

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**FRIDAY, 10 JULY 1891**

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Friday, 10 July, 1891.

The Recent Labour Troubles—Resumption of Debate.—  
Adjournment.The SPEAKER took the chair at half-past  
3 o'clock.

## THE RECENT LABOUR TROUBLES.

## RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

On the Order of the Day being read for the  
resumption of the adjourned debate on Mr.  
Glassey's motion—

That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that a special commission should be appointed to inquire into all matters connected with the recent labour troubles and their origin. Such commission to have power to call for all books, papers, letters, telegrams, and documents, examine witnesses, and to thoroughly investigate charges made against persons or associations of persons—

Mr. PAUL said: Mr. Speaker,—I think the members of this House, the working men of the colony, and the general public may congratulate themselves upon the action taken by the hon. member for Bundamba, because he has created a discussion which I believe will be the most important discussion that has ever taken place in this House—a discussion that will show the working men of this colony what is their true position, and who are their true friends. I feel very warmly on the subject, and hope I shall have the indulgence of the House if I speak at greater length than I usually do, because, as I have said, this is one of the most important matters that has ever come before the House. I have had an advantage in connection with this matter which few members of this House have had, inasmuch as I have been in the troubled districts of the colony for the past three or four months, and can therefore speak from personal knowledge of what has taken place. As briefly as I can, I shall describe what the condition of affairs has been in the outlying districts in the Western part of the colony. The hon. member for Bundamba went through the various electorates in that part of the colony long before this trouble occurred. He went through my electorate, the electorate of the hon. member for Barcoo, and the electorate of the hon. member for Clermont. I should like to ask him on his conscience whether he can honestly say that he never attempted to organise the terrible strike which occurred in the Western part of the colony, and which has cost the country so much?

Mr. GLASSEY: I never attempted to organise that strike in any way; my speeches appear on record.

Mr. PAUL: At any rate this discussion, which was commenced and carried on last night in such an admirable manner, will be productive of good. I listened to three speeches made last night which would be a credit to the British House of Commons, and I hope they will be read far and wide throughout the whole colony, as they will show the working men who their true friends are. I never listened to any speech with such pleasure as I did to the speech of my hon. friend the member for Cunningham, Mr. Allan. He has taken a most prominent part in the work of the Pastoralists' Association, and is a gentleman who works modestly and quietly. I do not think there is the slightest doubt but that his is a master mind, and as he spoke last night, in words of sympathy with the working man, he referred back to twenty-five years ago, as I can do—to the time when he was

intimately associated with the working man. That speech will go forth to the colony, and I trust that when a general election takes place the working men will know who are their true friends, and through the ballot-box return true, honest, and faithful men. What I wish to impress upon everyone is the terrible tyranny and coercion which existed in the Western districts. When I was at Adavale a number of the inhabitants of that place assembled together and signed an address of thanks to the Government for the action they had taken in sending the military forces out West. I will read an extract from that address. It is dated 4th May, and says that—

“No one but those residing in these far-away localities can imagine the terror that has been experienced by the threats and intimidation of evil-doers. Unhappily from our position we have amongst us the very scum of society, consequently our sufferings have been greater. The minor acts of vandalism, which have been numerous, have not been reported, but borne with patience and resignation.”

That is signed by a large number of people, comparatively speaking, in that outlying township, no less than twenty-six persons, representing different classes of society, from the honest working man up to the squatter or manager of a station, having subscribed their names to the document. I have been out in those districts, as I have said, for the last three or four months, and have seen the cruel destruction of property which has taken place. I had to go and report to the insurance companies on the destruction of the Gumbardo woolshed, and can therefore speak with confidence on the subject. I am perfectly certain that I have a record, not only in Brisbane, but also in the Western part of the colony, that whatever I say is truthful; and I may say, without fear of contradiction, that I have always had the courage of my opinions, and expressed them openly. People have not the slightest idea of what has been done in those outlying districts. I am not going to mention names, because they are too sacred to mention. I am not going to repeat the filthy epithets that were hurled forth in the faces of respectable and lady-like women, but will simply say that I have lived in the bush for twenty-five years, and I know what hard swearing is. I dare say I have sworn myself, but, thank God, I have never used filthy expressions, and the expressions I heard during the last three months are as bad expressions as those which I read, when a lad, in the evidence published in a Blue Book issued by a Commission in New South Wales, and only distributed amongst members of Parliament. That evidence was never published to the world, because it was so disgraceful, and so filthy, that it could not be published. I had an opportunity of reading it, and all I can say is that the language I have heard out West during the last three or four months is the language reported in that Blue Book, and that language any member may see if he applies to the Librarian of the New South Wales Parliament. Those are things I can vouch for, and that is the reason I am taking up the time of the House. One thing most predominant throughout these unfortunate affairs has been the system of terrorism that was created. I was at Charleville in the early part of April when the twenty-one prisoners were brought in from Augathella. I went out of curiosity out to the upper crossing of the river to see the prisoners brought in and to meet a gentleman I wished to see who was in command of the detachment. I saw there a body of twenty men who were unionists, and who I thought were respectable working men. They were chatting with the hotelkeeper, a man whom I know very well, and I joined in the conversation. I spoke to them in friendly converse for over an hour. I had

just returned from New South Wales, where I had stayed at a friend's house in Newcastle, and I heard there the condition of things then existing between the miners and the coal mine proprietors. I said to these men: "You have all heard of the unfortunate strikes that have occurred in Newcastle, and the last strike of all was during the maritime strike, when 9,000 men were out on strike over a single fireman on board of a steamer called the 'Corinna.' That man was dismissed, and the maritime strike leaders decided that he should be taken back. He was a delegate of one of the maritime unions; but he was not discharged because he was a delegate, but because he was incompetent to do his work. However, in those days the societies were affiliated, and when the vessel went up to Newcastle to load with coal she was boycotted. The men downed tools, and for four months were out on strike in a starving condition. As they were in a starving condition they called for a ballot, and by a large majority decided to go back to work. They went back to work and were received as unionists. No conditions whatever were made that they should renounce unionism, and they were taken back at the same hewing rates as were in force when they went out on strike. That had created a feeling of confidence in the miners that there was no desire to crush unionism, and I hope it will be many years before there is another strike in Newcastle." I then alluded to the pastoralists' manifesto. I said to those men: "You never see any newspaper, and are never allowed to see any paper, but the *Worker*, but if you read the pastoralists' manifesto you will find they say 'we know a number of honest hard-working men who are in camp either through ignorance or coercion, and we invite them back as unionists at union pay before we will introduce any free labourers.'" I then spoke upon freedom of contract to them, and I said: "Your leaders tell you that freedom of contract means working alongside of Chinese and kanakas, but they know as well as I do that the legislature of this country two years ago passed an Act virtually prohibiting the introduction of Chinese, because under it only one Chinaman can be imported to every 500 tons, and then he has to pay a poll-tax of £100." I said moreover that the pastoralists had publicly stated that they would not employ any Chinamen except as a gardener or cook. These are facts which ought to be known, and I am very pleased indeed that this discussion has arisen, in order that the facts of the case, which have unfortunately been withheld during the past three or four months, may go forth to the whole colony. Misrepresentation has been universally employed by the labour leaders. Take for instance the case at Barcardine the other day, almost the day before the camp broke up. Mr. Casey, who is one of the officials of the Labour Federation, told the men there that there were ample funds coming forward; that he had just got a telegram saying £1,000 had been sent from Ballarat and £600 from Broken Hill; and that they would be able to carry on the strike until August, when there would be a general strike in New South Wales.

Mr. SMYTH: And when the grass would be dry.

Mr. PAUL: That was only two days before the strike burst up. I know that all these working men now feel how cruelly they have been misled by their leaders. My line of argument is simply to prove to anybody that these labour leaders have systematically misrepresented everything. I have here the last manifesto of the strike committee, issued after the burst up. I am not going to read the whole of it, but I shall read one

extract from it to convince hon. members that I am correct in saying that they have systematically misrepresented everything. They say:—

"The classes, unfortunately, know better than ourselves that we have the power, were we intellectually prepared to recognise and wield that power. However, it is becoming daily apparent that we are fast awakening from a not ignorant, apathetic state, to a keen sense of the energetic duties the cause of humanity prompts us to fulfil, if we are determined to solve the problem which has exercised the minds of the world's greatest men. Pressure was brought to bear upon you to an indefinite degree by the pastoralists of Queensland, representatives of universal capital. You were, and are still, asked to work under conditions the framing of which are not even submitted to you. You must have no voice whatever in fixing rates of wages for work, or the number of hours you should work. You must accept whatever work is offered you, and you must sign an agreement to perform the labour allotted you, and be thankful if the squatters will fulfil the terms of that agreement, which practically means that you are only entitled to 50 per cent. of your earnings once a week. Your liberty is consigned to the keeping of capitalistic despots, who'll rule you with an iron hand, and govern you with red and blue-coated hirelings, ever ready to overwhelm and crush you by ball cartridge, Gatling guns, tramped up jury-packed conspiracy and arson trials, eventuating in violent death, or three or seven years' imprisonment."

Now that is the manifesto of the strike committee—a committee which ought, I suppose, to look after the working people. As I said to these men at Charleville, "My first recollection of a great man, the Rev. Charles Kingsley, a clergyman of the Church to which I have the honour to belong, was when I read his books 'Alton Lock' and 'Yeast,' and he there sets forth the necessity of combination among working men to protect themselves against the tyranny of capital." All those who have lived in old countries are aware of the sweating system that existed twenty-five or thirty years ago. There was a necessity then for combinations among working men, but those are not the conditions under which workmen live in a free country like we have. Here the working men have the largest voting power in the colony; here the working men enjoy a position in life which is not to be found anywhere else; there is a higher rate of pay all through this colony than in any other colony; and yet the hon. member for Bundamba goes about the country encouraging the men to strike for better terms when they are perfectly satisfied with the existing terms.

Mr. GLASSEY: Nothing of the kind. Give us proof.

Mr. PAUL: If the papers are correct, that is the report.

Mr. GLASSEY: Show us the papers.

Mr. PAUL: You went to Mount Morgan.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member will be good enough to address the Chair.

Mr. PAUL: Well, Sir, I say that I read in a Rockhampton paper that the hon. member for Bundamba, when he was on his celebrated tour, went to Mount Morgan, and told the miners there that they ought not to be satisfied with the rate of wages paid to them.

Mr. GLASSEY: I rise to a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I ask if the hon. member will produce the paper. I deny the statement made.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member for Leichhardt said that he had read the papers. He is quite justified in making that statement, but he is not justified in asserting as a fact what the hon. member denies.

Mr. PAUL: Well, Mr. Speaker, I say that I have read in the papers that the hon. member went to Mount Morgan, and told the miners there that they were working at a lower rate of wages than the men at Charters Towers and Gympie.

Mr. GLASSEY: Hear, hear!

Mr. PAUL: But the conditions of work at Mount Morgan are very different to the conditions of work at Charters Towers or Gympie. The work at Mount Morgan is simply quarrying; there are no deep shafts to go down at risk of life, as there are on Charters Towers and Gympie; and yet, although those men were perfectly satisfied with the conditions under which they worked, the hon. member—in his speech, if the papers record him faithfully—told those men that they ought to strike for better terms.

Mr. GLASSEY: There is no truth in it.

Mr. PAUL: I cannot vouch for the truth of that. I read it, and that is all I can say. I say it is a most cruel thing that men should go about for the sake of a popular vote, and mislead their fellow men. It is the duty of all those who have had the benefit of education to endeavour to impress upon every working man what his true position in life is, and those are the men who really do good work. It is distasteful to me to talk about myself, but I was delighted to hear what fell from the hon. member for Cunningham last night with reference to his relations existing twenty-five years ago with his employees. I am proud to say that the same conditions existed between myself and my employees, and whatever little ability I may have I owe my position as member for Leichhardt to the fact that I was always a fair employer of labour and did everything I could to raise the working man to a higher position. But the new system of these paid agitators is not to raise the men, but to bring down the better men to a lower level. I hope I shall be in order in referring to the action of the hon. member for Ipswich, Mr. Barlow, the other night. That hon. member tabled a motion with regard to the dismissed servants on the Central Railway line. When I was at Emerald I was interviewed by these dismissed men. I was the representative of that district, and they were electors of that district, and I say now that I hope that when hon. members wish to bring forward matters concerning other electorates than their own they will consult the member for the electorate concerned.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order in introducing this subject into the debate. It has nothing to do with the question before the House.

Mr. PAUL: Well, then, Sir, I hope I shall be in order if I refer to the action I took when I was at Emerald. It was in connection with these labour difficulties, and I hope you will allow me, Mr. Speaker, to speak on that subject. I will try and prove that I acted in a better way than the hon. member for Ipswich. When I was at Emerald I was interviewed by these dismissed men. They said, "Mr. Paul, we have been most cruelly and unjustly treated by the Commissioners, and we want you to assist us." I said, "I will do nothing of the sort. The Parliament of Queensland passed a Railways Act putting these Commissioners above parliamentary influence. Whether it was good or whether it was bad I am not here to discuss, but if you say anything against the Commissioners I will retire from the room and go to bed. But, I said, I am perfectly willing to listen to anything you have to say, and if you can make out a good case I will do all I can for you privately." They told me what their case was, and it was this: That during the maritime strike, some twelve months ago, they held a meeting of sympathy with the maritime strikers, passed resolutions of sympathy with them, and subscribed a portion of their wages to the fund. No action whatever was taken, either by the Commissioners or by the Government against what they did on that occasion; and those men told me that they held this other meeting under the impression that they had a perfect

right to do so. They held a meeting of sympathy with the shearers, and decided to subscribe something towards them. I told them the Commissioners had been their best friends, and that if they had acted as they might have done, the probability was that the majority of the railway employees would now be out in the cold, the same as the station hands were, and that free labourers would be brought up to take their places. I am often told I am a member who never speaks. Whether that is so or not, I think it will be admitted that I have done some good. I told those men that if they would write to me, stating their case, I would do what I could to get them reinstated. Here is one letter. It is one of the most creditable letters I ever received, and bears on it the impress of truth. It does not even "esquire" me, which, I think, is an honour. He calls me "Mr. W. S. Paul," although I suppose I am entitled to be called "esquire" on account of being a J.P. This letter is as follows:—

"Sir,

"Being one of the late railway employees who has been dismissed the service for attending a meeting of the Railway Employees' Association, when a resolution was passed offering pecuniary aid to the bush unions in the late disastrous strike, I beg most respectfully for your intercession on my behalf. I do not wish it to be thought that I wish to question the grounds of my dismissal, but hope, through your intercession, the Commissioners may consider me sufficiently punished, and reinstate me to my former position. My connection with the Railway Employees' Association, though of a short duration, has been very unlucky for me. The day the unfortunate resolution was passed my connection with the whole affair had ceased, but, unfortunately, I could not get out of the fact that I was present at the meeting. I am eighteen years in the Central district of Queensland, and have been always a person of retired disposition. I have followed railway work in the Central district in almost all its branches since I was nine years of age, and command the respect of all who know me; and I regret that I am placed in a position that it is not my fault to be in. Hoping, sir, that you will kindly intercede for me, and that through your intercession I may for ever have cause to be grateful."

I am not going to give this man's name, because if I did he might be boycotted. I presume he is a unionist, but, even if he is, I am not going to give up his name.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. T. O. Unmack): I hope the hon. member will intercede for him, because a man who can write like that is worthy to be reinstated.

Mr. PAUL: I am going to. I want to say that I have acted as a very much better representative of those men than those hon. members have who brought their case before Parliament. Here is another letter:—

"Herewith I enclose a written statement of facts relative to my dismissal from the maintenance department as follows:—I have served ten years a ganger with credit to myself and the department. During that time there was never a mark against me to my knowledge; and when attending the meetings of the Railway Association—the room in question where the meetings were held was given free by the Railway Commissioners for the express purpose of reading and debating—and falling short of issues to debate upon, the Shearers' Union difficulty was brought on the board, similar to the maritime strike, which we debated previously on, never thinking it harm to pass away the evenings, preferring it to public-house lounging. However, it was unanimously carried to support the shearers' strike as the maritime, nothing more or less. Had the circulars been issued then, that were after, I certainly should have taken no part in it. Pray take steps in the matter and try and get me reinstated."

These are facts which I wish to go before the colony. Every representative of the people ought to be honest and straight in his opinions; and although the working men's vote is the majority in this colony, still the working men will listen to reason, and they are protected by the ballot. It is the duty of every member

of Parliament to do his level best to get grievances settled, as I have done for the last three months. I have been amongst these working men, holding friendly conversations with them, and pointing out their true interests. With regard to these paid delegates, if it is unionism pure and simple, surely one or two evenings a week given up to it is sufficient to carry on the business of unionism. Why should not these delegates consider it an honour to be elected to that position, in the same way it is considered an honour to be an unpaid magistrate, or a member of a hospital committee, or a steward of a jockey club, or an officer of an Oddfellows' lodge? If it is simply pure unionism, one or two evenings a week are quite sufficient to carry on the work of unionism, which, as I understand it, is a work to protect men from tyranny or from oppression. But there is not the slightest doubt in my mind, as the Chief Secretary said last night, that this is not a question of wages or of the hours of labour. It is a movement to upset the Government of the colony. But, thank God, all men who commit crime make great mistakes, and I suppose there never was such a *fasco* as the way in which these men have managed the strike. They seem to have done everything to defeat themselves, and have cut themselves off from the sympathy of every right-minded working man, and of the general public, by carrying out nefarious schemes, schemes that are most disgraceful. And who are these leaders? Take the man who led the labour movement in Townsville—Lowrie. He served three years in St. Helena for stealing things by going to shops at Maryborough with a bag. The leader at Maryborough applied for the position of hangman; and, with regard to the telegrams and other documents read by the hon. member for Bundamba, it is clear, as the hon. the Chief Secretary said last night, that they must have been either stolen or forged, and that therefore the hon. member was the spokesman of forgers or stealers. What are we told by a telegram in this day's paper, which I suppose is authentic? That the private box of the police magistrate, Mr. Morris, was stolen from his hotel in Rockhampton. That is where the hon. gentleman has received those documents from, and all I can say is that he is the receiver of stolen property. If the Government have sufficient proof to take action against him I hope they will do so. I am not saying anything personal against him whatever. I am speaking of him as a public man, and I say that after the speech you made at Fortitude Valley, and the way you came forward in this House—

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Chair, chair!

The SPEAKER: The hon. member must address the Chair.

