

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 1 AUGUST 1923

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WEDNESDAY, 1 AUGUST, 1923.

The SPEAKER (Hon. W. Bertram, *Maree*), took the chair at 3.30 p.m.

QUESTIONS.

TECHNICAL COLLEGE INSTRUCTION IN APPLIED ELECTRICITY.

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

“1. If, in view of its rapidly increasing use, there is any class at the Technical College, or at any of the schools under his control, through which those desirous of acquiring a practical knowledge of electrical apparatus, such as engine-ignition, small lighting plants, and other household and farm appliances as are labour-saving and tend to make country life easier, may obtain tuition in the same without having to become apprenticed to an electrical trade and taking up electricity as their sole occupation?”

“2. Is there any law or regulation preventing private instructors from giving lessons on such lines?”

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. J. Huxham, *Buranda*) replied—

“1. Classes are held in the Central Technical College for the purpose of instructing amateur students in the operation of motor cars, the electric ignition of internal combustion engines, the various systems of car lighting, and the principles underlying the operation of motor cars. Day classes are also held for lads who intend to follow farm life in elementary electricity, magnetism, and various elementary trade processes used on a farm. Full courses of instruction are also provided for electrical fitters and mechanics engaged in the trade, and for telegraph and telephone mechanics engaged in the Postmaster-General's Department.

“2. There is no law or regulation preventing private instructors from giving lessons of any kind whatever, but such instructors are not permitted to teach in technical colleges.”

COST OF COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURE TO 30TH JUNE, 1923.

Mr. KING (*Logan*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

“1. What is the total cost to 30th June, 1923, of the Council of Agriculture since its inception?”

“2. What is the total number of employees from director downwards, and their total weekly salaries and wages?”

“3. What fees have been paid to members of the Council, including their travelling expenses?”

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. W. N. Gillies, *Eacham*) replied—

“1. £24,993 0s. 5d.

“2. Thirty-one employees; £171 9s. 5d.

“3. £2 2s, per day sitting fees. £1 11s. 6d. per day travelling allowance, with rail and/or steamer fares.”

DELAY IN DELIVERY OF FODDER FOR STARVING STOCK.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture and Stock—

"1. Is he aware that considerable delay is occurring in the delivery of fodder for starving stock after same has been granted by the department?"

"2. Will he make inquiries with a view of locating the cause of delay and have same remedied?"

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE replied—

"1. I am not aware that considerable delay has occurred in the delivery of fodder for starving stock. On the other hand, the department holds a large number of complimentary letters from farmers in regard to the expeditious despatch of their requirements.

"2. If the hon. member will submit any specific case where it is thought delay has arisen, inquiries will be made."

EMPLOYMENT OF LOCAL RESIDENTS ON TARA-SURAT RAILWAY EXTENSION.

Mr. MORGAN asked the Premier—

"1. Will he instruct the engineer in charge of railway construction on the Tara-Surat extension to give immediate employment to the large number of district settlers and workers registered for employment but up to the present unable to obtain work?"

"2. Is he aware that quite a large number of settlers, urgently in need of relief work, have applied for employment on this line, but up to the present have been turned down?"

The PREMIER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *'hillagoe*) replied—

"1 and 2. One reason for commencing this line was so that relief could be afforded to settlers in the district who were in distressful circumstances owing to the severe drought through which they were passing. When the work commenced as many local settlers as could be placed were given employment, and the number has been added to from time to time. The total number of men now employed on the line is 153, and the chief engineer advises that he is not at present in need of additional labour."

REPAIR OF FENCE, STATE SCHOOL, GOONDIWINDI.

Mr. MORGAN asked the Secretary for Public Works—

"Will he explain why the work of repairing the fence around the State school at Goondiwindi has not been proceeded with, in view of the definite promise given to the House last session that the work would be gone on with immediately?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *Mackay*) replied—

"The fence was not mentioned either by the hon. member or myself. The question of additions and repairs was submitted to the Department of Public Instruction, who recommended as follows:—

- (1) No action regarding additions.
- (2) Expenditure upon fencing be further considered when funds are available."

CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNEMPLOYED INSURANCE FUND.

Mr. ROBERTS (*East Toowoomba*) asked the Secretary for Public Works—

"What amount of contributions has been made to the Unemployed Insurance Fund to the end of June, 1923?"

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS replied—

"Contributions, including Government grant, from the 1st March to 30th June, 1923, £56,952 5s."

CANCELLATION OF NOTIFICATION OF PRICES OF HAM AND BACON.

Mr. EDWARDS (*Vanango*) asked the Premier—

"Owing to the present high cost of feeding of pigs, will he direct the Commissioner of Prices to cancel all prices notifications fixing the prices of ham and bacon?"

The PREMIER replied—

"Decontrol is unnecessary, as any increase in the price paid by the factories for pigs is allowed in the wholesale prices. Fixation does not, therefore, affect the price of pigs. Further, the limiting of profits on the retail prices of such commodities encourages consumption and to such extent stabilises the prices paid to the producer. During the past week the decontrol of prices as desired by the hon. member was also urged on the Commissioner by the proprietary companies and strongly opposed by a cooperative factory representative."

ACTION OF COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT *in re* INCIDENCE OF LEAD POISONING IN CHILDREN IN QUEENSLAND.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*) asked the Home Secretary—

"Have any steps been taken by the Commonwealth Government in regard to conducting a medical investigation into the incidence of lead-poisoning in children in Queensland?"

HON. F. T. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*) replied—

"No steps have been taken beyond setting out the scope and personnel of a proposed investigation."

DATE FOR INTEREST ON QUEENSLAND LOANS TO BECOME SUBJECT TO FEDERAL INCOME TAX.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE asked the Treasurer—

"1. Has any definite date been agreed upon with the Commonwealth Government after which the interest on Queensland loans will be subject to Federal income tax? If so, what is the date?"

"2. When Federal income tax becomes so payable, will it apply to the interest on any loans issued prior to the date asked for in Question 1?"

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

"1. At the recent conference of Premiers it was agreed that no tax-free loans should be issued after the 31st December next.

"2. It is understood that all issues up to 31st December next will be free of Federal tax."

PAPER.

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

Report of the Police Investment Board for the year ended 31st December, 1922.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Mr. BULCOCK (*Barcoo*): Mr. Speaker, I desire to make a personal explanation.

Mr. MORGAN: An apology.

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the hon. member for Barcoo be allowed to make a personal explanation?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BULCOCK: Yesterday the hon. member for Dalby took exception to a letter read by me on the 25th June, when I was speaking on the Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment Bill. In effect, this letter set out that a Mr. S. Spence, a drayman with his own turnout, was required to do certain work in connection with the recent election for Mr. Vowles's committee, and was refused payment for his services, his loss in this connection being 5s. 6d. Since the hon. member denied the charge I have pursued inquiry into the matter, and regret that, by a strange set of circumstances, Mr. Vowles's name was mentioned in this connection. I would like to outline these circumstances, and in so doing to point out that my production of the letter was brought about by Mr. Vowles's unfounded accusation that we employed non-union labour to produce our election signs.

Mr. VOWLES: You are a twister.

Mr. BULCOCK: In order to make the position clear, it is necessary for me to refer to a signed report by Organiser Funnell of the Australian Workers' Union. In this report he states Mr. Spence was instructed to deliver certain goods to Brook street polling-booth for Mr. Vowles's committee of the Nationalist party. This letter was dictated by Mr. Funnell to a stenographer in the Australian Workers' Union office, who unfortunately substituted "Vowles" for "Fowles." Subsequently Mr. Funnell's report came before Mr. District Secretary Martyn, of the Australian Workers' Union, and in a letter based on this report, he, knowing that the phrase "Vowles's committee of the Nationalist party" was incorrect, as Mr. Vowles was not associated with the Nationalist party, substituted "Country" for "Nationalist" party, believing the designation of party to be wrong rather than the name.

Mr. HYNES: The same species of bird.

Mr. BULCOCK: The effect of this on his letter was that the communication I read in the House read "Vowles's committee of the Country party." (Opposition laughter.)

It is a matter for regret that the name of a gentleman, who by his absence from the Chamber cannot offer an explanation to the House, has been introduced, as it is easily understood that the gentleman in question may not have been responsible for the action of his committee.

In any case, and to show the ease with which the two gentlemen in question may be confounded, I am informed that during the recent campaign the "Courier" attributed a speech made by Mr. Fowles to the late leader of the Country party.

In order that honourable members may perceive that in making the statement I did I was actuated by no motive of political dishonesty, I am prepared to place both Organiser Funnell's report and Mr. Martyn's subsequent letter, together with Mr. Spence's voucher showing 5s. 6d. short pay, on the table of the House, should hon. members so desire.

I would add that we of the Labour party have no need for misrepresentation—(Opposition laughter)—as our cause is able to succeed on its own inherent truth.

NERANG RIVER BRIDGE AND SOUTH-PORT-BURLEIGH ROAD BILL.

INITIATION.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. W. McCormack, *Cairns*): I beg to move—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirability of introducing a Bill to validate certain agreements entered into by the Secretary for Public Lands with certain local authorities and persons relating to certain road and bridge improvements and a certain quarry site near Southport, and for other consequential purposes."

Question put and passed.

INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT
AMENDMENT BILL.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. Kirwan, Brisbane, in the chair.*)

Clause 27—"Amendment of section 90—Power of inspection by union officials."—on which Mr. Moore (*Aubigny*) had moved the omission of the following paragraph:—

"In the second paragraph of the said section, the words "converse with or otherwise hamper or hinder the employees during their working time, but" are repealed, and the words "willfully hamper or hinder the employees during their working time, and" are inserted in lieu thereof."

Mr. MAXWELL (*Toowong*): The leader of the Country party is to be congratulated for drawing attention to one of the most dangerous clauses in this Bill. To allow any union secretary to unhinge a man's business will, in a good many cases, mean ruin. It is only necessary for me to take my own industry by way of illustration. To place this power in the hands of a man who is carrying out the red objective, or the wiping out of the employer—which is practically what the party on the other side is committed to—could easily mean ruin to the employer without any difficulty whatever. It is only necessary for me to illustrate my point. If I had a certain number of men carrying out certain work in this Chamber, and the union secretary came in and wanted to discuss matters of interest to himself and, perhaps, matters of interest to the union, there is nothing to prevent those men who are working from destroying the work they have been doing throughout the day. The Secretary for Public Works is a practical man, and he knows that that is correct. The proposed clause threatens the efficiency of the worker. I will quote something that was

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said by ex-Senator J. V. MacDonald at the Emu Park Conference—

“There were ways of gaining their ends, such as taxation and competing the capitalist out of business.”

This is one method whereby the employer of labour could be put out of employment. I will take the words of a man like Mr. Judd, the author of “The Case for the O.B.U.” Mr. Judd is a man who knows what he is talking about, and he says in connection with this matter and in dealing with the two classes—

“Capitalist class ownership of the socially operated means of production, &c., divides the people into two separate and distinct economic classes—one, the class of employers; the other, the class of wage workers. The employers are the capitalist class, the employees the working class.”

It is news to me that the employers are the capitalist class. I am quite satisfied that the Minister is not a capitalist and that I am not a capitalist.

I want to point out to the hon. gentleman that there are union secretaries and men associated with unions who are pledged to wipe out the employer.

A. GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Rot!

Mr. MAXWELL: It is rot. It is a lot of utter nonsense, yet men like the hon. members on the other side of the Chamber associate themselves with rot like that. All one has to do is to analyse their own labour paper to appreciate that.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: What are you going to do about it?

Mr. MAXWELL: I am going to raise my protest here. What is the Secretary for Public Lands going to do about it? At the Convention held in the Trades Hall in 1921, he spoke against what was being done, and now he has swallowed the programme *holus bolus*.

There is another aspect of the case which appeals to me. From 8 o'clock to 12 o'clock, according to the award, the man sells his labour to his employer, and from 1 o'clock to 5 o'clock he does the same. Certain limitations are placed in the principal Act by which a union secretary cannot go in and injure a business during working hours. That protection is now going to be removed, and the union secretary is to be given a right, irrespective of whether a man is paid from 8 to 12 or from 1 to 5 o'clock, to unhinge the whole of the business. What about the position of men associated with our primary products? Are those men not hampered and hindered quite sufficiently without having this kind of thing placed upon them? I know of instances where men who are associated with the primary products are on the verge of starvation and can hardly get a living. It may be said that I am calling “stinking fish” but I do not want to do that. We have it from some of the members on this side of the House that relief had to be given to some of them, and now a clause similar to this is being inserted in the Bill whereby these men are to be hindered and harassed. They are going to be oppressed by some of these organisers who are going throughout the length and breadth of the country with a view to getting the workers to link up. While they are linking them up I would like them to try and get them work.

[Mr. Maxwell.]

If they would do that, they would certainly be doing some good. The hon. gentleman would have been better advised—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I appeal to hon. members of the Committee, if they wish to converse, to converse in lower tones. I think the hon. member for Toowong is speaking under considerable disadvantage, and I also appeal to hon. members, on behalf of the Press and “Hansard” staff, who want to hear distinctly all that hon. members say. If there is less interruption, hon. members will not have cause to complain of being misquoted or misreported.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAXWELL: I do not wish to break the rules of debate by traversing the whole Bill from beginning to end, but it is nothing but a class-conscious Bill. If the hon. gentleman had desired to do something which would have been of benefit to the community, he knows perfectly well where he could have started in connection with it; and, instead of introducing an amendment such as this, he could have dealt with matters of more vital importance which would have created a better understanding between employers and employees.

Mr. COLLINS: You are doing all the talking on that side.

Mr. MAXWELL: I submit there is a necessity to do a great amount of talking. The hon. member and some of his friends did not mention matters such as this when they were on the hustings. That was kept for another place. I do not refer to the wonderful Emu Park Convention, but one has to be guided and led by the information that is conveyed in the Labour papers, and also in the papers associated with the One Big Union as to what is likely to eventuate.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: What is the “O.B.U.”?

Mr. MAXWELL: I think it stands for the British Empire, which is good enough for me.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Tell us about the One Big Union.

Mr. MAXWELL: I will tell you about the One Big Union.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope the hon. member will confine his remarks to the amendment.

Mr. MAXWELL: I was drawn off the track.

The CHAIRMAN: I would advise the hon. member to address the Chair and not be drawn off the track.

Mr. MAXWELL: I was addressing the Chair, and already you had to ask hon. members to give me an opportunity to explain the position. The Secretary for Public Lands wanted certain information conveyed to him, and I want to point out to him that the preamble of the One Big Union is exactly the same as the preamble of the I.W.W., and these men opposite have swallowed all of it. I want to say, also, what I said to a number of people in Australia eleven or twelve years ago—that is, that they were then on the edge of a precipice, and they are on the edge of a precipice still. (Interruption.) I am emphasising it now. I want to point out to the workers in Queensland that these gentlemen who are posing as their friends are not their friends at all. It has

been proved that they are hindering and harassing them all they possibly can. I venture to say that the introduction of an amendment such as this is going to hinder and harass men in their business; and, as I pointed out a moment ago, an employer has to pay his employees for working certain hours, and if the privilege is going to be given to union secretaries to come in and hinder these men in their work, you are going to interfere with the carrying on of business in a proper and legitimate way. Is there to be no consideration at all for those outside the industrial section in the community? Is there to be no consideration given to the man on the land? We know that the Premier has stated that lands are to be thrown open for selection with a view to trying to make this country of ours what we want it. It seems to me that what they are trying to make this country is what the "Red Objective" stands for—a co-operative commonwealth.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAXWELL: I thought I would get it. The Secretary for Public Lands knows what it means, and he told them at that convention at the Trades Hall in October, 1921, what it was. I have quite sufficient faith in him to know that he is exactly of the same opinion now as he was then, but, like a good many other hon. members opposite, he has swallowed this with a view to placating these men, and that the time may ultimately come for them to say, "If you don't like what we are doing, get out."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: What will happen to you?

Mr. MAXWELL: If you persist in your mad-brained scheme, it will be ruination, and neither you nor any other man can say anything else.

Mr. RIORDAN: You were responsible for sending the delegation home.

Mr. MAXWELL: That is the same old claptrap which we have heard before. Hon. members opposite can talk about the delegation till the cows come home but we have arrived at the position to-day that the Government are introducing measures which are detrimental to the interests of the whole of the community, and I would be wanting in my duty, as the representative of a city electorate, were I not to draw attention to the matter.

Mr. HYNES: You are taking a biased view.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You are always telling us about a revolution.

Mr. MAXWELL: In Melbourne they said that, if they could not get what they wanted by a peaceful revolution, then it would be a "bloody revolution."

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Oh, oh! and laughter.

Mr. MAXWELL: That was said by your friend, Mr. Ross. Hon. members opposite are the gentlemen who are supporting and assisting Mr. Ross by introducing an amendment such as this. I do not know that there is any use in attempting to plead with the hon. gentleman to withdraw this.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Not a bit. (Government laughter.)

Mr. MAXWELL: Union secretaries are paid to do certain work in specified times, and they have no right to go into certain industries and injure them, and try to create discord by carrying out the "Red Objective" which has been framed by the Labour Conventions.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay): It is rather unusual to be accused in connection with an amendment moved by someone else. The hon. member has denounced me for introducing the amendment which is now before the Committee, but that amendment was moved by the leader of the Country party, and all the remarks of the hon. member for Toowong apply to the leader of the Country party as the mover of the amendment.

Mr. MAXWELL: No; I am referring to the Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It is quite uncalled for for a member of the United party to accuse the leader of the Country party in that way. Let me apply myself to the question of the paragraph of the clause which it is proposed to omit. The hon. member for Toowong, following the example set by other hon. members opposite yesterday, is attempting to add a few verses to the new book of lamentations—the lamentations of the Opposition in the Queensland Parliament. He predicts that all kinds of awful things will happen if a union official is allowed to go on to jobs where men who are members of his union, or men engaged in the calling of which his union is a party, are engaged. Then he set out the possibility of men engaged in flattening the panels in this Chamber being disturbed by the union official, and immediately knocking off work and engaging in conversation, with the result that some of the panels would be spoilt. Hon. members will notice, if they read the clause, that any

[4 p.m.] official who wilfully hampers anybody engaged in an industrial operation is liable to a penalty for a breach of the Act. Assuming that the hon. member was charged with the decoration of this Chamber, and assuming that his men were engaged at the work of flattening the panels, does he suggest for a moment that his men would knock off in the middle of a panel in order to have a yarn with somebody who called on the job?

Mr. MAXWELL: It is possible.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: If they would do that, the hon. member must have a peculiar type of man engaged in his business, and I am satisfied that the man who would do such a thing would not last long with the hon. member. All that is asked is the right of the union official to visit jobs where work is being carried on. Nothing is proposed in the Bill which is not already actually in operation. In all cases where work is being carried on union officials can visit the men and look round the job. No objection to that can come from employers who are faithfully carrying out award conditions. Objections can come only from those employers who desire to break awards. They do not like a union official to come on the job, because he may lodge a complaint with the department that a breach of the award is taking place. This clause will only

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hit those people who are endeavouring to evade their legal obligations, and no new principle is involved.

Amendment (*Mr. Moore*) put and negatived.

Clause 27 put and passed.

