

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 30 MARCH 1892

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, 30 March, 1892.

Vacancy by Insolvency.—Question: Proposed agricultural college.—Sessional Orders: Sitting days; Order of business.—Standing Orders Committee.—Message from the Legislative Council: Joint committees.—Address in Reply: Resumption of debate.—Adjournment.

The SPEAKER took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

VACANCY BY INSOLVENCY.

The SPEAKER said: I have to inform the House that, by notification, dated the 8th inst., signed by M. Jensen, Deputy Registrar of the Supreme Court, and published in the issue of the *Queensland Government Gazette* of the 12th of that month, it was publicly intimated that a trustee had been appointed in the matter of a special resolution for liquidation by arrangement of the affairs of William Henry Bligh O'Connell. I do not feel called upon to express an opinion as to the position of the hon. member, but have felt it my duty to submit the matter to the House in order that such action may be taken as may be deemed necessary under the circumstances.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. Sir S. W. Griffith) said: Mr. Speaker,—It appears from the notification that you have announced to the House that the estate of the hon. member for Musgrave has been placed in liquidation. The question then arises whether his seat has become vacant. Under the Legislative Assembly Act it is provided by the 7th section that—

“If any member of the Assembly . . . shall become bankrupt or an insolvent debtor within the meaning of the laws in force within the said colony relating to bankrupts or insolvent debtors . . . his seat in such Assembly shall thereby become vacant.”

Now, Sir, under the Insolvency Act, various ways of obtaining a release from debt are given. The ordinary way is what is known as adjudication in insolvency; but the Act provides other methods by which the same results can be obtained. Part IX. of the Insolvency Act, dealing with liquidation by arrangement, provides that a debtor unable to pay his debts may summon a general meeting of his creditors. Then certain things are to be done. A special resolution has to be carried, and thereupon all the property of the debtor is made over to his creditors. Paragraph 5 provides—

“All such property of the debtor as would, if he were made insolvent, be divisible among his creditors, shall, from and after the date of the appointment of a trustee, vest in such trustee under a liquidation by arrangement, and be divisible amongst the creditors.”

Paragraph 7 provides—

“The trustee under a liquidation shall have the same powers and perform the same duties as a trustee under an insolvency, and the property of the debtor shall be distributed in the same manner as in an insolvency, and with the modification hereinafter mentioned all the provisions of this Act shall, so far as the same are applicable, apply to the case of a liquidation by arrangement in the same manner as if the word ‘insolvent’ included a debtor whose affairs are under liquidation and the word ‘insolvency’ included liquidation by arrangement; and in construing such provisions the appointment of a trustee under a liquidation shall, according to circumstances, be deemed to be equivalent to, and a substitute for, the presentation of a petition in insolvency, or the service of such petition, or an order of adjudication in insolvency.”

Thus the result is that the presentation of a liquidation petition followed by the appointment of a trustee under it are equivalent to an order of adjudication in insolvency. Under these circumstances I think there can be no doubt that the hon. member's seat is vacant. I do not know whether the question has ever arisen before in the House.

Mr. POWERS: Not in this House.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I think there was a case in 1881, but in my opinion there can be no doubt about the construction of the Act. I therefore move—

That the seat of William Henry Bligh O'Connell hath become and is now vacant by reason of the insolvency of the said William Henry Bligh O'Connell since his election and return to serve in this House as member for the electoral district of Musgrave.

Mr. POWERS said: Mr. Speaker,—Before the motion is put I wish to say a few words. Of course the Chief Secretary has laid down the law on the question to the House, but I would like to ask the hon. gentleman whether the question has not been already decided in the House of Commons that a seat is not vacated in the case of a liquidation by arrangement?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The law of England is entirely different to ours. There is no analogy at all.

Mr. POWERS: The clause in our Insolvency Act is very similar in that respect to the clause in the English Act, and there it has been declared that a liquidation by arrangement is not an insolvency so far as declaring a seat vacant is concerned. I do not intend

to go into the question at any length, because I happen to be the solicitor in the liquidation, and I have received no request from Mr. O'Connell to raise the question at all; but, as a legal member, I know the point has been raised and decided in England. The Insolvency Act provides for two classes—those cases where there is a liquidation by arrangement, and those that are wound up in insolvency. Yet we are going to now declare that because a man has liquidated by arrangement he is insolvent, and that his seat is therefore vacant. He might only pay 1s. in the £1 when he makes a composition with his creditors, and yet his seat in that case would not be declared vacant, whereas although in this case Mr. O'Connell is paying his private creditors 10s. in the £1, we are going to declare his seat vacant because he happens to be connected with others, where their estate has gone into liquidation by arrangement. This is a matter the House should take into serious consideration. I understand the case was submitted to the Attorney-General for the purpose of getting him to look into it. As a legal member, I contend that we ought not to make a precedent of this kind without serious consideration, and lay down that a man who makes a liquidation by arrangement is practically insolvent, when the Act declares he is not. In the case of a liquidation by arrangement the estate might pay 20s. in the £1, and yet he would be declared insolvent, whilst he might only pay 12s. in the £1 by a composition, and yet not be declared insolvent. You, Sir, had evidently some doubts about the matter when you put it before the House, and we should seriously consider before we establish a precedent. We are not now asked to pass a law, but a resolution merely, and it will be fatal to establish a precedent unless the House is going to make all members who liquidate by arrangement vacate their seats.

Mr. JONES said: Mr. Speaker,—The 7th section of the Legislative Assembly Act says that any member of the Assembly who becomes bankrupt or an insolvent debtor within the meaning of the laws in force within the colony relating to bankrupts or insolvent debtors shall thereby forfeit his seat. That is the true intent and meaning of the law, and I am of opinion that Mr. O'Connell having had his affairs liquidated by arrangement, has become by the spirit of the law disqualified, and has no legal right to a seat in this House. If that is not the strict letter of the law it is the spirit of the Act, because liquidation by arrangement is only another way by which a man gets rid of his liabilities. He may or may not have his certificate of discharge granted to him, and if any member comes to this House while his affairs are being liquidated by arrangement, and sits in this Assembly when he has not a discharge from his creditors, he is not a fit and proper person to have a seat in this House, and I agree with the Chief Secretary that within the spirit of the Legislative Assembly Act Mr. William Henry Bligh O'Connell has forfeited his seat in this House.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: If that is the case what necessity is there for a resolution of this House?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Act requires it except in the case of death.

Mr. GROOM said: Mr. Speaker,—I was in the same predicament in 1866, at the time of the failure of the Bank of Queensland, as Mr. O'Connell is in now. I was obliged to call a meeting of my creditors under the Insolvency Act, and was at the time a member of the Legislative Assembly. I consulted the then Attorney-General, the late Mr. Pring, on the subject, and he informed me that the very fact of my calling a meeting of my creditors was an act of insolvency, and I was bound to resign my

seat in the House. Acting upon his advice, I sent my resignation to the Speaker before I held the meeting of my creditors.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said: Mr. Speaker,—As two or three hon. members have addressed the House on the subject, I should like to say a word or two in reply. I did not elaborate my argument when I moved the motion, as I had no reason to anticipate that the matter would be disputed, but I will call the attention of the House now a little more fully to the words of the Legislative Assembly Act. The 7th section provides that—

“If any member of the Assembly . . . shall become bankrupt or an insolvent debtor within the meaning of the laws in force within the said colony relating to bankrupts or insolvent debtors . . . his seat in such Assembly shall thereby become vacant.”

The question then is—Has the member for Musgrave become an insolvent debtor within the meaning of the laws relating to insolvency? He has done certain things which produce this result, that all the provisions of the Insolvency Act apply to him as fully as if he had presented a petition for adjudication and had been adjudged insolvent; I think that under these circumstances he is an insolvent debtor within the meaning of the Act. I think there can be no doubt about that. The hon. member for Burrum suggests that if a member makes a composition with his creditors that would not affect his seat in this House. That question is not before us now, but I may say that I do not at present agree with the hon. member. I think that a person who makes a composition with his creditors under the Insolvency Act is an insolvent debtor within the meaning of the Act. Most people think that is so as a matter of common sense, and as a matter of law I think that it is so. As to the case referred to by the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom, I do not know what were the exact terms of the Legislative Assembly Act or the Insolvency Act in force at that time, and it would not be safe, in the absence of this information, to draw any inference from that case.

Question put and passed.

QUESTION.

PROPOSED AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE.

Mr. MORGAN asked the Secretary for Lands—

Have the Government taken any action towards the establishment of the proposed agricultural college and experimental farm, for which provision was made in the Estimates for the year 1891-92?

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS (Hon. A. S. Cowley) replied—

The condition of the revenue up to the present time has prevented any action being taken.

SESSIONAL ORDERS.

SITTING DAYS.

The CHIEF SECRETARY moved—

That, unless otherwise ordered, the House will meet for despatch of business at 3 o'clock p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday in each week.

Question put and passed.

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

The CHIEF SECRETARY moved—

That on Tuesday, Wednesday, and after 7 o'clock p.m. on Thursday, in each week, Government business take precedence of all other business.

Question put and passed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY moved—

That Standing Order No. 8, relative to business under discussion, and business not disposed of at the time of any adjournment of the House for want of a quorum, be suspended, so far as it relates to notices of motion and Orders of the Day, until otherwise ordered; and that it be an Order of the House during the present session.—

1. That remanet motions and Orders of the Day, instead of being placed at the bottom of the notice paper for the following sitting day, shall, with the motions and orders for that day, take precedence in the order of the dates for which they were first given or appointed; but that they shall not be permitted to displace motions or orders originally given or appointed for the day to which such remanet motions or orders go over.

2. That private business under discussion at 7 o'clock p.m. on Thursday shall, at that hour, stand adjourned until the Government business on the paper for the day has been disposed of.

Mr. NELSON said: Mr. Speaker,—I think that the first part of this motion relative to remanet motions and Orders of the Day is not sufficiently clear. I am sure it is not intended to include Government business.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It does not mean Government business.

Mr. NELSON: Well, Standing Order No. 8 does not exclude Government business.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Government business is dealt with in the second Sessional Order just passed.

Mr. NELSON: I think we should put in here the words “other than Government business,” as unless that is done this motion will make it appear imperative that Government business, instead of being left to the Government to fix up in whatever order the Government like, as they have and must have a right to do, may be brought under the conditions of this Sessional Order. That is not intended, I am sure.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said: Mr. Speaker,—It has been the practice followed in this House ever since it has been a House that the Government have the right to arrange their own business in whatever way they please.

Mr. NELSON: Certainly. They must have that right.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not know that that is a written rule, but the practice has always been followed.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD: Hear, hear! It has always been done.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am reminded that Standing Order No. 34 reserves the right to Ministers to place Government business in whatever order they think fit. I thought it was merely a matter of practice; but I find it is specially provided for by Standing Order No. 34, which says—

“The Orders of the Day shall be disposed of in the order in which they stand upon the paper, the right being reserved to Her Majesty’s Ministers of placing Government orders at the head of the list in the rotation in which they are to be taken on the days on which Government business has precedence.”

I thought it was merely a matter of practice, and the hon. gentleman opposite evidently thought so too. I was not aware that it was an absolute right provided for by the Standing Orders.

Mr. NELSON: What I refer to is that this motion seems to contradict Standing Order No. 34.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No; it only suspends No. 8.

Mr. NELSON: Which only refers to private business?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Of course. This only modifies Standing Order No. 8, which does not apply to Government business at all.

Question put and passed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY moved—

That it be an Order of the House during the present session,—

1. That every motion or Order of the Day for the third reading of a Bill, to which (on the question being put from the Chair, "Whether there is any objection to its being a 'formal' motion or Order of the Day") no objection is taken, shall be deemed to be a "formal" motion or Order of the Day.

2. That, before the ordinary business of each day is entered upon, Mr. Speaker shall call over the various notices of motion, and the Orders of the Day for the third reading of Bills; and on any such motion or order being called, it shall be competent for any member otherwise entitled to move it to have the above question put with reference thereto; and such "formal" motions or Orders of the Day shall be disposed of in the relative order in which they stand on the business paper, taking precedence of all the other motions and Orders of the Day.

3. That no debate shall be allowed on any such "formal" motions or Orders of the Day, or upon the further proceedings following the reading of such orders; but the House may proceed to division thereupon, without amendment or debate, as in a case of a motion for the first reading of a Bill.

4. That, in consequence of any such "formal" Orders of the Day having been disposed of as aforesaid, it shall not be held that the House has proceeded to the Orders of the Day upon the business paper, so as to exclude thereafter the asking of questions, the presentation of petitions, or the reception of notices of motion.

The Hon. B. D. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—When we talk about the mummery of the Address in Reply, I think this is mummery too. Why not have some confirmation of what was authorised during the last session of Parliament in a succinct way to cover all these motions?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have a word to say on that subject when we get to notice of motion No. 6 on the paper.

The Hon. B. D. MOREHEAD: Oh, very well.

Question put and passed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY moved—

That it be an order of the House during the present session that on each Wednesday, when the House is sitting, the Clerk shall read out the titles of all motions for returns agreed to previously by the House and not yet furnished.

Question put and passed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY moved—

1. That, in compliance with Standing Order 266, a select committee be appointed to assist Mr. Speaker in all matters which relate to the printing to be executed by order of the House; and for the purpose of selecting and arranging for printing returns and papers presented in pursuance of motions made by members.

That such committee consist of the following members, viz.:—Mr. Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, Mr. Aland, Mr. Barlow, Mr. Dalrymple, Mr. W. Stephens, and Mr. E. J. Stevens.

Question put and passed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY moved—

That this House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the desirableness of introducing a Bill to further amend the Pacific Island Labourers Act, 1890-1895.

Question put and passed.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

The CHIEF SECRETARY, in moving—

That the Standing Orders Committee for the present session consist of the following members, viz.:—Mr. Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Groom, and the mover, with leave to sit during any adjournment, and authority to confer upon subjects of mutual concernment with any committee appointed for similar purposes by the Legislative Council—

said: Mr. Speaker,—For the last twenty years at least we have been altering our Standing Orders every session by orders in terms of notices of motion 3, 4, and 5. Those are not the only instances in which the Standing Orders have

been found deficient. They are, moreover, rather old. Other Parliaments in the meantime, during the last thirty years, have made many alterations, and I think it would be desirable, if time would allow, for the Standing Orders to be revised. I propose to ask the Standing Orders Committee during the present session, if time will allow, to consider the whole question of the Standing Orders. I think with the many experienced members there are in this House this is a very good opportunity of doing so.

The Hon. B. D. MOREHEAD said: Mr. Speaker,—This comes as rather a surprise to hon. members. It is rather a large order to give to this committee, which, as a rule, has been appointed without any comment. We are told now by the Chief Secretary that they are to revise Standing Orders which have existed for the last thirty years, and I think we should have had some notice of this. I think in a case of this sort the committee should be appointed by ballot, and not simply be the nominees practically of the Government. I take no exception to any gentleman named here.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I shall be very glad to add any names if the hon. gentleman will suggest them.

The Hon. B. D. MOREHEAD: If the committee is going to revise the Standing Orders I think there should be more members put on it, and that every class and colour of the House should be represented.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Will the hon. gentleman suggest additional names?

The Hon. B. D. MOREHEAD: No. I think the appointments should be made by ballot. If the intention is that our Standing Orders should be revised, and if this is to be a committee of reference, it should be so constituted that its opinions will be received with every consideration. Let us, therefore, have a really representative committee. I do not think this is, and I say that without any intention of casting the slightest slur upon any one of the gentlemen named. I think there should be at least two other members, but it is not for me to suggest the names.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I would suggest the hon. member himself for one.

The Hon. B. D. MOREHEAD: I am a very old member of the House, but I have no desire to be on the committee, because it would be a very invidious task; but five is too small a number. Seven would be better, and although everyone would vote for the five gentlemen whose names are down here, yet if two others were added, and if the appointments were made by ballot, I believe the conclusions of the committee would carry more weight. It is not, however, my place to suggest names.

Mr. GROOM said: Mr. Speaker,—From personal experience I can testify to what the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government has said, that the Standing Orders of the House require revision. But what the hon. member for Balonne has said is quite correct, as to this function being referred to the Standing Orders Committee. It is a work they very seldom undertake. In New South Wales, shortly after the decision of the Privy Council was given in the case of Taylor *versus* Barton, a select committee was appointed, consisting of seven members, to revise the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, and they brought up a report of a very voluminous nature, which can be seen in the library. Mr. Young was the Speaker at that time, and they collected a considerable amount of evidence. They brought up a set of new Standing Orders applicable to the

state of affairs that had arisen in that colony owing to the decision of the Privy Council. Well, unfortunately for that colony, the report has never been adopted, nor have the Standing Orders been in any way revised. Our Standing Orders are almost a facsimile of those in force in New South Wales, and any gentleman who has occupied the Chair will know that they are very unworkable, and that cases frequently arise in which the Standing Orders do not apply. In those cases we are directed by one of our Standing Orders to fall back upon the practice of the House of Commons. It was, however, ruled by the Privy Council that what was meant by that was the Standing Orders of the House of Commons in force at the time that our Standing Orders were assented to by the Governor. And those that have been passed since are of no avail as far as this rule is concerned. Therefore it is absolutely necessary, if we wish our Standing Orders to conform to the more modern ones of the House of Commons, that they should be revised. But I quite agree with the hon member for Balonne, that it would be much better to appoint a select committee of seven members, whose duty it should be to revise the Standing Orders, rather than refer the matter to the usual Standing Orders Committee appointed at the commencement of the session. A report brought up from such a body would be more likely to command the confidence of the House than a report brought up by the ordinary Standing Orders Committee.

Mr. NELSON said: Mr. Speaker,—I quite agree with the remarks that have been made with regard to this motion. As far as I know the history of our Standing Orders, they were originally drawn up about thirty years ago. They were submitted to the House for its approval, and were then read a first and second time and passed, and afterwards submitted to the Governor and approved, so that to a large extent they have the force of law. What this committee will have to do will be simply to revise those rules, and to suggest improvements and additions to them. Those, of course, will afterwards be submitted to the House, and the House, if it approves of them, will have to pass them. The work of the committee will be to try to modernise our Standing Orders, and bring them up to the stage at which they ought to be at the present time, so as to suit the circumstances of the House as it is now. Many of the Standing Orders are antiquated, while some are almost useless, and others, in my opinion, could be very much improved. I think it will meet the views of the House if I propose, as an amendment, to insert, after "Mr. Groom" the words "Mr. Morehead, Mr. Barlow." The committee will then consist of seven members. I beg to move that as an amendment.

Amendment agreed to; and question, as amended, put and passed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

JOINT COMMITTEES.

The SPEAKER said: I have to inform the House that I have received the following message from the Legislative Council:—

"Mr. SPEAKER,

"The Legislative Council having come to the following resolutions, viz. :—

"1. That the President, Mr. Turner, and Mr. Murray-Prior be appointed members of the Joint Library Committee.

"2. That the President, Mr. Heussler, and Mr. Box be appointed members of the joint committee for the management of the refreshment rooms.

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"3. That the President, Mr. Gregory, and Mr. Macansh be appointed members of the joint committee for the management and superintendence of the Parliamentary Buildings—

beg now to transmit the same to the Legislative Assembly, with the request that they will be pleased to nominate a like number of members from their body, with a view to give effect to the 8th Joint Standing Order."

On the motion of the CHIEF SECRETARY, the message was ordered to be taken into consideration to-morrow.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

On the Order of the Day being read :—

"Resumption of adjourned debate on Mr. Annear's motion—That an Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor as follows :—

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

"We, Her Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, in Parliament assembled, desire to assure Your Excellency of our continued loyalty and affection towards the Throne and Person of Our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to tender our thanks to Your Excellency for the Speech with which you have been pleased to open the present session.

"We, in common with the rest of Her Majesty's loyal subjects, sincerely deplore the bereavement suffered by Her Majesty and the Prince of Wales in the untimely death of the Duke of Clarence and Avondale, and we desire to record our satisfaction that an expression of the sympathy of the people of this colony was at once transmitted by the Deputy-Governor to Her Majesty and His Royal Highness.