Mr. PAUL: I shall not detain the House much longer, because I know other hon. members wish to speak. I rose chiefly to impress upon every hon. member that I have had personal knowledge of all these unfortunate strikes, and I say that all these reports are not false, as the hon. member for Bundamba asserts. It has been asserted that the squatters have burned down their woolsheds to create a feeling against unionism. Now, I was the representative of an insurance company, and had to send in a report on the burning of the Gumbardo woolshed. That building, I know as a positive fact, cost £2,500, and was a new shed when I was dividing commissioner three or four years ago. In fact, it was one of the finest sheds out there, but it was not insured through some error. The owners had applied to get it insured, but the application was referred back so that plans might be sent in in order to see whether there were any surrounding

buildings that would increase the risk, and through some misfortune the insurance was not completed. Now, is it at all likely that any man would burn down his own shed under those conditions? And to burn grass in a season like this—when it is so high—would mean burning the stock. Yet I have travelled over the whole of that country, from within forty miles of Blackall to within fifty miles of Charleville, and the whole of it was burnt. But, although it was burnt with evil intent, that burning has proved one of the greatest mercies to the squatters there, because rain came immediately afterwards, and they have now got a fine crop of young grass, and there has been a better lambing on the burnt stations than on those which were not burnt, and where the grass is long. Now, to show how foolishly those strikers have acted, I would ask: Who is it that suffers by these burnings? In most cases it is not the squatters but the insurance companies, the shareholders in which are in many instances widows who have to depend upon the dividends they receive for their support; so that these rascals—I cannot call them anything else—who have gone and caused these terrible conflagrations throughout the country have not injured the squatters that they hated, but unfortunate widows and others. These things ought to be made known, to show and prove how utterly misled these working men have been; and I do hope that this discussion will be read with interest by everybody in the colony. I cannot better conclude than by quoting a few remarks on the matter made by the Hon. W. Brookes, M.L.C. Mr. Brookes was one of the oldest members of this House, and has now been honoured with a seat in the Upper House. He has done an immense amount of good for the working man; he has always been looked upon as an extreme radical, and what does he say?—

"I believe that the working classes of Queensland are at heart sound and loyal to Her Most Gracious Majesty, and are as law-abiding and as peace-loving a lot of people as any colony can show. But I am more anxious to take this responsible opportunity of expressing these opinions because I speak here not to hon. gentlemen only, but, through the reporters, to the whole colony; and I would say further that if we search into the matter and try to find out the real cause of the trouble and the strike, we will find it in the labour leaders and nowhere else. The masters and men behaved well during the strike. Let me say a word for the station owners. I have been supposed to be as hostile to the squatters as Hannibal to the old Romans; but circumstances have come to my personal knowledge which have shown clearly that in the most disturbed districts the working classes had no more constant, faithful, liberal, or better advisers than the station-owners; and their conduct under the name of the Pastoralists' Association shows that there was a dignity and kindness and considerateness in all the manifestoes of that association, which I am sure cannot fail to have a good effect upon those to whom they were addressed."

That is the opinion of a gentleman who has always been liberal in politics. I do not like to speak with regard to squatters, because I myself have been a squatter; but I cannot help repeating what the hon. member for Cunningham, Mr. Allan, said last night as to the friendly relationship that used to exist between the squatters and their men. Here in this manifesto of the strikers the squatters are represented as despots who would crush out the working men; but anyone who has lived in the bush knows that if there is one class of employers who are more dependent on the working man than another it is the squatters. The men have a power in their hands which I should be very sorry to suggest, but still it is there. It has been shown how grass may be burnt, and all that sort of thing, and no matter if any individual squatter may be inimical to the workers, for expediency sake alone he dare not commit an injustice,

There is no class of employers in the colony who are more faithful and true to their men than the squatters. They have a sort of personal regard for them. I am speaking now of the early days when we carried our lives in our hands; when we were dependent on the men for protection, and they were dependent on us. I recollect the time when I used to visit every man in my employ, revolver in my belt, because I thought if the blacks knew I was always on the lookout my men would be protected. There was a friendly feeling throughout the country which, I am sorry to say, does not now exist. I hope the discussion which has taken place, will be published broadcast throughout the country so that it may be read by everyone, and that the workman will find who his true friends are.

Mr. MURPHY said: Mr. Speaker,—This motion has been brought forward by the hon. member for Bundamba for the appointment of a commission for the purpose of acting as a revision court, or rather for taking evidence with regard to crimes that have been committed by certain criminals, in order that the case may be reviewed. That motion is one, Mr. Speaker, which I cannot in any way support, and it is my intention to vote against it. The hon. member for Bundamba in his speech attributed the cause of the late strike to a reduction of wages by the pastoralists of this colony. That is a statement that I challenged the hon. gentleman to prove, and I can show very conclusively to this House and the country that the statement is utterly without foundation. I think I can show that the wages paid by the pastoralists in this colony are the highest wages paid in any part of the known world for the same class of labour. There are no such wages paid in any part of Australia that I know of, and I have been an employer of labour in most parts of Australia, during a long career as a pastoralist, extending over twenty-five years. At any rate I never paid such high wages as I am now paying in the Western portion of Queensland. In order that the House may know what rates the Pastoralists' Association are paying to their men, I will just refer to a table of the rates published in one of our manifestoes, so that there may be no mistake about it, and I may say that these are the rates we have been paying for some years. The lowest wages we pay to any man for the most unskilled class of work is 25s. a week, and he is found on the most liberal scale. I will read the scale, so that you may see the men are not in any way starved; and when you hear it I think you will agree with me that it is almost impossible for a man to consume the amount of food with which he is supplied. As I said before, the lowest wages paid are 25s. a week, and they range higher according to the occupation. Tradesmen receive from 40s. to 60s. a week, with rations. I may say that all the men are supplied with rations in addition to their wages. Rough bush carpenters are paid 30s. a week; ploughmen 35s. a week. Of course we do not employ ploughmen for agricultural purposes. Then we go on until we get to the shearers' cook, who is paid up to 150s. a week; and I maintain that such a scale of wages as that cannot be found in any other part of the world for the same class of labour. The hon. gentleman in saying there was to be a reduction of wages had some foundation for what he said in this way. Just before we commenced the shearing before last—it is very difficult to distinguish one shearing from another in this colony, because we are shearing all the year round; at all events it was on the eve of a general shearing that the Labourers' Union held a meeting and suddenly sprang a heavy increase of wages upon us, amounting to from 25 to 50 per cent. We were in this position: We either had at that

moment to bring a disastrous strike on the colony and stop the whole of the trade—because when you stop the wool trade you stop the whole of the profitable trade of the colony—or we had to submit to the demand. We had, as it were, a pistol held at our heads, with the threat—"You must pay what we now demand or we will strike." After thinking the matter over we came to the conclusion that it was better for the time being to pay what was demanded, though it was more than the industry could afford. To have gone on paying it would have been absolute ruin, and though we paid the increased rates for that season, we immediately afterwards said, "We will have no more of this." The Labourers' Union held meetings year by year and raised the rate of wages upon us; there was never any attempt on their part to enter into a mutual agreement with us; they never offered to meet us in conference and decide as to what would be a fair rate of wages. At every meeting they held they raised the rates, and we went on paying them till we thought it was time to draw a line. We could see that there was no possibility of resisting their demands unless by some combination among ourselves; and that we should have to abandon the industry altogether if we were to be blackmailed in this way year after year. I think I have shown pretty conclusively that the strike was not caused by any attempt on our part to reduce wages; and I will now say something as to the real cause of the strike. There is an association here called the Australian Labour Federation, which, I take it, is an association of all the labour of Australia.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. Sir S. W. Griffith): I do not think its operations extend beyond Queensland.

Mr. MURPHY: I am only referring to what is called "union" labour. I will leave out of the question the "free" labour, which is the larger part of labour.

Mr. ANNEAR: There are plenty of unions that have nothing to do with the Labour Federation.

Mr. MURPHY: The real cause of the strike began to manifest itself when the difficulty occurred over the shipment of Jondaryan wool. It was not until that difficulty occurred that employers generally and the general public realised what the Australian Labour Federation were aiming at. I was in the Central district at the time; and I had no more control, nor had any other employer in the Central district, over the shearing or the shipment of the Jondaryan wool than the Chief Secretary has over the shearing and shipment of my wool. This wool was shorn by non-union labour, and when an attempt was made to ship it here, the riverside unions refused to ship it and went on strike. A notice was sent round to all the hands on the stations in the West—mind you, all those stations were at that time employing union hands and paying union wages—and to all the carriers, that on a certain day they were to down tools, because the owners of Jondaryan had decided to shear their sheep with free labour; That was the commencement of the strike business. The next step in the business was the maritime strike. They did exactly the same thing there. I had no more to do with the quarrel on board the "Corinna," where a steward and a fireman had a row, and the captain, after inquiring into the matter, dismissed either one or the other, I do not know which. I was in the Western portion of the colony looking after my business on my stations, and never knew anything about it. The weather was bad, and our mails were delayed, and I knew nothing at all about the strike until I heard that our men were to be called out. I was then in the middle of my shearing. I am very sorry, Mr. Speaker, to have to use the first

personal pronoun so often, but I do it because my own case only illustrates the case of every other man interested in the pastoral industry. I had a large number of men in my employ—about 250, something over—and we received a notice from some of them, not from the shearers, because they were under agreement, and therefore could not strike, but we received notices from others; that shows the cunning way in which they worked it, and if they had only carried their cunning a little further they might have put me in a very awkward position. The general labourers, who were only weekly men, gave notice that they would cease work at the end of the week; and the position I and other pastoralists were in was this, that under the agreement with the shearers we were bound to keep them going with sheep from day to day, unless we were stopped by stress of weather. Well, the unions withdrew all the men who filled the sheds, and picked up the fleeces from the floor, and mustered the sheep in the paddocks. All of those were withdrawn. My manager informed the shearers and told them that the general labourers having given notice that they were going to cease work at the end of the week, of course there would be a little difficulty about keeping them going with the sheep. The shearers replied, "If you do not keep us going as fast as we possibly can, if there is a fleece lying on the floor for one minute longer than it should be, we will hold you responsible and make you pay for the loss of time"—a thing which they could do under the agreement. We should have been liable for that, and so my manager said to them, "Very well, then I suppose we had better stop shearing altogether." And they said, "We are quite agreeable to that." So the difficulty came to an end. But had they held us to the agreement, what a nice position we should have been in. I am only giving this little narrative to show how these things, one after another, led up to the combination that we were obliged to form in order to prevent ourselves being placed at this great disadvantage. The danger was hanging over the industry that at any moment we might be practically smothered by the Australian Labour Federation—men who sat in Brisbane here, and gave no consideration or thought whatever to the suffering they might cause in the West. They thought nothing of the people living in the townships when they told the carriers to "down tools." When the men were ordered to "down tools" on a certain day, there was not one week's rations in the Western portion of the colony; and families living in the townships would have been reduced to starvation at the end of that time had the order been carried out. Exactly the same thing would have occurred in connection with the maritime strike, but it fortunately happened at the time of this last strike that the stations were all well supplied with food and the townships also, and no inconvenience occurred of that description. But it showed that a position such as that could not be allowed to exist in any country. That was a system of tyranny against which we were bound to combine, and to do the best we could to put an end to. It was our duty as employers of labour to see that the industry was not at any time brought to a standstill by the tyranny exercised by the Australian Labour Federation here. We were bound to do all we possibly could to see that women and children who had no connection with them in any shape or form were not starved by the action of the Australian Labour Federation, who appear to have no bowels of compassion for anybody, and who consider nobody outside their own selfish interests. I think I have shown pretty well what really were the steps that led up to the strike.

Mr. SMYTH: What about the rations.

Mr. MURPHY: I had overlooked that. I will, however, now show what was the scale of rations, in addition to the wages which, as I just now said, run from 25s. up to 150s. per week. In all cases weekly rations are added, as follows:—Flour, 8 lb.; tea, 6 oz.; sugar, 4 lb.; meat, 20 lb.; rice, 1½ lb.; salt, ½ lb.; preserved potatoes, 1½ lb.; dried apples, ½ lb.; spice, ¼ oz.; raisins, ½ lb.; currants, ¾ lb.; hops, 1 oz.; vinegar, half a pint; pepper, 1½ oz.; mustard, 1 oz.; coffee, ½ lb.; curry, 1½ oz.; soda, ½ lb.; and acid, 2 oz. That is the scale of rations given per week by the Pastoralists' Association, and I have never yet met a man who could consume it. I do not know whether the hon. member for Bundamba could consume it. The hon. member is able to swallow a great deal, and thinks others can swallow a great deal, but I do not think he could swallow that scale of rations. These are the real matters that led up to the position that the pastoralists took up in issuing a shearing agreement of their own, in order to free themselves from the shackles that unionism was throwing around them—that was in order that they should prevent the state of affairs that I have pointed out the Australian Labour Federation were trying to bring about in that part of the colony, and, in fact, all over Australia. Their object was to paralyse the whole of the trade of the country. The whole trade of this country was to be paralysed at the bidding of an irresponsible body sitting here in Brisbane—men who were not engaged in labour; men who were not engaged in trade. None of them are men who worked with their hands, or ever did work with their hands.

Mr. SMYTH: They could not do it.

Mr. MURPHY: I do not believe they could; but at all events they were not doing it. They were mostly men who were new to the country. They did not understand the conditions of labour in the country, and even if they had, that would not have mattered, because they were attempting, in fact, to override all the ordinary laws of the country, and subject all the employers of labour to the mandates of this irresponsible body. It was that that made the pastoralists, who saw clearly what was coming, take the first steps towards putting themselves into a position to counteract the efforts of the Australian Labour Federation. Now, Sir, I come back to the strike. The hon. member for Bundamba, in his speech yesterday, in blaming the Government for having taken the steps they did to enforce the preservation of law and order in the Central district, said that the unionists were animated only by the most peaceful intentions; that it was not their intention in any way to violate law and order; and, in fact, that the Government by sending troops there had incited the men to commit breaches of law and order. The hon. gentleman, when I challenged him as to whether the *Worker*, which is a newspaper published in this colony, was the official organ of the Australian Labour Federation, admitted that it was. Of course I know it. I know that it is entirely under the control of the Australian Labour Federation, and that they have an elective committee or something of the kind that manages it, and, more than that, that every member of the affiliated unions is bound to subscribe for a copy of it. I do not know whether they subscribe directly, but a copy is sent to every one of them. I think the subscription is paid by the various unions for all their members. At all events, every member of the unions gets a copy of the *Worker*. Now, what I am going to show is this: By means of extracts from the *Worker*, which I have just made in about half an hour or so, I want to show that, when this strike was first started, it was the

intention of the Australian Labour Federation to work the men up to the point of committing outrages; and I want to show that the Government were perfectly right in taking the step they did, and that they only took that step in time to prevent outrages being committed. The hon. member for Bundamba is equally as responsible as any member of the Australian Labour Federation—because I believe he is one of their leading lights—for the state of affairs they were trying to bring about. Here is one of the extracts I cut from the *Worker*. They are very amusing when you come to think them over:—

Mr. GLASSEY: What is the date?

Mr. MURPHY: 21st March, 1891, page 5. The extracts read as follow:—

“Not the justice of our claims, but our ability to enforce them, should be the measure of our demands as it is the measure of our success.

“(Signed) G. CASEY.”

Here is another extract:—

“What is more, for the classes to resort to violence is to drive the masses to violence, and in these days of scientific discoveries a few desperate avengers can do a lot of damage.

“JOHN MILLER.”

“John Miller” being the editor of the paper.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Is he the editor?

Mr. MURPHY: The writer is a little confused in his English, but when he says, “a few desperate avengers can do a lot of damage,” “in these days of scientific discoveries,” it clearly means that they were to use dynamite or some other explosive for the purpose of carrying out their objects.

Mr. GLASSEY: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. MURPHY: Now, this is signed by “John Miller,” who is the editor of the *Worker*.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Is not Mr. Lane the editor?

Mr. MURPHY: Mr. Lane is the editor, but he writes under the name of “John Miller.” The two paragraphs prove that it was the intention of the Australian Labour Federation to bring on a revolution, much as they may deny it now. It was the intention of this incendiary writer—this Mr. Lane—I do not know him, I never saw him, but I see his writings in the *Worker*—this incendiary writer—

Mr. ANNEAR: He writes all the manifestoes.

Mr. MURPHY: He is the man who pulls the wires that make the hon. member for Bundamba jump. We know where all the venom comes from. I do not blame the hon. member for Bundamba—he is innocent enough. This man Lane is the man who is behind the hon. member pulling the wires—“John Miller” alias Mr. Lane, the editor of the *Worker*. I believe he had a history, Mr. Speaker, before he came to this country. He has got it yet, and I think he will have a history before he leaves this country. Here is another extract from the *Worker* to show how this arch-fiend, who stands behind the men, was driving them on; and, mind you, Mr. Speaker, this paper is sent to every one of the bush workers. Every man in the West who is a member of a union gets one of these papers. They go through the post office in thousands, and this class of writing incited the men to commit the outrages that they did commit. I am speaking from personal knowledge. I know most of those men who are now in gaol. There are men under trial now who have worked for me for years. There are men under committal for trial who went with me on the Barcoo, and who have remained in my employment from that time to this—quiet, decent, respectable men in every way—men whose feelings have been worked upon by such incendiary writings as

these—men who, no doubt, are sorry they ever got into trouble. And who is responsible for it? Who led them on? The Australian Labour Federation, the *Worker*, and the hon. member for Bundamba, one of their leaders; these led them on. I will read another paragraph:—

“That there is no equitable claim on the part of Government upon those who have no voice in Government that they should keep the laws made by others for the sole advantage of others.”

What does that mean? Simply that those bushmen who are not on the rolls of the colony are not bound to obey the laws of the colony. That is a very curious kind of ethics to preach to men—that because they are not on the rolls under the electoral law of the colony and not entitled to a vote, they are therefore entitled to break the laws of the colony. And those ignorant men who got this literature, and were debarred from getting any other—for no other literature was allowed in the camp—were incited by such paragraphs to believe that because they had no vote they could break the laws of the colony. Here is another extract:—

“That Government as established in Queensland is a tyranny, and not representative of the people and that when force is used by a tyranny in furtherance of an attempt to enslave the people, resistance to that tyrannical force is called patriotism.”

This is the kind of writing which led to the outrages committed in the West. This is the misleading that has been done by the Australian Labour Federation and its *Worker*, and by the hon. member for Bundamba. They are responsible for the whole of these outrages; they are the criminals who ought to be in gaol. I have intense sympathy with the men, because I have lived amongst them and spent my life amongst them.

The HON. P. PERKINS: Amongst criminals.

Mr. MURPHY: No, amongst the men; not amongst criminals. I am not a member of the Australian Labour Federation.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: What is the date of the last extract?