Clause 28—"Amendment of section 92—Regulations"—

Mr. DEACON (Cunningham): I move the insertion, after line 20, page 7, of the following paragraphs:—

"(i.) Provide for the appointment of local officers having power to grant to inexperienced or slow workers permission to engage in work such as is usually carried on in farming operations on dairy farms, fruit farms, or agricultural farms at such rates of wages as are fair and reasonable.

"(ii.) Provide that agreements of farm learners made prior to the passing of this Act shall remain in force as if this Act had not been passed."

The clause, as it stands, does not provide for the inefficient worker in farming operations. There are large numbers of inefficient workers in farming operations, and a provision such as I propose means a great deal to such men. It will enable men who cannot be classed as efficient workers to get employment in perhaps the only industry in which they are able to obtain employment. It often happens that men who cannot hold their own in other callings come down eventually to the farming industries.

Mr. COLLINS: You will always get inefficient labour when you do not pay a good rate of wages.

Mr. DEACON: The second paragraph of the amendment will preserve rights under agreements made by farmers with farm learners. It is important that they should remain in operation, because, if these young men have not the opportunity of learning, they cannot become efficient.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (*Hon. W. Forgan Smith, Mackay*): The thing the hon. member desires to attain has already been achieved in the principal Act, and we are not interfering at all with the power which industrial magistrates have of granting permits to slow and inefficient workers.

Mr. VOWLES: That is not the policy of the Government. It is just a matter of direction. They are opposed to it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Does the hon. member suggest that we have given instructions to magistrates?

Mr. VOWLES: No.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The suggestion is absolutely false and a reflection on the magistrates of Queensland. No dictation has ever been given to any magistrate to my knowledge, and my department has never given instructions regarding this matter at all. It is purely a matter in which the magistrate exercises his judicial functions. Any man has the right to appear before him and ask for a permit as a slow, aged, or inefficient worker, and the union has the right to be represented at the hearing, which is usually in the magistrate's room, and on the facts the magistrate makes his determination.

Mr. VOWLES: On the facts?

[*Hon. W. Forgan Smith.*

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Yes. The hon. member must have a very poor idea of the magistrates of Queensland if he thinks that a permit is given or refused otherwise than on the facts. My opinion—and I am acquainted with many of the magistrates of this State—is that we have a very able body of men, who are not to be condemned even by a solicitor practising in Dalby. If the hon. member has been unfortunate in pleading a case before some magistrate, I consider it to be very weak—very mean, as a matter of fact—for him to make such a suggestion.

Mr. VOWLES: I do not care what you say. I say that the policy of the Government is against it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: If the hon. member is aggrieved, he can appeal. He would be justified in doing that if he is prepared to say that the magistrates do not do their duty—for that is what it really amounts to. Full provision is made in the principal Act for the hon. member's first point, and therefore I cannot agree with the amendment. It would be unnecessarily duplicating the existing provision. With regard to his second point, he will see that clause 30 provides—

"Nothing in this Act contained shall be construed to repeal or otherwise limit the operation of any existing award."

That means that nothing in the Bill will have any retrospective effect. If the agreements for learners such as the hon. member has in mind were valid when they were entered into, the passage of this Bill will not interfere with them in any way. This Bill only applies to cases that will come before the court after the Bill becomes law. If the agreements with regard to agricultural apprentices are valid under the principal Act, then they will continue to be so. On those grounds I cannot accept the amendment, and I would point out to the hon. member that it is quite unnecessary.

Mr. DEACON (Cunningham): Industrial magistrates are not to be found in every centre. I have only two or three in my electorate. What would happen in a place like Clifton?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: We have power to appoint any Government officer as an industrial magistrate.

Mr. DEACON: Any clerk of petty sessions?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Yes; any clerk of petty sessions or labour agent could be appointed as an industrial magistrate. Where there are no industrial magistrates we appoint clerks of petty sessions as industrial magistrates.

Mr. DEACON: There are places where there are not clerks of petty sessions.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You cannot expect the Government to appoint an industrial magistrate for every farmer on the Downs.

Mr. DEACON: No; but I would like someone appointed temporarily in the different centres.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: In all the important townships there is an industrial magistrate. Any Government officer can be appointed by the Executive Council as an industrial magistrate.

Mr. DEACON: In Allora there is a sergeant of police. Would he have power to issue permits?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: We could give him power. We could appoint him as an industrial magistrate for the purposes of the Act.

Mr. DEACON: Under the present Act?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: We have that power at present.

Mr. KELSO: To appoint any Government servant?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Yes.

Mr. VOWLES: To follow the Government policy.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: What does the hon. gentleman mean by that interjection? As a matter of fact, justices of the peace can be appointed industrial magistrates. The hon. member for Cunningham can rest assured that, when this Bill becomes law and is applicable to the rural industry, I will see to it that industrial magistrates are appointed in sufficient numbers to carry out the operations of the Act.

Mr. DEACON: I am pleased to hear that. I wish now to deal with the second part of my amendment. Clause 30 of the Bill reads—

“Nothing in this Act contained shall be construed to repeal or otherwise limit the operation of any existing award.”

That means any existing award of the court; but there are agreements in force that are not awards of the court.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: If the agreements that have been entered into are legal agreements under the existing law, then this Bill will not affect them.

Mr. DEACON: Does the hon. gentleman mean agreements under the principal Act?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: There can be no agreements under the principal Act, because it does not apply to rural workers.

Mr. DEACON: Any agreement that is legal will not be disturbed?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It will not be disturbed. This Bill does not propose to interfere with existing conditions. It will only deal with future conditions.

Mr. DEACON: I understand.

Mr. EDWARDS (*Vanango*): The hon. member for Cunningham can be congratulated on bringing this matter forward. The hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill assures us that a sufficient number of public servants will be appointed as industrial magistrates to carry out the operations of the Bill. That is an important matter so far as the agricultural centres are concerned.

Mr. COLLINS: We are representing them over here, and we are taking full responsibility for that.

Mr. EDWARDS: Take the case of immigrants coming to this country, who, in many instances, go on the land willing to work and are agreeable to do whatever they are able to do. I am sure the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill and many other hon. members opposite will agree that it will be a pitiable thing to see those men turned away because they are not able through inexperience to command the full rate of wages. They should be allowed to work at

a rate which is fair and reasonable for men going on to work that is new to them. Then, again, there are men who come from the towns to the farming districts who know nothing whatever about the farming occupation. It takes them at least twelve months or two years to learn sufficient to enable them to do a little work without having someone to instruct them. Every consideration should be given to those men to induce them to work on the land. I take it that it is the aim of the Government and the whole of the people of Queensland to-day to induce people to leave large centres of population and go and work in the country, and the Government should see that the chances of those people are not jeopardised, and that they are not driven back again into the large centres of population.

Amendment (*Mr. Deacon*) put and negatived.

Mr. KERR (*Enoggera*): I beg to move, on page 7, line 37, the insertion of the following subclause:—

“(iv.) Provide for the fullest degree of efficiency possible, by vocational training or by other means, in a trade or calling for any person who on account of any reason is unskilled in any trade or calling.”

The object of this amendment is to secure to any man, irrespective of age, a chance in life to learn a trade. On looking at the principal Act, it would appear that there is already provision for that. The words “any person under twenty-one years of age” in the definition of “apprentice” under the principal Act have been repealed, which means that an apprentice can now be a person of any age. We find that under this clause regulations can be made providing for the earliest and latest age at which an apprentice can be apprenticed. I want to make clear the meaning of the word “apprentice.” If you look at any dictionary, you will find that the meaning is simply “a learner.” This amendment is moved solely with the view to laying down definitely where the boy is to stand in the community to-day. In the professional occupations of life, such as barrister or accountant, it is not necessary for a boy to start at sixteen years of age. A man may start at eighteen, twenty, thirty, or forty years of age, and become a barrister. You can find that in every avenue of employment, barring the trades, a man can start at any time in life to learn something for his future personal benefit and for the benefit of the community generally. In our Railway Department, the man who becomes a station-master or a night officer is first appointed as a porter, and his age can range from twenty-one years up to thirty-five. That man is given a chance in life to learn a trade. A labourer may be working in a workshop, and he may wish to become a moulder, a brass-finisher, or a woodworker, but because he is over sixteen years of age he is debarred. He cannot qualify for those positions simply because he missed his chance in life when he was a boy sixteen years of age. It has been represented to me many times—and I have made specific inquiry, and I find it correct—that it is possible in Brisbane in a number of our factories to-day for a man to receive the necessary instruction irrespective of his age to become a tradesman. I know there are several difficulties in this regard, but they are easily got over. Take the case of the men half way through their

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apprenticeship when they went to the war. They came back unskilled after serving part of their apprenticeship away from Australia on military duty, and were anywhere from twenty-two to twenty-five years of age. The Repatriation Department saw how unfortunate was the position of these men who were going to lose their occupation in life, and they came to the rescue, and in Australia attended to 17,000 men over twenty-one years of age. Instead of these men being classified as unskilled labourers, to-day they are enjoying the benefits of being skilled tradesmen. Something like 13,000 men over twenty-one years of age have so completed their indentures. The Commonwealth Government did not ask the employer to pay the unskilled man the full rate of wages, but they paid to the employer the difference between the unskilled and skilled rates as a subsidy. They made a complete gift of tens of thousands of pounds in this connection, and gave £96,000 for general purposes. The Commonwealth Government, to give these men over twenty-one years of age a chance of learning a skilled trade, spent altogether over £4,000,000 in Australia. It is apparent to every reasonable thinking man that something may eventuate in the early portion of a young man's life that may penalise him for the remainder of his life. His parents, in a number of cases, are to blame, as they have not looked after the interests of the boy. They allow a boy of fourteen years to go out to work if he can earn 10s. a week, and, after he gets beyond sixteen years, it is too late for him to learn a trade. We know that in Queensland we can place a great number of bricklayers, plasterers, and other skilled men in their trades. We have the reticulation work in connection with the Water and Sewerage Board operations commencing shortly, when there will be an opening for 200 skilled plumbers and others. To-day we have not got those tradesmen. We have the unfortunate existence in Queensland of the condition of affairs which was disclosed by a question I asked of the Secretary for Railways the other night. The reply disclosed how, in the Railway Department alone, the avenues for boys have been restricted. We find that for three years prior to the Government taking office the department had placed 1,500 boys, while in the last three years of the present Government's tenure of office, because of these and other restrictions, they were only able to place 132 boys. The avenues of 1,400 boys were thus absolutely blocked. We know that, because of the restrictions and their inability to become apprentices, men to-day are travelling from loan job to loan job, and are unskilled. By my amendment I want to give these men an opportunity of going into the workshops which they missed when they were sixteen years old. It has far-reaching principles, and we should all get behind it.

Mr. DUNSTAN: Would you compel employers to have apprentices?

Mr. KERR: Yes; the Act lays down a minimum. No opposition was placed to the minimum being made practically compulsory. The employer, I believe, will offer no objection to that. I do not want, though, to deviate from the general principle of my amendment. My amendment must inevitably lead to increased production in our factories. Production in Queensland at the present time is deplorable, and we will not overcome that situation until some action such as I suggest is taken. If we make a limit of five

years, I shall be satisfied. I have a short article on this subject which I propose to read—

“ Many soldiers passed the best part of their apprenticeship days defending Australia, and so have to start or resume their trades rather late in life. They are not new intruders, but old inhabitants. Being too old to be ordinary apprentices, a small number began to learn trades at Sydney Technical College, but their reception is cold.”

We have the nucleus of one of the best technical colleges in Queensland, and there is no reason why these men should not get there—

“ The Boiler-makers' Union refuses to work with any of them when they have qualified, and the Bricklayers' Union offer, grudgingly, to admit 100 and no more. The vast bulk of the returned men are welcome to become loafers, race-course hangers-on, or criminals”—

I am not saying that the returned men are so—they are not—but I want to stop any avenue that will prevent these men having a chance of becoming skilled men—

“ or they may go on the land (if they can get there) without knowledge and with a £2,000 loan money mortgage, but otherwise the popes of labour put them outside the pale. It is not, of course, that there is not room for them; 1,000 new bricklayers could find employment, besides carpenters and stonemasons in large numbers. There is even room for more than that number of bricklayers alone.”

Here in Queensland we have a great shortage of skilled men. We have the opportunity in our own hands if the Government will only supply a certain amount of money. The Government will have to help in this matter. I do not know whether the estimate of the Minister in connection with the Unemployed Workers' Insurance Fund has been realised.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: It bears out the actuary's estimate very well.

Mr. KERR: You estimated £150,000.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: We might get more than that. I estimated the income at £180,000.

Mr. KERR: If the Minister will consult statistics, he will find that £40,000 is required for expenditure on relief rations. There consequently is a balance of £100,000 to the credit of the Unemployed Workers' Insurance Fund. To what better purpose could that money be applied than in preventing unemployment?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Under the Unemployed Workers' Insurance Act, where a man loses his employment through being deficient in skill, he can be sent to a technical college, or be put to vocational training at the expense of the fund.

Mr. KERR: I know that. I noticed that clause at the time, but it has never been put into operation. I do not want to provide only for the man who is unemployed, but also for the man who has some desire and initiative to learn a trade. I do not want to get down to infinitesimal numbers, but I wish to apply it to all men. The Minister is a tradesman, but, if he had been debarred through ill-health or certain circumstances in youth from acquiring that skill, why should he not have that opportunity if he

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wishes in later life? To-day I am studying myself, and the hon. member for Maryborough has just passed his final examination in accountancy, and is starting business in Maryborough this year. Why should he be stopped? We have the technical colleges where boys can be trained, and we have the work, but we have not the skilled men to do it. We have the brawn and muscle to convert into skill, but the Government will not move. I appeal strongly to the Secretary for Public Works to give those men a chance by inserting my amendment in this Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. W. Forgan Smith, *MacKay*): I have listened with a great deal of interest to the speech made by the hon. member for Enoggera. There is no doubt that he has endeavoured, with all the power [4.30 p.m.] at his disposal, to apply his mind to the proposal now before the Committee; but I would point out that the amendment is not a proper amendment for this Bill, inasmuch as it involves the question of education, and is really a problem for the Department of Public Instruction. It would be a suitable amendment for the Technical Instruction Act. Therefore, I cannot accept the amendment, as it is quite unnecessary and outside the ambit of the Industrial Arbitration Act, which sets out the conditions that shall rule in industry, and the rates of wages that shall be paid. It is not a function of the Department of Public Works under this Act to train employees for any given trade. It is their function to see that the machinery is set up under the Act, and to set out the industrial conditions which shall prevail in all trades and callings. If the hon. member for Enoggera will read fully the clauses that he proposes to amend, he will recognise that very wide and definite power is given to lay down the conditions governing apprenticeship. They have to be read in conjunction with clause 2 of this Bill and with section 4 of the principal Act—a very long section which deals with this very important matter. If he deals with these matters in the way I suggest, he will find that we have ample power to do everything that is necessary with regard to the training of skilled workers in Queensland.

I have been considering this question for some time, and I have realised that there is a scarcity of skilled men in certain trades and callings. It has been argued by some people that this is due to the industrial laws of Queensland and is peculiar only to this State. That is incorrect. I do not believe that any employer at the present time has his full quota of apprentices. As a matter of fact, I know that the Apprenticeship Committee have notified by letter employers who have good facilities for training boys in certain trades that, if they are agreeable, they may employ more even than the quota set down. Therefore there is nothing wrong with the law at present in operation. Scarcity of skilled men is not peculiar to Queensland. It is a problem that in some shape or form confronts every State in the Commonwealth, and confronts the various States of America, and various British Dominions at the present time. It is due very largely, in my opinion, to the fact that there have not been the inducements for boys to learn trades in the past that should have existed, and it is due to a certain extent to lack of forethought and con-

sideration on the part of parents themselves. We know that, when a youth leaves school, in certain occupations he can receive wages higher than those an apprentice can get. The result is that, with the desire to get that higher rate of wages, the boy is sent to that particular calling, and so is not provided with a skilled trade for his future benefit. Such a state of affairs is due in many cases to the economic circumstances of the parents. It must be realised that a parent who has a large family and is only getting the basic wage is forced by his economic situation to allow his children to go to work at the most remunerative rate that they can get, thus increasing the family exchequer to the greatest extent.

Again, there is a tendency on the part of a youth not to submit to the discipline which a lengthy course of apprenticeship involves. In fact, there are a whole set of difficult questions surrounding this problem. There is also the problem of employers who do not feel inclined to sign indentures to apprentice a boy for a definite period. Employers, where they can, employ boys and pay them off during any slackness of trade. They avoid employing their quota of apprentices, as they would be compelled under the indentures to retain them for five years at the rates laid down in awards. I consider that we should give power in awards to lay down the minimum number of apprentices that an employer must have.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Compelling the employers to have apprentices?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Yes. It is right that every employer should train his quota of the future generation of skilled artisans.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Do you think they will be properly trained if employers are compelled to take apprentices?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Yes. We should lay down a minimum number of apprentices. That should be put into operation where employers have not employed their quota of apprentices. We should also make the conditions elastic enough to enable an apprentice to be transferred from one employer to another if there is not sufficient work to enable that boy to continue with his first employer. I do not think that any employer should be compelled to keep a boy when he has not the work necessary to enable the boy to be effectively and properly trained. Industries in the future will require a certain number of skilled artisans, and I think it eminently sound that the training of that number of artisans should be a charge on the industry concerned. I have here a very interesting report published by the Victorian Apprenticeship Conference, which was held in 1922. The hon. member for Enoggera referred to an Apprenticeship Act which he said is in existence in Victoria. There is no such Act in existence in Victoria at the present time. In Victoria, wages boards under their Industrial Act have a right to lay down the number of apprentices to journey-men in any given trade or calling. That is a very ineffective and poor way of dealing with the problem. However, this conference investigated the whole problem. These were the members—D. Averb, Esq., M.Sc., Chairman; Hon. J. Lemmon, M.L.A.; G. McKay, Esq., J.P.; R. A.