"We will give our most careful attention and consideration to the several measures which Your Excellency has specially mentioned, and to all other matters that may be brought before us, and it shall be our anxious endeavour so to deal with them that our labours may be conducive to the material and moral advancement and prosperity, and the good government, of this portion of Her Majesty's dominions"—

Mr. SALKELD said: Mr. Speaker,—I shall now proceed to make the speech I intended to have made last night, instead of which I moved the adjournment of the debate. I have no intention to go into general details, or of discussing any of the matters mentioned in the Governor's Speech, but to refer more to the remarks of previous speakers. I hope I shall not unnecessarily give offence to anyone. I have no desire to do that; at the same time I cannot allow some of the remarks made to pass without alluding to them, and expressing my opinion upon them. I somewhat regret that, on the first day of the session, the first speech delivered should have been characterised by what the leader of the Opposition termed a bellicose, a combative spirit; and I was very glad to hear that hon. gentleman, and also the hon. member for Balonne, Mr. Morehead, speak in what I think was a proper spirit, showing that they did not agree with the tone of the remarks previously made. Some of the remarks I want to refer to are slightly personal to myself. The hon. the senior member for Maryborough, in moving the adoption of the Address in Reply, said, when speaking of the total stoppage of the kanaka labour and of the sugar industry—

"So that unless Polynesians are reintroduced this great industry must come to the position that the hon. member for Fassfern said the other night it must come to; that hon. member said, 'Let it die out.' Can we afford to let the smallest of our industries die out, much less an important industry like this?"

I then interjected that he was not quoting me correctly, and he said he was quoting what appeared in the *Courier* as a report of what I had said, namely—

"If the people cannot live in comfort, let this industry die out."

Well, Sir, any man's remarks may be made to appear very different when we do not know all he said; and, in justice to myself, seeing that some remarks afterwards made by the Chief

Secretary seemed to follow that up, I think I should explain what I did say. When addressing my constituents lately I dealt with this question, and pointed out that the contention of those engaged in the sugar industry was that they had to compete with cheap labour in other countries; therefore they must have cheap labour too. I said if that is the case—that they must have cheap labour the same as other countries engaged in the sugar industry—what are we coming to? I read a statement showing that in some countries they had men—I do not know whether they have them at present—at any rate they have had supplies of Government labour to work in cane cultivation at 6d. a day and rations. I then used this expression: “Is it fair; is it right, that men should be compelled to work for 6d. a day and rations.” I did not say that that occurred in Queensland, but I did say that even £6 a year and rations was not sufficient to pay the poor kanakas who come here to labour for 300 days a year under a broiling sun in the canefield. And I maintain that opinion still. I also said that if we are to have people here who are paid 6d. a day and rations, there are any amount of industries in the Southern part of the colony, as well as elsewhere, that it would pay people to go into at that rate. I maintain that if an industry will not afford to give fair remuneration so as to enable those engaged in it to live in some degree of decency and comfort, let it die out. I repeat that statement to-night. Whatever hon. members may think about it, I believe it is true and right; I do not feel that I am saying anything wrong. The hon. member for Maryborough did not say all I had said with regard to that matter; and here let me say that I have no desire to see the sugar industry or any other industry die out. When the hon. member for Mackay, Mr. Black, was alluding to this matter he spoke in quite a different strain from what I have heard him speak in previous years, and I was very pleased to hear what he said. He asked to be shown any way to carry on the industry without kanaka labour, and he would be very glad to adopt it. That is the proper spirit to go upon. Before I go further I should like to say, as it appeared to follow on the remarks of the hon. member for Maryborough, that the Chief Secretary said—

“Here we find a great agricultural industry in a condition in which there are only two alternatives—either to let it be carried on with the assistance of coloured labour or to let it die; and I say that any man in this colony, or any member who will stand up in his place in Parliament and say he would allow a great industry to die is a traitor to his country.”

It appeared to me that the hon. member for Maryborough having made the remark he did, the Chief Secretary took up the cry, and I wondered whether he intended to convey the impression that I was a traitor to the country for anything I had said. If all those who differ from the Chief Secretary's views—his latest views on every question—are to be denounced as traitors, I do not think he will gain any respect or any advantage by it. I say I am as true and as loyal to the country as the Chief Secretary or any man in it, and I repeat here in my place that if any industry cannot afford to pay sufficient remuneration to those engaged in it to enable them to live in some degree of decency and comfort, let it die. What is the good of it to anyone? The hon. member for Maryborough also called attention to the low price of agricultural produce at the present time; and I may say that statements—vague statements, I admit—have been circulated in all directions which have produced the impression that it is on account of the stoppage of Polynesian immigration that

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there has been such a great falling off in the sugar industry, and consequently the prices of corn and other agricultural produce are now so low. That has been industriously circulated in all parts of the country I am acquainted with; but I am glad to see that the hon. member for Mackay, Mr. Black, does not take that ground: I suppose that he is better informed on the subject than to make such a statement. I think the hon. member for Maryborough had not considered the matter, or he would have seen that his ground was untenable. The hon. member for Mackay said this—

“No doubt the colony was never in a more depressed state than it is at the present time. We never had more unemployed. I do not mean to say that Queensland is singular in that respect, because there is just as much distress in Victoria and New South Wales as there is in Queensland.”

That shows that the hon. member for Mackay recognises the fact that there is just as much depression in Victoria and New South Wales as there is in Queensland. I would like to ask if the depression in those colonies is also to be attributed to the stoppage of the kanaka labour by the Act passed in 1885. I can understand some of the arguments of the hon. member for Mackay, but I cannot understand the argument put forward that we can have the effect before the cause. If an effect is produced before the cause has operated we know that the effect is not due to that cause. The hon. member for Mackay put it very clearly when he said further on—

“Of course, hon. members may ask whether the reintroduction of black labour is going to make the colony prosperous at once? It is not, but it is going to prevent the colony drifting into a greater state of depression than it is in at the present time. That is the position.”

We can understand an argument of that sort, and a good deal may be said upon that. The reversion of feeling that has taken place in the agricultural districts upon this question has been produced by the impression which has been industriously circulated that the cause of the low prices of agricultural produce is the stoppage of the kanaka trade. I maintain fearlessly that the people in the South, when they clearly realise the situation, will find that they have not lost their objections to the kanaka trade; but that they only think that its stoppage is producing a bad effect in the South. I would like to say a word or two in regard to what the Colonial Treasurer said about the speech delivered by Mr. Atkinson at Gin Gin. The hon. gentleman said that the whole of that speech was summed up in this: “When the sugar industry was going ahead what prosperous times we had, and now look what poor wretches we are.” I would like to point out the fallacy in that. What was the cause of any prosperity that there was in connection with the farmers at that time? The period I suppose he alluded to was from 1878 or 1879 to 1884. We know that during that time a number of large mills were being erected, which required 50, 80, or 100 horses, which were bought in the South. They wanted a variety of things, and there was a great expenditure of money going on. But if the kanaka labour is continued, is it thought that state of things will come back again?

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Yes.

Mr. SALKELD: Nothing of the kind. If anyone will take the report of the Royal Commission appointed in 1888 by this Parliament, they will find repeatedly that when the owners or managers of any of the large mills were asked, “Has your mill ever paid any interest?” the answer always was, “No interest whatever.” Now, do hon. members mean to tell me that on the strength of the ten years' extension of the

kanaka labour—I am assuming that the Chief Secretary does not intend to go any further—the men who have invested £30,000, £40,000, or up to £250,000 in large plantations and mills which have never paid any interest, will go on extending their mills? I am quite sure they have no intention to do anything of the kind. Their real intention is to get out with as little loss as possible. The country is not going to have a repetition of the times that existed from 1879 to 1884, that they all speak about. It will want a good many factors in that problem. As to having small mills, it will require a good many mills costing £30,000 or £40,000 to do the work of a mill costing £250,000. The extension of the kanaka trade will not bring about the state of prosperity that is anticipated. It is looking for too great an effect from a comparatively small cause. To expect that the introduction of some 10,000 or 15,000 kanakas is going to make such a tremendous difference in this big colony, with over 400,000 of a white population, is expecting far too much. If we were only a small community of 40,000 or 50,000, there might be some reason in the expectation. My belief is that the extension will enable a boom to be got up in land in Brisbane, Maryborough, Rockhampton, Townsville, and in some of the sugar lands.

Mr. GLASSEY : A very small boom.

Mr. SALKELD : I do not mean a big boom, but it will enable some persons to sell out. It will enable some of the planters to sell out. I do not know to what extent that may take place, but I do not believe it is going to lead to a repetition of the erection of the large mills that was carried on for a good many years before 1884. I wish now to refer to another matter. I was very sorry to hear the remarks made with reference to the Rev. Dr. Paton by the hon. member for Maryborough last night. I really think the hon. gentleman will be sorry himself when he thinks at all; and I think the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, who seconded the Address in Reply, ought to feel sorry for the remarks he made about the missionaries. I do not think it will help his cause to speak as he did. I do not want to embitter the debate or to say anything to the hon. member that would hurt his feelings, but I feel I cannot allow his remarks to go without expressing my strong disapproval at such remarks being made. I do not know to what denomination the missionaries belong, but so far as I know, they go to the South Sea Islands to live a life that most people would not care to live, unless they were actuated by very high motives. I believe the missionaries are actuated by the highest motives. I feel that I would like to do good, but I do not know that I would like to live in the South Seas teaching kanakas, and striving to benefit them. I do not know that I have reached that height of self-denial; but I do not consider that those who asperse the missionaries have in any way shown the same self-denial as those gentlemen have done. We know well enough that they cannot have the pay that they would have if they settled down in any part of Australia, or social comforts, or anything of that kind. It seems to me a terrible thing for a man to take his wife and family and settle down in one of those islands in the South Seas, and I admire those men who from pure and lofty motives settle among the islanders. I think they are deserving of something better than having discredit thrown on them in this House. I would really like to see those hon. members withdraw the remarks they made on this subject.

Mr. ANNEAR : They are in *Hansard*, and we cannot withdraw them.

Mr. SALKELD : I think the words were probably said hastily. I know that I sometimes say things, and I do not think any hon. member would fall in public estimation by withdrawing remarks uttered in haste. I am sure the Treasurer has not fallen in the estimation of hon. members or the country by withdrawing the remarks he made last session with regard to the Bank of England. I know that at the time the hon. gentleman made those remarks I took the liberty of saying that I thought he was right, and hoped he would not knuckle down to the Bank of England. Of course, the remarks were not as nice as they might possibly have been, but I could excuse a little roughness in the language, as long as the hon. gentleman was honest and straight, knowing that he had the interest of the colony at heart. But the hon. gentleman has since had further information, and has now withdrawn the remarks, and I would be very pleased indeed if the hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Annear, would withdraw the statement he made in reference to the Rev. Mr. Paton.

Mr. ANNEAR : There is no statement; only a quotation from *Hansard*.

Mr. SALKELD : I do not wish to misrepresent the hon. member, and will therefore read what he said from *Hansard*. It is as follows:—

“I ask hon. members to look up *Hansard*, vol. lix., pages 1971 and 1972, and read the debates on an inquiry held by one of Her Majesty’s commanders of a man-of-war, and they will come to no other conclusion than that it was clearly proved that this reverend gentleman was nothing else but a slanderer and a wilful perverter of the truth.”

“HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Shame!”

“Mr. ANNEAR: I make that statement fearlessly.”

I believe the hon. member was put out and somewhat annoyed yesterday.

Mr. ANNEAR : Not in the least.

Mr. SALKELD : I thought so at any rate, and I certainly should be glad if the hon. member would withdraw the statement. However, I shall not say any more on the subject. I was very much pleased with the remarks made by the leader of the Opposition yesterday afternoon. The hon. member condemned both the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply, and also the leader of the House, for the tone of their remarks, pointing out that they were addressed not to the whole House, but to a small section of it. I suppose we all know what section he referred to; I believe it was to the members sitting on the benches in front of me. The hon. member for Maryborough said “No.” If so, I suppose reference was made to all the members who differ from the Chief Secretary. I do not think I deserve to be called a traitor to the country; I am sure I have never done or said anything to justify such an insinuation being made in reference to me, and I can only say that if the remark refers to me the hon. gentleman is entirely mistaken. When the Chief Secretary was speaking on this point I interjected, “What is the qualification?” The Chief Secretary replied—

“The only qualification is to provide that the means proposed to attain the desired result are not morally wrong. That is the only qualification.”

I said “a very important one.” I believe it is morally wrong to get people to work under conditions in which they cannot live in some degree of decency or comfort. I did not intend to discuss the matters contained in the Governor’s Speech, but I cannot help expressing my sincere regret at some omissions in that Speech. It is true that we are told that the Government are going to reduce the railway freight on agricultural produce. I am very glad to hear that

they are going to do something for the farmers in that direction, though I do not know what it is exactly. The Railway Commissioners took a wrong step when they raised the freights. With regard to the stock tax, I think that if it is carried out so that those who really benefit by its imposition have to contribute, it will be a very good thing, and I hope it will be successful. But one very important matter has been omitted from the Opening Speech. We know that a large majority in this House are protectionists, and I would like to have seen a revision of the tariff promised. Unfortunately when the tariff was revised a great majority of the Cabinet were freetraders, and the tariff was not made a protective one. I was asked the other day by a gentleman whether I could recommend him any good works on protection. I replied that I believed there were some, but I did not know what they were. He said, "I thought that you being a protectionist would know of some such works in the Parliamentary Library." I replied, "To tell you the honest truth, although I am now a protectionist I have been nearly all my life a freetrader, and nearly all the works I have read on the subject have been written by freetraders, and from reading them I have become a protectionist."

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. Sir T. McIlwraith): It is a very common thing for a man to be converted by reading works on the opposite side.

Mr. SALKELD: I do not say that I was converted by reading works on the opposite side. I was converted by my own observation, my own judgment, and by thinking out the matter for myself. I certainly read statistics and history, and I came to the conclusion that all nations which have been prosperous have protected their own industries; that all nations which have become eminent for manufactures have had to protect their industries in the first instance.

Mr. McMASTER: England is a freetrade country.

Mr. SALKELD: I suppose the hon. member refers to the policy of England as far back as his own memory goes, and it only reaches to the time when England first became a freetrade country. If the hon. member went a little further back in history he would find that no country in the world has ever protected its industries as England has done.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Half the grievances of Ireland have arisen from that cause.

Mr. SALKELD: Not only had England a protective tariff of from 25 to 50 per cent., but the importation of many things was absolutely prohibited, and they could not be sold in England.

The SECRETARY FOR LANDS: Duelling and many other things were also in vogue in those days.

Mr. SALKELD: I heartily respond to the appeal made by the Chief Secretary, and agree with the speeches made by members on the Opposition side as to the necessity for doing all we can to assist the Government in endeavouring to extricate the colony from its present difficulties. So far as I can conscientiously and honestly do so, I shall heartily support any measures that may be brought forward to get the colony out of its difficulties. I have not now stated my objections to coloured labour, but I shall do so when the measure is before us, as that will be a more appropriate time for doing so. I have very decided objections to it, and I shall state them honestly and truthfully. I hope it will not be found that because a man gives expression to views which he holds honestly and conscientiously he is to be

branded as a traitor. I am in favour of good government, and will assist the Government in any way I conscientiously can to tide over the present depression. I am very sorry, however, that when looking round for some remedy for the depression, the Government did not see the advisability of bringing in what I believe would do more than all else to assist the colony at the present time, and that is some revision of the tariff in the direction of protecting all our manufacturing and producing industries. That would establish confidence, and would put life and spirit into the people in every way. I sincerely hope that our debates this session, despite the bad start made by the mover and seconder of the adoption of the Address in Reply, will be well conducted. I hope that those who have had hard things flung at them will not retaliate, that they will show that they are above that kind of thing, and that their only concern is to see the country prosperous. I would like to have seen the Government take a more comprehensive view of the public affairs, and bring in a measure that would really establish confidence and bring about a reign of prosperity. I do not blame the present or the last Government exclusively for the present state of the colony, and I recognise the fact that great numbers of the people who are now crying out about the borrowing and spending of the Government took their share in the eating of the cake very cheerfully indeed, though they now grumble at having to pay for it. The spending of the money was not confined to one locality or to one section of the community, as people in all parts of the colony tried to get money spent. However, the state of the money market and the failure of our borrowing powers have now compelled us to look upon the matter in the true light; and I believe that by failing to introduce a protective tariff the Government have missed one remedy for the depression which would be as important as all the other measures they propose put together. If we had a protective tariff here twelve or fifteen years ago we would be in a very different state to what we are now in. What are we going to do with the rising generation? What is to become of them? It is a very serious problem. We cannot find Government billets for them, and as for the idea of putting them all upon the land, the fact is that we have no market at the present time for the products produced by those who are already on the land. Land settlement is a good thing, but it will not do by itself; we must have a fair proportion of all industries in progress to be prosperous. I need not speak further on the motion before us. I shall have something to say upon the measure mentioned in the Opening Speech when they are brought before us.

Mr. BARLOW said: Mr. Speaker,—I shall occupy the attention of the House but a very few minutes. I should like to add my personal testimony to the worth of the gentleman whose merits were referred to last night. I refer to the late member for Barcoo, Mr. Murphy. This is also the anniversary of the death of another great man who graced this House, the late Hon. Mr. Macrossan, and I feel sure that the memory of both those gentlemen will remain in the annals of Queensland for many years to come. I shall not enter into the details of this question of black labour, because the Bill is not before us, and for other reasons which will appear in the course of the speech I intend to deliver. Undoubtedly great attention has been drawn to this question within the last few months, and undoubtedly some considerable change of opinion has taken place in some electorates. That is beyond the power of any person who observes what is going on in the world to deny. I am not going to inquire into

the question as to whether the newspapers are or are not an index of public opinion. Whether they create or reflect public opinion is a mere academical discussion which has no place in this debate. As regards the electorate I represent in conjunction with my hon. friend, Mr. Macfarlane, we have two newspapers, one of which has taken up from the first a strong attitude of opposition to the proceedings of the Government, and the other newspaper, which is supposed to be of a more conservative turn of mind, has from the first declined to express an opinion on the abstract question, but has strenuously demanded an appeal to the country before any decisive action is taken in the matter. No meeting has been held to support the views expressed in the Chief Secretary's manifesto, but a large number of meetings, I think averaging one or two a week, have been held on the other side. It is true that the gentlemen attending those meetings have not discussed the provisions of the Bill, as the Bill was not before them, and is not before me; but in a general way they have taken the same line of argument as the first-mentioned newspaper—that of condemnation of the Government proceedings and manifesto. For my own part I was elected as a determined and decided opponent of black labour. There can be no mistake about that. The speeches which my friend and I delivered at our various meetings had all a strong tendency that way.

Mr. DONALDSON: And since.

