

the *Drayton Grange* and ascertain the true facts of the case. They may be exaggerated. I give the hon. member my assurance that everything will be done to make these unfortunate men as comfortable as possible if they have to go into quarantine. It seems to me, speaking as a man with some experience in regard to shipping, rather an extraordinary thing to put 2,000 men on board a ship like the *Drayton Grange*. She does not appear to me to have the tonnage that would warrant such an enormous number of men being put on board; and if the condition of the ship is such as that reported, it certainly is not creditable to those in authority that they should have put such a number of men on board and provided for them so badly as they appear to have done. I have no control now over military matters, but I shall take good care, and if necessary will exceed my duty, in seeing that these men are looked after in the best possible manner. With regard to the case of an unseaworthy ship, brought under my notice by the hon. member for Darlington, I will make inquiry about that to-morrow morning. I heard the name of the vessel that had been condemned, and, if the facts be as reported by my hon. friend, it certainly shows remissness on somebody's part that a vessel of that description should have been allowed to leave port. If there is one thing I have been contending for, for years, although intimately connected with shipping, it is that there should be a thorough and satisfactory inspection of the hulls and machinery of all steamers, whether passenger or cargo steamers; because I recognise that we owe as much to the men on board a cargo ship as we do to the men on board a passenger ship—the lives of the men are equally precious to them in either case—and if the law is not sufficient I will endeavour to have it altered. I will inquire into the reasons why this ship was allowed to leave the dock, and unless they are satisfactory I will take action in the matter. With regard to the sergeant of police who did such good service at Mount Kembla in recovering the dead and rescuing the injured, I shall bring the matter under the notice of the Inspector-General of Police, and, no doubt, something will be done. In regard to the question of the hotel-keepers in the resumed area, that is a perennial matter. If a landlady

[*Sir John See.*]

owes money to a brewer, or anybody else, naturally he would expect to be paid.

Mr. POWER: You have no right to protect him!

Sir JOHN SEE: I do not know that it has been done. My experience is that you cannot satisfy the people whose property has been resumed. I again express the opinion that it is a great pity the Government did resume the "Rocks." It may turn out to be a good thing, but it has proved most vexatious. It has given the Government endless trouble. The Secretary for Public Works and I have done all we could to expedite the settlement of claims; but it is impossible to satisfy people when they make exorbitant claims. When they make claims that cannot be entertained they ask hon. members to bring pressure to bear on the Government. It is impossible for me to pay a claim until I thoroughly investigate the particulars. If I did otherwise, hon. members would be perfectly justified in taking action.

Mr. POWER: It is all in favour of the brewers!

Sir JOHN SEE: I am not in favour of brewers. I am not concerned about them.

Mr. POWER: The Attorney-General is!

Sir JOHN SEE: I do not think so. I give my assurance that I will make inquiry. Where it is a matter of details and facts, it is better to come to the office and submit them. I can then send for the papers; and it is not necessary to bring such matters before the House where I have not access to the documents.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

House adjourned at 11:51 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 6 August, 1902.

Temporary Chairman of Committees—Drainage Promotion Act Amendment Bill - Petitions—Women's Franchise Bill (second reading)—Adjournment.

In the absence of the PRESIDENT, the DEPUTY-PRESIDENT (the Hon. W. J. Trickett) took the chair.

TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN OF
COMMITTEES.

Resolved (on motion Hon. F. B. SUTTON):

That the Hon. F. T. Humphery do take the chair of the Committees for this day only.

DRAINAGE PROMOTION ACT
AMENDMENT BILL.

Bill read the third time.

PETITIONS.

The Hon. Dr. CULLEN presented a petition from Gerald Ross Campbell, a member of the Australian Mutual Provident Society, praying that he may be represented by counsel or attorney, or in person, before the select committee on this bill, with the right to call witnesses and adduce evidence, and to examine and cross-examine such witnesses as may give evidence before the said committee.

Petition received, and referred to the select committee on the bill.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON presented a petition from certain residents of New South Wales over the age of 21 years, praying the House to further the objects of the petitioners by extending the electoral franchise to women on the same conditions as apply to men.

Petition received.

WOMEN'S FRANCHISE BILL.

SECOND READING.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON rose to move:
That this bill be now read the second time.

He said: In again submitting this measure to the consideration, and I hope the favourable consideration of hon. members, I can assure the House that I do not intend to elaborate or to deal at any great length with the simple principle contained in the bill. It is simply a bill to place women in the same position as men in regard to voting at the poll for candidates to be returned as representatives of the people in the Legislative Assembly. Before saying a few words upon the measure I may be permitted to say something in regard to its history. The late Government, of which Sir William Lyne was the leader, during the last Parliament submitted a measure exactly like this in the Legislative Assembly. It was passed by that House by an overwhelming majority, and submitted to this Chamber, but the

hon. members here, by a very small majority, rejected that measure when it was first submitted to them. On that occasion hon. members said that the measure had not the impress of public favour upon it, and that it was therefore a matter justifying an appeal to the people. It is so difficult to get an appeal on every public question that we cannot claim that there was a general election directly upon this measure; but I respectfully submit to hon. members that at the last general election there was hardly a single candidate or a single gentleman returned who had not expressed himself in some way in reference to the measure, who had not expressed himself either for it or against it. When the present Legislative Assembly came back from the people it at once, by a larger majority than before, again recorded its decision in favour of this proposal. The bill was then again submitted to this House, and hon. members will recollect that early in the last session the second reading of the bill was carried. The bill was carried through Committee, and on a subsequent day, hon. members, exercising that constitutional right which they possess, rejected it on the motion for the third reading. Although I say that hon. members exercised a constitutional right, still, I think I may claim that the bill having passed its second reading, and having been carried through Committee in its original form, the House adopted an unusual course in rejecting it on the motion for the third reading. Hon. members may recollect that one of the arguments used against the passing of this measure when I last had the honor of submitting it to the House, was that we should wait and see what the Federal Parliament would do with regard to women's franchise. In my speech on the motion for the second reading of the bill, I urged hon. members to pass the measure, because it was a foregone conclusion that the Federal Parliament would pass a corresponding measure. It was well-known in political circles that a very large majority of members in the Federal Parliament were in favour of a measure of this kind. The position has materially altered since I last asked hon. members to consider this question. Women's franchise is now the law of Australia as regards the Commonwealth. I, therefore, submit that it would

be inconsistent, if not ridiculous, if we should have the election of members of Parliament in the State of New South Wales on a franchise different from that in existence for the election of members of the Federal Parliament. I say it would be an anomaly for the Commonwealth Parliament to be elected on a wider franchise than that existing in any one of the states. That being the case, I submit to hon. members that there is no other course open to them—I say it with all respect—but to submit to what they called, during a former debate, the inevitable, and allow the motion to go. One cannot conceive of anything which can be more inconsistent than a number of persons in a state like this voting at one election under one franchise and at another election under another franchise. I claim that we must make our franchise uniform in connection with both elections. In matters of detail such a state of things would lead to enormous trouble and inconvenience at the different elections. As I have stated this measure is one which gives the adult women of the state the privilege—I may say the right—to vote for members of Parliament, who shall make laws for themselves and their children as well as for the state generally. I can readily understand hon. members of mature age, who have not, perhaps, that chivalrous feeling for women which they ought to have by reason of their intelligence and education, voting against the measure; but I do say that the qualifications of women who exercise the franchise now are infinitely greater than they were a few years ago. I think every man will admit that even a generation or less back the highest educated woman was as well educated as the highest educated woman of the present day; but I think that at present they will admit that education is now infinitely more general than it was. I suppose it would be almost impossible, or very difficult, in these enlightened days, to find a woman who cannot read or write. Therefore, if the franchise was refused to women years ago because of their want of education, that argument cannot lie now. I submit that women are now as well capable of voting as are any men in the community. The highest of them, as regards the education they have acquired, are equal to the highest of our men; but the most ignorant

[*The Hon. F. B. Suttor.*

of our women, if I may use such a term, are not so ignorant, I believe, as the most ignorant of our men.

The Hon. W. WALKER: Education has nothing to do with the matter!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTOR: I think we can all read and write here.

The Hon. W. WALKER: Education is not a qualification for men!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTOR: Education, in the estimation of the people, is a qualification in the election of men to Parliament.

The Hon. W. WALKER: The most ignorant man can vote!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTOR: Exactly; and the hon. member, who will give a vote to the ignorant men, refuses it to the highest educated woman in the country.

The Hon. W. WALKER: Education has nothing to do with the matter!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTOR: I am very much obliged to the hon. member for these interjections, but he will admit that, whilst he gives the greatest criminal, the most ignorant man in the community, a vote in the election of politicians, he refrains from giving it to the highest-minded and the highest educated woman in the country.

The Hon. W. WALKER: That is not the case!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTOR: If we admit that women are as well educated as men, how can the hon. member excuse his inconsistency when he says that we give the vote to the basest men in the community? Is not that one strong argument in favour of women voting? We admit that wherever the franchise has been extended the vote of the women has been in favour of moderation, and in the direction of home influences. The hon. member cannot show a single instance where parliament has depreciated in the quality of its members by reason of women having a vote. It is admitted by everyone who has been in New Zealand that time after time when women have recorded their votes there, they have done so for the best men who have submitted themselves for election.

The Hon. W. WALKER: They have voted with their husbands!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTOR: The same remark applies equally to South Australia, where women have given several votes under the extended franchise, and, I believe,

also in Western Australia. Wherever the franchise has been extended it has received the universal support even of persons who were opposed to it, and they have admitted that they were justified in giving it. My hon. friend, I am afraid, is one of those who was born a good many years ago, and he does not quite realise the present position and standing of the women. No doubt the hon. member, in his youth, was as I was. He might have felt then that he was vastly superior to women, because of his better education. I can tell him now that, in my opinion, taking into consideration the blessings of education, women are in every way equal to men in character, intelligence, general capacity, and certainly in education.

The Hon. W. WALKER: Hear, hear. I do not object to that!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: Is the hon. member, and those who agree with him, prepared at all times to say that women shall not have a vote because of intellectual inferiority? The hon. member cannot say that. Upon what grounds then, except a most sentimental one, can he say that women should not have a vote? He cannot show that they have done anything but good by the exercise of the franchise. That they are capable of exercising it by reason of education and intelligence is undoubted. The time has come when we should place women on a par with men in regard to the election of members of Parliament.

The Hon. W. WALKER: They have not got it in England and America?

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: The hon. member knows that England has copied our legislation time after time, and no one hopes more than I do that the hon. member will live to see the franchise extended to women throughout the whole of the British-speaking dominions.

The Hon. W. WALKER: It will make no difference to me. My admiration for women makes me object to the extension of the franchise to them!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: Why does the hon. member object to it?

The DEPUTY-PRESIDENT: I must ask the hon. member not to interject!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: I can assure you, Mr. Deputy-President, that the hon. member is of great assistance to me.

The DEPUTY-PRESIDENT: But he is not of assistance to the Chair.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: The hon. member says that the giving of a vote to woman will degrade her. Is she already degraded when she votes at municipal elections once in two or three years? Is it to be supposed that because a woman goes into a polling-booth, as she does into a draper's shop to buy a yard of tape, she will be unsexed and degraded? No doubt the hon. member will say that the degradation consists in her mixing with men in an indiscriminate way in a polling-booth. I am informed, on the most reliable authority, that in those states where the franchise has been extended to women, the elections are conducted in a way which is an example to other places, and that the very fact of ladies going quietly to record their vote at the polling-booths has a refining influence on those of the opposite sex who are similarly occupied. This hon. members can easily understand. The idea that a woman will be degraded because once in three years she may go for five minutes to a polling-booth and record her vote in favour of one man as against another is, in my opinion, a nonsensical one. How can it be otherwise? This fact stands out as a strong argument in favour of the extension of the franchise to women: that wherever they have exercised it there has not been a single outcry in the direction of withdrawing it. It has met with the universal approval even of those who voted against it, and they have admitted that it has been a step in the right direction.

The Hon. W. WALKER: The number of women voters in South Australia has fallen off!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: In reply to my hon. friend, I may state that if the hon. member will examine the result of the elections, he will find that New Zealand and South Australian women have recorded their votes in greater numbers proportionately, than have the men.

The Hon. W. WALKER: The Maoris vote there!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: Yes, the Maoris vote there; and my hon. friend is one of a number who would give a vote to the meanest aboriginal of New South Wales, and refuse it to a woman.

The Hon. W. WALKER: I would do nothing of the kind!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: The hon. member has given it to the most unintellectual ignorant man in the country in the shape of an aboriginal black, and yet refuses it to ladies.