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Prior, Esq.; J. Martyn, Esq.; E. J. Holloway, Esq.; J.P.; Councillor A. Dobson, J.P.; C. A. Hoadley, Esq., M. Sc., B.M.E.; W. H. Middleton, Esq.; F. Tait, Esq., C.M.G., I.S.O., M.A.; D. Clark, Esq., M.M.E., B.C.E.; H. Murphy, Esq., P.M. Those were the men who inquired into this matter. Mr. Lennon is a member of the Labour party in the Victorian Parliament; Mr. E. J. Holloway is the Secretary of the Trades Hall Council; and Councillor A. Dobson, I understand, is also a representative of that body. The Department of Labour and the Department of Public Instruction were represented, as were the Chamber of Manufactures and the Employers' Federation. They went into this problem very fully and made certain recommendations, which, according to the Governor's Speech, the Government of the day intend to embody later on in an Act. That Bill has not yet been introduced into the Victorian Parliament, so it cannot be said whether it embodies fully or not the recommendations made by this conference. The conference made certain important recommendations. It recommended a system of technical and vocational training to be carried on in conjunction with the training in the workshops on the job. It also proposed that there should be progress examinations for the boys attending the technical schools, so that each year, when a boy achieves a certain standard of efficiency in his trade, he may be given a higher rate of remuneration, according to the standard of efficiency that is attained. The report of the conference states that that would provide an incentive which would induce boys to attend these technical classes and take more interest in their work than has been the case in the past. We are not in the position to lay down any hard-and-fast rules that shall govern apprenticeship in Queensland at the present time, because a whole lot of interests have to be considered, and a whole lot of questions have to be dealt with. I consider we should have power to make regulations which would govern any conditions that might arise from time to time without the necessity of having to apply to Parliament for increased power. It is my intention to draft regulations under this Bill, when it becomes an Act, and I desire the co-operation of everyone interested in the problem. A conference was held recently—convened, I understand, by the Chief Justice, the President of the Arbitration Court—which made certain recommendations, and those recommendations will receive full consideration. It may be decided later on to appoint another conference representative of all the interests concerned to go further into this question and make recommendations to the Minister. I am not prepared to say here that I can provide a cure for all the difficulties or for all the ills which are bound up in the problem at the present time, but I believe the views of those engaged in the various industries that call for skilled tradesmen should be given full consideration, and public interests should also be kept in mind in any final regulations that may be drafted. The employers may look at it from the point of view of the employers in the industry; the employees' union may look at it from the point of view of their union; and each of those associations has the right to full consideration of their views. But, in addition to that, the public interests—that

is, the future of Queensland—must be paramount to all interests in any final scheme that may be laid down. I have said enough to indicate to the Committee what I have in mind in regard to the matter. Any representations that may be made by any hon. member in connection with the matter will receive full consideration. The amendment proposed by the hon. member for Enoggera is not germane to the purposes of this Bill. It should be moved in connection with an Education Bill, and the power he asks us to take is already embodied both in the principal Act and in the clauses of this Bill, therefore I do not propose to accept the amendment.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): The speech we have heard from the Secretary for Public Works just now is a commendable one, and, if he carries out the ideas which he has suggested, he will get somewhere near success. But I am not of the opinion that he is quite correct in saying this amendment is outside the ambit of this Bill. As a matter of fact, the Bill distinctly states the court shall have power to—

“Prescribe the matters to be taught to apprentices and the methods, times, and conditions of instructing apprentices, and the examinations, if any, which shall be passed by apprentices.”

Even in that respect we are linking up with an Education Bill, and, to a certain extent, this amendment comes within the ambit of an Education Bill. I want particularly to stress the point raised by the hon. member for Enoggera. The hon. member is to be commended for raising the point at the present time in view of the difficulties which confront the children of poor parents in the community. The State is yet young, and we are now, we hope, opening the way to great industrial progress, and those men who have missed their chance by force of circumstances over which they have no control should have an opportunity to progress. The hon. member for Enoggera referred to the men who enlisted and went abroad and thereby missed the opportunity which had presented itself to them to go on learning a trade and so fit themselves to take their place in the industrial world on their return. I know of a case where a young man who, by force of circumstances, had to take the first employment that was offering, and, although he did not consider that the work was congenial, he went on earning his money and at the same time devoted himself to the study of other matters. That young man put in many hours of his spare time in the morning and many hours at night studying along lines for which he was most fitted. If it had not been for the persistence and perseverance of that young man he would never have got out of the “ruck.” At the present time he holds a very responsible position and is doing well. We know very well that force of circumstances, and, as the Minister said, lack of foresight, frequently interfere with the intentions of parents. Many parents would like to put their boys to the occupation for which they are most suited, but the opportunity is not offering, and consequently, in view of their economic circumstances, the boys have to take the first thing offering. That is why I am appealing to the hon. gentleman to see if the amendment, or something which will carry out the intentions of the hon. member for Enoggera, cannot be inserted in the Bill. This is the opportunity.

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If we wait for some years, our lads will not have the opportunity they have at the present time. We are hoping that, with the development of the State, industries will spring up in connection with which more men will be required, and that our young men will be able to take up the work. If we delay, we shall probably find that there will be an inrush of people from other parts of the world, who are only too anxious to take the work.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The position in Canada is such that not more than 4 per cent. of the skilled artisans there are trained in Canada. It is a very serious position.

Mr. FRY: That may be so, but Canada has on its border the United States, which can supply all its wants. We are further away from the old world than Canada, and our aim should be to build up the Australian character, and give our own men the chance to get the work.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That is my contention, and I merely mention Canada to show what a serious problem it is there.

Mr. FRY: We are not to be guided in this matter by Canada or any of the countries of old world. We are much further away from the old world, and have, consequently, to a great extent, to map out our own destiny. If the Minister would further consider the matter, he would probably be able to carry out the idea of the hon. member for Enoggera. This is not a question of party tactics; we should all co-operate with the Minister to bring about the best solution of this question which confronts the State, and open the door to the man who, by force of circumstances, has not been able to get into the occupation for which he is most suited. There are cases of men who would probably make excellent ironworkers; but, by force of circumstances, they have had to take up bootmaking. If there were some means by which we could allow them to get into the avenue for which they are most suited, they would have a chance of developing themselves along the right lines. All that is asked by the amendment is that some provision shall be made, so that men who have not been able to select an occupation will be given an opportunity of going into a trade for which they are suited. The Minister has given particulars with regard to apprentices taken into the Railway Department. From 1912 to 1925 we find that year by year the apprentices have fluctuated. In 1912, there were seventy-five apprentices taken in the Railway Department, while in 1922 there was only one apprentice. That bears out my statement—that if our industries and our railways had been prosperous, and development had taken place requiring more men, apprentices would have been taken on. This question of apprentices not only applies to commercial houses but also to the Government, who are equally responsible with others. It is a general problem which must be faced by the State. The Bill is an educational measure to a certain extent, and I hope that the Minister will accept the amendment.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: We have now all the powers which are necessary to do everything that is required. I propose to move another amendment in clause 28 with regard to apprentices.

Mr. FRY: Do you agree that provision should be made for apprentices?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: We have full power under the existing law, plus this clause, to do everything necessary in regard to apprentices.

Mr. FRY: Are you going to move an amendment which will give an opportunity to these men who have not previously had a chance?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: There is nothing to exclude them now.

Mr. FRY: Is there any provision now which will admit them? The whole trouble is that there is too much ambiguity in regard to these matters.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: What have you really got in your mind?

Mr. FRY: What I want is what the hon. member for Enoggera asks for—to have it clearly defined that these men will have an opportunity, under this Bill, of going in for a trade, and that there will be nothing to hinder them from doing so.

Mr. GLEDSON (*Ipswich*): I have examined the amendment to see if there is any business behind it. It seems to me to have been moved for the purpose of allowing the hon. member for Enoggera and the hon. member for Kurilpa to air their knowledge, or want of knowledge, of the apprenticeship question and our Technical College system. As the Minister stated, for all that hon. members opposite are asking for in the amendment there is already provision on our statute-book and under our educational system. Hundreds of men are to-day attending the technical colleges and improving their efficiency and status in connection with the trades and industries they are working in. The hon. member for Kurilpa stated that a man might have an idea of becoming a good ironworker, although he is a bootmaker. The amendment does not provide for anything of that kind. How could a bootmaker go and receive training in bootmaking so as to make him a good ironworker?

Mr. FRY: I did not say that. You are twisting, as you always do. What I said was that a man could not previously, by force of circumstances, enter into the profession or trade for which he was most suited, and I asked that he should have an opportunity of going into the trade or calling for which he is most fitted.

Mr. GLEDSON: Hon. members opposite have tried to cloud the issue right along the line, and I want to point out that we have already an educational system dealing with trades, and that all we need is that hon. members opposite should inform themselves

[5 p.m.] of the laws we are working under so that they will be able to tell their electors just where we stand. If they will take the opportunity to go into the next building to this, they will see the very thing they are asking for carried on from day to day and night to night. Through the good offices of Mr. H. G. Noble, a colliery proprietor in Queensland, who provided £5,000 to be invested in war bonds, scholarships are provided at the Ipswich Technical College for about thirteen men

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engaged in the mining industry, in order that they may make themselves efficient.

Mr. EDWARDS: He is one of the men you are always hounding down.

Mr. GLEDSON: I anticipated the silly interjection of the hon. member for Nanango. I have to fight Mr. Noble and every colliery proprietor in Queensland and Australia at times in order to get good conditions for my men, but I think everybody will admit that I do not hound them down. I give credit to everyone for the good he does, and I give credit to Mr. Noble for the good he is doing there. Part of the interest of that money has enabled us to build up in the Ipswich Technical College a library of scientific and technical mining books second to none in any part of the world. This has been going on for the past five years to my knowledge, and the same thing applies to carpentering, plumbing, and other trades. We are already providing the opportunities to do what the hon. members opposite wish. I am not going to take advantage of the amendment to deal with the question of apprenticeship generally, but I wish to say, in conclusion, that the amendment is utterly useless and unnecessary.

Mr. F. A. COOPER (*Bremer*): I recognise, as the Minister has pointed out, that the amendment is unnecessary and useless for its purpose, but I do hope that what has happened in the matter of certain opticians who endeavoured to get registration under the Opticians Act will not happen to apprentices in other trades or callings. The hon. member for Kurilpa backed up the hon. member for Enoggera in making a plea for the admission of men to trades who are skilled, but who have served no apprenticeship, but the very society of which the hon. member for Kurilpa was president, and may now still be president, absolutely refused to register men who are particularly skilled and have been in the trade for many years simply because they did not pass some particular examination.

Mr. FRY: I say it is not true. I will reply to you when you sit down.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: I hope the same thing will not happen in connection with these apprentices which happened to those opticians. I have in my mind men in Ipswich who are competent, but who, because they have not passed a University examination or an examination set by the opticians of a higher standard than other examinations, have not been admitted to practise. I trust that our action will be much more lenient than that which was meted out to those men.

Mr. FRY (*Kurilpa*): The hon. member has made a misleading statement, wilfully or unwittingly. It is only partly true. The hon. member himself wears glasses. Will he or any other hon. member in this Chamber wear glasses prescribed by those men who are not admitted to practise? That is the point. If the hon. member answers that question, he answers his own statement. I have the very best wishes for the men to whom he refers, and the hon. member knows it, because I have spoken to him in the lobby about them. He knows I have the highest respect for them, and what happened occurred long before I had anything to do with the legislation he refers to. If the hon. member does not know that, the hon. mem-

ber is not educated to the extent to which a man should be educated before he speaks in this House. I have two friends to-day, one of whom was in the lower ranks as a mechanic and who I thought should have an opportunity to enter the higher grades of the profession. I paid him £5 10s. a week as an apprentice and encouraged him to rise, and to-day he ranks among the best men in the State. I took into my charge another man who had lost his opportunity, and he has developed in such a way that some day, if he goes along at the rate at which he is travelling now, he, too, will rank amongst the foremost men in the profession in the State. I hope that he will develop in such a way that, when he leaves me, he will be prosperous in his profession. But the men whom the hon. member for Bremer was talking about were turned down as inefficient by a board appointed by the Government.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: No.

Mr. FRY: Yes, and by the examiners appointed by the Government. There is no analogy between the two cases. I am only asking in this Chamber for what I hope will be applied all round. I am a poor man's son—as a matter of fact, so far as I know, not one of us here is the son of wealthy parents—and I only hope that everybody will have the opportunity through legislation to qualify for the calling for which he is most fitted. It is not becoming in a member of this Chamber to try to draw a red herring across the track. I have the greatest sympathy with the cases to which the hon. member has referred—as a matter of fact, the men he mentioned are amongst my friends—but that does not give me liberty to go up in this Chamber and make a point of it. If the hon. member had had that little bit of restraint which he ought to possess, he would not have referred to it nor tried to make out that I am responsible for their not securing registration. I am not responsible in any way whatsoever. The men who are responsible are themselves and the examiners appointed by the Government. Those gentlemen had not the necessary knowledge or efficiency to satisfy the Government examiners. I still hold that those who have got into an unsuitable avenue of employment should be allowed the opportunity of being lifted out. By doing that we would be practising the brotherhood of man in real truth, and that is what I am aiming at. I hope the hon. member for Bremer will take what I say at its full value, and give me credit for being sincere. I had no intention of referring to any specific case, but since the matter has been raised, I have felt in duty bound to defend the present position. I am not a member of the Board of Optical Registration. I resigned because I considered that certain things which took place were political. I recommended to the board that someone should be appointed who would properly represent the opinions of the Government, and I suggested that Mr. McPhail should take my place. I retired, and Mr. McPhail is now in the position which I once occupied. The hon. member for Bremer has gained nothing by his short sarcastic speech.

Mr. F. A. COOPER (*Bremer*): I would like to stress the point made by the hon. member for Ipswich that provision should be made to widen the apprenticeship scheme so that under certain circumstances many men who are efficient can come in. The hon. member for Kurilpa has taken my remarks wrongly. I hope that we do not fall into the same error

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as the Board of Optical Registration fell into—by widening their powers to make it more difficult for boys to become tradesmen in that calling.

Mr. FRY: We are widening the provisions in the interests of the boys.

Mr. F. A. COOPER: The Board of Optical Registration some time ago were content with a sixth class standard of examination, but they raised that examination to the Junior University standard or something higher, and they demanded from the people in the trade, who were in the trade when this Act came into operation and who had not passed the examination, a higher standard of skill than that set to the other people who fortunately got into the opticians' select circle prior to the passage of that Act. I hope we will not fall into the same error regarding apprentices in other trades. The opticians have set us a very bad example. So far as the hon. member for Kurilpa is concerned, I might refer him to the passage of Scripture which sets out that in removing the mote from your neighbour's eye you should be sure that there is no beam in your own eye.

Amendment (*Mr. Kerr*) put and negatived.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I beg to move the insertion after the word "apprentices," on line 44, of the words "or improvers." It is necessary in a proper scheme of apprentices to have power to deal with the question of improvers and young workers generally.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): I do not propose to advance any argument against the amendment. I would ask the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill whether he considers that the principal Act, as amended, will be sufficiently embracing to permit of the transfer of apprentices from one employer to another?

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I am sure that there is that power. I made sure of that when the Bill was being drafted.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 28, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 29—"Validation of existing awards, etc."—put and passed.

Clause 30—"Existing awards"—put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with amendments.

The third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. Kirwan, Brisbane, in the chair.*)

HON. F. T. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*): I beg to move—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Local Authorities Acts, 1902-1922, in certain particulars, and to repeal the Undue Subdivision of Land Prevention Act of 1885, and for other consequential purposes."

This is really a Committee Bill. Most of the provisions have been recommended from time

to time by the Local Authorities' Conferences. There is provision that there shall be no necessity for the election of mayor or chairman in the single divisions, and that the person recording the highest number of votes at the local authority elections shall be declared elected as mayor or chairman of the division. There are also a number of provisions with regard to town planning. Most of them have been submitted from time to time by the Local Authorities' Conferences. Provision is also made to allow of extraordinary vacancies—which have caused a good deal of inconvenience from time to time through the holding of special elections—being filled by the local authorities themselves. The expense incurred on such occasions will thus be saved. The Local Authorities Act requires rolls to be compiled, but under the amending Bill this will not be necessary in cases where the electoral rolls can be utilised. This will save a good deal of expense. There is also an amendment regarding reference to the Land Court for valuations of resumptions. That is an important provision. I think the town planning provisions of the Bill will be welcomed by the Opposition, because they nearly all emanate from Local Authorities' Conferences. The basis of valuation is also mentioned in the Bill. The Bill in detail is a matter for the Committee stage.

Mr. TAYLOR: Do I understand from the Minister that, when a vacancy occurs in a local authority, the members of that particular authority will fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of the mayor, chairman, or councillor?

HON. F. T. BRENNAN: Yes.

Mr. MOORE (*Lubigny*): I do not think that the Minister gave us a great deal of information as to what this amending Bill is likely to contain.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: He is nervous.

THE PREMIER: He will give that on the second reading.

Mr. MOORE: It will be too late then. I want to get the information at this stage as to what is likely to be contained in this Bill. The Minister is bringing in a Bill to amend the Local Authorities Act "in certain particulars," but he only stressed two minor matters, two important matters, and one medium alteration. One wonders if that is going to be the extent of the amendment of the Act. There has been such a large number of amendments suggested to the Act we are working under to the various Ministers in the last six or seven years by Local Authorities' Conferences that I would not hesitate to move the deletion of the words "in certain particulars" so as to be able to move those amendments which have been suggested by the people who are now working under this Act. If the Minister will give the information I have sought, it might enable me to move in the direction of incorporating some of these amendments. Under the present Act, we have a large number of services thrust upon us which we have to carry out the best way we can.

HON. F. T. BRENNAN: You sit down, and I will give them to you on the first reading.

Mr. MOORE: The difficulty is that it may be too late on the first reading. It is of no use discovering afterwards that there are important amendments which we would like to get in to permit the local authorities

Mr. Moore.]

to carry out their work effectively. The only opportunity we have of extending the scope of the Act is at the present time I must admit, though, that the ruling we obtained last night from the Temporary Chairman of Committees as to amendments to an Act which may be covered by the words "in certain particulars" in the order of leave, gives very wide powers. I think the Minister will be well advised if he will give us a little more information as to what he exactly intends to do.

HON. F. T. BRENNAN: In what respect?

MR. MOORE: As to whether the five or six matters the hon. gentleman specified are the only directions in which the Act is going to be amended. I understand that an amendment of the Local Authorities Act has been in preparation for five years. I think it was when the present Secretary for Public Instruction was Home Secretary that a commencement was made in the matter. It was to be a comprehensive measure, embracing, as far as possible, all the views put forward by the Local Authorities' Conferences so as to render the efficient working of the Act possible. In the last Parliament we had several amendments; now we have two or three slight amendments brought in, and I suppose next year we shall have another Amending Bill. I would like to see a consolidated measure introduced so that we may know where we stand.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: You would stonewall it.

MR. MOORE: It is not a question of a stonewall. The local authorities who have to work under the Act want to carry out their duties as efficiently as possible. If this opportunity goes, there will be no other under which we can widen the scope of the Act.

HON. F. T. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*): Most of these amendments are being made at the request of Local Authorities' Conferences from time to time. There is the question of the eradication of the prickly-pear.

MR. TAYLOR: Are there any other amendments besides those you referred to?

HON. F. T. BRENNAN: I cannot make a detailed reference to all the amendments, but practically every amendment is at the request of some Local Authority Conference. The hon. member for Aubigny should accept my statement and try to get the amendments he wishes in Committee.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Hymnnum*): To me the difficulty lies in the fact that there has not been a Bill introduced so far this session which has not contained matters which were not indicated when the Bill was initiated in Committee. What we want this afternoon is an assurance from the Minister that we are not going to have matters sprung on us as was done in previous Bills. If the amendments are what have been recommended by Local Authorities' Conferences, then the Minister will do very well. We have been face to face, though, with amendments that have been introduced but which have not been known to members of the Committee, or even to members of the Government party, until they were moved.

HON. F. T. BRENNAN: I give my assurance that there is nothing in this Bill which is not altogether known to the hon. members opposite.

[*Mr. Moore.*

The PREMIER: There is nothing *ex parte* in it.

HON. F. T. BRENNAN: No.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

FIRST READING.

HON. F. T. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*) presented the Bill, and moved—

"That the Bill be now read a first time."

Question put and passed.

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

FIRE BRIGADES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. Kirwan, Brisbane, in the chair.*)

HON. F. T. BRENNAN (*Toowoomba*): I beg to move—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Fire Brigades Act of 1920 in certain particulars."