Mr. BARLOW: And, as the hon. member assists me—"and since." I have delivered some of the strongest testimonies delivered in this House on that subject. There is a judgment or retribution that overtakes us all at times, and that judgment has overtaken me in the shape of a repudiation of all my speeches on that occasion. I went very carefully through them all, and I must say that they are stronger in many respects than I thought they were. The Chief Secretary last night—and I speak with great deference upon constitutional questions emanating from him—said that this Parliament has no authority to bind a future Parliament, and if a future Parliament disagrees with the proceedings of this Parliament it can reverse them. If that is the case, what foundation is there for the anticipation of any investment of capital or any permanent arrangement upon the strength of a Bill which may be upset immediately after the ensuing general election? I am expressing no opinion as to whether it will be upset or not; but as this Parliament has no right to bind a future Parliament; as the next Parliament will undoubtedly have the right to reverse the decisions of its predecessor, certainly as a business man I should not be disposed to do very much upon the strength of any enactment passed in this Parliament upon this question. But if at the general election a proposal is duly put before the people, and then endorsed by a majority of the constituencies, any attempt to interfere with that would be repudiation of the most decided character, which I believe another place would have a strong right to put their foot down upon and prevent. There is no doubt about that. It is a self-evident fact. Now, the hurrying on this matter in the present House will afford a very strong fulcrum to the extreme anti-black labour party at the general election. It will be one of the strongest points which the anti-black labour party—a party which will not listen to detail, or listen to anything except the absolute and positive exclusion of the black man—can have. It will be a strong fulcrum for them to work upon, and it might defeat a harmless and reasonable proposal up to which the people in the meantime might

have been educated. That, I think, is a fair statement of the case. I am not judging any member who gives a vote on this question. I assume that every hon. member who votes will have satisfied his own conscience. He will have satisfied himself that he can put himself right with his constituents, or that a change has taken place in the attitude of his constituency. Therefore, I judge no man, but I say that a very great cry will be raised at the general election, that a large number of members violated either the letter or the spirit of their pledges. I wish to emphasise that. I do not judge any gentleman who gives a vote. Every member has a right to vote as he pleases. His electors and his constituency are his business and not mine. Now, the Chief Secretary said that the theory of representative government is, that the whole of the people not being able to assemble together, as I believe the ancient Celts and Anglo-Saxons did, they delegate to certain people certain work, and they send them into Parliament for a fixed period to do it. That is quite true as to details and as to emergencies. No member could possibly be expected to tell his constituents the details of every Bill coming before the House on every little emergency, or even every considerable emergency. There must be at all times the exercise of discretion. In any great emergency, such as a case of war or anything of that kind, this House might make laws or do things which might appear very strong and decided or even arbitrary, but the principle of the safety of the public is the highest law. But the very fact that the people sent us into Parliament because they think us fit to make laws, amounts to this: that they deemed us fit because we had given, in certain important matters, certain pledges. The people have said to us: "We trust you with the representation of our district and ourselves, but that representation must be on certain lines—on certain great and broadly-defined lines; you must act within those bounds, and, unless you are released from your pledges, either by a dissolution of Parliament or some other means, you must adhere to those pledges." That is the ground I take in this case; not with any hostility whatever to the Government; not with any desire to create any trouble; but with a due sense of the responsibility of the position I occupy I cannot help feeling as I do. Now, how are you to ascertain the opinions of the people? You cannot ascertain them by public meetings, because you can never be sure that they are fairly representative of the electorate. It has been said—I do not know with how much truth—that it is not altogether possible to obtain freedom of speech at public meetings in these times. But this is certain: that if you collect 100 or 500 men together at a meeting, it is not certain that they are a fair sample, in due proportion, of a constituency of 4,000 people. Now, as regards a by-election, people may say, "Why not resign and test the feeling of your electorate?" Well, in the first place we are not always disposed to brave the trouble and turmoil of an election when we have not violated any pledge and do not wish to break any pledge we have given to our constituents; and a by-election is never, as I endeavoured to submit to the House last session on the question of federation, a test of any one question. It is not a referendum. If we could have an official referendum on this question to those constituencies whose members intend to vote against the present proposal and a ballot taken, that might give a verdict, but no by-election could decide it. Now, I give the Chief Secretary every credit for honesty of purpose. I indulge in no reprehension of him or any reproach of what he has done, but the hon.

gentleman stands in a very different position to a private member of Parliament. He has become an Australian statesman. In him the member of Parliament is entirely swallowed up in the statesman. I think the position of the Ministry in our Houses of Parliament is that, that although they require to be elected by the people, they notwithstanding have a certain official position. A voter who takes up a ballot-paper with the name of Samuel Griffith on it may not agree with him at all, but, unless he is very much blinded by prejudice, he would say, "We must have Sir Samuel in the House." Therefore, in that case and in the case of other prominent members on the opposite side of the House, the member is entirely subservient to the public interest. With the rank and file it is very different. They are sent in to carry out their pledges, and do what they promised to do, and that is a position that I cannot get away from. The leader, in his capacity as a leader, undoubtedly has a right to change his front if he feels it necessary.

Mr. HYNÉ: As circumstances change.

Mr. BARLOW: No; I do not contend that, but I contend that it is possible for a great political leader to do that and yet to stand right with the people who sent him here in a way that I could not pretend to do.

Mr. DRAKE: What if his followers do not go with him?

Mr. BARLOW: If his followers do not go with him, the obvious result is a dissolution of Parliament. I am not entering now into special pleading for the Chief Secretary. I am only showing how very different his position is to that of the ordinary member of this House, and I cannot help feeling it is so. I will just conclude by saying that I have learned a great deal in the House since I have been here, and I believe I have unlearned a great deal. I have unlearned a great deal of violent prejudice. I do not know what the proposals of the Government are, but these proposals, after a general election, if I were here, would have my support or opposition entirely upon the old ground which I have never deserted—that an alien race is objectionable when it comes into competition with the white population—when it permanently and directly lowers the standard of civilisation, and when it fixes amongst us people who are not fit to be incorporated into our society and not fit to take part in our political institutions. What I may say hereafter I do not know, but in view of the past pledges I have given, and from which I cannot be released until I am released from them by the electors of Ipswich, I am bound not to support this proposition. I do not know what the state of parties may be at the next general election, and I do not think anybody else does. A very great deal of water will have to run down the hills before then. But I do say this: That, standing as I do, pledged to a certain course, I cannot, with any degree of self-respect, and thinking that my constituency has not undergone such a very strong and serious change as to justify the belief that they are entirely changed—I cannot depart from the pledges I have given. I need not say more. I need not enter into more details on the subject; but I reserve to myself the right, when I address myself to my constituents, of making them thoroughly understand what I mean on that occasion; and you may depend upon it that they will understand it.

Mr. HOOLAN said: Mr. Speaker,—This seems to be a kind of full-dress rehearsal of the legislation we are about to undertake, and it seems only right that I should take my share in that part of the business. There is a great deal

in the Speech placed in the mouth of His Excellency by the Government to which the party I belong to must object very strongly. There are other things in it with which, of course, nearly every member of the House will agree, while there are a great many other important matters to which no reference is made in it, and which certainly ought to have been brought prominently forward at the meeting of Parliament—matters which, if carried out, would be very beneficial to the public, and to the cause of good government generally. Seeing that we have already had so much of the black matter since hon. members met yesterday afternoon, it may, perhaps, be advisable to give them a little change to white. We find the Governor addressing the "Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly" as follows:—

"The general depression to which I have already referred has necessitated the utmost economy in the administration of the Government. My Ministers have given their best endeavours in this direction.

"The Estimates for the ensuing financial year will be submitted to you at an early date, and will be framed with a due regard for the circumstances of the colony."

I contend that we ought to have had the Estimates first. Those matters which concern white people ought to come first, and those which concern black people last. The white people are the superior people, and should come first, and the question of the transplantation of the black people from their homes in the Southern seas to the hot soil of Queensland, together with all that concerns their moral, social, and religious welfare after their arrival here, might well remain in abeyance until we have dealt with the wants of the white people. There is nothing whatever said as to the direction this promised economy will take. It is to be hoped it will be more than a mere empty promise. But I daresay the Government are like a good many other people; they will not enter upon a system of rigid economy until it is absolutely forced down their throats, if I may be permitted to use a somewhat forcible illustration. The material depression that exists in the colony has been brought about by extravagance, and that extravagance began with the floating of the colony's first loan, and has continued down to the present day. This extravagance has not only overburdened the public, but it has overburdened the Ministry to such an extent that they are asking the poor unfortunate people of the South Sea Islands to come and help them out of their difficulties. Amongst the many questions we are called upon to deal with, I hope they will not forget their promises with regard to economy, for this colony can never resume anything like prosperity, and public confidence can never be restored, until the strictest and most careful economy is practised in every department, from the highest down to the very lowest. Although the Government cannot interfere with people with very low salaries in the service, yet the mere fact of a more careful administration in the higher branches will have its effect on all the rest, and induce them to practise a far greater economy than has hitherto prevailed in the public service of the colony. It is a crying shame that some of our Civil servants, who are drawing salaries from the public revenue of £1,000 a year, should not be able to live upon that £1,000 a year, and carry on in an honest way, and pay their just debts. It sets a bad example when we hear of public servants in the receipt of an enormous salary embracing the opportunity of going into the Insolvency Court, getting white-washed, and then returning to their former fat billets to carry on the same game again. That is a matter which demands the earnest attention

of every member of the House, and I trust it will receive it. However, I suppose we have got to continue the discussion on the unfortunate kanaka—the docile, amenable, gentle, obedient kanaka—and perhaps it is as well not to enter into anything else at the present time. We know that not only this Parliament, but also the preceding Parliament, stand distinctly, forcibly, and strongly pledged in every way, both by addresses on public platforms and by addresses in this House, to bring no more coloured labour of any kind into the colony. How does it appear to me, who was the only one who took the stand that you cannot separate the two questions black labour and separation? I took that stand, and yet I was howled at by public men, by all the black labour party throughout the North, saying that I was an impudent, bold, forward fellow, who did not know what I was uttering. How could I be right and all the other Northern members wrong? I must be wrong, and they must be right. During the discussion on separation, the very first utterance of every public man was: “We will set the black labour question and all the labour difficulty on one side. It is scotched, killed, slain, hanged, drawn and quartered, and put out of sight.” The parents are slain, and the orphans—that is, the children of the kanaka question, if I may use the simile—are sent to the orphan school. The whole Press of Northern Queensland, from Normanton to Cloncurry—the *Cooktown Courier*, the *Cairns Argus*, the *Townsville Herald*, the *Townsville Telegraph*, the *Sentinel*, the *Northern Miner*, and all the Mackay papers took up the same yarn. In the very first session of Parliament I sat here, when the motion tabled by the late Hon. John Macrossan on the question of separation was brought forward, what was the first little sedative they administered to the public? In all their arguments they said, “We shall set aside entirely the black labour question.” When I find men who have been returned to this House to represent the country faithfully and well, come forward and say “such and such a thing is set aside,” I believe they are telling the truth. But when they found that they could not carry out their objects and aims with regard to separation, in a few months, we have hardly time to breathe in a manner of speaking, before the whole question of black labour is brought forward in all its force. The Chief Secretary issues a manifesto, and all at once black labour is to be the policy of the colony for the future. It is not to be a small extension or concession to the planters by which the difficulties they are labouring under may be mitigated; if it is for ten years. Great Scott! I am a fledgling politician; a person of no importance, or no supposed importance above whatever consideration I may give to myself; but they appear somewhat mysterious to me, these utterances of public men. I should like to say what I think of them, but if I did so I believe that you, Sir, would very quickly call me to order. I am afraid that my thoughts on the matter would not be very complimentary to the whole of them, were they uttered. I cannot conceive how any man can come in here and saying one thing and meaning another, having quite a contrary and different thought in the innermost recesses of his heart. But yet we see that when a man cannot carry a big political question, he is immediately prepared to turn round and say “Yes,” where before he said “No.” That is one of the mysteries of parliamentary life, which I suppose a person may overcome in time and get used to. Certain sections of the community have taken the very broadest stand upon the kanaka question. That is, they say that they have no desire to get any assistance from any alien race, and no matter

whether they are on a platform before the public, or here as members of the Legislative Assembly, I think it is only right and manly and proper that they should stick to their principles. I would rather starve than accept the bread or any of the sweets of life produced by the sweat of a black man. And I say that any working man or any starving man who says that he cannot get a living in this country, which can produce plenty for all hands, and is able to contain 5,000 or 10,000 times the number of people in it now, without the assistance of a black man, is a coward, and the very worst sort of man. Those men are traitors to their country who do not maintain the convictions which were born in them, which have grown with them, and which they ought to retain until the day of their death. I know that as far as I am concerned I shall retain my convictions until the day I die. I am, I believe, but a paltry individual, but I should lower myself to the utmost if I for one moment thought that I could not get a living in any part of Australia without asking or desiring the assistance of any black or alien race. Here we are a proud race; we have got possession of this great colony; we have our institutions, some of which have cost enormous sums of money, and yet the cry has gone forth not only throughout the colonies, but throughout the whole world, that we cannot live or carry on public business, cannot pay our public servants, provide bread and butter for our families and beer for ourselves, or decent frocks for our wives, without the aid of the kanaka. It is a most shameful position to take up. We are taking up a position which, under any circumstances, I should be most heartily ashamed of. Nothing would induce me to do it. I think it is a very poor thing indeed if we have to rescue the colony from the mud and mire of insolvency by appealing to the unfortunate kanaka to help us. There is no doubt that we can grow sugar-cane, and we have a solution of the difficulty within ourselves. When we had a national danger, as it was called, last year there were plenty of men ready to leap into the breach, and if this is a national danger why do not we members of Parliament try and rescue the colony from it? Why does not the Chief Secretary go out with a hoe in his hand and grow cane, instead of issuing manifestoes asking other people to do the work? Why do not the members of the Assembly, who have nine months' recess, and free railway passes, go through the country and grow it during that recess? I say it is their duty to rescue the colony, and restore confidence between the working people and the commercial people. If this industry is necessary to the welfare of the colony and the best interests of the people, by all means let us assist that labour by making every person amongst us pass through the ordeal of it before he can attain to any position in the State. Send out the hundreds of big fat policemen who reside in the Roma street barracks to grow sugar-cane. Let every public servant who is physically strong enough, go through the ordeal of growing cane. The great majority of the people are able to do it, and why should we teach them that they are not wanted to do it; that there is no necessity for them to do the work; that we can get alien races to do it? The clerical workers and the gentlemanly class generally outnumber the actual workers six to one, and how can you expect the working people to take kindly to this class of labour, or in fact to any kind of labour under such circumstances? It is not likely that working men will wear their lives out working and toiling when they look around and see how society is regulated; that the idlers reap all the benefit, while a worker, more particularly when he becomes the

father of a family, has to work and toil from morning till night until the day of his death, and groan and grind and torture his body and soul to provide food for his children. Is it any wonder under these conditions that the working class are driven to despair? Some change must take place in the management of our public institutions to remedy this.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD: In our gaols.

Mr. HOOLAN: It is to be hoped so. It is to be hoped also that the hon. gentleman will keep out of them. He would make rather a rough customer if he got into gaol, I believe. I believe he is built on the principle—wherever he can get his head he is bound to get the rest of his body. The remedy for the existing state of things does not lie in the introduction of kanakas, nor of the pigtailed Chinaman, nor any other alien race. Last night an hon. member referred to the pamphlet that was circulated saying the curse of God is on them. I do not know whether the curse of God is on them or not, but a curse is on them. The curse of leprosy and other diseases is on them, and we have quite enough curses caused by ourselves without introducing these, no matter what becomes of the sugar industry. No one will starve so long as he is willing to work, as the majority of our adult population are adult males, and they are not likely to starve while they can shift about. It is most unfortunate that this subject was ever introduced. It only provokes further warfare when there might have been peace, and some readjustment of the affairs of the colony arrived at. This will provoke a dangerous warfare before it is over, and the warfare will continue. The public will rather starve in the streets than give up their principles. I would not like to undertake the task of preaching this doctrine to many of them, because no matter what may be said, the public mind is entirely against the kanaka, and it is only those who are subject to the baneful influence of their employers, or whose minds have had poison instilled into them by the professional agitators—not labour agitators, but professional agitators from the city of Brisbane, who are subsidised by the planters—it is only those who are not opposed to the reintroduction of kanaka labour. They have been led to believe that there is a prospect of better things in store for them, and most certainly this poison will destroy the whole body and corrupt them for time and eternity.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD: Deal with time—you have nothing to do with eternity.

Mr. HOOLAN: I have taken up little time since I came into the House, but the hon. gentleman is utterly regardless of time. In fact, time does not seem to fly with him. He is one of those fortunate people who take no heed of time. I may be pardoned for alluding to what the Chief Secretary said, but I shall try and allude to him most respectfully. He said that it was nothing but right that the Government policy should change when there was no reasonable doubt that the people had changed their opinions. With all due respect to the hon. gentleman, I would like to ask him how he has obtained the information that the people have changed their opinions? He went on a trip to New Guinea, and I understand he witnessed one or two of their interesting corroborees; but surely he cannot take what he saw there as a change of public opinion in Queensland. Then he went on a tour round North Queensland. There was no occasion to go into the back parlours, or amongst the broken-down planters of the North to find

what public opinion was. The only way to find out the public opinion in the North was by calling the public together. A few years ago if the hon. gentleman had wanted to have an expression of public opinion he would have taken good care to go on a public platform—the proper place to go. He did not do so on this occasion, and he is certainly labouring under a very great mistake, to put it mildly. Public opinion in North Queensland has undergone no change in regard to this question, any more than it has undergone a change in regard to the question of separation. It is politicians who undergo change, not the public. The public are not cowards. The public can live without kanakas. They have not all been land boomers, like a few people connected with chambers of commerce, and a few semi or wholly insolvents, with whom the hon. gentleman mixed on the banks of Ross Creek. The public have been working for their living, and do not need kanakas introduced, or dirty-faced chow-chows. They do not need the assistance of these alien races. It is very wrong for the Chief Secretary to say that. If it had come from me it might have been taken for what it was worth. But it has come from the Chief Secretary, and it has led to the issue of his manifesto, which has brought about this state of turmoil, and dragged down one of our biggest institutions—the Church—into this warfare, and has caused ministers of religion to attack and scandalise each other. I think the Chief Secretary has no right to come here and say that public opinion has changed. The first step to have taken towards finding out whether such a change has taken place would have been to go to his own constituents. That was clearly his duty, and that is where humble members of the Legislative Assembly go if they carry away with them any straightforwardness or political principle after they have passed through the atmosphere of this Assembly. It is not by the subsidised articles of an insolvent Press that we can arrive at what public opinion is upon this matter. I know five papers in the North which have been shut up. One of them was forced into the law courts by an action for libel; and has not the *Carpentaria Times*—one of the best and straightest little papers that we had in the North—had to go through the insolvent court? Is not its editor now at work in this city as a journeyman printer? That man would have been still running his paper, and been enunciating the principles of the workers of this colony had the commercial men of Normanston not been against him. But he could not carry on. He tried as long as he could, but the consequence is that he died. Unfortunately the commercial people and the bankers run this colony, and the sooner that stops the better. They put their thumbs down, and prevent editors from expressing the state of public opinion. They jump on the poor editor, or they rig up their business managers to bring libel actions against the papers, and rig up picked juries. No one knows better than the Chief Secretary that we cannot get a proper expression of public opinion from the Press of Northern Queensland. The true editors of the papers there are the bankers, who reel out the articles that are supposed to express public opinion. There are really no responsible journalists there. If you search you will find that it is either a syndicate or the banks that are interested in the plantations, which own the newspapers. You cannot get no proper expression of opinion from the Press of this colony. There is only one way in which public opinion can be found out, and that is by calling the public together and eliciting the truth from them. It is all very well for the *Telegraph* to shriek and howl and say that free speech is interrupted and stifled in Brisbane. It is only that the *Telegraph* wants

to make a public grievance. All that has to be done is to take one of the halls in this city and the hon. gentleman will get a fair hearing.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No.

Mr. AGNEW: He may if he crams the meeting.

Mr. HOOLAN: Surely 400 or 500 men cannot control the public meetings of this city! That is absurd, and I would not believe such a thing. No one can make me believe that.

The HON. B. D. MOREHEAD: We cannot limit your belief.