The Hon. W. WALKER: I have done nothing of the kind. I object to the aborigines voting!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: Of course, when I speak of hon. members, I speak of Parliament as a whole, and Parliament in its wisdom has done it.

The DEPUTY-PRESIDENT: I cannot allow the hon. member, Mr. Walker, to keep up a running fire of interjections. If he persists in that course, I shall have to take further steps.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: We offer every encouragement to the poorest girl in the community to rise from one position to another by attending our public schools, our high schools, and the University. They have every opportunity of obtaining, and they do obtain, the highest degrees which can be given by the University. Is it not inconsistent to give them these opportunities and refuse them the privilege of voting for members of Parliament? The ranks of the medical profession are being augmented year by year with young ladies who have earned not only the highest commendation but the highest awards the University can give them. Only recently one young lady won her degrees in the profession of law, so far as the University could give them. Therefore, it seems to me utterly inconsistent that, whilst we encourage women by every means in our power to improve their positions and obtain a livelihood for themselves, we should refuse them the privilege of exercising the franchise. The days have gone by for the men to express the opinion that the only avenue in life for women is that of marriage. There are many women who object to marriage, and who do not wish to be married. Is it possible to find men who can say that persons of that kind should not be allowed to endeavour to earn a livelihood for themselves by exercising the brains which God has given them? That seems to me an utterly inconsistent position for hon. members to adopt. Seeing that we are now encouraging women by every possible means to improve themselves with a view to earning an independent living outside their home, we should place them, as

[*The Hon. F. B. Suttor.*

far as possible, in the same position as men, by allowing them to determine by their votes who shall make laws for them as well as for the general community. Some hon. members who object to the measure are under the idea that it is revolutionary in its character. I submit, with all respect, that, if we give the women of New South Wales a vote, the result will be exactly the same as it has been in the other states in which it has been given. It will have no violent effect on the political situation. It certainly will not reduce the standard of parliamentary representatives. I believe, on the other hand, that it will materially improve it. Therefore, I urge hon. members to vote for the measure, because it only gives what women have a right to expect at our hands. If hon. members are going to vote against the measure in the belief that it is going to bring about any revolutionary alteration in the system of legislation, or in the men who represent us in Parliament, I can assure them that, as far as experience goes, their fears are utterly groundless. Hon. members, apparently, from interjections that have been thrown out, are under the impression that, if this concession is granted to women, it will have a demoralising effect upon them. I do not believe it will. It has not been proved to have had that effect in other places, and I believe that if we give women the franchise, the whole desire of a woman in recording her vote here would be to record it in such a way as to keep her home intact, and that the good influences of her home would be increased rather than diminished by the action she would take at elections. I think that the women's vote as a whole would be one of moderation and fair dealing. As I have said, I do not intend on this occasion to enter into very lengthy arguments in favour of the measure. It is not necessary for me to do so. Those arguments have been used *ad nauseam* previously, and I hope that hon. members will not think that I have used them to any excessive degree now. I appeal to hon. members, and urge them to vote for the measure—for one reason, because the other branch of the legislature, representing directly the people of the state, have on three different occasions voted by overwhelming majorities in favour of it; in fact, those voting

against it were so small in number that the divisions simply proved the unanimity of hon. members generally in the other branch of the legislature.

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: The whole of those who voted, did not represent half the House!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: Whenever the votes were taken, they were recorded in large majorities in favour of the measure. The position has been very materially altered by the fact that a measure similar to this is now the law as regards the Commonwealth, and that throughout the length and breadth of Australia in six states, the women at the next Commonwealth election will have the privilege of voting. That being so, I appeal to hon. members to make the franchise consistent in both Commonwealth and state elections—to give the women of the state, in state elections, the same privilege as they will enjoy in Commonwealth elections. Those are two reasons why hon. members should vote for the measure. A third I submit, is that the women are entitled to have granted the request they have made to us, and that this request has been made to us is proved conclusively, not only by the petitions that have been received, but through the other branch of the legislature, who are acting on behalf of the women, and they know it.

The Hon. W. WALKER: Only a handful!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: I ask hon. members to vote for this measure, because I claim that the women by right of intelligence, education, and general capacity are as much entitled to vote as the men are. I appeal to hon. members to vote for a measure that will allow the women at last to say who shall be the men to make laws for them and their children, and for the benefit of the state generally.

Question proposed.

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: I was in hopes that some hon. member who has more leisure than I have would have risen to express some views upon this bill; but as no hon. member seems to be quite prepared to speak on the measure at this stage, I am forced to state to the House what I think about it. It must be admitted that this is a very radical change in the Constitution of this state. It must be further admitted that this is a change that has been introduced, nurtured, fos-

tered, and I may say forced upon the people, or attempted to be forced upon them, by a handful of women. In saying that, I do not wish to cast any reflection on those ladies. I have no doubt they are actuated by the soundest judgment, and that after mature deliberation they have come to a conclusion on the matter, which from their point of view, perhaps, does them credit; but, at the same time, the interests of this state are not the interests of a handful of women. If I were convinced that the women of this country as a body wished to have this advantage given to them, I would sink my own views, whatever they might be, and would let them have it. So far as petitions are concerned, I think I am right in saying that we only had, last session, a petition from a few hundred women in favour of the bill, and a petition from a few thousand women against the bill; but I admit that neither of them speak much one way or the other; they are both small. However, I certainly do think that when this momentous question is before the public, and has been for a long time, if the women of the country as a body wished for the franchise—if they saw the advantages which some eloquent advocates of the bill seem to see in it—we should have had the bill advocated at women's meetings. Women are not loath to go to meetings. Unless rumour is a lying jade, they meet for all sorts of purposes of amusements, and so on. But when this big question arises—what the Vice-President of the Executive Council described a minute ago as something that was to enable the women to choose the men who were to make laws for them and their children—we do not hear a word from any of them, except from a mere handful. There are no meetings, no letters, no excitement.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: Plenty of letters, and very good ones too!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: From a handful.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: A good handful of letters!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: I said they were from a mere handful of women. We know exactly what they advocate, but I myself do not know what some hon. members who support the bill really advocate, wish, or mean. I have a grave suspicion—

The Hon. Dr. NASH: Suspicion of what?

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER : I leave hon. members to fill up the blank. I spoke in a tone of voice that was unmistakable, and any person of ordinary intelligence could write the word in. If the women of the country are entitled to participate in the election of members of Parliament, and to take a personal part in the politics of the country in that way, I can see no reason in the world why they should not take the whole responsibility of the position. They ought to take it all, or not at all. If they are fit and proper persons to choose members to sit in a house of parliament, they certainly ought to have sufficient judgment, intelligence, and character to sit in the House themselves. I am not for a moment attempting to decry the intelligence, amiability, character, and feeling of responsibility of the ladies of the country. Far be it from me to say a word against them. But I say that if they have all those qualifications, they certainly ought to go the whole hog, and go into Parliament, and take their part there and give the public the benefit of the qualities they possess.

The Hon. J. WILSON : That is exactly the same cry as was used last time. But the moment the hon. member was pressed to go the whole hog, he backed down!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER : I never backed down.

The Hon. J. WILSON : The hon. member voted against the bill!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER : Yes, because that clause was not in the bill.

The Hon. J. WILSON : It was in the bill!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER : It was introduced into the bill afterwards.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON : If the hon. member will vote for the second reading of the bill, I will introduce that clause!

The Hon. Sir NORMAND MACLAURIN : Will the Vice-President of the Executive Council pledge the Government to pass it?

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER : Will the Vice-President of the Executive Council undertake to see that it shall become law?

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON : How could I undertake that?

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER : Well, what is the good of trying to buy a vote when you cannot give a price for it? It only shows the view the Government take of a measure of this sort when they think

they can secure a catch vote by making a proposition to which my hon. friend knows the other House would not agree. In speaking of the women of the country, I use the word "women" in its true sense. They are all women—there are no special qualifications for those who are to have the right to vote under this bill. They are all women, and a nobler name no woman ever had. In pointing out my objections to the bill, I use as an argument that if the ladies ought to have a voice in the election of members of Parliament, then they certainly ought to be entitled to sit in the House as members of Parliament. But the Government have not taken that view. This is proved by the fact that the Government did not introduce the bill with that clause in it. But now, for the sake of catching a vote, they will put that or any other clause in it. Why did they not put it in originally? Why was not the bill settled in the Cabinet and introduced on those lines? That would have been a straightforward way of showing the opinion of the Government. But when the bill is in this Chamber, and exception is taken to it, they give us any plausible answer; they say "We will put what you want in." Why did they not put it in when considering the bill in Cabinet, instead of the Vice-President of the Executive Council now saying, for the sake of catching votes, "If that is your view, I will put that or any other clause you like in the bill"? It shows that the Government are not dealing seriously with a radical alteration of the Constitution. If the clause ought to be in the bill it should have been in it from the very moment it saw the light of day and should not be put in to meet the exigencies of the case as they arise. I certainly did think once, and to a large extent I think still, that the effect of this bill will go largely in the direction of unsexing women. In fact there is no doubt about it. We know perfectly well from past experience the kind of excitement that exists in connection with parliamentary elections. Every person who has a right to exercise the franchise should be able to give an intelligent vote in choosing between one candidate and another, and ought to give each of the candidates an opportunity of being heard by him, so that he may listen to all their views and judge whether they

[*The Hon. C. E. Pilcher.*]

are or are not fit persons to represent the people in Parliament. We know where these meetings are held. We know that they are held on the balconies of hotels more frequently than anywhere else. They are held in large rooms at night. They are held at any place where it is convenient to hold a meeting.

The Hon. F. B. SUTOR: Women are there in hundreds!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: All I can say is that the women who go there would be much better at home, and are not a credit to their sex. But I have attended a great number of meetings of that character, and I do not agree with my hon. friend's statement. Is that the kind of place where the women of the country ought to have a desire to be? Certainly if they had a vote it would be their duty to go there. If they are called upon to choose between one man and another as the proper person to represent them in Parliament they ought to go to those meetings wherever they may be held. Is that the class of meeting one would desire the women of the country to be present at, where you frequently hear the foulest and coarsest language used, where you find all sorts of horse-play tricks indulged in, and specious arguments coming from the outside assemblage in the shape of rotten eggs? Is that the class of association women ought to be mixed up with in this country? Is that what we desire? Is it what the women themselves desire? If so, let them say they want to be a party to these proceedings. But they have not stated it except through this handful of women. I say it is unavoidable; you cannot get away from that. Women cannot possibly inform themselves of the views of candidates unless they take the trouble to submit themselves to the ordeal of attending meetings wherever they may be held; and we know what those meetings are like. I go further and say that associations of that sort are highly calculated to demoralise women, to unsex them, and to alter their character, because we know there is no more radical changer of character than associations. I do not wish in any way whatever to minimise the intellect, the intelligence, or the integrity of women. I recognise to the fullest extent that women in the old country exercise a great power in elections, and that they exercise

it because of their clear perception and their clear intellect, and they do it in the legitimate and right way. They go round from house to house and use their influence. They work for the particular candidate to whom they have given their support, whether it be their father, their brother, their husband, or a stranger. They work for their candidate in a legitimate way, never associating themselves with the most degraded and worst parts of election proceedings. They have a power; I admit they exercise a great power; and more than that they exercise it with sound judgment. I admit all that, and I have no doubt whatever that in England elections are influenced to a large extent by the exertions of women. Now, there is another reason—some people may call it sentiment, but it is a sentiment that must appeal to every right-thinking man: there is no doubt in the world that women were never intended by nature to occupy the position of politicians. They have a great and a noble part in life to play—a part which is refused to men, and which is reserved to them alone, and one which they are specially suited by nature to perform to perfection. Their characters, temperaments, and affections all conduce to aid them in playing the part of women as the Almighty made them. Those who may not have so many domestic associations as others, if they want full scope for the exercise of the good qualities nature has endowed them with, may have an immense sphere before them. In this, as in every other country, they have the poor always at hand to help and aid. They have any amount of public movements short of political life in which they can take an active interest, and to which they can lend their countenance and assist by their exertions.

The Hon. J. WILSON: The hon. member knows that women are already electors in Australia!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: In certain places, no doubt.

The Hon. J. WILSON: In New South Wales. Every woman in New South Wales has a political vote!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: I suppose the hon. member is referring to the Commonwealth. Does my hon. friend consider that the legislation of the Common-

wealth is of such an admirable character that this state should copy it? God forbid that we should copy anything they have done. That is my answer to the hon. member's interjection.