Some inconvenience has occurred from time to time through fire brigades being unable to exceed the statutory limit of their borrowing power, and the Bill will improve the position in that respect. There is also a slight amendment giving power for the fire brigades to make certain charges for work done.

HON. W. H. BARNES: At whose suggestion is the latter amendment inserted?

HON. F. T. BRENNAN: The ratepayers of various towns.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

[5.30 p.m.]

FIRST READING.

HON. F. T. BRENNAN presented the Bill, and moved—

"That the Bill be now read a first time."

Question put and passed.

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

GOVERNMENT LOANS REDEMPTION AND CONVERSION BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. Kirwan, Brisbane, in the chair.*)

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): I beg to move—

"That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to authorise the redemption and conversion of Government loans and the issue and creation of Government stock or inscribed stock for that purpose, and for other incidental purposes."

On the second reading I will take the opportunity of more fully explaining the intention

of the Government with regard to the loans falling due next year and the year following. This Bill is necessary to enable us to deal with those loans.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): I would like a little more information from the Treasurer at this stage with regard to the proposal. We are quite in the dark as to what is proposed to be done.

The TREASURER: The Bill is simply to give authority to the Government to convert the loans that are falling due next year and the following year. I will deal more fully at the second reading with the arrangements that will be made regarding those particular loans.

Mr. TAYLOR: Can you not give any more information than that?

The TREASURER: There is no difference of opinion about the principle of the Bill.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Wynnum*): A most vital measure has been introduced into this Chamber. Every hon. member knows that next year there is maturing a large sum of money, and in the following year another large amount, and I think it is right that the Treasurer should furnish us with some particulars. He need not go into the matter fully, but surely, as a matter of courtesy, we are entitled to a little more information.

The TREASURER: You mean particularly as regards the Bill itself?

HON. W. H. BARNES: Some information as to what is proposed.

The TREASURER: That will come more properly at a later stage. We can discuss it more properly on the second reading.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The Treasurer surely realises that not only the Committee but the people outside want to know what is going to be done in this important matter. He must know that the practice heretofore has been for the Treasurer to take the Committee into his confidence.

The TREASURER: Not at the introductory Committee stage of the Bill?

HON. W. H. BARNES: Certainly. We have the right to know what is going to be the procedure in connection with this important question. I do not say that the Treasurer should make a second reading speech, but there are certain vital points that should be touched upon. Is he going to bring in any legislation that will make the renewal of loans that were made by certain people compulsory?

The TREASURER: The Bill has no such intention.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The Treasurer should take us into his confidence at the present stage.

The TREASURER: I shall be very pleased to give the hon. member what information I have in my possession relating to the intentions of the Government under the Bill; but it seems to me that this is not the proper stage at which to enlighten the House with regard to those intentions respecting the loans that are falling due in 1924 and 1925. I will do so at a later stage, and an opportunity will be given to the House then to fully discuss the subject in detail. It is unwise at this juncture to have a discussion concerning the particular conversions I refer to. I agree that the subject is an important one, but I do not think the

Bill will be regarded as controversial. Whatever Government might be in power, it would have to make arrangements for the conversion of the loans that are falling due within the next two years. The Bill, it will be admitted, is absolutely necessary.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

FIRST READING.

The TREASURER presented the Bill, and moved—

“That the Bill be now read a first time.”

Question put and passed.

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

LOCAL BODIES LOANS GUARANTEE BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. Kirwan, Brisbane, in the chair.*)

The TREASURER (Hon. E. G. Theodore, *Chillagoe*): I beg to move—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to authorise the Treasurer on behalf of the Government to guarantee the repayment of moneys borrowed by local bodies from banks or other financial institutions, and for other consequential purposes.”

The necessity for this Bill has arisen because the Commonwealth Bank has asked that legislative authority be secured for the guarantee which the Government gives from time to time to the bank in respect of loans made by the bank to local bodies. There is no statutory authority, but the bank has been making loans to local bodies when authorised by the Government. Some of the local authorities can make satisfactory arrangements with the Commonwealth Bank to borrow, and it is convenient at times for the Government to agree to such propositions.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Are they going further to relieve the Government from financial responsibility?

The TREASURER: They have in the past, and I think it is a relief that ought to be welcomed by the Committee. Under the Savings Bank Act the Commonwealth Bank has practically undertaken to utilise 30 per cent. over and above the Savings Bank moneys coming to the State Government by way of advances to local authorities. That is a very happy arrangement. The local authorities get money at a reasonable rate, and are dealing with an institution which gives them very reasonable and rational terms, and there is no reason why we should discourage them.

Mr. TAYLOR: You agree to the 30 per cent. also?

The TREASURER: In each case the loan has to be approved by the Government, and we give a guarantee.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed.

The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

Hon. E. G. Theodore.]

FIRST READING.

The TREASURER presented the Bill, and moved—

“That the Bill be now read a first time.”

Question put and passed

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

LIQUOR ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. Stopford, *Mount Morgan*): In moving the second reading of this Bill, I desire to be as brief as possible, as I believe hon. members always appreciate speeches of the briefest possible nature. The Bill, as I explained at the introductory stages, is but a short one, but I still think that the House and the public outside regard it as a very important one. It is a measure which we may regard as purely a measure of reform. I recognise that no Minister, no matter what his political opinions may be, can ever hope to introduce into this House a perfect Liquor Bill. I recognise that the division of opinion on the great question of liquor reform is greater than one would at first imagine. It is only when you get the opportunity of meeting people who hold different opinions upon this question that you realise how really difficult the problem is. On the one hand you have people who object to any continuance of the trade, and whose remedy is to abolish it. They do not believe that any reform can be of lasting benefit, and they stake everything on the efforts that they make to remove what they honestly believe to be an evil. On the other hand you have those who believe that no evil exists at all, and that any attempt at curtailment of what they are pleased to term the privileges of the British subject is an encroachment on the rights of the people. There is another class of people who believe that no interference should take place at all, and who are actuated by personal and financial considerations. In introducing this Bill I desire to say that I have not considered any particular section of the people, but have endeavoured to recognise what is right and proper from the standpoint of the majority as I view it.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: You will find it hard to make some of us believe that.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. gentleman would find it hard to believe anything that we advocated from this side, but I recognise that he is so out of touch with the majority of the people as to be sitting in the cold shades of opposition. What I desire to say in this respect is that the Government introduced the Bill purely as a reform measure. I think it will be recognised that in different parts of Australia during the war period there was a demand for shorter hours. That demand has been responded to in different States—

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Do you remember us asking for that?

The HOME SECRETARY: But whether it has accomplished what those who demanded it anticipated is another matter. The hon. member asks, if I remember them demanding it. I remember many demands that he and others have made which have not been

supported by sincerity. I realise that in this State no organised sincere demand was ever made for early closing. Early closing was used as a political weapon, but was not supported by any organised attempt, for the reason that the true advocates of temperance reform regarded early closing in Queensland as somewhat unnecessary, because they had the most stringent Act in the form of our Liquor Act that existed in Australia.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: I am sure that you are making a statement which the people you are referring to would not endorse.

The HOME SECRETARY: I am speaking of those whom I have had the privilege to meet—

Hon. W. H. BARNES: Then you have met very few.

The HOME SECRETARY: And I say that no real definite organised demand was made in this State. Let us see what demands were made. There was a raid made in this Chamber by some ladies, who threw down cards from the gallery demanding 6 o'clock closing. We had a request from the Upper House asking for 6 o'clock closing, supported in that Chamber by temperance reformers, who forced the Government to which the hon. member for Wynnum belonged to hold back the Liquor Bill which was in charge of the hon. member for Albert, because they demanded the insertion of certain provisions in the Bill which the Government were not prepared to insert.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: You are not speaking the facts.

The HOME SECRETARY: I am speaking from the records of “Hansard,” which show that the Hon. T. J. O’Shea, when speaking in that Chamber, said that the Government to which the hon. member for Wynnum and the hon. member for Albert belonged had entered into a contract, and that certain provisions of the Bill were a breach of that contract.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: I say emphatically that that is not correct.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: A contract with whom?

The HOME SECRETARY: The liquor trade. (Opposition laughter.)

Hon. W. H. BARNES: You have been contracting with them—not us.

The HOME SECRETARY: We are submitting a Bill to-night, which is purely a measure of reform—

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: As a result of that contract.

The HOME SECRETARY: And we are content to leave the decision on the question of continuance or prohibition to the people, who will record their vote in October next.

Mr. EDWARDS: Once and for all,

Hon. W. H. BARNES: But you are not going to trust them afterwards.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You never gave them an opportunity.

The HOME SECRETARY: I will deal with that aspect of the question when I come to it. To my mind, the most important provision in this measure, and one in regard to which I understand the leader of the Opposition has foreshadowed an amendment, is the proposed reduction of the existing hours from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. to 8 a.m.

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to 8 p.m. In arriving at the hours set forth in this measure, I have not done so without having first considered the matter thoroughly.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Did you arrive at the hours, or did someone else arrive at them for you? (Opposition laughter.)

The HOME SECRETARY: The hours were arrived at by the united intelligence of this party.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: By someone outside.

The HOME SECRETARY: An hon. member occupying a seat on the front Opposition bench should support his statements with stronger arguments than the hon. member uses.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I am simply using the Premier's own words in 1911.

The HOME SECRETARY: We are considering a definite proposal for liquor reform, and the leader of the Opposition will use the power which his position gives him to move an amendment expressing the will of the people represented by the opposite side of the House so far as those with whom he is associated are concerned. Before the interruption took place I was saying that I, or the Government—I speak for the Government in this matter—did not arrive at these hours without deep consideration. Suggestions with regard to hours were made to me as Minister in charge of this measure covering nearly the whole twenty-four hours. There are many people who would like to go back to the hours which prevailed before the passage of the 1885 Act. Let me say here, in support of my contention, that this is the first time that the hours of liquor trading have been adjusted since the Act was passed in 1885. Prior to that the hours were from 4 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Whose fault is that?

The HOME SECRETARY: The fault of the Government of the day.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: Yes, your Government.

The HOME SECRETARY: This Government gave to the people of Queensland the power to give expression to their will on the whole question of whether the liquor traffic should disappear or whether it should continue. That was the greatest thing ever done in the history of this State for the temperance people. It was suggested to me by some people that from 9 to 9 would be the most favourable hours, and by others from 8 to 8, and from my own electorate I received a general suggestion for the continuance of the hours till 1 o'clock in the morning, so that the men who came off the late shift might get a drink. (Laughter.)

Mr. CORSER: What did the Emu Park Convention suggest.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hours that we have fixed upon appear to me to be the hours which will assist those who are charged with the administration of this measure to get the best results from it. Hon. members opposite no doubt base their opinion in favour of the hours from 8 to 6 on the experience of other States, but I want hon. members to realise that this is the only State which has liquor laws stringent enough to enforce early closing. In New South Wales and Victoria the definitions of "lodger" and "bonâ fide traveller" are so broad that almost any person who has any standing at

all can obtain in the lounge bars of hotels as much liquor as he can reasonably consume. (Opposition laughter.)

I think it will be agreed that the most dangerous hours in which the sale of liquor can take place are the early hours of morning. Experience has shown that many a man

who may have partaken too freely [7 p.m.] the night before goes to a hotel early in the morning with the intention of having one drink, but finishes up by missing that day's work.

Mr. MORGAN: That is a good argument for prohibition.

The HOME SECRETARY: The other dangerous hours—the extreme hours of what I might term useless drinking—are late at night. So that in selecting the hours from 8 o'clock in the morning till 8 o'clock at night, I believe we shall avoid many of the evils which I witnessed in New South Wales when 6 o'clock closing came into force. It practically debarred a large section of the workers who had performed a hard day's work from getting the stimulant they felt they required—leaving out of consideration our beliefs as to whether drink is good or evil. Many other people in the community were able to leave their offices at half-past 4 and have what they deemed to be their right, but a large section of the workers were deprived of it.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: Are not the workers deprived of many other things which are very much more necessary?

The HOME SECRETARY: That is so; but the hon. member, though a temperance advocate, had an opportunity for years and years to bring about 6 o'clock closing, and yet he sat silent in the Administration which he supported. To-day, when we come forward with something of a practical nature, he interjects as he has done. But the strongest reason, I believe, why the hours from 8 to 8 are reasonable is this: Any Act of Parliament is no more than printed paper unless more good than evil results from its administration, and I claim that one of the most dangerous things that Parliament can do is to interfere with what an individual shall eat or drink. We may pass any legislation to do that, but, unless its administration has the moral support of a large section of the community, we shall accomplish nothing. The Government believe that in selecting the hours fixed in this Bill they will have behind them the major portion of the community, though many of them perhaps would like prohibition, but will realise that it is at least a step in the direction of a reform and that, if successful, it may be improved upon till they accomplish their objective. We, as a Government, are not proposing the measure for any other reason than that we believe that we, who will be called upon to administer it, shall be able to do so in a way that will make it the success we desire it to be. That is why we have selected the hours that we believe will bring to our aid the moral support of the community. We are going further than that. We are taking the opportunity to rectify a wrong that has existed, so far as the liquor traffic is concerned, in relation to the treatment meted out to the various clubs throughout Queensland. We have determined that we will not pass an Act of Parliament which will grant favourable treatment to what might be termed a popular club. We

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will strike at the evil, recognising that by striking at it through the hotel people alone is only half accomplishing our work.

Mr. MAXWELL: What are you going to do with the parliamentary bar?

The HOME SECRETARY: If the hon. gentleman will apply his intelligence to the question, he will realise that this House is master of the parliamentary staff, and surely to God it does not require an Act of Parliament to control our own actions! This Bill is intended to rectify a wrong with regard to clubs that has existed since the Act was passed in 1912. There is a certain amount of history attached to that Act which makes very interesting reading. The hon. member for Albert, who was in charge of that measure, set out to accomplish what we are trying to accomplish to-day. He intended that the clubs should have no preferential treatment. When the members representing the popular will of the people in the Legislative Assembly passed that Act, the clubs and hotels were placed on an equal footing; but the efforts of the Legislative Assembly were nullified by the nominee Chamber, who were able to give preferential treatment, not to all clubs, but to certain clubs, and that provision was carried on the casting vote of the Chairman of Committees. This Bill, as it is drafted, contains a certain defect, and does not give effect to what I desired when I first started out. I intend, in Committee, to move an amendment rectifying that, and I sincerely hope that hon. members on both sides will assist me in giving that amendment an easy passage. Representations have been made to me on a very important matter—one that should be cleared up before the poll is taken in October. That important matter is the sale of sacramental wines if prohibition is brought about. I have given my promise—I think it will be agreed with by all sections of the House—that, when the Bill is in Committee, I will amend it by making provision that sacramental wine shall be at the disposal of whatever church desires it, even if prohibition is brought about as the result of the poll in October, or of any other vote that may be taken.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The church will be very popular then.

The HOME SECRETARY: I wish to say a few words on the question of licenses for billiard-rooms on hotel premises. The Bill proposes that hotel billiard-rooms shall be closed at 8 o'clock. I am asking the House to give me power, by regulation, to broaden that provision in country districts, where, I believe, a great hard-hip may be inflicted. I desire power under the regulations to enable me to extend the hours where billiard-rooms may be kept open, and if I do that, I can at least determine the construction of the billiard-room in its relation to the bar to see that our efforts in one direction are not nullified by our efforts in another.

There is another clause that I desire to touch upon, and that is the proviso under which we take power to regulate, as it were, certain labour that will be employed in and around the hotel. There is nothing new in the proposition. A measure introduced by the hon. member for Albert was amended in this Chamber, I think, on the motion of the present Premier, so that a provision similar to that which I have placed in this measure might be given effect to. Again, the efforts of the Legislative Assembly were

nullified by another Chamber, and on the measure being returned here it was dropped in 1911. It was re-introduced in 1912, and, in view of the opposition in another place, this proviso was not inserted in the measure. I have listened to and I have read the remarks of hon. members opposite and their supporters outside on the very grave question of the maintenance of our sugar industry. They have based their arguments on the fact that they are supporters of the "White Australia" policy.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: In any industry which is carried on under license of the Government we might well try and practise what we preach.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: If it is right to give effect to legislation such as we have done time after time in various Bills in this House, it is equally right that we should determine that coloured people, as far as possible, shall be removed from an industry where our women folk are asked to work side by side with them. I do not anticipate that the clause will cause any great contention from hon. members opposite.

Mr. KERR: You are not removing them from the industry?

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member for Enoggera should recognise that there are certain national problems that compel the expression of the idea embraced in the amendment. That has been debated several times previously in the House, but, if hon. members have any amendments to offer, we will discuss them at the Committee stage.

I now come to another very important provision, and that is the one under which the Government are repealing section 191, (a) of the present Liquor Act dealing with special polls on the question of nationalisation, prohibition, or continuance. There is no State in Australia where greater facilities have been given to test the opinions of the people on the question of prohibition than in Queensland.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Why are you repealing it?

The HOME SECRETARY: I will come to that in a moment. I desire first to trace the history of local option and prohibition polls in this State. The first of such provisions was contained in the 1885 Act. That provision provided that the question of prohibition could be determined in certain districts, but purely on a ratepayers' franchise. A petition of one-sixth of the total number of ratepayers could demand a poll. The fact that nothing resulted from that will be recognised when we consider the nature of the franchise then offered, when one individual, a property owner, who possibly was interested in the liquor trade, might have at least ten votes. That continued until 1912, when a measure was introduced by the then Government, which gave a form of local option and which determined that no new licenses could be granted by the licensing court. Up to that time the court had a right to grant licenses. In 1912 a very important amendment was made. The old Act placed the onus on the people who protested against new licenses of proving that the wish of the people was contrary to

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the granting of new licenses. In 1912 this was amended, and the onus was placed on the shoulders of those who desired new licenses to prove that the public desired new licenses, so placing the initiation of the petition on the right shoulders—the shoulders of the people desiring that the will of the people should be in any particular direction. That proposal was amended in 1912, and it was provided that after 1915—later on amended to read 1916—no new licenses could be obtained without first instituting a poll by a petition of one-tenth of the electors in the district in which the poll was to be taken. It was also provided that three resolutions might be submitted to the people—

“A” Resolution, making for a reduction of 25 per cent. in the existing licenses.

“B” Resolution—which could not be moved until “A” Resolution had been carried—provided for a further reduction of 25 per cent.

“C” Resolution, after “B” had been carried, provided for a still further reduction of 25 per cent., and it was provided that when “C” Resolution had been carried, a further referendum might take the question on “D” Resolution.

Perhaps it would be as well if I were to refer to some of the local option polls that have taken place in the State, because I desire hon. members clearly to understand what this question has cost the consolidated revenue of this State over a number of years.

“In 1913, ten polls were initiated; five were carried.

“In 1914, sixteen polls were initiated; eleven were carried.

“In 1915, sixteen polls initiated; ten were carried.

“In 1916, four polls initiated; two were carried.”

Under the new provision in 1917, Resolution “A” was put to the vote in fifty-five districts of the State, and was carried in four. Resolution “E,” which provides for an increase on the existing licenses, was put in two districts, and carried in two districts. In 1919, Resolution “A” was put in one district, and was not carried. Resolution “E,” providing for an increase, was put in eleven districts and carried in four.