Mr. HOOLAN: If the working people are divided against each other they will very soon go into a public hall and show their hostility. You need not tell me that, because I spring from the ranks of the working man, and if I may use the term, I have rigged public meetings and conducted public meetings. Over and over again I have rigged public meetings to applaud Sir Samuel Griffith. I know how to rig and fix up public meetings as well as anyone, and I also know that as soon as hostility divides the working public, they have their separate leaders and form into opposite factions and fight the battle out. The commercial public are anxious for one thing and the working public are anxious for another, but the commercial public, the very respectable white-coated or black-coated gentlemen, will not come out and state their opinions; they are too respectable for that, and leave it to the Press to do it for them. Why do they not come out and put their case before the public, and get a fair expression of public opinion? Is it not because they know that the working classes are against them? Anyhow, no expression of public opinion has been sought, and it will only complicate matters throughout the colony if the proposed legislation in regard to kanakas is passed this session. Hon. members who have spoken have, of course, wandered all round this subject, and presumably I have the same privilege as other members, and may, if I choose, perambulate round it in the same fashion. It seems to be the orthodox thing, and I suppose I may do it as well as other hon. members, especially as this is what the hon. member for Balonne would probably call my *début* on a Governor's Speech. The Chief Secretary said yesterday that the labour leaders "took in hand to regulate the mechanical industries. What was the result with respect to that action? A large number of mechanics have been driven out of the country." I could very soon show that the legislators of this colony have been working on a false system for years. Look at that confounded building at the corner of George and Elizabeth streets, which will not be wanted for a hundred years hence. And how many buildings have been erected on the same false and unsound system? Look again at the small population of the colony, one-fourth of which is stuck about Brisbane, at the southern end of the colony. Any business man will tell you that that large number of people can never be kept here in a state of industry. It is all very well to boast about our resources, but that has been done before for the sake of booms. We have certainly great resources, but they are not sufficient to keep up the state of things which has prevailed hitherto. Legislators as well as other people have made mistakes, and they must accept the responsibility of those mistakes and not try to shirk it. If I make a mistake I accept the blame for it with the best grace possible. If I had, as a legislator, assisted to create a false and unsound system I would take the blame of my action and not try to force it on to the shoulders of the secretaries or leaders of labour organisations. The Chief Secretary has had a very big hand, as

a leading politician, in bringing about the present state of affairs, and should bear the blame of his own misdoings, and so should every other man who has had any share in the matter, whether as a legislator, a taxpayer, or voter. We do not want to enter into an acrimonious discussion on this subject, although the gauntlet has been flung down to us; but it is just as well not to sit here with papers spread out on our knees and look wise, because if we do we shall get heartily pilled by the public when we go outside. The hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Annear, is no doubt well able to take his own part. He is not one of those weakly, sickly bantams with a weak voice, a small body, and attenuated form, but a robust man with strong lungs. The hon. member has informed us that he has been crowned. Therefore I suppose it is not improper to say, "Behold the king, his majesty has arrived," and I hope that if in future references I speak of him as "worthy sire," or "liege lord," I shall not be considered to be acting improperly. We cannot tell what sort of a crown he received, because unfortunately at that point of his speech an hon. member rose to a point of order. However, whatever it was, we are glad to hear that he has been crowned. The time will come when we shall all be crowned; some of us are no doubt looking forward to a crown of immortality when we go down the long vista of time for evermore. I fear, however, that the crown some of us are to receive at the general election will be one that will be pleasant to neither sense, sight, nor smell. But, whatever it is, we shall have to put up with it. The hon. member for Maryborough seems to have a constant and unceasing hostility towards the labour leaders in Brisbane and throughout the colony generally. Is the hon. member aware that he and the Chief Secretary have been travelling about the colony for a short time as professional agitators? Is he aware that the people to whom they have preached in back parlours, chambers of commerce, and other places were prepared to go to work in a proper manner to solve the difficulties which beset the colony, and that he and the Chief Secretary have raised in them a false hope, as it will eventually prove to be, with respect to the effect of the proposed reintroduction of black labour? If the hon. member is not aware of these facts, he should be made aware of them. The hon. member put himself in the position of one of those professional agitators who go about the country to disturb the public mind. It is not the working men or any one section in the colony who are professional agitators. Anyone who buoys up the public mind with a hope in a state of things which cannot possibly exist under any circumstances is in the position of a professional agitator, even if he is not paid for his services. That is a very wrong and improper position to take up, and I am very much surprised that the hon. member for Maryborough, who has always denounced that kind of thing, should take up such a position. If we reintroduce black labour, it will cause further annoyance and depression, and drag us still deeper into the mire in which we are now labouring. If this proposal had not been made, the people would have carried out the resolve which is growing in their minds to work at agricultural pursuits and assist the industries of the colony, the public revenue, and themselves. But, instead of encouraging them to do that, the leader of the Government has practically said, "There is no necessity for you to work; we will call Parliament together; we have a majority and will carry this kanaka business; you need not work, your constitutions are not built that way; if those fellows round Brisbane will not work let them starve; the kanaka will come and

work for you." This was the doctrine spread by the Chief Secretary and the hon. member for Maryborough on their tour round amongst the chambers of commerce.

Mr. ANNEAR: No.

Mr. HOOLAN: The hon. member denies it, but I give the statement for what it is worth, just as he gives his statements about agitators. I make the statement as it was told to me, and I believe it to be true. It is as true, at all events, as most of the statements made on the floor of this Chamber. The hon. member ejaculated that there was no such thing as slave trading.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. HOOLAN: Very well, if he takes up that position he should stick to it, and he should be careful not to make the figures he quotes confound it. He says that all through the kanaka we get £8,000,000 of money spent in the colony at the rate of £20 per head.

Mr. ANNEAR: No; £1,400,000.

Mr. HOOLAN: I stand corrected; but how much does the unfortunate kanaka get? Here is a class of people perfectly happy and contented in their own islands, where peace reigns supreme; but they are not to be allowed to stop there. We send ships to their island homes where these people grow and breed, and have their fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, and cousins and aunts, and where every "Joey" has his "Mary" and all the rest of it; where everything goes on all right, and they have no churches to go to and no taxes to pay.

The Hon. B. D. MOREHEAD: Have they any labour leaders?

Mr. HOOLAN: Here the planter gets the wholerest of their labour, and they are put upon the canefields and made to sweat, and scorch, and burn, and in some instances to starve, if they could not live on the few sweet potatoes they grew, though that may not be the case now.

The Hon. B. D. MOREHEAD: Have they any labour leaders?

Mr. HOOLAN: No, and it is very fortunate for them that they have not.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. HOOLAN: It is to be hoped that if they come here in such quantities as is proposed they will soon have their labour leaders. The Javanese soon got labour leaders, and were able to turn round and give the planters as good as they received, and—perhaps I had better leave that sentence with a "dash." The hon. member tells us those enormous profits derived from the labour of the kanakas are distributed amongst the people. No doubt, it is a nice thing to get an inferior race to do your work and have the profits of their labour distributed amongst you, as it was a nice thing to have the profits of the labour of the negroes in cultivating tobacco and cotton in America distributed in the same way. No doubt it would be a nice thing for the hon. member to get the profits of my labour or for me to get the profits of his, but it is not so nice for the unfortunate individual who has to do the work. Is it not fair to say that if the kanaka comes here his labour should obtain its price? You cannot say that one man shall work in the canefield and another man elsewhere. The white man and the black man in the employ of the planters are socially equal, though the kanaka may get only 6s. a week while the white man gets 25s. The kanaka can do the white man's work, and there is the difficulty, and they have been known to outstrip the white man in some things. We know these people are useful, and there is the difficulty. Did not a leading man at Charters Towers, W. P. Morgan, who

is now an M.P. in the British House of Commons, have one of these men for a butler; and the Hon. Tom Buckland, a Charters Towers millionaire, got a kanaka for a butler because he was docile and obedient, and people like docile and obedient servants. We know that Grant up there got one as a buck nurse to hawk his little children about. There are dozens of them nursing, and they are employed as nurses at Thursday Island. You will see a kanaka go up to a lady and take a child off her breast. We know that the big fat Malays do that, and they are grosser than the kanakas; and all sense of delicacy is lost where people are thus brought into contact with the kanaka. These people receive nothing for their labour, and they are taken away from the islands where they grow food they can digest, and grow up stalwart fellows with plenty of bone and muscle, and have none of the vices and crimes that are taught them here. But we are determined to bring them here and stuff them with our unsuitable food, and create feelings of dyspepsia amongst them. They learn to eat sweet potatoes and corned meat, and from the treatment they get here they die of the measles and are buried. If you want the blacks to work why are you not prepared to pay the labourer his price? What right have you to get him here and take the result of his labour, and then give him to take home to his island a rusty musket, a red handkerchief, and a string of beads for his "Mary"? I want to know that. Can any of you answer me? Is it not only a part of the greed of human nature, and in keeping with the whole history of slavery from the early days to the present time? How can you, knowing that these people do not understand yet the nature of their contracts, fetch them here against their will? How can you bring them here and teach them the crimes, wickedness, and vice of the white man, and in the first place teach them to poison themselves with the vile rum of their own manufacture? You bring them here for that, and then when one of your own clergymen who has lived amongst those people for many years, and has devoted his life to them, has watched them in many stages of their existence, and will no doubt watch the dying struggles of some of those kanakas, protests against the whole thing in proper form, a servile Press, and a bad, wicked, gorgeful public join in falsifying themselves on purpose to vilify that man. I say the Rev. Mr. Smith's statements are—I won't go so far as to say they are lies, because he has written them temperately; but he has no knowledge of what he writes about, and has no more right to enter into a controversy with that gentleman, who has devoted many years of his life to those people, than I would have to enter upon a controversy with the Chief Secretary on a point of law. I have read every line of the Rev. Mr. Paton's letters carefully, and I am sure that what he has written is the result of his own convictions, founded on his own knowledge, gained bit by bit and scrap by scrap, of these people; and the Rev. Mr. Smith, in attempting to refute what he has written, places himself in just the same position that I would place myself in if I went before the Chief Secretary and tried to argue with him on points of law. It is said that it is easy to stand here and make accusations against the planters, but I stand here as strong an opponent of the planters as any man can be. I have done so from the first, and will do so to the last, no matter what the consequences may be. I study the white race of this colony—of which I am one. The black man is not my thought or care, as I do not profess to be a missionary, or an evangelist, to take the black

man under my wing. I could never be a planter to employ any men and get the results of their labour and give them a beggar's pittance.

At ten minutes past 7 o'clock,

Mr. GLASSEY called attention to the state of the House.

Quorum formed.

Mr. HOOLAN said: Mr. Speaker,—There is another side to this question entirely apart from the side of strong principle and honest conviction. With some people who oppose the coloured labour question it is merely a matter of strong principle and honest conviction—the very strongest principles and the most honest convictions. It is very easy for those opposed to that individual or individuals to call their action aggressive or hostile. Although in a manner aggressive to the planters, I quite understand the difficulties of their position. They are, of course, a number of commercial people, and they deserve the very same consideration as other commercial people. Possibly had I the means at command, or had I any knowledge of the sugar business in my youthful days, I would have been a planter on the coast of Queensland, and be now engaged in this trouble and warfare, trying to get black labour; and I expect the same consideration extended to me, occupying as I do the reverse position, as I should expect if I were a planter. As far as I am concerned, I can do the planters very little good and probably very little injury, but still I am willing to extend to them all the consideration they deserve and all the helpful assistance I can give them. No doubt they are unfortunately placed. It would, no doubt, be very wrong, through ignorance of the affairs of the country, to destroy an industry which we must all admit is a very important one, and one which, except under very extreme circumstances, should not be allowed to die out. I hope the circumstances are not so extreme, and will not become so extreme, that the industry will die out. The planters, of course, deserve every consideration, and have had a great deal of consideration at the hands of the State, and I believe some of them have made money. No doubt they have gone in for very expensive machinery, but that is not on account of their philanthropic views at all, and they only deserve the same generous and soft-hearted consideration that should be extended to any other class in the community. They have spent their money in building and establishing sugar-mills, but it was not for the benefit of either the white or the black race; it was solely for the benefit of themselves. And like everyone else engaged in commercial enterprises, if circumstances occur which prevent them from reaping that benefit, they must put up with the result, whatever that may be. Every one of us engaged in commercial pursuits has to risk all he has got, and the sugar planters on the coast of Queensland have to do the same. Many of our coast planters are agents, and they have risked all that other people have got. They are like some of our very clever mining agents; they have risked that which was not their own. It is certainly a momentous matter, and one which should not take the form of hasty legislation. Let us give it the fullest consideration within the limits of common sense and our own consciences. It is a matter that the public of the colony is deeply concerned in. But it concerns more than the welfare of its present inhabitants. There are national and State aspirations to be considered. The claims of the rising generation are also involved in the question, and of generations yet unborn. It is a question which affects the future not only of Queensland, but of the whole of Australia, and yet hon. members seem inclined to rush it through in an acrimonious debate. I know

that I am quite unable to deal with it. I will do the best I can from my own standpoint, but it will require the very greatest thought to properly deal with the question and to settle it. The alien has been a constant trouble to Queensland and to the whole of the Australian colonies. He has been more trouble to Queensland than to the other colonies, and is likely to continue to be, because we are so close to the countries he inhabits, and his facilities for landing on our shores are so great. From my infancy I have been fighting against the introduction of Chinamen. It is most disheartening to think that you are always placed amongst people who are your inferiors by race. When you come into the Legislative Assembly you feel all the natural pride of manhood, and rise to the dignity of the occasion, because you are amongst your compeers, amongst people who are a great deal cleverer than yourself, and then there is some credit in warfare over matters that affect your interests. But it is no credit, it is disgusting to human nature in every way, to have to be constantly standing up and fighting against inferior people as if you were afraid that they were going to take the bread out of your mouth and wipe us off the face of the earth. Yet some section of the community must do it. I know that if we had not been constantly fighting against the Chinese they would now overwhelm us. They would be in every nook and corner, in every branch of business intermixed in our social life, acting as pastors in church, and high officials, as they are at Port Darwin, where you may see a coloured policeman lugging white men off to prison. I therefore contend that if it is necessary to fight against one alien race it is equally necessary and imperative that we should take a determined stand and fight against all the others. There is only one stand to take, and that is that we must live without the aid of aliens of any sort. When we take our place amongst the people of the world to whom all the powers and privileges of nations are extended, we have to fight not only against the inferior black, but also against the yellows and browns and darkies of all shades. We pride ourselves upon being white, and at one time we got rid of the black and went in for other colours; but now they won't do, and we are going to return to the black again. The kanaka is a very docile and harmless person, and there is no great objection to him on the ground of his peculiarities. I know that when the Chinamen first came into Northern Queensland they at once took up the position of gardeners, an occupation which was much required at that time. But if you have Chinamen to grow your vegetables, it is not likely that white men, who are a lazy, idle, indolent class—the whole of us, gentle and simple—will do so. It would be well worth anyone's time to calculate the hundreds and thousands of tons of vegetables that have been grown by Chinamen in Queensland since it was first opened up. If white men and their children had done that work, how many agriculturists should we have at the present time, and how far would we have advanced the settlement of this question; because once we engaged in agriculture in even the most primitive form it would be very easy for an intelligent industrious race to advance to cultivation in its highest branches. Sugar is not one of the highest branches; any man can grow it. If we had been always free from alien races our own people would have become cultivators, and we should not be sobbing and sighing now for the kanaka to help us. Most of the hostility which had been shown towards the kanaka business has arisen through the action of the planters themselves. When first introduced the kanaka was utilised for purposes of cultivation only, but the planters were so selfish that they instructed

them in other branches of industry. Now they say they only require them for field work, and intend to keep them at it. If they had taken that stand at first there would never have been any trouble. The planters could have fed or starved their kanakas, or killed and buried them decently, or without proper ceremony, as they liked. I have a knowledge of this business from its inception, and it was when the kanaka was allowed to straggle all over the country and take up positions in various occupations, some of which he now holds, that the opposition to him commenced. I know one cattle station in North Queensland which enjoys many privileges from the State, simply leasing the frontages of rivers and getting the use of the rest of the land for nothing. That station has built itself up in five or six years from having 1,000 head of cattle until it had 8,000 or 9,000, and while in that state of prosperity it employed nine kanakas and one white stockman. No wonder that a person's strong feelings rise against such conduct. I could name dozens of similar cases, but I do not wish to be wearisome. I remember that a man named Cameron, up North, brought up whole coachloads of kanakas and Cingalese to work for him. These things gave rise to the agitation then; that agitation took deep root in the public mind, and many of the men who stood up on platforms and denounced this interference with the rights of labour and of citizenship have to take up the same rôle again. Some politicians change their opinions, but it does not do for everyone to be so changeable. Some of us must stick to our principles, and I may say at once that I am one of them. When this question comes up for discussion again I shall have a little more to say upon it. A man is only doing his duty here by saying his say. It is not from egotism that a member gets up and expresses his opinion. It is because he is bound to do it. The public take such an active interest in these matters that they notice everything that goes on in the Assembly, and every member who is in touch with his constituents must express his views. I have done no more than I have a right to do. But, presumably, whatever legislation the Government think is required will be carried. It is as good as carried now, and all this is a waste of words. However, they are really trying to establish too much confidence; and when people try to establish anything on too large a scale they generally break down. It is not only this, but there are other matters in connection with this colony and its administration during the last seven or eight years that have been established on a very large scale; but, unfortunately, they were not firmly established, and they are going to the ground, notwithstanding all we can do to sustain or bolster them up. People may put their shoulders to them to prop them up, but they have not sufficient strength, and down they must come, although the fragments may be rebuilt if necessary. And this is one of those things. If a section of the community want kanaka labour, it is a very small section, and certainly they are not the self-supporting nor the self-sacrificing section, nor are they by any means the self-reliant portion of the community. Still, as long as they form a section of the community their requirements deserve consideration, and if their wishes are not laid on a solid basis then it is our duty to oppose them. The section of the community that want this labour, if they are the advisers of the Chief Secretary, are certainly bad advisers. To legislate for ten years when we consider that the Church and the people consider it a nefarious traffic is too much to ask. Both sides of the House are exhausting their memories to find proper terms in which to depict this very queer and unsatisfactory request

[Mr HOOLAN.

that we should legislate ten years ahead. I am at a loss to find words to express my utter and profound astonishment at the audacity of the thing. Ten years ago I can remember that the Chief Secretary was a hale, hearty, and flourishing young man, and I attended upon him at a banquet given to him in the North. Ten years have brought us both to the brink of the grave, and without wishing or attempting to place myself in the position of the hon. gentleman—when I think what the last ten years have done for me—when I see what a wrecked past I have had, and think how it has destroyed my hopes and ambitions, and what it has brought me to—I am overwhelmed with astonishment, and have no words to express my feelings with regard to the proposed legislation. Ten years for rapidly-growing Queensland is too far ahead to look, and certainly too far for the Chief Secretary to go. A year or two would be within the limits of reason and common sense, and a year or two he might carry, and it might remain as a monument of his power and his legislative abilities. But ten years is going too far. Certainly, legislating for ten years in the kanaka business is over long. Before ten years are over it should be settled whether this is to be a white man's country or a black man's country. I sincerely trust it will be a white man's country, and I shall strain every endeavour to keep it so. It is a white man's country at present. White men have worked and toiled to open it up, and white men have still to work to keep it going, and the white men's shoulders have to bear the burden of its heavy debt. If they all work together to place its affairs on a sound basis, they will struggle through their difficulties and will be able to face the world with a clean balance-sheet; but if, on the other hand, they turn round in the weakness of the moment, and with craven spirit and scared countenances declare that there is no remedy but the introduction of the black man, then there can be only one verdict, and that is that they are hopelessly and helplessly beaten. I am sure other hon. members wish to air their eloquence, but there is another matter I wish to allude to, and to express my opinion upon. We are called upon to condole over the death of the Duke of Clarence. Well, I have reverence for the dead, no matter who they may be; but, presumably, it is everyone's place to give an honest and straightforward opinion. I know nothing about princes at all. All my sympathies and condolence extend to the paupers. I have no hesitation in acknowledging that I came from a pauper race, and it would be out of keeping with the parents I sprang from, and out of keeping with my grandparents and my great grandparents did I not avow my sympathies with the race from which I sprang. I know nothing about royalty and thoroughly disbelieve in it. I have no sympathy with any prince, and would not pass a vote of condolence for any prince or duke who may have gone to the bosom of Abraham. I have no respect or disrespect, no love or hatred for the late prince, and if I am called upon to offer a vote of condolence I steadily refuse. I have had friends of my own, whom I have worked alongside of in the mines, and when they have died in a distant place I am almost ashamed to admit that in the hurry and bustle of life their deaths have hardly caused me a second thought. I think I would be a very poor, paltry, and mean man were I to stand up and avow condolence and sympathy with the death of a prince of whom I know nothing, and for whom I never have felt and never shall feel any sympathy or condolence.