The Hon. J. WILSON: The hon. and learned gentleman cannot protect women in the way he proposes!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: I do not want to protect them. They can protect themselves. But I strongly object to its being said, as the Vice-President of the Executive Council declared, that because the Commonwealth Parliament has passed a certain measure, which my hon. friend assured us had received assent—and I thank him for the information; I was not previously aware of it, but I presume he is right—that is any reason why this state should cede its rights. Simply because the Commonwealth has chosen to adopt it is no reason why we should follow suit. Personally, I do not care a snap for what the Commonwealth has done. I do not believe, and never did believe, in it, and every day we live in this country I believe in it less. If I am not mistaken the day will come when we will all curse it.

The Hon. F. FLOWERS: They have started now to curse it!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: Wait for another year or two, and the air will be thick with their curses. At any rate, my contention is that that is no reason for the adoption of such a proposal as is now submitted to us, and it never operated in my mind as a reason why we should pass this bill. I was drawn off from what I was saying about the women of this country. I was pointing out that their sphere in life was a different one from that of politicians, and I gave the reason about their attending meetings and the things they would have to submit themselves to as very strong reason indeed why they should not have the right to vote. Then I was proposing to deal with this, that they have already spheres of public usefulness in which all the qualities with which nature has endowed them can have full play without in any way interfering with public political life. I was pointing out that if there are women who have not as many domestic associations as others they always have an unlimited scope for the exercise of their better qualities amongst the poor and amongst the

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many other people who, though we may not call them poor, still require and would be all the better for assistance from their female friends. But women have an even higher sphere than that, and let me ask hon. members to think solidly of this. I presume hon. members will admit that the proper sphere for a woman who is married, and who has children, is to stay at home.

The Hon. J. WILSON: Not all the time!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: I did not say all the time. I say her proper sphere is to stay at home, and, to the best of her ability, to endeavour to educate and to inculcate into her children qualities which developed in time will make her children good citizens and a benefit to the country to which they belong. By inculcating good moral principles in the earliest stages, by suggesting the classes of education, perhaps in the more primitive forms, she, by degrees, will develop the minds of those children until by and by they will become highly educated people, useful to the state. When her husband comes home after a hard day's work, whatever occupation he may follow, whether of manual or mental labour, after buffeting with the world, no one can discount the supreme happiness of the moment when he sees the wife of his choice, and finds a clean house and ease and comfort, and finds his wife, to the best of her ability, endeavouring to inculcate into their children the beginnings which will eventually result in their being great men or women, or at any rate honest men and honest women; the happiest moment of that man's life will be when going into the house, he says, "I thank God I have a home, and it is here." But how would it be if some political meeting drew away his wife, and in after years, possibly, his daughters? How would it be if in this domestic house, which ought to be what I have pointed out, there happened to be a diversity of opinion? How would it be if the wife of his bosom took a strong view about her husband's political views; and if she thought that his political views, as we sometimes think of men's, were not only wrong but dishonest —

An Hon. Member: —————

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: Yes, we do. We do think that men's political views are sometimes not only wrong but dishonest.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: My hon. friend has recently returned from New Zealand!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: My hon. friend knows that what I am saying is true. It makes no matter whether I have been to New Zealand or not. These trumpery interruptions make me think that my hon. friend imagines he is playing a game of skittles. I shall be obliged to my hon. friend if he will pay more attention to the business of the country instead of interrupting me.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: I was interrupted throughout my speech. I have only interrupted the hon. gentleman twice!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: I only interrupted the hon. gentleman once, for which I apologise. Of course it is not easy to deal with an important question of this sort if all kinds of immaterial matters are introduced. What has my trip to New Zealand to do with this? There are women there, and good women there; but what has that to do with the question now before us? What I was saying was this: That if this bill passes into law we must look to see what will be the probable consequences of it, and I am pointing out some of them. For instance, I am giving the opposite view to this domestic felicity which I pointed out ought to exist in every home. I was putting a case of where the wife took a strong view in politics; and if she has the right to vote, she should take a strong view if she intends to give effect to it. I was submitting that she might take the view that her husband is wrong, and more than that, that his views might be dishonest. Is that the sort of thing to cherish affection between husband and wife? I go further, and say this man may have two daughters, one of whom thinks the mother is wrong, and the other thinks the father is wrong.

The Hon. W. ROBSON: Why should they not?

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: They have no right at present, and I am pointing out reasons why they should not have the right. If my hon. friend will restrain his impetuosity and say what he has to say a little later on it will assist me. The object I know is to throw me off what I wish to say, but I am going to say it. I am too experienced a hand to be drawn off by interruptions. Supposing you multiply

the complications, bringing two daughters into the field, both of age and both entitled to vote; they may have strong views, even to the extent of thinking that not only is their mother wrong in her political opinions, but dishonestly wrong. I ask is this kind of thing calculated to preserve the harmony, affection, and love which has been part of the history of British homes as long as we can remember the British nation? It is the home influence, the home associations and affections that have done more to cement the great nation which has been built up, and of which we are so proud, than anything else that we have done. If you do anything which runs the risk of undermining that, and interfering with it and weakening its influence, then you are taking a serious step which may be productive of very grave consequences. I said a little while ago that, as far as I am personally concerned, it really does not matter whether women get the right to vote or not. I hold a strong view that they should not get it, and I intend to move that the matter be referred to the women of the country by way of a referendum, so that they can say whether or not they wish to have the right to vote. I think hon. members will agree that the course I suggest is a reasonable one, and that, as the Vice-President of the Executive Council has put it, we should not pass the bill without knowing whether a substantial majority of the women of the country want it. I may have strong views against the bill, but I will go with my hon. friends who are in favour of the measure if the women of the country really wish to have this bill passed. I admit that that would be a strong argument in favour of the bill.

The Hon. J. WILSON: You make them electors then!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: No. I let them determine the question whether or not they shall be electors. Hon. members will bear in mind that the Vice-President of the Executive Council, in moving the second reading of the bill, used various arguments in favour of the measure to which I take no exception. I do not question the intelligence of women. I do not question their desire to do what is right and straight. I do not desire to minimise the nobility of their character. I recognise that they are infinitely superior to us in

many qualities. I recognise that in quickness of perception they can run rings round any man; but there is one thing that they want I think, and that is soundness of judgment. I may be wrong, or I may be right. The strongest argument of the Vice-President of the Executive Council is that it is a fair and reasonable thing to give women the franchise if they want it. I agree with that, although I see strong reasons for opposing the bill. It is a very simple thing for the women to say whether they want the bill or not. Amongst the very large number of women with whom I have come in contact, I have put the question to many. I say, "Do you want the bill?" And with the exception of one or two, and I have spoken to scores, they say that they do not want it. I have asked a number of men what their experience has been, and one and all have said, speaking from their experience amongst women whom they have asked the question for the purpose of knowing what they should do, that with very few exceptions, the women do not want the franchise.

The Hon. J. WILSON: Why should not those have it who want it?

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: Why should a minority govern in this democratic country?

The Hon. F. FLOWERS: We will test it by a referendum!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: Exactly. If they want it they will say so. I have curtailed my remarks about the bill, because I thought that on reflection, hon. members would see as my hon. friend, the Vice-President of the Executive Council, has said, that if the women want the franchise, it is only a fair and reasonable thing that they should have it. I admit at once that if they decide that they ought to have the franchise, the argument would be unanswerable.

The Hon. J. WILSON: You never asked the men whether we should liberalise the franchise, as far as they were concerned!

The Hon. F. FLOWERS: There was no need to do that. The men clamoured for it!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: This is a new departure. I quite admit that there is very great force in the argument of the Vice-President of the Executive Council in the direction I have indicated. If it is made clear that the women do want the

franchise, and the course I propose is the only way to determine the question—then they should have it. There is no great hurry about it. They cannot get the franchise for a long time; they have gone on for a very long time without it, and I think they may well wait a year or two more, so that the women of the country may have an opportunity to say whether they want the franchise or not. As far as I am concerned, if a majority—I do not mean a majority of one—if a fair and reasonable majority vote in favour of the bill I shall not oppose it any longer, and I have no doubt that hon. members generally will adopt that course. It is a fair thing first to say to them, "Do you want the franchise?" It is a fair thing to offer to women many advantages in life; but it is also a fair thing to say, "Would it be of any benefit to you?" There are heaps of things that it would be a very gracious thing to offer to women, but it might turn out that we were giving them what would prove to be a white elephant. They might not want it. If I sent a carriage and pair to a poor woman who could not afford to keep a coachman or a stable, she would say, "I appreciate your kindness, but these things are of no use to me." When making concessions or conferring rights, which do not already exist, it is a fair thing to ask the question, do you want them? We may not all think that you ought to have them, but if you think you would like to have them we ought to give them to you. With regard to the franchise we might say to the women, "Try the experiment, and if you find that you cannot work under the new order of things, we rely upon your intelligence and judgment to come and say so, and put things back into their original position. We must in the first place, before we force you into a certain position, ask whether you want us to do it." Hon. members must remember this, that I pointed out, and I am sure hon. members in their own hearts must admit it, that the probable consequences of a bill of this sort may be, and I do not want to put it higher than that, very prejudicial to the position of women. Do not hon. members think, under these circumstances, that it is a fair thing to say to the women of the country: "We want you to seriously think the matter over, to look at the pros and cons, and consider whether, having heard the sug-

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gestions made and the opinions expressed, you can come to the conclusion that the bill will be an advantage to you. If on the other hand, having thought seriously over it, you see dangers that might ensue, dangers that you think will ensue, things which will come into existence which might have the effect of destroying the status which women have had for all time in the British dominion, do you think that under such circumstances you should have the bill"? Is it not a fair thing to let the women have an opportunity of saying that? Why should we, at the invitation of a mere handful of women, force this bill upon all the women of the country? That is what it is. We are to force it upon them, and they are to be compelled to be electors.

The Hon. J. WILSON: They need not vote!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: Need not vote! What is the good of giving them the franchise then?

The Hon. J. WILSON: Many men do not vote!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: Many men do not vote who ought to vote. But I think the hon. member will appreciate the fairness of the proposal that we should send the bill to the women of the country, invite them to consider it seriously, and if a majority say that they would like the bill to pass, to let them have it.

The Hon. J. WILSON: Is the hon. and learned member prepared to support that on every proposal that comes before the House?

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: Yes.

The Hon. J. WILSON: The referendum!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: Yes; on every great principle I certainly would.

The Hon. J. WILSON: The hon. and learned member opposed it before!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: Not in regard to a bill, but in regard to some twopenny-halfpenny thing.

The Hon. J. WILSON: With regard to the biggest thing we ever had before us, the hon. member opposed the referendum!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: What was that?

The Hon. J. WILSON: The Commonwealth Bill!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: I was opposed to federation pure and simple!

The Hon. J. WILSON: The hon. and learned member was opposed to a referendum on it!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: I was opposed to federation, and hon. members know that during the last twelve months there have been hundreds and thousands of converts to that view in New South Wales. You cannot walk along the streets now without tumbling up against one. The only man you cannot find is the man who voted for the Federation Bill. I beg to move:

That all the words after the word "That" be omitted with the view to insert in lieu thereof the following words:—"in the opinion of this House a referendum of the adult women of New South Wales should be taken before dealing further with the Women's Franchise Bill."

The Hon. B. R. WISE: I submit that the amendment is out of order, for the reason that it is impossible to carry out any referendum such as that suggested without incurring expenditure.

The Hon. Sir NORMAND MACLAURIN: We can express an opinion!

The Hon. B. R. WISE: But it is proposed to do more than that. It is perfectly clear under the Constitution Act that this House has not the power to appropriate any portion of the public revenue, or to introduce a bill imposing any sort of charge on the people. I have always understood, and I speak subject to correction by those who have had a longer experience of this House than I have, that constitutional propriety extended that rule so as to restrain the power of this House to pass a resolution which, if adopted, would involve a charge on the revenue. The Constitution says that this House shall not pass a bill imposing any charge on the revenue; also, it shall not pass a resolution which if put into law would necessitate a charge on the revenue. I speak subject to correction; anyone will be able to mention any resolution which has been passed which, if carried into effect, would impose a charge upon the revenue. There can be no doubt that this resolution cannot be carried into effect without the expenditure of public money. Rolls would have to be collected, polling-booths would have to be established, poll clerks would have to be appointed, and in various other ways public money would have to be spent. The simple point which

I would submit is this: Has this House power by resolution to submit to the Government and to the other Chamber any proposal which involves public expenditure? If there is any precedent, of course, my argument is answered. If there is no precedent, then, undoubtedly, the amendment is a violation of the spirit of the first section of the Constitution Act. I believe that the amendment submitted is wholly unwarranted by any precedent of this House.