Mr. MURPHY: I do not know; I did not make a note of it, but I will get the date for the hon. gentleman in a few minutes. There is one more extract I would like to read to the House. It appeared in the *Worker*. I do not think it was written by the editor, and therefore I do not say he was responsible for it. At all events it was published in the *Worker*, and was probably written by some member of the Australian Labour Federation. His advice was that the men should save their drink money, give up drinking, and put the money into Winchester rifles, as by that means they would be able to enforce their rights as against this tyrannical Government, and against the people of the colony who have votes at the present time. But I take it, Sir, that the people who have votes, or at all events the bulk of them, are on the side of law and order. The next matter I shall refer to, though I do not know that it is necessary to refer to it except for the new development which has cropped up since yesterday, is the letters that were read by the hon. member for Bundamba in the House. As a member of the Pastoralists' Association and a member of the executive, and vice-president of the Employers' Association here, I say that every letter we have written is in our letter-book and open to the public, and if any man can find anything in them to object to, or show that we have in any way attempted to influence the Government, or any Civil servant, or used our organisation for any other than the purposes set forth within the four corners of our rules and regulations as registered, and which anybody can

read, I will resign my seat in this House, and he can brand me as a liar. But I know perfectly well that no one can do so. What harm is there in the letters read by the hon. member for Bundamba? There is no crime in them. But there was crime committed when those letters came into the possession of the hon. member. The Chief Secretary, when the hon. member read those letters yesterday, said the hon. member for Bundamba was the spokesman of forgers or thieves. I am sorry for the credit of a member of this House to say that the hon. gentleman's words have been absolutely proved by the facts. The letters the hon. member quoted were stolen letters. What sort of an organisation can it be that the hon. member belongs to when it makes use of stolen property? I should like to know whether the hon. member was aware that those letters were stolen. How did he come to get possession of them? He knows that the police magistrate never gave them to him, and that they could never have gone out of the keeping of the police magistrate by fair means. The hardihood of the hon. member in reading those letters in this House, and acknowledging openly and publicly to the country that he is making use of stolen property—that he is absolutely in collusion with the thief who stole the property—I cannot understand. It is quite beyond my comprehension that his moral conscience should be so dull that he should do such a thing. Mr. Speaker, it is the most dishonourable transaction I have ever known since I was a member of this House. It is the most dishonourable thing that has ever happened in any Parliament I have known, at all events in Australia. I do not think any man can describe the conduct of the hon. member in making use of those letters in language too strong. I may have transgressed the rules of this House in what I have said; at the same time, I feel very strongly on the point. No man who has been elected a member of this House should do anything to degrade his position in it, and I think the hon. member has not only degraded his own position in this House, but he has also degraded the House in the eyes of all Australia.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: No, he cannot do that.

Mr. MURPHY: Well, I hope he cannot. To show what is the opinion of some persons who have been through this strike in the Western part of the colony, I will read a letter written by the Rev. W. E. Hillier, which has been handed to me. Somebody in the gallery interjected "Oh!" I do not know that I should be interrupted by strangers in the House.

The SPEAKER: I did not hear any interruption from the gallery.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. Sir T. Mellwraith): I think it was from a member of the House who is not at present within the Chamber.

Mr. PAUL: Mr. Speaker,—I made the interjection.

The SPEAKER: Will the hon. member take his seat. I must remind hon. members that when the Speaker rises to speak hon. members are supposed to keep silent. I may point out to the House that particular instructions have been given that if any stranger in any of the galleries interrupts the House in any way, by making a disturbance of any description, he is to be ejected at once.

Mr. PAUL said: Mr. Speaker,—I have to express my sincere regret that I should have interjected. I forgot I was outside the House, but I interjected with a view of endorsing the hon. member's statement.

Mr. MURPHY: When I was interrupted I was about to read a letter which has been handed to me, and was written by the Rev. W. E. Hillier. He is a bush missionary who has been working for a number of years in the Western portion of Queensland. When the strike first started he held the view that the pastoralists were wrong and the strikers were right, and I wish to read his letter to show what is the opinion of a man, and a clergyman, who was present in the Western districts during the whole time of the strike, and was through the whole business. I think there can be no more independent testimony as to what occurred than the testimony of Mr. Hillier. He writes under the heading, "Thoughts for Western workers."

"Brothers! W. Fothergill introduced me into your dispute. You are aware that your leaders Hamilton and Taylor requested me to help you in Clermont, and that your old strike committee offered to help in Barcardine. This is my excuse for now addressing you. I tried to convince your leaders in Clermont of the foolishness of this strike. They agreed with me. In my opinion the pastoralists' offer was just and fair—viz.: 'Not to employ Chinese, Asiatics, or any other alien labour; not to cut down wages, nor to victimise unionists.' Again, they had cause to discredit your leaders for the following reasons:—First, M'Gregor's offensive letter to the pastoralists, 7th June, 1890; secondly, they gave you a conference in Blackall and you rejected all their suggestions. They gave another conference at Pittsworth; you then passed a vote of censure on your own delegates for signing the Pittsworth agreement. These facts you have forgotten, and your delegates have asserted that the pastoralists will not meet in conference. You should know all the facts. You suffer from your friends. Look at the position Smith-Barry and others put you in during, at a mock trial, the effigy of Sir S. W. Griffith; then before the smell of the smoke has gone you wire and write asking him to hurry up Parliament to grant you some court, and to compel a conference. Brothers, it is of little use asking for a conference amid the smoke of burning grass and flames of smouldering sheds."

Those are the words of a man who was on the spot and mixed with unionists every day, and he knew everything he wrote as a fact. He goes on:—

"If there are less thunderstorms there will be less lightning. It is a sorry plight and a sad sight to see new chums playing 'Aunt Sally' with your best friends. Sir S. W. Griffith gave the death blow to Chinese and Coolie labour, gave payment of members to enable you to return your own men, and passed the Triennial Parliaments Bill. What do new chums know or care who they burn in effigy? I will not allow you to be put into a false position without a protest. Such are a few of the leading facts in the new development. Think over it and see where you are drifting. You continue to ask my advice; we'll, I advise you to give up this ill-considered strike; carriers and all should return to work and keep Queensland money in Queensland. Take the advice of your best friends, and note with care those men who denounce us. The public interest I hold to be paramount to unionism. I write in no captious spirit, but as your friend. Ask yourselves these questions: What are the characters of those who are keeping you on strike? Are they interested or disinterested? Do they get paid, and, if so, how much while you are idle? They told you you must win the Jondaryan battle; you lost. You were told that you must win over the maritime strike. Did you? What became of the £8,000 sent to Brisbane? You were told that the free labourers could not land on Peak Downs. Did they? Some are trying to delude you that they cannot come West. Are they not here? Carriers and men of labour, are you dupes? I tell you the truth that the Jondaryan strike was a mistake, the maritime strike a blunder, and that this strike is an idiotic suicide. The first deranged you, and the last has almost destroyed you; you are beaten did you but know it. It would be criminal not to tell you. I pity you, and will now help you. Think of this fact: You in the three strikes have lost enough money to purchase thirty stations and 4,000,000 sheep, and fifty gold mines, which would have been your own. Look at the position in the West! You have in four years suffered one drought, two floods, and three strikes. This, with baby strikes at sheds, fines and levies, has made you depend on the charity of the public and your fellow unionists. I will help you to be independent, and instead of your going to the bankrupt Argentine, you can go to the ballot-box."

I may state in passing that the Argentine was the pet scheme of Mr. Lane, and it is the proper place for him, as they have a revolution there every day.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MURPHY: Mr. Hillier further writes:—

"You heard or read the speech of one of your representatives, John Meehan. I quote it for your thought and opinion:—'They had nothing to do with the motto, "Forget and forgive," but their motto must be, "In the future remember our wrongs in the past," and "No surrender." And the business people should be treated just the same, for what have the business people done?—nothing. In some of the small towns about here they may be supporting the men, and there have been subscriptions given here for which we thank them, but it is only in their own interests—they expect to get the money back again. If they had any sympathy with the bushmen they would hold meetings and agitate for the Government to compel the squatters to come to a conference, or they would roll in all the money they could raise to support the bushmen. But they have not studied us, and we will remember this and not study their interests in the future. (Cheers.)' Are the Queensland public and the storekeepers stingy? Does this representative of yours know that the public he condemns once heard the cry of millions in India, and then the wires brought us sad news from Ireland, and like an electric shock formed committees and sent £50,000 to help them? What did we do during the London dock strike and the Southern floods? Why, gave another £20,000. Have the storekeepers whom this man threatens done nothing, from the Comet to Barcardine? Examine their books for twenty years. I know one man with £5,000 bad debts, all gone in rations. The storekeepers this man slanders you know are your best friends, and they have given £25,000 to you; you can pray to be saved from such friends as Meehan. Barcardine, headed by the minister there, the Rev Joseph Pike, turned out to a man to sympathise, and sent a memorial with the names of seven J.J.P. and fifty business men to get a conference. You want thinkers as well as wind-bags to advocate your cause. In conclusion, I appeal to you to return to work; remember that if each of the 500 shearers engaged will shear ninety sheep per man per day they can shear all the sheep in the West, and one million over on the Warrego in six months. Stick to principle and get all the money you can. Hundreds of you write to me and assert that they are sick of strikes and new unionism; they are prepared to form another body *minus* socialism and communism, and will go in for pure and legitimate trades unionism. Discussion must come, but first we must have peace, then a conference, and next an Act of Parliament defining your rights.

"Blackall, 24th May, 1891."

Well, that letter was handed to me with a request that I would read it to the House, and, after reading it over, I thought that no better testimony could be brought to bear on the question than the testimony of a clergyman who is a bush missionary, who is working among the men, who is not a squatter's parlour man, and who lives among the workers. Well, Mr. Speaker, I do not think I need say much more on this matter. I think I have gone pretty fully into it. I think I have shown the cause of the strike, and that the cause was not in any way a reduction of wages. I think I have proved to the hilt that there were other causes far removed from that of wages. But even supposing that the pastoralists were intending to reduce wages, why should they not? I say they had no intention of doing so, and they have not now; but, as an abstract question of right, why should they not, if they thought fit to do so, and if they could get men to take the wages offered? This is a free country. A man can offer to a fellow-man what wages he likes, and there is nothing to compel that man to accept them. So that even supposing that we tried to reduce wages, that would not put us in the wrong in any way. We are still keeping perfectly within the law, and within our just rights as employers. But we never made any such attempt, and I think I have proved that most conclusively. But, Mr. Speaker, I will tell you what is happening in the

colony now. I have shown the cause, and I will tell you the effect of the strike, and that is that wages are going down every day in Brisbane. That is a fact. The squatters are not responsible for that; they are not reducing the wages of men in all the workshops of Brisbane; they are not reducing the wages of the workmen in the Typographical Society. Wages in almost every trade are falling in Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane, although the pastoralists are paying as high rates as they ever did at any time since there has been a pastoral industry in Queensland. We have never reduced our wages by one 6d., but the wages are being reduced in all the large towns in the country districts, the agricultural districts and other places, and why? Because of strikes, and nothing else. Because of the Australian Labour Federation. They are responsible entirely for the present condition of affairs. They are responsible entirely for the extra number of unemployed who are out of work; they are responsible for the unfortunate men walking about in the West now, without a coat to their backs and hardly a shoe to their feet, and who are now dependent upon the charity of the very men whose grass and woolsheds have been lately burnt. The Australian Labour Federation did that, the hon. member for Bundamba is responsible for that, the *Worker* is responsible for that. Those are the forces that have been at work to cause all this ruin and disaster, not only to the working men, but to the employers also, who have lost money over it. And then as to what the hon. member said as to there being no acts of incendiarism, and no acts of violence committed—

Mr. GLASSEY: I did not say that.

Mr. MURPHY: The hon. gentleman said no acts of violence were committed by unionists.

Mr. GLASSEY: You asked who committed them.

Mr. MURPHY: And I say unionists committed them, and I can prove it. I can prove, and it will be proved in a law court before long, that these unionists were sent out specially from Blackall by the secretary of the Blackall Union. He sent them out to burn the Lorne woolshed; he sent them through my run to burn my sheep and grass.

The Hon. P. PERKINS: Did he not burn you?

Mr. MURPHY: They burnt me in effigy, but I feel the loss of the sheep more than that. These men were all well-known unionists; every one of them were known to me and my manager; known to my own men who did not go out, and who followed up these men and saw them commit these outrages; and who put the fires out after them as they threw lighted matches right and left into the grass. I am speaking from personal experience, and the hon. gentleman cannot controvert what I say. What I say has been testified to in a court of law, and will be found sworn to in the records of the Blackall police court. The hon. gentleman may be able to convince people in Brisbane; but do you think the people in the Central district, who have been amongst these things, do not know that these men meant revolution and burning right and left? They are not to be deluded. My constituents are not to be deluded by the hon. gentleman or the Australian Labour Federation. There is not one publican, or one storekeeper, or one resident of a bush town who has not felt the iron hoofs of the Australian Labour Federation. They hate and detest that organisation. They may subscribe to it, but they do it under compulsion, and why? Because if one of the officials of one

of those unions walks into an hotel and demands from the hotelkeeper a £5-note, the hotelkeeper has to pay it or be boycotted. The hotelkeepers were boycotted because they gave the pastoralists' executive shelter, as they were bound by law to do. Publicans were boycotted in all parts, and storekeepers were boycotted in all parts because they dealt with squatters. That is the doing of the Australian Labour Federation, and that is the system of tyranny that the pastoralists got up their association to fight against. That is the tyranny that would have spread had we not checked it, and I say the thanks of the general community are due to us for having risked all we had in order to suppress this tyranny; and people can imagine that we felt it a tyranny that we could no longer support, when they think of the defenceless position we were in when we commenced to fight against it. I am sorry to be personal, but I am only quoting myself as an example of the class of employers to which I belong. Every shilling I have in the world is invested in the properties I have in Queensland, and every shilling I have in the world could have been swept off by a bush fire. I risked the whole of that, and if that gang had gone across my run one week later I should not have had one sheep left to my name at this present moment. I risked all that to fight this strike, to fight for my rights as a free man; and every other squatter in Queensland did the same thing. We determined we would submit to no tyranny. We were entitled to certain rights under the law, and those rights we were determined to uphold even though it cost us all we were worth—even if it cost us our lives. We have fought the battle out to the end, and we have won, not by our own exertions, but because we had public sympathy with us. The public saw and realised what we were fighting for—that we were fighting against an organised tyranny—such a tyranny as I do not think the world ever saw before, and a tyranny in the hands of the most ignorant, the most prejudiced, and the most criminal class in the community. I have no hesitation in applying all those terms to them, and I know that in talking as I am I shall have the sympathy of my own constituents, and of every honest and right-minded man in my constituency—of every man, in fact, who is not a criminal; because they know, although unionists, as they are, that all those men have put themselves out of the pale of unionism by their acts. They know that I am a unionist, that the whole of the pastoralists are unionists, and that we employ none but union men, and pay nothing but union wages. They know that we—I am speaking as one of a class, and for that class—encouraged unionism, and that they accepted our rules. They accepted my own when they first established a shearers' union; they took my shearing agreement as a model agreement, they worked on it for years, and they would have gone on had we not had these new chums—these labour leaders, so called—coming among the men. I appeal to the men themselves whether by means of these men they have been benefited in any way—whether they have raised wages one single penny. The wages were raised by the unions themselves long before these men got to the front. But there were no strikes in those days. We agreed with our men, and gave them the advance they asked for. But since these men came to the front we began to get what is called the "new unionism," the tyranny of which is now beginning to be seen. I think I have said quite enough on the subject. It is a subject on which I feel very deeply; and I feel this, that if my action in this House, in fighting against that organised tyranny, the Australian Labour Federation, costs me my seat,

and I never enter this House again, I shall have fallen in the cause of freedom, and that I have fallen in order to prevent the people of this free country from being over-ridden by an infamous tyranny.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS said: Mr. Speaker,—When the hon. member for Bundamba tabled this motion, it was not my intention to have addressed the House on the subject. But after listening to the long speech he favoured us with yesterday, after listening to the many misstatements he has been guilty of, after listening to the very questionable means he has taken in order to convince the House, I feel that, notwithstanding the crushing reply that has been given to him by the Chief Secretary, and the very satisfactory answer that has already been given by the Colonial Secretary—I feel, I say, that I should be a coward to myself if I any longer hesitated to express my opinion in the House upon this question of the strike. That is why I take this opportunity of saying a few words upon it. The hon. member tried in the first instance to show that the main object has been to crush unionism. Nothing of that kind has ever been attempted. On the contrary, I believe all right-thinking people, all people who have any mind and thought of their own, must admire unionism so long as it is conducted within bounds and proper limits, as it ought to be. But the moment unionism branches out into tyrannising over everybody who does not belong to it, it is time steps should be taken to put a check and a brake on the efforts of lawless men. As far as I am concerned, as a member of the Ministry, I have no hesitation whatever in declaring that every action which has been taken by the Government has my full sympathy and concurrence. In every instance have I been thoroughly satisfied that the Government were taking lawful means to check this almost insurrection, and that, if anything, the Government have been, in many instances, too lenient. But we had a duty to perform. We had to protect ourselves, and be particularly careful not to step onesolitary inch over the lines which are laid down for our guidance in the laws of the country. In what we have done I believe we have had the full and complete sympathy of all right-minded people throughout the colony; and if any reward is required for the great anxiety which every member of the Cabinet has experienced during these troublous times, that, I think, is quite sufficient reward for every one of us. We feel we have done our duty to the best of our ability, and our sufficient reward is the sympathy of every good and law-abiding citizen in the colony. The hon. member for Bundamba has made many statements which I will not traverse, but there are just one or two which I will briefly touch upon. He has stated, for instance, that one of the ringleaders, Casey, was arrested by order of the Colonial Secretary. It was nothing of the kind. He was not arrested by order of the Colonial Secretary. He was arrested on information given by a unionist to the effect that on two distinct occasions Casey had incited men to burn down Parnell's premises at Barcardine. He was not arrested for seditious language, but on the more grave charge of inciting to arson.

Mr. GLASSEY: Why was he not convicted?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He was not convicted because we all know the amount of terrorism which is held over witnesses who have appeared, or who are likely to appear, and which the Government have experienced in procuring evidence to convict those evildoers. The hon. member referred to two schemes—the one Mr. Ranking's scheme, and the other Colonel French's scheme; and I shall take the liberty

of reading a few extracts from some official correspondence on the subject that has been received from Mr. Morris, police magistrate at Barcardine. He writes:—

"Re the advertisement, I beg to offer the following explanation:—At the time that the advertisement referred to was published, I had what I considered reliable information that a number of men were anxious and willing to return to work from the union camp, and from other quarters, but were in fear of the consequence of so doing from the hands of their fellow men. In fact, several men who sought protection in the military and police camps told me that this information was correct, and that they felt sure a good many men would return to work if they were sure of protection and sufficient rations to last them until they found work on the surrounding stations.

"Several men applied to me for work, and all who applied were rationed out of the pauper fund, which I have the power to administer, and sent out to various employments.

"The names of all such men were taken by me, and when I heard of vacancies I sent these men out to fill them.

"I may say that I never inquired whether the applicants were union men or otherwise, but I simply obtained work for all who applied.

"I verily believed that, if the fact that such protection was guaranteed was made generally known, a large number of men would go to work, and, further, I was informed, from what I considered reliable sources, that there were four hundred men kept in camp, and deterred from returning to work simply by the influence of the most prominent men in the union.

"Mr. Ranking, who at this time was in Clermont, when he returned to Barcardine at once pointed out to me the grave error I had made, as I had acted injudiciously and without due authority from you, and I withdrew the advertisement at once. It was only published once.

"I feel certain that had the men known that protection and food would be given them until they returned to work, a number of them who were just wavering would have applied and obtained work.

"I never, I candidly admit, contemplated the fact that the advertisement would be regarded by the union leaders as showing a partiality on the part of the Government for the pastoralists. I have endeavoured to act with strict impartiality in all matters in connection with the present strike; but when I knew that a large number of men were simply deterred from seeking work by terror of the consequences of so doing and that if they could be induced to go to work others would follow their example, and so possibly put an end to the present disastrous state of affairs existing in these Western districts, I considered I was partly justified in the course I took, a course which I now see has been construed into a partiality by the Government for the pastoralists.

"To give an instance of the reign of terror existing here, I may mention the fact that a prominent union man named Reynolds announced his intention to return to work a short time back. He was sent for by the members of the present strike committee, was grossly insulted and abused, and, although I can get no evidence of actual intimidation, as Reynolds will refuse to give any information, I have reason to believe he was afraid to adhere to his determination to return to work, and he is still out on strike. As long as the most violent members of the union, who are all paid agitators, hold such sway over the men, so long will the present state of affairs last.

