

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**WEDNESDAY, 23 JUNE 1897**

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WEDNESDAY, 23 JUNE, 1897.

The SPEAKER took the chair at 3 o'clock.

#### THE QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE.

The SPEAKER: I have to inform the House that the Presiding Chairman of the Legislative Council and myself presented to His Excellency the Governor the Address from the two Houses of Parliament to Her Majesty the Queen, and that the Address will, in due course, be transmitted to the Secretary of State for the Colonies for presentation to Her Majesty.

#### EARLY CLOSING BILL.

On the motion of Mr. McDONNELL, it was resolved—

That the House will, on Thursday next, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the desirableness of introducing a Bill for limiting the hours of business in shops.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On the motion of Mr. FRASER, it was resolved—

That leave of absence be granted for the whole of the present session to Mr. Macdonald-Paterson, the senior member for Brisbane North.

#### AUSTRALASIAN FEDERATION ENABLING BILL.

The ACTING PREMIER (Hon. Sir Horace Tozer) moved—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the desirableness of introducing a Bill to enable Queensland to take part in the framing, acceptance, and enactment of a Federal Constitution for Australasia.

Mr. GLASSEY: My reason for calling "not formal" to this motion was not for the purpose of blocking business, but in order to raise the question with regard to members having the fullest liberty possible in discussing federal matters during their speeches on the Address in Reply. I am sure hon. members will recollect that during the discussion which took place last week it was disappointing when they found that you, Sir, in the discharge of your duty—

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is now raising a question that should have been raised at the time I gave my ruling. He is not now in order in speaking to that question.

Mr. GLASSEY: I am sure you will pardon me for one moment. I merely say that hon. members were somewhat disappointed that they were not allowed to discuss more fully the question of federation, which finds a large place in the Governor's Speech.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is now transgressing our rules. On the question referred to I gave a certain ruling. If the hon. member objected to that ruling, then was the time he should have taken exception to it; but he is now entirely out of order in questioning my ruling and in dealing with the matter on this motion.

Mr. GLASSEY: May I speak now?

The SPEAKER: If the hon. member wishes to speak to this question he may do so, but he can proceed no further on the lines he has followed so far.

Question put.

Mr. GLASSEY: Mr. Speaker—

The SPEAKER: The hon. member has spoken.

Mr. ANNEAR: I would respectfully submit that as the motion made by the Acting Premier the other day lapsed, this now becomes a new motion and now is the time, I think, if you will permit me to call attention to the ruling as laid down in "May."

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is thoroughly out of order. He cannot now raise the question of my ruling given on a previous day.

Mr. ANNEAR: I respectfully submit that I was not doing so. As I have to follow the hon. member who last spoke on the Address in Reply, I do not want to come into collision with you. I wished to mention it so that it might clear the way a little later on. The Address in Reply was moved prior to this motion being made, and if you will look at "May"—

The SPEAKER: Does the hon. member question my ruling?

Mr. ANNEAR: No, I do not.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member appears to me to be doing so.

Mr. McDONALD: I think it was very wise to make this motion "not formal." I say it is most indecent on the part of the Government to ask leave to bring in any Bill already mentioned in the Governor's Speech before the debate on the Address in Reply is finished. They might give notice of all the Bills referred to in the Speech, and no member of this Assembly would be allowed to discuss those subjects during the debate on the Address in Reply. Perhaps the hon. gentleman had no intention of stopping discussion, but the fact of his having given notice of this Bill will have that effect, and it will be wise on the part of the Government to withdraw this motion. It will only be a matter of a few days probably before the debate on the Address in Reply is finished, and then the Government can go on with their motion. The hon. gentleman will see, on a moment's reflection, that this course has the effect of blocking business. Hon. members can laugh as much as they like. If they like to fall in with the errors of the Government, let them; but I think the hon. gentleman will find it very hard to find similar cases. There is nothing specially laid down to prevent the hon. gentleman doing as he has done—he is quite within his rights—but it is not generally done.

The ACTING PREMIER: In reply, I should like to say that this motion was not put by me on the paper with the view of restricting discussion in the slightest degree, any more than the motion in regard to the Local Government Bill.

It is put on the paper in order to avoid the necessity of adjourning three or four days after the debate on the Address in Reply is concluded, so that we can get to business. If hon. members will remember particularly the details of your ruling, they will see that there cannot be the slightest possibility of any objection by the Speaker or this House to the question of federation being fully discussed upon the Address in Reply. As far as I gather the ruling went no further than to say that the details of a measure or a Bill dealing with the subject did not form matter for discussion; but the whole aspect of Queensland in regard to federation in every possible way, not restricting it in any form, is without doubt a fit subject for discussion on the Address in Reply. I have no doubt whatever that would be your ruling. However, I am sure that is the sense of the House, and that being so, if hon. members, getting from me the positive assurance that neither of these Bills was put on the paper with the object of restraining in the slightest degree the fullest and freest discussion of the subject in the debate on the Address in Reply, will allow this motion to go, I am sure the Speaker will gauge the sense of the House on the matter. I hope the most liberal construction will be put on the matter, so that when we get past the Address in Reply we may get to business in a practical form.

Mr. BROWNE: I am prepared, and I think other hon. members are, to take the hon. gentleman's assurance that this was not put on the paper with the intention of blocking anyone from speaking on the subject during this discussion; at the same time, we know that when the hon. member for Kennedy was referring to the measure dealing with federation he was stopped. I agree with the leader of this party and other hon. members that if the effect of a motion for the introduction of a Bill is to close the mouths of hon. members, the best thing we can do is to refuse to pass the motion, and discuss the thing fully on the Address in Reply.

Question put and passed.

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY.

##### RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Mr. ANNEAR: I desire to make a few remarks upon the Speech of His Excellency the Governor, but before doing so I will refer to two or three matters which have taken place during the recess; and I feel sure I shall receive the indulgence of hon. members while I express my views on certain things that have been done with which I do not agree. The first is the two appointments that have been made to the Legislative Council. As hon. members are aware, those two gentlemen were selected from one district of the colony. I am a member belonging to a group of districts which contain one-eighth of the population and which return nine members to this Assembly, and yet the representation of those districts in the Legislative Council is one member.

Mr. JACKSON: What about the North?

Mr. ANNEAR: The hon. member is well aware that there are more members than one representing that part of the colony in the Upper Chamber.

Mr. LEAHY: What about the West?

Mr. ANNEAR: As to the West, the hon. member will be well able to put forward that case, if he thinks that part of the colony has been overlooked, when the opportunity offers. But I do claim that it is not equitable to the Wide Bay and Burnett districts that it should return nine members to this Assembly and have only one representative in the Upper House; and I trust that when the opportunity offers this oversight will be rectified. The next matter to which I

wish to refer is the appointment of the Secretary for Agriculture. I am one of those who believe that the Minister administering a department of such importance to the colony should have a seat in this Chamber. At the time that Bill was passed I understood that when the Minister was appointed he would be a member of this House. But I recognise this fact: that the Department of Agriculture is a new department in Queensland, and that it requires a person to initiate it who possesses considerable administrative ability; and I believe the Government made a good selection when they appointed the Hon. Mr. Thynne to be its first Ministerial head. I need not draw attention to what that gentleman has done and is doing, which, I feel assured, will be the means of establishing that department on a firm and proper basis. He has entered on his duties with great enthusiasm, and will render a good account to the colony of his services in establishing it. But, apart from that, I do trust that when the department is properly established, and the time comes when a new Minister has to be appointed, that Minister will be found in his proper place, where he will be answerable to the representatives of the people; and that is this Chamber. The next matter I will refer to is the appointment of the Hon. J. R. Dickson to the position of Secretary for Railways and Postmaster-General. I think the House and the country will agree with me that in Mr. Dickson we have a gentleman fully qualified to ably perform the duties appertaining to those two offices; and I congratulate the Government and the country on the appointment. The hon. member for Fassifern was very ungenerous in his remarks the other day concerning this gentleman. He spoke of him as being responsible for the £10,000,000 loan. Many hon. members may not know it, but although that loan was passed by Parliament to carry out certain works, it was not all placed at one time on the money market. I think it was floated in four or five instalments. And what has been the result of obtaining that money? Railways have been extended all over the colony, public works have been constructed in every direction, and loans have been advanced to local authorities, and especially to water boards, which have been, by means of that money, able to furnish a vast number of people with a good wholesome supply of water. The £10,000,000 loan, I believe, did what it was intended to do. Parliament decided what it was to be, and, in my opinion, that money has been properly appropriated. There is one other little matter which I trust the Acting Treasurer will take into his consideration as soon as possible. I think the time has now arrived when a competent engineer should be appointed as head of the Harbours and Rivers Department. That is a very important department, spending large sums of money at the different ports of the colony, and especially on the Brisbane River; and the head of it is the portmaster. I say nothing whatever against that gentleman's capabilities with regard to the management of the ports, lighthouses, and other works appertaining to his office. But he is not an engineer, and I maintain that for such an important department the best qualified engineer that can be obtained should be obtained at once. After making these remarks I come to the Speech delivered by the Governor, the second paragraph of which refers to the completion of the sixtieth year of Her Majesty's reign, and the acceptance of the invitation of the Imperial Government by the Premier to take an official part in the commemoration ceremonies in London. I am sure that no words are required from me to emphasise that paragraph. The great demonstration we saw in this city yesterday and the demonstrations which we saw by the papers this

morning took place from one end of the colony to the other are an answer that the people are almost unanimous in ratifying what is expressed in that paragraph. Queenslanders are a loyal people, and their loyalty was exhibited yesterday in the city of Brisbane, and especially in South Brisbane and Fortitude Valley; also in that great electorate, the next in size to that of the city of Brisbane—I mean Charters Towers. We saw by the *Courier* this morning that 15,000 persons assembled there yesterday to do honour to the greatest monarch who has ever sat on the British throne. Hon. members opposite believe in going to the people, and I am confident that if they went to the people on this question they would find that an overwhelming majority—I believe 90 per cent. of the people of the colony—would ratify the paragraph in the Governor's Speech to which I have referred.