In 1923 Resolution “E” was put in thirteen districts and carried in three districts. That shows the large number of polls that were taken under the early provisions of that measure. I did not have the cost of the various polls worked out, but, if hon. members consider what an ordinary election costs, and that we give the same facilities in regard to local option polls that we give at a general election, they will get some approximate idea of the cost of these polls. The Act that I refer to contained another important provision—that in 1925 a further referendum might be taken. That has always been recognised as an agreement between the then Government and the liquor trade on the question of time compensation instead of money compensation. Resolution “D” gave the right to initiate a poll on the question of total prohibition if any electoral district or the whole State had carried Resolution “A,” Resolution “B,” or Resolution “C.” Under section 170 of the Act, a poll may be taken in 1925 either in one district or in the whole State on either Resolution “D” or

Resolution “E,” provided a petition signed by 10 per cent. of the electors has been received. Another important feature entered into the liquor question of this State in connection with the hysterical attitude of other Governments on the question of early closing. I made a statement that the true temperance reformer in Queensland never did desire early closing during that period, because he stood definitely on his belief that he could appeal to the people and obtain a vote on the broader question covered by Resolution “D,” and on the representation of those people to this Government their request was granted by a special Act being granted to them—by an Act passed by my predecessor in 1920—whereby, honouring the promise of the previous Government, this Government determined to give them the opportunity of testing whether their judgment of public opinion was correct or not, and passed a provision that would carry them over the period that must elapse as laid down in the previous Act. The history of the last attempt is well known. What hon. members should realise is this: The Government must be concerned on questions of finance and public policy, and while they may be prepared to give a fair deal to any view that may be held by a large section of the community, they cannot allow the peaceful life of the community to be disturbed by too repeated appeals such as the present Act provides for.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: That is shockingly thin.

The HOME SECRETARY: I want the hon. member for Wynnum to realise that any criticism of the actions of this Government on liquor legislation or liquor administration cannot be truly effective unless he realises his own actions. He is a man with fixed opinions, yet he swallowed those opinions when he had power to give effect to them. The hon. member for Wynnum says that my argument is too thin, but I believe that, as I proceed, he will realise the force of what I am saying. I want the House to realise that the last appeal under this particular section cost the taxpayers of the State between £20,000 and £26,000.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: How much did it cost the prohibition people?

The HOME SECRETARY: It may have cost the prohibition people a large amount. I claim that it would be a disgrace to the prohibition people and the licensed victuallers if a question of this description, on a poll given freely by the Government, was not fought out on the soundest lines they could fight it, so that they might get a true reflex of the opinion of the people.

Mr. MORGAN: You do not trust the people any longer.

The HOME SECRETARY: These polls have gone on, and the Government have stood firm to the pledges they made, and although we are introducing this Bill to-night as a measure of reform, we are still adhering to what we gave the temperance people—the right again to obtain, without initiation and without cost, a further expression of opinion from the people.

The PREMIER: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: I ask whether any hon. member opposite will assert that the Government, who have tried repeatedly

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to provide for obtaining an expression of the will of the people on this question, should continue the same method of securing that expression, when at the same time that section of the community has the same right, under another provision of the Bill which will come into force, before they suffer any loss by the removal of the provision I have spoken of to-night.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Do you remember what you failed to do in connection with the Upper House?

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You fixed the present hours.

THE HOME SECRETARY: In order that the House may know the position with regard to this question, I will state the exact number of polls that can be taken under the existing law. I would then ask whether we should continue on those lines, or whether we, as a Government, should determine to do the fair thing, but not the foolish thing. Many hon. members know that in May last local option polls were available for those who liked to initiate them. It was realised that those local option polls had to be confined to Resolutions "A," "B," "E"; but in 1925 Resolution "D" will come into operation. Section 170 of the Act states that notwithstanding anything else in the Act, Resolution "D" may be submitted either in a district or a group of districts. In other words, although section 191A, dealing with the special poll which will be taken in October, will disappear, yet prohibition votes may be taken in 1925, either over the whole of the State or in portions of the State, by the initiation of a petition of 10 per cent. of the electors.

MR. ELPHINSTONE: Where is that provided for?

THE HOME SECRETARY: It is provided for in section 170. I will read the actual polls which we are bound to take if this Bill is not passed, showing that the power will remain even if what we propose in this measure is not given effect to. Under section 170 polls may be taken in 1925, following the three-year period of May polls, which will come into operation, as far as Resolution "D" is concerned. There may be a poll in 1926, a further one in 1928, a further one in 1929, a further one in 1931, a further one in 1932, a further one in 1934, and a further one in 1935, and so on. That

[7.30 p.m.] does not include the special poll which I am preparing to wipe out by this Bill, because polls under that provision can be held in October, 1923, and every third year afterwards. I have just given a brief outline of the number of polls which can be taken, without explaining the sections in detail.

MR. MORGAN: You are misleading the Chamber. You know that one has to be carried before another can be put.

THE HOME SECRETARY: Any man would be foolish, with members in this House acquainted with this subject and with the library at their disposal, to come into this House and supply false information deliberately. Let me proceed on the even tenor of my way. Hon. members often complain that they do not get information. I am trying to give them as much information as I can. In 1923 there are two polls—one was held in May and one will be held in October, although the May poll was not a prohibition poll. In 1925 there is one poll, in 1926, if

the Act remains as it is, there can be a prohibition poll in May and a prohibition poll in October. In 1928 there can be one poll, in 1929 two polls, in 1931 one poll, in 1932 two polls, in 1934 one poll, and in 1935 two polls, and so on. I do not think that Parliament ever intended such a state of things to continue. Adherence to that policy can only result in the State being kept in a sort of continual turmoil. If in October next prohibition were carried—and, if I were a supporter of it, I would proclaim the fact from the housetops; I never back a horse but that I say he is going to win, and, if I back a political party, I say they are going to win—if in October prohibition be carried, the licensed victualler, if the Act is not altered, can initiate a poll in 1925, provided that the proper petition is presented before 30th November, 1924. Then, if the Act remains as it is, a poll can be held without any initiation in 1926, and so on. The prohibitionist who says that an injury has been done to his cause by the removal of these special polls admits that he fears defeat, because he wants to keep us perpetually at the question without any possible hope of solution. Are we to have no period of stability? Where is it all to end? I contend that any body who claim to represent a majority of the people but who confess that in twelve long months they cannot prepare a petition representative of 10 per cent. of the electors of this State have no claim to recognition as a public body at all.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

THE HOME SECRETARY: I claim therefore that whichever side wins in October next a petition will be presented for a poll in 1925. If prohibition is carried then the Act stipulates that after the next licensing term of eighteen months prohibition shall come into force. And not only may a poll take place upon the question of State-wide prohibition, but polls may be initiated in any State electoral district or other district declared for the purpose.

I have heard it said that we are taking something from the prohibition people. I claim that as a Government we have the right, in whatever measure of reform we may engage, of interpreting the wishes of the majority of the people, and the fact that we are giving a second poll without initiation or cost to a certain section of the community, who have had three years to advocate their cause and prepare their line of attack, shows that we have no desire to take from them anything to which they are legitimately entitled.

It has been said by interjection to-night that this Bill is being introduced at the request of the licensed victuallers. All I can say is that the licensed victualler who likes this Bill should be under my care in one of the insane asylums. Let me put the case for him as I see it. Assuming that prohibition is carried in 1923, he has to initiate a petition and has to reverse that decision under a provision which stipulates for a certain vote and a certain majority. If he is satisfied with that, then he is easily satisfied.

I have spoken longer than I intended to. I hope that, when I get used to making second-reading speeches, I shall be able to curtail them. (Laughter.) Recognising that I ought to put the full facts before the House and show hon. members to what the country is committed by a continuation of the

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measures which have been passed by two different Governments aiming at the same objective, I have endeavoured to give the full facts as I understand the position. There is one point on which I did not touch. We have a local option poll, independent of the special poll, in 1925, and a further poll becomes necessary thereafter in 1925. I have told you that in 1925 we shall have another poll if a petition is presented, which in its turn means that we shall have another poll in 1928. We cannot logically claim that polls should follow one another so closely, considering that the conditions under which they will be taken are the same. I am therefore providing in the Bill that if a poll is initiated in 1925 the three-year periods will date from 1925, and the next set of polls will be in 1928, in order that we may get back to the original intention of the Act of a reasonable limit between these periods of turmoil. If, however, it is felt that the time given till 1925 is not sufficient and the poll is delayed until 1926, then the three-year periods will date from 1926 to 1929, and so on. I have much pleasure in moving—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Mr. ELPHINSTONE (*Oxley*): I should like at the outset to compliment the Home Secretary on the manner in which he has introduced this measure. It is the first time we have had the pleasure of listening to him moving the second reading of a Bill since he has been a member of the Cabinet, and I hope we shall hear him on other occasions during this session. I compliment him still further because he has had an exceedingly difficult task to-night in his endeavour to defend his Government against a gross act of inconsistency, if of nothing worse. I presume the duty of the Opposition will not be to discuss whether prohibition or early closing is the cure of the liquor problem. I can easily carry my mind back some three years ago when the Liquor Act Amendment Bill of 1920 was before this House, when many of the Opposition delivered speeches much in keeping with the Home Secretary's speech to-night, beseeching that the issue of early closing should be placed in that measure so that it could be put before the people at the fourth issue when the referendum came about. In those days hon. gentlemen opposite thought quite differently. They contended that the question of early closing was beside the mark. It was playing with the subject. It was no cure whatever. It was not to be considered for one minute. The amendment that we moved for the purpose of allowing that fourth issue was defeated. Now within three years these hon. gentlemen are turning round and scapping their own measure, and adopting the very clause which we strived so hard to have introduced into that Bill.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: That is no reason for objecting to the Bill.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I am glad to see that hon. members opposite are coming back to reason. I hope that, as the session proceeds, the Government will think as the Opposition think, and as the Opposition have been thinking for many years past.

The PREMIER: Is that why you went back to the Nationalist party? (Government laughter.)

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: No. The point the hon. gentleman has to understand is that there is evolution taking place in Opposition

politics, the strength of which he will recognise before he is very much older. I only hope that the Premier is as comfortable in his very uncertain camp as I am in mine. (Loud Government laughter.) The point I wish to make in regard to this matter is that, in spite of the great defence which the Home Secretary has put up in regard to this measure, we have to recognise to-night—there is no good mincing matters—that he is proposing to consummate an unholy alliance between the liquor trade and his party. In support of that I am going to quote no less an authority than the Premier. It shows how one's opinions vary according to the side of the House on which he sits.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You are a good judge of that.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The Premier is reported in “Hansard” for 1911, at page 1427, as follows:—

“I would point out to members that the trade until now has fought all temperance organisations, and fought all reform that has for its object the proper regulation of the trade. It has supplied bribes and hush money and the money to fight political elections, and has fought on every possible occasion, and has always come out on top. Whenever any reform movement has reached an apparently successful stage, and has been put into operation, then come along the people who have vested interests in the trade, and, by devious methods mostly, they have managed to undermine the reform and eventually overthrow it. That has been the experience in countries which have tried to apply the principle of prohibition.”

I want once more to repeat certain significant words—

“It has supplied bribes and hush money and money to fight political elections, and has fought on every possible occasion, and has always come out on top.”

Once more, the liquor trade of Queensland has come out on top by the introduction of this measure into this House to-night. Hon. gentlemen opposite have had to eat their own words and simply bow their knee to Baal. That is the real sum and substance of this Bill. How long is Queensland to be dominated by this liquor trade? The Premier admitted in 1911 that Queensland was under the domination of the liquor trade, and, by the attitude of hon. members to-night, we have further proof that that is the position. I presume that we are all sincere in our desire to uplift humanity. I want to ask hon. members opposite how long are the interests of Queensland—and the world, as the Premier admits—to be subjugated to this liquor trade? We must admit that the public interests are subjugated to this liquor trade. Hon. members opposite know that it is so. Some of us know more about the Emu Park Convention than hon. members opposite give us credit for. We knew perfectly well that a bargain had been entered into which was consummated at the Emu Park Convention that these prohibition polls—which were a menace to the liquor trade—had to be wiped out and had to be replaced by some certainty or fixity in regard to the liquor question, the result of which was, as I will once more repeat—

“It has supplied bribes and hush money and the money to fight political

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elections, and has fought on every possible occasion, and has always come out on top."

Now we see where all the support was coming from during the last elections. It was the support from "Bung." There is no getting away from that. To my mind, it is a most shocking illustration of the effect of outside influences. The vested interests that are supposed to coerce the present Opposition on every occasion are beginning to make their forces felt with hon. members opposite. Another extraordinary point is that, whilst all the other States of the Commonwealth years ago introduced measures or referenda for the reduction of hours for the sale of liquor, here in Queensland we went all through the war without any alteration in the hours of sale. Now in the year 1923 we begin to find that a reduction in the hours for the sale of liquor is a measure that the community demand. Why have we deferred it so long? Why is it that hon. members opposite have taken about nine years before doing that which the other States introduced many years ago? Why is it that this necessary innovation has been delayed so long?

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: We did not want to interfere with the expressed will of the people

MR. ELPHINSTONE: Why did the Government not introduce the matter in 1920, when we asked them to give the people an opportunity of saying what their views were with regard to early closing? The Government stand absolutely condemned. They have come under the domination of the liquor trade, and their silence to-night furnishes full proof of what I state. What were the earlier efforts to bring about this early closing in Queensland? I remember a petition being presented to the Home Secretary on more than one occasion asking that there should be early closing. I remember, since my time in Parliament, the Legislative Council initiating a Bill which had as its object the early closing of public houses in Queensland, which Bill was never dealt with in this House. I remember the very strenuous efforts that were put forward by the Opposition to have that fourth issue of early closing included in the referendum which was to be placed before the people.

MR. HARTLEY: Who was working for "Bung" when you moved that?

MR. ELPHINSTONE: We are not arguing as to whether prohibition or early closing is the proper solution. Speaking for myself, I am an early closing man and have always been so, because I believe in moderation in these things as in all others. We are not approaching this matter from a party standpoint any more than the Government should approach it from a party standpoint.

MR. HARTLEY: Didn't you apply for the position of secretary to the Licensed Victuallers' Association?

MR. ELPHINSTONE: I cannot understand the chattering of the hon. gentleman who is interjecting. He is asked to vote for and swallow a measure of this description, when it is against the better feelings of his conscience. I sympathise with him.

MR. HARTLEY: I do not want your sympathy.

MR. ELPHINSTONE: As I said before, we are not offering criticism on this measure on the ground that we are supporters of

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prohibition or early closing. We are indignant on the ground of the inconsistency of the Government in regard to the handling of this important and particular question. Where is the great principle of the initiative and referendum which used to be introduced in this House session after session? Time after time it was introduced, and it was stated that the only drawback to its final consummation was the Legislative Council. It is remarkable that since the Legislative Council has been wiped out we have never heard anything more of the initiative and referendum. Why are those hon. members who have stood for those principles now going to deny the people the right to express themselves on this important subject?

THE HOME SECRETARY: They can initiate a poll every three years

MR. ELPHINSTONE: The Home Secretary said so. I have listened very carefully to his remarks, and with all due deference to him, and without implying that he tried to mislead the House in any way, I am not at all clear on it. We know that there is certain complicated paraphernalia to be complied with before that issue can be put before the people.

THE HOME SECRETARY: Not at all—only a petition of 10 per cent. of the total number of electors.

MR. ELPHINSTONE: The Home Secretary would not be allowed by "Bung" to permit that particular feature to exist if there had been anything in it. Hon. members opposite know quite well that the liquor trade, by supporting the Government, know that they have got down to a safe anchorage and that they will be relieved from fear of molestation for years to come. I am not arguing whether the early-closing issue is a right one or not. It is our duty to-night to expose the Government and their shocking inconsistency in regard to this matter.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You are a judge of sitting on a fence.

MR. ELPHINSTONE: Where are the supporters of prohibition to-day in the ranks of the Labour party? We know quite well that there are some hon. members on the Government side who have at all hours of the day stood out strenuously to support the Government in prohibition. We know that they are supporters of a Government who profess to have prohibition as their ultimate objective, and I do not know how they will allow their consciences to be stultified on this occasion, or how they will allow themselves to be dictated to as to what they should do on this great question.

I want to ask the Government why it is that this measure is introduced just prior to the holding of the prohibition poll? Why should not the measure be left in abeyance until after the prohibition poll is taken? The Government are safe in their occupancy of the Treasury benches for three years. Why, then, rush on with this measure before that poll is held in October? We know why. They want to thwart the whole issue wrapped up in that poll. We know that there are many people in Queensland who would vote for prohibition if the early-closing issue was not one of the questions, and they see now that with early closing shortly to follow by means of this Bill they will possibly cast their votes for continuance.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Will that be your attitude?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: No. Let the Secretary for Public Lands concern himself about his own a titude. Why should this Bill be introduced just prior to the prohibition poll, when they have three years in which to do it? Simply because there is another clause in this secret compact with the licensed victuallers' trade. They say, in effect, "You have to stop this prohibition poll from succeeding in October next. We had a rude shock as to the strength of the prohibitionists in 1920. Prohibition had a much stronger hold in the community than we had any idea of. You must stop it. We helped you with your election expenses, and did all we possibly could to advance the cause of Labour, now you must see we are made safe in our trade." One of the conditions is that this Bill is to be introduced before the poll takes place, simply with the idea of thwarting the possibility of the prohibition vote at this forthcoming referendum.

I have studied this amending measure very carefully, and if I read clause 11 rightly—I am open to correction—I seem to see, even supposing this prohibition poll is carried in October next, that the machinery to give effect to it is nullified and withdrawn by this amending measure. That is a matter which, at the Committee stage of the Bill, might be cleared up.

The PREMIER: The hon. member is wrong.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I hope I am. I trust that control by the trade is not of such a nature as to permit of the practice of a deceit such as that would be. That is my reading of it, but I stand open to correction.

Another point I wish to touch on is this: Seeing you are going to make the hours for the sale of liquor from 8 o'clock in the morning to 8 o'clock at night, do you not think that it is a fair thing, if liquor can be disposed of during those hours, that food should also be available during the same hours? Do you not think that those people who rely more upon foodstuffs than drink for their sustenance should have the opportunity to buy in the same hours as liquor is retailed in?

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: So they may.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: No, they have not. We know that shops are compelled to close at 6 o'clock, and we know quite well no groceries can be purchased after that hour, and that no bread is available after that hour. If that is going to be the acknowledged hour during which drink is to be obtained, why can we not be consistent and permit these other elements towards sustenance to be available at the same time?

I was very annoyed at the reference of the Home Secretary—that the community cannot be disturbed by frequent appeals. It was only a short while ago that that was the method which the Government party proposed to put into the hands of the people of Queensland to approve or disapprove of all the great problems. They were going to permit people to initiate legislation and object to legislation—not once in three years, but continuously—just as frequently as they were minded. The hon. members opposite used this argument whenever the Initiative and Referendum Bill was before the House. It is remarkable how they have turned round. When we turn up the pages of "Hansard" of five or six years back and read the arguments of hon. members opposite, one begins to wonder what is happening in this State of Queensland.