"I have heard on good authority that the men were all wavering again last week, and really felt inclined to return to work, until a delegate named Meehan arrived here, and by 'moral suasion' made the men as bitter as ever they were, and more resolved than ever they were to hold out."

That will show, at all events, whether the assertion made by the hon. member for Bundamba is correct or not. But the matter which has really induced me to address the House to-night is the very grave action of that hon. member in producing here last night documents purporting to be letters which had passed between the different Government departments, and telegrams which had passed from the Government to various of their officers in the disaffected districts. In the face of those statements I feel

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that it is absolutely necessary that I should take this opportunity of removing the grave feeling of doubt which very naturally exists in the public mind as to the safety of their correspondence and their telegrams. I can only say that the hon. gentleman has done a very bad turn indeed—that, in fact, he has inflicted very serious injury upon the servants of the Post and Telegraphic Department who are employed in the Western district, because I have no hesitation in saying that the information he gave last night was such as to place the whole of those men under my suspicion, and under the suspicion of the department. They will sift the matter, but in the meantime probably many innocent men will stand accused in the eyes of the department in consequence of the cowardly action of the hon. member in producing those documents without giving any authority for them or stating from whence they came. I would ask, as I interjected last night, what further justification do we require for having made the dismissals we did from the various departments for participation in this matter? All I can say is that I am beginning to be afraid that we have not dismissed half enough—that others ought to be dismissed as well. However, the whole matter will be inquired into. At the same time I am very pleased to say that I have it in my power now to remove the feeling of anxiety and irritation which has, no doubt, been aroused in the public mind by what has happened in regard to those letters and telegrams, by reading a telegram received from Mr. Charles A. Morris, now police magistrate at Charters Towers. I may say that upon leaving the House last night the Colonial Secretary went to the office and despatched telegrams to both Mr. Ranking and Mr. Morris, inquiring about the letters and telegrams which the hon. member for Bundamba produced last night; and the answer received from Mr. Morris is as follows:—

"The letters you allude to were in a tin box containing all my papers private and official and law books which was stolen from the railway station Rockhampton on the night of the 29th ultimo on my arrival by train. Have endeavoured trace it ever since unsuccessfully. Deeply regret unfortunate occurrence."

Under these circumstances, Mr. Speaker, the statement made by the Chief Secretary last night, accusing the hon. member for Bundamba of having acted as spokesman for either thieves or forgers, is amply justified; because, that these letters have been stolen there is not the slightest doubt, and the hon. member has produced either the documents themselves or copies of them. He knows best what is his position in this matter. During this strike the measures which have been adopted by the various leaders to secure their ends have not always been correct means, nor honourable means, nor such means as ought to be employed in a cause which can stand upon its own merits. Deception and misrepresentation have invariably been the order of the day. Every member of the Government has been vilified and maligned over and over again. At public meetings which were held in Brisbane, in the suburbs, and elsewhere, the members of the Ministry have always been maligned and held up to derision and execration. This has also been carried into the different electorates. I may say that in my own electorate efforts have been made to undermine me in the estimation of my fellow-electors. I will speak only for my own electorate, because I know what I have to answer there. I am proud to say that the electorate I represent is largely composed of working men. I have had many opportunities of communicating with many of those working men, and they have one and all assured me that they are thoroughly satisfied with the efforts made by the Government, and have not the smallest sympathy with the doings of the labour leaders. I am

satisfied, though the number of men belonging to the union is considerable, that if they had been free to do as they liked; if that feeling of terrorism that was held over them had been removed; if the ballot had been taken as it should have been taken in the Western districts, instead of the men being given a white paper and a red paper so that everyone could see which way they voted—if the ballot-box had been fairly used, the result would have been vastly different. I will take this opportunity of contradicting one of the false statements those men have been guilty of towards myself, a statement which they have endeavoured to use as political capital against me in my electorate. It will be within the recollection of some hon. members that three months ago there was a large number of unemployed—about 200, I think—searching about town for one of the Ministry. The Chief Secretary was out of town; the Colonial Secretary was not handy; the Colonial Treasurer was also absent; and finally they landed at the Post Office, where I happened to be engaged in my public duties. They sent up word that 200 of the unemployed desired to see me as a Minister of the Crown. I said I knew nothing of the circumstances, and I had not the power to afford them any relief. I declined to see 200 men, but said that if I could be of any service I would do what I could, and I consented to see one of their number if they would send him to me. That is just where I made the mistake. I asked them to send one man; and unfortunately I allowed that man to interview me without any witnesses. People generally have to pay for their experience; and in this case I paid for mine. I shall endeavour, however, not to commit such an error again. I will just give the history of this matter. This man came and told me that there were 200 men outside the door, very much in want of work and nearly starving. I said, "I cannot give you any work. Cannot you find work at all?" He said, "We have been offered work on agricultural farms, but that is not good enough." I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "We have been offered work on an agricultural farm at 10s. a week and all found." I said, "Are you not going to take that?" He said, "How can a married man live upon that?" I said, "Are all the 200 married?" He said, "Not by any means. There is a large number of single men." I said, "Tell the single men to take that work. Tell them to take the offer of 'all found and 10s. a week,' and consider themselves very fortunate indeed." And I would give the same advice again to-day if they or any other men came to me. I say that sooner than go to the Government and ask for charity in the shape of relief works, a man should consider himself exceedingly fortunate in such times as these if he is offered his keep and 10s. a week pocket money besides. Now, what was the result of that interview? This man left me, and the men held a meeting at the corner of Wharf and Queen streets. Ever since then meetings have been held throughout my electorate, and on every occasion I have been held up to derision as the 10s. man, as the man who said that 10s. a week was enough for any man. They forgot that there was the keep besides the 10s. a week. It was 10s. a week and all found that was offered; but they forgot that. It just shows the unfair means to which those men resort. Even yesterday I heard those statements repeated by men who have known me for many years, and who never attached any credit to the statements. They told me that people were spreading this report among the working men in my electorate to my injury. I am sure I wish them luck. I am willing to meet my electors at any time, and I know they will acknowledge the labours I have done for them.

The hon. member for Bundamba, a few nights ago, during the passage of the Naval Defence Bill, was very loud in the assertion that we should reserve Australia for the Australians. That is all very nice. Is it because he happens to be here now that we are to shut our doors against the outside world? Is it because he has been here a few years that we are going to reserve Australia for the Australians, and nobody else? I would like to say this: Let us look round at the various leaders, or paid agitators, or whatever you choose to call them, and let us ask this question—Is there an old colonist among them? Is there one man among them that can boast of ten years' residence in the colony?

Mr. MURPHY: Is there one of them who ever did a day's work?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: These men, Mr. Speaker, who have been brought here chiefly at our expense, at the expense of old colonists who have been here thirty years or more, who came here when the colony was in its infancy, when Brisbane was almost a village—who have done all the pioneer work, and who assisted to build up this place—these men come here to dictate to us, and to pull down what we have built. How long are we going to stand this? Who asked these men to come here? If they are dissatisfied with the country, why do they not clear out? I am perfectly certain that we should be delighted to put our hands into our pockets and pay their passage money. We have lived here till within the last five or six years in peace and harmony. We have had times of prosperity, but we never heard of such rows and fights before, and why should we have them now?

Mr. LITTLE: The vagabonds!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I believe some of these men have come here for the purpose of agitating, because they found the doors for agitation shut upon them in the old country. The Chief Secretary was charitable enough last night to say he looked upon the hon. member for Bundamba as the catspaw of some of those people. The Colonial Secretary is of a different opinion, and I certainly am of a different opinion. In my conscience I blame the hon. member for Bundamba for the whole of this strike, and I will show why. Mr. Glasse laid the seeds of the strike during his visit to the West two years ago, when he instilled into the minds of the shearers that they had grievances. The men had been happy and contented till then; but he went among them and formed unions, said that they were badly treated, that they had grievances, and all the rest of it. What did he do at Mount Morgan? Of course I was not at Mount Morgan, but I have read the reports of what took place. The men were reported to have said they had no grievances, but the hon. member said, "Nonsense, what do you know about it? you have a grievance, and I will convince you that you have." That is the statement that we have in the Press. As the hon. member in moving this motion requires that the Royal Commission he asks to be appointed shall inquire into the origin of this strike and these troubles, I am very much afraid that the commission would have a very large order, because I believe if they attempted to do so they would have to go back at least to the year 1885, when the hon. member first arrived in the colony. I think these troubles date from his arrival here.

Mr. GLASSEY: I arrived herein the year 1884.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I find from the records of the Post and Telegraph Department that in July, 1885, the hon. member received an appointment as a temporary letter-carrier. The letter-carriers—a large body of men

—up to that time had been acting with very great satisfaction to the different officers of the department, and were perfectly contented; but no sooner did the hon. member for Bundanba come amongst them, than, in a little less than six months, a petition was forwarded to the then Postmaster-General, enclosing no end of grievances, complaints, and assertions, a demand for eight hours, and all the rest of it. I have the whole of the papers here. The petition was, I believe, in the handwriting of the hon. member himself. At all events the Postmaster-General at the time, the Hon. Mr. Macdonald-Paterson, put a minute to the petition that any representations made in a respectful and courteous manner would receive attention. The result was that within a fortnight or three weeks another petition was sent in, couched, if possible, in still more discourteous language than the former, and not only reiterating the demands, but adding others. The Postmaster-General being then absent, his duties were performed for the time by the Hon. B. B. Moreton, a gentleman whom we all know to be of a very mild disposition, and one who would overlook many things which, perhaps, men of more fiery temperament would not. But he endorsed upon this petition that its language, more discourteous than the last, deserved some further action on the part of the Postmaster-General on his return. Well, the ultimate result of it was that just on the eve of the letter-carriers going out on strike and seriously embarrassing the department, the hon. gentlemen was dismissed from the service, although he sent in a letter a few days after in which the date had been altered—dating it from the first of the month, although it was only received about the third or the fourth of the month—in which letter he tendered his resignation. It is needless to say the resignation was not accepted, and the dismissal was enforced.

Mr. GLASSEY : It was sent in on the morning of the same day.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS : The letter was received about two or three days after—I am not sure which—with an altered date. The date had evidently originally been something else, and that date had been erased with a knife, and another date inserted—the first of the month; but, as I say, it was not received until the day of his dismissal. Now, a cause in which the mover accuses everybody all round—the Ministry, the magistrates, the military officers, the police—of all being in the wrong—they have all been wicked; they have all conspired, including the judges, against these poor misguided men—the men who alone of all men seem to stand without a blemish upon them—such a cause must be a weak one. A motion such as this, which requires such statements to prove its necessity, is in my opinion worth very little indeed. Of course, after all is said and done, we are all liable to make mistakes; but I do not think that such a number of officers could have been mistaken and wrong, gentlemen whose duty it was to administer justice and to perform the duties entrusted to them impartially—and I have no hesitation in saying that those gentlemen did administer their duties impartially. It is disgraceful, I say, to accuse those men in the way that they have been accused, when they are not in a position to defend themselves. Now there is another point which strikes me. Possibly my feelings may be too fine in the matter, but I maintain that any member of this House who expects the title of honourable should always conduct himself in an honourable manner. He should pay due respect to this House, and not insult members of this House and the Chair by producing and reading documents which have been stolen. He should not insult the House by producing docu-

ments for the accuracy of which he is unable to vouch. Last night the hon. member, in reply to repeated interjections, said that those documents were handed to him, and that he believed them to be genuine. Now, in justice to the Chair, and in justice to hon. members, any hon. member should be made responsible for any statements he makes, and he is morally held responsible for them. I say I may be wrong in my feelings in this matter, but in my opinion no hon. member should make any statement unless he is prepared to accept the full consequences. Another thing is, the right of any hon. member to openly avow his sympathy with men—and to boast that they are his most intimate and best friends—who have been convicted by a jury of their fellow countrymen, fairly tried before a judge. And for the hon. member to boast that these men are his friends is a discredit to this House. It is a disgrace that any hon. member should so far forget himself as to express approval of the actions of men who have stood their trial and been duly convicted and condemned. The hon. gentleman now asks for a commission of inquiry. Well, I am perfectly satisfied to be of the same opinion as my honourable leader and the Colonial Secretary. This motion is only intended to form a grievance, so that the labour leaders may be able to say that this Parliament as now constituted refuses to listen to and to redress the wrongs of the people. What is the use of granting such a commission as this? We all know from past experience during the last few months that whatever evidence might have existed will not be found to now exist as against any of those men. There is no doubt that it is a mere hollow sham to ask for it. Is it likely that the evidence that would be required to show the active participation in the crimes that were committed, and to show the wire-pulling which went on to encourage the men—is it likely, I say, that that evidence has been allowed to remain in existence? We all know that a few days before the strike committee were arrested, they having received information regarding their intended arrest in some mysterious way, all the documents in any way implicating them were removed. What would happen if we appointed such a commission as is asked for? It is a perfect farce to propose anything of the kind. I am satisfied that the men have been misled by interested parties, that they have been seriously misled, and that somehow they have followed advice which I know of my own certain knowledge many of them are now sorry they followed. I believe, Mr. Speaker, in unions; I believe in the good they accomplish, but the moment they step outside the pale of their legitimate duties and objects, then I say they ought not to be allowed to exist. I trust that unions may long exist, and continue to increase in strength, and work for the benefit of the workmen and do much good, for there is plenty of room for them to do good. I know that all intelligent working men are anxious to benefit themselves, and I am sure there is no man in the community, no member of this House, who would not cheerfully do what he could to benefit those who are not so well off as they are themselves. There is no man in the colony who has done more than the hon. member for Bundanba to set class against class. The aim and object of his work is to create a class feeling in the colony, and the classes that he wants are two—the unionists on the one side, and the colonists with capital on the other; he wants those who have to shell out to those who have not. There is no doubt about that; that is really the object he has in view. I trust the day is far distant when we shall have such a state of affairs growing up in our midst. We can all be very happy and contented together. Let every man be entitled to the fruits of his

labour; and we shall be proud to see those who have nothing at the present moment work themselves up to the highest ranks in the colony, which will entitle them to respect. How many members of this House have commenced life without a solitary sixpence in their pockets? How many gentlemen are there here who have worked hard for years, and by the sweat of their brow and the toil of their hands have not earned more than a living. I have already referred to the advice I gave to the deputation, when I said that, "If you single men refuse your keep and 10s. a week you are doing a wicked thing; you seem to prefer rather to come to Government and ask for assistance and relief than to work for an honest living." I have had to work for a bare living before now, and I am not ashamed to say it, and, what is more, I say that that is the best experience I have had in my life. It is not those who start in the world with their pockets full of money who make the best men. Those who have to work their way in the world from the lowest position are the men who form the backbone of the country and lead the van, and I am sure there are scores among the men who are now misled who will yet shine in this Parliament and shine in the country and lead the way. I trust that no obstacle will be placed in their way; only let them use legitimate and fair means. There is only one other matter that I shall refer to, and I refer to that in order to correct a serious misstatement which affects the Government. The hon. member for Bundanba in his speech last night, referring to a telegram alleged to have been sent by the Colonial Secretary to Colonel French, said:—

"We are informed that a wire was sent from the Colonial Secretary's office stating that this 'dilly-dallying' would not do, as firm action was required, and 'finish the strike'—so our information says—'finish the strike.' says the Colonial Secretary, 'even if it cause bloodshed.'"

"Honourable Members: Oh, oh!"

"Mr. GLASSEY: That is the information we have received, and I have reason to know that that information is of a solid and substantial character."

"Honourable Members: Oh, oh!"

"Mr. GLASSEY: That is from the Colonial Secretary."

"Mr. SALKELD: Is that a letter from the Colonial Secretary?"

"Mr. GLASSEY: That is a wire from the Colonial Secretary to Colonel French."

Further on he said:—

"What was Colonel French's scheme? It was to give the unionists a certain time to disperse from their camps, and if they did not disperse within that time to use force to compel them to disperse, even if bloodshed took place. That was his scheme."

Now, the fact of the matter is simply this, that a diligent search has been made through all the records of the office to-day, and I am in a position to say that no such telegram was ever sent by the Colonial Secretary, or by any individual member of the Ministry, or by anyone in the Colonial Secretary's office, or any other party in connection with the Government. So that there is a complete contradiction of that positive assertion which the hon. member made here last night. I will not detain the House any longer now, Sir. I think I have advanced a few arguments which will justify the action that the Chief Secretary has intimated the Government will take with regard to this motion, that is, that they will not consent to the granting of any such commission; and I am perfectly sure, that the good sense of hon. members, and the good sense of the House, will lead them to see the utter absurdity of the request which has been made, and the necessity of not acceding to it. I am sorry to say, as regards the men, that the course of conduct which the hon. member

for Bundanba has adopted here has done their cause more harm than anything that has been done hitherto, because every upright mind must revolt at having such statements put forward in this honourable Assembly with an air of authority, when already so many of them have been contradicted, and when there are a great many others to be contradicted.

Mr. BARLOW said: Mr. Speaker,—I should like to say a few words in reply to my hon. friend, the member for Leichhardt, Mr. Paul, a gentleman with whom I am on the best of terms, and my acquaintance with whom dates back something like thirty years. I quite agree with the principle that he put forward as regards the interference by any hon. member with another member's constituency, in matters respecting roads and bridges and the never-failing occupation of a member of Parliament, billet-hunting. At the same time, I can assure the hon. member that no elector of his constituency ever appealed to me on the subject of the railway dismissals. Hon. members will observe that the terms of the motion which I submitted referred to the Central district. Now, that Central district, I believe, has eleven members to represent it, and I can only assure the hon. member for Leichhardt that I had no intention of interfering with his constituency, and held no intercourse, by letter or by word of mouth, with any one of his constituents. With regard to the letters he produced, I can only say I do not place much reliance on them. No doubt they are perfectly genuine as to the penmanship; but as to their feeling, I have considerable doubt as to their genuineness. When a man is in want of money and bread, he will write many things in order to get both, and I do not think those letters should be taken for more than they are worth—that is, as the endeavour of a man to obtain reinstatement in the service, when he finds an outsider put in his place, knowing that he himself is fit for very little else. I can go back a good way to find a precedent for this, where men were told that they would have to go to another man for a morsel of bread and a piece of silver, and say, "Put me, I pray thee, into one of the priests' offices that I may eat a piece of bread." It has been the rule in this world for a great many years that a man in need and in want will do a great deal to get back to office and get the means of keeping himself and family. I will say no more on that subject, but with regard to the question of telegrams I think that perhaps an undeserved slight has been put upon the officers of the department, who I believe are honourable men. In this connection I do not think sufficient attention has been given to what is known as sound reading. When I was in Melbourne many years ago I had a friend who had been in the telegraph service who was one of the most accomplished sound readers in the colony. On one occasion I was with him in the Melbourne Telegraph Office, when it was on the wharf near the Custom-house, and before it was removed to its present position next the Post Office. The gentleman turned to me and said, "If it were not a breach of honour to do so I could tell you every word that is going over those wires." I ask, is it not possible that the divulgence of the telegrams which have been referred to has taken place by reason of the presence near some of the offices of some intelligent person who was able to read by sound?