Mr. DUNSFORD: You are afraid to trust the people.

Mr. ANNEAR: I am quite prepared to trust the people at all times. Members who occupy seats in this House do so by the votes of the people.

Mr. McDONALD: Give them votes then.

Mr. ANNEAR: I thank the hon. member for his interjection, and shall go into that matter by-and-by. I think it will not be out of place if I, in my humble way, congratulate the Government on the Premier going home to England to represent the colony. I also think the Government are to be credited for the appointment of Sir Henry Wylie Norman as Agent-General for the colony. It is the best appointment that could have been made, and I believe that the presence of Sir Henry in London as Agent-General and the presence of Sir Hugh Nelson there have been the means of bringing about the great success that attended the loan lately floated in London. By that success the people of the colony will see that the credit of Queensland is good, especially in the hands of the present Government.

Mr. DAWSON: What about the Attorney-General?

Mr. ANNEAR: The references to the Attorney-General's going to England were, I think, sufficiently answered by the Acting Premier.

Mr. TURLEY: They were not answered at all.

Mr. ANNEAR: I am not in the secret why the Attorney-General went to England, but I am confident from what we have seen in the Press that wherever the Attorney-General may go, whatever he may say, will be said in the interest of the colony. We know that he is an able man, one of the able men of Australia, and I believe that his going home will be the means of increasing his usefulness, and that when he comes back he will render still greater services to the colony than he has done in the past. I congratulate the Acting Premier, and I am sure that the people also congratulate him, on the mark of honour bestowed upon him by Her Most Gracious Majesty.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. ANNEAR: With perhaps one or two exceptions there is no member in this House who has known the hon. gentleman longer than I have. I knew him first in 1863, and I am sure that everyone who knows him will say that no harder worker or more competent man as a Minister has ever held office in Queensland. I am confident also that the hon. gentleman will carry his honour with grace and dignity. I am sure, too, that we are all pleased to know that a very distinguished colonist in the person of the Hon. J. R. Dickson has received a favour at the hands of Her Majesty.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. ANNEAR: I congratulate the hon. gentleman, and I am sure that everyone who

knows him will be as pleased as I am at the honour bestowed upon him. I now come to the question of the meeting of the Federation Convention in Adelaide. I do not regret for one moment that Queensland was not represented at that Convention. I am of the same opinion on that matter as the Premier and Acting Premier, both of whom stated last session in this House that there was no "business" in it. In my opinion there is no "business" in it now. Queensland is the second largest colony of the Australian group, and I believe we are the wealthiest. We have unbounded wealth, and all we want is an increase in our population. If instead of a population of 450,000 we could have 5,000,000, in ten years Queensland would be one of the greatest countries in the world. Such being the case, I am of the same opinion with regard to federation as the leader of the Opposition in New South Wales, Mr. Lyne. That gentleman stated that all the colonies were going in for federation because they believed they were going to benefit by it. Then, before we go in for federation it is the duty of every hon. member to seriously ask himself will Queensland benefit by federation?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Certainly. Question.

Mr. ANNEAR: If she will, then by all means enter into federation. But what did we read only a few days ago? The Chief Justice, Sir Samuel Griffith, who is admittedly the greatest mind in Australia in connection with federation, in his last paper says that the difficulties in the way of federation, especially the financial difficulty, are almost insurmountable. Such being the case, I think we shall do well to confine ourselves to the legislation passed by our own Parliament. Let us not be led away by Tasmania, Western Australia, or any of the other colonies. There is no business in the matter, and there is no business intended unless some benefit is to be derived from it. The words of the hon. member for Fassfern have great weight with me, and I am sure they have with other hon. members. He has had great experience, and he says that federation will ruin the agricultural industry of Queensland. I agree with him in that. We have established a few manufacturing industries, and with the increase of population we will, I trust, establish more. We are well able to look after our own affairs. I wish to say also that I, with other hon. members on this side, passed a Bill to send representatives to the Adelaide Convention on the same lines as representatives were sent by West Australia. I believe the representatives of that colony did very good work there, but hon. members opposite say, "We must have a vote of the people." They tried a vote of the people in all the other colonies. In New South Wales those holding the same views as hon. members opposite were determined to have ten representatives to go to the Convention, and the result was they got none at all.

Mr. DAWSON: That is not correct.

Mr. ANNEAR: In the whole Convention there was only one gentleman upholding almost the views of hon. members opposite, and his ideas have been greatly modified since he made a visit to Europe. I allude to Mr. Trenwith.

Mr. McDONALD: Let us have an election here. We do not object to an election.

Mr. ANNEAR: Would we have received any benefit if we had spent £7,000 or £8,000 in an election, as hon. members opposite wanted us to do? I say, "No." The money might as well have been dropped into the ocean.

Mr. McDONALD: That is your opinion.

Mr. ANNEAR: We are all entitled to give our opinions in this Assembly, and no one gives his opinion more freely than the hon. member who interjects. Then referring to his visit up

North, His Excellency says that he was well received wherever he went. If he had not been well received he would have been the first person who ever visited the Northern portion of the colony who had not. There is only one fault the Northerners have—they are too liberal altogether in their entertainments. The Speech goes on to refer to the progress of the gold-mining industry, and to the exhibit of the Mines Department at the International Exhibition. That exhibit is a credit to Queensland. I trust the Secretary for Mines will ask the House for a vote that will enable him to send it, if not to the Imperial Institute, to some other place in London where it can be equally well seen, and after that I trust it will be sent to the Paris Exhibition. In my opinion that exhibit will do ten times as much good as all the immigration lecturers we can send from the colony.

Mr. KING: Send the Mining Commission with it.

Mr. ANNEAR: I should not object to doing that. I believe the Mining Commission is a very good one. I was going to refer to it later on, but I shall do so now, as it has been mentioned. I believe that when the commission brings in its report, that it and the evidence taken will prove of great advantage to Queensland. The Speech then refers to the appointment of immigration lecturers. A good deal has been said about the gentlemen who have been sent home in that capacity. The first gentleman mentioned was Mr. Joseph Russell—an American by birth. I have known Mr. Russell for many years, and a more competent man could not have been found to send to America. If he can induce twenty or thirty farmers from the western States of America to come to Queensland he will have well earned the small salary he is receiving. Mr. Randall we also know. He has done good work for this colony. Mr. Lyons I do not know much about, but from what we have read in the *Courier* he appears to be the right man in the right place. Hon. members have all read in the *Courier* that a certain gentleman—whom I do not know except by name—wrote to *Reynolds' Newspaper* abusing Queensland, and doing all he could to slander the fair name of this colony.

Mr. McMASTER: Although we are keeping him.

Mr. ANNEAR: Yes, although we are keeping him. He is protected by living here or anywhere in the British Empire. It is the freest Empire under heaven, and if I was a citizen of the United States of America—if I lived under her flag, and earned my living there—I would be loyal to the Government, or I would leave the country. But this gentleman had hardly been here twenty-four hours when he wrote a letter to *Reynolds' Newspaper* endeavouring in every way he could to detract from the good name of Queensland. Mr. Lyons answered him in a most masterly manner. He wrote a most able letter to the London papers, and if he did nothing else than write that letter, upholding the good name and fame of this colony, he would have earned his salary. The Acting Premier has satisfied the House that Mr. Finucane is also doing good work in introducing our meat into the different markets of the world. Then there is a paragraph in the Speech which I do not believe in, and I trust the Secretary for Lands will seriously consider before he proposes to repurchase any more land on the Darling Downs, as the Government seem to intend doing.

Mr. W. THORN: All the land which has been purchased on the Downs has been taken up.

Mr. ANNEAR: I heard the hon. member for Burnett address a meeting a few weeks ago, and he stated that there were something like

4,000,000 acres of good agricultural land alongside a railway, or within twenty miles of a railway, which belongs to the Crown.

Mr. W. THORN: Where?

Mr. ANNEAR: In the Burnett district, from Woowoonga to Gayndah, and on Rawbelle, Coonamble, Oakwood, Ideraway, and at Eidsvold, and different stations which the hon. member for Burnett will be able to tell the hon. member better than I can. We are constructing railways to that district, and it is time for the Government to cry "Halt!" and try to settle a population on those lands before it purchases any more land on the Darling Downs. One hon. member said the Government had sold all they had purchased, but that was the first time I had heard it; and while we have all the land referred to by the hon. member for Burnett I do not see why we should purchase any private estates. Hon. members will have seen that since last session the agricultural college at Gatton has been placed upon a firm and lasting basis, and that a conference was held there, which was attended by men from all parts of the colony, who were well versed in agricultural pursuits. I am sure this college will prove a great and lasting benefit to Queensland. I think the hon. member for Bundaberg will bear me out when I state that in the United States, where there is a population of between 60,000,000 and 65,000,000, there is only one principal college, and that is at Washington, and from there young men graduate and are sent out as experts throughout the Union. I feel sure that the education that will be given at this college will be a great advantage to the rising generation here. Farming is a most honourable occupation for anyone, because it is the means of producing that upon which we all live. The Speech goes on to state that the Government are impressed with the wisdom of constructing light lines of railway to connect some of the more important districts with the main lines, and they hope soon to be in a position to submit some proposals concerning their construction. I hope the Government will seriously consider what main lines they are going to extend. A great deal of attention has been paid to the three main trunk lines in this colony—the lines to Cunnamulla, from Rockhampton to Longreach, and from Townsville towards Winton—and a great deal of money has been spent upon them. There is a main trunk line in the district of which I am one of the representatives; but it has only been extended forty-five miles. Hon. members will admit that they are returned by majorities in their different districts, and what are they returned for but to carry out the wishes of the majority? The wish of the majority in my district, and in the Wide Bay and Burnett districts, is to have this line extended from Woowoonga Scrub to Gayndah, and out westward, and I would like to tell the Secretary for Railways that we think we have been very badly treated in this matter. A permanent survey was completed over two months ago, and the Secretary for Railways assured me that in three weeks' time the Commissioner would go over the thirty-five miles which has been surveyed, and report to the Government as to the desirability of the construction of the line. Up to the present that promise has not been fulfilled. When I received that assurance I wrote at once to the secretary of the Railway Extension Association in Maryborough, who asked me a few days ago why the promise made had not been attempted to be carried out, and I trust that the Minister will see the necessity of proceeding with this main line before he asks the House to vote large sums of money to extend the others. The expression "light lines to connect some of the more important districts with main