The Hon. J. H. WANT: I think that my hon. and learned friend has mistaken the amendment altogether. This is not an amendment to the bill, it is simply an expression of opinion on the part of this House.

The Hon. B. R. WISE: I say the question is whether we can do what is proposed by resolution. I take it as a resolution.

The Hon. J. H. WANT: When the opinion of the House is against the passing of a measure it is not an uncommon thing to pass a resolution which will have the effect of defeating the measure that is before the House, and letting hon. members give an expression of opinion without in any way affecting the real question before the House except as showing their disapproval of it. This resolution is nothing more nor less than letting it be known that so far as we are concerned we express disapproval of this measure, that we think it ought not to be adopted, but if it is adopted it should only be done by way of referendum. We do not bind the Government to go to any expense, we do not bind the Government to take a referendum, but we give expression as far as we are concerned to our objection to the passing of the bill in the form in which it is before us, and we say that if it is to be done at all we are of opinion that it ought to be done in another way—not that it ought to be done in that way, but if it is done at all, that is the way the House would select. Under those circumstances it would be a farce to say that every time we express an opinion adverse to the passing of a measure by simply passing some resolution inconsistent with it we initiate taxation. We do nothing of the kind; we simply give an expression of opinion to the effect that we disapprove of the bill.

The Hon. T. M. SLATTERY: In addition to the point which has been taken by the

[*The Hon. B. R. Wise.*

Attorney-General, I should like to raise the question of relevance, the question as to whether the amendment is relevant to the bill under consideration. It is a well-known rule in parliamentary practice that any amendment to a bill must be relevant to it. I submit that the amendment is not relevant to the bill.

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: Could we move that the bill be read this day six months?

The Hon. T. M. SLATTERY: Certainly; that is a parliamentary method of getting rid of a bill.

The Hon. J. H. WANT: Could we move that it be referred to a select committee?

The Hon. T. M. SLATTERY: That is another way which is also recognised by parliamentary practice. If there is a point which can be taken in reply to the one I have taken, surely hon. and learned members are capable of taking it. I question the relevancy of the amendment, and I submit that it must be ruled out of order.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: In supporting the objection raised by the hon. member, Mr. Slattery, I desire to submit that not only is the motion not relevant, but it is utterly impossible that such an amendment can be moved. We are now discussing the second reading of a bill. The hon. and learned member, Mr. Pilcher, has moved the omission of all the words after the word "That." Instead of inviting the House to come to a decision on the bill, he has moved an abstract resolution. Supposing the House carries the amendment moved by the hon. and learned member, what becomes of the bill? We have not dealt with it at all. We are invited to consider a definite proposition, and if we adopt the amendment we put it on one side. I contend that you, Mr. Deputy-President, cannot put the question, because it is not relevant. If you do put it, and it is carried, what becomes of the bill? I submit that it stands on the business-paper, and that on any other day I can move the second reading.

The Hon. Sir NORMAND MACLAURIN: There are three ways in which the House can deal with the second reading of the bill. We can pass it, negative it, read it a second time this day six months, or move the previous question.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: Or refer it to a select committee.

The Hon. Sir NORMAND MACLAURIN : That is another way, but we seldom do that. What we can do is to move the previous question, if we do not choose to do anything else. It so happens that this very question arose in the House on a former occasion, and there is a ruling of Judge Burton on the point. The hon. and learned member, Mr. Pilcher, has moved that all the words after the word "That" be omitted with a view to inserting a substantive proposition. The ruling of Judge Burton is to this effect :

An amendment to substitute a substantive proposition for a motion for the second reading is in the nature of the previous question, and will, if carried, have the effect only of postponing the question for the second reading of the bill.

That is to say, it is in the nature of the previous question, and it has always been held that this House has a perfect right to move the previous question on any bill submitted to it by the Government or any private person. It seems to me that there is nothing whatever in the argument of the Attorney-General that the amendment involves the appropriation of money, and that, therefore, it is *ultra vires* of this House. The amendment does not involve the appropriation of public money. All that the amendment says is that, in the opinion of the House, we ought not to be asked to vote upon the bill until a referendum of the women of the country has been taken.

The Hon. B. R. WISE : That means until money has been spent.

The Hon. Sir NORMAND MACLAURIN : Is the House to be debarred from expressing an opinion? It is for the Government to decide whether they will accept the recommendation, even if it is adopted. It is perfectly within the power of the House to express an opinion. We have expressed many opinions, which, if carried into effect, would have been attended with great expenditure; and it seems to me that the amendment is one by no means beyond our powers. As to the question of relevancy raised by the hon. member, Mr. Slattery, it seems to me that Judge Burton's ruling is absolute on that point, namely, that the proposition has to be taken as involving the previous question.

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER : In connection with the forms of words used, what we have to look to is their real

spirit. The words used in connection with an amendment of this kind are absolutely immaterial. Their effect is that the second reading should be postponed, instead of being taken now, until a referendum of women has been taken. The amendment simply postpones the second reading until a referendum has been taken.

The DEPUTY-PRESIDENT : Standing Order 168 provides :

Amendments may be proposed to the question for the second reading by moving the omission of the word "now" with a view to the insertion of the words "this day six months"; or by moving that the bill be referred to a select committee; or the previous question may be moved; and a bill ordered to be read that day "six" months, shall not be considered again in the same session.

Then, in addition to that, our second standing order provides that :

In all cases not specially provided for by these rules and orders, or other rules and orders hereafter adopted, resort may be had to the rules, forms, and usages of the Imperial Parliament as laid down in the last edition of May's "Parliamentary Practice."

I first come to the question whether the amendment can be dealt with under our standing orders, or under the usages of Parliament as laid down in May's "Parliamentary Practice." In the last edition of "May," page 446, will be found the various modes of disposing of a bill—by negating it, by moving that it be read this day six or three months, or by moving the previous question, &c. Then this passage occurs :

It is also competent to a member, who desires to place on record any special reasons for not agreeing to the second reading of a bill, to move as an amendment to the question a resolution declaratory of some principle adverse to or differing from the principles, policy, or provisions of the bill; or expressing opinions as to any circumstances connected with its introduction or prosecution.

I think that is a clear indication that it is competent for any hon. member who wishes to postpone the present consideration of the bill, to put on record his opinion, and, if carried by a majority, the opinion of the House as to why the bill should not be proceeded with, and setting out his opinions for not proceeding with it. I do not think there is any force in the argument that the amendment will have the effect of involving Government expenditure, because the amendment, if carried, merely asserts that the House is of

opinion that a referendum should be taken. This House has nothing to do with the carrying out of a referendum. That is a matter, possibly, for the consideration of the Government for the time-being. Under the circumstances, I think the amendment is in order.

The Hon. T. M. SLATTERY: The hon. and learned member, Mr. Pilcher, has stated that the bill before the House means a political change in the Constitution, and that it has been forced upon the people by a handful of women. Of course, every change in our Constitution can be described as a radical change. That is an expression that has been used both here and in the old country. For instance, in the days of William IV, when the Reform Bill was brought in, there were able and learned men, like the hon. and learned member, Mr. Pilcher, who protested against the extension of the franchise on the ground that it was a radical change in the Constitution, and that it was forced on the people of Great Britain and Ireland by a few. If this measure has been forced forward by the power of the intellect of certain women in our community, what power must those women have in moulding public opinion to see exactly as they see?

The Hon. J. H. WANT: They have not moulded it!

The Hon. T. M. SLATTERY: If the hon. and learned member will bear with me, I will prove, as well as one can prove anything in a deliberative assembly, that they have moulded it, and that the people have followed them. The hon. and learned member, Mr. Pilcher, has stated that the bill has been forced on us by a handful of women. I think that is the greatest compliment which has ever been paid to women in this country or elsewhere, namely, that a handful of them, by their intellect and persistency, and by the undoubted logical position which they have taken up, have been able to mould the public opinion of this country to such an extent as to get a majority of the people to send representatives to Parliament in favour of their view, that the franchise should be extended to women. My hon. and learned friend, Mr. Pilcher, said that, if he were convinced that the majority of the women were in favour of this measure, he would vote for it, even although he conscientiously believed that it would be a

bad thing for the future of the country. In what position does he stand? If I thought this was a measure calculated to do the slightest injury to the people of the country, I should have the courage of my opinion, and hold it to the last, and record my vote against the measure, even though all the women of the country were in favour of it. My hon. and learned friend pictured a number of women attending public meetings. Do we not know that within the last ten years, since women have been taking a very large interest in public affairs in this state, it has become an invariable custom to invite the women of Sydney and suburbs to public meetings, and that tickets are issued to them, and seats assigned to them in places like the Town Hall, for the purpose of letting them hear the speeches of candidates for the representation of the various constituencies in and around the city? And is it not an undeniable fact that, since women have attended these public meetings, the meetings have been creditable, alike to the city and those attending them; whereas, in former days, there was, at times, a tendency to something like disorder; and some of the reckless and improper things alluded to by my hon. and learned friend, Mr. Pilcher, took place? Does not my hon. and learned friend know that, certainly for more than fifty or sixty years, women have openly taken a very active part in the politics of Great Britain and Ireland? From the days of the well-known Duchess of Devonshire who went round canvassing amongst the constituents for the candidate of her choice, we know that leading women in England have taken a very large part in public affairs—those on the Conservative side for their party and those on the Liberal side for theirs. My hon. and learned friend, Mr. Pilcher, thinks that by women being called upon, say once in three years, to exercise the franchise, and go for about half an hour to the polling-booth to record their vote, their fine womanly instincts would be almost destroyed. What nonsense! Do we not know that for years past women have had a vote in the city of Sydney and in various municipalities in the state as ratepayers? And where have we ever heard a single suggestion made that they have lost their womanly qualities by exercising their right as ratepayers in voting for the return

[*The Deputy-President.*]

of aldermen who would have the control of the expenditure of the rates to which they contributed? The municipal franchise is exercised once a year; the parliamentary franchise is supposed, at all events, to be exercised only once in three years. If in connection with municipal elections women exercise the franchise as electors voting for the return of aldermen precisely in the same way as they would vote for the return of members of Parliament, how could they lose their fine feelings and womanly qualities by voting at parliamentary elections, as my hon. and learned friend, Mr. Pilcher, has suggested they would? The hon. and learned gentleman drew a picture of a hard-working man returning home and finding everything all right so long as his wife had not the franchise, but said it would be all the other way immediately she had the power to cast a vote. I suppose that at the present time every intellectual woman in this and every other community, whether she has a vote or not, takes an intelligent interest in public affairs, and will hold to her opinion against that of her husband or anyone else. Why should not a woman have the right to exercise her judgment as freely in a free community as her husband has? On what ground of superiority is a man to say that his wife is to be entirely guided by him, and that he is to mould her opinions on public affairs? It may be that in the majority of cases the woman would take the right view. She might take an unprejudiced view. Men, on account of their daily avocations, are far more likely to take a prejudiced view of public matters and against a candidate for a public position than would women, who would judge by the public utterances and conduct, and perhaps also by the private conduct of the candidates who appeared before the public for election. It has been said by interjection in the course of this debate that the passing of this measure will lead to the degradation of woman. Degradation of woman! This is the elevation of woman. How could the giving of the franchise to the women of this state degrade them? If this is degradation, hon. members have already degraded women, because for many years past we have extended the franchise to women by giving them the right to vote in connection with municipal elections.

We have amended the law on many occasions, and on every occasion when we have amended it, hon. members have not dared to interfere with the right of women to vote in the election of aldermen of the city of Sydney and suburbs. There is one point we have to consider outside all that has been already stated. What is the constitutional duty of this House at the present time? It is no part of our duty to reject measures which have received the sanction of the representatives of the people, and we know that on three separate occasions the Legislative Assembly has passed this bill, and that on one occasion the second reading of the measure was passed in this House by a majority, and that the bill went through Committee, but was wrecked on the third reading by a small majority.

The Hon. W. WALKER: Six!

The Hon. T. M. SLATTERY: Well, I will call six a large majority. What constitutional position are we in? The Assembly has passed this bill three times, and before it came here now, it was included in the programme of the Government, and was presented to the people for their consideration, and we know that on the second reading of the measure in the Legislative Assembly fifty-three members of that House voted in favour of it, and only eight against it.

The Hon. W. WALKER: And seventy were absent!

The Hon. T. M. SLATTERY: I should say that is a very large division—sixty-one altogether.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTOR: A majority of this House never votes on any occasion!

