situation. We could not wait three years before we amended the Act.

Mr. MACARTNEY: If the Treasurer did not want that violent change, there was an easy way of meeting the case. The present board might be allowed to continue until the first period of biennial election came round.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: How would you provide for that?

Mr. MACARTNEY: By simply making a verbal alteration that the election should take place in February next for Ipswich. If that was done, they would have two members from Ipswich added to the present board, and all the members of the board would continue to hold office until the next biennial election, when the provisions of the Bill would come into operation. It was a fair proposal to make, and as there was nothing behind it, and no intention to alter the votes of the people at the last election, he took it the hon. gentleman would accept the amendment. He moved the omission of the third line of subclause (4), page 3, and the insertion in lieu thereof of the words "an election for the Ipswich division of the district." No further alteration would be necessary except the elimination of the two last paragraphs of clause 4, and the substitution therefor of the following words:—

> "Members so elected shall, with the existing members of the board, be and continue to be members of the board till the first triennial election to be held in the year one thousand nine hundred and twenty-one hereafter mentioned."

The Labour members of the board would continue a year longer.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: All Labour members have to retire twelve months earlier under the Bill.

Mr. MACARTNEY: And all Liberal members would have to retire three years earlier.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He thought the amendment would be unworkable, and he did not think it was necessary. The hon. member was only attempting to protect the interests of those elected last February. Surely the greater interests were paramount, and regard should be paid to them by Parliament rather than to the interests of a few individuals who might have been elected last February, some for terms of four years; they would have still three years to run.

Mr. MACARTNEY: And the other a year.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: And the other four would have four years to run. The hon. member must see the undemocratic way of continuing in office men who were elected for a different purpose altogether.

Mr. MACARTNEY: If you want to remove the political stamp, this is the thing you want to do.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The hon. member seems obsessed with the belief that the Labour party was going to sweep the polls at every election; of Water and Sewerage Board, at parliamentary elections, and everything else. The Labour party were here practically for all time. He was glad to hear that that was the opinion of the other side, as it showed a very healthy position of things politically. If the hon. member had in his mind the view that it was utterly impossible for the Conservatives to win under a broad franchise, it showed how hopeless a position that party had got into.

Mr. MACARTNEY: That is not the argument.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He did not know what the argument was. The hon. member took pains to show how, under the districts as they had been distributed, the Labour party must win three out of the four seats.

Mr. MACARTNEY: As the party stands to do.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The hon. member assumed that the Labour party would win under any circumstances in the future; if he did not, there would be no point in his argument. The hon. member must think that next year the Labour party would win three out of the four districts, or six out of the eight seats. He had no doubt they would win all the seats they contested, but that did not prevent him from realising the political situation, which any public man could do. Even in local authority elections, if the Labour party put up candidates it was bound to win wherever the voice of the people was heard. The hon. member seemed to have a grievance because they had distributed the seats in this way, but he could not suggest as to how they could be distributed on a fairer basis. The Government had left the allocation of the districts to him, but he had not been inspired by a desire to gain political advantage. A very definite scheme had been followed in allocating the districts. The Brisbane division was really a Brisbane division, and not a South Brisbane division. The five electorates were contiguous, and all in the heart of the city. The question as to what electorate should be included in the Ipswich division was suggested by the Ipswich people themselves. If the hon. member thought the Toowong district should go into the Ipswich district, he had no objection to that.

Mr. MACARTNEY: You know there is no suggestion of that sort.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Oxley had an identity of interest with Ipswich. To his mind, the arrangement under the Bill was a satisfactory allocation, apart altogether from political consideration. Political considerations were altogether too petty to consider in regard to this matter. If Bulimba and other divisions should grow faster than the others, it would tend to balance the thing more. No one could say that Ipswich was not growing. The hon. member for Toowong suggested that they should allow the eight members to remain on the board, and elect two new members for three years, but that was absurd and impracticable, and would be acting childishly. They could not expect Ipswich to be satisfied with a scheme of that kind. They would have a greater grievance than ever if they allowed eight Brisbane members to continue with two new members. That would be unsatisfactory. The arrangement might possibly affect the term of some of the present members of the board, but they would have to put up with it. As far as he knew, the present members of the board who had had the Bill under consideration had not raised any objection from that point of view. The metropolitan board favoured the scheme.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The whole board?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: So far as he knew. He had never heard any protest or had any communication from them on the point. If they were broad-minded men, concerned only with the larger interests of the cities and districts they represented, it was not likely they would raise their own personal consideration in a way which might block the consummation of the beneficial scheme affecting the whole of the area.

HON. W. H. BARNES: He questioned whether the representatives—he was referring to the water board of Ipswich—had had put before them the suggestion which had been made by the hon. member for Toowong. The suggestion was a very reasonable one. The fact that there were at present eight members on the Brisbane board, after all, did not make a great deal of difference. If it was going to become a question of voting, it did not matter very much whether they were eight against two or six against two. He was not going to assume that the present or any future occupants of seats on the water board were going to combine themselves against Ipswich. He was not going to make that suggestion, because he could scarcely conceive of any number of intelligent men doing that kind of thing. He took it that when they got together
[3 p.m.] their object was to do the very best possible for the various districts, and to act in a commonsense way. He assumed that that would be done. The Treasurer has laid very great stress on the question of expenditure. He would repeat again that the expense in connection with the new methods would be as great as with the old methods. But if the proposal made by the leader of the Opposition were carried out, it would mean that, apart from the election of the Ipswich representatives, there would be no other expense at all. He hoped, therefore, that the Treasurer, after hearing what had been said by the leader of the Opposition, would see his way clear to accept the suggestion which had been made. It was a reasonable suggestion, and he was quite sure members for Ipswich and district would feel that it was a proper suggestion. He did not think for one moment they would cavil at the suggestion made by the leader of the Opposition, as long as Ipswich and districts were included in the proposition. Might he say to the Treasurer that if he agreed to that suggestion it would remove the suspicion that the Bill now under discussion was very largely a political Bill, which had been introduced for the purpose of putting right, in some directions, what was regarded as the return of the wrong party at the last water board election. If the Treasurer accepted the suggestion of the leader of the Opposition, it would remove that idea from the minds of the people, and he earnestly suggested to the Treasurer that he should look at it in that way.