lines" might lead some hon. members to believe that we are paying an enormous cost for our railways, but I will state without the least fear of contradiction that for the last three years we have been constructing railways here cheaper than in any country in the world. I will give two instances. Hon. members are aware that a great depression existed in some parts of Ireland a few years ago, and the Government of which the Right Hon. Mr. Balfour was a member asked Parliament to vote £3,000,000 to construct light railways there. Those lines, which are 3-feet gauge, have been in course of construction since, and they are costing £5,000 per mile. In Belgium they have a 3 feet gauge, and 50 lb. rails, and although labour is a great deal cheaper there than it is here, those railways cost £2,500 per mile. But I would point out that the line from Charleville towards Cunnamulla, including a large bridge over the Angellala River, with squared sleepers of the best timber and 41-lb. rails, is costing, for construction and permanent way, £1,700 per mile. Mr. Wilcock's tender for the sixty miles of line was £60,000, and the permanent way and supervision are costing £700 per mile. We may not be able to let contracts as cheap as that again, although I believe the extension from Hughenden towards Winton is costing the same amount. What is the use of talking about the construction of light railways when we can have permanent lines constructed for £1,700 per mile?

Mr. CHATAWAY: In regard to Belgium, you have added the cost of the rolling-stock.

Mr. ANNEAR: I say the construction and the permanent way alone cost £2,500 per mile. We have had light lines constructed before. We have to get lighter engines and rolling stock, and before the line has been working three months the traffic manager says he wants to take up certain machinery or bring down certain timber, and the light line is found to be no good at all, and has to be reconstructed to meet the requirements of trade, as we have had to do already. Reference is made in the Speech to the evils arising from the presence of a migratory Asiatic population, and I need not dwell long on this subject, as I entirely agree with the remarks made upon it by the hon. member for Croydon. I trust the Government will do all in their power to prevent any influx of Japanese and Chinese to our colony. We do not want the Japanese; we can do very well without them. The Government are to be congratulated upon the appointment of the Lands Commission, which has been travelling from one end of this colony to the other during the past few months. They made a splendid selection when they appointed the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom, to be the chairman of that commission. No man in this colony has done more to settle people upon the land than that hon. gentleman. I can remember when he had to stand in this House almost alone to fight the battle of land settlement. I also approve very highly of the gentlemen appointed to that commission under the chairmanship of Mr. Groom. I feel sure they will have done good and lasting work, and their report will, I trust, assist to simplify the taking up of land, because at present a man desiring to select land needs to take a lawyer with him to the Lands Office to enable him to understand the conditions of settlement. With so many difficulties in the way it is a surprise to me to find so many people settling on the land.

Mr. GLASSEY: Do you think that four members appointed from one side and only one from the other is right?

Mr. ANNEAR: I believe you could get four members from either side of the House to go and

do what is right, but what they have done, and what the members of the Mining Commission have done, will come up for the review and criticism of Parliament when their reports are presented to this Chamber. We are informed that a measure of local government is being prepared and will be submitted to the House. I trust that Bill will have a chance to pass this session. I know that the local authorities are demanding such a measure, because there are a great many anomalies existing in the present local government Acts. We are also promised a measure to effect further reforms in the registration of voters. I do not know what reforms the Government can introduce in the registration of electors. I have stated before in this House that in my opinion we have the most liberal franchise of any country in the world. A man of the age of twenty-one years is entitled after six months' residence in the colony to have his name placed on an electoral roll.

Mr. KEOGH: And it takes a Philadelphia lawyer to fill up the form.

Mr. ANNEAR: I agree with the hon. member that the form of application could be simplified. It is very difficult to understand, and I doubt whether any twenty members in this House could be got who could at the first time fill up that form in a correct manner.

Mr. McDONALD: The Attorney-General made a mistake in it.

Mr. ANNEAR: A man has to be resident for three years in the great Republic of America before he can claim the rights of citizenship, and it takes him six months after that to become a citizen. Altogether, we may say it takes him about four years before he can get his name on the electoral roll there. I do not know whether the Transvaal, presided over by President Kruger, would suit the hon. member for Flinders, but I can tell him that a man must be resident there for twelve years before he is entitled to a vote. I ask hon. members to make these two comparisons, to compare them with the facilities given here to have one's name placed on an electoral roll. I notice that a Bill is promised in the Speech to provide for conciliation and arbitration in the settlement of industrial disputes. That is a very old friend indeed, and I may say that no Conciliation Bill that is not made compulsory will have any effect at all. There are Bills promised to relieve people crossing the Victoria Bridge and the Lamington Bridge at Maryborough. I trust the Government will not long delay the introduction of those Bills, because the present tolls on those bridges are an almost unbearable burden upon the people. Many hon. members have referred to the length of the Speech, but I do not think the Address from His Excellency could be much briefer than it is. I believe a lengthy Speech was necessary to give in detail the work the Government intends to proceed with. I trust the several measures foreshadowed here will receive the serious attention of this House, and will become law. Before I sit down I again impress upon the Secretary for Railways the utmost necessity for extending the main line of railway from Maryborough to Gayndah. I must thank hon. members for the patient hearing they have given me.

Mr. DUNSFORD: I think this is the third time an attempt has been made to get a snatch vote upon the Address in Reply. I certainly have heard hon. members on the other side express a desire to speak, and there are those on this side who also have something to say, but hon. members apparently are not willing to speak at this stage. The hon. member, Mr. Annear, has been listened to with pleasure this afternoon, as he always is, because he always

peaks in a good-tempered manner, and he generally has something to speak about which is of interest. But I certainly must take exception to one or two of his remarks. The hon. member belongs to the ultra loyal section of the community, and takes every opportunity of giving lip evidence of his loyalty. It does not necessarily follow, although the hon. member evidently thinks it does, that because we take advantage of a fine day, dress in our finest, go out and listen to the music, and witness displays of fireworks, that we are therefore loyalists in the sense which the hon. member means.

Mr. McMASTER: What about the Exhibition last Sunday?

Mr. DUNSFORD: I will tell the hon. member something about the Exhibition yesterday. The hon. member, as mayor of the city, gave a picnic to the children yesterday, and I have heard complaints about the small amount of food he supplied them with; one bun and one small sandwich, with more mustard than meat. The hon. member ought to be ashamed of himself.

Mr. McMASTER: The children know better.

Mr. DUNSFORD: Well, I was saying that it does not necessarily follow that because people turn out and enjoy themselves on a holiday that they are therefore as loyal as the hon. member for Maryborough thinks. I believe he said they rallied round the flag. It appears to me that the ladies came out to display their own colours and not so much to rally round the flag, and the children came out because there was something to see, and better still, in their opinion, because there was something to eat. The hon. member for Maryborough takes this as a universal display of loyalty. I believe that some of the leading citizens were not only full of loyalty but full of liquor. Is that also to be taken as a proof of their loyalty? I believe on one occasion yesterday an hon. gentleman who legislates for this country, when it came to his turn to strike up "God save the Queen" struck up "For she's a jolly good fellow."

Mr. McMASTER: You never heard any such thing.

Mr. DUNSFORD: The Mayor of Brisbane is not so dignified as he might be. I do not know whether he is disappointed that he has not been made a K.C.M.G. When the hon. gentleman assumes more dignity there may be a better show for him getting knighted. The hon. member for Maryborough said that there was a unanimous desire on the part of the people that they should be represented at home by the Premier. I want to know where that unanimous desire found voice, and how it was voiced. Perhaps the hon. member means by the people the "we" of this House. I know the Premier always asserted that the representatives of this House were the people. I object to the statement that the Premier represents the people at home. He was never desired by the people to go home on such a mission, and I certainly believe the verdict of the people would be against the visit of the Attorney-General. If there is any expense attached to his visit I shall certainly try and prevent the vote from passing; because it is unfair that the taxpayers should have any such demands thrust upon them. I will turn now to the Address in Reply. Many hon. members have taken the Speech paragraph by paragraph, and at this stage perhaps there may be very little new to say. The Acting Premier referred to the former portion of the Speech as the "narrative" portion, and the hon. member for Croydon, in his

