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1901-08-08

Senate.

The President took the chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

#### PETITIONS

Senator STANFORTH SMITH presented a petition from 20 ship-owners and agents in Western Australia, protesting

Against certain clauses of the Inter-State Commission Bill relating to shipping.

Petition received.

Senator STANFORTH SMITH

- I move -

That the petition be read.

The PRESIDENT

- This petition ought not to have been presented. I understood that the honorable senator had obtained the necessary certificate from the Clerk. The standing order is that no petition can be received unless it has been left with the Clerk and certified to be in accordance with the standing orders. This petition is against a Bill which is not before the Senate. I did not ask the honorable senator if he had got the necessary certificate because I presumed that he had.

Senator STANFORTH SMITH

- I apologize, sir. I was not aware of the usual formula. With your consent I shall withdraw the petition, and present it on another occasion.

The PRESIDENT

- It can be presented to-morrow when it is in order.

Senator Sir JOSIAH SYMON presented a petition from ship-owners and shipping agents in the port of Melbourne, engaged in the oversea carrying trade, protesting against the application of certain clauses of the Customs Bill to oversea vessels.

Petition received and read.

#### AUSTRALIAN-TASMANIAN STEAM SERVICE

Senator KEATING

- I desire, by leave, to move, without notice -

That the Australian-Tasmanian Steam Service Select Committee, appointed by this Senate, have leave from time to time to make public the evidence taken by them before the same has been reported to the Senate.

Senator Drake

- I think that notice should be given.

The PRESIDENT

- Then the motion cannot be moved.

#### DEATH OF MR. W. H. GROOM, M.P

Vote of Condolence

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Postmaster-General

Senator DRAKE

. - It is with feelings of the deepest regret that I have to announce to the Senate the death, at an early hour this morning, of Mr. William Henry Groom, member of the House of Representatives for the Darling Downs constituency of Queensland. I cannot help feeling that this to a certain extent is a personal matter, because I was acquainted with Mr. Groom for more than a quarter of a century, and was closely connected with him in politics for the last 14 or 15 years. In Queensland Mr. Groom was correctly regarded as being the father of its Parliament. At the time of his resignation he had represented for between 39 and 40 years the same constituency, and the Darling Downs district is a monument of his industry as a politician and a statesman in that State. Here he may be regarded in a somewhat similar sense as being the father of the House of Representatives. I think that in his death not only Queensland, but the Commonwealth of Australia has sustained a great loss. I propose, with the permission of the Senate, to move, without notice, a motion expressive of our regret, and sympathy with his family in their

loss, and after that I shall be prepared to submit a motion for the adjournment of the Senate for the occasion. I believe it is probable that the House of Representatives will adjourn over to-day as a mark of respect for the deceased gentleman and sympathy with his family. I may remark as perhaps a justification for moving the adjournment of the Senate - a course which under ordinary circumstances I should not take without grave consideration - that Mr. Groom is the first member of the Federal Parliament who has been removed by the hand of death. That, in addition to the circumstance that he occupied such a very high position in his own State, and deservedly won the esteem of the members of both Houses of this Parliament, is a reason why I think this course might be adopted without creating a precedent which might be found inconvenient at a future time. I beg leave to move, without notice -

. That this House desires to record its profound regret at the loss which the Commonwealth suffers in the death of Mr. W. H. Groom, and expresses its sincere condolence with his wife and the members of his family in their bereavement.

That Mr. President be requested to convey the foregoing resolution to Mrs. Groom.

It is the intention of the family that the remains of Mr. Groom shall be removed by railway from Melbourne to Toowoomba, and there interred, and the procession from his late residence will start at about 4 o'clock to the station, with a view to the family leaving for Queensland by the mail train starting at a quarter past 5 o'clock.

Senator WALKER

-I rise to second the motion. I join with the Postmaster-General in all he said. I suppose there is no member of the Senate who knew the late Hon. Mr. Groom so long as myself. I knew him since the year 1866. He was a man of remarkable tenacity of purpose and great ability, and very loyal to the colony he served so faithfully. I trust that the Senate will show the respect due to one who occupied such an important; influential position so admirably as he did.

Senator GLASSEY

-I thoroughly concur in the motion which has been moved in such excellent and choice language by the Postmaster-General. It was my good fortune to be associated with Mr. Groom for many years, not in a casual way, but in a very close and intimate manner, and I can truly say that I know of no man in our State who commanded more universal and widespread respect than the late departed gentleman. He was highly esteemed as a man, and greatly valued as a citizen.; his words were always appreciated as coming from a man with a matured mind, and such words generally carry great weight. I am sure that the action of the Senate will be received with great satisfaction throughout Queensland, and more particularly on the Darling Downs, especially at Toowoomba, the capital of the Darling Downs, which he represented uninterruptedly for well-nigh 40 years. That in itself, of course, is some testimony to the late gentleman's worth as a citizen, and his ability as a politician. I do not wish to trespass unduly upon the patience of the Senate, but I join heartily in the excellent remarks which have been made by the Postmaster-General, and in the motion that he has proposed, which I have no doubt will be carried unanimously.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

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14:47:00

Senate adjourned at 2.47 p.m.