Mr. BRENNAN: That is your construction only.

HON. W. H. BARNES: No one could ever charge the hon. member for Toowoomba with being blessed with what might be called the ability to construct.

Mr. BRENNAN: You have constructed a good deal in your time.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. member could not be charged with being constructive, but rather with being destructive, except it be in the matter of hospitals, but there was a good deal of difference between hospitals and water boards.

Mr. BRENNAN: What about the profits on the oil tar?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Order!

Mr. GLEDSON: He wished to say, in reply to the hon. member for Bulimba, that the representative for Ipswich, at any rate, could see through a brick wall as far as most people, and the people of Ipswich could see through what the Opposition proposed. (Hear, hear!) They actually proposed to abolish the Ipswich water authority, and to allow the Brisbane water authority to remain for three years longer. They would abolish Ipswich and say, "You can send two men down to join our Brisbane board." But the Treasurer had made a distinct promise not to abolish the Ipswich authority; that the whole thing would go together; that there would be one board to control the whole of the water supply of the Brisbane River. The Treasurer had stated the facts very clearly to the leader of the Opposition, and also to the hon. member for Bulimba, showing that the Ipswich people would certainly not be satisfied with two members coming down to Brisbane and joining the present board. It would be better to have nothing at all than that.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It would be Brisbane swallowing Ipswich.

Mr. GLEDSON: Yes. It would be like the Brisbane board swallowing Ipswich. He hoped the Ipswich people would see what the Opposition would give them if they had the opportunity of dealing with the matter. He thought the amendment had been moved, not with the purpose of improving the Bill, but for the purpose of blocking the whole thing. If it was to be blocked, it meant that the people of Ipswich and district would be, for a long time, deprived of a water supply, and it was a matter of urgency as far as they were concerned. They had to get water, either through the amalgamated board or through their own water authority. If they did not get it through the amalgamated board, they must absolutely get it elsewhere. The leader of the Opposition, for the purpose of deferring the amalgamation until 1921, was not speaking in the interests of the people most deeply concerned. He did not think the hon. member had thought very well over it.

Mr. SIZER: How many members are there on the Ipswich board now?

Mr. GLEDSON: There was no Ipswich board. The Ipswich City Council was the water authority.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: And they have twelve members.

Mr. GLEDSON: The aldermen of the city council formed the water authority. This was a new matter. The Ipswich Water Authority was being abolished, the whole water supply was to be placed under one board. The Treasurer had explained the position clearly, and they ought to go on with the Bill.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: When the deputation from the Ipswich City Council waited on the Treasurer, he had made use of practically the same arguments as had been adduced by the hon. member for Bulimba. He pointed out that if there were six representatives from Brisbane and two from Ipswich, that the six from Brisbane would be entirely antagonistic to Ipswich, and that this would be everlastingly detrimental to Ipswich. While the representatives of the city council did not think it would be, they said they would feel it was a deep-laid scheme to swallow up Ipswich interests for the sake of Brisbane, if the districts were so arranged that there might be a suburbs area that would have interests somewhat similar to Ipswich. Thereupon, the Treasurer had promised to constitute a suburban area, an Ipswich area, and a metropolitan area. If the Brisbane board were allowed to remain under the new Act, the proper thing to do would be to amalgamate the two boards as they stood. Then Ipswich would be able to send down twelve aldermen to sit on the board. (Laughter.) If the twelve aldermen took their places on the board, they could certainly see that Ipswich interests were conserved as they desired them to be.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: That is what we were going to suggest. (Laughter.)

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Why not give Ipswich its present twelve members and Brisbane its present eight? He assured hon. members that it was at the request of the Ipswich City Council that the Treasurer had consented to arrange the proposed division. If there was anything in the political argument, why was the Opposition pressing this? There were four men supposed to be Labour men on that board at present. There were four the Opposition claimed as Nationalists. The leader of the Opposition had said that two Labour men from Ipswich was "a dead sure thing," so in 1921 there would be six Labour and four Nationalists, and so the six could play ducks and drakes with their property so that they would not know it. Solid Labour control would be absolutely certain for three years, and yet the leader of the Opposition was not a bit concerned about it. There was nothing at the back of this proposal, or the leader of the Opposition would not have made that offer. He would never have fallen into the blunder of six to four against him without any possibility of rectifying it for three years. He hoped that if any alteration were made, it would be the continuation of the eight Brisbane members and twelve Ipswich aldermen working together until 1921.

Amendment (*Mr. Macartney's*) put and negatived.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

On clause 4—"*Amendment of section 10*"—

Mr. MACARTNEY said they had already taken a division on the franchise question, and although that division had gone against the Opposition, they were still of the same opinion. It was, however, no use going over the same ground again.

HON. W. H. BARNES: He would like to ask the Treasurer, in connection with clause 4, if he proposed to make voting compulsory? The present Act was a compulsory Act as far as State elections was concerned, and seeing that the Treasurer was going to use the rolls for certain divisions, was he going to apply the same provisions?

The TREASURER: No, voting is not to be compulsory. The ordinary Elections Act did not apply to those elections, only the rolls were to be made use of. The machinery for controlling elections was provided in the Bill and the principal Act.

Clause 4, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 5 to 9, both inclusive, put and passed.