humorous way, described the latter portion of the programme as "old friends." Well, I desire to refer to the latter portion as the dry-bones of political promises, and the former part as the shroud in which they are wrapped; a shroud composed of rags of rhapsody. The Government are continually trotting out these measures with which we are so familiar, and which we know it is not their intention to pass. It puts me very much in mind of the system which prevails in Madagascar. When any leading men of the village die their bodies are wrapped in silk and cotton cloths, and placed on shelves in vaults, and on the anniversary of their deaths the bones are turned and covered with fresh cloths. That is what the Government have done here; and I think it is time they had a jubilee funeral of these bones and started afresh. They might give us a little direct taxation in the shape of a land and income tax, also the referendum and other up-to-date legislation that would meet with the approval of the people. I notice there are seven Bills prominently noticed in the Speech by special paragraphs. Strange to say, there were seven which received special prominence in the same way last year, and only two of them—the Tick Bill and the Tariff Bill—became law. Last year there were twelve other measures mentioned; this year there are seventeen others. When we remember that measures are continually trotted out and shelved year after year, that only eight measures out of the nineteen promised last year became law, and that three-fourths of the measures which became law last year were not even hinted at in the Governor's Speech, we cannot accept this as the programme of the Government for the present session. It is time the Governor's Speech was a true programme of the work of the session, and the House should consider itself under an obligation to pass the Bills mentioned in the Speech. The Government have no excuse for not doing so. They have their majority, and they have command of the other place. There is another aspect of the question. Within the last month of last session there were no less than nine measures rushed upon this House; and when measures are sent hurriedly at the end of a session to the other House, which exists for the purpose of preventing hasty legislation, they have to be passed and returned to this House in a hurried manner. Are the Government going to continue that policy? Are they going to waste time again at the beginning of the session, and rush business on in such a hasty manner at the tail end of the session as to prevent fair consideration of the matters brought forward? It is just as well to take a stand early in the session, and understand whether the Labour people are to be blamed for the prevention of business or for all the talk, or whether the other side are going to take on their shoulders the responsibility of bringing legislation forward in a decent manner, foreshadowing everything possible in the Governor's Speech, and giving this House—also that other place—ample time for the proper consideration of all the Bills brought forward? Mr. Speaker, I think it is indecent, while a member is addressing the House, to have your ear—I am supposed to have your ear, but I fail to see how I can do so while members are talking to you in a semi-loud voice.

The SPEAKER: It is usual for hon. members to consult the Chair on matters pertaining to the business of the House while an hon. member is speaking. I must object to the way the hon. gentleman alludes to hon. members coming to speak to me.

Mr. DUNSFORD: I took it as a personal insult to myself.

Mr. BELL: I rise to a point of order. I beg to ask you whether, in accordance with House of Commons etiquette, I was not doing that which was entirely becoming any member in consulting you.

The SPEAKER: As I have already intimated, I think it is sufficient to point out that it is customary for members of the House to consult the Speaker on any business they have whilst an hon. member is addressing the Chair.

Mr. DUNSFORD: It seems to me that it is impossible for you to know whether I am in order or not, whether I am addressing myself to the subject or not, if I have not your ear; and I hope the hon. member will display a little more decency in future.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not right in accusing an hon. member of indecency when I have ruled that he is in no way transgressing.

Mr. DUNSFORD: I know that no hon. member on this side would do such a thing if that hon. gentleman were addressing the House. I was saying that it was not fair to bring forward legislation in such a hurried manner at the tail end of the session, putting through batches of eight, ten, or twelve Bills, and expecting them back from the other House on the same evening, as has been the case in other sessions. I well remember one hon. gentleman in the other place stating at a show that he was tired. It seems that he had cause to complain of overwork. Through this rushing of measures, he had been compelled to sit after dinner, and I think that of itself should be one reason why we should try to distribute the measures over the session in a business-like manner, and not keep so many till the tail end as we have seen them kept hitherto. As I before said, 25 per cent. of the legislation which has been passed in this House has never been foreshadowed in the Governor's Speech, and at least three-fourths of it has been introduced within the last few weeks of the session, thus preventing anything like reasonable consideration either in this House or the other. In the Speech the Governor mentions his visit North, but I cannot gather from it that he visited any of the mining centres. At any rate, if he did he is silent as to their existence. It appears to me that, considering the Northern part of the colony is essentially a mining country, and that the greatest portion of the welfare of the inhabitants there is connected with the mining of gold and other metals and minerals, the Governor should never, if he wishes to advertise the colony in any way, ignore in any statement he may make about any visit North so completely the mining industry. If he does he will lead people who do not know the facts so well as we do, to believe that there is no such industry in North Queensland. While on this I may point out that the Acting Agent-General, Mr. Dicken—and he ought to know better—has not even mentioned the mining industry in his report for 1896, which has just been issued. You find in it page after page giving a full account of the different markets of the world for meat, arrowroot, butter, tinned fruit, timber, india-rubber, fibres, rye, ginger, and almost everything else, but no mention is made of the great gold industry. And when we know that the mining industry is at present, and is likely to be in the future, the backbone of the colony's industries, it certainly is as well deserving of mention as any other of our producing industries. Of what use is it for the Agent-General to tell us about markets for butter when we cannot supply our own markets, or for tinned fruits when we have to send to America and other parts of the world for the fruits we consume. And Mr. Dicken, who was

many years in the North in the service of the Government, knows something of this great industry, and ought to be in a position to tell the people of Great Britain something about it. The Governor goes on to say he "is pleased to be able to congratulate the colony on the measure of prosperity it has enjoyed during the past year, and upon the indications which are everywhere manifested of an awakened spirit of enterprise and self-reliant industry"; and then a little further on he contradicts this by saying that "by reason of the exceptional nature of the circumstances at present injuriously affecting the main industries of this colony, labourers will find increased difficulty in obtaining employment." If those two statements are not contradictory I do not know what are. The Government are endeavouring to bring immigrants into the colony. If they tell those whom they wish to bring out that there is not likely to be employment for our own people in the future, it will certainly not tend to attract them here. As a representative of a mining constituency, it becomes my duty to say a word or two about that industry, and I do it with a great amount of pleasure. Following the lead of other members I must say that the Secretary for Mines and the Mines Department are worthy of a little congratulation on the manner in which they have arranged the exhibition of minerals displayed at the International Exhibition. Certainly I am afraid that the result will hardly be worth the labour, as the Exhibition is pretty well a frost, and the people who scrape up their shillings to visit it are not likely to put their pounds—and pounds are necessary when you go into speculation—into the mining industry. Be that as it may, these exhibits will probably come in useful for other exhibitions in other parts of the world. It is satisfactory to find that the mine-owners throughout the colony have responded so liberally. The Charters Towers mine-owners have given the department at least 10 cwt. of stone each, to say nothing of specimens and other things, and as that stone probably goes from 1 oz. to 10 oz. per ton, you will see that even from a pecuniary point of view this has been a gift worthy of the mine-owners of the colony. Some mention has been made of the Mining Commission. I shall not refer to that matter now because we have not yet had the report of their labours. When we do have it, and the promised future legislation based upon it, we shall have an opportunity of more fully inquiring into these matters. But it appears to me that it is just as well, even at this early stage, to say a word or two on the probable systems which may be adopted in trying to assist the industry. It strikes me that we shall have to consider in our future legislation the advisableness of legislating to induce outside capitalists to come in and work our mines, or by some direct State assistance to enable the miners within the colony to work and own our mines. These are the two alternatives—whether we shall encourage absenteeism in the ownership of our mines, or State Socialism in connection with them by direct State assistance, as is now being done in New South Wales and Victoria. I was very pleased to notice that in Victoria lately they have offered a very large reward for the discovery of some efficient system of ventilation of mines, and I hope our Government will take a leaf out of their book in this direction. At several places in Queensland the mines are getting very deep, and the deeper they get the more difficult it is to ventilate them in anything like an efficient manner. I know that in some of the mines on Charters Towers the miners suffer greatly from insufficient ventilation. If the Government, by offering a reward, could find out some better system of ventilation than we have adopted in the colonies, or than is

known at the present, they would do some good, not only to the miners, but also to the mine-owners, because if a man suffers from insufficient ventilation he cannot do anything like a satisfactory day's work, and that means a direct loss to the mine-owner. In New South Wales they have formed what is called a prospecting board, and the Government have granted them something like £40,000 for the furtherance of the objects for which they have been appointed. The board grant loans direct to applicants for the erection of crushing and testing batteries, for putting down test bores, and for shaft-sinking. Last year they had at their disposal £25,000. The number of applications for the year amounted to 1,901, and out of these 523 were granted. Loans are not granted in any haphazard fashion, but it is the duty of the board to inquire into each application and deal with them all on their merits. I have here a list of all the applications received, but shall not inflict it on the House, also a list of cases in which people have been successful in obtaining large yields of gold. It is stated that the Star Lead at Gulgong was lost for many years, but that by means of the money granted by this board the lead was re-discovered, and that extensive machinery has now been erected at the mine. There are also a number of other cases where applicants have been successful, and in some localities villages are springing up as a result of the assistance afforded. Applications for test batteries in districts where batteries are already provided have been refused, and very properly so, but assistance has been given to sink shafts in a number of places, and to put down twenty-eight bores for alluvial gold. There are any number of districts in Queensland where, if test batteries were provided, people would go out and earn an honest living and something more. We very often have the question put to us as to whether the mining industry is worth bolstering up, and whether it is a payable industry? I read an article in the Sydney *Bulletin* recently in which it was stated that it was not a payable industry—that it cost from £5 to £6 for every ounce of gold produced in Australia. That certainly does not apply to Queensland, for in Weedon's "Queensland, Past and Present," we find that the value of gold raised amounted in 1890 to £180 per head for each miner, including carters and others directly engaged in the industry. In some cases the amount was as low as £140 per head, but on the whole we have a return of over £3 per week for each man directly engaged, which proves that as far as Queensland is concerned mining is a payable industry. The returns for miners only show that the value was £300 per head. On Charters Towers for the first five months of this year the dividends paid amounted to £96,786, while the calls only amounted to £37,842, leaving a surplus in favour of dividends of £58,944, which proves that the industry there is in a very satisfactory state, and I firmly believe that there are other fields in Queensland, such as the Etheridge, Woolgar, Hodgkinson, Palmer, and Croydon, which will turn out as good as Charters Towers, if not better. Such being the case, it is the duty of the Government to wake up and put a little more spirit into that industry. We have the sugar industry bolstered up, and we have rabbit fencing, Rabbit Acts, and rabbit boards provided for the squatters. We have, in fact, special legislation for every industry except the mining industry, and I hope the Mining Commission will lead to a little more assistance being given to that than has been given to it hitherto. We are told in the Speech that reasonable means have been taken to place the advantages of immigration to Queensland prominently before the populations of European countries and people of European descent. Let

us see what the Government have been doing in this connection. The Acting Agent-General, Mr. Dicken, says—

It will be remembered that during the continuance of free and assisted emigration a great number of agents were at work collecting people for the colony. Many of them were exceptionally active and were highly thought of by Mr. Randall, who was constantly visiting them. I therefore reappointed the best of these local agents.