Some reference was made to the great cost which these periodical referenda impose on the people. I think the hon. member for Fitzroy interjected, "At what cost to the licensed victuallers' trade?" We know that the licensed victuallers' trade is spending thousands of pounds in the directions I have referred to in my speech by which hon. members opposite have benefited. Who has had to find that money?

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: The worker.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The worker has to pay, because the price of the beer of the worker has been increased, no doubt to assist to find the funds to keep hon. members in office. (Government dissent.)

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: That is untrue.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: It is not untrue.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You are not game to say that outside.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: The hon. gentleman knows it is true, and I am prepared to say it anywhere. The moneys that are contributed by the licensed victuallers' trade towards maintaining the present Labour Government in power and [8 p.m.] towards the organisation to keep prohibition from coming into this State is contributed by the worker, who has it put on to the price of his beer. I say that without any hesitation, and any man who has followed the rise in the cost of beer and spirits can see quite well what has caused it.

Mr. HARTLEY: You tried to run the Rockhampton by-election on the rise in the price of beer. (Interruption.)

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I quite expected that my remarks would bring forth a howl of interjections from hon. members opposite. We have to put forth a very plain statement in regard to the matter. The Government have got an opportunity—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS:—

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I invite the Secretary for Public Lands to repeat that interjection.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Did you not try to get the job of secretary to the Licensed Victuallers' Association?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: What was the interjection you made before? You accused me just now of not being brave enough to speak outside. Well, I invite you to be brave enough to speak in the House.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: What is the charge you made?

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: I ask you to repeat your interjection across this Chamber. The hon. member for Normanby heard it and breathed it into my ear, and I ask the hon. gentleman to repeat it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The "rat?"

Mr. PETERSON: You are a "squib."

The SPEAKER: Order!

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I will put Brennan on to you.

Mr. ELPHINSTONE: It is pretty obvious, when the Ministers adopt the methods the Secretary for Public Lands is doing, that they are trying to divert us from our course. But they are not going to succeed. I wish

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to expose their intention and to ascertain whether they are being used as tools to defeat the periodical reference of this question to the people of Queensland, and whether they have found it necessary to initiate this measure to placate the Licensed Victuallers' Association, their supporters.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MOORE (*Aubigny*): I would also like to congratulate the Home Secretary on his able exposition of the Bill and on his very clever attempt to cloud the issue so that it will be almost impossible for people to understand exactly what this Bill does mean and its purport.

The Country party look upon this as being absolutely a non-party measure. We believe, on a question like this, that every individual should leave it to his conscience to vote as he considers best, and we do not believe in any individual being tied by party chains. One of the most remarkable things I have seen in this House during the time I have been here has been the galling chains that bind a man's convictions. I have seen a 6-o'clock measure brought into this House, and the president of the Temperance Association voting against it because of his party ties being stronger than his convictions. I have seen hon. members advocating prohibition, and, when an opportunity came to put their beliefs into concrete form, they quibbled on it because of party ties. It is a most extraordinary position that on an important question such as this, where the welfare of the community is at stake, people should not be allowed to vote as they think right and in the best interests of the community. In the Premier's policy speech there is one sentence which I think is very effective by way of criticism of the present Bill—

“Fearing that under Labour policy there will be an end to concession-mongering and less opportunity for boodling enterprises.”

It is evident that this Bill is an example of concession-mongering. The present amendment is the result of a contract. It comes from a party which has on three occasions brought into this House legislation supporting the Initiative and Referendum Bill. Now we have the Home Secretary coming here to-night and saying that we are not going to allow the people to take a vote on a moral question like this because the cost is too great—because something like £25,000 would be expended.

The HOME SECRETARY: Be fair! I told you that a poll could still be initiated the same as at present.

Mr. MOORE: We know perfectly well the conditions which attach to these local option polls. The Home Secretary very clearly explained that one poll could not be initiated until the earlier resolution was carried.

The HOME SECRETARY: No! No! I made it clear that that existed up to 1915. The provision then disappeared, and under section 175 of the present Act polls can be initiated.

Mr. MOORE: In 1920 the Government brought in a measure to allow the people to have a voice regarding what action they considered best. In 1923 they are bringing in another amending Bill wiping out the concession given to the people in 1920, on the plea that the expense is too great. I think

the whole position is rather farcical. The people should have an opportunity to express their views. The Home Secretary of the day, the present Secretary for Public Instruction, when introducing the Initiative and Referendum Bill, stated that he recognised that this was the one question on which the people should have an opportunity to express their views. Now, when the opportunity is coming, this provision is going to be done away with, and an emasculated Bill such as this is brought in. Why should not the people have an opportunity? When the 6 o'clock closing was first mooted people were vigorous in this State and presented petitions to the Premier. What happened? The Premier pointed out on every occasion that he was bringing in an Initiative and Referendum Bill to allow them to have a voice. We remember that exciting time when the last petition went in. No one knows where it went to.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: You said that it went to the Home Office.

Mr. MOORE: It was never found out where it went to. The Home Secretary never knew—the whole public service was searching for it. We knew that a petition was presented and that it disappeared.

The HOME SECRETARY: Didn't the former hon. member for Drayton make an explanation to this House that he had made a mis-statement?

Mr. MOORE: The former hon. member for Drayton never had anything to do with it at all, and he never made such a statement that I know of. However, the question of that petition is past, and what we are dealing with to-day is a Bill which has been brought in as a result of a contract, and I think the people should have a voice as to what hour should constitute the suggested early closing. I believe in the people having a voice on a question such as this, and, if I believed in prohibition, I would have the courage to vote for it whether it was against the party wish or not. But I do not believe in prohibition, because I do not think it has proved a success in those places where it has been tried. You can search the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will find only one man who ever asked for a drink of water, and he was in Hell. I do believe in temperance, and I do believe in early closing; and I believe that the people should have an opportunity of saying what they desire in this regard. I cannot understand the volte face on the part of the Government in going back on their own policy on a question such as this. There is no explanation for it. Nothing would account for it except one thing. We know that there would never have been any question of 8 till 8 if it were not for the last poll when the prohibitionists secured such a wonderful vote. We know that the licensed victuallers never suggested at that time any reduction in hours until that vote was taken; yet, when it comes to a question of a reduction in the hours, we find that the proposal comes from the licensed victuallers themselves. Why? Because they want early closing? No; but to protect themselves and to protect their trade; and they have a Government supine enough to make a compact with them. I think 8 to 8 are very good hours, but I do think the people should have an opportunity of expressing their desires on a question such as this.

Mr. PRASE: What about Emu Park?

[*Mr. Elphinstone.*

Mr. MOORE: I think the less said about Emu Park the better. We have had supporters of the Labour party in this State going round and giving away State secrets in regard to some of the money paid in connection with these interests. I remember Mr. Dawson, a member of the Wharf Labourers' Union, being very emphatic in his objection to some of the money paid by these interests. That was at the time the beer strike was on. I am not concerned about that, but I am concerned about this Bill. The people should be given an opportunity to express their views on a moral question such as this, which has to do with the uplift of humanity and the welfare of the community. The Government themselves recognise that, and, if they were not bound, as apparently they are, to bring in a Bill such as this, we would have that opportunity. This is one reason why I am sorry the Initiative and Referendum Bill did not pass.

Mr. HARTLEY: You voted against the Initiative and Referendum Bill.

Mr. MOORE: I opposed it for the very same reason that the Minister gave to-night—because the expense was too great, and because on many questions the people have not enough information to vote intelligently. So it is too great for trivial questions; but there are a few questions in regard to which it is worth the expense to get a true reflex of public opinion. I do not intend to take up any great length of time on this Bill because—

Mr. BRUCE: You have nothing to say against it.

Mr. MOORE: I saw by to-day's "Standard" that the hon. member for Kennedy was approached by the president of the committee appointed to do propaganda work in connection with prohibition. I do not know how he will salve his conscience on the question before the House. If he believes in prohibition, I cannot understand why he supports a Bill such as this, which is only going to limit the hours. I would personally vote for prohibition rather than have continuance on present lines.

Mr. PEASE: You have a very weak mind.

Mr. MOORE: There are thousands of people in the same position that I am in. The Government are bringing in this measure because they recognise that it is going to affect thousands of votes, because the people are disgusted at the way the trade is being carried on. The Home Secretary said we had one of the most stringent Acts in Australia. So we have, and we have one of the most loosely administered Acts.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is not right.

Mr. MOORE: It is right. You find licensed victuallers in Victoria endeavouring to carry out the provisions of the Act, and you find them endeavouring to help the Government to carry out the Act. What do you find in Queensland? You find that some of the greatest trade done in many of the hotels is done on Sundays.

Mr. KIRWAN: Where?

Mr. MOORE: You will find it anywhere you like to go.

Mr. KIRWAN: That is a sweeping statement.

Mr. MOORE: It is a sweeping statement.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is a reflection on the police.

Mr. MOORE: It is not a reflection on the police. If the police were instructed by the Government to see that the provisions of the Act were carried out, they would do it.

The HOME SECRETARY: The police should do that without instructions.

Hon. W. H. BARNES: What about the case at Sandgate?

Mr. MOORE: When they do secure a charge the Government will not back them up.

The HOME SECRETARY: I defy you to show that the Home Office, during the regime of this Government, has ever stopped one case brought up by a constable. There have been eight prosecutions in my own electorate since I have been Minister.

Mr. MOORE: The Justice Department is the department I am referring to as stopping prosecutions from going on—not the Home Secretary's Department at all.

Mr. PEASE: In North Queensland the police officers initiate prosecutions themselves.

Mr. MOORE: I am very glad they do.

Mr. WARREN: They did at Sandgate.

Mr. MOORE: I have my own convictions, and I have seen it occur. It is no good people coming here and saying that is not the case, because it is. Nothing will make me withdraw that statement, because I have seen it occur myself, and hon. members in their hearts know that it is so.

Mr. HARTLEY: You cannot take the Oakey "pub" as a sample for the whole of Queensland.

Mr. MOORE: I have never been in the Oakey "pub" on Sunday, and know nothing about it.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is the hotel where you got your experience.

Mr. MOORE: I understand that a special effort was made to catch a certain hotel because it was thought political capital could be made out of it at election time. That is quite possible.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is the reason advanced for the withdrawal of the prosecution, which was not acceded to.

Mr. VOWLES: They gave you every opportunity when you were speaking.

Mr. MOORE: I am quite prepared to support this Bill, because I recognise that it is a measure which is going to be for the benefit of the State. Personally, I do not think that any measure which is going to close hotels all over the State at the one time is going to be quite fair to the whole State, as different conditions apply in different places.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is a very difficult problem.

Mr. MOORE: I know it is difficult, but we know perfectly well that what applies in large towns does not apply in country districts where people have to travel long distances. To my mind, it would be preferable if a vote as to the time of closing could be taken in the local option areas. We would then know the desires of the people who live in those areas. Whatever happens you cannot frame a law that will be equitable and just so far as the whole of Queensland is concerned. It must inflict a hardship on a large number of people who live under different conditions altogether to the people

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in Brisbane. In country districts, where people have to travel about, and in some occupations also, it is necessary for the people to get stimulants when they finish their work, and if in those outside districts it is possible to have a different hour of closing to what it is in the large centres of population, it will be a great advantage. I see great difficulties in providing for that; but, if it could be done, it would be of great assistance. I am prepared to accept this Bill as a palliative, as I recognise that it goes some way towards a better condition of affairs.

Mr. COLLINS: A palliative! How far would you go?

Mr. MOORE: I would go as far as the people want to go. If a majority want 6 o'clock closing, they should have 6 o'clock closing. If they want 7 o'clock closing, they should have 7 o'clock closing; and if they want 9 o'clock closing they should have 9 o'clock closing. And if they want total prohibition they should have it. I would support that either in a State poll or a local option poll.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Do you think it is a fair thing that, while the poor man is not able to get a drink, the well-to-do man should be able to store it in his house?

Mr. MOORE: That is the old trivial argument of endeavouring to inflame class-consciousness in regard to a question like this by trying to make out that a rich man can get a drink when a poor man cannot. It is one of the trivial arguments which are always brought up on such a question as this. If it is a good thing that the people should have hotels closed at a certain hour, whether a man is rich or poor, it is a good thing that the people should have an opportunity to vote on it.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*): It has been said by many leaders of political parties that the Government who were game enough to tackle the liquor question generally brought defeat upon themselves. That was so in 1912, when the then Government, led by Mr. Denham, decided to bring in a certain measure of liquor reform. Although Mr. Denham was honest in expressing his convictions, and endeavoured to do what he thought was right, he found by experience that he pleased neither party—neither the "Bung" party nor the temperance party. After the measure became law, the leader of the liquor party in this State, Mr. Peter Murphy, was interviewed in Sydney, and he stated that, although up to that time he had been a supporter of the then Government, he and his party—that is the liquor trade—would do all they possibly could, by the use of money and political support, to secure the defeat of the Denham Government. The Bill was introduced in 1911 and withdrawn, and it did not come forward again until 1912. The very first election after the Bill became law the Denham Government were defeated with the assistance of the licensed victuallers and the liquor trade. Not only were the Denham Government defeated with the assistance of the liquor trade, but they were also defeated by the assistance of the temperance party, simply because the temperance party at that time was not satisfied with certain steps in the reform of the liquor trade, and by a combination of the forces of the temperance party and the liquor party, they succeeded in defeating the Denham

Government and in putting the Labour party on the Treasury benches. The temperance party thought that, when the Labour Government got into power, they would get a greater measure of liquor reform. I claim that, if there is any party which should endeavour to see that the worker spends as little money as possible in the consumption of alcoholic liquors, it should be that which represents the worker.

The HOME SECRETARY: This Bill will do that.

Mr. MORGAN: I claim that a rich man can perhaps afford to spend £5 or £6 a week in liquor, but a working man can only afford to spend 5s. a week, which could be much better spent for his wife and family. I do not know what the Minister thinks. He is an experienced man in this respect; he is not what may be termed a "wowsler." I have never been a teetotaler in my life.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Did you ever get "shikkered"?

Mr. MORGAN: Not to my knowledge. (Laughter.) I claim from actual experience that the less a man spends in strong drink the better it is for himself and for all those connected with him. Anything that a Government can do—more especially a Government representing the working classes—to prevent the expenditure of huge sums of money on the consumption of strong drink, the more beneficial it will be to the class which they allege they are representing in Parliament. The temperance party placed their faith in the Labour Government, thinking that that Government would bring about the reform which they honestly and conscientiously think should be brought about in our State; but they find to-day that the faith which they placed in the Labour Government has been misplaced. The Labour Government have not only sold the temperance party, but they have sold themselves to the "Bung" party.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is not true.

Mr. MORGAN: We have evidence of that in the introduction of this measure. We know that the licensed victuallers—or the "Bung" party—have accumulated funds for the purpose of helping political parties which are prepared to give a quid pro quo for the money which the licensed victuallers are prepared to grant. Undoubtedly the present Premier, when he made the speech in 1911 which has been read out by the deputy leader of the United party, stated what he thought was honest and true. The language he used in that speech was thoroughly considered before he gave expression to it. His conclusion was that the liquor party were prepared to spend money to assist their cause, and were always successful in winning any battle they were engaged in. The liquor party have undoubtedly succeeded in obtaining the support of the Government in connection with the introduction of this measure. We found throughout the war that it was thought by the great statesmen of the world that there should be some way of lessening the amount of drink which was being consumed. In almost every part of the world there was a reduction in the hours for sale of liquor during the war period, while Queensland, represented by a Labour Government, stood out. A Labour Government were in power in New South Wales, and they thought it advisable to bring about a reduction of the hours for sale of liquor. The

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Minister's only argument for closing hotels at 8 o'clock was the fact that the rich man could have a drink—

The HOME SECRETARY: No.

Mr. MORGAN: And that the worker could not get a drink.

The HOME SECRETARY: I said that the 8 o'clock proposal would gain the sympathy of the people.

Mr. MORGAN: You said that the rich man would be able to get a drink where the poor man would not.

The HOME SECRETARY: I did not. You are wrong.

Mr. MORGAN: The Labour party in New South Wales did not oppose the Government of the day in regard to the action which brought 6 o'clock closing into operation there. In fact, the Labour parties supported the Governments in the other States in regard to 6 o'clock closing, recognising the fact that it gave the people ample time in which to get the drink which they desired. I think that the people should be trusted in such a matter as this. One of the principal reasons why the Labour Government have reached the position they are in to-day is the fact that one of the election cries of the late Hon. T. J. Ryan was that they were prepared to trust the people. Yet

to-day we find that the Labour [8.30 p.m.] party holds altogether different views. The people desire early closing, and they should be consulted. Whether they desire 6 o'clock or 8 o'clock should be left to the people—not to the men engaged in the liquor trade. Undoubtedly, the Government have introduced this measure before the poll is taken in October because thousands and thousands of people agree with the leader of the Country party when he said that, if the hours of drinking were not reduced, he would go for prohibition. The liquor party have their organisers throughout the length and breadth of the country with the object of ascertaining the views of the people, and they know that they are going to gain thousands of votes against prohibition if the hours of trading are reduced and fixed from 8 in the morning till 8 at night. It is for that reason that the compact was entered into between the present Administration and the liquor party before the recent elections. What has been the result? Again the Government, with the assistance of the liquor trade, have won the fight against the temperance party. I am not altogether sorry for the temperance party. It serves them right. They were not satisfied with gradual reform or with the honest endeavours of the late Denham Government. They transferred their affections, and they have been sold. So I say, "Serve them right." I do not believe in any party, whether it be the temperance party or the liquor party, entering into a compact and selling themselves for a reward at a later period. Just as the liquor party were able to buy the Government, so did the temperance party sell themselves to the Government. I have no sympathy with those who have been connected with the temperance movement, because a great number have used their temperance views to help the system which placed the present Government on the Treasury benches.

Mr. PEASE: Do not forget that the Premier made this prominent in his policy speech.

Mr. MORGAN: We know what happened at Emu Park. One vote was carried and somebody moved an amendment. It seemed to be a general tug-of-war between the temperance representatives and those who were there to represent "Bung." And again "Bung" won. "Bung" always wins. "Bung" won at Emu Park, and it won at the recent elections. It cannot be denied that in the suburbs of Brisbane the Nationalist party had to fight the liquor trade.

Mr. HARTLEY: You tried to win the by-election at Rockhampton by promising cheap beer for the workers. You attacked us for putting up the price of the workers' beer. That is how your leader tried to win that fight.

Mr. MORGAN: Ever since 1911 I have voted and spoken on this question as my conscience directed, and I intend to continue that policy, even though I be the only one to vote for an amendment I may see fit to move. This is a matter altogether separate and distinct from politics. It affects the future generations of Australia, our children and our children's children. Neither money nor fear of losing a seat in Parliament nor any other emolument should in any way deter a man from doing his duty and acting just as his conscience dictates. I have spent my life in all parts of Australia, and I am the father of a fairly large family, and I intend on this matter fearlessly to do just as my conscience directs. In 1911 and 1912 I advocated—not prohibition but a measure of abolition of spirituous liquors and the introduction of light wines and beers. The temperance party unfortunately want the whole hog or nothing. Well, they will go on and get nothing.

Mr. HARTLEY: They will go on and get the whole hog.