On clause 10—"*Power as to water-courses, etc.*"—

Mr. MACARTNEY asked whether it was under that clause that Mount Edwards was supposed to be capable of being taken in?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No. The Bill had no particular reference to the scheme, nor was the area included in the district, but the whole of the catchment area of the Brisbane River was under the control of the board for certain purposes, for erecting works or preventing or prohibiting contamination of the water. He mentioned on the second reading the possibility of conserving water at Mount Edwards, and the Bill permitted the carrying out of the scheme. It was not necessary to mention the Mount Edwards scheme in it, but they gave power under the Bill to deal with Mount Edwards when the water was conserved there, or any water in any other areas controlled by the board. The hon. member would find certain extended references in clauses 15 and 16 to powers which might be utilised by the board when the Mount Edwards scheme or other such schemes were developed.

Clause put and passed.

On clause 11—"*Works by Tramway Company*"—

Mr. MACARTNEY: The clause was obviously an amendment of the Tramways Act. On the second reading he pointed out that it suggested a position that arose with reference to Stanley street, South Brisbane. He failed to see the necessity for the alteration of the Act. They discussed the principles of the Tramways Acts under different measures, and that was really a left-handed fashion of altering the foundation of the arrangement upon which the tramways concession rested.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You are not raising the question of vested interests again under this?

Mr. MACARTNEY: It was just as well to point out that the Tramways Acts provided for certain rights and duties of the Tramways Company, and provision was made for the settlement of disputes which might arise between the company and other constructing authorities. In the present case a most unwarranted attack, as he read the facts, was made by the water board on the Tramways Company. A claim was made whatever the position of the pipes was, and whether or not they were affected by the tramways system or not, that the company were called upon to construct an entirely new service from one end of Stanley street to the other at their own expense.

The TREASURER: The company held that they had no responsibility whatever in connection with any possibility of damage to the pipes.

Mr. MACARTNEY: There was on the company a responsibility if any alteration they made affected the water service, and if any dispute arose between the company and the other constructing authority, it was to be settled by the municipality of the area in which the dispute arose. The claim was absurd, because, as a matter of fact, the alteration which the company proposed—the substitution of a single line for a double line—did not affect the pipe service of the water board at all. In the second place, the removal of the double line of tramway, instead of adding to the board's difficulties, simplified the means of access, and he was sorry to say he felt more indignation over it, because Stanley street for a very considerable period caused inconvenience to the travelling public, owing to the dilatoriness of the Government in realising the necessary requirements and the stupid claim of the board.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Owing to the avariciousness of the company.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The position kept that street practically in a condition of construction for nearly two years to the great hindrance of the travelling public other than the tramways. As a matter of fact, there were many members on both sides of the House who realised what had been going on there for the last two years, and the inconvenience that it caused. In the first place, the Government of the day, apparently unable to provide such conditions as were necessary for what they considered to be public interests, adopted just the same attitude as they were taking at the present time in regard to electric light. The Government said that they were not going to give away all the rights of the people to the so-called concession mongers, but, at the same time, it failed to impose or suggest protective provisions and so perpetuated the public inconvenience. Owing to the absolute stupidity of the water board—to his mind—the condition of things of which he was complaining was continued for a considerable period of time. The position in due course came before the municipal council, and was settled by them without much trouble in a common-sense way—in the only way in which anybody with any common sense could think it could be settled at all.

Mr. WILSON: I doubt that.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The clause was a kind of vindictive provision to take away jurisdiction from the local authority.

Mr. WILSON: Not at all—to protect the board's interest.

Mr. MACARTNEY: To protect the board's so-called interests so that they might have a new service from one end of Stanley street to the other, whether entitled to it or not, and the power to give them that was to be transferred to the Minister, a nasty reflection on the council that did its duty in the circumstances, a little piece of that vindictiveness that pleased a certain class who were ready to support any claim on the Tramways Company. If their laws were to be tinkered to meet the needs of the position in that way, he did not know where the end was going to be. At any rate, he did not suppose anything that was said on that side was going to alter it, but it was some satisfaction to point it out.

Mr. WILSON: The leader of the Opposition tried to throw a good deal of blame on the water board, but when he had finished he thought he would have shown that they were not to blame altogether. There was a little bit of obstruction in Stanley

street, from the Dry Dock to Victoria Place, caused by the company's making a single tramline of it and placing it over the board's main. There was a good deal of objection to it at the time, and the board had the right to object; but, unfortunately, the company was carrying out work at that time for the South Brisbane Council. He did not know the amount of the contract, but it ran into some hundreds of pounds, for lowering the grade of Stanley street. When an objection was raised like that, did hon. members think it was a fair thing that the local authority should sit in judgment on its own street? All the amendment was doing was to give the Minister full power to decide the question.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Are you talking about the whole width of the street?

Mr. WILSON: He was talking about the work that was being done. The hon. member said that the amendment was being inserted for political purposes. He (Mr. Wilson) said that it was to protect the board's interest. A good deal of trouble was going on at the time, and the board thought fit to send a letter explaining to the Press and the public the facts of the case. He would read it—

"To the Editor, 'Brisbane Courier.'