Even those who are in favour of immigration will want to know whether the money voted year by year for that purpose has been wisely expended, and whether the expenditure is likely to lead to good results. Let us then see what the Acting Agent-General says as to what hope we have of attracting people from Great Britain to this colony. When speaking of the small number of immigrants sent out to Queensland, he says:—

The real reason, I believe, is the general contentment of the farming class, owing to the lately improved conditions. The Belfast agent says that at present agriculturists are as well off at home as they would be in any part of the world, and that emigration from counties Antrim and Down has almost ceased.

This bears out the statement made last year by the hon. member for Burke that people in Great Britain were better off than they were in these colonies. If we take into consideration the fact that in the old country they have more regular work, and that they have not to pursue the nomadic life which the large majority of people here have to do, we must come to the same conclusion as the hon. member for Burke—that people are better off in Great Britain and should not be trapped, or induced to come here by specious arguments. The Belfast agent goes on to say—

"There is not likely to be much, if any, increase of emigration, with a declining population and plenty of work and good wages at home." The Shrewsbury agent says that last year has been the worst for emigration he has known since he began business in 1879. Enquiries are quite a thing of the past. He has not had a single answer to his advertisements, and the farmers are doing so well that they have no need to move. He says—"At the present moment there is not a vacant farm in Shropshire, and the demand for holdings up to 300 acres is unprecedented; in many cases increased rent being paid above what was paid by the outgoing tenant." Messrs. Fleming and Haxton, of Dundee, say—"The abnormally high wages which for the past three years have been paid to farm servants in this country, higher, in some instances, than the maximum paid in Queensland, and work less intermittent, prevents much movement in that class. Small farmers are difficult to move."

When hon. members on this side stated that wages were lower here than farm labourers were receiving in the old country we were held up to ridicule, but here are our paid agents reporting to the same effect. Then we are given another reason why immigrants do not come here. I do not know whether the Agent-General recognises it as a reason, but I think hon. members of this House will recognise it as such. The report states that Mr. Benjamin Jones, who it will be remembered was one of the co-operative delegates who visited Australia last year, has been writing to the newspapers in England in reference to Queensland. He says that the general idea prevalent in England is that it is not a suitable country for white people, but that that belief is entirely erroneous, and the Agent-General gives publicity to his letters because he acknowledges that there is a general idea in Great Britain that Queensland is not a suitable place to come to. How has that idea come about? By the publication by members of this House and by the Government of lying statements about this colony. When Miss Shaw went home she gave a lecture, in which she said that Queensland was not fit for white men to live in—especially the Northern part of it. What did the Government do? They distributed 25,000 copies of the pamphlet

broadcast over Great Britain and other parts of the world at the cost of the taxpayers of Queensland, thereby telling people that Queensland was not fit for white men, and that they should not come here. Then after holding out the red flag of danger, and telling everyone that this country is only fit for niggers, and after doing their best to induce servile labour to come here, they now publish the statement of Mr. Jones that the colony is not so bad after all—that white men can live here—that he has been here, and has gone home again quite happy and lusty. If we hope to get any large number of British people to come to Queensland, we shall have to do something more than pay agents. They will certainly draw their salaries, but we shall find them reporting that there are no applications, as has been the case in this report. There are a number of other statements backing up what I have read, but I shall not inflict them on the House. I do not know that there is anything else I care to speak about except a few words with reference to the proposed Local Government Bill, and also the Registration Bill for electors. Speaking of the Local Government Bill, the local authorities have held conferences in different parts of the North, and they have sent to members of this House and to the Government some wise suggestions, and I hope that when the Bill is introduced these suggestions will be taken into consideration, because some of them are well worth consideration. Then there is to be a Bill dealing with the inspection of meat. This power is to be taken out of the hands of the local authorities. During the last few months the Municipal Council of Charters Towers has led the way in the North by appointing an inspector of meat. The health of the population demands that this legislation should be hurried forward. It seems absurd that we should have inspectors to see that no bad meat goes out of the country, while we allow our own people to consume dangerous meat. If we are afraid of injuring the health of other people, certainly we should look after the health of our own family. We are also promised a Bill to provide water in order to induce people to settle on our lands. When the hon. member for Balonne was speaking I interjected that this promise was another slice of State socialism, and it is just as well to recognise it as such. If the Government does induce close settlement by means of artesian bores, it will be doing a very good work. Up to the present the Government has put down a number of bores of an experimental nature. That is to say, it has sunk them in different parts of the colony—going ahead, as it were, of the selectors in order to show them where water may be obtained—so that these bores may be deemed to be of an experimental nature. A great amount of good has been done in this way, but I am given to understand that the administration of these Government bores has not always been of a wise nature—that very often they have been handed over at nominal rentals to syndicates, and that these syndicates have used them not in the interests of the public—and, being public bores, one would think they would be used in the interests of the public—but they have been used solely in the interests of those who have monopolised them, so that administration has a lot to do with it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Where was that?

Mr. DUNSFORD: I read an article—I think it was in the paper of the senior member for Toowoomba—in a Toowoomba paper, anyway—which gave a list of these bores, and the names of those to whom they were rented, and to me the rent seemed very small. It seems to me that some parties have received

favouritism. I may be wrong, but the Secretary for Lands, who is well posted up in this matter, will be able to correct me.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The matter was not then in my department.

Mr. DUNSFORD: Then it may be information for the hon. gentleman, and I am glad to be able to give it. The bores mentioned here will be in his department, which I hope will be better administered than in the past.

Mr. BARTHOLOMEW: I take this opportunity of extending the sympathy of all young Queenslanders to Sir Horace Tozer upon his recent bereavement. His late son was a strong and real good-hearted young man, and one who could be ill-spared in a young colony like Queensland. In reference to the Address in Reply, it has been received by the House in a very cordial way, and, taking hon. members all round, they have treated it very fairly. The first paragraph that attracts the eye is that relating to federation. We have heard a great deal as to the advantages of federation in the Press and elsewhere, but very little has been said as to its drawbacks; and I hope that when the Bill comes before the House those drawbacks will be noticed as well as the advantages. I do not think our great exports such as wool, gold, tallow, meat, etc., will benefit one iota; but I am afraid our home products will be considerably affected. I would ask hon. members if the produce of the Downs can compete with that of New South Wales and Victoria?

Mr. KEOGH: It cannot.

Mr. BARTHOLOMEW: To enable it to do so we must have more population and cheaper facilities for getting produce to market, and if we cannot get the population we cannot reduce the railway freights. I would ask any hon. member if it be possible for us to compete against Newcastle coal or against New South Wales for timber? Is it possible—

The SPEAKER: Order! I would remind the hon. member that there is a notice dealing with a Bill upon that very subject on the paper, and I would ask him to refrain from referring to it until that Bill comes before the House.

Mr. HARDACRE: I think now is the proper time to question that ruling. We were prevented from doing so before because it was pointed out that the ruling had been already given. With all due respect to you, Sir, I think a ruling of this kind should not go without objection. It is wrong according to our Standing Orders, and it is wrong also because it puts it in the power of any hon. member to take away the right of another hon. member to speak. I intend to move a motion, although I should have preferred the hon. member for Maryborough to move it himself. However, if I do not speak now I shall lose my right to speak upon the question. Some two sessions ago a somewhat similar question to this came up. Two Bills dealing with electoral reform were introduced—one by the leader of the Opposition and the other by Mr. Powers. The question was then referred to the Speaker whether the introduction of one Bill would prevent the introduction of another. It was urged that if this rule were adopted, the introduction of a second Bill would take away the right of an hon. member to speak upon the former one; and when the matter was referred to the Speaker it was decided, upon reconsideration, I think, that two members had a perfect right to bring in similar Bills during the same session. If the ruling given then was right, that given now must be wrong. It might happen that there might be some burning question referred to in the Address in Reply such as electoral reform, and I might wish to move an amendment upon the Address. If this ruling is

good any hon. member hearing of my intention might take away my right to refer to the question by introducing a Bill on the subject, the same as the Acting Premier has done in this case. I think that is sufficient to show that this ruling is wrong and should be reversed, and hon. members should take this opportunity now, the moment the ruling has been given, to bring up the question and have it settled in some satisfactory way, so that they may preserve their right to introduce Bills or motions and discuss subjects no matter what other hon. members may do. Therefore, with every respect for yourself, and with some reluctance, I feel it my duty to move that your ruling on this subject be disagreed to.

The SPEAKER: I think before putting the motion I may save the time of the House by quoting the practice of the House of Commons, because, as our Standing Orders are silent on the subject, we are guided entirely by the practice of that House in the matter. I find that Mr. Speaker Peel ruled, on 4th March, 1889—

On the Address in Reply that it is not in order to propose amendments which anticipate discussion on Bills which the House has appointed for a future day, nor to make remarks which are pertinent to such Bills, or to debate matters which are provided for therein.