Mr. MORGAN: Liquor has been in use for many, many generations—for many centuries—yet an endeavour has been made by a section of the community to introduce what they regard as a reform for which the time will not be ripe for fifteen or twenty years. In my opinion that reform should be a gradual process. The drink that does the greatest amount of damage is no doubt spirituous liquor, and, if we prevent its manufacture, importation, or sale, and sell only light wines and beers, gradually the people will forget its taste; they will not acquire the habit of drinking it, or know what benefit or what harm may accrue from its consumption. I am sure that no man ever drank the first glass of whisky or brandy—or even the second or third—because it tasted nice. It is a habit which is acquired by a gradual process; it grows upon one. The result is that after the consumption of spirituous liquors for a number of years one feels that he cannot do without it, just as an opium smoker, after indulging in opium smoking for a considerable period, finds that he cannot live without opium. So anything we can do to prevent strong liquor getting into the hands of the young people will do a considerable amount of good. Some people argue that the continued sale of strong drink is necessary, because otherwise a number of people will die or take to the use of "dope." When people cannot live without strong drink or the use of a substitute in the shape of "dope," the quicker they shuffle off this mortal coil the better.

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It is far better to clean up the country and be rid of a curse of that description, rather than allow it to continue for all time a temptation that will cause the rising generation to become addicted to strong drink. As the Country party have decided that each man may speak and vote as he desires, I hope the same liberty will be allowed to hon. members opposite. I hope the hon. member for Bowen will vote just as his conscience dictates.

Mr. COLLINS: I will vote according to the Labour party's platform.

Mr. MORGAN: In 1911, when the Liquor Act Amendment Bill was before this House, a resolution was moved by the Labour party favouring the nationalisation of the liquor trade. The nationalisation of that trade has now been thrown overboard.

Mr. HARTLEY: No, it is in the platform now.

Mr. COSTELLO: It is a long way down.

Mr. HARTLEY: No.

Mr. MORGAN: The Labour party have been in power for eight years, yet they have done nothing to achieve the nationalisation of the trade.

Mr. COLLINS: We established the Babinda State Hotel; that was the first step.

Mr. MORGAN: An explanation was given by the Home Secretary with regard to future polls. I feel sure that during the hon. gentleman's speech the issue was clouded. We realise that certain districts may take a poll; in fact, the whole of the electorates in Queensland may decide to take a poll under certain conditions. It may be possible for three-fourths or four-fifths of the electorates, or even all the electorates but one in Queensland, to vote on the question of total prohibition. That one electorate may not be able to get the required number of signatures for the petition. Therefore the vote is only taken with respect to each electorate that sends in a petition in accordance with the Act. That is quite a different poll from the poll to be taken in October next. The Minister did not make that clear.

The HOME SECRETARY: I said that a poll could be taken by some of the people of Queensland, or by the whole of the people of Queensland.

Mr. MORGAN: The Minister did not make it clear. He gave us to understand that the polls that would be taken after the poll to be taken in October—provided this Bill becomes law—would be similar in every way to the poll to be taken in October next.

The HOME SECRETARY: No.

Mr. MORGAN: If this Bill becomes law and a prohibition poll is taken, it is only necessary for the licensed victuallers to succeed in one electorate to prevent a poll being taken to apply to the whole of Queensland. A poll for the whole of Queensland can only be taken when the provisions of the Act are complied with in every electorate. The Minister endeavoured to make us believe that by doing away with the right to take a poll such as is to be taken in October next he was not interfering with the people who desired eventually to bring about prohibition.

The HOME SECRETARY: No.

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Mr. MORGAN: I am pleased to know now how we stand. I looked through the Act very carefully, and I found that the position with regard to the polls was very different from what the Minister told us.

The HOME SECRETARY: You read the Act, and then read my speech to-morrow.

Mr. MORGAN: I listened to the hon. gentleman's speech very carefully. I congratulate him on almost succeeding in convincing this side of the House that there was really no harm being done by the abolition of the prohibition polls. I intend to declare my position on this Bill clause by clause. Just what amendments are going to be moved I do not know. Just what events may occur I do not know. I am going to exercise my own judgment and be absolutely responsible for what I do myself.

HON. W. H. BARNES (*Wynnum*): I think that every hon. member must admit that the question before us is an important one. We have no right to treat it lightly. I anticipate that, if hon. members on either side were consulted as to their own private convictions, it would be found that the differences of opinion would be very great on both sides.

Mr. DUNSTAN: You attend to your own side.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I know what human nature is, and I know what influences are brought to bear. I say that this subject is one on which men conscientiously differ. I am not going to sit on the rail. The House will at least know where I stand in connection with the matter. When the prohibition poll comes on in October, I shall vote for prohibition. In connection with this measure I shall certainly vote for its second reading, because I consider that any step that goes in the direction of reducing the evil which exists to-day in connection with this particular traffic is one which we should support until something better comes along.

Mr. DUNSTAN: You are following us step by step.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I am not desirous of following the hon. member step by step. Before I sit down I shall say some things of a very critical nature in connection with this Bill. I know that many hon. members will disagree with the utterances that I am about to make. Speaking with regard to that trade which supplies the ordinary necessities of life, I am not in sympathy with any man who suggests that any trade should have its hours extended to 8 o'clock if this Bill providing for 8 o'clock closing becomes law. That would be a distinctly retrograde step in our life. I do not believe in that. This Bill does something which goes in the direction of removing temptation from that which we value, and value intensely—the young manhood of our State. I am not going to say that every man who takes drink is likely to go to ruin. That would be a statement which no man has a right to make in this House. Some of my best friends would differ absolutely from me there. I have to extend to them what I claim for myself—the right of conscience in the matter. I do say, and say earnestly, that there are many men to-day who, as a result of the ability to get intoxicants at 11 o'clock at night, have abso-

lutely been driven to the devil. A man who says that need not be designated as a "wowsler." I do not say you will find it in all hotels—I have no right to make a general charge against hotel-keepers—some of them are just as good as I am—but, if you go down the street just as the hotels are closing, you will find young fellows of nineteen or twenty years of age coming out of the public bars the last thing. Will any man say that that is good for the community? No man will. In my judgment, it is very bad. No man can be charged with looking at the question from one standpoint. The asset of our young manhood is most important for the State. (Hear, hear!) The physical side is one we want to look after. Therefore I am prepared to vote for this Bill; but if an amendment is moved for 6 o'clock closing, I am going to vote for it, it does not matter where it comes from. This is not a party measure, and should not be treated as a party measure. It is something bigger than party, and no man should be confined to party in dealing with it.

There are one or two clauses in the Bill that I wish to deal with. The Minister is quite right in saying that clubs should not have any special advantage over hotels. I belong to a club, but why should a man who belongs to a club have an advantage which the hotel-keeper has not? You must have a law which is fair all round, otherwise you are penalising a section of the community. I would not call that an advantage, although some people would. Do the right thing. The Minister has also said that the administration of the Act has always been carried out, so far as he was concerned, in a strictly impartial manner. I reminded the Minister by interjection that, at any rate, even supposing a man in a very high place—even a Minister of the Crown—has been caught breaking the law on Sunday, he should be punished.

HON. F. T. BRENNAN: Was he punished?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I do not know whether he was or not. He should be punished by the court for doing something which was wrong.

THE HOME SECRETARY: How can that be a proof of maladministration?

HON. W. H. BARNES: A legislator should set an example as to what should be done in the community.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: You are spoiling your argument.

THE HOME SECRETARY: How can you say the administration is at fault if the man was caught and punished?

MR. MOORE: Didn't you punish the policeman who caught him? (Laughter.)

HON. W. H. BARNES: What about election time, when the hotels in Rockhampton were supposed to be closed? What did you do when you found that certain hotels there were carrying on a trade brisker than on any other day in the week?

THE HOME SECRETARY: That is a reflection on the police.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The fact remains that the Government have not carried out the Act as it ought to be carried out. The Home Secretary, in introducing the Bill, said that the Government were not interested in a certain section of the people, but he will

tell me broadly that they are interested in all sections of the people.

THE HOME SECRETARY: No special section.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I hold in my hand a copy of "The State Service," the official organ of the Public Service General Officers' Association of Queensland. I notice indications of some influence at work in connection with certain printed matter which, I suppose, has been well paid for. The date of the publication is Wednesday, 18th July, 1923, volume xii. This is headed, "Scandals of Prohibition."

MR. BRUCE: What does it mean?

HON. W. H. BARNES: It means that there has been influence at work to get at the Government.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Nonsense!

MR. WEIR: That is a paid advertisement.

THE HOME SECRETARY: Do you say that is a Government publication?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I say, at any rate, that it is full of Government advertisements, and it is apparent that money has been spent in that particular direction. What are some other headings in it? "Sanctity of Womanhood Violated by Prohibition"; "Cost to the People at Everybody's Elbow."

THE HOME SECRETARY: Do you say only one side should advertise?

HON. W. H. BARNES: No; both sides have the right to advertise; but in a paper that to some extent is a Government one there should be absolute impartiality. We know very well that the Government are in a position to control publications of that kind.

MR. KIRWAN: Nothing of the kind.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The Minister said that he had considered all sections. He told us what he thought 6 o'clock closing might mean, what 8 o'clock closing might mean, and what 9 o'clock closing might mean. I would ask him whether, in the consideration of these matters, there was anyone at his elbow to help him consider them?

MR. POLLOCK: Oh, give us your arguments.

THE HOME SECRETARY: It was considered at a full party meeting, where all the various advocates gave expression to their opinions.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I can understand and recognise that when one knows hon. members opposite. The Minister said there has been a demand for shorter hours. I believe there has. The demand for shorter hours is being recognised, and wisely so, by the trade, and quite probably they encouraged the Minister to come along with an amendment.

THE HOME SECRETARY: You know that the amendment was carried by the highest tribunal of this party.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I know that some resolutions were carried at the highest tribunal of the party opposite, and they are buried already, as they are afraid to trot them out.

I want especially to deal with the [9 p.m.] question of the October poll. The Minister was perfectly right in saying that in 1925 a vote would be taken, and every third year thereafter. But does the Home Secretary recognise how it appeals to some of us here? We say that, so far as untrammelled referenda are concerned, the

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poll in October is to end them. We say that this measure will influence the vote of the man who may be satisfied with shorter hours, and may not want prohibition.

The HOME SECRETARY: Do you think he should be compelled to vote for prohibition?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I do not think any man should be asked to vote against his convictions, but the effect of this measure will be to jeopardise very largely the prohibition vote.

Mr. FOLEY: They must have a weak cause.

Mr. HARTLEY: Do you not think it might strengthen the prohibition vote?

HON. W. H. BARNES: I have said I shall vote prohibition, and I hope the hon. member for Fitzroy is right in saying that this will strengthen the prohibition vote, but my opinion is that it will not strengthen the vote for prohibition. If we are right in thinking that strong influences are behind the Government, I want to ask what may be the fate of the 1925 poll. Would the party sitting opposite not undertake that there shall not be a poll in 1925 if the powers behind them say that such a course must be taken?

The HOME SECRETARY: I will give you an assurance on that.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman's assurance may be very good so far as he is concerned. If it is a question of avoirdupois and geniality, it is very good indeed. While I accept his word fully, I know that sometimes an assurance has been given with regard to certain things and it has been broken absolutely because there have been powers behind dominating the party. The Home Secretary knows that is the case to-day.

I was very much surprised to hear a reference made to the cost to the State. The hon. member for Fitzroy wanted to know something about the cost to the other people, and rightly so. But what is the cost to the State if it is going to improve the position of the people generally? Have we not, without any hesitation whatever, spent heaps of money on things which have been absolutely detrimental to the best interests of the State?

The HOME SECRETARY: It causes continual turmoil.

HON. W. H. BARNES: The hon. gentleman argued that the polls cause continuous turmoil. Supposing prohibition is lost in October, I do not think it would be a fair thing to revive the question in eighteen months, or to take further action until a reasonable time had elapsed. If the poll should go the other way, I think that it would not be a fair thing to revive the question in eighteen months. In that respect I agree with the Home Secretary. But I do not agree with the hon. gentleman's endeavour to please both parties. I want to know where the democracy of the Government has gone. They are proposing to remove from the people the right to take an untrammelled vote after October next. Is it the democracy they exhibited in connection with the abolition of the Upper House, when they appealed to the people, and when the people turned them down, they said, "Our democracy is to have our own way irrespective of the people." Here we have a Government who entered into power on the cry of democracy, and they

are going to remove the untrammelled right of the people to vote on this question after October next.

Mr. POLLOCK: The people have approved of our policy and disapproved of yours.

HON. W. H. BARNES: That is not so.

Mr. POLLOCK: That is why you are not over here.

HON. W. H. BARNES: I say that we are face to face with one of the biggest questions that Queensland and the whole world has to face, and the Government are afraid to trust the people on it. After October next they say they are not going to trust them any longer.

Mr. POLLOCK: You never even tried it in over ten years.

HON. W. H. BARNES: Yes; we started a movement making provision for taking a vote in the direction of reforming the liquor trade, as we started every other reform for the benefit of Queensland; and the Labour party now claim the credit for it all. I purpose voting for the second reading of this Bill; but, if an amendment is moved in the direction of 6 o'clock closing, I will vote for it.

Mr. HARTLEY (*Fitzroy*): I think if I quote the lines—

"Though the mills of God grind slowly,
Yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience He stands waiting,
With exactness grinds He all,"

they would express what I think about the introduction of this measure. I suppose everybody has recognised that in the progress of reform and of a great movement there is an ebb and a flow, and my personal opinion is that this is the ebb tide so far as temperance reformers are concerned in connection with this measure. Perhaps it might be legitimately urged that, having failed on one occasion and with an opportunity of shortly taking another poll, it is justifiable to remove from the Liquor Act the provision for taking a poll on prohibition. While I conform to the expressions of opinion of the majority of this party, I personally express disappointment at the impatience of the Government in seeing that reform further contested. As a temperance reformer I do not stand as a fanatic, and I do not stand as a man who does not know anything about the vicious effects of alcohol on the human body or on the race. Though I may come of a family some of whose members have been noted for their temperance habits, I do not suppose you could name many families in Australia where in some generation or another the vicious effects of alcohol have not been felt, and, when I speak about the effects of alcohol, I know from personal experience what it leads to, and what a great thing will be accomplished when once and for all the possibility of a man damaging his physique and his mental powers by the use of alcohol is removed. I have had in my own life and in my own experience between the ages of eighteen and twenty-six or twenty-seven a knowledge of what it is to be beaten by King Alcohol, and I am very glad to say, further, that I have had the very pleasurable experience of knowing what it is to gain a victory over the craving for King Alcohol, for I know it

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is bought at great cost. In the case of some men with a hereditary craving which has been passed on for generations it is a miracle if they can be redeemed and enabled to live as God Almighty meant men to live, and not debase themselves with the use of alcohol. I am not saying anything about the man who can use alcohol temperately. Such men are very few and far between, and I say, for the sake of the great majority who cannot use alcohol temperately and for the sake of the great number who, step by step, are being destroyed by it, that I still stand as a solid advocate of prohibition. While the elimination of the poll in October next may have a chance of affecting the result in one way, it is like everything else either in nature or in politics, it has a compensating side to it, and the message that I want to send out through the columns of the Press and through "Hansard" on the question is this: There is an opportunity in October of this year that may not come to you again. Grasp it now. Make this the last time that any Bill dealing with this specific traffic will ever come before the Parliament of the State. Although in the Labour platform there is a method by which another poll may be taken, no one can tell, after the poll is taken in October, when another opportunity may be given, or when this reform may be brought about, so that the effect I hope the elimination of this poll will have on the people of Queensland will be that they will rally to the poll in such numbers as to make sure that prohibition is carried, and then there will never be any further need for this House again to deal with the liquor trade in Queensland.

There is the other point as regards the hours of sale, from 8 till 8. Speaking personally, I do not care whether it is from 6.55 in the morning till 10.45 at night or whether it is any other time. Eight till eight will do me as well as any other hours. Whenever the 6 o'clock closing question has come up for discussion in this House I have opposed it and spoken against it on nearly every occasion. The only occasion on which I ever raised my voice for 6 o'clock closing was when the Initiative and Referendum Bill was before the House, and I spoke in favour of accepting the then existing 6 o'clock closing petition as a petition under that Bill, and it was so accepted. If it had not been for the attitude of hon. members opposite and of the Legislative Council, which was then in existence, in connection with the Initiative and Referendum Bill there would have been no need to make provision in the Liquor Act for a prohibition poll, and there would not have been any need for regret if it was taken out, because, under the Initiative and Referendum Bill there would have been ample opportunity to take a vote on any particular phase of the liquor question—whether it was for 6 o'clock closing or for closing at any other hour. The blame for not having that opportunity must rest with hon. members opposite and their supporters in the Legislative Council because of the bitter way in which on every occasion, although the Government were in the majority, they fought the Initiative and Referendum Bill, and the way hon. members opposite induced their friends in the Legislative Council to defeat it.

Mr MORGAN: Why don't you go on with it now?

Mr. HARTLEY: I hope that in our own good time it will be gone on with.

Mr. COSTELLO: What about the contributions to your party funds?

Mr. HARTLEY: As regards the insinuation that any money has been sent to this party for the purpose of fighting an election, I want to say to the hon. member and to the Licensed Victuallers' Association that, if they want to send me any money for political purposes to secure my return for the Fitzroy I will accept it. (Opposition laughter.) I do not know whether they subscribed to any party funds for me, but, if they did, I am very much obliged to them. As regards future polls under the local option provisions of the Act, I know that in 1925 a poll can be taken in certain areas on the question of new licenses or prohibition, but the difference between that poll and this Bill is that it requires three-fifths of the voters voting to carry that poll. I have not heard hon. members opposite offer any suggestion to remedy the position as regards prohibition, and, with the exception of the hon. member for Wynnum, I have yet to learn that any of them are genuine advocates of prohibition.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*): I do not think that this is an occasion when we should be delivering testimonies or offering apologies for our past conduct in connection with our legislation regarding the liquor trade. We have before us to-night an amendment of the existing law, which contains certain well-defined principles, and I propose to direct myself to those principles in the main. A good deal has been said to-night on the sentimental side of the liquor traffic. We have to realise that we have a Liquor Act to-day which is under amendment, and it is for us to consider what the effect of that amendment is going to be, not so far as the trade is concerned, but so far as the travelling public in the country are concerned.

Mr. CARTER: And the people generally.

Mr. VOWLES: Yes. I belong to a country district, and I realise that for a long time it has been claimed in many quarters that liquor reform is necessary in Queensland. At present the hours are from 6 o'clock in the morning till 11 o'clock at night, and by some arrangement, presumably, it has been agreed that there shall be a limitation of those hours. I can only take it that the trade is in some way interested in that arrangement.

The HOME SECRETARY: Not at all; it is a matter of Government policy.

Mr. VOWLES: I hope that it is a matter of Government policy. I thought that possibly some arrangement had been arrived at with the liquor trade. My point is that it would be better, now that the limitation of hours has been decided upon, to make it a twelve-hour day. I would point out that what may be desirable so far as Brisbane and other cities are concerned is altogether inapplicable to the country districts. It would be a good thing, first of all, to agree to the principle of a twelve-hour day in the liquor trade as a fair thing, and, having done that, the people of the different districts should be able to decide by ordinary referendum what closing hour they should accept.