"Sir,—In your issue of 22nd ultimo there is a long letter by the managing director of the Brisbane Tramways Company, Limited, in which he states: 'Further delay was caused by the attitude of the Board of Waterworks,' and in another letter in your issue of the 30th idem he states: 'Then on top of all this came the attitude of the water board—a Government instrumentality—which delayed for months, and is still delaying, the completion of the work.' Statements are reported in your columns as having been made at recent meetings of the South Brisbane City Council also attributing to the board delay in the completion of Stanley street. In these circumstances, Sir, the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board desires to state that there has not been any unnecessary delay on its part in the matter, as a reference to the board's records will prove. On the contrary, the delay rests upon the company and the council, the former in objecting to pay the cost of the necessary work of adjusting on a safe and equitable basis the water supply to suit the proposal of the company to place the single tram track in the centre of the roadway immediately over and above the board's main, and the latter in not supplying, as requested, information as to intended alteration of levels, and in neglecting or refusing to furnish a statement of the permanent levels of the roadway. Delay was also made by the company in furnishing sufficient information and complete plans. In the case of both the company and the council, the board was simply asserting its rights as provided by its own Act of Parliament. Grey street has one pair of tram rails in the centre of the roadway, as Stanley street is intended to have, but it has not any main in the centre of the road, but one main on each side of the road. The necessary and proper alterations were there carried out to suit the company, and the consequent expense was defrayed by the company without cavil. However, in the case of Stanley street, the company refused to pay the cost of the necessary alterations, and forced the board to protect its property and rights. The matter was referred to the South Brisbane City Council as provided by the Tramways Act, no appeal from its decision being allowed. It is an anomalous position in which to put the council—to be judge in a dispute about its own street—and the position was accentuated at the hearing when evidence was given to the effect that the company was contractor for the council in making the part of that street for which the council is responsible conform to the level of the central portion of the street as left and to be completed by the Tramways Company.

"Though the decision was against the board, that did not lessen the duty of the board to defend its property from injury and its rights from encroachment, nor did it justify the company and the council in charging the board with delay for which the company and the council were responsible. The company, acting on the decision of the council, has gone ahead with its work regardless of the safety of the board's main and fittings. There is not the requisite depth of 2 feet of covering in some places to protect the board's main, while in others the main is several feet below that depth. In one place the work done by the company left one of the board's fittings exposed 7½ inches above the level of the tram rails. The inevitable injury to the main from deficient or excessive covering, added to electrolysis, will necessitate extra repairs, increased expense, and frequent interference with traffic from time to time, while in cases of the main being used for fire fighting, the tram traffic—on the single line—will be absolutely stopped by reason of the fire hydrants being between the two tram rails. In the recent fire at the State sawmills the traffic was so blocked for two hours. As the company has placed its single pair of rails over the main, despite the protests of the board, and the work is being completed, it does not seem logical to charge the board with delay.

"Even now the council has not furnished necessary information as to levels, though applications have been made for it. If the council intends to permanently alter the level of Stanley street, the board is entitled to at least seven days' notice, in writing. No such notice has been given to the board by the council. The records in connection with the matters between the company, the council, and the board are so extensive that your space forbids a sufficient recapitulation, but the papers are open for inspection, and will prove the accuracy of the above statements, which are made in justice to the board and upon its authority, also in the interests of its ratepayers. In the circumstances, therefore, will you please insert this letter in your correspondence columns?

"I am, Sir, etc.,

"(Sgd.) E. J. T. MANCHESTER,

"President.

"Brisbane, 4th December, 1917."

He thought it was necessary to read that letter in justification of the board for the slanderous attacks made upon it [8.30 p.m.] for delaying its work. He was sorry that the leader of the Opposition took up the same attitude. He thought they were justified in having some provision inserted in the new Bill to protect the board. No reasonable argument had been advanced against the amendment. At the present time the Tramways Company seemed to be able to do what they liked. They hung up the streets at their own sweet will. The board had had a good deal of bother with the Tramways Company because the manager, Mr. Badger, was a hard man to deal with. Mr. Badger had an autocratic style in dealing with local authorities who went to him asking for extensions, and told them to wait until he opened his bag and that sort of thing. He was anything but a good man to deal with if he got his back up. When the dispute was on in South Brisbane, Mr. Badger was away, but was on his way back again, and the acting manager, Mr. Stephens, offered to pay the board £1,000 without prejudice. Then Mr. Badger came back and the matter went to court, with the result that it was decided that the South Brisbane Council were the sole arbiters of their own streets. The Minister was wise in protecting the interests of the board.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The hon. member for Fortitude Valley had placed the matter before the Committee very clearly. No matter what might be the rights or the wrongs of the matter in Stanley street, the Committee were justified in including the clause in the Bill. Surely, if there was any reference of a dispute to any party it should be to the council which was an interested party. The matter should be referred to the responsible Minister, and not to the local council, who would, no doubt, be prejudiced one way or the other.

Mr. MOORE: So would the Minister.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They knew that the Tramways Company in its own interests acted in agreement with the South Brisbane Council against the water board. The Tramways Company were asked to shift their tram rails in such a way as to leave the mains alone, but, as a matter of fact, the tram rails rested on the main, and, even now, the main was inaccessible to the board.

Mr. MACARTNEY: You are entirely wrong.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He was assured by the present board that the only way to get access to the main was by cutting the sleepers and blocking the traffic. If it became necessary to put in a new pipe, they would have to cut the sleepers for the whole length of the pipe. Such a situation should never have been brought about. If the Tramways Company were responsible, they should pay compensation to the water board, which would be put to the expense of laying pipes on both sides of the street. The leader of the Opposition seemed to think that the claim was an exorbitant one. The pipe was not a new one, but it was a serviceable pipe, and would not have to be renewed for a number of years if it were not disturbed. In one case, the tramway sleepers rested upon the main, and that might have a bad effect upon it. It might have the effect of a miner getting electrolysis through coming in close proximity with the tram rails, and that would certainly shorten the life of the miner. Such matters as that should not be referred to an interested party such as the South Brisbane Municipality. That was an unfair position, and that was why the alteration was proposed. He was sure the Opposition would see that the amendment was highly justifiable, because it provided a fairer way of deciding these matters which might arise between the water board and the Tramways Company.

Mr. MACARTNEY: It was said that the South Brisbane Council should not act in a matter in which it was interested. That was quite true. He thought, in carrying out work like that, there might be a mutual understanding between the constructing authority, the Tramways Company, and the council for the purpose of altering the grade of the road. It appeared to him that in the matter referred to there was a certain amount of trouble before the water board came into it at all, owing to the action of the Government in granting the authority and then withholding the authority.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: We withheld it in order to safeguard the rights of the people.