Mr. STEVENSON: He could not have been such an honourable man as your friend.

Mr. BARLOW: The hon. gentleman is quite right. He could not; but I am endeavouring to show that the divulging of telegrams does not necessarily involve a breach of secrecy on the part of officers of the department. I am not

sufficiently acquainted with the subject to know whether the instruments could be cut out at by-stations, or whether it is necessary they should be kept in circuit; but I know that when there is a certain amount of tension on them they make a clicking which can be very distinctly heard indeed, often outside the office.

Mr. BLACK: But a person could not hear a telegram that was never sent.

Mr. BARLOW: I am not dealing with the genuineness of the telegrams which have been referred to. I am merely endeavouring to start the idea that it may be that the charges of leakage of information from the telegraph office, which we hear of frequently in connection with mining and mining shares, and betting and horse-races, possibly arise from the knowledge possessed by some outside persons of what is known as "sound reading." With regard to the main question, I must say I cannot go all the way with the hon. member for Bundamba, because I think he asks too much. He asks that a special commission should be appointed to inquire into all matters connected with the recent labour troubles and their origin, and with power to call for all books, papers, letters, telegrams, and documents, to examine witnesses, and to thoroughly investigate charges made against persons or associations of persons. I cannot agree with the proposal that these books and telegrams, whether of the labour party or the pastoralists, should be forced into a court of justice. If any evidence was tendered on both sides well and good, but I could not consent to the other even if it could be done. Now, there is one man in the colony eminently fitted, and perhaps he is the only man so fitted, to conduct an inquiry of this kind. I refer to District Court Judge Paul. I believe he is the one man in whom all parties would have perfect confidence, and if he were appointed, no assistants need be appointed to protract the proceedings in any way. I have not had the slightest consultation with the hon. member for Bundamba on this subject, as I have not spoken to him to-day, but if he will amend his motion in this direction, and ask for a commission consisting of that gentleman—if it can be done in accordance with the rules of the House—with power to inquire into all the papers and documents between the Government and the Pastoralists' Association on the one hand, and the labour association on the other hand, and that the proceedings of the commission should be regulated by the ordinary laws of evidence governing the examination of witnesses in criminal cases—if the hon. member will amend his motion in that direction, I will give it my support, but I regret I cannot do so in its present shape.

Mr. ARCHER said: Mr. Speaker,—I have a little to say on this subject, and I will deal with the matter from a different side somewhat to any taken yet. I have heard the debate that has taken place, and I think that in the able speech we heard from the Chief Secretary last night there was nothing more true than the statement that this motion was brought in purposely to provide another cause of complaint. It may be supposed that there are some ignorant men in the House, but it is not possible to suppose a man so ignorant as to think that the Government could, without a special Act passed for the purpose, grant or sustain such a request as is asked for in the motion now before the House. The proposal the hon. member for Bundamba makes in this motion, and which he made in his speech last night, is that not only all the books and papers of the unionists, but also all the books and documents of the Pastoralists' Association should be brought before this commission. What business, Sir, have the Government to seize upon the documents of any persons

who are not guilty of any crime? I would like to see the Government try to seize my private papers. The thing is absurd. The men who will join together for the purpose of forcing their views upon a country in spite of the law have no idea whatever of personal liberty. Really if they had their own way they would be more tyrannous than any single tyrant who was ever in the world. One tyrant may be a great curse to a country, but his action is restricted and he cannot suppress a whole country. But these men, if they had their way, would force everyone to do as they thought proper, and would not allow anyone to have a private opinion, or to have a private letter. The Government they would have would allow nothing to be hidden from them, but that is a kind of Government we are not going to have in this colony. When we have such a Government it will not be without much more serious conflicts than any we have yet had, because there are a very great many people who will not submit to a Government seizing private papers and doing just what they like. The real object of the motion is, as the Chief Secretary pointed out, to get up another grievance—"We have brought this case before the House, and they won't listen to it." That is what these persons want to be able to say. It must have been known that the House could not listen to such a motion, and if it had listened to it and passed it, it would have been utterly valueless, because there would be no power to carry it out. That is the strongest and best point taken during the debate, and I do not think that even the hon. member for Bundamba was ignorant of the fact when he put his motion on the paper, that even if the House carried it unanimously it could have no result whatever. It appeared to me that the hon. member in his speech last night, in speaking of the pastoralists as one group of men, and of other persons, some of whom are now suffering punishment, as another group, drew no distinction at all between people who worked within the law and those who went beyond it. He put them all together, and he blamed the Government for having used means which were, I believe, forced upon them for the purpose of protecting innocent men in the carrying out of their affairs. The hon. member talked about the Gatling guns and cannon sent out to those districts. It is very easy to make fun of a thing of that kind, but I am by no means convinced that the fact of sending out those guns did not prevent bloodshed. If the Government has to do a thing they must do it well and thoroughly, or leave it alone. If they had made half work of it, and if they had shown the slightest slackness in this matter, there is no knowing where the thing would have ended. We praise them in this matter because they did what they had to do effectually. The very fact that the Government had taken such strong precautions in this matter is the greatest praise that can be given to them. It was the very thing that enabled us to go through such a scene of disorder as very few countries have been able to go through without bloodshed. But there is another matter that, to me, is infinitely more painful, and which does more harm than all the rioting and burning, or all the crimes, that have taken place in the West. In spite of what the hon. member for Bundamba said, I do still believe that all these offences have been committed by unionists. I believe they burnt the grass and woolsheds, first, because I do not think people are fools enough to burn their own property, and, secondly, because there is no reason why they should do so. I have as strong evidence that these acts were the acts of unionists as I have of anything which has happened in the world which I have not seen with my own eyes. Of course, if a man is only to

believe what he knows, his knowledge will be limited indeed, but we take for granted many facts in history, and we accept the fact of the battle of Waterloo having been fought, upon less evidence than we have now that the unionists committed those crimes. No one doubts that the riot at Clermont, for which they were not punished, did take place. The judge at the trials stated that there was no doubt a riot, but the jury doubted whether the right individuals had been arrested, and therefore were quite right in acquitting them. But that a riot did take place, that men were stoned and threatened with all sorts of dreadful consequences, no one doubts. It is no use, therefore, for the hon. member to try and throw dust in the eyes of people, and tell us these acts were not the acts of unionists. The evidence that we have that these crimes were committed by unionists is far greater than the evidence we have of any of the great events that have happened in the history of the world. But even these crimes I look upon as not being so serious a matter as this new moral code that has been published in the country by the unionists. I do not think the sacrifice of life would have brought such evil to the country as the new doctrine of morality preached by the unionists. There are people living now who remember the time when it was counted the greatest honour for a man to say that his word was as good as his bond. There was a time when, if a man was hired on even a verbal agreement, there was not the slightest doubt about him keeping it. But in these times the unionists not only seem to think nothing of breaking a verbal agreement, but the doctrine is preached to them that they can break a written contract if it is distasteful to them. Now, such a moral doctrine as that, if it were adopted, would put us back a hundred years. I cannot believe that such a doctrine will take hold of the people of Queensland; but even if it did take hold of a small minority, it would do us more harm than if fifty woolsheds and all the grass in Western Queensland were burnt. To me such a doctrine is perfectly horrible. Are we to look upon every man with whom we make a contract as a confounded scoundrel, and expect that he will break his agreement the moment it suits him to do so? It was distinctly said by one of these leaders, Mr. Spence, in New South Wales, that the men should break their contracts if they were distasteful to them. That is the doctrine which is now preached, whilst before the people who preach it came into existence, out of every ten men whom I hired I could be certain that nine would fulfil their agreements. Now, I think instilling a principle of that sort into the people is far worse than riot, and, in fact, if it is adopted we shall be afraid to compare ourselves to any civilised country in the world. I rose, Mr. Speaker, merely for the purpose of saying this. I think when it is looked at in the light in which I have put it it becomes far more serious than a mere riot which we can put down with physical force. We cannot put down moral laxity with physical strength. The morals which ought to be our guide are the result of thousands of years of training, but there suddenly jumps up a party that throws all that to the wind and says, "Never mind truth or justice; let us do what we think is right in our own eyes, and take the course which we think of most advantage to ourselves." I would like to say a few words about freedom of contract, and the effect of this strike. Of course, after the very clear way in which the Chief Secretary put the question of freedom of contract, it is hardly worth while saying much on the question, but it is one of those matters upon which I feel strongly, and I must therefore refer to it. Freedom of contract to me is a personal right which a man holds, and which cannot be taken from him

except by injustice. I have a right, so long as I keep within the law, to hire anyone at whatever price he will take, and I have a right to hire out myself—if my labour is worth anything—for anything I choose to accept. Nothing is so clear to me as that, and it is so obvious that I cannot understand what there is to argue about. Yet the unions would compel people to starve if they cannot get a certain rate of wages, or they would compel them to be loafers and "sponge" upon other people. The unions lay down a rule about wages, and no less wages than they name must be accepted; men will not be allowed to accept less wages even if they are not union men. They say "You must not accept a smaller wage than this." Could anything be more absurd? A great many people cannot earn those wages, and rather than see a man accept a wage which is less than that of the best worker, they would see him idle and become a loafer on the community. That is another way of breaking down the moral principles of the country. Ninety-nine men out of every hundred feel it a point of personal honour to make their own living, so that they may not be a burthen on their neighbours or on the State; and that is a principle to be encouraged. But to prevent men from taking such wages as they can earn will break down that feeling of independence and turn them into loafers upon others. Experience is a great teacher in the long run, and the long spell of bad luck the unionists have now had ought to teach them some salutary lessons. Lately, glancing through Macaulay's "History of England," I came across this passage:—

"Some people have accused the people of being fickle, it is not so; the people are not fickle; they are faithful to their leaders, and the great mistake is that they choose their leaders so very badly."

That is absolutely true of the unionists, and by this time they ought to have been taught a valuable lesson. They suffered a defeat, as was mentioned by the hon. member for Barcoo, in the matter of the Jondaryan wool, and they had a frightful defeat in the maritime strike—a strike got up solely to enable the officers of the vessels to join their union; going out of their way in fact for the purpose of backing them up. In Queensland the unionists have just suffered another very heavy defeat, although, I dare say, they will begin the war again in New South Wales, which will end in their suffering another defeat. I wonder if the unionists—the men I mean who follow these labour leaders and agitators—have really considered what they have suffered, and what they have lost; for some of them might have been moderately wealthy men if they had continued working. I wonder if they have taken into consideration the truth, as stated by a visitor from England, that they are "an army of lions led by asses." The money they have wasted, as stated last night by the hon. member for Cunningham, in this last dispute would have put many of them into very good positions. Will their leaders ever put them in good positions in life? Will they not, on the contrary, lead them nearer and nearer to ruin? What did we find only a very few weeks ago? Only two or three days before the camps were ordered to disperse the leaders continued lying to them, saying that the strike was not over, but only beginning, and that their victory was certain. They lied up to the very last. It was the most wonderful exhibition of credulity on one side and barefaced lying on the other that ever I heard of. I assume that their speeches were truthfully reported, and I particularly remember a speech delivered to some unionists at Barcaldine to the effect that the strike was only now beginning, and a week after it was all over. Is it not pitiful to think that fine honest working

men should be misled in this way? Is it not pitiful to think that they should be led by people who have no moral feeling, or truth, or honour, and that under their guidance they are prepared to do almost anything? A year or two ago you could rely on the word of those men; you could make contracts with them knowing that they would fulfil them. Now those same men are prepared to break contracts and to commit crimes for the sake of those leaders. It is the most painful incident in the whole of the strike—the moral degradation of the people who have followed those leaders. They have suffered in this way what will take them years to recover. I have employed hundreds of men in Queensland, and I know what workmen are. Many of them, whom I have employed as common labourers, are now in good positions in life, as they all might be if they stuck to their work. Although we may take this strike as over, although we may hope these men will return to their senses and see that even if they are going to fight again they will have to elect other leaders more capable of leading them to success—with sufficient judgment to lead them to victory—it will be a long time before the evil effects of the teaching they are now receiving will be eradicated. I do not look upon the misery and the poverty that is now suffered by those men outside, and the difficulty of finding work, as the greatest evils that have resulted from the strike. Those are physical evils which can be borne and remedied. They are as nothing compared with the evils they will suffer from the serious degradation of morals to which I have alluded, and I believe it will be years before they will get over it.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS : Hear, hear !

Mr. HOOLAN said : Mr. Speaker,—I can see that by taking the side of the unfortunate strikers I shall be placing myself rather in the position of a forlorn hope ; but, holding the opinions I do, it would be a sign of cowardice if I allowed this opportunity to pass without giving a very straightforward opinion on the subject, and showing the side I am on. I represent a constituency that feels very strongly on the subject of unionism. I may say for them that they do not join in with incendiaries and those who go about burning and destroying. At the same time they have collected and given considerable sums of money in aid of the shearers on strike, and in other ways have shown their sympathy with them. I told my constituents before I left that I would give a straightforward opinion on the question in the House, and I intend to do so. There is no doubt the squatters have suffered during the strike, and every man with a spark of honesty in him will sympathise with them in their sufferings. Although I am a unionist, and my sympathies are with the strikers, I should be very sorry to incite them to destroy any man's property. I believe we have little enough property in Queensland, and that it is the duty of every man to acquire as much as he possibly can. I can honestly and conscientiously say that it is not the fault of our Queensland laws that has prevented me from being a man of property instead of a poor impecunious member of Parliament. It was my own fault, not the laws of the land ; and with regard to these strikers, many of whom I know personally, it has been their own fault, too—their improvident habits. I have told them to their faces, and I tell them so here again, that if it were not for that they would be wealthy men. I think we can sympathise with the squatters, but there is no necessity to go into mourning over their losses. It is a very unfortunate thing, but there is not much use in lamenting over it. It has happened to about the wealthiest class

we have got, the people who can best afford to bear whatever little losses they have met with. They enjoy the biggest privileges of any class in the country, and pay less for them. Their privileges are something extraordinary, and their taxes or contributions towards the public revenue of Queensland are very small indeed in comparison. But what strikes me most throughout this debate is that the people who knew so much from the very commencement, who knew all about it, who knew that a number of ignorant, deluded men were being led into a position calculated probably to destroy their own lives and the lives of others who had to exercise authority over them—that not one of those people ever attempted to move or stir in the matter. It is very strange, indeed, that while we have a large number of gentlemen in the Legislative Assembly, and a number of highly intelligent gentlemen connected with the Press of Brisbane and surrounding towns, they could allow people to so far exercise their talents and powers as to simply override the whole of them, and to gain the extraordinary influence over a number of their fellow-beings that they did. We have been told that the unionists were only allowed to read two papers—namely, the *Worker* and *Sydney Truth* ; but I can say that the *Sydney Bulletin* had more influence in those strikes than the *Worker* or any other paper published in the colonies. It shows “the sign of the weakness” on the part of the Brisbane Press when one pressman, with a little tiny publication issued once a month or once a fortnight, was able to completely override them, notwithstanding all their rabid writings and utterances—utterances and writings that have done more to incite this strike than all Lane's mysterious writings in the *Worker*. That they should be so completely at fault, and allow themselves to be driven into a corner in this manner, shows helplessness somewhere ; and most decidedly it was the duty of leading men, members of Parliament, and Ministers of the Crown, to try and interfere and stop this matter before it got to the unfortunate state it was in when the military were landed at Clermont. The hon. member for Bundamba has got to pay the penalty of his rashness or honesty or whatever it may be, and I fully intend to take a share of the blame and of the penalty with him. I am glad he is to be boycotted ; I have felt it myself and know what it is. I am very happy to see it, because, if there is one thing more than another which affords consolation to a man when he is in trouble, it is to see others in the same position as yourself. But all the censure in this case seems to take one direction. Some hon. members, amongst them a very high authority, accused the hon. member that he is pulled from behind ; others have accused him that he wishes to put the Government in a corner, seeking glory to himself. Now, I know a little of him, and I know that this is all entirely wrong. There is a very big section of the public of Queensland who consider that they are not represented in this Assembly. I do not know the cause of it ; you all know it more than I do. I do not profess to know. Still the fact remains, and this I do know—that a large section of the working public of Queensland are strong unionists ; and you must all remember that they have a number of supporters and sympathisers who double the unionists. I can say that truthfully. At any rate they do in North Queensland. I am not so emphatic with regard to the South. Whether the unionists are entirely wrong or have got any design on the State I do not know. I do not believe they have, because I am sure that anyone who would attempt to control the State or to govern Queensland from the side of labour only, would make a serious mistake and be

unable to carry it through. I do not believe they have any such intention, because I am satisfied that such a state of things, if brought about, would not last long. There is no doubt they aim at being represented in this Assembly, and there is no doubt that they will carry out their aims and intentions—that is, to have better representation than at present. Why they have so many opponents here I do not know. I will not try to fathom it, but the fact remains. Of course people do not like to handle or touch them, and that makes it all the more difficult for those who do so; but still they must go through the task with all the ability at their command, and all the boldness and courage they can bring to bear upon it. It is this class of people who have forced the position on the hon. member for Bundamba. They think that there has been unfair play with regard to the prisoners tried before the magistrates, and also in the case of those who are in St. Helena. They would like to know a little more about those matters; hence the motion for further inquiry. Of course the motion will be lost. There will be no further inquiry held. But you must remember that these strikes and the results which have followed—the trial and imprisonment of the so-called leaders—have left an impression on the public mind that it is not easy to eradicate; and as long as they remain there the public mind will always suffer from a gaping wound which, although it is not impossible to heal, will require great care to bring it to a state of healing. It is very easy to stand here and make charges against those prisoners who are now suffering, and I suppose will have to suffer, for what they have done or are supposed to have done. One section of the community claims that they have done nothing; another claims that they are the most outrageous wretches who ever encumbered the earth. They have not made use of those words, but have expressed their views to that effect in a general way. One side say it is plain that these men came down to Clermont, advancing in a body, terrorising the district, prepared to take possession of the railway; in fact, to take possession of all the Government institutions, and to administer the law on their own account. I do not believe they had any such intentions. They are spoken of as ignorant, benighted fools. They are not that. We can claim that for them. There is no doubt that they made a demonstration to try and strengthen their own side, but that anything like a revolution was intended I do not believe. You know more in Brisbane as to who pulled the wires, but from what I know I do not think they intended anything of the sort. I do not think they would be such fools. They had a few guns, such as a man might put on the stage to make a bit of a display; and that was about all. They certainly went into camp peacefully when the military approached. It is said that they did so for fear of the Nordenfeldt gun; but it was no such thing. There were some among them whom I do not know; but I am acquainted with a great many of them, and, whatever they may be, I do not believe that anything like cowardice reigns in their hearts. I think their own sense of law and order restrained them, and they went into camp peaceably to avoid any collision with the military. If they had intended to fight, they could have very easily got away from the Nordenfeldt gun and commenced trouble. It was the good influence of a number who knew they had made enough demonstration and intended to go no further, and the influence brought to bear from outside places, of which probably no one in the Assembly has any knowledge. They have a number of friends throughout the country who

have all along done their best to restrain them, and it is unfair to impute motives of cowardice to men who are pulled from behind by their friends, and asked to keep quiet, so as to gain the public sympathy in order to better their cause. There is a strong feeling in the public mind that they have not received fair play, and that they were cruelly and unjustly treated while travelling from place to place in charge of the officers of the law.