The Hon. T. M. SLATTERY: I am not a keeper of the conscience of those members who were absent, but if I can offer an expression of opinion without being personally offensive to them, I would say that they ought to have been present and have had the courage to vote either one way or the other. It may be, that all those gentlemen were in favour of the bill, or it may be that they were all opposed to it. I can only go by the public records and state the position we are in constitutionally. Who ever heard of a Legislative Council in any British community rejecting a bill for the third time after it had been passed by the representative Chamber?

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: And in two different parliaments!

The Hon. T. M. SLATTERY: Yes, in two different parliaments, and after the question of the extension of the franchise to women had been included in the manifesto of the Government who had come back from the country with a large majority? Did we not hear all this talk with regard to the degradation of women when it was first proposed that women should be admitted to the learned professions, and be entitled to go to the University and take degrees there? Exactly the same kind of argument was used on those occasions as is used now in reference to this bill. But there has been no degradation of women by their taking degrees at various universities both at home and here, and we know that in the professions, certainly in the medical profession, women have attained a very fair place indeed.

The Hon. W. R. CAMPBELL: Women themselves will not trust them!

The Hon. T. M. SLATTERY: I am quite aware that it is no part of our duty to follow what the Federal Parliament has done. I fully and frankly admit that at once. The Federal Parliament has no more control over our proceedings than we have over theirs, but it is a different matter altogether when the Legislative Assembly, the people's representatives, have passed this bill three times in two parliaments, and when it has been included in the Governor's speech and in the manifesto of the Government. If ever there were a case in which you could say that the rejection of a measure would be defying the will of the people, it would be in a case of this kind. What constitutional answer could we give to the people of the country if we were to reject a bill that has been passed three times by their representatives in two parliaments, and which was passed the other night in the Legislative Assembly by fifty-three votes to eight? Supposing that when my hon. and learned friend, Sir Normand MacLaurin, was a member of the Ministry, of which I also had the honor to be a member, this Council had rejected a bill passed three times by the Legislative Assembly, how long would he have stood that?

The Hon. Sir NORMAND MACLAURIN: I would never have brought forward a women's suffrage bill!

[*The Hon. T. M. Slattery.*

The Hon. T. M. SLATTERY: This bill is either important or it is unimportant. If it is unimportant we should pass it. If it is important there are 10,000 times more reasons why we should pass it. If it is important we must pass it because it embodies the will of the people, as expressed three times by their representatives in Parliament. If the second reading of a bill of this kind were rejected after being introduced by a government of which my hon. and learned friend, Sir Normand MacLaurin, was a member, he would have a cabinet meeting called the next morning and have the House prorogued, and we know exactly what would follow.

The Hon. Sir NORMAND MACLAURIN: He would never bring it in!

The Hon. T. M. SLATTERY: That is what my hon. and learned friend would do. He would have a Cabinet meeting in the morning, because the people must rule, and when they express their opinion on a matter as they have done on this three times, it is our clear and constitutional duty to bow to their will and pass this bill into law. This is no experiment. It is the law of the Federal Parliament. It is the law in South Australia, in New Zealand, and, I understand, in Western Australia. And if it is the law in two of the states of the Commonwealth, and in one state outside, what good reason can be given for the rejection of this bill? It is only a sentimental reason; there is no practical reason why it should be rejected. With regard to the position of women, I can only put this point. They are liable to all the pains and penalties provided by our laws.

AN HON. MEMBER: No!

The Hon. T. M. SLATTERY: They are liable, precisely, in the same way that men are liable. There is no difference. A woman is liable to all our laws, and under one particular law, namely, that relating to divorce she is certainly placed at a singular disadvantage. There is no doubt in the world that of all the laws on which women should have the power to exercise their right to vote, it is on the law relating to divorce. It seems to me a strange and anomalous thing that whilst we have our women educated exactly as are the men of the country, and whilst we place all the penalties of the laws on their shoulders, we should stop short of giving

them the power to exercise the franchise for the return of men to Parliament. My opinion is that if we give women the vote they will exercise it prudently and wisely. They will think more calmly and more deliberately about the men they will send in to make laws, not only for themselves, but for their children, and their children's children; they will consider and weigh carefully the power and ability and services of men in public life, and you may depend on it that the men who are the most attentive to their public duties, the most virtuous in their performance of them, will be the men whom the women of this state will support if the franchise is extended to them. I do not know if I can say anything more in favour of this bill; but outside the arguments that may be adduced, and a great many may be adduced which it is not necessary for me to traverse, I submit that on the one ground alone, it is our clear constitutional duty as a Legislative Council to agree to the second reading of this measure by a fair majority.

The Hon. J. M. CREED: I may first say that I am thoroughly of the opinion that women are just as capable of exercising the franchise as men. I believe they would do it with equal conscientiousness, and equal intelligence; but what I fear is—and the more inquiry I make, and the more information that is placed at my service the more I am convinced—that a large proportion of the very best women, and those most capable of forming an accurate judgment on public questions, will decline to exercise their vote. Under these circumstances, I am very loath indeed to give countenance to a measure which would tend to increase the worst elements of the franchise without counterbalancing that evil by equally increasing the better elements. Of course, I am always met by those in favour of this bill with the statement, that at the present time a large proportion of the men who possess a vote do not exercise it. That, I admit, is true, and like every man having the well-being of the country at heart, I regret it very deeply; but that is a matter which I am afraid no action that any one of us can take will rectify. It has not yet been found possible on the part of the legislature to in any way restrict the franchise to those who exercise it. I certainly would like to

see some measure under which any person on the roll who did not exercise his vote at a general election, should, unless he could prove to the satisfaction of the officer having charge of the registration, that his non-voting was dependent on some unavoidable cause, be removed from the roll, and until he took all the original steps to get replaced he should not be reinstated and able to vote again. I think this would do a great deal to prevent the evil of the non-exercise of the franchise by many of those possessing it, but at the same time it is to my mind an additional reason for postponing for the present the addition of the feminine vote to the already existing roll. It may be said that the fact of the Federal Parliament having given the franchise to women for the election of representatives to that Parliament is a strong reason why we should not oppose the granting to women of the right to vote for candidates for the State Parliament of New South Wales. It is a very strong argument, but I think it may be used in another direction. It is now necessary for the Federal Parliament to create a roll of women voters so that we shall have an electoral roll which will contain the names of all the women in the Commonwealth who are entitled to vote, all who have no disqualification and who are over the age of 21 years. It will then become easy for us to ascertain exactly whether the women of the country are in favour of being endowed with the vote in connection with the election of members of the state legislature or not. If this change had not been made in the electoral basis of the Federal Parliament it would be necessary to make a special roll which would entail undue expense and would be difficult to carry out, but with the roll that is formed for the Commonwealth it will become practicable and comparatively easy to take a vote of the women on the subject, and by referendum to ascertain whether the women of this state, as a body, do, or do not, desire to vote. Under the circumstances I think that the amendment moved by the hon. and learned member, Mr. Pilcher, is not out of place, but is in the best interests of the country. It will be thoroughly practicable to arrive at a decision by a general vote without undue cost. We shall best study the interests of the coun-

try if we refrain from giving women the franchise until we know that the majority desire it. If the majority do desire it I shall willingly support it, and I shall be satisfied that the women who have the vote will exercise it properly. Under the circumstances I feel it to be my duty to support the amendment, but I may again state that I do not wish it to be supposed that I do not think women are as intelligent as men, as capable of exercising the franchise, and as fully possessed of all the conscientious feelings that would induce them to exercise the franchise properly.

The Hon. Dr. NASH : I think we have all listened with considerable interest to the address of the hon. and learned member, Mr. Pilcher, who, certainly after the manner of an advocate, placed his case before the House in a forcible form, but in advancing his arguments he did not adduce those cases which occur to the minds of everybody, and which at one fell swoop bring to the ground the whole strength of the arguments which he put forth. Whilst he did in the main adopt the manner of an advocate he departed in one portion of his speech from the advocate's province and became a prophet, and I hope his prophecy, like that of the Bishop of Carlisle, will not be fulfilled, that the war he predicted will not come about any more than the bishop's prediction that peace would sleep with the Turks and infidels. If I were a prophet and took up the stand of the hon. and learned member, I should say that his prophecies will not be fulfilled. A strong point of the hon. and learned member's argument was that if we gave women the right to vote there would be no future peace in the households of this land. Fancy an advocate advancing that as one of the arguments for refusing this privilege and right to women! Have we not every-day experience of the hon. and learned gentleman in the courts and on the floor of this House where he fights with might and main for the cases and the position he takes up, and then goes away from the court or from this chamber and dines with the gentleman with whom he has been fighting? How does his fighting interfere with the harmony existing between himself and his colleague? He goes up with his colleague and has his dinner and his joke and they get on as well and as

[*The Hon. J. M. Creed.*

happily as if there had never been any war between them at all. They recognise that they are entitled to differ in opinion on any subjects which they discuss, and is it not likely in these enlightened days when men and women are coming to have the same standard of education, when women are entering the universities, that educated men and women, even though partners for life, will be able to disagree and yet be friends. I doubt whether they have not disagreed for a long while on certain subjects and have yet got on very well, but they will get on better when they know that they have thousands of subjects besides those little ones, or it may be large ones, which in time past have occupied their attention. I think, therefore, that the House can hardly be convinced by the arguments which the hon. and learned member brought forward and which his own case so entirely disproves. Is it not somewhat laughable that we should have a gentleman like the hon. and learned member proposing the referendum in this House? What has been his own political history and the political history of those who it is supposed will back him up in voting for the referendum? What has been their political history for the last thirty or forty years? Has it not been that whenever the subject of the referendum has been proposed it has been opposed by those gentlemen to the utmost of their power? Is it anything more than a joke for a gentleman to come forward and propose a referendum when everything that he has said in the past has been entirely opposed to anything of the kind? Do we not know that he and his colleagues are quite content to deal with any subject that is brought before the House without referring it back to the electors of the country?

The Hon. W. WALKER : That is not the question!

The Hon. Dr. NASH : I shall deal with the hon. gentleman directly. I am sorry that the hon. and learned member, Mr. Pilcher, who has just entered the Chamber, was not here when I was showing what a fatal mistake he has made in advocating the referendum. There is one peculiarity about the position in which I am placed on this side of the Chamber. Something has been said about university men, and I find on comparing both sides of the

House that there happen to be, as far as I know, only two men on this side who have had the advantage of university education. Why should we be in a minority in that respect? It is not difficult to explain. If we refer back to the political history of the universities, we shall find that the university people have not at all times been in favour of the extension of the franchise even to men. I think that the history of the universities in Great Britain will bear out what I say. They always tried to retain a larger modicum of power than people were prepared to give them. I think that university training has in some cases dimmed the vision of hon. members and, narrowed their views of what will be the outcome of the enfranchisement of women. In a debate which took place not long ago in the British House of Commons upon this subject, the leader of the House of Commons said that when the matter came up for debate there was no doubt that the same old arguments, the same old theories, and the same old sympathetic references would be made as had been made in the past in regard to the extension of the franchise. In regard to the extension of the franchise to men the same arguments were used. It was said that the men would not be competent, that they had not sufficient knowledge to entitle them to vote upon the large subjects which would be brought before the electors. The largest of all those subjects is perhaps the subject of war. In all the debates that I have read there has been but one argument that appealed to me with force in the matter: that because women never can and never will be in a position — although they have at times been placed in the position to have to bear arms on behalf of their country—they should have no say in the making of the laws of their country. So far so good. But are war and peace the only subjects that are brought before the electors of the country? War is one of the rarest subjects to be brought before the electors of Great Britain, and I hope it will be seldom that we shall have the subject brought before the electors of this country. Look at the departments of the state. We have a cabinet composed of a certain number of ministers, but we have not one minister devoted to the subject of war. The minister for war holds a subsidiary position, his

duties forming part of the duties of one of the state ministers. If that be so, how many other subjects are there to be dealt with. Those subjects require the constitution of a cabinet consisting of six, eight, or ten members, each with his allotted work to do. Is there any other subject but the one I have referred to which it can be truly said woman is not as capable of dealing with and giving a vote upon as man is? If so, I am unable to find it. I have been unable to find it in the debates which I have read and in the debates to which I have listened. Then, since women are affected by all those departments of government, directly or indirectly, if she has to submit to laws made by Parliament, why should she not have a vote for those who have the making of those laws? As regards the position which women now occupy in the state, I may point out that women are admitted to all the avenues of study, and to most avenues of employment, and I think I have read lately that one woman in New South Wales has been admitted to practise at the bar.