Mr. MACARTNEY: If the hon. gentleman provided that a matter in which the municipality was interested should not be referred to the municipality for judgment, then he could understand it. That would be a reasonable thing to do, because it might be regarded as likely to affect the council's judgments. But that was not the case with the clause before the Committee. The clause proposed to take away from the South Brisbane Council and every other local authority within the tramway area the powers already invested in them, quite irrespective of whether a matter arose in which they were interested or not. That was his objection to the clause. Because the hon. member for Fortitude Valley was a member of the water board, that was the reason why the clause was introduced. That was why the Government took such an extreme step against all local authorities where the tramway applied. It was just because one board in the metropolitan area made a complaint. That seemed to be carrying the thing just a little bit too far. It was suggested by the Minister that a single line was likely to do more damage to the water board than a double line of rails. He (Mr. Macartney) was not an expert, but, unless an expert showed him how that happened, he failed to understand how a single line in a street could prevent access to the pipe in a greater degree than the existence of a double line.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: A double line has rails on both sides of the pipe.

Mr. MACARTNEY: There was only a limited distance between the double rails, and there were sleepers under both sets of rails. In all probability, the sleepers abutted on one another. With a single rail it ought to be easier to get access to the pipe than with a double set of lines.

That point was immaterial compared with the proposal to take from the municipality the general powers invested in them by law. A special tribunal had been created by the clause to meet cases of dispute as they arose. That was the objection to it. He noticed that an appeal was to be made to the Minister in such manner, in such form, and under such conditions as the board directed by by-laws. It was an easy thing for the board to make by-laws which would make it not worth while for anybody to appeal from anything. The water board were just as capable of making an unfair claim as anybody else. They may not make it just because it was unfair, but they may make it because they felt it was their duty to the public to make the biggest claim they could possibly make, and the party which was subject to that claim had got to go before some tribunal to get the question tried. If the water board were able to say that the claim could only be made in a certain way, it would be difficult to defend it, and it might be necessary for a tramways company to put their hands in their pockets to be allowed to go on with their work, even in an unfair case. That was what it came to. The hon. member for Fortitude Valley showed what was possible when he stated that the company offered £1,000 to put an end to it rather than have the matter delayed.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The by-laws have to be approved by the Govenor in Council.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The Governor in Council would not give a second thought to them. The by-laws could easily be fixed up to put the board in the most favoured position. The clause showed the facility with which the Government were prepared to bring in an amendment to please the gentleman who instructed them from behind.

At twenty minutes to 9 o'clock p.m.,

Mr. POLLOCK relieved the Chairman in the chair.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The leader of the Opposition had pointed out what might be the effect of this alteration. They all recognised that, when there was a dispute, one of the parties concerned should not be the arbitrator in the dispute, as, no matter how desirous anyone might be of doing the right thing according to their own conscience, it might open the door to a charge that they had not done the right thing because of being interested—that their spectacles might be coloured in some way. The leader of the Opposition was quite right in the suggestion he made. Instead of the sweeping proposition in the clause, provision should have been made for preventing the local authority sitting in judgment upon a matter in which there was a dispute in which they themselves were concerned. It seemed to him that this clause would not get over the difficulty. Did it not seem to be in keeping with the policy of the Government towards local authorities? It seemed to him that the Government were very largely out of sympathy with local authorities.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No; this was proposed by the water authority.

HON. W. H. BARNES: He was speaking of local authorities which had to do with more general local authority work. The Government here was taking the first opportunity of removing a matter in dispute from the control of the local authorities concerned, and handing it over to some other authority to decide. What was going to be the position of any party, especially a tramway company, which might have to appeal for justice to the Government? It was a foregone conclusion as to what the judgment would be. They had had evidence in this session already that the Government were out to "down" the Tramways Company.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Would the hon. gentleman mind me interrupting him? This amendment is suggested in accordance with the view of the Water and Sewerage Board, and each member of the board—and they are all Liberals on the board—has desired the acceptance of the amendment.

HON. W. H. BARNES: He must accept the statement of the Minister. Had they not abundant evidence that the Government were out at every turn to try and "down" the tramway company? In connection with this proposal, the Treasurer had taken exception —and probably rightly so—to any interested party sitting in judgment; but here they were going to transfer the authority to sit in judgment from one interested party, who had an interest in one particular, to a Government which, apparently, were out, under all circumstances, to "down" the Tramways Company. The Bill was going to take certain powers from a local authority and hand them over to a Government who were prejudiced every time against the Tramways Company.

Mr. MOORE protested against this filching of power by the Minister. The Ministry were always trying to filch power from local bodies and put it into the hands of a Minister. He did not believe in giving such power to the Ministers.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Are not the local authorities likely to be biassed?

Mr. MOORE: The proper people to settle disputes were the local authorities, and it was nonsense for the Minister to say that the local authorities were likely to be biassed. The party most likely to be biassed was the Government. In connection with the Tramways Company, no matter what the evidence was, the decision on the part of the Government would be against the company. It had been the same in connection with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. He did not believe that the members of the water board were going to be so biassed that they would not give justice. It was more likely that the Minister, who was obsessed with regard to a certain company, was more likely to be biassed than a local authority sitting in council.

Mr. COLLINS: Do you know how biassed local authorities are?

Mr. MOORE: The only time he had found local authorities to be biassed was when the members were elected on a definite pledge to the caucus party, and they could not get away from that pledge, as they would be kicked out if they did. The local authorities did their work without pay.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I see you have a local authorities journal.

Mr. MOORE: We have had that for the last three years.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. member to deal with the clause.

Mr. MOORE: He was led away by the interjection of the Minister. The local authorities strongly objected to the Minister taking away the power which they should have and exercise.