Mr. SMYTH: That is not true.

Mr. HOOLAN: It may not be true; but a good many people believe it is. I will now read a little information I have here. This is sworn information, on the oath of a unionist. I suppose hon. members here are not inclined to pay much attention to that; but from my point of view it is just as good as the oath of any other man:—

“Six men were kept on one chain for ten days at Augathella night and day, and fourteen men in two cells measuring 7 feet by 8 feet each.”

These are the assertions we want to come at, and see whether they are true or not. When a man allows himself to be arrested quietly by the officers of the law, it is evident that he is prepared to put up with whatever the law may allot him, and has no intention of trying to escape:—

“One man named Gavin was suffering from fever and ague, and notwithstanding this fact was known to the police he was still kept in handcuffs at night. This will account for the twenty-one men arrested at Augathella. During the day we were allowed to go to the closet with a guard, but at night we had on a leg-iron and a heavy chain attached, a policeman with a drawn revolver having hold of the end.

“We were handcuffed and leg-ironed travelling in Cobb and Co.'s coach for two days. During those two days the coach horses kept continually knocking up, and we were placed on horseback at intervals, handcuffed, and our horses bitten to one another. Having to camp out one night, some of the men were leg-ironed together and some handcuffed on a chain.”

The Hon. P. PERKINS: That is right enough.

Mr. HOOLAN: Some people may think so. People who have been a long time in the beer and swipe trade get careless of human suffering. No doubt this unionist business has hit very hard at the beer and swipe manufacturers generally; and I may say that among all the evils that have been caused by the strike we can claim some good, because a wave of temperance has gone over the land. It is only natural, therefore, that the beer and swipe sellers should disapprove of anything said in favour of unionism.

The Hon. P. PERKINS: You are a nice specimen.

Mr. HOOLAN: I do not argue with swipe sellers; but whether I am a nice specimen or not, I consider myself a cut above anything in the shape of slush or pot-boys.

The Hon. P. PERKINS: Blackguard!

Mr. HOOLAN: Unfortunately, if I am, blackguards do not reign alone in this Assembly.

The SPEAKER: I must call the hon. member to order if he uses terms of that character in this House. He is not entitled to use that term, and I must call upon him to withdraw it.

Mr. GLASSEY: Is it in order for the hon. member for Cambooya to describe an hon. member—

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Speaker has called on the hon. member for Burke to withdraw the term.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member must withdraw the word he made use of.

Mr. HOOLAN: Of course, I cheerfully bow to your ruling, Mr. Speaker, and withdraw the word. I also ask you to request the hon. member for Cambooya to withdraw his words. He called me a blackguard.

The SPEAKER: If the hon. member will call attention to any language of that kind used *sotto voce*, I shall be obliged to him. If any unparliamentary language is used, it is the privilege of any member of the House to call my attention to it.

The Hon. P. PERKINS: No notice was taken at the time of what I said. I adhere to what I said.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order.

Mr. HOOLAN: I do not wish to weary the Assembly, but I will read a small paragraph from the affidavit of an eye-witness:—

"I, George Best, at present of Charleville, in the colony of Queensland, shearer, do most solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:—

"I was present at Augathella on the 30th day of March last past, and in the evening of that day I saw a number of military and police there.

"I started to go to a camp about eighty yards from my tent, and when within about ten yards of it I was covered with a rifle, and told that I would be shot down if I moved, as the Riot Act had been read in the camp; I was going to twelve men who were at supper, surrounded by military and police, Captain King and Inspector Stuart being in command.

"Inspector Stuart called upon Captain King to read something, which he did, and the only part I could hear of it, was the words, 'In the reign of George the Fourth. God save the Queen.'

"Inspector Stuart then called upon a boundary rider and a man named Bartlett to identify some of the men camped there. John McNamara and Latraile, now in Roma gaol, were pointed out. Inspector Stuart, covering McNamara with a revolver, called upon him to step out, charging him with committing arson, rioting, and conspiracy. When Latraile was coming out the inspector covered him with a revolver, and, as he (Latraile) was not coming quick enough, counted one, two, as a threat to fire.

"Latraile stopped, and said, 'Fire, that's all you are good for is firing on defenceless men.' The inspector then ordered them to be handcuffed together, saying, 'Screw them together like dogs.' He repeated this order twice, which was carried out by his men."

Certainly if those statements are lies they are calculated to do a great deal of damage to the Government, and also to the laws under which we live. If the statements are true, such things ought to be checked; and if not, those who gave utterance to them should bear the brunt of them:—

"During our confinement in the cells we were allowed out for fresh air by changing places with the prisoners on the veranda, this veranda being only 3 feet 6 inches wide; only the occupants of one cell were allowed out for exercise at a time, and we were confined in these cells for nine days, the air being almost suffocating."

Then—

"We started next morning about 10 a.m. for Charleville; after proceeding a short distance the coach got bogged. The men were taken out and ordered to walk about half a mile, still having leg-irons on. After again getting into the coach and going a few miles further, the coach got bogged again. The men got out and walked for safety, as the horses in the coach were young ones. After the men had walked a short distance I refused to walk any further unless the leg-irons were taken off me; thereupon the police took them off. The whole of the above are facts, and took place in my presence and hearing."

This statement is signed by H. Morley, and the first statement is signed by Moncton Creagh, Peter Stewart Hastie, George Cole, P. J. Irvine, T. Mather, John Nolan, John Traynor, James Mather, and Charles Richards. Whether the whole of these men are telling lies or not remains to be seen.

Mr. PAUL: A nice lot they are.

Mr. HOOLAN: Until these matters are gone into, there will always be a doubt as to whether or not they were fairly treated. It does not matter what crime a man may commit, he is supposed to be treated humanely while he is in

the hands of the officers of the law. These assertions and many others that are agitating the public mind must be cleared up, or there will always be an impression that these men were unfairly treated and brutally treated. It is rather a tough job to identify oneself with a prisoner in St. Helena, but one of those men is my particular friend. I do not care if the whole world stands against him; he is still my friend. He was a miner at Croydon in 1887, and he worked very hard to try and put me in the position I am in now. At any rate he behaved like a friend to me, and if I accepted his friendship then I should be a very poor man if I turned back upon him now; so I do not intend to do it. I do not know what he has done, but until I know that he has committed some grievous crime against society that would unman him, or until he has forfeited the manliness which was born in him, and which I know he has inherited, I shall believe nothing bad of him. The Colonial Secretary says he has gone through the reputations of those men at St. Helena carefully, and has found out their records. He said last night:—

"I have gone through them carefully, and have found out the records of those who are in gaol, and I can say that the greater number are men who were notoriously in the union camp; and in some instances I know that there are warrants issued for them in the sister colony of New South Wales, for offences committed there. In one instance a warrant has been issued upon an information laid by the unionists in New South Wales for embezzlement of the union funds."

He does not cast any imputations upon those men by saying they were notoriously in the union camp. Surely the hon. gentleman would not so far descend from his pedestal as to cast imputations upon men who are already treated as felons. I suppose in one instance a warrant has been issued upon information, and probably the hon. gentleman is in possession of that information. I do not dispute a word of it; I only say that I know two of those men, and one of them is my particular friend. Until I know more about him, I shall refuse to believe anything bad of him, or that he is guilty of any wicked or heinous crime. There is no doubt fires have occurred; but all this outcry about fires in the grass is simply ridiculous; there is no place in Queensland where the grass could burn in March. The unionists had a chance of running the whole of the colony into misery from which it could never have recovered, and that is what they would have done if there had been nothing noble in their hearts. The man whom I refer to at St. Helena is Alexander Forrester, and I pledge myself, although the Chief Secretary scouted the idea last night, that he could never do anything mean or sneaking. I do not intend to say anything bold to-night, or to insult anyone, not that, if I did, I would care if any hon. member resented it, because I suppose I must get used to those things. I will conduct myself in a proper way; but I must state that I would pledge myself to that man as he remains a prisoner of the Queensland Government, at the Island of St. Helena. I pledge my constituency of Burke also to sympathy for him, and that is a very bold thing for any man to do; at any rate I do it, and if they do not like what I say they can reject me.

Mr. ANNEAR: You only represent a minority now.

Mr. HOOLAN: That does not matter a bit to me. I hold myself a man anywhere, and defy any man to prove I am not. I hold myself above any constituency in Queensland, and I may show hon. members, when the time comes round again, that I can represent a larger constituency than the Burke, although that is such as any man need be proud of. There is very little in being a member of Parliament, and I believe a

good many hon. members are very tired of the job, and would well wish themselves out of it. It is supposed there is no public sympathy with these unionists, that they are without public sympathy; but I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that they have sympathisers, and brave, honest, sympathisers all over the country. When I came into the Chamber I found a letter in my box from as good a man as ever breathed, and it is neither a stolen letter nor a forged letter; but it is something above the common. It was from a miner at the Mount Zeehan Tin Fields, in Tasmania. The reason I inflict this upon the Assembly, and upon you, Mr. Speaker, is that the unfortunate prisoners have very few friends who have said a word in their favour; and I think it is the duty of any man to speak in their favour if he has anything to say. It would be very mean for a man, who professed to be a friend, to receive a letter from a distant land and not communicate it to the columns of *Hansard*. It will be a cheap and easy way of acknowledging it to the man who wrote. It refers to a man named Hamilton, and is as follows:—

"You need have no doubt, Jack, as regards Bill Hamilton's character. He is an Australian goldfields' boy, noble-minded, honest to a fault, and one who resents the oppression of the producer by the capitalist. He has more than the average intelligence, and has always, I believe, conducted himself respectably, as his parents taught him to. He is a zealous workman at whatever he tackles. I have known him on Mount Brown to do two men's work. I have also known him on Kimberley to work like a Trojan (if they ever did work), but I am sorry to say with very poor results. Pat Hyland, that used to canvas for you at Tabletop, says he thinks you are acquainted with Bill Hamilton (I doubt it), hence my recommendation as to character."

Of course the writer asks me to do what I can for him. Well, there is no necessity for him to ask me that. I may further add the writer of this letter is William David Chalmers, care of Messrs. Mackay and Douglas, sharebrokers, etc., Mount Zeehan, Tasmania. These men have plenty of friends throughout the colonies. It is all very fine to say that public opinion is against them. It may be in certain sections of the public, but there are other portions of the public who are very strongly in favour of them. It is not likely that public opinion will be tested; but at the same time I would be very glad to see it tested in the matter. I am quite satisfied with my share in public life, and am quite willing to retire now on my laurels. At the same time it is not a very wise thing to say that public opinion is quite against them when there is no way of testing it unless by public meetings. In the North large meetings have been held expressing very strong sympathy with the strikers, and although it is not the place of anyone who has the welfare of the colony at heart to encourage strikes or to wish for strikes, or take any active part in bringing them about, at the same time I think it would be very unmanly for anyone who sympathised with them not to back them up when they are in trouble. I do not know who originated the strike, but, certainly, up to the present they have not done much. I believe that the appearance of two or three well-known men—particularly Ministers—at the Clermont camp would have been the means of stopping all this bother, and have nipped it in the bud in a very peaceful way. It was very unfortunate that the attempt was not made, and that the military were sent there instead. There has been nothing but trouble ever since, and possibly we have not seen the end of it. An hon. gentleman has remarked that the strike has now advanced into New South Wales. Well, that is where it ought to be, and it would be very wise if the Government released those St. Helena prisoners and sent them over to New South Wales just to help things there a little.

A great deal has been made about the unionists being armed, and of whatever little threats they made use of, and whatever indiscretions of speech were made use of. If people make such a row when they only talk of bloodshed, I do not know what they would do if they actually saw it. Probably they would go distracted altogether; but it is to be hoped that, not being a bloodthirsty race, we shall not have any bloodshed in Queensland. But I do not believe that the firearms business was confined exclusively to the unionists. Other people had a great deal to do with firearms also. Here is a bit of information about a Mr. Oliver. I believe he is one of the pastoralists, and some time ago he came to Brisbane to purchase firearms with which to shoot the shearers. He gave rather a large order. Here it is:—

Brisbane, March 19, 1891.

MR. OLIVER, c/o Q'land Club.

BOT. OF FO-TER & KELK

(Late Brookes & Foster), Ironmongers.

6 English Constabulary Revolvers, 100s.	... £30 0 0
2 S. & W. Revolvers, ea. 85s., 95s.	... 9 0 0
6 Boxes 450 Cartridges, 4s. 6d.	... 1 7 0
4 Boxes S. & W. Do., 4s.	... 0 16 0
	£41 3 0

Of course, Mr. Oliver might have been a special constable, but he might have been a bushranger in embryo. I do not know who he is, or what he is, but it is quite evident he was here on the firearm racket, and just as much stress should be laid on his purchasing firearms as on a shearer doing so. Goodness knows if Mr. Oliver was of a bloodthirsty turn of mind. Possibly he was not; at any rate we have not heard that he shot anyone, or took any life, so that in all probability he was a sober, law-abiding citizen. If, however, a unionist shearer had come to Brisbane and given that order, most likely he would have been at once arrested for intimidation, conspiracy, or some of the other charges which were so numerous during the late trouble. I have no idea what the expense of this proposed commission will be, or what the damage will be in prying into books, papers, and telegrams; but as I am economically inclined it will trouble me, and I was about to ask permission from you, Sir, to bring my blankets and live here in order to economise further. I have no desire to see the colony put to expense any more than any other man but, I think this commission is necessary to further the ends of justice, and it certainly would allay the public mind. The public of Queensland are certainly masters of the situation, and a very big section of the public ask that this inquiry should be held. There is no possibility of them demanding it, but I shall not use strong words if I say that a big section wish for it. It is necessary that they should be thoroughly satisfied regarding every particular. It is all very well for members who were elected some years ago and have possibly never returned to their electorates to describe public feeling, but when they next go before the electors they will probably find that public feeling has changed considerably. And that is not entirely due to unionists, but partly to other parties in the body politic. I intend to support the motion and have given it my little assistance, but I know that no argument that could be adduced here will do any good. At the same time it does not do for a man to desert his colours, particularly when they are in trouble. I was not elected a unionist, but was opposed by one of the best little unionists in North Queensland with unionist money and influence. The people, however, who supported me, although not unionists, are a class who strongly sympathise with them. People in the

North have only had a one-sided story of what took place in the Western districts, owing to the hostility of the Press. The Press, particularly the Brisbane Press, fiercely attacked the shearers, and by giving a one-sided version of the affair created enemies where they expected to make friends, and caused hostility where they should have used every endeavour to sow the seeds of peace and friendship. Their duty as moderate, truthful, and straightforward journalists was to state both sides of the story. It was very unfair to begin an article with a sentence condemning the strikers as an ignorant lot of men, and then to finish up by abusing them and rating them soundly for what they were doing. According to my idea of journalism, that was thoroughly absurd, and unlikely to effect the object they were supposed to aim at—that was, the reconciliation of all parties. There is no possibility of bringing about a peaceful state of affairs while the country fancies that the men have been unjustly or improperly imprisoned, or too severely sentenced. Those men have a lot of friends, and the shearers and unionists still have a lot of friends; the unionists are a strong body, and it is necessary that a full explanation should be made of the whole affair, and satisfaction given to those who sympathise with them without being participants in or having any connection with the strike. To cast reflection on the men suffering sentence is a very poor argument. The Colonial Secretary stated that those men on the entrance to prison set themselves down as having no religion. Surely that is no reflection on them. Many of the brightest men and women in the world have no religion. Some do not like to go so far as to state that, but others do not hesitate to affirm that they are non-religionists. We know that a great many of the cruelties and barbarities that are perpetrated in the world are practised in the name of religion. The Australian Natives' Association, which was formed in the colony some time ago, was formed for the purpose of destroying sectarian feeling among natives and preventing them becoming imbued with the prejudices and religious bigotry and intolerance of the old country. Unionism, whatever else it does or may have done, brings all kinds of religionists together, and interferes with no man's religion. A man in a unionist camp can say his prayers at the butt of a stump, and nobody would cast any reflection on him, unless, perhaps, some very ill-disposed person. Some of them have no religion and do not hesitate to say so, and some of the best unionists we have are Latter Day Saints—that is, Salvation Army men. So far as unionists are concerned, it is all the same whether a man worships the image of the man who was crucified many hundred years ago on Calvary, or a block of wood cut out by a handy Chinaman to do duty as Joss at a picnic or feast; and I cannot see that it reflects in any way on these prisoners to say that they have no religion. They may have said it in a moment of anger at the fate which had overtaken them, or in displeasure at their surroundings. At any rate, I hope if the Government intend to bring all things to a peaceable conclusion, that they will seriously take into consideration the case of the conspiracy prisoners, and others who have been sent to gaol during the late trouble. The imprisonment of those men is making more impression on the public mind than the downfall of the strike or the loss of money. The loss of a bit of money is not a great matter, even if it amounts to tens of thousands or millions of pounds; but where human beings suffer it is a much more serious affair, and there is a sympathy with those men which it will be very hard to eradicate, even by the most favourable overtures.

Mr. HOOLAN,

Mr. LITTLE said: Mr. Speaker,—I think it would be very unjust for me not to speak in this debate. I have listened attentively to the hon. member who has just sat down, and his colleague, the hon. member for Bundamba, and I hope sincerely that the language I use will not offend either of those hon. members. I speak as a shearer. In this very Chamber, and in the other House, there are men, as I dare say you know yourself, Sir, for whom I have shorn. I will tell the House a little of my experience, and give my explanation of freedom of contract. I think the last time I earned a shilling by shearing was in the year 1869, and I will tell you how I did it. I was a miner at the time, and I and my mates were hard up. I went out shearing, and every shilling I earned I sent back to the men who were representing my interest to keep, as we called it, the pot boiling. We signed an agreement to shear all the sheep on a certain station, to the entire satisfaction of a certain person to be appointed. You, Sir, know the usual terms of such agreements. I did not like to sign it, because I would be liable to the laws of the land if I did not do my work satisfactorily. I will tell you what I did as a shearer. I shored sheep at 3s. 6d. a score, with 5s. for ewes, and a pair of shears for every 500, and the rations were such as we got. What do they get now? They get 4s. a score, and they get tucker at 50 per cent. less than we got it. There is not a hotel in Brisbane lays a better table than they get now, and there are no men in the colony, or in the world, better paid than the shearers are now. Well, in the olden days gone by, many a hard day's shearing I have done, and what did we get? We got a feed of mutton or beef and pigweed. But we never grumbled about it because we knew we got what was available, and the very best feeling existed between the men and their employers, and continued to exist between them until these hateful and infamous agitators and delegates came amongst them. They are infamous men. I would sooner go to their funeral than to a banquet. I was shearing at Yandilla in the year 1869, and I may say that I was a "ringer," and when I walked out of the shed I demanded my £1 a-day. I was leader of the shed there, and there were thirty-four men on the board, and one Saturday afternoon Mr. Owens came to me and said, "Little, can you get the men to work on?" I was a general favourite with the men, and I never quarrelled with the boss. He knew if I was willing to work, the men would work with me, and there were a lot of ewes that had to be got through and let out to the lambs who were starving. Many hon. members in this House understand what I mean. We shored until dark, and we could not get the work finished then. I said, "Mr. Owens, the boys are good fellows. I can square the boys, and we will be here to-morrow morning." On the Sunday morning I shored thirty-eight sheep before I ate my breakfast, and we got them away. I tell you this to show the feeling that then existed between the men and the employers.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LITTLE: Well, Mr. Owens said, "Now, boys, to-morrow you can have a day's holiday." We wanted no holiday; we were paying for our own tooth-powder and rations, and we wanted work and we told him so; and he said, "Well, we will have a cricket match this afternoon." He grew grapes and made wine at the station, and he sent us up twenty gallons of wine. I am simply describing the feeling that existed between employers and the employed until these infamous vagabonds—God ought to have struck them dead—called labour agitators came on the scene. Every shilling I have earned I have worked for honestly, and I have worked in

every avenue of employment; and I only quarrelled with one employer, and that was "Black Allen," on the Barcoo. I signed an agreement with him to shear for 3s. 6d. a score, and the usual conditions and schedule of rations. There were four of us there from the Cloncurry—a good push. Well, he gave us a pen to-day and half a pen to-morrow, and I said, "I come here to work," and he would not give me work, and so I went back to the camp and paid up my ration account and got a receipt for it, and then came to him for what I was owed. He stood at the door and would not let me in—he was one of the class of men who cause these troubles—and I shoved the door in. I said, "There is my account receipted by the storekeeper, and I want you to pay me." He said, "I won't pay you." Well, what did I do? I showed him the door, and said, "So help me God if you don't I'll pay you." That is the only time I had a quarrel. Mr. Crombie's brother-in-law was boss of the shed at the time. Have I not narrated that to the hon. member?