The Hon. W. WALKER: No!

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: I hope they will admit a lot of them!

An Hon. MEMBER: She has qualified, but she will not face the bar!

The Hon. T. M. SLATTERY: I know a number of them that are qualified!

An Hon. MEMBER: For which bar?

The Hon. Dr. NASH: An hon. and learned member has asked me for what bar. I am referring to the bar which the hon. and learned member himself and the hon. and learned member, Mr. Pilcher, adorn. Having adduced these various ideas, which I do not claim to be my own, but which have always impressed me as being the strongest which have come before me, I desire to say, in bringing my remarks to a conclusion, that I will cast my vote in favour of granting the franchise to women. My first ideas on this subject were entirely against it, but I paid a visit to New Zealand some years ago, and became so favourably impressed that I have since become an advocate for the extension of the franchise to women, and I am unable to see why they should not now have it. I have not heard any sound argument adduced against the granting of the franchise, but I have heard several arguments and interruptions this evening which have not im-

pressed me very forcibly. During the speech of the Vice-President of the Executive Council one gentleman sitting opposite interrupted several times. In looking up his works upon various subjects I find that he has written in his time some poems. I am alluding to the hon. member, Mr. Walker, who has written a book of poems, a large number of which are devoted to praises of women.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: He wrote them in the exuberance of his youth.

The Hon. Dr. NASH: For his poetic fancy, and his knowledge of rhyme and time and all those matters which constitute metre of course he is responsible, but for the information of the House, and to show how his opinions have changed, I will read one or two verses.

The Hon. W. WALKER: My opinions have not changed a bit!

The Hon. Dr. NASH: I shall quote from a poem of five verses. The hon. member, since I have had the honor of a seat in this Chamber, has been the most virulent opponent of granting the franchise to women. I do not know exactly the date of the poem, but the book containing it bears the date "Sydney, Turner and Henderson, 1884."

The Hon. W. WALKER: It was written long before that,—when I was a boy!

The Hon. Dr. NASH: If I have any hand in immortalising the hon. member, and in making his poems more public, I shall be very pleased with the action I am taking. However, I think that for some reason or other, during the last eighteen or twenty years, the hon. member's opinions have changed, as hon. members will see when they listen to the two verses I am about to read.

The Hon. N. HAWKEN: Is the hon. member going to quote a political opinion? If he is we shall be glad to hear it; if it is a social opinion we do not want to hear it.

An Hon. MEMBER: It is the opinion of a political poet!

The Hon. Dr. NASH: In order to show that the hon. member has changed his opinion—

The Hon. W. WALKER: I have not changed my opinion!

The Hon. Dr. NASH: In order to show that the hon. member has no right to change his opinion, I think I may be per-

[*The Hon. Dr. Nash.*

mitted to quote from his works, and to ask him not to sit on the opposite side of the Chamber, but, in accordance with his opinions in 1884, to cross over and vote in favour of the motion.

The Hon. W. WALKER: Those were my opinions long before 1884. Let the hon. member state facts.

The Hon. Dr. NASH: The poem from which I wish to quote is entitled "On an Apple" (sent by a young lady to the writer):—

Lovely stranger! thou hast come,
Enticing, tempting, red as sun:
Thou seem'st as in a garden grown
Where seeds of love are surely sown.

In shadow of thy ruby cheeks
I see prefigured her who seeks
The bond of truth, affection, love,
And virtues only found above.

If that be the hon. member's opinion of women, how can he to-night refuse her the right to vote in the interests of good government, truth, affection, and honesty? I ask the hon. member to come to this side of the Chamber, and to back up the opinion he expressed in 1884. I have heard it said by more than one hon. member in this House, that it is a degradation to women to have anything to do with politics. I venture to differ from that opinion. I think there can be nothing greater, nothing more sacred, and nothing finer in the history of any country, and especially in the history of any British country, than the fact that the nation has always played its part well, and that it has played its part well because it has had in its parliamentary institutions men of honor, men of rectitude, and men who are prepared at all times to do that which is just, right, and proper. I have sufficient confidence in the women of this country, in the women of the Anglo-Celtic race, to believe that if they be enfranchised they will cast their votes in favour of what is honorable, just, right, and proper. That being the case, what has this or any other Chamber to fear from the extension of the franchise to women? Has anything ever been lost by the extension of the franchise? Was the extension of the franchise to men not fought as bitterly, or more bitterly than this measure is being fought? There are many hon. members in this Chamber who remember the last great fight—the Midlothian campaign—when the forces of conservatism, backed up by faggot voters, were opposed

by that advocate of advancement and of the extension of the franchise, the Right Hon. William Ewart Gladstone.

The Hon. Sir NORMAND MACLAURIN : What does the hon. member think about the Majuba settlement ?

The Hon. Dr. NASH : He may have made a mistake in regard to that matter. I think he did ; but no one can go through the world and not make some mistakes.

The Hon. Sir NORMAND MACLAURIN : He made a great number !

The Hon. Dr. NASH : Did Pitt go through his career without, in the opinion of the other man, making mistakes ? Did Disraeli complete his career without, in the opinion of the other man, making mistakes ? Then is it not possible for the man who stood on the stage of the British Empire for so long to be forgiven for that one mistake, which I admit has had such disastrous consequences. However, in that great Midlothian campaign, he stood forward as the advocate of the extension of the franchise to men, and he led the way to the position we occupy to-night in advocating the extension of the franchise to women. The question which presents itself is, what disqualifications do women possess in this respect ? If, of course, one got down to a certain level one could invent plenty ; but to cast a vote in an intelligent manner it is necessary that one should have some knowledge ; and if one has sufficient knowledge to cast an intelligent vote why should that opportunity be denied ? I do not think any hon. gentleman who is going to vote against the measure can say that he thinks for a moment that women who are now being educated to a high standard, who have opportunities which they never had before, and have power to listen, and to learn, and to read and think for themselves, are not in as good a position as men to cast an intelligent vote on any subject which may be brought before them. Is it necessary that they should attend public meetings ? The hon. and learned member, Mr. Pilcher, said it was ; but I do not say so. The hon. and learned member spoke of elections as if they were conducted upon the method which was in vogue twenty or thirty years ago. Then, when a candidate was addressing the people from the hustings, and it was desired that questions should be asked of him, the man

who stood up to ask them was knocked down. I do not think he would be knocked down now. If he were, there would be a large number behind him who would get up and demand that the question he put should be answered. Those times have passed for ever. The average intelligence, both of the male and female members of the community is greater, and with the advancement of this intelligence electioneering is becoming more civilised. If women are granted the franchise it will be still more civilised, and there will not be need for recourse to those methods which were in vogue some years ago. Those who have taken part in elections during the last twenty years know that an election is quite a different matter from what it was at that time, and that with the enfranchisement of women there will be a still greater difference in the near future. I hope that the second reading of the bill will be carried, and that it will without amendment be sent back to the other Chamber. I feel very strongly on this matter. I do so because I think as every extension of the franchise has been in favour of and has helped on the advance of British communities, so it will come about that this extension of the franchise will tend to further advancement. Now that it is the Commonwealth law, there can really be no reason for withholding it, unless it be with a desire to be inconsistent, and to maintain some principles which hon. members have on previous occasions advocated ; but that can hardly be a just reason for persisting in the course of throwing out this bill at the present time. If it were, I would have more sympathy with the hon. and learned gentlemen who are opposing this measure. It really is not a just, right, honorable or fair course to pursue, and it is my intention, as I did on a previous occasion, to cast my vote in favour of this measure, and I appeal to those hon. gentlemen who so far have decided to oppose it, to change their minds and allow the second reading to go without division.

The Hon. B. R. WISE : I ask the indulgence of the House for a few moments whilst I state the reasons for the vote I am about to give. I have always held that the widest opportunity ought to be given to women to earn a livelihood, and I have only recently given an earnest of my belief in that respect by using my best endeavours

to allow a certain lady, to whom reference was made by the last speaker, to practise her profession as a barrister. I have also long been of the opinion that the presence of women in representative assemblies has been productive of great good. That in the London County Council, and in the municipal institutions of Great Britain the presence of women has had a humanising influence, and has directed popular attention far more rapidly than it otherwise would have been directed to great social evils, is I think unquestionable. I fully realise that the questions of immediate political interest at the present time are eminently those in which the quick sympathy of women, their power to kindle enthusiasm, and their readiness, perhaps, to run risks to obtain reform would make their influence extremely valuable. I refer more particularly to those questions of social reform which turn upon the preservation of family life and interests, which deal with the question of neglected children, and to the problems of society that are involved in the earning of a livelihood. But holding this opinion, and I have long held it, I have never been able to bring myself to advocate the extension of the suffrage to women, because I have always considered that there is a fundamental difference of sex which justifies the holding of that opinion for reasons which it is not easy to discuss publicly. I have also thought that inasmuch as the force behind all law is physical force, occasions may arise in the history of the country in time to come, as they certainly have arisen in the history of other countries in the past, when it might be extremely dangerous to entrust the majority of the voting power to people who had not the physical strength to enforce their wishes. But these are old stock arguments. They are the commonplaces of this controversy; hon. members are just as familiar with them as I am. Indeed, it is not possible to say anything new on either side of this question. Those being my views, which I have never disguised, I claim to be acting with perfect consistency in voting at the present time for the second reading of this bill. I ask the indulgence of hon. members present whilst I point out to them the reasons which have convinced me, than whom no one could be more strong in his theoretical objections to this measure, although I do not enter-

[*The Hon. B. R. Wise.*

tain the exaggerated views expressed either by the opponents or the advocates of this bill as to its disadvantages or benefits. Practically I believe that in normal times it will leave matters exactly as they are. My real objection, as I have already hinted, is the objection expressed by Mr. Lecky, Professor Goldwin Smith and others, who have written on this subject, that it is in times of crises that the danger of this vote will be realised. Now I shall vote for the bill for two reasons. The first is that uniformity in the system of franchise is a practical necessity of politics. We may argue as we please as to what is desirable, but it would lead to an intolerable state of affairs if we were to have two systems of franchise, one for the Commonwealth and one for the state, which would inevitably clash. I want no other argument for that than what was said by an hon. gentleman, who I hope, in consequence of what he said, will be found voting for us. I refer to my hon. and learned friend, Mr. Want. When speaking in this House on the 11th September last Mr. Want declared it to be "the worst thing of all"—I use his own words—"that we should have in this state and in the Commonwealth two different systems of voting which may clash with one another." When my hon. and learned friend said that he was advancing it as an argument, and an extremely strong argument, against the proposal of the Government of that day to carry the second reading of this bill. He pointed out that the Commonwealth had not yet adopted female suffrage, and that they might not do so, and he said that if they did not do so we should have—and I repeat his words—"this worst thing of all, namely, that we should have in the state and in the Commonwealth two different systems of voting which may clash with one another." That is the condition of affairs to-day. We not only may, but we certainly shall have if this bill is rejected, the worst thing of all—these two systems of voting which will clash with one another. It is not on my seeking, nor with my wish, that women suffrage has been granted by the Commonwealth. If I had had power to resist I should have done my utmost to resist it. But it has been carried, and on all those large questions of policy with which the Commonwealth deals, there is to be this wider suffrage, with interests

which may clash with the interests of the narrower circles of men, dealing with important questions, with those very questions, in fact, on which rest the determination of peace or war, and with regard to which, according to my views, the women's vote is dangerous. Those questions which are important questions of policy are to be dealt with by the women's vote, whilst minor questions of local affairs will be dealt with wholly by men. Is it not obvious that, whatever our opinions about federation may be, if, as we must desire, the Commonwealth Government is to work smoothly with the governments of the states, there must be the same constituencies for both, and the same franchise; and that we should not deliberately create this possibly permanent element of antagonism which arises from the existence of two different franchises? Then there is another reason which weighs even more strongly with me, and that is the duty which we as members of a revising chamber owe in this matter to the public. Now, I only want to remind hon. members of what the Vice-President of the Executive Council has already stated, and that is that this measure has passed the Legislative Assembly on no less than three occasions by ever increasing majorities, and it has been indorsed at a general election. The consequence is that we have now reached that condition in the political history of this movement, which has been described in words used by my hon. and learned friend, Sir Normand MacLaurin, and which I adopt. My hon. and learned friend on 16th October, 1901, when speaking on the second reading of a bill in which I was very much interested—the Arbitration Bill—was asked by Dr. Cullen, "If the bill is bad why do you vote for it?"—the same question which I dare say may be asked of me, holding the views I do with regard to female suffrage. My hon. and learned friend gave this answer: "If I were Prime Minister or a member of the Assembly, I would fight against it, but we have thrown it out once here, and it has always been our principle to say, 'Well, if the Government and the Assembly insists on the bill a second time, on their heads be the blood. The responsibility lies with them.'" In expressing those views my hon. and learned friend has only given terser expression to that which I believe has been the fundamental principle

of our Constitution, and certainly the principle, which, I understand, has always guided the deliberations of this House. Mr. Todd, in his recognised work on "Parliamentary Government in England," speaking of the power of the House of Lords, uses these words:

It may be regarded, however, as a settled principle of modern parliamentary government that it is not the duty of the House of Lords to continue a persistent opposition to measures that have been repeatedly passed by the House of Commons with large and increasing majorities; especially when public opinion out of doors has been unmistakably expressed to the same effect. Such a course—

and I commend these words to the attention of hon. members—

would inevitably lead to an infringement of the constitutional independence of the Upper House by the creation of additional peers to facilitate the passing of the particular measure. But this is an extreme proceeding which could not be approved under any circumstances; although, the right of the Crown in the exercise of this prerogative can only be restrained by considerations of public policy.