HON. W. H. BARNES asked the Minister: With regard to the voters' roll, what method was to be adopted to bring the roll up to date for each electorate?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: There is no mention of that in clause 11.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 12 put and passed.

On clause 13—"*Amendment of section 37; damage to works by electricity*"—

HON. W. H. BARNES: He wished to draw attention, by way of protest, to the way in which the board under this clause had the power to make by-laws, which would have to be approved of by the Minister in the same way, and then, if there was a difficulty afterwards, the Minister had to decide. It seemed to him that this was placing, first of all, in the hands of the board, and then in the hands of the Minister, a very dangerous power, and he protested against legislation of this kind being introduced. It was not fair nor in the interests of all parties. There was no chance whatever of doing a fair thing under such conditions. The Minister himself would probably be prejudiced by reason of his desire to help the board.

Mr. MOORE: He could not understand the reason for the amendment made by this clause, which related purely to a question of damage. Section 37 of the principal Act stated—

> "If upon an examination it is found that any work of the board has become injured or defective by reason of the escape thereto or influence thereon of electricity from any electric tramway or any electric line or electric works, all expenses of opening up and reinstating the ground, and of examining, removing, reinstating, or replacing any such work of the board may be recovered by the board from the owner or person controlling such tramway line or works."

It did not say that the dispute had to be settled by the council. It was a question in a case like this of evidence as to who created the damage, and whether damages could be awarded for the injury. He did not think the Minister had a right to make himself a judge and jury in a case which should be decided in court. It was left under the Act to be decided by the ordinary rules of court. He strongly protested against the clause.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It is perfectly safe, because there will be no unfair decision. I can assure you that nothing unjust will be done.

Mr. MOORE: He would not be prepared to go to a Minister, who was biassed, on a question like this. If there was a question of damage on a tramway through no fault of the company, he would far prefer to go to a court. This principle contained in the clause was not in the old Act, and it was a power which the Minister had no right to take.

HON. W. H. BARNES: He hoped the Minister would have something to say on this matter. The power taken by the Minister under the clause might become a great burden to him. First of all, he was an interested party by reason of his close connection with the board

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That would not make him an interested party.

HON. W. H. BARNES: His spectacles would be coloured as far as his judgment was concerned. The power was a dangerous one, and the Minister ought to give some reason why the proposal was made.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He had not risen to speak before, because exactly the same point was involved as in the clause they had been discussing with regard to the power of settling a dispute when it arose between the Water and Sewerage Board and the Tramways Company. In this case it was a question of damage to the pipes of the board by electricity escaping from the tramway line. He thought there was no necessity under the circumstances to be afraid.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 14 put and passed.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS moved the following new clause to follow clause 14:—

> "After section forty-two of the principal Act the following section is inserted:—
>
> "[42A.] (1.) Upon application by any water supply board constituted under the Rights in Water and Water Conservation and Utilization Acts, 1910 to 1915, and having jurisdiction in a water supply area constituted under those Acts through which any stream or pipe of the Metropolitan and Ipswich Water Supply and Sewerage Board passes or in which any of its waterworks have been constructed, that board may supply water to such water supply board by measure and on such terms and conditions as may be agreed on between them.
>
> "(2.) For the purposes of the last-mentioned Acts, any such stream, pipe, or waterworks as aforesaid shall be deemed to be a source of water supply."

This was to carry out the suggestion made at the deputation introduced by the hon. member for Fassifern from Harrisville. It was pointed out that it was [9 p.m.] possible, shortly after the constitution of that board, and when the Mount Edwards scheme was launched, that people resident in the Fassifern Valley might desire to use water for irrigation purposes, simply taking it in bulk from the metropolitan board. This provision provided that this could be done by simply paying the metropolitan board for the water supplied.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Pay for its own water

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Not for its own water. Water from the Mount Edwards scheme.

Mr. ROBERTS: From its own district?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The metropolitan board would be responsible for conserving the water, building the weir, and the pipe line. It would supply the water in bulk. As far as he could see, this would solely affect water supply for irrigation purposes.

New clause put and passed.

Clause 15 put and passed.

On clause 16—"*Electricity and motive power*"—

Mr. MACARTNEY: He understood there was a strong objection on the part of the local authorities to the introduction of this clause. He had received a letter from the president of the Local Authorities' Association informing him that he had sent to the Treasurer a letter of which he had received a copy. That letter stated—

"2nd October, 1918.

"Sir,—I have the honour, by direction, to respectfully draw your attention to certain clauses of the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Acts Amendment Bill now before the House.

"The Bill proposes to create an authority having equal powers to local authorities in the management and control of a public utility, which should come strictly within the functions and duties of local authorities solely.

"Any interference with the rights of local authorities or overlapping which might be detrimental to the rights of ratepayers are objectionable to my association.

"I am, therefore, directed to respectfully protest against clause 16 of the proposed Bill, and trust that you will give favourable consideration to the wishes of the association."

He took it that the effect of the clause was to enable the water authority to manufacture and use electricity—not only to manufacture and use it—but to supply it in any portion of the area, and he assumed, in the event of the Ipswich local authority deciding to establish electrical works, that they would find a possibility of the water board competing with them in the supply of power and electric light. That might not be a reasonable thing, but still the power was there, and it was not unnatural that the local authorities should object to that general power. Now electric light and power were provided for by a special Act containing many provisions, which not only set out the conditions under which those undertakings could be started and carried on, but which also set out the necessary safeguards for the public. If the order were granted to the waterworks board under the authority of that Act, unaccompanied by the safeguards that the law provided, it seemed to him it was an authority that did not extend the safeguards and precautions provided in the Electric Light and Power Act, as far as he had been able to find out. Therefore, on both grounds——

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They have to get an Order in Council before they can supply electricity.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Under this Bill?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Yes.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He did not take it so. If they had to get an order under the Electric Light and Power Act, and it was at the discretion of the Minister to grant that order, then the position was essentially different.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That is the position.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Then they could take it that this clause merely gave power after an Order in Council had been obtained.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Exactly.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He did not know whether that would meet the objections of the local authorities.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Yes; he was sure that they had misunderstood the position.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: I am sure they have not.

