

trates absolutely, so far as these voters are concerned, one of the primary purposes of the Australian System, viz : the secrecy of the ballot.

It manifestly permits as to all this class of voters, the liberal use of coercive influences and intimidation by employers and persons in authority. With the destruction of its secrecy goes also the destruction of the freedom of the ballot.

But bad as this is, it is not the worst.

The disclosure necessarily invites bribery and furnishes the most effective means and facilities for its perpetration.

It enables the venal voter to sell his vote with impunity, and to prove to the bribe-giver that he has kept his corrupt bargain.

It practically puts a premium on the purchasable vote. It enables men most susceptible to the influence of money to be ascertained, approached, corrupted and silenced by the price in their pockets paid with absolute certainty that the bribe has secured the vote.

This evil so fatal to the purity of our election flourishes under our existing law, and all good men must agree that if possible it should be cured.

The repeal of the privilege in question and the substitution in its place of an enactment requiring all voters (except the blind and physically disabled) to mark their ballots themselves will, in my judgment, go a long way towards the extinguishment of this great abuse. It is too much to hope that it will extinguish it altogether. But reform measures are not to be rejected because they will not completely accomplish their intended object, nor ought we to continue on in a passive submission to acknowledged evils because we cannot cure them entirely.

THE CONSTITUTIONALITY OF THIS PROPOSED LEGISLATION.

The necessity of these proposed reforms is fully admitted, but quite a number of those who do not hesitate to make this concession insist that the provisions of our State Constitution are so inflexible that this important