Mr. GANNON said: Mr. Speaker,—I waited to see if any other hon. member was going to speak before I rose. I have not a great many words to say about this Address, and I do not

intend to delay the House very long. I may say that I have read the Governor's Speech, and think there is a great deal in it to be commended, although it is very short. One matter that has not been touched upon so far is a matter that I know has caused a great many heart-burnings to a large number of people in the Southern portion of the colony, and that is the question of the railway tariff. So far, no member has spoken about it. I must say that I congratulate the Government on the step which I believe they are going to take in the reduction of the very heavy freights on agricultural produce, which have kept farmers back in the Southern part of the colony. I may state that the very strong feeling of antagonism which I have had towards the Government was largely due to the manner in which the railways have so far been managed by the Railway Commissioners. I am glad that the Government are now going to take the matter in hand. I had thought, and the country at large were beginning to think, that the people would have to take the matter into their own hands, but I hope that the Government are now going to do something for the Southern farmers. The Chief Secretary when speaking last night twitted me with regard to something I had done not very long ago, and if I had had the opportunity to speak then, I should probably have turned up certain matters with respect to the hon. gentleman's change of opinion. But we know that very often if we get a few hours to think over such matters, our feelings, possibly of ill-temper or ill-will, will give way to other feelings which are very much better. I am not inclined to open up old sores in this House, but am prepared, as every hon. member and every man in the colony should be prepared, to do all he possibly can to help the Government to get the colony out of the terrible position it is in at the present time. We have been going through very troublous times, and there is no one in this House or in the colony who has not felt, and is not still feeling, the effect of the depression. I wish to say a few words now in vindication of my own position, because hon. members have good-naturedly, and in some instances my friends have laughingly, twitted me with something I have done in regard to the question of black labour which is shortly to come before the House. At the last general election I was returned as one of the candidates most strongly opposed to black labour. At that time the Chief Secretary was of the same way of thinking as myself, and a large majority of the members of the present House were returned as strong opponents of black labour. As an Australian, my sentiments are strongly against the employment of black labour. But I am told by a large number of members of this House, by the Ministry, and by a large number of people outside that we ought to put sentiment in the background for a time, and give a chance to the sugar industry, which we are assured is going to do a large amount of good to the colony. I said the other night, when addressing my constituents, that I must stand by the promise I made at the general election, and vote against the proposed reintroduction of kanaka labour, and I am going to vote against it, although in doing so I shall vote against my own feelings in the matter. I was elected as a member of the House on the pledge that I would oppose the introduction of black labour. At the time I was returned I was supposed to be a member of the great Australian National Party. Of course that Australian National Party is now dead, just as the great Liberal Party is now dead. But it is not now a question of parties that we have to consider. The question is what are we, as one united party, going to do to help to get the colony out of its present difficulties, and I am prepared to do all

I possibly can in my small way to assist in this effort. I am going to justify the vote I intend to give against black labour by saying that I shall do so because I am pledged to vote against it, and I am not going to go back on the promise I made to my constituents, who believed me, and in that belief returned me as a member of this House. As hon. members know, I have spoken on this question both inside and outside the House. I took the trouble a short time ago to visit some of the sugar plantations, and I saw many things which opened my eyes on the subject. I had not much time at my disposal, but owing to the courtesy which I received I was able to see a good deal in a short time. I believe that in the future we shall see in the sugar industry what may now be seen on the Darling Downs—namely, the subdivision of large estates into small farms worked by white labour. It appears to me to be an absolute certainty that such will be the case. I am confident that in the more southern parts of the Northern portion of the colony it will be an accomplished fact within a very few years. It would be worth the while of hon. members who have not yet done so to visit the scrubs about Bundaberg and see what the farmers are doing there at the present time. I think that all hon. members who can possibly manage it should go round the colony and see for themselves what is being done at different places, and not form their opinions from what they read in the newspapers or what they hear from other sources. The Chief Secretary and the Government know I have been a strong opponent of theirs. I believe that I might, as a matter of fact, say that I am leader of the Opposition, that opposition being myself. However, I am glad to notice that there is nothing very contentious foreshadowed in the Governor's Speech, and that there is no reason why parties should be squabbling as to who should be in power. I think the Opposition are perfectly willing to allow the present Government to remain in office for their full term. Only a few months ago, when asked the question, I said I would vote for sending the Government to the country; but if I had seen their manifesto before that question was asked me, the chances are that I would have said exactly the opposite. I am prepared to give the Ministry credit for doing the best they can for the colony, to put aside any feeling of antagonism towards them, and assist them in their endeavours. I look upon myself as a Queenslander, although I was born in New South Wales, as I look upon all those who are living in the colony as Queenslanders; and I think it is the duty of all to unite for the purpose of devising and passing such measures as will remedy the present depressed condition of things. I am not going to blame those who I know had a great deal to do with getting the colony into its present terrible position. Let bygones be bygones, and let us put our heads and hands together to get the colony out of its trouble. Much has been said with regard to the proposed reintroduction of black labour. Some people say that it will do a large amount of good. I believe it will do a certain amount of good, but not as much as some persons seem to expect. I believe it will help to restore confidence, cause a certain amount of money to be spent in the colony, and give a certain amount of work to those who require it.

Mr. BLACK: And yet you are going to vote against it?

Mr. GANNON: I have said distinctly that I was pledged to vote against black labour. I pledged myself to vote against black labour, against immigration, and against the naval defence scheme. I have voted against immigration and the Naval Defence Bill, and I am

going to vote against black labour, although I believe it will be a good thing for the colony. It seems a funny position for me to take up.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. GANNON: I am here to justify myself by saying that I cannot, without a mandate from my constituents, go back upon the solemn promise I made. I hold it to be a solemn promise when a man stands up before his constituents and says, as I did, "Put me into the House, and I will vote against the Naval Defence scheme, black labour, and immigration." These were the principal planks of the platform of the National party put forward by Sir T. McIlwraith, who was the leader of the party at that time. I am determined to stand by my solemn promise, and there is only one thing that would make me go back upon the promise I made then, and I will tell you what that would be: If the question came to a vote, and it required my vote to turn the scale in favour of the employment of black labour, I would vote for it and immediately resign, because I consider—

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

Mr. GANNON: It is all very well for members on the Ministerial benches to laugh, but they have, every one of them, been in very funny positions. I am in a very funny position at the present moment.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. GANNON: I am prepared to stand by that position, because I am not afraid of it. I was returned to this House by making a solemn promise to oppose black labour, and I intend to keep that promise unless I am allowed by my constituents to withdraw it. At the time I was elected I did not know much about the duties of a member of Parliament; but my eyes have since been opened, and I shall take care, if I am returned again, not to make any promise, because people's minds may change, and a member's mind may change upon many matters. If he has made promises he may find himself in a false position, as I have done lately. I said at starting that I was not going to throw any stones, and I shall not do so, though if I had spoken last night I think I would have thrown stones. I shall not do so now, because people who live in glass houses should not throw stones.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

Mr. GANNON: I have a lot of stone-throwing material here if I wished to indulge in that game, but, as I say, I am inclined to let bygones be bygones, and, as an Australian representing the people, I am prepared to do what I can for the good of the colony. I shall not obstruct the passage of the proposed Bill in the slightest degree, but I shall simply record my vote against it. The question of land-grant railways is included in the Governor's Speech, and that question was before the electors at the last general election, and the members of the National party pledged themselves against land-grant or transcontinental railways.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No, no!

Mr. GANNON: Some of them did. I am speaking for myself, and I do not want to drag anybody else into my way of thinking. I said at the time that I was not in favour of a transcontinental railway under such an agreement as was then proposed, but if we, by giving grants of land, could get a *quid pro quo* in the shape of a good railway, I would support such a scheme if the agreement was a fair one. It is simply a question of agreement, and I am prepared to help if a fair agreement is made. To return to the question of black labour, I trust that by the new Bill proposed the Government will be prepared to confine the kanakas to the canefields, so that they will not not compete with white men.

Mr. GLASSEY: Who will confine them? The planters?

Mr. GANNON: That is a difficult question to go into, because we know that, though at the present time we have an Act to confine them to tropical agriculture, they are not confined to it, and they are doing a lot of work they should not be doing. I trust something will be done to prevent "ticket" boys who have worked out their terms on the canefields coming into competition with white workers. I was in Maryborough, Bundaberg, and Mackay some years ago, and one of the things which made me so strong an anti-kanaka man was to see a number of these boys driving spring carts and perambulators and doing a lot of work that white persons should be doing. I trust the Government will take that into consideration, and prevent the employment of these "boys" in that way. I said that the extension of the Act would not do all that has been claimed for it, but I believe it will be one factor to help us to confidence and to a better position than we are in at present. I trust we shall go on as we have started, in an amicable way, and that we shall all help the Government to get the colony out of its difficulties. I cannot sit down without congratulating the Colonial Treasurer upon the manner in which he spoke last night in connection with the trouble with the Bank of England. At the time the difficulty began, I considered the hon. gentleman was right in taking up the position of a man who, when looking for a friend who had promised to turn up, found he was not there when he was wanted, and I stated my intention to support him through thick and thin. I am very glad he put the matter in the way he did last night, and I think he deserves the thanks of the House for his action. We know now that the Treasurer and the Government were placed in a false position through no fault of any member of the Government here, though it was, I think, through the fault of a member of the Government who is a long way off. I may as well say straight out that I think it was the Agent-General who made a great mistake in the matter. I am in favour of a dissolution, and I think it would be better to have a dissolution and let the constituencies settle the matter of the ten years' extension of kanaka labour at once. I think that if we had a dissolution now the Government would, in the present state of public feeling, be returned, whereas, if we push the Kanaka Bill through now, we shall have a great deal of agitation and trouble at the next general election. That is my own opinion, and, though some members may think differently, I believe that, if the ten years' extension was settled now, instead of the planters applying for black labour we should soon have the small farmers growing the cane and supplying the labour. I notice that a deputation of ironmoulders and founders waited upon the Treasurer the other day about a large contract for iron pipes for which tenders had been called by the Board of Waterworks. I trust something will be done to keep that contract in the colony, and that a greater measure of protection will be given for all things that can be manufactured in the colony. I trust that we will be assisted, and that protection will be given where it is most required. The question of the expediency of retaining the Railway Commissioners will be a matter that will crop up very soon. It seems to have cropped up all over the colonies, and I think it is quite time the matter came before this House. There is no question a great mistake has been made in the constitution of that board. In fact, I think the time has come when the whole question of government by boards must be taken into consideration. Government

by boards has become a perfect farce, and every year shows that it is one of the greatest mistakes that could have been made, although at the time I voted for it, and thought it would do a great deal of good. I do not think it is necessary for me to delay the House any longer. I have endeavoured as well as I could to express my feelings, and I will do as I have said with regard to the question of the reintroduction of kanaka labour.

Mr. RYAN said: Mr. Speaker,—As this debate is evidently coming to a close, I think it is necessary that I should say a few words, although I would have preferred to let the opportunity go by, because I am rather young in parliamentary experience. In fact, I do not know much of parliamentary procedure; but with the assistance of yourself and the indulgence of hon. members I hope to soon learn. I was rather surprised last night to find that I was encouraged to come into this House, or rather that expressions of welcome were extended to me by the Colonial Treasurer, the hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Annear, and several other speakers. No doubt this welcome was extended to me in a kindly way, and I trust that my conduct in the House will be deserving of it, and that hon. members will never have cause to regret what they have said. I did not wish to say much about that matter; but I think it is nearly time—especially as the Governor in his Speech, evidently alluding to the labour party and the trouble that was in the way of prosperity last year, expressed satisfaction at the turn things had taken—and hoped that we should let bygones be bygones. If there is to be a labour party in the House let us come here, and if we misbehave ourselves, you, Mr. Speaker, can do your duty, and the other members will assist you. At the same time, I think it is necessary that we should sink all party differences, and I can assure you that no one in this House has the interests of the colony at heart more than I have. I am a native Australian, and am proud to own it, and I have been returned by the electors of Barcoo on the express understanding that I would oppose tooth and nail the reintroduction of kanaka labour. If I had not been returned on that understanding I would still oppose it, for the reason that I do not think we shall tide over our financial difficulties by the reintroduction of kanaka labour. I may be wrong. Of course every man, as the Chief Secretary said last night, is entitled to his own opinions. I do not for one moment place myself on the same level as the Chief Secretary. I have not his ability, and although I do not believe in him I tell him he is a far cleverer man than most people I ever met, and I also believe he is doing the best, according to his convictions, for the good of the country. At the same time it is my opinion that he is mistaken, and I think time will show that I am right. I do not know that I can say much with regard to kanaka labour. I have been on sugar plantations, although I did not care much about the work there, for the simple reason that I did not like to be working with kanakas. I worked on a sugar plantation eight or nine years ago on the Victoria Plantation, on the Herbert River, where there were 600 or 700 kanakas and thirty or forty white men. I was butchering there, and to use a bush phrase I got "full up" in about a fortnight, because it was nothing but kanaka here, there, and everywhere. All the work that was supposed to be done by white men I can assure the House was done by kanakas, where the planters could get them to do it. I heard one hon. member say to-night that the kanaka was a docile person,

easily taught, and could be driven. That is just where it is, the white man cannot be driven. I should be glad indeed to see some scheme such as that referred to by the Chief Secretary last night, whereby workers could be induced to settle on the land. In his manifesto the hon. gentleman said distinctly that in his opinion sugar could be grown by whites, that it has been grown by them, and that the result is marked and conspicuous. Consequently I think it is the duty of the Government, and of every member of the House, to use his utmost endeavours to try and tide over the present depressing state of affairs, and bring Queensland into its natural prosperous channel. I for one shall do my best; but I tell you, Sir, that I intend to vote against the reintroduction of kanaka labour. There is another phase of kanaka labour. We are told that the kanakas will not be brought into competition with white wage-earners. I am sorry to say, speaking from experience, that kanakas to my knowledge in Northern, Central, and Southern Queensland—not very far South, but down about the Warrego—have come into daily competition with white wage-earners under the eyes of the Government, and with their knowledge, although I do not say with their consent. The hon. member for Mackay, Mr. Black, said most emphatically last night, when someone interjected the remark that kanakas were at the present moment employed in the mills, that they were working there, and they would work there. It is quite apparent that it is the intention of the planters to make them do the work which is generally supposed to be the legalised work of the white men, and I for one do not believe in the professions of the Government. I believe they mean well enough, and I dare say they would mete out condign punishment to any planter who broke the law; but at the same time we know well that the laws of this country can be easily broken, and I know from what I have seen of the planter that there is not much of the milk of human kindness in him, and that he thinks more of the kanaka than he does of the white man. That is where the difficulty lies. If we were legislating for the planter, the man who actually owned the soil, there would be something in it; but we are not. To my knowledge—and I speak from positive experience on the subject—we are legislating now for syndicates, mortgage companies, and banks. I could almost take an oath upon it that if the whole of the sugar planters were called up to-morrow we could not find four of them who could say they owned one-third of their plantations. As one hon. member said last night, it is patent to any man of ordinary intelligence that this action on the part of the Government is being taken merely to bolster up the sugar plantations, so that those engaged in the business will be able to sell at a profit and clear out. I do not blame them for doing so, because, as the hon. the junior member for Burke said this afternoon, if he was a planter he would no doubt do the same thing. Human nature is human nature all the world over, and I believe I should do just the same if I were in the same position; just in the same way as, if I happened to be a squatter, I should do all I could to get white workmen to work for as low wages as they would take. There was another thing I did not like in the Chief Secretary's speech, and that was the exception he took to the strong language—the vilification, I think he termed it—of the labour party towards him. It seemed strange to hear the hon. gentleman using the same words which he condemned when used by others. I think he reviled the labour party in just as abusive terms as they themselves used. Perhaps he was not quite so plain-spoken, but in his tone of mild

sarcasm he repaid whatever vilification may have been hurled at him. I do not think that is the way to bring matters to a satisfactory conclusion, and I hope we have heard the last of it. I blame for it the hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Annear, and I was sorry to hear that the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. Watson, who seconded the motion, was imbued with the same spirit.

Mr. ANNEAR: We are both able to stand it.

Mr. RYAN: So am I, but still it is necessary that I should mention it. During the debate yesterday allusion was made to the amount of money earned by the Alice River settlers. The Chief Secretary stated deliberately that he did not think they had earned much, and he thought nobody would ever earn much on that barren land. He seems to know all about it; and Professor Shelton, when he went up there some time ago, on seeing the soil pronounced it at once as no good. At the same time, I dare say the hon. gentleman, when he visited the place, must have seen the Chinese garden within a stone's-throw of this very spot. That garden has been there, to my knowledge, for six years, and it has supplied the whole of Barcaldine and the surrounding stations and small places with vegetables for the last five and a-half years. And yet we are told by people who know no more about the land there than I know about sugar land that it is useless. If you go there, you will see that the men are determined to raise up some sort of a settlement which will keep them off the labour market, and show a good example to others who have been situated as they were. I know most of those men personally, and have known them for years. They had become altogether disheartened and discouraged, travelling about aimlessly from one week's end to another for five or six months in the year, shearing or doing other station work, and they were determined to settle on that land. And yet the Government will not give them any fixity of tenure. That was promised to them by the Chief Secretary, but up to the present moment, according to the information I have received, no further notice has been taken.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member is wrong.

Mr. RYAN: I got my information a week ago at Rockhampton, and if it has been done I apologise. I saw the Secretary for Lands last July, and he professed to do everything for those men, but I do not think he bothered his head about the settlement from that day until Professor Shelton went out to Barcaldine. I do not believe in these professions of doing good. It would be only fair, when a person approaches a Minister and asks a fair question, that he should get a fair answer. He might have said, "We do not want these men to settle on that land, because we do not think it will be a prosperous concern." Then the men would know what to do. When the Chief Secretary went to the Alice River settlement the men were in a state of commotion. They did not know when the Crown ranger or land commissioner would come and order them off the land. I am glad to hear from the Chief Secretary that their tenure is safe, and I am certain that if they can manage to keep together, and get sufficient work to enable them to tide over the initial difficulties, they will make the Alice River settlement something to be admired, and an example to be followed by every other class of their suffering fellows who are knocking about in the same way as those men were heretofore. With regard to land-grant railways, I fail to see what good they are going to do us. It seems to me that we are just entering upon another era similar to that which was inaugurated by the £10,000,000 loan. Railways are to be constructed,

I understand, on the principle of giving land in large blocks, something similar to what was proposed in the transcontinental railway scheme. This land, I suppose, will be parted with in perpetuity to those people who build the railways. I want to know, if Queensland is going to become a thickly-populated country—which the Chief Secretary said last night he hoped it would be—what is going to become of this land when the country gets thickly populated. If it is going to be given away like this to railway syndicators, we shall be in just as bad a position ten or fifteen years hence as we are in now, if not worse. While alluding to the question, I may say that during my electioneering campaign I saw a man at five or six different places—at Isisford, at Blackall, and at other places which I need not name. That man had £2,000 or £3,000 to spend. He was a large selector from Victoria, who had been crowded out. He had heard of the wonderfully good country in Queensland, and he had travelled here in search of a suitable block of land to settle upon. He was unable to find one; all the best land had been peacocked, or taken up in huge continuous blocks by what I may term dummies for the squatters. Wherever the land is on a frontage it is taken up, and the man who has £2,000 or £3,000, or even £500 to spend, and is willing to expend it in taking up country to live upon, has to go away into the back country—no one knows what that country is like better than the Colonial Treasurer—eight or ten miles from a river; where he may have to use an artesian boring machine, and bore nearly as far as China before he can get water. If we are going to offer inducements to people to settle on the land, care should be taken that sufficient land is reserved suitable for agricultural purposes, or for other purposes for which the intending selector may wish to apply it. Another matter I wish to refer to, which I forgot in my opening, is this paragraph in His Excellency's Speech:—

"I am glad to think that the organised interruptions to industry to which I had occasion to refer when I last opened Parliament have to a great extent come to an end. The unfortunate effects of this action have, however, not yet ceased."

I fail to see how the "organised interruptions," as they are termed—which mean, I suppose, the labour troubles last year, which I now freely admit that I was concerned in—I say I fail to see how they have hampered the prosperity of the country in any way. No doubt it caused £60,000 or £70,000 of expenditure—useless expenditure I call it—to send out a lot of troops in all the glory and pageantry of war—a hollow mockery—just to suppress a row which two or three drunken men might create in Brisbane, and no notice whatever be taken of it. This £60,000 or £70,000 is ascribed to "organised interruptions" caused by the unionists in the bush. The other day the Chief Secretary was at Longreach, and it appears that he was hooted there. No one was more sorry for it than I was, although I was eighty or ninety miles away at the time. The hon. member for Maryborough was with the hon. gentleman at the time, and I can tell the Chief Secretary this: That I have already informed Inspector Ahearn that I knew ten or fifteen of the greatest vagabonds on the coast who went up from Rockhampton on free passes granted by the police magistrate at Rockhampton to that very place, Longreach, only a week or ten days before. I know that two of the most notorious characters were granted free passes to go out into the bush; and yet all these "organised interruptions" were caused by the unionists! They are put down as the cause of all the trouble, while at the same time the Government are sending these

scoundrels out on free passes to create disturbances, and hoot the Chief Secretary and other hon. gentlemen, and what is the result? "Oh, we must send out the soldiers and police and everybody else to put a stop to this." Mr. Inspector Ahearn can bear out my words that no less than three weeks ago two of the greatest scoundrels—if I may use the vulgarism—unhung were sent out there. One of them, who had just done a term of imprisonment in St. Helena, said he got his free pass—both he and his mates—from the police magistrate at Rockhampton. I think it is nearly time that the Chief Secretary, or whoever has charge of this work, should stop it altogether. There are more men to my knowledge out in the Western country tramping and riding about in search of labour than could find work if all the squatters were prepared to put them on. I am alluding now to the Barcoo and Mitchell districts. The excitement caused by the recent election no doubt attracted a great number of men there. Many of those who had their names on the roll travelled 200 and 300 miles to register their votes, and they are now distributed all over the district. I know that on the Flinders and in the Winton district there are hundreds of men in camp, and if you take up any paper—the *Western Champion*, the *Barcoo Independent*, or even the Brisbane papers—you will see that the destitution is very great in Blackall, Barcaldine, and other inland towns, and that it is on the increase. Applications to the police magistrate for rations are daily increasing, and are likely to increase tenfold. I think that when we surmount these difficulties and make the white men prosperous and happy by settling them on the land, it will be quite time enough to think about raising the social status of the kanaka.

HOONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. ISAMBERT said: Mr. Speaker,—A supporter of the Government sitting on the cross benches has not a pleasant duty to perform in speaking on the Government policy unless he is prepared to speak approvingly of it. At such a time as this, when we are surrounded by difficulties and in the midst of depression, the country expects to see something better than is foreshadowed in this Speech as a remedy for existing evils. It reminds me very much of a bag full of dry bones. What are the remedies proposed to relieve our difficulties? A number of exploded, condemned measures of the past are unearthed, and their dry bones are going to do wonders which they could not do when they were full of flesh before. The most favourable feature in the Governor's Speech is its brevity. Only a few measures are shadowed forth, but I say that the chief ones brought forward as calculated to relieve us from our difficulties are wrong prescriptions for the sick patient, Queensland. The Chief Secretary gave as the reasons why Parliament was called together so early the following:—

"Because we want to give immediate relief to the sugar industry. We want to give that relief in time for those engaged in the industry to take advantage of the coming season, and that is the reason why we meet just now."

That sounds as if the sugar industry was in a terrible condition, and that the condition of the country at large was the result of the state of the sugar industry. Now, to give relief one must be in a bad state; but the sugar industry, I maintain, was never more prosperous than in the last season. Only a few days ago I was told by a sugar-planter who has about £100,000 invested in that industry that it was not the matter of cheap and reliable labour that affected them, but that it was the seasons that interfered with them. He said that

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if they had had good seasons they would have been able to work through and stand their ground; but having bad seasons just in the beginning, they got into difficulties which they could not see their way out of. They were never short of cheap black labour. How can this proposed relief—black labour—cure evils if they do not exist? Up to the present the supply of black labour is ample—more than ample, because at this moment there are about 2,000 kanakas going about the country unemployed. We have been told that there are 2,500 going about interfering with white labour—that they are here, there, and everywhere. How has this feeling against black labour arisen? The Chief Secretary has been very often blamed for it, but I say that nine-tenths of the reasons which led to the prohibition of the traffic were furnished by the planters themselves. Similar reasons are now existing, and the kanakas are engaged in all sorts of occupations. I know Civil servants receiving large salaries who have engaged black boys as coachmen and as "generally usefuls," who could well afford to pay a white man, and afford him a footing in a new colony. How many prosperous settlers would never have been able to get into the colony if they had not accepted the first situation they could find, whether as a coachman or a "generally useful," or something else at first? And when such situations are laid hold of by kanakas, how are such white men to get a chance? To such an extent has this practice spread, and these boys been employed contrary to the Act, that they are told by their employers when the inspector comes, to hide themselves.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: It is false.

Mr. ISAMBERT: It is true; the town is getting full of them. If any white man in the colony cannot show how he maintains himself, he is taken up as a vagrant, and should not these blackfellows, who are not employed according to the Act, be maintained in the Government immigration depot, and all be engaged before any fresh application for recruiting from the South Sea Islands is granted? These are the kanakas who are the flotsam and jetsam of the colony, who interfere with white labour, and if they were not present the feeling against them would not be so bitter. The sugar industry in the past and up to the present, I am informed, and as the report of the commission shows also, has not been a paying one. Even in its palmiest days it was not a paying one, and only of late years, since the estates have been managed on a scientific basis, has it been at all prosperous. During the last few years it has been more prosperous than ever it was before, and now it does not pay. There is no fear that by the reintroduction of kanakas our sugar industry will expand to such a wonderful extent. All the reintroduction of kanakas will do will be to prevent the future collapse of the industry, and to maintain it sufficiently long that it may be dismembered and brought into the hands of the small farmers.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Is not that a good thing?

Mr. ISAMBERT: That is the only good feature about it. I know from my own personal experience how difficult it is for white farmers to settle in the North. I know from bitter experience how difficult it is for the farmers in the South to make a decent living on their farms. It is only maize that they can depend upon, and I know for a fact that sugar-cane is the most profitable crop that can be grown.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Up to a point.

Mr. ISAMBERT: Yes; up to a point, and beyond that point it is bad. It would be wrong to say "Down with the sugar industry" when

we cannot replace it with anything better. Those who find fault with everything should be ready to provide a remedy—something to supplant what they condemn. Those who cannot devise anything better should hold their tongues and not find fault. Sugar-growing on large estates is not profitable, and I know well that on small estates it is profitable because the owners employ the cheapest and most reliable of all labour—their own and that of their families. How can farmers in the South maintain themselves when maize is at from 2s. to 3s. per bushel? Even if you take an average as high as forty bushels to the acre, at 3s. it only makes £6 gross receipts, while they could make two or three times as much out of sugar-cane. So far as a remedy for our existing depression is concerned, this prescription to save the country is outside the mark. I do not dispute its value in the way of preventing a collapse of the sugar industry in the future, but for the present it will be rather a mischievous measure. It is drawing a red herring across the track to divert people from the real cause of the trouble. Another good feature in the Speech is the absence of any remark attributing the present state of things to a drought or a flood, as was formerly the case. Afterwards it was attributed to the labour party and to strikes; but now it is attributed to anti-kanaka legislation. I know that it is not a bed of roses for the Government to have the cares of the country on their heads; but they should look the difficulty in the face and propose measures calculated to relieve the colony. The way in which they are going to do this will injure their best friends—it will actually injure the sugar industry. They will make the people believe that the reintroduction of the kanaka will have a wonderful effect—that it will expand the sugar industry to a wonderful extent. Now, I believe that if the industry is to expand it will be expanded by the small selector, and by the dismemberment of the large estates. I believe that in several parts of the North that is going on in the most satisfactory manner, and it will be a mistake to do anything that will prevent that dismemberment. When once this small settlement takes place it will afford a good example, and the prosperity of the sugar industry will be placed upon a sound basis and be assured. To do this we require that the Government should bring in a Bill compelling all parties to be parties to the bargain, not only the planter, who is only the nominal owner, but also the man who has advanced the money. If that is not done, a farmer or selector may take up a farm, work it for a few years, then a foreclosure may take place, and then where is the settler? Some say that members have been elected on certain pledges, and in that case it is not proper to change. If the Government have nothing else to propose than this change in the kanaka legislation, then the sooner they go to the country the better. This will not give relief to the country. It will only pass the time, and we shall come to a worse state; and we are bad enough now. I know what will be the result at the next general election, when the people are angered by distress and starvation. How much longer will the Government go on doing out relief as they are now doing? They will not learn from the signs of the times and from experience. If the Government would only dole out the relief themselves, they would soon come to their senses. It is very easy, of course, to find fault, but I found fault with the Government long ago, and I also told them what were the only means of relief, and of bringing the colony into a prosperous condition. It is not the strikes and the labour disturbances that are to blame. The business of the country was not delayed for one day during the late strikes.

[Mr. ISAMBERT.

For every man who laid down work there were half a dozen to take his place. The maritime strike was a perfect god-send to many a farmer who did not know how to make both ends meet, and they were glad of the opportunity of coming to Brisbane and of earning sufficient to get them out of their difficulties. Business was not disturbed, and that strike did no harm to the colony. Then, when the labourers, after having been beaten in the maritime strike, foolishly determined that when the shearing in the West commenced they would gain the mastery there, and prepared for the strike there, I saw beforehand what would happen, and I warned the leaders. I said, "You are about to jump at the top rung of the ladder, and you will certainly not reach it, but will tumble down and break your legs." The strike began. Was the station work delayed? I say no. For every man who refused to work a dozen were ready to take their places. I heard the hon. member for Mackay state that the strike was a good thing for many in Brisbane, as about 800 men cleared out of the city. Then the useless expenditure of the Government in sending out the military was not lost, as the money was spent in the country. The only real injury to the colony was the wages that were taken away from the colony. No harm resulted from the expenditure on the military. I believe that it made the Western districts more prosperous than ever; just as I believe the money spent through the occupation of Egypt by England is a great factor in the progress of Egypt. If this is all the Government have to propose, then the sooner they go to the country the better, so as not to prolong the agony. The next measure to relieve the colony is land-grant railways. If the building of railways by the £10,000,000 loan has not been able to establish permanent prosperity, is it reasonable to expect that building railways on the land-grant principle will do wonders? It will certainly give employment to a number of men, but they are a most undesirable class of people. It is the expenditure of money on public works on a large scale which has created the artificial prosperity. It has created a high artificial rate of wages, which the ordinary business of the colony cannot afford to pay. This high rate of wages, although it has created an artificial prosperity, has also interfered with our progress. It has interfered with most of our industries through raising wages to an artificial height which other industries, and particularly the agricultural industry, are unable to stand. In this respect it has done more harm than good. The people engaged in railway building are very hardworking men, but very few of them are agriculturists. They work very hard and earn big wages, and no sooner have they got their money than they spend it like a man in a drunken orgie and commence work again. When a ship is in danger we should lay aside all etiquette and try to get that ship out of danger. This colony is, I believe, in such a state, but the means proposed are not calculated to achieve the end desired. The only good point in the Speech is the reference to the stock tax; but even that will not give immediate relief, although it may give future relief. It is a measure on a very sound principle, being based on mutual aid, and I am sure it will cause the exportation of meat and be of that value which it is expected to be. The next good point is the Bill to deal with mining on private property. Then there is to be a revision of the railway tariff. The Government and the Commissioners annoyed and injured the farming population until they are almost at their wits' ends, and then they come tardily forward with a proposal to revise the railway tariff to repair the mischief they have done. As sensible men they

should have seen the evil before it came to such a pass. The Chief Secretary said in his speech that the chief remedy is to increase the production from the soil. I believe the last few seasons have been so favourable that production from the soil has been, in consequence, so largely increased as to be almost beyond the boldest desires of human heart. Yet that has not given relief. If that argument were logically correct then we ought to be very prosperous now; but notwithstanding the abundance of produce we are very miserable, showing that we are governed on wrong lines. If our production is increased more largely, according to our present experience, we shall not be better off. As it is, Queensland is producing more per head than any other civilised country in the world. According to our latest returns, I believe we are exporting produce to the amount very nearly of £20 per head. We are importing to the amount of from £12 to £14 per head. It is not the labour troubles nor anti-kanaka legislation which has brought about the present state of depression, but economical and industrial neglect from the beginning of the colony up to the present time. Every second man you meet has a remedy for our difficulties. They say, "Go on to the land, settle on the land." I wish those who give that advice so readily would settle on the land themselves. They would then discover that farmers who have been settled on the land for years now find it hard to make both ends meet. When they send their produce to market it is first heavily taxed by the Railway Commissioners, and when they get it to the market they are blackmailed by the middlemen, and often do not get as much as will cover expenses; sometimes they have even to shell out money into the bargain. Is that a remedy? Then, again, the raw produce which is raised in the colony costs a large amount for railway transit, and has then to be carried 16,000 miles to the old country, and 16,000 miles back again as a manufactured article, which, of course, causes the price of such articles to be very high, and the lion's share of the profit in these operations goes to foreign countries. Therein lies the whole secret, and, until this matter is remedied, the depression will continue, and we shall go from bad to worse. I do not approve of the foolish actions of the labour party. I condemn them as much as any man can do, but, at the same time, I also recognise that labour has a great deal of cause for dissatisfaction. In engineering or in architecture the strength of the material used is a matter which must receive consideration. When a brick building is constructed regard must be had to the pressure which every brick will stand before it crumbles. That is a principle in architecture. Now, just look at the labouring classes who have to do all the nation's labour and maintain everything. The colony has now a population of about 400,000 men, women, and children. Of course, all of these 400,000 people are not producers. There are probably 80,000 adults, but even these are not all producers, as many of them live on others. There are altogether too few really productive labourers, and when we consider the taxes that are imposed for revenue and the cost of living, the profits that are made out of commerce and speculation, and that the burden of everything ultimately falls on the working classes, it is truly a wonder how they can stand it. In reality they cannot stand it, and what they cannot stand has to be made up by borrowed money. According to the last revenue statistics, the revenue collected amounted to £8 10s. per head, and the revenue necessary was £9 10s. per head, so that there was a deficiency of £1 per head. There would, therefore, be a deficiency of £400,000 to

be made up. How can the labourers make up that deficiency and all the revenue and requirements, and compete with foreign produce raised by cheap labour? It is impossible. Any man who can explain that satisfactorily to me will make a freetrader of me, but I cannot see how it can possibly be done. A complete reversal of the policy which has hitherto been pursued by both parties in the House up to the present time is necessary, and the sooner we make that change the better. But we shall not improve our position merely by passing the measures shadowed forth in the Governor's Speech, and I fear that at the general election we shall have to face an angry people. What prospect of relief is there from the re-introduction of kanaka labour? I admit that it will prevent the breaking-down of some sugar estates, and I believe that it will be favourable to the settlement of a white population in the North, which is so difficult to settle under ordinary conditions. But it will not bring general prosperity to the colony. We must of course recognise that the sugar industry is an important one. Last season, so we are told, the produce of the sugar industry was worth £1,400,000 to the colony. Of this £400,000 worth was consumed in the colony, and £1,000,000 worth was exported. Our total exports amount to £8,000,000, and only a little more than £500,000 is for articles of miscellaneous character, all the rest, nearly £8,000,000, being the produce of three industries—the pastoral, mining, and sugar industries. When we have only three industries to depend on, it is a very serious matter to interfere with one of them, and we should think twice before we say, "Let it perish." It is no use riding the hobby of sentiment. We must be practical, and if by restricting and regulating the temporary introduction of kanaka labour, and particularly by restricting the importation of Javanese, we can assist that industry, we ought seriously to consider whether that course should not be adopted. I regard the introduction of coloured labour as great an evil as ever I did, but we should not be short-sighted or obstinate in the matter. The Chief Secretary has done all he could to bring about a change in the cultivation of sugar, and the House allowed him to spend £50,000 on central mills to prove that cane could be grown by white labour. In curtailing the importation of kanakas, he hoped the planters would be careful enough to try and dismember their estates, and he gave them every facility to get European labour from Germany and Denmark. What did the planters do then? They vilified the Government for asking the Germans and Danes to take the place of the kanakas, and said they wanted them to become slaves. Now they see that they made a mistake then, and were cutting off their noses to spite their faces. They now see that sugar-growing in large estates will not pay, and that the safest and surest plan is to dismember the large estates. I recognise that sugar-planting on a large scale cannot be carried on without kanaka labour, and where it is carried on in that way there may be from fifty to 100 white men employed on the estates. Those men become accustomed to the work and acclimatised, and they are the people who must be looked to to take small farms from the larger estates. Therefore, in the interests of settling a white population in the North, where it is so difficult to accomplish it, I would advocate a temporary readmission of kanakas, but at the same time the Government should introduce a sound revision of the tariff to encourage our industries. If they do not do that, they had better go to the country, and we will then soon find out what is the best thing to do, as we did at the last election. Everyone knew then that a national policy was

required for the encouragement of our industries, but as soon as the election was over, and members had secured their seats by false promises, that policy was forgotten, and even the misery that is now in the colony has not opened the eyes of the Government. I think there are at least fifty members in this House in favour of a policy of protection, and it is only the obstinacy of the Government that prevents them introducing the necessary reform. Prominent members of the Government know that as well as I do, but they cannot convince their colleagues. Hon. members should insist upon this economical reform. I would recommend hon. members to study a return supplied from the Pacific Island Immigration Office. They will see from it that up to the present time the sugar industry has not been short of black labour, and the return also shows that about 2,000 coloured labourers are abroad in the colony, and many of them are as hard up as the women who stormed the Treasury. They are competing with white men, and are, to a great extent, the cause of the aversion to this labour. Although I think the temporary readmission of kanakas advisable, it will not be a cure-all for the present state of things. I hope my criticism of the Government policy will be taken into account. It is not meant to be personal, as I know I have spoken the sentiments of some of the members themselves, and if they do not take better counsel and initiate economical reform the sooner they go to the country the better.

Mr. GRIMES said: Mr. Speaker,—I have a few remarks to make upon the matters referred to in the Opening Speech, but before I do so I wish to speak in congratulatory terms of the very temperate and moderate way in which the latest addition to the House—the hon. member for Barcoo—gave utterance to his opinions. His speech augurs well for his usefulness in this Chamber. Though comparisons are odious, I cannot help at the same time contrasting that gentleman's speech with the deliverance of another member who spoke from the same bench earlier in the evening. The speech of the hon. member for Barcoo stands out in marked contrast with the speech of the other member to whom I have referred. The chief discussion of the Governor's Speech has centred in the question of the continuation of kanaka labour. There are a number of persons who have thought fit to designate the Chief Secretary and those who have expressed approval of his manifesto on this subject as political acrobats. It has been said that by expressing such opinions they have turned a political somersault. I have expressed myself in favour of the manifesto, on condition that provision is made to prevent the abuses connected with the trade in the past. In expressing my approval of it, I do not see that I have accomplished this acrobatic feat, or that I have been in any way inconsistent with my former utterances upon this subject. I have taken a very firm stand in reference to the employment of kanaka labour; but I do not see that my expression of approval of the Chief Secretary's manifesto has in any way laid me open to the charge of inconsistency. I can give my reasons in a very few words, and I intend to do so. I have always advocated the employment of European labour on plantations, and I have endeavoured to show from my own experience and that of others in the business that white men can do the work, and that they can carry out the cultivation of the sugar-cane profitably under certain conditions, not as gang labourers or hired labourers, but on proprietary or leasehold farms upon the sugar estates. After visiting the whole of the Northern sugar districts some years ago, I addressed a public meeting in Townsville upon

the subject, and I there gave my opinion that the industry could not be carried on by white labour, unless it was done by cutting up the large estates into small farms, to be worked on the central sugar-mill system. I am still of the same opinion, and I am glad to hear an expression from all sides that considerable progress is being made in that direction, and that numbers of farmers are settling upon the sugar estates in the North. The progress made, however, has not been sufficiently fast to provide the necessary quantity of cane to keep the mills employed. The mills cannot possibly continue unless they get a fair amount of cane to keep them employed for something like four or five months in the year. There is a large amount of money invested in the sugar industry, and the interest is so large that it will not pay the proprietors to keep the mills open or do the work of crushing unless they have good hope of getting pretty well supplied with cane for the season. I see very well that the progress in the way of settlement is not going to overtake the quantity of cane required by the mill-owners. I see there is an intervening gap that we will have to provide for. I believe eventually that the whole of the plantations will be leased out or sold in small portions, but at the present time it cannot be done with European labour as it has given evidence that it will not take to the work, and the attitude of the labour leaders has encouraged the men to stand aloof. Probably another reason is the way in which the labour on sugar plantations has been degraded by the planters themselves, for they have publicly in this House, and outside of it, on every occasion, told the white people that the work was not fit for white men. I do not wonder now that the white people should have that impression, especially the white labourers in the North. Seeing, therefore, that the labour in the colony will not take to the work, what are we to do? Are we to allow the sugar industry to fall through? Are we to allow it to be hampered, and very probably those who have taken up these small farms to be left without a mill to crush their cane? That will really be the result, I believe, unless we have other labour to grow cane sufficient to make up the quantity the mills require in the season. We are forced into that view of the matter by what we have heard lately in connection with the leaders of the labour party. They have shown that it would be unsafe for any planter to depend upon getting his labour at the crushing season. You may defer shearing a sheep for a few months, but it is not so with the planter. When his cane is ready for cutting he must cut it and get it through in the season, or else it will be a total loss. He cannot afford to be dilly-dallying when the crushing season is on—parleying with the men. I do not wonder, from what I have seen lately, that the planters are prepared rather to abandon their plantations than trust to the unreliable nature of the European labour in the North. Taking that view of it, I see there is nothing left us to do but tide over this time by the continuation of kanaka labour. I am prepared to support Sir Samuel Walker Griffith if he can provide regulations that will prevent the abuses that have taken place in the past. Another matter that has been dwelt upon this evening is that this Parliament should not undertake the duty of carrying this measure. Well, I am in such a position that I can easily vote on the question, and if other hon. members had taken the same opportunity as I have done of consulting their electors, they would have been in as free a position as I am in to give a vote according to their consciences. I never have cared to give pledges at election time. I think if a candidate cannot be trusted to use his discretion on matters of this kind he