Mr. CROMBIE: Often.

Mr. LITTLE: I said that if he would not pay me I would pay him, and I was the best 12st. man that stood on the Barcoo. But this infamous crowd of agitators, they are the men who have caused the distress, and, I am sorry to say, the foundation of this agitation is in this Chamber. I will not mention any names, but he knows who I refer to; and if any member in this Assembly feels offended at what an Australian says to him, he can tap me on the shoulder, and take me down into the back yard, and I shall be only too glad if he will.

The SPEAKER: I would remind the hon. gentleman that his remarks have no application to the subject before the House. The hon. gentleman will please confine himself to the question.

Mr. LITTLE: I sincerely apologise, Mr. Speaker, for anything I have said which may be contrary to the Standing Orders. I have always respected the rules of this House, but I am speaking here from a working man's point of view, and I sincerely hope that if I leave this House to-morrow I shall remain on friendly terms with each and every hon. member whom I have had the honour to meet, with the exception of one.

Mr. DALRYMPLE said: Mr. Speaker,—A great deal of this debate has taken place on an entirely wrong issue. The hon. member for Bundanba talks about the unionists having been persecuted and being in gaol, but it is not the Government who have persecuted the unionists. No man has been punished for being a unionist. They have been punished for being criminals, and for breaking the laws of the country, and for nought else. Now, the hon. member for Bundanba poses almost altogether as the representative of labour. Doubtless he does represent a section of the labouring people, but I think if the colony were polled we should find that the hon. gentleman does not represent the labouring classes of this colony. The labouring classes of this colony are, I believe, law respecting—most of them—and God-fearing, and I think that after what we have heard from some hon. members of the state of mind of some of those persons who have been engaged in the recent disturbances it is certainly not at all surprising that our gaols are beginning to fill. I cannot be surprised at it, and I think very few people will be surprised at it when they find such letters as those written by Mr. Fothergill, a member of the Central District Council, affiliated to the Labour Federation, telling Mr. George Taylor and other persons belonging to the same order to "remember the Commune," and to emulate in Clermont the deeds

of those people. Now, to those who do remember the Commune it is a ghastly thing to remember, and the man who in cold blood desires that the deeds of the Commune should be repeated in this colony is a man without conscience and humanity. In the Commune the Archbishop of Paris was cruelly and foully murdered, and thirty of his colleagues were foully murdered—men who were devoting their lives to helping the wounded and to administering the last consolation to the dying soldiers. Those men were brutally murdered without any reason, and with no cause; every reason, in fact, to the contrary. Again, every endeavour was made by Frenchmen, who called themselves Communists, to destroy the city of Paris. They burnt down the Town Hall, although it belonged to the city; they attempted to burn the streets of the city; they burnt down some old palaces; and they attempted to burn down the Cathedral of Notre Dame, a structure which, like some other structures such as St. Paul's and Westminster Abbey, belong as a heritage to the whole human race. Those, then, were the deeds which some men told other men in the West to endeavour to emulate. There were, doubtless, some men who had such ideas in their minds and were disposed to carry them out, and they did carry them out in a humble way as far as they could. But, Sir, those are not the objects of real labour leaders. Their object is not to destroy but to build up; it is not to burn this country from end to end and convert it into a desert; it is not to emulate Atilla, the Hun. If those men had been able to carry out their ideas, there is every reason to believe that, but for the fact of Providence sending rain, the whole of the Western districts of Queensland would have become a desert; that millions of sheep would have been burnt; that property of all kinds would have been destroyed; that the golden fleece, which constitutes the wealth of this country, would no longer have existed; that the labour that produce gave to the people would no longer be wanted; and that the capital which is necessary to employ labour would have been destroyed. How, Sir, could that possibly benefit anyone? It is a ruin and injury to the whole country. And the men who would do all those things, and have so little regard for the true interests of the country, now pose as labour leaders. I, Sir, have every sympathy with unions. A legitimate unionist is not a man who wars with capital. He knows perfectly well that capital and labour should be brothers, and that it is necessary for the welfare of both that they should work together. Now, there are people in this colony who undoubtedly have set capital and labour at loggerheads, and they have done it regardless of the consequences, but that is not in the interests of labour. In some cases it may be their interest to live as the Cornish wrecker—by destruction; but as a rule it is not so. The unionism which we have had lately to deal with should not be called unionism at all. It might be called Anarchy, or by any other name, but it certainly is not anything that tends to draw men together. It is that which tends to cause men to fight and destroy, and which makes life not worth living. I dare say every member of this House is in favour of unionism. What we object to is that we should be called upon to tolerate criminality, because crime chooses to masquerade under the name of unionism. That is what the Government have very properly, and to some extent very successfully, endeavoured to put down. What they have done is not to restrain unionism, but to diminish and prevent crime; not to protect the squatter, but to allow the working man, if he chooses, to exercise his right of

freedom. If we admit that men of all sorts have a right to unite, is not the right not to unite equally as valid? If a number of men claim, as one of the rights they enjoy in a free community, the right to come together to make such arrangements as they like, is it a proper thing to punish and starve men and to ruin the colony because they choose to exercise what is just as much their own right—namely, the right not to join such an association unless they choose? Now, with regard to the question of the crimes that have been committed during the strike. One hon. member gave us a list of them, and the Colonial Secretary gave us his account of what has happened, and those are duly recorded in *Hansard*. It is a good thing that they are so recorded, as there is no doubt that crimes were committed. It will throw some little light on the origin of those crimes if I quote some of the doctrines which have been publicly preached by those who call themselves the chiefs of the labour federation, but whom I call anarchists. The object those gentlemen have in view, so I believe, is to starve and to coerce every man in the community, whether he like it or not, into joining their organisation. That is abundantly shown by the last strike, because, as far as I am aware, there were no grievances whatever to remove. It was simply a trial of strength to see whether the power of the unions was sufficient to compel every man in the community to enter those unions or be deprived of his liberty. What would be the consequence if every man in the colony were driven into them? A man would have no freedom at all. His right to live would depend on the way he succeeded in placating the great boss, the man who desires a republic where every man should be free and equal, but in which he proposes to be king. This man proposes to be king, and we should not be able to live unless we paid him whatever taxes he demanded. Their object has been to accomplish this by force of arms. There can be no doubt whatever on that point. Some hon. members want to impeach the Government for the action they have taken. I will impeach the Australian Labour Federation. Those are the parties who have brought this trouble on the colony, in order that they—representing a minority of the colony and a great minority of the workers—may defeat government by the majority. They are endeavouring to obtain by violent means what I believe they will never be able to obtain by constitutional means. They will never be able to govern this country while they denounce liberty and love oppression. I may mention some of the atrocities that have been committed. They have varied from simple insults to attacks on the Government, to cutting telegraph wires, to placing obstructions on railways, and to cutting railway bridges. We all know what happened at Abor Creek, where a determined attempt was made to destroy a train. In that particular case the outrage was not discovered for a very long time after it was perpetrated. Certain men from what was called the union camp stole away, cut through one of the piles of the bridge, and believed that the next train that crossed the bridge would be precipitated into the gulf beneath, where the men travelling by it would all be mangled corpses. This was defeated by chance. Their intention was to commit wholesale murder, and to create orphans and widows. By accident, or by want of knowledge how to proceed to wreck that particular train, the attempt failed, and trains went over the bridge for two or three weeks. The train that was intended to be destroyed was one conveying the military. Perhaps they fancied that a soldier—a man of the Defence Force—was a man who had no friends or relations; that he was an isolated being; and that if

[Mr. DALRYMPLE,

he got killed or maimed nobody would trouble about him. It is hardly possible to conceive that men should entertain such diabolical wickedness as to allow train after train, not carrying soldiers but ordinary passengers, to go over that bridge every day, knowing that at any moment the whole of those people might be plunged into eternity. Some hon. members do not believe that certain crimes were committed, crimes which did not involve anything like the wickedness that this did. Yet that this crime did take place there is not the slightest doubt. That the expected calamity did not occur was pure chance, or what some people might call Providence. A man has confessed to knowing something about it, or, rather, some men were apprehended, and one turned Queen's evidence. One of the men proposed to establish an *alibi*, but his *alibi* broke down, so that he was evidently committing perjury. Such men's notions have become so perverted and twisted that they believe the most diabolical crimes are justified if done in the name of unionism. I quite believe that if these men were in India they would join a gang of Thugs. They are unionists, and very strong unionists, and they live by murder and robbery. But does anyone suppose that the moral laws are going to be done away with because a man belongs to a union? Are the Government going to permit all kinds of crimes to be committed with impunity because somebody says he belongs to something? I say that the Government in this case have done their duty. What good purpose could be served by reopening this matter I do not know; no one does know. Some hon. members say that there is a feeling in the public mind in some places that justice has not been done; but there is a feeling in the public mind in some places apparently that all these outrages and crimes were justifiable. It is impossible really to understand how some people's minds appear to be framed. The men who have been incarcerated, who have been punished, have been tried either by the usual judicial tribunal or by juries of their fellow countrymen, and there is no more reason that I can see why these matters should be reopened than that other similar cases with which we are familiar should be reopened. Again, with respect to the Australian Labour Federation. The officials of this organisation have said they were not responsible for these outrages. Now, Sir, I believe—the Chief Secretary on one occasion said something of the same sort—that when men who are the leaders, who have the power of control, remain silent for months and months when crimes are being committed—which I may say did not benefit even their own cause; nothing more injurious or destructive to the cause could possibly have taken place—that when they did not openly, readily, and publicly proclaim that those crimes were not unionism, that they reprobated and denounced them and forbade any of their unions to help the people who were breaking the law—as long as they did not do that, they sanctioned those crimes. There is no doubt on that point. They tacitly approved of every one of those crimes.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Instigated them.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: They were the leaders; their men were obedient—remarkably obedient—and they never put out their hand and never expressed what they ought to have felt, what any honest man would have felt—their horror that crimes of that nature should take place. Crimes of all sorts took place. Rabbits were to be introduced—that was an idea that I call perfectly diabolical, to propose to bring live rabbits into the colony, which would simply mean additional taxation on the

whole of the people of Queensland for years and years to come, and which would render useless the vast expenditure of public money which has taken place in order to prevent a terrible calamity. In order to annoy a few people, those scoundrels—they are nothing else—would plunge the country into ruin. I have pointed out that the Abor Creek Bridge attempted massacre was never repudiated publicly by the hon. member for Bundamba, who is the representative of the labour party. He never considered it necessary to even say that he repudiated that outrage. He said instead that somebody else did it—somebody who had no earthly reason to do it, but every possible reason not to do it. I say that outrage was never denounced as it should have been, and there is one crime, and only one, that I can remember—and I have taken particular notice of all this trouble—that was denounced, and in connection with which the unionist leaders at the strike camp at Barcardine interfered and expressed their willingness to give all the assistance in their power to detect. Now, Sir, if in one case they were willing to exercise their authority to repress crime, it shows that they did recognise some crime. It shows that they recognised also that it was their duty to repress crime, but the only crime they ever attempted to put down, or to detect the offender, was the case where the man ate, or was supposed to have eaten, a poisoned apple. Apparently, then, there is no offence that can be committed out West by persons who may be in the union camps. You can capture a man, you can kidnap children, you can burn down either sheds, or wool, or grass; you can go and attempt, sometimes by trees, persisting in your attempts, sometimes by great crowbars, persisting in your attempts again, or by sawing bridges, to wreck trains—you can do all that; that was legitimate unionism, and the only place where you must draw the line is, you must not put strychnine in an apple. I say that if these men had known their duty—I say further, if they had known the interests they were supposed to represent, they would more strongly than any other persons in the country have denounced the crimes that were being committed. For the sake of the men who were there, they should have shown that although they were in favour of unionism they were prepared to denounce crime as strongly as any honest man in this city. That was their true policy; much more ought they to have done it on other grounds. Here is a quotation I shall give you from the evidence given before the Labour Commission by Mr. Spence, who is president of the Shearers' Union in New South Wales, I believe. It was on the 21st January of this year. Speaking of a circular which had been issued, he said:—

"Circular stated strike organised to reconstruct society. Had no distinct idea what was wanted or how it was to be got. Phrase reconstruction might be dangerous to very extreme men."

He knew that this attempt to reconstruct society was jeopardised. He had in his camp some very extreme men. The hon. member for Enoggera has pointed out that the West had become a modern Alsatia, that in one case 500 out of 600 men who masqueraded as unionists were vagrants and criminals. That is the evidence of an hon. member who is favourably disposed towards the labour cause, and, I believe, towards the extreme forms of it. Mr. Spence goes on to say:—

"His experience proved that the unions collectively agreed to recognise certain rules, and if one particular union broke its rules it was at once discountenanced."

Now, Sir, the Australian Labour Federation is, as we have heard, the head of the unionists of Queensland, and if that union had power to

compel rules to be recognised, and to order that all bad rules would be discountenanced, then how much more ought that federation to have exercised that power when every rule of morality and the criminal law was being continually broken. I say if they exercised their duty to their society, why did they not exercise their duty to that larger society—the community in which we live? I may mention how this matter began. The hon. member for Bundamba, I believe, some two years ago went to Barcardine. He said a short time ago—I do not wish to quote him wrongly—that he had only received £50 from the union funds in his life. If I mistake not, if he did not receive it from the unions, at any rate he got £75 on that occasion, and all his expenses paid. On that occasion, I believe, the seeds of which we have been reaping the fruit lately were sown. Then Hinchcliffe—I give you this in order to show that apparently the Australian Labour Federation had something to do, superficially at any rate, with these matters—Hinchcliffe was at Barcardine on 3rd February, conferring with the Labourers' Union. On 28th January, Messrs. Hinchcliffe and McDonald returned from Blackall, and got to Rockhampton; that shows that this movement was then under the control of the Australian Labour Federation. Then Mr. Seymour was at Barcardine on 22nd March. A variety of speeches were delivered there of a blood and thunder character—more blood than thunder. There was Martin, with his celebrated speech with regard to shear-blades. The footmen were to drill, and the horsemen were to drill, because an organised few were better than an unorganised many. Those remarks came from a Mr. Moore, who addressed the unionists present. It is difficult to decide who delivered this part; but Mr. Seymour was present. It was said that there was every prospect of a civil war, that if the unionists were beaten they would seek revenge, that the feeling of revenge would remain for years, and that the squatters would lose by it.

Mr. GLASSEY: That is not Seymour.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: It appeared at the time to have been delivered by Mr. Seymour. There was a difficulty in following the particular paragraph; and though Mr. Seymour was there, I believe those remarks were made by some other speaker, who went on to say that if the squatters were beaten they also would seek revenge. It appears that there was to be no end to this. The suggestion was that there should be a vendetta, and that the object of the beaten party would be revenge. That was what those men were taught. But how utterly untrue it is. The Government have shown, and the pastoralists have shown, that they did not entertain a spirit of that sort. They are not all children of the devil, and they do not want to have a blood feud from generation to generation. Up to the time the last payment of 3s. 2d. per week was made, those shearers were led to believe that they were going to conquer, that the strike was only beginning, and that thousands of pounds were pouring in. They had no notice that they would be left without anything. But what did they do? They did not take advantage of the provision which the Government had generously made for them; they went to the squatters, the men whose property many of them had endeavoured to destroy. I am not speaking of the decent and respectable men; I am speaking of those firebrands, those criminals who masqueraded and prostituted the good name of unionism. These men were left entirely on their beam ends; and as the Government told Mr. Ranking to give them rations if they were in need of rations they went to Mr. Ranking,

They got a small quantity of supplies on their own account, and the pastoralists promised that their old hospitality should still continue.

Mr. MURPHY: Hear, hear! And took them all back to work.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: Yet those men were told how abominably the pastoralists were going to act. They were told that by people whose object it was to set class against class, and to excite a diabolical spirit that would be not only injurious to the men, but ruinous to the colony and destructive to society. Another speech made at that meeting was to the effect that the republican feeling was gaining ground every day; that if they had to fight they would go in for a republic; that they could get other parties to join them, and they should see that it was a big affair. It was also said that they should try to get the volunteers to join them, that it would be quite honourable to get them to lay down their arms, and if the worst came to the worst they could fight them. I do not think the volunteers desired to join them. A large proportion of the members of the Defence Force who went out West consisted of wage earners, whose sympathy went naturally to a considerable extent in the direction of the shearers, who, from the pictures drawn of them by the labour leaders—such pictures as have been painted here by the hon. member for Bundanba—would appear to have been particularly pacific and inoffensive as lambs. When I was out West the men told me that it was with the greatest difficulty that they controlled themselves under the abominable insults to which they were subjected. They were not only called all kinds of names, but were spat upon; and nothing but a sense of duty and military discipline enabled them to restrain their natural indignation and behave with impartiality and self-control. I say that those men who have come back cannot be charged with partiality. If they had any partial feeling at the first it was, as I said before, in favour of the shearers. I have seen members of my own corps; and when I was at Barcaldine I saw a great deal of what took place. It was evident enough to me that men who went prejudiced in favour of what they supposed to be a strike, came back with the conviction that it was a strike certainly, but something superadded to a strike—namely, a criminal outbreak. Now those men have come back they will do a great deal to counteract the evil effect that has been caused by continual repetition of utterly false statements with regard to what really took place. They will be able to put before the people of Brisbane, Gympie, Rockhampton, Townsville, Mackay, and other towns, what was the real position of affairs; and when they do so I am convinced that a good many people will alter their opinions. It is only necessary that the people of the country should know the truth, for the Government—this or any other Government—to be fully supported in their endeavours to keep this colony from becoming like some of those South American republics, where life and property are not secure, where anarchy exists, and, as an hon. gentleman who interrupts reminds me, where there is a Buenos Ayres. At the Barcaldine meeting they said they had plenty of people to take up arms, that the 200 horsemen they had sent to notify the strike to the men on the stations had done good work, and that they had shown wonderful persuasive powers. Of course when men are ordered by the Labour Federation to come out, and bands of thirty or forty determined men are going to take them out, and put out their lights if they do not come out, it is no wonder that they are so persuasive. I once heard of an Irishman who was specially eloquent. He used to persuade people with his stick, and his eloquence was invariably effective, because he

was a big man. The persuasion used by those men to get shearers into the union camps has been that kind of persuasion in a great many cases. Many abandoned their work and went into the camp when they would far rather have remained out. One of the speakers at Barcaldine had to say something to the horsemen after the meeting. He wanted to say something in private. Again, Mr. Lane came up to Barcaldine a very short time before the strike. So that during the last two years we have had the hon. member for Bundanba there, and during the last six months we have had Messrs. Hinchcliffe, Seymour, McDonald, and Lane, who, I believe, is a sort of No. 1 at the back. We have had all those men at the strike, and what their counsels have been I think we may detect pretty well from the kind of actions which have been going on. We know perfectly well that in the beginning the men were quiet, and we know perfectly well also—and it is impossible to account for it in any other way than by a given signal—that for 700 miles in length, by 200 or 300 miles in width, the men came out, and in many cases committed cruel acts. Here is another quotation which I will give you from Mr. Spence. This was at a meeting at the Melbourne Hibernian Hall. Mr. Spence is President of the Shearers' Union, and he said this:—

“If the shearing party wanted to overrun the Government in Queensland they could easily do so. They could muster 10,000 of the best riders in the world—men with whom the Mexican cowboys were not in it, and men who were splendid rifle shots. They could, many of them, bring down kangaroos at 300 and 400 yards, and put a bullet on every spot on the six of hearts one after the other with a revolver. If these 10,000 men were not sufficient, the number could be doubled from New South Wales. Against such a body as that what use would be the 1,000 disciplined men, which was the limit of the Queensland Government force. It was simply ridiculous to tell the people the unionists intended to get up a revolution.”