I have a volume of English *Hansard* here, from which I shall make a few quotations, because I do not want to do anything which will limit discussion, and hon. members must see that I am not doing so. I am only postponing discussion. Notice has been given to deal with this particular matter; the Bill will come on in due course for consideration; and then hon. members will have every opportunity of fully debating the question. I find in the English *Hansard* for 4th March, 1889, that in resuming the discussion on the Address in Reply, Mr. James Stuart rose to speak and said—

I wish to bring before this House a matter—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The first two amendments on the paper—the first standing in the name of the hon. member for Hoxton, and the second in that of the hon. baronet the member for Cockernouth—are out of order as amendments, inasmuch as they anticipate the discussion, one on three, and the other on four, Bills, which the House has appointed for a future day, and one of those Bills I observe is in the name of the hon. gentleman himself. The amendment, therefore, of the hon. gentleman will be out of order as an amendment to the Address.

Again, on page 858 of the same volume, I find that the hon. gentleman was proceeding to discuss one of those matters, and the Speaker said—

I am very sorry to interrupt the hon. gentleman, but I must say he is quite, no doubt unintentionally, evading the ruling I have given, because he is now anticipating a discussion which must come on one or two of the three Bills, or on all the Bills to which I have referred. This question arose in 1886, and I was obliged to give the same ruling.

Again, on page 860, when Mr. Ritchie, President of the Local Government Board, was proceeding to speak in the same way, and the Speaker said—

I must remind the right hon. gentleman that the question of the provision of sites for dwellings for the working classes is directly covered by the Bills to which he has referred.

Again, during same debate, page 869, when Mr. Lawson was speaking, the Speaker said—

The hon. member is now certainly touching upon matters to which I must remind him one or more Bills now before the House are addressed.

Again, at page 886, the Speaker said, after Sir W. Lawson had spoken—

It is somewhat difficult to contend with the ingenuity of hon. members in evading a plain rule of the House. If the hon. baronet turns to the notice-paper he will find a Liquor Traffic Local Option Bill, a Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill, a Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Ireland) Bill, and a Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Wales) bill. The reason why I insist so strongly upon the

observance of the rule is, that if hon. members who have not been fortunate at the ballot and find their Bills not well placed for early discussion are to be at liberty to anticipate the debate upon their Bills by moving an amendment to the Address embodying the subject matter of those Bills by merely prefixing the formula, "We regret that no mention is made in the Speech of such and such a Bill," then the debate on the Address will be illimitably extended.

Sir W. LAWSON: I thank the right hon. gentleman for mentioning the matter to me, but I think that I shall be in order if I express my regret that the subject has not been mentioned in the Queen's Speech.

Mr. SPEAKER: On the contrary, the hon. gentleman will be quite out of order.

Perhaps, with the information now before the House, the hon. member will withdraw his resolution.

Mr. DAWSON: I may be permitted to suggest that for the guidance of hon. members it would be as well if you gave your ruling fully upon the point, as to whether hon. members may not touch upon matters which may be contained in the proposed Bill or upon the broad general subject of federation. If you now rule fully upon that particular point it might get over the difficulty.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member, Mr. Bartholomew, was discussing whether it was advisable to introduce the Federal Enabling Bill. He prefaced his remarks by saying that he trusted that when the measure was before the House hon. members would give their arguments against its introduction. Then he himself proceeded to give arguments against the introduction of that measure, which is down on the business-paper for consideration. The hon. member was, therefore, decidedly out of order.

Mr. McDONALD: I think this difficulty could have been avoided by the Acting Premier himself, and if anybody is to blame in the matter it is that hon. gentleman—

The SPEAKER: The hon. member will pardon me. It is the common practice of the House of Commons to have Bills thus early introduced. Hon. members will see the necessity for getting on with Government as well as private business. The hon. member for Portitude Valley has given notice of the introduction of a Factories Bill; the hon. member for Dalby has also given notice of the introduction of a measure, so that all business would be retarded if this course was not pursued.

Mr. McDONALD: I do not deny the right of hon. members to introduce Bills. I stated that clearly this afternoon. I understand that all the authorities state distinctly that it is quite within the right of the Government or of any member of the House to introduce Bills whenever they think proper, and even when the Address in Reply is being debated. But I say it is not usual to do it, and in this case a good deal of unpleasantness, and even the motion now made to disagree with your ruling, would have been avoided had the hon. gentleman at the head of the Government withdrawn the motion he proceeded with this afternoon. As a matter of fact the Bill proposed to be introduced is not a Bill upon federation, but one to send delegates to the Convention. It does not touch the question of federation at all, and in speaking upon the broad subject of federation I do not think we would be touching in any way upon the details of the proposed Bill, whatever it may be. To my mind the hon. member for Maryborough, in speaking upon the question of federation, was perfectly within his rights. There is a good deal in what was said by the hon. member for Leichhardt, that the discussion upon a number of important questions may be anticipated in this way. Suppose the Bill to be introduced was to deal with this question of the registration of voters, upon which some of us may have a good deal to say during the debate upon the Address

in Reply as the first opportunity afforded for dealing with the question; we would be debarred from debating that most important question. If the hon. gentleman had hastened slowly we would not have dropped into this difficulty. I do not think the motion will be carried, because you appear to have the whole of the authorities on your side, but still it is injudicious to introduce measures while the debate upon the Governor's Speech is progressing.

Mr. GROOM: There is another aspect of the question to which your attention should be called. I believe it is very necessary that both sides of the House should, wherever possible, uphold the ruling of the Chair. At the same time I deprecate the slightest attempt, or even the appearance of an attempt, at limiting the freedom of speech. It is one of our most cherished liberties, and ought not to be interfered with unless some very strong and unprecedented reasons can be given for it. We are now discussing the Address from the Throne, in which there is an important paragraph referring especially to the Federal Convention. Now the Acting Premier has intimated that in giving the notice which he did he had no intention whatever of interfering with the freedom of debate or preventing hon. members from discussing any particular paragraph in the Speech. Might I submit to you that this Bill is really not before the House at present. The hon. gentleman has moved a formal motion that the House at its next sitting will consider the desirableness of introducing a certain Bill. The House has to decide whether it is desirable or not that that Bill should be introduced. When the hon. gentleman gets into committee with that proposal, it is quite conceivable that the majority may decide that it is not desirable to introduce such a Bill. What would be the position of the House then? You, in the proper exercise of your functions, have decided that because the Acting Premier has given formal notice of certain action which he proposes to take on a future date, therefore the House is to be debarred from debating the important matter of federation. I respectfully submit that the Bill is not yet before us, and I ask you whether under those circumstances, and in view of the statement made by the Acting Premier, the incidents which you have quoted are not distinct altogether from the question now before us. The House has yet to determine whether it will give the hon. gentleman authority to introduce the Bill, and it may decide that it is desirable to allow the Convention to proceed as it commenced, without any Queensland representatives. In that case the result of your decision will be that members are debarred from discussing this important matter through a motion introduced by the Acting Premier, and given notice of with the best intentions, because it did not strike him that it would be used as an incident to debar fair discussion on the question of federation.

The SPEAKER: I think the House will pardon me for adding one word. I do not think the hon. gentleman could have given, nor could I myself have advanced, a stronger argument in favour of my views than he has done. He has pointed out that leave has not yet been given to introduce such a Bill, and that the Acting Premier intends to ask for that leave. The hon. member, Mr. Bartholomew, in arguing against the introduction of that Bill, was distinctly anticipating the very discussion which must take place.

The ACTING PREMIER: I submit that the Governor's Speech, in its entirety, should be considered upon the same lines as if the motion of which I gave notice had never been put on the paper at all. Some of the quotations which you,

Sir, have been good enough to give us deal with a set of circumstances entirely different to those which arise under our Standing Orders. I would remind you that in the British Parliament, in discussing the Address in Reply, no subject whatever can be discussed except those specifically mentioned; but in Australia the rule is that speeches are not confined in any way to the subjects mentioned in the Speech, and that discussion can go entirely outside the Speech. I submit that my motion not only was not intended to limit the speech of hon. members, but that it is impossible for hon. members to give a correct answer to the Speech unless they take the action they have taken. I in no way considered the motion I put on the paper as affecting the Address in Reply. Without going into the question as to whether your ruling is right on the particular matter under discussion, I would say that if your ruling is based on the action which was taken to-day by me and that that limits the speech of hon. members, then I cannot agree with you. If, on the other hand, you find hon. members are transgressing the rule which allows them to speak generally that of course would be an entirely different matter. The wisdom of presenting the Bill or of dealing with the abstract question is no doubt within the province of hon. members, although it will be clearly out of order to imagine or anticipate what may appear in the Bill. Consequently it is the opinion of members of the Government that the House ought to be allowed to discuss the abstract question, and if I can assist the House in any way to accomplish that, without disagreeing with your ruling, I will do so. I would even ask the House to allow me to withdraw the motion which I made sooner than there should be any limitation of the fullest discussion of the Governor's Speech.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. GLASSY: The closing words of the Acting Premier might very fairly be discussed—namely, that if there is likely to be any limitation to the discussion of the Governor's Speech he will ask the House to permit him to withdraw his motion.

The SPEAKER: I would remind hon. members that the question before the House is that my ruling be disagreed to. No other motion can be proposed until that is disposed of.

Mr. GLASSEY: I sincerely hope that hon. members having a strict regard for their rights and privileges in this House will protest against the ruling. If the Speaker is right in his contention, it is possible that some future Government may, by strength of numbers, introduce Bills which will prohibit members from discussing the Address in Reply. I hope hon. members on both sides—not that I think any hon. member has any desire to call in question any legitimate ruling—will rise to the occasion and safeguard their privileges.