I do appeal to hon. members to reflect whether this House has not grown a great deal in public estimation during the last eight or nine years.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The Hon. B. R. WISE: I honestly believe that if the country were polled to-day there would be a very large majority of votes cast in support of the continuance of this Chamber. Largely, that confidence which this House possesses is due, no doubt, to the fact that it has always acted upon the principle laid down in that passage of Mr. Todd's, and never has it acted better and in graver crises with a more true perception of its constitutional duties than when it has so acted under the guidance and leadership of my hon. and learned friend, Sir Normand MacLaurin. Consequently, the House, in throwing out this bill, takes upon itself a very grave responsibility, a responsibility which undoubtedly it ought to take if the occasion justifies it, or if by taking it there can be any delay which would have material consequences in mitigating the evil anticipated, but which, if taken only for the purpose of asserting the power of the House, and without anyone who takes it believing that it can produce any delay of practical importance in the actual accomplishment of the measure; then I say it is taken in defiance of the estab-

lished usages of the House, and contrary to our constitutional history. I am aware that the amendment which has been moved ingeniously attempts to divert the attention of the House from the gravity of the step which has been contemplated.

An HON. MEMBER: It will not work!

The Hon. B. R. WISE: The House has been asked to refrain from openly and in express terms defeating the measure on the pretext that it first of all desires that the women themselves shall declare whether this reform is wanted. I do appeal to hon. members, even to those who are supporting the proposal—certainly to the hon. member who submitted it—is not the desire to kill the bill? Is it not a deliberate attempt to do by a side wind, and by an apparently concealed method, that which ought to be done openly, and which hon. members who vote for this amendment would not do openly? It must not be forgotten that this proposal to submit the measure to a referendum is not new. It has been one of the strongest arguments which those of us who have been opposed to woman suffrage have always used, that women do not want the franchise, and that the question ought to be submitted to a referendum. The bill was before the Legislative Assembly in 1899, before the last general election, when such a proposal was actually made. It was one of the arguments urged at the general election by all who discussed the question on the public platform. It is an argument which has been urged over and over again in the press and in the Assembly when the bill was before it, and on each occasion it has been relied upon as a principal weapon of opposition to the proposal, that the majority of the women do not want the franchise, and that those who are in favour of the bill are afraid to let the majority of the women vote upon it. On each occasion, however, that argument has been rejected by the people and by the Legislative Assembly. Are we then any more justified as a second revising Chamber in refusing to pass the bill because this method of ascertaining the opinion of those who are supposed to wish for it has not been adopted when the advisability of adopting that method has been urged and urged, and rejected and rejected? Are we more justified in defeating the measure on that ground than upon

[*The Hon. B. R. Wise.*

any other? Now, I do in all sincerity appeal to the House to reflect, that by supporting the amendment they are destroying this measure, not probably for many days, but for a time. They are doing that, therefore, which if they are prepared to do, they must take the responsibility for. If they are prepared to do it with a full knowledge that they are taking a step in direct antagonism to the measure, I have no more to say, but I may remind those who have expressed their intention to vote for the referendum, though they may not be opposed to the bill, that by voting for the amendment they are effectually destroying the bill and directly flying in the face of the votes given in the Legislative Assembly and by the people outside, just as much as if they gave a direct negative to the motion for the second reading. I appeal to hon. members to sink their personal feelings in the matter, and vote for this reform, for this alteration of the law which has been approved so often, and which so far as we are able to gather, is in accord with the opinion of the people, as clearly expressed by Parliament, in a way perhaps that may not be consonant with our own wishes, but in a way that we ought to obey.

The Hon. J. HEPHER: With the general principle of the referendum I agree; but in this case I doubt very much whether there is any sincerity in the proposal to resort to the referendum. I am of opinion that the hon. and learned member who moved the amendment has proposed a resort to the referendum as a subterfuge, as the hon. and learned Attorney-General has stated, to kill the bill. Although I am in favour of the referendum as a principle, on this occasion I am not going to vote for it, seeing that it will jeopardise the passing of this bill. With regard to the principle of woman's suffrage, I do not think I need say anything, as the House knows my views on the question. I am in favour of the bill. As women are amenable to the laws of the country, I can see no earthly reason why they should not be allowed a voice in the selection of the men who make those laws.

The Hon. S. CHARLES: This bill is undoubtedly intended to alter the Constitution of the state—to alter it completely—and more than that, it is an alteration that is against natural events and circum-

stances. I would ask hon. members whether they consider that the ladies of the present day, with all the education which they have, are superior to the woman that Almighty God first created? God created woman to be the helpmate of man, to be a companion to man; and what was the first advice she gave to man? Why, it was hellish advice. She advised him to break the commandment of God.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: And he was coward enough to throw the responsibility upon her!

The Hon. S. CHARLES: From that day until the present generation, whenever woman has attempted to govern man it has been a failure. Nature itself has fixed that she is not equal to man. Man is the lord of creation. Leaving aside the human family, and looking to the brute creation, we find that the male rules, and has done ever since animals were created. The males are the guardians and caretakers. If you go to the feathered tribe you will find a similar state of things. Go into a farmyard, and you will find a lot of hens cackling, and some of them trying to crow; but it is a complete failure. When the male bird gets on the roost and flaps his wings and crows, all the hens come to him, and he is their ruler and caretaker. It has been said that in New Zealand the system proposed here has been tried. It has been, and at one town a lady was elected mayor. She was no sooner seated in her chair of state than she commenced to crow, but her crowing very soon came to cackling, and the result was that they got rid of her as soon as they could, and they have not attempted to elect a mayor in petticoats since. I may say this, that there is no man amongst all the henpecked members of this House that has ever loved woman better than I have. I still love woman; but I protest against her being put in a position to rule me. The author is a particular friend of mine. No man admires the Prime Minister of this country more than I do. He is a man, I believe, who is thoroughly honest and straightforward, and possesses considerable ability. He is able to take his part against any person with whom he may have a dispute. But what did it all end in? A deputation of ladies called upon him, and, although he is a fearless man, he has got a soft spot in his heart. He gave way to

the charmers, and, as head of the Government, he said we must bring in a bill to grant the suffrage to women. To-night we have heard a speech from one of the cleverest men in the House, the Attorney-General, and if that speech is analysed, it will be found to be one of the most milk and water speeches ever made in this House. It resolves itself into this: that it means yes or no. I am certain that the leader of the Government holds just the same opinion that I do, that women should not be allowed to rule. Therefore, to call upon us to support this measure simply on the score of party is a thing which I object to. I have been told in conversation when I said that I objected to being ruled by women, that the nation has been ruled by a woman for many years. That is true. We have had one of the best queens probably that ever reigned; but I object to the statement that she ruled the people. Her counsellors and the Parliament of Great Britain ruled both her and the people. Admitting that she was the head, when war broke out in South Africa did the Queen send out an army of amazons to fight the Boers? No; she sent out an army composed of men.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: She sent out a fine army of nurses!

The Hon. S. CHARLES: She sent out an army of nurses; but did she send out generals in petticoats? No. She made choice of one of the noblest little fighting cocks in Great Britain, Lord Roberts, and she gave him a lieutenant equally good. We sent soldiers from this country who gallantly did their share of the fighting. Some women were sent there, but were they sent to fight or to lead the soldiers? No. They went in their proper position as nurses to nurse the wounded and to cherish the sick, and nobly they did it. They knew what was their duty, and they knew their place. That is what we want all our ladies to do, to nurse and cherish the men of their choice and their children, and not to get on platforms and make a noise like a cock crowing on a dunghill. We expect them to be careful wives, to nurse and bring up their children, and to leave the law-making and the ruling of the country to men. Some time ago, in this Chamber, I gave advice to young women, and I would now give advice to young men. I think every

unmarried man should choose a nice, honest, quiet woman for a companion, and make her happy ; but let them avoid the ones that crow. I have voted against the measure before, and I shall vote against it now ; and if no one else does it I shall call for a division, so that the public may know who are the hen-pecked members of the House.

The Hon. J. WILSON : I should have been quite prepared to go to a vote on the main question without speaking ; but the situation has somewhat altered, and it is apparent that I shall be placed in the position of voting against a principle which I hold very dear. I recognise that the tory of 364 days is wearing the democratic garment for twenty-four hours. On the last occasion on which we had a discussion on the extension of the franchise to women, there was a desire on the part of the opponents of the measure to include in the bill a more liberal clause than any which were in it when it originally came before the Chamber. There were several hon. members who believed, and who, I think, still believe, that if women are entitled to a vote they are also entitled to have everything the franchise gives, namely, the right to sit in the Chamber if elected by the people. When, however, hon. members who believed in that principle, followed the leader on the other side and carried the new clause, and the third reading came up for consideration, those who had been instrumental in having the clause inserted voted down their own creation. As I recognise that those who are opposing the measure to-night are as antagonistic to the principle of the referendum as they are to the extension of the franchise to women, I am not for the second time going to allow the democratic flag to be waved from the temple of the tory in order to lead me to the opposite side of the House in connection with this question. It seems to me that the time has gone by for discussing the question as to whether a woman should or should not have a vote. To my mind the position is this : that this Chamber should be the last in the world to refuse to concede that which has lately been conceded to the women of the Commonwealth. I have read some of the speeches delivered by some of the senators who for years opposed the extension of the franchise to

[*The Hon. S. Charles.*

women, and the reason they gave for voting for the measure was that it was necessary, because of a desire for uniformity in the exercise of the franchise. Surely members of this House, who are not in any way affected by women having a vote, who are not, in fact, the creation of the voters of the country, should not refuse to extend the franchise to women. I hope hon. members, who may have the power of resistance for a short time, will not oppose the bill, and I hope the necessity will not again arise for pressure being brought to bear upon the House to give effect to a measure which the Legislative Assembly has thrice carried by overwhelming majorities.

The Hon. N. J. BUZACOTT : I rise to support the second reading of the measure. Certainly I would like to have seen the last clause of the bill eliminated, and I would have supported the measure with a greater degree of pleasure if it had been. I have not risen to say anything on the merits or demerits of women having a vote. I think we are side-tracked to-night by the amendment of the hon. and learned member, Mr. Pilcher. I am sorry that the hon. and learned member who moved that amendment had not the courtesy to sit in the Chamber to listen to the arguments advanced against it. I am reminded very much of the gentleman whose son was going into the world, and who said to him, "My son, make money, honestly if you can, but make it." I cannot help thinking that the idea abroad in reference to this bill is, "Kill it, honestly if you can, but kill it." I have not the slightest doubt that the object of the amendment is not to obtain the opinion of the women of New South Wales, but to kill the bill. The hon. and learned member, Mr. Pilcher, has not told us what will happen if the amendment is carried. He has not foreshadowed what constitutional action will be taken by the Government to give effect to it. Consequently, we know nothing except that we shall be landed, as it were, in the mud. Time brings many changes, and there is always a certain amount of democratic development in the human being. Four or five years ago, when the principle of the referendum was a burning question to the people of New South Wales, this House stood out against it—not straight out against it, but they burdened it with restrictions which pre-

vented the untrammelled vote of the people. We find, to-night, that certain hon. members are prepared to send this question to an untrammelled vote of the women of the country. They have not informed us how the rolls will be prepared in order that the matter may be submitted to them. Consequently, we are left in the dark. I understand that a bill would have to be introduced to create the machinery for submitting the question to a referendum. Rightly or wrongly, certain hon. members on a former occasion led some of us to believe that if the Federal Government extended the franchise to women, they would withdraw their opposition to the bill. I have not had time to look up the debate on the matter, but, rightly or wrongly, that is the impression which has been left on the minds of some hon. members. To my knowledge, a large number of very worthy women, who are actuated by high motives, are simply asking for the franchise, so that they may do something for the elevation of humanity; and for that reason I am prepared to grant it to them. I quite agree that there are a large number of women who do not want the franchise, and who think nothing of it. They would rather go to Government House, and see their names published in the newspapers the next day as having been attired in a certain kind of apparel, whilst those who are clamouring for the franchise would prefer to go through the world doing some good in their time.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON, in reply: The last hon. member who addressed the Chamber in opposition to the bill was not very complimentary to ladies when he compared them to the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air; but even accepting the hon. member's simile, I would remind him of that stage in the life of a male animal when he is driven from the herd. I think the hon. member should consider the age of a man, as well as the age of an animal, in connection with the vote he gives. I have done with the hon. member, except to say that I am amazed to find that there is any man in this Chamber who would not give the greatest credit to the greatest woman who ever reigned, Queen Victoria. If the hon. member says that Queen Victoria was not a noble woman, but that she simply did as she was told —

The Hon. S. CHARLES: I did not say that!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: I decline to be interrupted by the hon. member.