should never be sent into this Chamber as a representative of the people. It is not the pledges that should be relied upon. It is the general trustworthiness of the individual, and I regret very much to see the position that one hon. member is in at present with reference to this matter. He has actually to vote against his conscience to keep his pledge to the party that returned him. I say that such an individual is nothing more than a delegate to this House, and I for one would never occupy that position in this Chamber. If I were not to come here free from pledges of that kind, and free to vote according to my conscience, and what I believe will be for the best interests of the colony and the masses of the people in it, I would not occupy a position here. Now I think hon. members have had ample opportunity since the issue of the manifesto to have gone before their constituents and obtained their opinions. I was very pleased to hear the remark from the Chief Secretary during this debate that we must get more wealth from the soil. I cheered the remark, and I only wish that the Chief Secretary would also direct the same remark to other branches of the agricultural interest as well as to the sugar industry. I commend that to him. There are other branches of the agricultural interest which are as important as the sugar industry, and they are at the present time languishing as much as the sugar industry, and require attention. It requires the careful thought of the Government, and especially of the Secretary for Lands and Agriculture, to find some means of showing the people that they can grow other products besides those they are growing at present. Although Providence has smiled upon the farmers and given them plentiful crops, they are actually as poor as ever, because they cannot sell their crops at a profit. We are getting plenty from the soil, but we want to be able to produce some other kinds of crops for export as well as sugar that will be suitable to the Southern portion of the colony. I am pleased at the efforts made by the Agricultural Department in reference to rust in wheat. They are taking an interest in that matter, and if they are successful, as I believe they will be, in obtaining a kind of wheat that will resist rust, there will be a large opening for the farmers in that direction. These experiments cannot be carried on without patience and perseverance and money, and I hope that while the Chief Secretary is anxious for the sugar industry to prosper he will also be prepared to support the general agricultural interest with an expenditure of money if necessary. I commend to the Government the necessity of establishing an agricultural college. I know that we are short of funds, but that is one of the things on which the money would be well spent if it is carried out in the proper way. With regard to the proposed bonus on meat, if the pastoral tenants and the large squatters are prepared to tax themselves for the purpose, I will assist them in the matter, but I shall firmly oppose the imposition of any tax on the dairy herds of the colony. I am very glad to see that there is to be some modification of the railway tariff—in reference to agricultural produce, I presume. I have always considered that the freight on goods should be in some measure equal to the amount that may be obtained for them. It is ridiculous to impose upon articles a freight which they cannot afford to pay on account of the low price obtained in the market. If the freight is so high as to make it unprofitable to send produce by rail, the result is that produce is allowed to rot on the farm, and the railway is deprived of the traffic. I hope, therefore, that some fair way of meeting the agriculturists will be found. I think, also, that some attention should be paid to the working of those

lines upon which the Commissioners intend to cease running passenger trains. It seems to me monstrous that we should have railways made and trains running, and not allow passengers to travel by those trains. That is so in the neighbourhood of Brisbane at the present time. I came from my residence on the South Coast line to the South Coast Junction, where a train was waiting. I wanted to go to Ipswich, and that train was going to Corinda, where I could have got into the Ipswich train; but I had to go first to Melbourne street and then to North Brisbane before I could get to Corinda. I had to go round about fifteen miles instead of two miles; and numbers of passengers from Southport and other stations have to take the same route. The excuse for not carrying passengers on the trains to which I allude, is that it does not pay; but I think that if the trains had been run at the proper times it would pay to carry passengers. I think there has been an act of repudiation in connection with this matter. I, with others, have paid my share towards that line in this way: When lands were resumed for the construction of the line, there was a set-off in the statement of the valuer—so much for the enhanced value the line would give to the property it went through. In some cases the whole of the frontages of large allotments were taken away in the construction of that line. In that way I have paid my quota towards the building of that line, expecting to get some advantage, but it is no advantage if nothing but coal trucks are run along the line. There is one thing that I would commend to the sugar planters before I sit down. If they do get a continuation of black labour I advise them not to abuse their privilege, because if they allow kanakas to be employed in any other than field work there will soon be such an outcry against the continuance of coloured labour that it will have to be discontinued.

Mr. OSULLIVAN: They are all over the colony now among the squatters.

Mr. HYNE said: Mr. Speaker,—A great deal of stress has been laid by previous speakers upon the position which certain members hold in reference to their electors. I am placed in the unfortunate position of not having had an opportunity of meeting my electors, though I intended to do so at the earliest opportunity; nevertheless, I think I am justified in arriving at the conclusion to which I have arrived—namely, that the voice of my electors is in favour of the Chief Secretary's proposal to extend the term of the employment of Polynesians. I therefore intend to give the proposal my hearty support; and I fully believe that it can be carried out almost free from abuse. I believe, also, that the further introduction of Polynesians will be beneficial to the country generally—beneficial to the white man and beneficial to the Polynesian both materially and morally. One hon. member who spoke yesterday asked with great emphasis where public opinion has changed. I can say positively that it has changed in my electorate, and I can give you the reasons why it has changed. When the anti-kanaka feeling grew so rabid in my electorate, the abuses connected with the kanaka industry had then become very rampant. Kanakas, as we know, were introduced for purposes of tropical agriculture only, but in the town of which I have the honour to be a representative there was scarcely a house of any position but had a kanaka attached to it for outside work, and in many instances a kanaka for domestic work which a female servant should be doing. That was the cause of the anti-kanaka feeling being so very rabid in my electorate. But those abuses exist no longer; the anti-kanaka feeling has died away, and I do

not think the electors would offer any opposition to the introduction of kanakas, provided they are strictly confined to the work for which they are specially introduced. I sincerely hope the planters will endeavour to assist the Government to keep them to that kind of work.

Mr. DRAKE: You heard what the hon. member for Mackay said last night.

Mr. HYNE: I regretted to hear the emphatic statement of that hon. member, that kanakas would be and should be employed in the mills. But I know that in the Wide Bay and Burnett districts the planters are determined to assist the Government by keeping them out of the mills. I have much pleasure in stating that the planters in that district have determined to bring the kanaka into competition with the white man as little as possible; and I trust that planters elsewhere will follow their example. The question was raised in a very pointed manner by the hon. member for Enoggera whether the present Parliament is justified in dealing with this matter. I think myself that, in the altered circumstances of the colony, the Government are perfectly justified in bringing the matter forward, and that this Parliament is perfectly justified in dealing with it.

Mr. GLASSEY: What are the altered circumstances of the colony?

Mr. HYNE: The altered circumstances are that we have no money to spend, that we can borrow no more money, and that the period for the introduction of kanakas is drawing to a close; and therefore all confidence as to the future of the industry has been done away with. The production of sugar, I am proud to say, has not decreased, but it would have been far larger if those abuses had not crept in which prompted the Chief Secretary to introduce the legislation abolishing the introduction of kanakas. That legislation was necessary at the time, because abuses in connection with kanaka labour were rampant all over the colony. I am certain no white man could work on the plantations in the North that I visited two years ago; it would be impossible for them to work between two rows of cane on a hot summer day, and I should be very sorry to see a man of my colour doing it as long as there are black men obtainable. There is plenty of work for white men without their doing that. This is considered a desperate remedy for the leader of the Government to introduce, but desperate diseases require desperate remedies, and we are in a very desperate state at present. We are about as low as we can go in the financial scale. The passing of this measure will do no harm to the white workers. The white workers know perfectly well that I am heartily with them, and would do nothing to injure them, and I am quite satisfied that in my own district, at all events, it will give such an impetus to the foundries and other industries as will be beneficial to all concerned. If we are to accept the dictum of the hon. member for Enoggera, that this Parliament should not deal with this question because the Parliament is moribund, I want to know where the line is to be drawn? When do we become moribund? Is it twelve months before the end of the Parliament for which we were elected, or is it six months, or is it three months? I maintain that any legislation that we undertake and carry out up to four years eleven months and three weeks will be just as legal and constitutional as any legislation that we undertook during the first week that we were returned to the House. If circumstances have so changed that it is necessary for the Government to change their policy, it may be very distasteful to those who hold the old Liberal programme, on which I was elected, and from which I regret I have had to depart.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. T. O. Unmack): It is not pleasant for the Government.

Mr. HYNE: It may not be pleasant; still it is their duty. I am democratic in my views, and I have always maintained that the land should be retained in the possession of the Crown, and I am sorry to see the Government compelled to part with the land for money to carry on public works. Another reason given by the hon. member for Enoggera why this Parliament should be dissolved and an appeal made to the country, was that there is no Opposition. I maintain, from observations I have made and from conclusions I have arrived at since I have been a member of the Assembly, that there is no direct necessity for an Opposition, although there is certainly a necessity for criticism.

Mr. DRAKE: Then you would have an autocratic Government.

Mr. HYNE: An autocratic grandmother! Look at the proceedings of municipal councils and divisional boards. Is there ever a measure brought before them that is not properly criticised? And yet they are not divided into parties. My opinion is that many measures which are brought before Parliament when party feeling runs high do not receive that justice which they would receive if party feeling did not exist. I have arrived at the conclusion that party government is not essential to good government. Criticise measures as much as you like, but I do not believe that party government is absolutely necessary for the good government of any country. Those may be new views to promulgate, but I have a perfect right to express the opinions I have arrived at. From personal observation since I have been in this Assembly, I am convinced that many measures are not treated on their merits, but from a party point of view. Considering the state of the colony financially, I think myself, with other hon. members who have expressed themselves in favourable terms to the proposals, that we should one and all try and assist the Government in endeavouring to drag the colony out of the financial quagmire it is in. I must say that it has puzzled me, in looking over the financial returns published in the *Courier* one day last week, to see the enormous advantage we have in exports over imports. I think our exports exceed our imports by something like £3,000,000. I do not think there is another colony in Australasia that stands so favourably in that respect, and it is really a mystery to me that we should be in such a position as we are. As one of the labour members said to-night, there must be extravagance somewhere. Where is it? Where are we to look for it? I have always had very clear views on that matter. I say our Civil Service is over-manned. I took the trouble the other day to go over the Estimates, and I find that our Civil servants number 4,300 out of a population of 393,000 all told, and the great majority of them are billeted in and around Brisbane. In the Governor's Speech it is stated that attention will be paid to the circumstances of the colony in framing the Estimates.

Mr. ALAND: The same old yarn.

Mr. HYNE: Perhaps it is. I should like to have seen that matter more emphasised, and to have been informed what shape or form the retrenchment is to take. I felt rather disappointed at that. I was in hope that a similar proposition to that made in Victoria by the present Premier, Mr. Shiels, would have emanated from our Treasurer here, and if such a scheme is brought forward it shall receive my hearty support. Retrenchment is absolutely necessary. We are a mere handful of people. Out of a population of 393,000 we have

only 63,000 who are producers of the raw material from the land. I say that is not right. The Chief Secretary laid much emphasis upon the necessity of settling more people on the land to get the wealth out of it, and one hon. member interjected, "What is the use of producing more; there is no market for what we already produce?" I only wish that hon. member would look through the statistical returns of exports and imports, and see the number of articles imported that we can produce ourselves. For grain of different descriptions alone, about three-quarters of a million of money was sent out of the colony last year, every item of which we could and should produce in Queensland. That is a subject well worthy of consideration when we hear an hon. member say we cannot sell what we produce.

Mr. ALAND: Was not that in the year ending 1890?

Mr. HYNE: I quote from the returns for 1890-91, the latest we have. I do not know that I need say much more. I should not have risen to speak to-night, but I leave for Maryborough to-morrow morning and intend to address my constituents on Friday night, when they will endorse or condemn the opinions I now express. With regard to the question of railways, I as one of the public desire that railways shall be constructed. We cannot stand still as we are. We have unfinished railways in my district, and we shall never rest until they are finished. If the Treasurer cannot find the means to construct them, by all means let us part with our lands for that purpose. I see no alternative but to do so. We must finish those railways in some way or other. The question of the land being locked up does not trouble me in the least, because I know it is only a question of time when it will not pay anyone to keep it locked up. I mean that a land tax will come as surely as the sun will rise to-morrow morning, and it shall receive my support. We have a land tax for local purposes, but we must have it for general revenue purposes, and then I shall have no fear of the aggregation of large estates, because it will not pay to keep those large estates locked up. That is the only way out of the difficulty, and if any reasonable scheme is brought forward for the construction of railways, to be paid for in land, I shall support it. With regard to the railway tariff, I hope it will be satisfactorily settled by the Railway Commissioners. I can assure those gentlemen that there are many other industries besides the agricultural industry which require a helping hand from them. For instance, in the industry in which I am engaged, the very life-blood is dragged out of the men working in it by the high carriage charged for timber. With regard to the stock tax, as those who are asked to pay it have expressed their willingness to do so, and as it will establish a new industry, I think it ought to receive the hearty support of all members of this House. I shall say no more to-night, as there may be other hon. members who desire to speak. I shall give the measure relating to kanakas my hearty support. As to land-grant railways, as I can see no other way by which we can get our railways constructed, I shall support any reasonable proposal of that kind.

Mr. GLASSEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I move that the debate be now adjourned.

Mr. BLACK: Too early.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said: Mr. Speaker,—I think it is very early to adjourn the debate.

Mr. GLASSEY: It is ten minutes to 10 o'clock.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We adjourned early last night. I do not see why the hon. member should not go on with his speech to-night.

Mr. GLASSEY: You might at all events extend a little courtesy and adjourn the debate to-night.

The SPEAKER: I would remind the mover and seconder of the motion that if it is rejected they forfeit their right to speak.

Question—That the debate be now adjourned—put and negatived.

Mr. NELSON said: Mr. Speaker,—Speaking to a point of order, I may suggest that I have not the slightest doubt that the House will grant indulgence to the hon. member for Bundanba and allow him to speak. I shall offer no objection.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is no objection to the hon. member speaking.

Mr. GLASSEY said: Mr. Speaker,—I have been very ill during the last few weeks, or I should have taken an earlier opportunity of speaking. I was confined to the house for a month, and I am not now in a fit condition to speak, although I want to say something on the Speech of His Excellency. I think hon. members might have extended the courtesy which I asked, but as they have not done so I will go on. I may tell the Government that they will not make any progress by their opposition to me to-night.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If you had taken the proper course and intimated your desire to the House, the House would have met you.

Mr. GLASSEY: I noticed last night, when the hon. member for Fasifern was about to speak at this hour, the Chief Secretary suggested that we should adjourn.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It was the House generally. I did not suggest it.

Mr. GLASSEY: I never heard anyone, except the Chief Secretary, suggest that we should adjourn. However, seeing that the House has not thought fit to grant me that courtesy, I shall address the House, and I shall not curtail my remarks one iota if it takes me till 3 o'clock to finish. I had no idea but that other hon. members were desirous of speaking, otherwise I should not have moved the adjournment of the debate. But I suppose there is nothing for it now but to go on, and I shall go on. First of all, previous to making any remarks on the Speech of His Excellency, I may be permitted to say a few words in reference to what the hon. member for Maryborough said yesterday afternoon in regard to some hooting at the Governor that took place. I regret very much that such took place, and I was not aware of it until I heard the hon. member say that it had taken place. I concluded from his remarks that he thought I would know something about it or I had some hand in bringing the parties forward to do it.

Mr. ANNEAR: I did not think that for a moment.

Mr. GLASSEY: I say that hooting can do no good, and I never resort to it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member never discouraged it.

Mr. GLASSEY: The hon. member does discourage it upon all occasions. I say it is not a desirable or a pleasant thing for any person to hoot a gentleman occupying the position the Governor does.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. W. O. Hodgkinson): And women, too.

Mr. GLASSEY: And women, too. It can do no good; but when there are a large number of persons out of work, and many of them without money, and no doubt some of them without food, doubtless from their point of view, when they see a considerable sum of money expended in the pageantry that we witness from year to

year, they may feel a little discontented, and in consequence of that discontent they may give vent to their feelings in the wrong way, so that there may be something to be said for them. I do not say this by way of making an apology for these people, but I say that from their point of view there is something to be said in their favour. I am not going to discuss the question of the re-introduction of kanaka labourers in detail. Opportunities innumerable will no doubt present themselves when the Bill comes before us for its second reading and in committee. Therefore it is not necessary to go into details now, but I think it is necessary to say that it seems rather remarkable to see the large number of members who were returned to this Chamber absolutely pledged to the hilt to oppose kanaka labour, led by the Chief Secretary himself during the last ten years, and to hear the number of apologies that have been made by hon. members who have practically violated their pledges to their constituents. I came to this House distinctly pledged against coloured labour, and one of the strongest reasons that I ever had for admiring, as I have admired, the present head of the Government was the action he has taken in regard to this matter. The excuse brought forward by certain hon. members, as a sort of feather-bed to fall gently upon, for their intention to vote for the continuation of this traffic is that circumstances have changed. Circumstances of what nature? Is the sugar industry on the decline, as has been stated? Is there any want of black labour in the colony?

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Yes.

Mr. GLASSEY: Where? I challenge proof and testimony upon the point.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: In North Queensland.

Mr. GLASSEY: Not in North Queensland or in South Queensland. If the returns presented to hon. members and to the country are to be relied upon, I say there is abundance of black labour and to spare.

Mr. PHILP: No.

Mr. GLASSEY: When we come to debate the question and go into details I shall endeavour to show from the most reliable authority—the Government themselves—that such is the case. Then we come to consider another question—the question of making railways on the land-grant principle. The same question the Chief Secretary has fought for many years and fought with success. Now, of course, like the subject of black labour, circumstances have materially altered. One of the questions that demand early attention, from my humble standpoint, is the best means of settling the lands along the different lines of railway. If that were done I believe great good would result, not only to the individuals who would settle there but to the colony as a whole. But there is not one word in regard to that in the Governor's Speech.

Mr. MORGAN: How would you do it?

Mr. GLASSEY: If the lands are held by private persons and they are useful in the interests of the country, but are not used by those persons, then the State should demand either that they should use the lands themselves or place them in the hands of persons who would.

Mr. PHILP: They are used.

Mr. GLASSEY: They are not used. With regard to raising a tax to provide for a bonus on the exportation of frozen meat, I shall not say anything to-night, as it is a matter which will doubtless come on later for consideration. Coming back now to the question of black labour, we are told that the opinion of the country has changed. Because the Chief Secretary has changed, I suppose. Where is the proof

that the opinion of the country has changed? A few leading articles have appeared in the principal journals of the colony, chiefly in Brisbane. A few interested persons have been interviewed on the question, and they have given the most wild and reckless statements in some instances; and then because there is a sort of little flutter in certain circles where interested parties can do much mischief, we are told that the opinion of the country has changed. I have seen no manifestation of any such change. I have, of course, read those articles and the reports of those interviews that have appeared. I have read, for instance, of one gentleman stating that only about one-tenth of the maize is grown in the Bundaberg district that used to be grown there. I have got the returns with me, and when I use them I think that gentleman will rather regret the statement he made. That is only one of many such statements which have been made by certain interested parties in order to bolster up this question. Then we have been told that public meetings have been called to consider the question. I know that at a farming centre called Lowood, in the Stanley electorate, a meeting was called to favourably consider the manifesto, and an overwhelming majority of the farmers present on that occasion voted against both the re-introduction of coloured labour and against the land-grant railways.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Hear, hear!

Mr. GLASSEY: I know that the same thing took place at Laidley.

Mr. NORTH: No; I contradict that.

Mr. GLASSEY: The same thing took place at Laidley to a great extent. A few interested persons called a meeting, but the meeting was not by any means satisfactory to its promoters.

Mr. NORTH: Because you sent a lot of labour fellows up.

Mr. GLASSEY: I did not send anyone or communicate with a single person on the question.

Mr. NORTH: You got someone else to do it.