Mr. BELL: I do not think your ruling on this matter is receiving that consideration on its merits which it deserves. I apprehend that you are placed in that chair to interpret to the best of your knowledge and discretion the meaning that is set, on the face of them, upon the Standing Orders that govern our procedure; and when a point arises on which those Standing Orders do not touch you have direct instructions laid down in the Standing Orders to refer to the procedure of the House of Commons for your guidance; and I emphatically assert that in the ruling you have given you have followed out your duty and given the ruling you should have given. I say that as a House beholden by every decent instinct of manliness to uphold so far as we can the man we put into the chair to preside over us—as a House influenced by such an instinct—our disposition and desire should be to support you

in your ruling, and I greatly regret that, so far as this debate has proceeded, there has not been that desire evidenced to support you which we might have expected.

Mr. HARDACRE: That is not fair.

Mr. BELL: I was not at that moment thinking of the hon. member for Leichhardt; I was thinking of an hon. member who occupies a much more important position—the hon. gentleman who is at present leading the Government. And I regret that the hon. gentleman, in pursuance of what he considered his duty, has not seen fit, as every other leader so far as I know in a political assembly has seen fit, if not always, generally at all events to support the member who has presided over the debates of the House. I make that reference to the hon. gentleman with the utmost respect. It is proposed that we should differ from your ruling because there is some danger of the rights of this House being curtailed. I ask is there anything in that contention? Is there the slightest ground for the apprehension that the rights of debate are likely to be curtailed? Suppose we are on this Address in Reply prevented from debating the matter of federation, do we not know that within a few days' time a Bill will be put before us on the matter, and we shall hear federation debated *ad nauseam*, and so far from our rights on that subject being curtailed and our privileges being interfered with the feeling amongst us all will be one of thankfulness when we are done with the question. I appeal to hon. members whether there is really so much importance in the contention that our privileges, our conveniences, are being restricted as to warrant us in doing that which, from the mere personal point of view of manliness, and also from the other point of view—that of upholding the dignity of Parliament—we should refrain from doing—namely, passing a vote of censure on the Speaker. We know that in the House of Commons if the ruling of the Speaker is censured it is generally followed by the resignation of the Speaker. I hope that practice may not obtain here in these colonies, because we pass our votes of censure in a very light and airy frame of mind. We should weigh well any action we take that is a reflection on the man we have deliberately appointed to preside over us. I have not often the privilege of finding myself in accord with any contention put forward by the hon. member for Flinders, but I am in the happy position of agreeing with him in his contention that so long as we have no proper instruction upon the matter in our Standing Orders, and so long as we have to follow the procedure of the House of Commons, it is decidedly inconvenient that any business should be introduced before the Address in Reply is concluded.

The ACTING PREMIER: The same Bill was introduced before the Address in Reply was passed last year.

Mr. BELL: I am not here to censure the hon. gentleman, or to support what was done last year; I merely say that it is highly inconvenient that any business should be taken before the debate on the Address in Reply is concluded. And when the hon. gentleman gave notice of the Bills he proposes to introduce, I went to an authority on procedure in this House to ask whether such a course was usual.

The SPEAKER: Order! I think the hon. member is now wandering from the subject.

Mr. BELL: I will merely say that really there is no infringement upon our convenience in the ruling you have given, because we shall have ample opportunity on the second reading of the Bill to debate the matter if we like *ad nauseam*; and even if there was an infringement upon our convenience, it is the result of our own actions, and if in the future we wish to prevent the

recurrence of this situation our proper course is not to censure you for having done your duty but to see that a Standing Order is framed giving those who desire it the opportunity of speaking twice on the same subject.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I think we all sympathise to a very large extent with the remarks made by the hon. member for Dalby in this respect, that we would all very much regret to pass anything like a vote of censure on the Chair or disagree with your ruling where that ruling is based on precedents established by the House of Commons and other authorities; at the same time, there is no doubt that this ruling, which I believe is strictly correct, comes upon hon. members as a surprise. I think I may refer to the proceedings of last session, where you will find that before the conclusion of the debate on the Address in Reply no less than four Bills were introduced—a Bill to amend the Constitution Act of 1867, a Bill to further amend the Officials in Parliament Act of 1884, a Bill to amend the Government Savings Bank Act of 1864, and the Savings Bank Amending Act of 1882, and a Bill to enable Queensland to take part in the framing, acceptance, and enactment of a Federal Constitution for Australasia. The last is a Bill of the same character as that of which notice has been given. Looking at *Hansard* for last session, I find that the subject matter of each Bill was very fully entered upon during the debate on the Address in Reply; and at that time you had not taken quite the same view that you have announced during this debate. No doubt the views you have expressed are based upon parliamentary authority, and I do not think that on that ground your decision can be called in question. I cannot see why we should stultify ourselves by voting against your ruling, based, as it is, on the authority and precedents you have quoted. While I should like to see every reasonable latitude given to debate on questions mentioned in His Excellency's Speech, at the same time your ruling is so sound that I do not like to say anything against it. But the present difficulty might be met by a little moderation on both sides, and I would suggest to the hon. member who moved that your ruling be disagreed to that he withdraw his motion, and that you, Sir, recognising that the feeling of the House is that fuller discussion should be allowed in connection with the matter now under consideration, might allow reasonable debate thereupon, on the understanding that in the future we shall confine ourselves within the lines you have laid down. However much we may desire to have fuller discussion—and certainly the Address from the Throne should be a subject for the fullest discussion on the past actions of the Government and its future policy—I cannot, in the face of the authorities you have quoted, say that we can rationally vote that your ruling be disagreed to without attempting to subvert the Standing Orders and the rulings of eminent Speakers of the House of Commons. I therefore take upon myself to suggest, as a matter on which discussion may be enlarged, that the hon. member who moved the motion, and he moved it in temperate language, and with the sole view of getting facilities for fuller discussion, should consider the propriety of withdrawing his motion, and that you, Sir, should accept the sense of what I conceive to be the majority of the House, that fuller discussion may be allowed than you feel yourself at liberty to permit under the authorities you have cited.

Mr. FINNEY: I should like to know whether, under your ruling, members cannot allude to any of the Bills mentioned in the Governor's Speech?

The SPEAKER: The hon. member misunderstands; probably he was not present when I gave my ruling. I may repeat that there is a

notice on the paper to the effect that the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole, to consider the desirableness of introducing a Bill to enable Queensland to take part in the framing, acceptance, and enactment of a Federal Constitution for Australasia. That motion has been carried, and is now an Order of the Day for to-morrow. The question the hon. member was debating was strongly against the introduction of that Bill. I maintain that he is anticipating a discussion that must take place when the Bill is brought forward, and that, therefore, he is out of order.

Mr. CHATAWAY: I think we are all agreed that the principle of following the rules and practice of the House of Commons should as far as possible be adopted here. But in order that we may see our way clearer in this particular matter I would ask you, Sir, if the rulings you have quoted from Speakers of the House of Commons were given in cases where Bills had been actually introduced, or where, as in this case, there was merely a notice on the paper for the introduction of a Bill on a future day. It seems to me that the senior member for Drayton and Toowoomba put the difference between the two cases very clearly; and as most hon. members are extremely anxious to vote solely in accordance with what is the correct practice, if you will explain either that both cases are exactly the same, or that they are not, you will do a good deal towards guiding us in coming to a decision.

The SPEAKER: There is not the slightest difference in the practice whether a Bill has been actually introduced or whether merely notice to introduce it has been given; the same rule applies equally to both, and the same practice has been followed in all cases. The Speaker has even ruled that it is not necessary that the notice should be on the paper if it is actually given on the date on which the question arises before it goes on the paper. I feel sure hon. members will give me credit for giving my ruling in this matter in what I consider to be the best interests of the House. I have no desire whatever to limit hon. members' opportunities for discussion, and I again urge upon hon. members to remember that the debate will be merely postponed, and that is the object of the House of Commons' rule. As probably some hon. members were not present when I read it, I will repeat the last ruling I quoted given by the Speaker of the House of Commons, which applies so admirably to this question. [*Vide supra*—Speaker's ruling after remarks of Sir W. Lawson.] With regard to what the Secretary for Railways has said, I wish it to be distinctly understood that I do not withdraw one iota from the ruling I have given, because I believe it is strictly in accordance with the practice and procedure of the House of Commons. Every opportunity will be afforded on a future date for hon. members to discuss this particular matter in all its bearings, and I think it is actually better for the good government of the House that the question should not be considered at the present moment. But if it is the desire of the majority of the House to do away with the practice and precedents of the House of Commons in the consideration of the Address in Reply, the House is free to do so, and the Speaker must abide by the wish of the majority of the House.

Mr. BARTHOLOMEW: I have much pleasure in supporting your ruling, and I hope that the mover and seconder of the present motion will withdraw it. I was referring to details when you, Sir, pulled me up. I am not in the habit of transgressing the rules of the House, and have no wish to act contrary to what is the best procedure in matters of debate.

Mr. LEAHY: I think it is just as well that we should know where we are in this matter. We have got rather mixed at the present time. The Acting Premier put it very clearly when he spoke, but we have got into rather a tangled state since then. It seems to me that you, Sir, pulled up the hon. member for Maryborough for speaking on the details of the Bill, of the introduction of which the Acting Premier has given notice, and if that is the ground on which you ruled the hon. member out of order, the House will, I think, be inclined to support you, because it would be a great mistake in a matter of this kind, where we have every certainty that it will come before the House later on, to discuss the minutiae of the measure. But certainly the general question should be open to discussion. Of that there is no shadow of doubt. A good deal has been made of precedents of the House of Commons, but with all respect I submit that the precedent of the House of Commons quoted by you does not apply in the way you have stated, but refers to cases in which amendments have been proposed on the Address in Reply. The matter before us is not an amendment on the Address in Reply.