Mr. MACARTNEY: If that was the meaning of the words, the effect would be that all the provisions to which he had referred would apply when the Order in Council was granted, and those provisions would not be independent.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It would be subject to whatever restrictions are placed in the Order in Council.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He would like to ask the Minister if he thought, in view of the position, that a construction order would be granted for Ipswich, or, say, for Brisbane?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Not unless it was required for the purpose of utilising or establishing a hydro-electric scheme.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He was talking about that part of the order which would bring it into competition with any scheme of the local authority, or any person or authority already authorised to supply electricity or power. That seemed to be the position they had to consider.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It was a difficult question to answer offhand—whether a Government would consider the granting of an Order in Council which might possibly bring into competition the operations of this board with the operations of some other local authority which might be supplying within the area for which they had the Order in Council. It was not likely that the Government would grant an Order in Council which would have the effect of enabling one authority to compete injuriously with another engaged in the same business—not that the granting of any Order in Council at present offered to the owners of it any monopolistic rights whatever. That was the position. He could not answer now what might happen in ten years time—if the metropolitan board applied for an Order in Council to supply in any part of their district, supposing they intended to establish a hydro-electric scheme in connection with the Mount Edwards scheme. However, it was not likely that permission would be granted to go into injurious competition, say, with Ipswich, or any local authority which had expended money in establishing these works. The hon. member could be assured that the clause as at present drafted would prevent the Water and Sewerage Board from

entering into the manufacture and supply of electricity unless they got an Order in Council. The words "subject to any general Act in force for the time being regulating such matters or any of them" made it difficult.

Mr. TAYLOR: Were they to understand from the Treasurer's reply that in the city of Ipswich, if the water authority wished, it might establish an electric light system or any other electric system in the district without any reference to the local authority? For instance, in Ipswich at the present time there was no electric light supplied to the town. Were they to understand from what the Treasurer had said just now that the Bill would give the water authority power to go into the city of Ipswich and establish electrical works and supply electric light and power without reference to the local authority?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No, they would not have that power.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Was this Bill going to enable the carrying out of the lighting works?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Not unless they generate power cheaply.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The fact remained that quite a number of districts at the present moment were held up by reason of the Treasurer's refusal.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Well, the hold-up commenced under your own Administration while you were Minister for Works.

HON. W. H. BARNES: That is only a half-truth. In many cases the conditions had altered very materially. The other night the Minister had said there was no shortage of lighting power, such as kerosene.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The fact remained that a number of districts adjacent to Brisbane were going to be placed in a most awkward position unless they could get authority to provide light. That was a matter of very great concern to a large number of the suburbs of Brisbane. There were people outside of Brisbane where it would be possible to have electric light, and where Orders in Council have been turned down, who were having to use candles to do their reading. They were obliged occasionally with a pint of kerosene. That was a correct picture of what was happening to-day. Was this Bill going further to tie up the ability of the local authorities to carry out their lighting works? The Treasurer had said they themselves would get authority to borrow, but the Treasurer knew that the local authorities could say, "Thank you for nothing." It was quite an impossibility, and in addition it was most expensive. There would not be any very great objection to it if it were in the near future, but it was in the long distant future, and in the meantime they could hold up all proposals for lighting. He was afraid that the Minister was not fully seized with the position around the suburbs of Brisbane, and he wanted to ask him to give consideration to the request which he had so abruptly turned down.

Mr. MOORE: He understood that Ipswich was getting electric light, and he supposed that that was done under an Order in Council. But it appeared that the Water and Sewerage Board would come into competition very possibly with them. Other Orders in Council had been refused to the same company to supply light to different areas through which their lines already ran.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: There are two authorities supplying power within one area in Brisbane.

Mr. MOORE: He was not suggesting that they were not, but the Minister said a little while ago that if a local authority was already supplying light the board would not come into competition with them.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No. I said it was difficult to answer that now. The Government would have to consider it at the time.

Mr. MOORE: It might be rather awkward if a company had established lighting in places like Ipswich at a great deal of expense if the board could come in afterwards.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They know that they had taken all risks of competition.

Mr. MOORE: Then the Minister would not do it with a local authority but with an ordinary company that had an Order in Council? That was going to make it very much harder for those shire councils who wanted to get Orders in Council—on which he believed the Minister would have to give way, because there was certainly such a trouble over lighting. Companies were not going to establish plants if they were going to have the water board coming in and competing with them. It was a very difficult question. They knew the difficulties with which people were putting up, and in some cases Orders in Council had been given, but if they were going to give an Order in Council to a local authority and then another Order in Council to the water board to compete with them it was not likely that the people were going to get light at all. He did not suppose that the board themselves would establish lighting for a considerable time. They knew that in many of the suburbs around Brisbane lighting was an immediate necessity. He did not think it was necessary to point that out after the deputation which went to the Treasurer the other day. It was all very well to say that they had done without it fifty years. Perhaps fifty years ago or twenty or ten years ago they were able to get kerosene.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They had to put up with a lot of things—with the Liberal party.

Mr. MOORE: The Labour Government, now that they were in, should study the interests of the people. He did not think that the Treasurer realised what difficulties the electric light would solve.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I think you are a pessimist.

Mr. MOORE: No. He knew the conditions under which the people were living, and when the Treasurer made a statement that they had done without such lighting

for fifty years, and consequently should do without it now——

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I did not say that.