The HOME SECRETARY: You would have confusion worse confounded.

Mr. VOWLES: I do not think we would. In country areas adjacent to cities you may

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possibly have one hotel closing at 8 o'clock and another on the opposite side of the road closing at 9 o'clock.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: You have that at Coolangatta.

Mr. VOWLES: Why should we study all these things from a Brisbane point of view? Let us consider the backblocks. I have been out something like twenty-four years in the back country—more than half my life—and have lived a good many years in hotels, and in my travels, which are frequent, I stay in hotels. I know something about the liquor trade. The reform which is being brought in for the closing of hotels up to 8 o'clock in the morning will be the best reform ever introduced, because more harm is done by the early morning "nips" than by the "nips" taken after 6 o'clock at night.

Mr. CARTER: Hear, hear!

Mr. VOWLES: I think that any man who has travelled will realise that we have started a reform which is gradual, but it is a step towards reform which has been asked for. I ask the Minister to consider the climatic conditions in Western Queensland and the fact that the travelling public in those outside places are very differently situated to the settled population in the city. He must come to the conclusion that special consideration must be given to country districts. We are not studying the interests of the trade but the interests of the travelling public, and the farther you go out West the more my remarks apply. I would like the Minister to let me know whether I understood him or misunderstood him when I thought he suggested that he was going to introduce regulations which would affect the hours in regard to billiard licenses.

The HOME SECRETARY: In country districts, yes.

Mr. VOWLES: My reading of the Bill is that billiard licenses on hotel premises are under legislation for, but is that going to affect billiard-rooms in town and country which are not attached to hotels?

The HOME SECRETARY: Oh, no!

Mr. VOWLES: The next thing is the reduction of hours. I think we are all agreed that that is a step in the right direction. I remember that, when we endeavoured during war time to get a measure of reform in that direction, it was refused by the Government. It is coming along now; it is a question of evolution. It is admitted by all parties that it is necessary to do something in that direction, although I must say that I am at a loss to know why a man who is accustomed to take his drink should be refused it after 8 or 9 o'clock at night. It is not a fair discrimination. The liquor trade is the only business which is entitled to keep open for long hours. If you are going to inflict injustice on one section of traders, why not close the lot up?

Mr. CARTER: What do you want?

Mr. VOWLES: It is interfering with the liberties of the people, and, if I cannot have my whisky at 8 o'clock, 10 o'clock, or 11 o'clock at night, I see no reason why the hon. member for Burnett should have his cup of coffee. (Laughter.)

I was in the House in 1911 and 1912, when there was a good deal of argument in connection with the question of alien labour. I do not hold any brief for alien labour in

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hotels or any other places, but you have to realise that under the altered conditions you are going to put a premium on the labour of certain people who will receive permits because they are in employment when this Bill passes, and at the same time you are not going to restrict that same class of alien from accepting work as cooks, or otherwise, in a boarding-house. Why should a licensed victualler be specially singled out for attention in this direction? I admit that, as there is no law dealing with boarding-houses in this connection, it would be impossible to apply these conditions to such establishments. It may be all very well to deal with alien labour, but you are going to put a premium on the labour of those individuals who are at present entitled to permits.

It is intended to take away from the public, after October next, the right which they have under existing legislation with regard to certain polls. Whether that is desirable or not is not for me to say. That is a burden which the Government have placed upon their own shoulders, and it is for them to accept the responsibility. The reason I refer to that particular matter is because I strongly object to the last speaker, who referred to the Popular Initiative and Referendum Bill, telling us that, if that proposed legislation had been agreed to by the Upper House, provision would have been made under which any section of the community could have initiated legislation dealing with any class of reform or any subject-matter at all. The hon. member for Fitzroy is consenting to-day to wipe off the statute-book, to a very great extent, that very principle which he says it was his desire to have placed in the Popular Initiative and Referendum Bill.

Mr. POLLOCK: He did not say that at all.

Mr. VOWLES: He said that in effect.

Mr. POLLOCK: That is your construction—not that of the hon. member for Fitzroy.

Mr. VOWLES: The only construction that I can put on it is that it was purely a hypocritical apology.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. VOWLES: I must withdraw the word "hypocritical." It was an apology for his present action in consenting to this Bill. I was very pleased to hear the leader of the Country party say that this was to be dealt with as a non-party measure. The platform of the Country party sets out that [9.30 p.m.] we prefer to have periodical referenda on the question of continuance, and we strongly object to the principle of nationalisation. Under no circumstances will we consent to the Government taking part in the liquor trade, because I think it is within your own knowledge, Sir, that for many months past a hotel has practically been conducted at the Central Railway Station in Brisbane, and I venture to say that, if a hotel in the backblocks had been conducted in the same way, the licensee would have been called upon to show cause why his license should not be cancelled.

For these reasons I intend to support the Bill. I sincerely hope that the Minister will consider what I said about country hotels. I have no brief for hotel-keepers. I am simply looking after the interests of people who travel. I would commend to the Home Secretary the speech which his predecessor made on this question in 1911, on page 1599 of "Hansard." I refer to the late Mr. Crawford, the member for Mount Morgan.

Mr. STOPFORD: I have read it—a very able speech, too.

Mr. VOWLES: It was a very fine speech, and I would like the hon. gentleman seriously to consider the suggestions he made as to how the miners, for instance, and the country people generally, may be affected.

The HOME SECRETARY: I suggested that myself.

Mr. VOWLES: It is very easy to say these things. What we need to do is to provide for them.

Mr. CORSER (*Burnett*): This being a non-party measure, I am certainly very loath to oppose it.

Mr. WEIR: How can it be a non-party measure when it is in your platform?

Mr. CORSER: The hon. member must give us credit for ordinary intelligence and an intention to deal with matters which may be brought before us, irrespective of our party platform. We cannot initiate legislation, and the hon. member cannot say that the Labour party initiated this legislation. It was born at Emu Park. There the Government received a mandate to bring it forward. I am not going to be narrow enough to say that because it was initiated at Emu Park it is impossible for me to support it. In 1912 I had the pleasure of opposing the present Liquor Act, and, so far as I know this measure, I am going to support the second reading. But after our experience on the Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment Bill, we do not feel that we know just what amendments may be introduced after the second reading is passed. The Minister, in his valuable explanation of the Bill, indicated that he proposes to bring forward an amendment providing that all clubs shall fall into line with one another. At present all clubs registered prior to 1st January, 1907, retain the privileges they had then. Those privileges are denied to clubs licensed after that date. Now the Minister tells us that he proposes to move an amendment in the Bill to curtail the privileges of all clubs. That is one instance of an amendment coming from the Minister himself to a Bill he is introducing, and it is an alteration which is vital to some people. I am not going to express myself upon it. It does not interest me, and I am not going to say that one section of the people should enjoy a privilege which others do not enjoy.

I represent a country district, where people are not always within a few yards of a hotel. On these benches we represent people who probably cannot get into town except for a few nights in the week, and then probably not before 7 o'clock; so that under the Bill it will be very difficult for them to enjoy a drink if they wish. They are certainly not going to be in town at 8 o'clock in the morning, and if they were to take a drink then it would perhaps not be very good for them. I think that in country districts it would be very much fairer to fix the hours at from 9 in the morning till 9 at night. I do not advocate total prohibition, because I believe that under existing conditions it would be impossible in country districts to establish boarding-houses at very many towns without the privilege of licenses.

Mr. POLLOCK: "Daddy" will smack you if you don't support it. (Laughter.)

Mr. CORSER: I think hon. members will give one credit for using his own discretion

in a matter like this, and, whilst one section of the family may want to see prohibition, I must stand for my own convictions—(laughter)—and, if the hon. member for Dalby and other members of the Assembly want to have a drink, I am not going to deny them that right. I trust that the Bill is not going to mistake unfairly against our country people, and I hope the Minister will be reasonable with respect to all amendments dealing with them. If we are going to be foolishly extreme, we may deny to country people the right to have the lodging-houses in many centres which they now enjoy. I do not believe in extremes either way, and I think that the Bill goes a long way towards a solution of some of our troubles. At Emu Park certain other amendments were proposed by Government members taking away altogether the right to a referendum in October next, but they were defeated. In 1912 I voted against a referendum at all, and I think that we, as legislators, should take upon ourselves the burden of deciding what the people desire. I think no assembly in the State has a better right, or is in a better position, to know their desires than this Chamber.

At 9.40 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. Kirwan, *Brisbane*) took the chair as Deputy Speaker.

Mr. CORSER: I shall support the second reading of the Bill. I trust that there will be no skeletons brought forward from the cupboard.

Hon. F. T. BRENNAN: There may be some bottles. (Laughter.)

Mr. CORSER: I would not like to do anything unfair by supporting the Government in this proposal, not knowing what may be behind it. I hope that the reform that is desired will be brought about. If it is not, then we shall have another opportunity at another time in this House.

Mr. TAYLOR (*Windsor*): I am sure that we all listened with a very great amount of pleasure to the speech made by the Home Secretary when introducing the Bill. A great many of us had some sympathy for him when he delivered that address, especially when we come to consider the remarkable change that has taken place in the Labour party with regard to the referendum and in connection with this particular question. The ex-Home Secretary, when introducing the Liquor Act Amendment Bill in 1920, is reported in "Hansard" as saying—

"I stand corrected. This gives the people the opportunity of a referendum.

This party stand for the referendum; it is part of their platform. The Labour party have nothing at all to fear in putting this matter to the electors."

I cannot understand the change that has taken place in the attitude of the Labour party to-day with regard to the referendum.

The HOME SECRETARY: That referendum was only necessary to fill the gap until the 1925 referendum arrived.

Mr. TAYLOR: I do not think it was to fill any gap at all. The referendum has been on the Labour party's platform for a number of years.

The HOME SECRETARY: I thought you referred to that special poll.

Mr. TAYLOR: It was not brought in as stop-gap legislation at all. Hon. members

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opposite tried on several occasions to have it placed on the statute-book, but it was defeated by the Legislative Council. There is certainly in the Bill some measure of reform. The Home Secretary was quite right in describing it as a reform measure. I look upon the fixing of the hours of trade between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. as reform, but I do not think it goes far enough. We have got to acknowledge that 6 o'clock closing has been in operation in the Southern States of the Commonwealth for about eight years. I do not know of any case where they have gone back on that. If that hour of closing had proved a failure or had not worked to the benefit of the people in Victoria, South Australia, and New South Wales, I take it there would have been a reversion to some other closing time.

Mr. POLLOCK: There is no need to revert to any other time, because you can get a drink at any time after 6 o'clock.

Mr. TAYLOR: Unfortunately what the hon. member says is true to a very great extent. It is a remarkable thing with regard to liquor legislation that those engaged in the liquor traffic are able to flout and break the law, whilst the number of breaches of factory legislation is almost negligible in comparison. That is a scandal and a shame. It is wrong, when a law is passed by Parliament saying that hotels shall close at a certain hour, that those engaged in that traffic should openly and brazenly break the law. The persons who come under the operations of the factory law dare not, and do not, break the law in that way.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: During this week I have had not less than thirty-five reports regarding breaches of the Factories and Shops Act.

Mr. TAYLOR: While, no doubt, there may be that number of breaches, in my judgment they are not open and defiant breaches of the law.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Take for example the shops selling exempt and non-exempt goods. They run the risk and do most of their business after 6 o'clock. I had a deputation asking for legislation on that matter.

Mr. TAYLOR: That may be done in some cases, but in comparison with the liquor trade there are very few breaches. The liquor people are continually breaking the law and are not brought before the court. We do not seem to be able to get at them in the same way as we are able to get at those who break the factory laws. We are dealing with a very big subject indeed; but to lay down a hard-and-fast law for every man and woman in the community is a most difficult matter indeed. There is a lot to be said with regard to the contention raised by the hon. member for Dalby and the hon. member for Burnett with respect to the people in the country and the country clubs. In some of the far-away towns in Queensland, the club is the only rendezvous for pleasure of the people in that particular area or town. To apply to the people in the outback areas the same rule as we are prepared to apply in the large cities would probably create a hardship. But, as one hon. member stated, if you start to discriminate you make confusion worse confounded. I hope that, when the Bill is in Committee, the Minister will accept one or two amendments. We want to do the best in the interests of the people of the State and

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in the interests of the State itself. I realise that you cannot make people sober by an Act of Parliament. Still I do not think we should hold out a special inducement to help them to go wrong. The fact that during the whole period since the declaration of war in 1914 up to the present time there has been no restriction in the trading hours does not reflect credit on our State, nor does it reflect credit on us as Queenslanders.

Mr. PAYNE: Are we worse off here than the people in the other States?

Mr. TAYLOR: From what I hear, I think there has been an improvement in those States where the hours have been restricted. I have read many reports about prohibition in America, and any unbiased man who reads those reports must come to the conclusion—notwithstanding the bootlegging and the doping that is alleged to be going on by the people who indulge in strong drink—that the bulk of the evidence shows that there has been an improvement in the conditions in America. I may be wrong. I simply go by the remarks of the men in this country who are not teetotallers and who have been to America. I do not go to teetotallers for any information with regard to this matter. I find that it is far better to go to men who are not teetotallers. They will give you an unbiased opinion with regard to what is taking place. If there are men and women in America to-day who are substituting dope for whisky, then it will only be a matter of a few years when these people will pass out of existence. When any individual is craving for liquor to such an extent as to resort to drugs when he cannot get it, he must be in a very bad way indeed. I will not take up any more time, as the subject has been discussed very well, but I hope, when we reach the Committee stage of the Bill, that we will get in some of our amendments. I regret that the Government are taking out that particular provision which gives to the people the right, if they wish, to take a poll every three years. That is a retrograde step which the Government should not have allowed in this Bill. I will certainly oppose that amendment as far as I possibly can.

At 9.52 p.m.,

The SPEAKER resumed the chair.

Mr. KELSO (*Yundah*): I was very pleased to hear the Minister say, in introducing this measure, that it was a reform measure. It is rather peculiar to me, though, that a Bill which aims at reform should have extended to this particular trade hours from 8 o'clock in the morning to 8 o'clock at night when the ordinary food of the community cannot be purchased after 6 o'clock at night.

Mr. HYNES: Are not all refreshment-rooms kept open till 11 and 12 o'clock?

Mr. KELSO: I quite admit they are. But I am talking of shops which retail the food of the community which are closed at 6 o'clock. Articles of food cannot be bought after 6 o'clock. It is a question whether the subject should not be treated in a federal spirit, and the hours fixed from 8 o'clock in the morning to 6 o'clock at night. If hon. members visit the Tweed Heads, they will find that after 6 o'clock at night people come in streams from Tweed Heads to Coolangatta, and it is the complaint of the hotel-keepers of New South Wales that legislation exists which permits people to come

from New South Wales into Queensland and use the hotels in this State until 11 o'clock at night.

The HOME SECRETARY: The liquor laws of Queensland are more drastic than those of New South Wales.

Mr. KELSO: The Government propose, under this Bill, to close hotels at 8 o'clock at night and thus give the trade a margin of two hours, from 6 o'clock to 8 o'clock, in which time a lot of damage can be done.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hours of other shops were reduced by evolutionary methods. I know, because I worked in them.

Mr. KELSO: The members on this side of the House are quite prepared to support any amendment to reduce the hour for closing from 8 o'clock to 6 o'clock.

The HOME SECRETARY: Which would you sooner have—3 o'clock with public opinion behind you, or 6 o'clock and only a section with you?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. KELSO: The Home Secretary has to prove that public opinion is behind 8 o'clock and not behind 6 o'clock closing. The Government have taken no steps to find that out.

Mr. COSTELLO: And it is not going to.

The HOME SECRETARY: The Premier, in his policy speech, declared for shorter hours, and we are here.

Mr. KELSO: It has been suggested from this side of the House—I do not know whether hon. members on the opposite side are absolutely wedded to this Bill as a party measure—that the Bill should be treated as a non-party measure. It is a matter affecting the morals of the community, and surely, on a matter such as this, we can rise to the occasion and discuss it from the point of view of the good of the public! If the Minister is looking at the point of view of the good of the public, I ask him to let the House know if the Bill is to be treated as a public measure and not as a party one. We know that the matter has already been considered in a certain quarter, and 8 o'clock decided upon. The Minister, in introducing the Bill, said that it is going to affect hotels, clubs, wine shops, and railway refreshment-rooms. How are the public going to judge us if they find that every part of the community is to be legislated for on this particular subject, and that we, their legislators here, are afraid to legislate on our own actions?

The HOME SECRETARY: You do not need to. You control your own actions.

Mr. KELSO: It is all very well for the Minister to say that, though he is probably quite right; but what is the effect on the community outside? It would have a good effect if we included the parliamentary refreshment-rooms.

Mr. MAXWELL: You have no right to keep an open bar here.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: There is nothing to prevent you, then, putting a bottle of whisky in your locker.

Mr. KELSO: I am sorry to hear a Minister of the Crown suggest that.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: We know some of you do.

Mr. KELSO: I have heard the story of a certain reverend gentleman who had the

nickname of being a signpost. Someone said, "Why do you call him a signpost?" and the reply was, "Because he is always pointing to the road he will not go himself." I hope the Home Secretary will think of subjecting us to the same discipline to which we are subjecting the public. It will not do the Home Secretary the slightest bit of harm if he puts into the Bill a proviso that the parliamentary refreshment bar is to be included in the list of places which are to be closed down.

I want to know why hon. members are tied to 8 o'clock at night. It has been suggested by the hon. member for Oxley that there is some compelling power behind the Government in the matter.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do not take any notice of him.

Mr. KELSO: I must do so, for his arguments were so convincing that at last he had the hon. members opposite reduced to silence. He suggested that the influence behind this Bill is the Licensed Victuallers' Association, because the Government got a quid pro quo from that body. It is suggested that that body is "His Master's Voice" behind the Bill. The edict has gone forth and hon. members opposite have to obey it.

Hon. members on the other side have evidently decided to break away from the established principles of the referendum which they have held for many years. The cry of the Government was always that they were prepared to trust the people. Why is it that they want the referendum done away with after October? Why not allow the thing to go on? I would remind the Government that for some time they have had in the forefront of their platform a plank referring to the initiative and the referendum. If this measure is passed, I ask the Home Secretary whether he is prepared to substitute for it the initiative and referendum so that every facility will be given to the public to decide on all important public matters whenever the requisite number of people ask for legislation in any particular direction. Take the abolition of the Legislative Council. Why was it that the will of the people in that particular case was not carried out? There was a big majority in favour of the retention of the Legislative Council. If hon. members on the opposite side are such strong democrats and place such faith in the will of the people, why did they not carry out the will of the people on that occasion? The Government failed to do so then, and it makes us anticipate that, if the referendum in October is carried in favour of prohibition, the Government will not carry it out. They have done such a thing before and may do it again. They may bring in legislation later on to nullify the success of the temperance people. The subject has been pretty well debated, and I do not propose to repeat myself just for the sake of speaking. We on this side of the House intend to support the second reading of the Bill, and I hope, when we get into Committee, that the Minister will see his way to reduce the hours, and I hope also that he will see his way to justify us in the eyes of the people by including the parliamentary refreshment bar.

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

The consideration of the Bill in Committee was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

The House adjourned at 10.5 p.m.

Mr. Kelso.]