The Hon. S. CHARLES: I never said a disrespectful word of Queen Victoria in my life!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: The hon. member said that Queen Victoria was controlled by her ministers. In my estimation, and in the estimation of men infinitely better capable of judging than I, Queen Victoria, as a monarch, stood head and shoulders above any other monarch in the world.

The Hon. S. CHARLES: Hear, hear!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: And yet the hon. member would not give such a woman as that a vote. The hon. member would not give Queen Elizabeth, or any other woman a vote.

The Hon. S. CHARLES: I would not give them the liberty to rule men!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: Rule men! Why, any child could rule the hon. member,—I do not say it disparagingly. The hon. member himself admits that he is a henpecked man.

The Hon. S. CHARLES: I did not!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: If the hon. member did not say it, it proves conclusively that he is. The hon. member repeated the argument to which he gave expression on a former occasion, namely, that the proper function of women is marriage.

The Hon. S. CHARLES: Hear, hear!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: Is the hon. member going to force every woman into marriage because he thinks she will be a mother of children?

The Hon. S. CHARLES: I did not say so!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: What, then, is the object? Surely a woman has as perfect a right to say whether she should or should not be married, as has a man; but even if the hon. member would force all women into marriage, there are not enough men to go round. I am amazed that any hon. member can approach this subject in the way the hon. member has approached it. It simply shows that the time has come when a decision on the matter should rest in other hands than

that of the hon. member, and men like him. I should like to say a few words in reply to the hon. and learned member who moved the amendment, because his, after all, was the only serious speech delivered against the measure. As has been said, and said correctly, the object of the amendment is simply to entice the unwary, or to throw dust in the eyes of those who ought to know better. The hon. and learned member knows as well as anyone that it is utterly impossible for any resolution of this House to bear fruit in the direction he proposes. Therefore, I do claim that, whatever the vote may be on the hon. member's amendment to refer this to a referendum, it should be negatived. Let us have a straight-out vote on this straight question. My hon. and learned friend, Mr. Pilcher, in a well-prepared impromptu, gave a terrible description of the disasters which might descend upon a happy family if the woman of that family once in three years went out to record her vote in favour of some particular candidate. Can my hon. friend believe, or can any woman or man who has a knowledge of both believe, that the fact of a woman voting once in three years will have such a demoralising effect upon her that she will neglect her household duties and her children? My hon. and learned friend used it as an argument against this bill that there had been no public meeting of women held in support of this measure. I venture to say that, if meetings of women had been held in favour of this measure, no stronger argument would have been used in opposition to the bill by my hon. friend than that very fact itself. I am told, indeed, by hon. members that they are not going to support this measure, although they believe in the principle, because of the injudicious action of some of the women who have advocated it. If women had adopted the course which my hon. friend complains they have never adopted, of sending petitions, and of meeting in public to advocate this measure, I believe that fact, in itself, would have been the very strongest argument against the measure on the part of the hon. gentleman who has raised this question. I am sorry that I offended the hon. and learned gentleman, Mr. Pilcher, by interjecting when he was endeavouring, in the most graphic

[*The Hon. F. B. Suttor.*]

way, to describe the desolation of these homes, and asking him his experience in New Zealand. We know very well that the catastrophes he pictured have not occurred in those states where this bill is already in existence: the happy homes are still flourishing, just as they were before women had the vote in all those colonies where women now have the vote; and, surely, seeing that men and women are reasonable beings, each will acknowledge the right of the other to vote as he or she wishes in the election of a member of Parliament. Have they not their differences every day? Have not young men been advised, before they marry, that they have a great deal to bear and forbear? Perhaps it is so. At any rate, we can give our wives, if they are worthy the name of wives, and have intelligence enough to vote, credit to vote according to their consciences, as we do ourselves. My hon. and learned friend, Mr. Pilcher, said that it is a mere handful of women—I am not quite sure whether he said armful or handful—who are advocating this measure. Who are the men who are opposing it? Twenty-five members, a mere handful of those constituting this Chamber, are resisting the public will. The greatest vote we ever had against this measure in the Legislative Council was twenty-six. The hon. gentleman, in reply to an interjection as to the votes for the proposal in the other Chamber, said the number recorded for the measure was not half the House. I can say here that not one-half the members of this House have voted against the measure. The biggest division we ever had was twenty-five, whilst half the number of this House is thirty-one and a fraction. Now, if we say that it is a handful of women who advocate this measure, it is a handful of men in this Chamber who are endeavouring to resist the public wish and the public will. What can be more solid as to the position, than the argument advanced by my hon. and learned friend, Sir Normand MacLaurin, when the Arbitration Bill was before this Chamber? I think the hon. gentleman expressed the opinion—an opinion which is supported by able men in other similar legislatures—that the constitutional principle which should guide hon. members was that, ultimately, the public will must be accepted by a chamber

such as this. Now, we have gone beyond the ordinary number of times with this measure when that principle has been adopted. It has been the almost invariable, if not the invariable practice, that when a bill has been sent here the second time from what is commonly called the popular branch of the legislature, that is, the branch which directly represents the people, then this Chamber has accepted it. I do not wish to go through all the history of this measure again, except to reiterate that when this measure has been defeated, it has been defeated by narrow majorities; and on the second occasion when it came here, accepting the principle laid down by Sir Normand MacLaurin, the second reading was carried; the measure went through Committee; and, on a subsequent day, all members who were opposing it having been whipped up for the purpose, the third reading of the bill was rejected. That was within the constitutional rights of hon. members, but, as I said before, it is not a common occurrence. On this occasion, unlike any other bill which has been accepted, this measure comes up for the third time, having, practically, unanimously passed through the other branch of the legislature. We have been told—my hon. and learned friend, the Attorney-General, mentioned it—that this is the third time that the Women's Franchise Bill has been before us; but beyond that, I should like to repeat what I said in moving the second reading, namely, that not only has this measure come up the third time, but it has come up to us from two parliaments and after a fresh election. The late Parliament passed it. My hon. friend, Mr. Charles, is wrong when he says that the present Prime Minister was the author of this measure. It was, first of all, passed by the Government of which Sir William Lyne was the head; and on the second occasion it was one of the first measures adopted by a legislative assembly coming direct from the people. If it is argued that this measure has not had the concurrence of the people, I would repeat what was said by Mr. Slattery, that it was in the Government's manifesto. It was there stated that this would be one of the first measures submitted to Parliament for its approval. It was submitted, and it was approved of by an enormous majority in

the Lower House. It was sent up here last session, and rejected on the third reading in the way I have described. Now, it comes here for the third time, and I do invite hon. members before they reject this measure to let us have a direct yes or no on the second reading, and not allow any question of a referendum to interpose. I appeal to hon. members to consider twice before they reject this measure. I hope that hitherto, as I shall do now and in the future, I have endeavoured to advocate measures submitted to Parliament on their merits. I have never endeavoured to coerce a single individual in this Council, nor have I held out any threats. I do not do it now. I can only say that, for this Council to reject on three occasions a measure which has been practically unanimously passed by the other House, because the number against was so small that it only went to prove the unanimity of the members there, is to take a serious step. Hon. members, when arguing in favour of the referendum, said this was a question on which the people should express an opinion, but my hon. and learned friend, Mr. Pilcher, in moving the amendment, observed that if you give women a vote they will not exercise it. If they are not going to exercise their vote, when they have a vote, how will they exercise it on the referendum? My hon. friend's argument kills itself. But I submit that this question has been referred to the people and hon. members in the other House, representative of the people, have come back and voted three times for this measure.

An HON. MEMBER: They will do it again, too!

The Hon. F. B. SUTTON: We are told that what is now contemplated is a very material alteration of the Constitution. I deny the statement made by my hon. friend opposite that we are now, in a very important, unusual, and novel way, altering the Constitution. We are simply giving a vote to a number of persons who are just as good and as permanent citizens in the country as we men are. Was the one man one vote ever referred to the people by a referendum? It was never referred to them even at a general election. Was payment of members ever referred to the people directly? Never. I say that to give one man one vote, and

to give payment of members was just as important an alteration of the Constitution, if it was an alteration, as is this proposal. That is the position; and the position of those who reject this measure is made more serious by the fact that on a previous occasion the principle of women's suffrage was accepted by hon. members of this House when they voted for the second reading of this measure, and when they carried the measure through Committee, though, as I said previously, they rejected it on the third reading. But as a principle women's franchise has been three times accepted by the other branch of the legislature, and it has been accepted here once, when the second reading of the bill was carried, and it was passed through Committee. The whole responsibility now of rejecting this measure rests with those hon. members who are going to vote against it. I cannot do better than use the words of Sir Normand MacLaurin, when dealing with another bill before this Chamber, when he said that he would vote for it because the responsibility of carrying the measure was on the head of the Government. I leave the responsibility of rejecting this measure on the heads of hon. members who vote against it.

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question—put. The House divided:

Ayes, 14; noes, 17; majority, 3.

AYES.

Backhouse, B.	Stuart, H.
Black, R. J.	Suttor, F. B.
Buzacott, N. J.	Wilson, J.
Hepher, J.	Wise, B. R.
Hughes, J.	
Nash, Dr. J. B.	<i>Tellers,</i>
Ross, A.	Meeks, A. W.
Slattery, T. M.	Robson, W.

NOES.

Campbell, W. R.	MacLaurin, Sir Normand
Charles, S.	Pilcher, C. E.
Flowers, F.	Renwick, Sir Arthur
Hawken, N.	Roberts, R. H.
Humphery, F. T.	Walker, W.
Kerr, A. T.	Want, J. H.
Kethel, A.	<i>Tellers,</i>
Lee, G.	Jones, R.
Macintosh, J.	Moses, H.

Question so resolved in the negative.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTOR: I submit that I am in order in making a few remarks. I was going to suggest —

[*The Hon. F. B. Suttor.*]

The DEPUTY-PRESIDENT: I must put the concluding part of the question. The question is that the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTOR: In a speech which I delivered just before the division was taken, I endeavoured to point out the position which the House was taking.

The DEPUTY-PRESIDENT: I must remind the hon. member that no debate is usual, unless an amendment of the proposed words is moved.

Motion (Hon. F. B. SUTTOR) proposed: That this House do now adjourn.

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: I rise to order. I will take your ruling, sir, as to whether that motion can be proposed at this stage. The question before the Chair, I submit, must be decided before any other question can be submitted. It is not as if there were no question before the House. There is a question before the House, and it is not competent for any hon. member to baulk a division by moving the adjournment of the House.

The DEPUTY-PRESIDENT: Under the standing order the adjournment of the House can be moved at any time by the Minister, to terminate the sitting of the House. It will be competent for hon. members to divide on the motion.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTOR: In moving the adjournment I can make a statement.

The DEPUTY-PRESIDENT: No. I think the hon. member will not be in order in referring to the recent debate.

The Hon. C. E. PILCHER: I submit that under the standing orders it is necessary to give notice if an hon. member intends to move the adjournment with the view of discussing any matter.

An HON. MEMBER: That is not necessary in this House.

The DEPUTY-PRESIDENT: The standing order says:

Nothing contained in this rule shall apply to the usual motion of adjournment by a member of the Government to terminate the sitting of the House.

I think the motion can be put.

The Hon. F. B. SUTTOR: Then I understand that I cannot make any speech.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

House adjourned at 9:20 p.m.