Mr. MOORE: That was one of the reasons or the excuses which the Minister gave to the deputation.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: When you were protesting about the awful conditions I reminded you that they had lived under a Liberal Government for fifty years without it.

Mr. MOORE: They got light under a Liberal Government.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: And when they got light they returned a Labour Government. (Laughter.)

Mr. MOORE: And had been in darkness ever since, and apparently they were going to remain in darkness, because the Minister would not let them have any light. He thought that if they got Orders in Council it was only reasonable that they should not have competition from the water board. It might be a joke to shires that had already got light to see others sitting in darkness.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: Why are you afraid of competition?

Mr. MOORE: He was not afraid of competition if they could bring it in so that those people would establish plants, but if they saw that they were going to have competition forced upon them they would not establish them. It was all very well for Ipswich to sit back and say that other places should not have it. He wanted to see people who were hungering for light get it in the most economical way. The Minister had taken up an untenable position, and now he felt that as Treasurer he did not like to go back on his word. If the difficulties were going to continue, some other means would have to be found by which the people would be able to get light. He could understand how the Minister had taken his stand regarding the country, because they knew that people in the country very often had to do without things, but when they got into the city they generally found that the Minister was prepared to give in. He should make it as easy as possible to get it, and he did not think that the principle in the Bill was going to make it any easier. It looked as though the people were going to be without light far too long, and the Government should realise the needs of the public and not the needs of the past.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 18 to 24, both inclusive, put and passed.

On clause 25—"*Amendment of Schedule II.*"—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS moved the omission, in lines 18 and 19, on page 13, of the words "[or Ipswich] division of the Metropolitan," with a view to inserting—

> "Brisbane [or South Brisbane or suburban Brisbane or Ipswich] division of the Metropolitan and Ipswich."

Amendment agreed to.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS moved the insertion, after line 22, page 13, of the following words:—

> "In the form in paragraph iv. of subsection four, after the word 'Metropolitan' the words 'and Ipswich' are inserted."

Amendment agreed to.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The clause made provision for the new method of election, and he wanted to ask the Minister whether the rolls were going to be up to date. They all knew that it was absolutely necessary to have clean rolls. What method was going to be adopted of making them up to date—of removing names that had no right to be on and putting on names that ought to be on?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The hon. member would notice, on page 4, clause 4, that the subject was dealt with as follows:—

> "For the purposes of every election, it shall be the duty of the Principal Electoral Officer, under the Elections Act, when and so often as he is required by the returning officer so to do, to compile a voters' roll for the Brisbane division of the district and a voters' roll for the Ipswich division of the district,"

and so on. The returning officer had to compile the rolls from the rolls compiled for the State electoral purposes. As the elections would take place in February, it was thought that the annual roll would be used. It would be up to date, it would be a purged roll really—the roll compiled for the year immediately preceding the election. He thought that would be eminently satisfactory. It would be the latest State electoral roll.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The hon. member had made a statement that there was difficulty in getting names off the parliamentary roll in cases where the electors had left the district but could not be truth-
[9.30 p.m.] fully said to have left the State. That was one of the reasons why it was impossible to clean the rolls. It was important that the elections should be held on clean rolls. He would like to know if the hon. gentleman had given any consideration to the technicalities said to exist in the Electoral Act, and if they were likely to be overcome so that the rolls could be purified.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That is more fancy than real. If the elector does not reside in Brisbane, he cannot record his vote.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Unfortunately, the dead voted sometimes and the living voted for others.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That might be the experience of the Liberal party.

Mr. MACARTNEY: It was the experience of the hon. gentleman's party.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It is a strange thing that not one complaint has been made this session of any alleged malpractices by any member on this side.

Mr. MACARTNEY: There were forty-eight members on the Government side, and they knew that any information as to impersonation was only supplied to the men who were returned.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: No; it is supplied to each candidate.

Mr. MACARTNEY: He had only been a defeated candidate once, and he was not here at the time. He did not agree that there were no complaints. He knew that in shearing districts and in sugar districts a large number of names on the roll could be polled from Sydney or other places, whether they were polled by the right man or not.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You should not make suggestions unless there is some ground for complaint.

Mr. MACARTNEY: The condition of the electoral rolls should be such that anything of that sort should be reduced to a minimum. They knew the condition of the rolls at the last election. They knew that there were thousands of names on the roll that had no right to be there; and although the Government had been in office for three years they had done nothing to clean the rolls. As long as the rolls were in that condition impersonation was likely to take place. They asked for a reasonably pure roll, and that matter ought to be attended to. It only required instruction from the department to remove the trouble that existed. At the present time a man had to make a declaration that an elector had not only left his electorate, but had left the State, and they could not get men to make the declaration. He was only asking what was fair, and he hoped that it would be attended to. The objection raised by the hon. member for Bulimba about the preparation of the roll should also receive consideration.

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*): He was surprised to hear the Minister say that there were no complaints about the state of the rolls in March last, because he had occasion to complain about the rolls in his electorate.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: There was no complaint made in this House.

Mr. ROBERTS: Yes, complaints were made on a previous debate. There were hundreds of names of electors on the roll that should not be there, and 400 of those voted. So far as those people were concerned, they had lost their interest in that electorate. He thought that if the person in charge of the roll was satisfied that an elector had left the electorate, then he should not allow the vote.

HON. W. H. BARNES pointed out that if an elector left Bulimba and went to Enoggera, which was within reasonable distance of the city, although outside his own area, he should not be allowed to vote, and his name should be struck off.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: If he is enrolled for a new district, he is automatically struck off his old electorate.

HON. W. H. BARNES: But even if he were not enrolled for the new electorate, and he was known to have left his old electorate, he should not be allowed to vote at this election.

Clause 25, as amended, and clauses 26 and 27, were passed with consequential amendments.

The House resumed. The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with amendments.

The third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

The House adjourned at forty-five minutes after 9 o'clock p.m.