There, apparently, you may suppose the speaker was of a different mind. But there can be no doubt about this: that the first part of that speech was intended to terrify. It was intended to make the people in the colony believe the shearers could say what they liked and do what they liked. They had 10,000 men equipped with firearms, against whom there was nobody in Queensland to contend; and when the hon. member for Bundanba talks about these men in the West not being prepared to carry out what they said, because if they had been they would not have spoken, he has forgotten the teaching which those men had. If those men had been taught truly, if they had known the true state of things, probably they would not have spoken so wildly. But they spoke as they did because they had unlimited confidence in their own powers, and in the weakness of the Government of Queensland as representing the colony. That is why they so rashly attempted to bring about that attempted revolution—not because they did not intend to have a revolution, and bloodshed if necessary, but because they believed that their power was so overwhelming, and that they could do what otherwise it would behoove them to be much more careful in doing. At that meeting at the Hibernian Hall another speech was made. Mr. Wray said:—

“When he heard Mr. Spence say the unionists in Queensland could, if they liked, set up a republic in this colony, he could not help thinking why the dickens don't they do it.”

Undoubtedly that was the opinion out West amongst a good many people who have their harvests as pickpockets and thieves in London when there is a row in the street—those men whom the hon. member for Enoggera called vagrants; 500 men, criminals, going out into that Alsatia, and for whom nothing would be better than anarchy. They have nothing to lose—not even characters. The police know them.

Mr. DRAKE : You know I did not say that.

Mr. DALRYMPLE : I understood that. Vagrants sent out by the police courts in Brisbane to get rid of them.

Mr. DRAKE : I said I had been informed that in one camp, where there were 600 men, there were not more than 100 *bona fide* unionists.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER : The others were criminals.

Mr. DRAKE : I did not say that.

Mr. DALRYMPLE : It is, I think, no wonder that these people who call themselves unionists—*anarchists* I call them—those who, at any rate, have been under command, have been desirous of bringing about a revolution. The Chief Secretary and the Colonial Secretary, who have the largest amount of evidence in the matter, have told us they believed these men did seriously propose a revolution. Now, I have shown the connection which I believe exists between the teaching of these men and the outrages that were committed, and I have shown what might be gathered from their silence. It is quite sufficient to point that out to enable hon. members to place these things in the relation of cause and effect. Now, with regard to the question as to whether the men were unionists or not, it does not affect the case, it seems to me; because I say there is no one in the colony—no rational person—who has any objection whatever to unions. I believe the majority of people I know of are decidedly in favour of unions. The *Boomerang*, Mr. Speaker, is a paper which is very liberal in these matters, but I saw in the last issue of the *Boomerang* that 100 unionists are at present suffering imprisonment, and others are awaiting trial in connection with the present strike. I must say there cannot be the least doubt that those men were misled in regard to the sums which were forthcoming for their support, and misled more particularly in regard to the chances of the pastoralists obtaining labour, and they were kept in utter ignorance of the number of unemployed. They were falsely informed in regard to the men who were applying to the pastoralists in large numbers, and were misinformed in regard to the men who went West. They were told that twenty-five men had gone away and so on, and that the pastoralists could not obtain labour. In every way they were deceived. These leaders were responsible for that strike. If they had had ordinary business heads on them at all, in the first place they would not have begun it when they did; and in the next place when it became evident that there was a large amount of labour in the colony. And if the strikers would not do the work there were plenty who would be exceedingly glad to do it, the men who had gone out would have been able to regain their positions, and a great deal of suffering would have been avoided. At the very last, not only were they told that money was rolling in, but they were told to shift the camp at Barcardine, and when some of them had shifted a message came to tell them that they need not go. Then the men were sent penniless upon the world. That was a gross blunder as a matter of strategy on the part of the leaders. No matter whether the object was good or bad the leaders showed themselves grossly incapable. Now, there is a letter here also that I wish to refer to—that is to say, the one the hon. member for Bundanba wrote, and also to a speech of his. We know the letter which he wrote to Mr. George Taylor. I mentioned the kind of letters which were being written to Mr. George Taylor, who is one of the men who has been convicted and is suffering the penalty of his crimes. He appears to be a very intimate friend of the hon. member for Bundanba. The hon. member states he is one of his intimate friends, and he sends

his regards to him; and the very words the hon. member for Bundanba used with regard to the action of the Government in that celebrated statement, that if the Government ordered him to lay down his arms, his arms would only be taken away over his corpse, those words were repeated by Mr. George Taylor. One apparently instructs the other. Now, I do not know what would happen if the hon. member had been told to lay down his arms; but Mr. George Taylor laid down his arms, and I believe his body is now at St. Helena, and he is still alive, and probably healthy. But I do remember a story of the hon. member for Bundanba—I do not know whether it is correct or not—that at one time at Bundanba there was some trouble, and some of the miners' wives with broomsticks chased the hon. member.

Mr. GLASSEY : Not a word of truth in the story.

Mr. DALRYMPLE : It may not be quite true. However, in regard to this proposed commission, I do not think the commission would serve any useful purpose. I certainly think, with regard to the Government and the measures which they took, that they were very necessary and very proper, and I believe that if the Government had not sent the military, which has been so objected to by the hon. member for Bundanba, the Government would have been charged with endeavouring to entrap those men into crimes. There is no doubt of it. The military were sent there in order to prevent crime, and by their presence I believe they did prevent crime. I believe they have saved many a man from being in gaol. I consider that the action of the Government has been wise and prudent. They showed a great deal of patience, and they acted wisely and well; and the position they have taken up in this matter is one that I agree with, and for my part I shall be glad to support the attitude which they have taken up.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS : Hear, hear!

Mr. STEVENSON said : Mr. Speaker,—Although this subject has been pretty well thrashed out, I cannot allow the debate to close without saying something about it, especially as all this trouble arose in my electorate. We have to congratulate the country, in the first place, that this strike is over now, and I hope no more trouble will arise from it; but I think the country is to be congratulated on the stand taken by the Government, and the way the Defence Force and the police behaved themselves, and also upon the way in which the pastoralists behaved themselves. I have noticed that the Government have never gone ahead of public opinion, and I believe that they have had public opinion with them right through, owing to their having taken such a moderate course. The pastoralists have given the unionists every opportunity of going to work again. Before bringing up every fresh batch of free labourers the pastoralists invariably offered employment to the men on strike, who every time refused to accept it. I think the pastoralists have shown great moderation. This debate has gone pretty well in the one direction of approving of the conduct of the Government, and I am perfectly satisfied that the feeling of the country is in accord with that expressed by most hon. members. At the same time, I notice that most of those who have spoken are in favour of unionism. I am not at all opposed to unionism so long as it is subject to law and order, but I think that we had far better times in Queensland before we had any unionism at all. That leads me to read the motion of the hon. member for Bundanba :—

“That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that a special commission should be appointed to inquire into all matters connected with the recent labour troubles and their origin.”

Now, I do not see the necessity of asking for any commission to inquire into this at all. I believe that it commenced at the unfortunate date when the hon. gentleman arrived in this colony, and more recently when he went up into the Central district. Unionism commenced with the workers themselves. The pastoralists never thought of forming a union until they were forced to do it in self-defence, and to save themselves from wreck and ruin. There is no doubt had they not done so, that wreck and ruin would have resulted, and it is about the first time that such a thing has been done. One of the things we have to congratulate ourselves upon is that at last the pastoralists have joined to save themselves from the trouble which would have sent this colony into a very deplorable state indeed. I do not think that the workers have any cause of complaint at all. I can understand quite well how a strike can occur at home, where wages are low, but I cannot understand any shearer in this colony going on strike, as they can earn their £5 or £6 a week easily at the present rate of pay for shearing. Had it not been for the agitators, I am certain that no strike would have occurred, and no trouble would have arisen. Without a doubt the strike has tended to drive capital out of the country, and it has also had the effect of preventing the introduction of capital. I do not wish to delay the House, as other hon. members are anxious to speak; but I hope that this strike and its disastrous effects will soon be got over. It has had a disastrous effect upon the last loan, and I believe it has had the effect of preventing capital coming into the colony. I hope it will be a lesson to the workers of the colony. Notwithstanding that my hon. friend alongside me (Mr. Paul) is sometimes a little proxy, I will say that I have always admired him for the way he puts it—that it would be very much better if a more friendly feeling existed between employer and employee than does exist at the present time, when trouble is made by those who are agitators and loafers pure and simple. I hope this will be a lesson to the workers of this colony not to do anything to drive capital out of the colony or prevent it coming in, and that it will also be a lesson to every member of this House, from the Chief Secretary downwards, never to do anything to prevent capital coming into the colony or to hunt it out. Too much has already been done in the way of injuring one industry and another simply through pandering to public opinion.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: You mean popular clamour, not public opinion.

Mr. STEVENSON: The cap fits the hon. gentleman, I know. The hon. member wanted the blame for this labour trouble laid on the right shoulders. Well, I say the hon. member for Bundamba is directly to blame for it; but, at the same time, the Chief Secretary and many members of this House, through pandering to public opinion, have encouraged the labourers to go the length they have done. If it had not been for the encouragement they received from members of this House they would never have gone the length they have, and, as I have said, I hope that this strike will be a lesson to the workers and every member of this House who desires the good of the country.

Mr. ADAMS said: Mr. Speaker,—At this late hour I shall make my remarks as short as I possibly can. The hon. member for Bundamba asked for a commission to inquire into the origin of the recent labour troubles, and yet, at the same time, told us all about it. He had not been speaking many minutes before he told us what the labour trouble was and what was the cause of it. The cause, he said, was a reduction of wages which was to take place in 1890. But wages

were not cut down, and it was not, I believe, intended to cut them down. What, then, was the cause of this trouble in 1891? I think this is a trumped-up cause. I say trumped-up advisedly, because we find that wages were not cut down in 1890, and yet the men would not go to work in 1891, when they knew there was no reduction. As I do not propose to speak at any length, I shall not touch very much on any matter but the agreement, and I refer to that because I have heard it stated by working men more than once—aye, more than a thousand times—that if the shearers signed the pastoralists' agreement they would sign away all their rights and liberties. I have heard that from the platform, and from agitators, for I cannot call them anything else. They have said that 50 per cent. of the money earned by the shearers was to be kept back, and if they happened to stop shearing after they had earned a considerable sum the pastoralists could turn them off and keep the 50 per cent. This has been preached from more than one platform by more than one agitator and labour leader, and we do not need to go very far to find some of them. I mention this particularly to warn the working men against the leaders they have got. If men have good leaders they will lead them to good; but if they have bad leaders there is not the slightest doubt but that they will lead them to destruction. A quotation from the pastoralists' agreement will, I think, convince the most sceptical that the statements which have been made concerning it are not accurate. Paragraph 5 reads as follows:—

“If the shearer be discharged, as he may be, for breach of this agreement or of the rules endorsed hereon or attached hereto, he shall be paid for the number of sheep shorn by him up to the time of such discharge.”

I think that is quite sufficient to show that it was not the intention of the pastoralists to keep any of the money back from the shearers.

Mr. GLASSEY: Read paragraph 4.

Mr. ADAMS: Yes, I will read that paragraph, to enlighten the hon. member. It is as follows:—

“The shearer shall not absent himself from work, but in case he leave before the completion of shearing, owing to sickness, accident, or other such unavoidable cause, or by permission of the employer or his agent, he shall be paid in full for all sheep shorn by him, but shall be charged 15s. per week for his board and lodging, cook's remuneration included.”

I do not know what the hon. member wanted me to read that clause for, unless it was to show that a number of the shearers were likely to leave their work and not pay for their board. I say that it was not the intention of the pastoralists to keep one solitary shilling from the men who honestly earned their money, and I wish to impress this upon the working men who have been so led astray—for led astray they no doubt have been by agitators. It is within my knowledge that it has been represented to people that such was the intention of the pastoralists; and I think it is only just that I should bring the matter before the House, and warn the workmen against being led astray by being told that if they sign an agreement of that description one-half the money will be kept back from them on leaving. The hon. member for Bundamba also stated that there were no paid agitators, but that there are such I will endeavour to prove.

Mr. GLASSEY: I have not said so.

Mr. ADAMS: My ears must have deceived me, and my eyes must have deceived me, and my senses must have gone astray in some remarkable way, if I have not read it or heard it stated in this House. I do not wish to cast any reflection upon the hon. member that he has not brought upon himself, but it has been said in this House and outside the House that

there is no paid agitator. I think I shall be able to prove that there is a paid agitator. We have a person in the colony named Casey—Gilbert Casey, he is called; but he has worked in the colony under the name of Curtis, and also under the name of Carey. I remember this gentleman coming to the Burnett district, and he made use of such language from a platform in Bundaberg that it was a wonder to me he was not taken off the platform and put into the lockup.

Mr. LITTLE: He ought to be in gaol.

Mr. ADAMS: He designated one Minister of the Crown as a dog, and another as either a knave or a fool. Those gentlemen have been in this House for years, and have served their country well, while this man is not fit to be the leader of a dumb beast. This same man was organising on the Kolan River amongst the navvies, and he spoke there very strongly. A gentleman went up to him afterwards, and said, "You have spoken very strongly, Casey;" and he replied, "Yes, I had to do it to convince the working man, because argument is no use." This is the kind of language used by a labour agitator and organiser to try and dupe sensible and respectable men, and I am sorry to say a vast number have allowed themselves to be led by such men. We find this gentleman came into the colony in 1883, but he has acknowledged himself that he has done very little work. He worked for two weeks in the pits at Ipswich, and how many days he worked for the Tramway Company, cleaning carriages, I do not know. Two weeks in the coal mines was quite sufficient for him, and he has acknowledged that he only went there to organise the miners. Under cross-examination in a court of law, he said he earned 6s. a day, and what he earned from the Tramway Company I know not; but I will show from his own statement on oath what he got as one of the organisers of the labour party. He said:—

"He was a labour organiser for the Labour Federation, and was working at Bundamba on the 10th October. Was paid for the work at so much per waggon, and his wages was 6s. per day."

Further on we find that, under cross-examination by the Solicitor-General, he said:—

"He had been in Queensland since 1883; was a wharf labourer and seaman by trade; had been a member of the federation for about twelve months. Had never been a member of the executive; became a member of the Wharf Labourers' Union in 1886, but the union was not then affiliated with the Labour Federation, and not till about twelve months ago. He had been organising labour most of his life."

It is evident from this statement that this man did no manual labour in his life, because he was afraid of it; but he had organised others and tried to lead them astray and bring them into poverty and distress. He says further:—

"Had been a pretty successful organiser; tried to organise the tramway employees."

He was there, I do not know how many days, when he tried to organise those people. He further acknowledges that—

"Besides working under the name of Curtis, he went under the name of Carey once in Queensland; was organising the navvies up at Gladstone; received £3 per week for organising, and 5s. per day for travelling expenses."

He had £3 a week as an organiser, and 5s. a day for travelling expenses. I would like to point that out to the labouring classes, of whom I may say I am one. I have worked hard in my days, and those days have been many in this colony. I have been in Queensland thirty-eight years, and in the colonies forty-two years, and I was proud to hear the Secretary for Railways say to-day that he knew many men who had come into the colony without a penny in their pockets, and who

had risen to the top of the ladder of fame. I cannot say that I had not a penny in my pocket when I came, but I had not much. What I had I made good use of. I worked hard for many a year, even at less than 10s. a week. Thank God, I am here to-day. I maintain there is not a single workman in the colony of Queensland to-day who cannot work himself up if he only tries to do so. I believe myself in organisation and labour organisation; but when it comes to terrorism I think it should be put a stop to. I do not say there are not many honest men amongst those people; but I say they have been tyrannised over until they cannot say their souls are their own, and they cannot do what they wish to do, though they may wish to do right, and maintain the freedom of every man in the colony. I am aware that many of the organisers are men of great ability, but I say that if they used those abilities for a different purpose—for the benefit of the colony in place of the oppression of their own fellow men, they would have done far better, for they would then have been good colonists.

Mr. BLACK said: Mr. Speaker.—At this late hour, I move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed.

Mr. GLASSEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I move the resumption of the debate stand an Order of the Day for Thursday next.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said: Mr. Speaker,—I said yesterday that I thought this debate should be concluded as soon as possible. I do not think, under existing circumstances, that it should intercept Government business next week.

Mr. GLASSEY said: Mr. Speaker,—May I say a few words by way of correction? I see in the *Courier* of to-day that there is an error. The report states that I very shrewdly devised my plans so that I should have my speech delivered at tea-time yesterday, at which time Government business came on, and that thus my speech would go to the country without any answer being made to it. It is due to myself that I should say that I saw the Chief Secretary yesterday morning, and asked him to permit the debate to go on in the evening, as I was anxious that it should be concluded as soon as possible. The *Courier* puts the thing in a wrong light in stating that I wished to have the advantage of my remarks going before the country without a reply. I make this correction, so that the paper may put me right, if it will do so.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said: Mr. Speaker,—What the hon. gentleman says is correct. He asked me to give up yesterday evening to the debate, and I told him I could not give an answer then, but that I would let him know later on.

Question put and passed

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said: Mr. Speaker,—I move that this House do now adjourn. There is on the paper a motion of thanks—business which always takes precedence over all other business, according to parliamentary practice. It will be taken first on Tuesday. After that we will take the second reading of Water Authorities Bill; then the consideration in committee of those Bills which have passed their second reading, and after that the second reading of Crown Lands Acts Amendment Bill.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at twenty-four minutes past 10 o'clock.