Mr. GLASSEY: The meeting was not satisfactory, and another meeting was held outside to oppose the manifesto, which was opposed by resolution.

Mr. NORTH: Yes; by the labour delegate.

Mr. GLASSEY: I was sorry that an effigy of the Chief Secretary was prepared on that occasion—no doubt to inflict a certain amount of indignity upon that hon. gentleman. I think these things can do no good; but so far as public meetings are concerned, in that quarter of the colony at all events, they have not been by any means favourable to the manifesto. Charters Towers has spoken most emphatically against the manifesto. Townsville has spoken against it, and Croydon has also spoken against the manifesto.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Townsville?

Mr. GLASSEY: Yes. I have a letter and two resolutions that have been forwarded to me from Townsville.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: One thousand electors on the Townsville electoral roll have signed a petition in favour of the proposal.

Mr. GLASSEY: And 3,000 electors will sign a petition against it.

Mr. PHILP: Where are they?

Mr. GLASSEY: At Charters Towers. At least 1,000 electors in Townsville will also sign a petition against the proposal. At least that is the information I have received. Rockhampton, on two different occasions, in two of the largest meetings ever held there, most emphatically pronounced judgment against the manifesto.

Mr. ANNEAR: Sunday meetings.

Mr. GLASSEY: Not by any means Sunday meetings, so far as Rockhampton was concerned.

Mr. PHILP: They were in Townsville.

Mr. GLASSEY: Three meetings have been held in Maryborough, one of them favourable to the manifesto, the next one against it, and the third one, when the hon. senior member for Maryborough was present, went in favour of the manifesto. In Bundaberg, a sugar centre, one of the largest meetings that has been held in the Victoria Hall of that town pronounced a most emphatic judgment against their member, who supports black labour. Ipswich on two occasions held meetings which pronounced against the proposal. We are told Fortitude Valley is favourable to this question.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. GLASSEY: I challenge either of the members to go to Fortitude Valley to-morrow and hold a meeting, and I, as an elector, will go there too, and if I cannot carry that meeting against them, as an elector, then I am very much mistaken. I challenge either of them to go, and I, as an elector, will go upon the platform with them, and I challenge them to carry a vote favourable to the manifesto.

Mr. ANNEAR: Look at Mr. McMillan's meeting in Sydney; but he was at the head of the poll when the election took place.

Mr. GLASSEY: As an elector, I say that they do not represent the opinions of the people in regard to black labour.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: You would pack the meeting.

Mr. GLASSEY: I will not take any man with me.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: They would have no show at a packed meeting.

Mr. HOOLAN: They can pack it from the other side, if there is another side.

Mr. GLASSEY: Then another meeting was held here recently. What did a considerable portion of the electors of Toombul say the other evening?

Mr. ANNEAR: The crowd that worships in the Gaiety Theatre every Sunday?

Mr. GLASSEY: I was not there, and I do not know who were present. I am taking the result as it was reported in the *Courier*. The result of that meeting was that twelve persons supported the reintroduction of black labour and 200 voted against it. And yet we have some hon. members coming forward in this House and telling us that the opinion of the country has changed. Where is the manifestation of that change?

Mr. ANNEAR: Wait till you see the polling in Bulimba.

Mr. GLASSEY: It may tell a wonderful tale against black labour. If it does not, it will not be residents of Bulimba who will vote for black labour, but the 1,256 land proprietors, the majority of whom do not live in the electorate—bricks and mortar and mud will vote and not people. I have not been in the electorate since this campaign commenced, but I venture to affirm that the residents of Bulimba are against black labour. I have referred to some of the meetings which have been held to consider the Chief Secretary's manifesto, and have shown that they do not by any means prove that the people are in favour of black labour. But the best means of testing the feeling of the people is to appeal to the people. I contend, as strongly as the hon. member for Enoggera did last evening, that a Government which goes to the country with a distinct policy has no right afterwards to bring forward a policy absolutely and entirely opposed to that on which they were returned without

first consulting the people who elected them. Moreover, I say that this is a bad precedent to set, and one that the Chief Secretary and his colleagues may yet live to regret; because two parties can play at that game, and it is not a wise game, nor an honourable game, nor a moral game. I believe the Chief Secretary is a man who has a high conception of guiding his conduct on moral principles, but I say that on this occasion he has been extremely ill-advised and entirely misled. I think also that if he went to the country he would find that he had been misled. What can we hope to gain by the continuation of this traffic in black labour? It cannot possibly bring about the change which some people say it will effect. The Chief Secretary stated in his speech yesterday that the sugar industry is languishing. I do not think it is languishing. I think, as has already been stated in this discussion, that it is more prosperous now than it has ever been, though possibly it has not extended in the way certain persons interested in the industry anticipated it would. However, I shall not discuss the matter more fully at present. The Chief Secretary also said last evening—

"As to the unemployed—a term of which they are almost ashamed, as was justified by the extracts the hon. member for Maryborough read from Cardinal Moran's speech—the men unfortunately out of employment, what remedy has been suggested by their own leaders who go about denouncing the Government? What do they propose?"

Surely the memory of the hon. gentleman is not quite so short that he does not remember the proposal submitted to him some six years ago with the view of meeting the unemployed difficulty. I had something to do with the submission of that proposal, which embodied a scheme of State-aided village settlement. It was not proposed that people should receive money as a gift, but as a loan to be repaid with interest in a few years. Is it unreasonable or unfair to ask the Government to settle people on the soil with the view of meeting the unemployed difficulty? A proposal of that kind was submitted six years ago, and was again submitted last session by the hon. member for Enoggera as an amendment to the Land Bill then under discussion. Yet the Chief Secretary says that no proposal has been submitted by the labour leaders, who go about denouncing the Government. I am not aware that they go about denouncing the Government. If they criticise the actions of the Government, have they not a right to do so? It is not wrong surely to criticise the actions of the Chief Secretary and his colleagues if they do wrong. That is what we do in this House, and what is reasonable and fair in this House cannot be wrong in citizens outside. The Chief Secretary further said—

"They took in hand first of all to regulate the mechanical industries. What was the result with respect to that action? A large number of mechanics have been driven out of the country, and of the remainder over one-half are out of work."

Does any sensible man for a single moment believe that the maritime strike had anything to do with driving mechanics out of the colony, or keeping them out of employment to-day? As the hon. member for Rosewood fairly and logically put it this evening—for every man who ceased work during the maritime strike there were half a dozen persons ready to fill his place; and what does that prove? It proves that previous to the strike there were large numbers of persons out of work. The mechanics then out of work are out of work now, and why? Because the work they were engaged on is completed, and there is nothing more for them to do. Look at the large buildings now being erected in George street. There are sixty masons employed on that building, and what is to become of them when the work there

is finished? Is there any building at which they can be employed? As a matter of fact unless some other work is found for them they will go to swell the ranks of the unemployed—a very numerous body already in the city. I wonder whether it will be found that the maritime strike will have anything to do with throwing these men out of work when this job is finished. Is not that preposterous reasoning from an eminent man like the Chief Secretary? I will say more: it is most illogical and childish, though it came from a much more humble person than the Chief Secretary. We have heard a great deal about confidence restored, and we know it is very necessary and desirable at all times, and I do not think any business can be carried on without it. But I would ask where is the want of confidence which is spoken of? Where is the outlet for these large sums of money that we are told are only waiting a return of confidence to be invested? Is it in buildings, in making roads, or in making railways? Probably we will be told it is.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: There is plenty in squatting.

Mr. GLASSEY: Well, when we consider that the products of squattages have increased within the last six years as much as 100 per cent., there cannot be much want of confidence in that industry. Six years ago we had 9,000,000 of sheep, and now we have 18,000,000. It does not look much like a want of confidence when we find the flocks increased by 100 per cent. in that time. Maybe it is a sign of want of confidence, however, and that if confidence had been restored we would have had 100,000,000 of sheep. I think this large increase in our flocks has shown the great productiveness of the land, and has proved beyond a doubt that there has been no want of confidence. Then we were told that this class of men—the labour leaders, I suppose—took in hand to regulate the pastoral industry. When did they take in hand to do that? I am not aware that they did anything of the kind.

Mr. ANNEAR: When they prevented the men from working.

Mr. GLASSEY: They did not prevent the men from working. Was it an unreasonable thing, when the pastoralists last year submitted to their workmen an agreement which they did not consider fair, that the workmen should turn round and ask to have a say in framing the agreement which set forth the terms and conditions under which they were to labour? Because they did not quietly acquiesce in the proposals submitted to them, it is stated that they took in hand the control of the pastoral industry. They did nothing of the kind. They did perfectly right, and moreover, I say it is morally wrong for any party, be they pastoralists or shipowners, I care not, to draw up an agreement, and because they have the power, attempt to force it upon the workmen and say to them, "If you do not accept work under these conditions you shall have no employment and you shall starve." The pastoralists' agreement was by no means agreeable to the workmen, and there were many things in it to which strong objection could be and was taken. Surely it was not an unreasonable request that the workmen made! What was the next request they made? They offered to submit the question to an independent tribunal and ask them to say in their calm and dispassionate judgment whether the terms and conditions under which they were asked to work were fair or not. Was that an unreasonable request for the workmen to make? The pastoralists declined that and the workmen stopped work. Meetings of course were held, and the hon. member for Barcoo put the matter very well this evening, when he said that because a few

drunken persons gave expression to wild, ridiculous, and outrageous ideas, £70,000 of the people's money was spent in sending up an armed force, not to quell a supposed revolution, but to overawe workmen and prevent them obtaining reasonable and fair conditions for their employment.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. Tozer): You do not believe that.

Mr. GLASSEY: I do believe it, and it is not right for the Colonial Secretary to say I do not. I have given utterance to it before and I repeat it now. There is one matter I am sorry I overlooked when I was referring to the black labour question. One reason given by the hon. member for Maryborough seemed to me very amusing. In speaking of the low price of farm produce in consequence of the want of kanaka labour he goes on to say—

"The other day I was in Ipswich and I saw a horse that was given a ton trial up Nicholas street sold for £5. Six or seven years ago you could not have bought the same horse at Ipswich under £20."

Is it not astonishing for an hon. member to use such an argument as that? Seven years ago the horse was seven years younger, and surely the horse was worth more when it was seven years younger than it is now.

Mr. ANNEAR: You know I did not mean the same horse. At that time I bought twenty horses and I had to give £23 a head for them.

Mr. GLASSEY: I do not know what the hon. member may have meant, but he spoke of the same horse. Mr. Speaker, I find my strength is not particularly good. I am not as strong as I thought I was when I got up, and I will therefore have to cut my remarks very much shorter than I otherwise intended. However, we will have several opportunities of discussing the Bill for the reintroduction of kanakas when it comes before us in proper form, and if I am then in health I shall have a good deal to say on the subject, and shall be prepared to say it. In the meantime I can only say that I have heard nothing to convince me that the circumstances in connection with this matter have altered. I hope the advocates of black labour will be able to give us some reasonable arguments in support of their statement that that is the case. Up to the present time we have heard that the sugar industry is in a most deplorable condition for the want of black labour. We have heard, on the other hand, that there are large numbers of black labourers who cannot find work. We have also heard that there are a considerable number of persons very anxious to enter into an engagement to construct railways provided they get grants of land. I think that would be very wrong, and that it would only be perpetuating economic evils to part with the land on any such conditions. Of course other hon. members hold the opposite view. Those are mine, and I say again that if we wish the country to prosper; if we wish to see a prosperous community here, we want to get those persons who are now out of work on the lands of the country and to work the minerals of the country—minerals the raising of which will not glut the market. The lands and the minerals are here; the people are here. How to bring them together is the question. I think, as far as my investigations go, you cannot settle people on the soil except by monetary assistance.

Mr. BLACK: Where is the money to come from?

Mr. GLASSEY: From the same source as money for other purposes. The Government could find money to aid and assist central sugar-mills. If they were so inclined they could find money for other purposes to aid and assist other persons to find for themselves a living. Referring to the last two strikes and their failure, the

Chief Secretary brands the labour leaders, with not being able to accomplish the unattainable during those strikes, when the whole force and power of the Government, the military, and police force was against them; but he should be the last to speak in that strain. I have said before that strikes ought to be things of the past. However, the last man in the world who ought to talk about the failure of others is the Chief Secretary himself. Why, there is not a man standing on this continent who had a higher admiration for the hon. gentleman than I had; more particularly on the question of retaining the lands for the people, and keeping out of the colony inferior coloured races. But, Sir, of all the statesmen I am acquainted with, I do not think there is a greater failure than the Chief Secretary. Why, there is not a thing he has touched that he has not had to reverse. The lands-for-the-people cry; where is it? Gone. Queensland for the white man is gone. The opposition to land-grant railways is gone; and then in the most childish—in the most unmanly way—he says, “The reason I have altered my course of action is in consequence of the altered circumstances brought about by a few men called labour leaders.” What a ridiculous and absurd position for a gentleman occupying a high and honourable office to be in! A more childish and greater parrot cry I never heard raised—miserable and paltry to the lowest degree. Suppose all their hopes are not realised, as they will not be, I wonder what we shall hear next. There will have to be some other excuse than labour leaders. I hope the Chief Secretary will take higher ground than always denouncing a few individuals who do not agree with him. I say it is wrong, from my point of view, to part with the land on any such terms as now proposed. I say it is entirely wrong, from my point of view, to introduce coloured races among white people. It has been demonstrated that the two races cannot live alongside of one another. Remember the conflict in America; and America has not got over that difficulty yet. I ask, is it wise or prudent to attempt to continue this traffic, which must eventually result in evil? Then, of course, it is said it is only temporary. I pay very little attention to that “temporary” cry. Temporary means perpetual. The hon. gentleman who is contesting Bulimba does not hesitate to give his opinion. He says, “I don’t believe in this temporary business; I believe it is necessary to have black labour perpetually in the tropics of Queensland.” That is Mr. Dickson. At all events, we understand what he means, and I think I can understand what is meant by this “temporary” argument. It is meant to be perpetual if it can possibly be carried out. If time and my strength permitted I could give many instances of very considerable shortcomings on the part of the present Chief Secretary, particularly in the matter of railway building—the estimates being comparatively small and the ultimate cost enormous. I again repeat that the last man I am acquainted with who should denounce others for failure—I will use no stronger term—is the Chief Secretary himself. In every possible direction, so far as any legislation he has touched is concerned, it has been miserably and lamentably a failure. But coming to a question with which I am more immediately concerned. Take the Trade Unions Act of 1886. What is its value? It is not worth the paper it is printed on. It was expected that it would be some protection to the workmen; but what has been its value? Judge Lilley fairly described it when he said it was made more in the interests of the capitalists than in favour of the workmen. And how has the Employers Liability Act been described by the Bench? As a delusion and a snare. When the Chief Secretary comes to say that these persons

who attempted to control these industries—which they did not—more especially when he says they lamentably and miserably failed—I say there are no more lamentable failures than the legislation in which he himself has been engaged.

Mr. ANNEAR: You have not been here long enough to know. The Chief Secretary has been here more than twenty years.

Mr. GLASSEY: I have been here eight years; and I have read and observed during that time.

Mr. NORTH: And you have done more mischief during those eight years than any other man in the country.

Mr. GLASSEY: I have always aimed at this and nothing more. I believe that the working people have never received their just and legitimate reward for their toil.

Mr. ANNEAR: They are receiving it now, and they have to thank you for it.

Mr. GLASSEY: All I have aimed at is that they shall receive, in whatever occupation they may be engaged, a reasonable amount to maintain themselves and those who depend on them in comfort and decency.

Mr. DONALDSON: The Elementary Property Bill!

Mr. GLASSEY: That is all I ask. Is there anything immoral in that? Moreover, if an industry cannot afford to pay that, what is its value? Where semi-poverty is perpetuated you will always have a discontented people. I was born in the lowest depths of poverty, cradled in its midst, and suckled at its bosom—and I do not forget it. Moreover, I am not ashamed of it, because, as far as I know, poverty is not a crime. But I say it is a crime on the part of those who have the power, by the right of possession, to keep multitudes of people in poverty. All that those who are associated with me aim at is that the reward of the wage-earners shall be reasonable, that they shall have sufficient to feed, clothe, and house them in decency and comfort; and the only means by which that can be brought about, so far as I know, is by combination among the workmen—intelligently worked and honestly controlled—and I challenge any man to come forward and put his finger on a single line or word I have ever said of a contrary character either in print, on the platform, or in this House. But, Mr. Speaker, how are the combinations of workmen treated? I have referred to the Act placed on the statute-book by the present Chief Secretary. What is its value so far as these combinations are concerned?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is good for them so long as they are honestly controlled.

Mr. GLASSEY: And they are honestly controlled, so far as I know and so far as my information goes. I say that honestly and sincerely. Of course sometimes the methods resorted to by some persons may be wrong; but I say—and I would not be doing my duty to those with whom I am associated if I did not say it—I say that a more honourable, a more disinterested, a purer-minded body of men I have not come in contact with during my travels.

Mr. BLACK: Where is “Dear George”?

Mr. GLASSEY: Possibly “Dear George” may be a member of this House yet. Here is my young friend the member for Barcoo. Every one is proud to see him here; yet he ran as great a risk of being in gaol last year as “Dear George,” and would have been denounced as strongly by those who are opposed to these movements, as they denounced the others who are now in St. Helena.

Mr. DALRYMPLE: If he had been found guilty.

Mr. GLASSEY : It does not follow because others have been found guilty that they are wrong. I have never believed they are wrong, and I say that the sentences were monstrously unfair. If I was asked to-day to sign a document on the ground of mercy for their release I would refuse to do so, because I so strongly hold the opinion that those men are unfairly imprisoned. I am sorry that I do not feel well enough to say much more, particularly as I think the Chief Secretary was rather ungenerous in not allowing the debate to be adjourned.

Mr. ANNEAR : Your people at the public meeting the other night were very generous.

Mr. GLASSEY : Yes ; they were very generous.

Mr. ANNEAR : They called for three cheers.

Mr. BLACK : And you waved your umbrella for the groans.

Mr. GLASSEY : I did not wave any umbrella. I had no umbrella with me. Therefore, the hon. member for Mackay is wrong. Both my umbrella and my hat were in the ante-room. But if I had waved an umbrella or a hat on the occasion I should not have denied it. When I intend to cheer I shall cheer, and when I intend to groan I shall groan. When the Chief Secretary was in the Central district there was nobody put into prison for cheering, but there was a man put into prison for groaning. It was a wretched, miserable, unmanly piece of officialism to put a man in prison because he happened to groan at the Chief Secretary. It is not a pleasant thing to be groaned at ; but the idea of imprisoning a man because he groaned at the Chief Secretary ! Who is the Chief Secretary that he should not be groaned at more than anybody else in the country ? In his official capacity, and as a man, I have the very highest respect for him ; but so far as the groaning is concerned it was a miserable thing to put a man in gaol for.

The CHIEF SECRETARY : I don't believe it ever happened myself.

Mr. GLASSEY : Before sitting down I must thank the Chief Secretary for having granted some slight concession to the Alice River settlers. The hon. member for Barcoo informs me that the hon. gentleman has kindly granted them some assistance.

The CHIEF SECRETARY : I have granted them what I said I would grant.

Mr. GLASSEY : But the hon. gentleman promises to do many things which he does not do.

The CHIEF SECRETARY : I wish you would name some of them.

Mr. GLASSEY : I will content myself by naming two. The hon. gentleman said we should not have him as Chief Secretary unless we also had a beer tax and a land tax. However, this is by the way ; I am glad the Chief Secretary has kindly given these men—

The CHIEF SECRETARY : Not kindly. I am bound to keep my word.

Mr. GLASSEY : I hope the hon. gentleman will keep his word as far as the land tax and the beer tax are concerned, and I trust that as far as these settlers are concerned he will, during the session, pass a short measure giving them some security of tenure.

The CHIEF SECRETARY : They have got that now.

Mr. GLASSEY : Those people are deserving of every encouragement. I entirely agree with the Chief Secretary that it is necessary to have a larger number of persons on the land, so as to increase its productiveness, and to provide for their own wants and for the wants of others. I am sorry in one sense that I am not able to speak

at much greater length in order to compensate the Government for what I consider—to put it in the mildest way—a very ungenerous act towards myself.

Mr. DALRYMPLE said : Mr. Speaker,—I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed.

The resumption of the debate was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said : Mr. Speaker,—I move that the House do now adjourn.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at four minutes to 11 o'clock.