The SPEAKER: I think the hon. member will excuse me, for I am sure he has no desire to lead the House into error. In the precedent I have quoted there was no amendment on the Address in Reply. Members were discussing the Address in Reply, and in doing so they went into the consideration of Bills of which notice had been given.

Mr. LEAHY: I understood you to refer to the matter in that way. At all events I would point out that in the latest edition of "May," at page 264, where matters that cannot be referred to in debate are dealt with, it is stated that—

A matter whilst under adjudication by a court of law should not be brought before the House by a motion or otherwise. Nor can a motion be brought forward which is the same in substance as a question which, during the current session, has been decided in the affirmative or negative—

and this is the point to which I wish to call attention—

nor which anticipates a matter already set down or appointed for consideration by the House.

I submit that the conditions are the reverse of that here, as it is a prior matter we are considering. The Bill of which notice has been given is not prior to the question at present under discussion. If the Bill was prior to the question under discussion, then I submit we should be following the precedent of the House of Commons in preventing discussion on the matter referred to in the Governor's Speech, and your ruling would be quite right. If that is not the practice of the House of Commons then any member might put a notice on the paper respecting any matter referred to in the Opening Speech, and in that way prevent discussion upon it. I do not think I should have risen to speak on this matter if it had not been for the remarks made by the hon. member for Dalby. He stated, and emphasised his statement, that it would be a direct slur upon you, Sir, if the House disagreed to your ruling in this matter. I do not hold with that view at all. There is a provision in our Standing Orders which gives any member the right to question your ruling on any point, and to ask that the opinion of the House should be taken on the matter. And it is no reflection upon you to say that the opinion of seventy-one members of this House should be taken in preference to your opinion, though you have, I know, given a great deal of study to matters of this kind, and your decisions have given a great deal of satisfaction. The hon. member for Dalby went further, and stated

that it was an outrage on this Chamber that notice of a Bill of this kind, or of any kind, should be given before the Address in Reply has been disposed of. That shows that the hon. member is ignorant of a provision in our Standing Orders which gives permission—in fact, it is almost supposed to be a privilege of this Chamber—to introduce a Bill *pro forma* before the Speech is received from the Governor.

The SPEAKER: I think I called the hon. member for Dalby to order when he referred to that, and pointed out that it was entirely foreign to the matter before the House. I hope the hon. member, therefore, will not further refer to it.

Mr. LEAHY: I did not catch that, or I should not have transgressed. However, I will leave that point. A precedent has been set in this matter by Sir Thomas McLwraith, who, notwithstanding that he was Premier and leader of the House at the time, proposed on one occasion that your ruling should be disagreed to. Some members on his own side, and almost the whole of the members on that side, saw fit then to support you against the motion of the hon. gentleman, because they believed that you were in the right. I supported you on that occasion, and shall certainly do so always when I think you are right. It is a matter of the highest importance that the privileges of the House in regard to debate should be retained. I have already expressed the opinion that it is a want of form to discuss the details of measures referred to in the Governor's Speech, which we will have an opportunity of discussing later on, and I should not do it myself. I think it would assist the House if we could know from you whether you called the hon. member for Maryborough to order for transgressing the limits of discussion by referring to details which should be dealt with on the second reading of the Bill, or because he was discussing a matter of which the Acting Premier has given notice. If it was for the latter reason, I shall have to vote against your ruling, and I shall not do so from any disrespect to you, but because I feel that I shall show respect to the House and myself by voting according to my own convictions.

The ACTING PREMIER: With the consent of the House I wish to make a suggestion in regard to this matter, but I have already spoken.

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the hon. gentleman be again heard?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The ACTING PREMIER: What I suggest is that the motion be withdrawn on the understanding that the House signifies its wish that there shall be no limits to the debate on the Address in Reply generally, by reason of any subsequent notices of motion which may be placed on the paper by anyone. I believe that would be the unanimous opinion of this House, and if that unanimous wish is conveyed to Mr. Speaker I have no doubt it will have that effect.

Mr. BROWNE: I think that the suggestion the hon. gentleman has made is a very reasonable one. I have scarcely ever taken part in a debate on a point of order, having generally left it to members who I thought had more experience in regard to the forms of the House than I had; and I should not have spoken on this occasion but for the eloquent speech that fell from the hon. member for Dalby. That hon. and learned member adopted a favourite *rôle* with him—that of self-appointed censor of both sides of the House—and delivered one of his very nicely-worded lectures. When an hon. member like that gets up and lectures this House, and tries to educate poor benighted members to the level of the exalted pedestal on which he himself stands, he should at least be sure of his

facts, so that he may not lead less enlightened members into error. The hon. member laid a great deal of stress on one point, which was afterwards alluded to by the hon. member for Bulloo—that was, that if this House ruled against your decision, Mr. Speaker, you would be called upon to resign, which was, the hon. member said, the practice in the Parliament of the old country. Now, any hon. member with the most elementary knowledge of home politics knows that that is not the case. In the case referred to by the hon. member for Toowoomba the House by a very large majority overruled the decision of the Speaker. Did the Speaker at that time resign? Not much. He simply took the decision of the House as the interpretation put upon the Standing Orders by the House, and, as placed there to preside over the debates of the House, he took that decision of the House for his future guidance. There was another matter which the hon. member for Dalby referred to in very scathing language. That was about the want of manliness on the part of members who introduced and supported this motion. When the hon. member talks to members on both sides of the House, he should think before he speaks quite so strongly.

Mr. BELL: I rise to make a personal explanation. What I stated was this—and I say the same now—I said that there is, I believe in everyone of us—and I am not censuring any section of the House—an instinct of manliness—an innate instinct which should lead us to support the man whom we put in the chair. That is what I said.

Mr. BROWNE: I shall take the hon. member in that way. I did not say that he was censuring any section of the House. I said distinctly that he was very fond of censuring both sides of the House. When the hon. member says that a sense of manliness should actuate us to do a certain thing, I can see very little difference between that and saying that men who take the opposite course are wanting in manliness. One of the hon. members who preceded the hon. member for Dalby was the hon. member for Toowoomba, Mr. Groom—the oldest member of the House, and an hon. member who has occupied the exalted position which you, Sir, now occupy, when the hon. and learned member for Dalby was in his political knickerbockers. The hon. member seems very short of memory—I do not know whether he is conveniently so or not—but by inference he censured the hon. gentleman who is at present leader of this House, the Acting-Premier. The hon. member admitted that he sort of censured the hon. gentleman when he stated that leaders of Governments always supported the Chair. Now, one of my first experiences of such a motion being moved was in 1893. I think that was also the hon. member's first experience on a motion that the Speaker's ruling be disagreed with, because he happened to be, like myself, a new-fledged member at that time. That motion was made by the Hon. Sir Thomas McLwraith, the then leader of the Government—the gentleman under whose banner the hon. member for Dalby was supposed to be fighting. He was supported by the present Premier, Sir Hugh Nelson, and by all the gentlemen sitting on the Ministerial benches, and whom the hon. member for Dalby is still following. The motion was opposed by the whole of the members on this side, and by a few members on the other side of the House, and your ruling, Sir, was upheld by a majority of one. I do not know whether at that time, in the hon. member for Dalby, his loyalty to his chief and his reverence for the Chair were having a fight to a finish, and made a draw of it, but on looking at *Hansard* I find that his name does not

appear in the division list. At any rate, that is the only inference that can be drawn. When hon. members on both sides are debating a question of very great importance to the House—as I consider this question is, because we do not know when it may crop up again—it does not come with a very good grace from any hon. member to lecture this House, and I am not going to sit quietly by and allow it to be done. I have no wish to dispute your ruling, Sir; but if it is your ruling that no reference can be made during this debate on the Address in Reply to any subject mentioned in the Speech that happens to be brought forward by a motion—as has been done in the present case—then most decidedly I shall support the hon. member for Leichhardt that your ruling be disagreed to. However, if the suggestion made by the leader of the Government or some other suggestion will bring this matter to an amicable termination, and the debate will not be curtailed, while at the same time the privileges of the Chair are not assailed, I shall be a great deal better pleased than if we go to a division on the matter.

Mr. CROSS: Like my hon. friend the hon. member for Croydon I do not think it right that any member of this House should be permitted, without dissent, to take up the rôle of censor. On more than one occasion the hon. member for Dalby has given us a homily upon manliness and other things which would do very well at a Sunday-school treat. I resent his assumption of that rôle. The hon. member performs his duty with a great deal of eloquence, and it was very nice to hear him. I think the whole House should resent the adoption of that rôle. So far as the motion is concerned, if your ruling is good it certainly amounts to an infringement of the freedom of debate; but we have an historical privilege, that redress of grievances should precede Supply, and I should strongly resent any infringement of our privileges. If your ruling is upheld, it will afford opportunities to different sections of this House to prevent other sections from discussing certain subjects by introducing motions or Bills dealing with the same subjects, which would be very unfair. I would have liked to see you adopt the lead of the Acting Chief Secretary, who, in introducing this motion regarding federation, led the House to believe that his giving notice should not prevent references to the subject in the debate on the Address in Reply. If any hon. member had called your attention to what he thought was an infringement of the rules of debate, your ruling would have been acceptable; but under the circumstances I think the question of whether we should have a larger amount of freedom of debate on the Address in Reply is now before the House, and for that reason I should certainly support the motion of the hon. member for Leichhardt if it goes to a division; but if some other way can be found to get over the difficulty, and the Chair will accept the expression of the opinion of the House, I should be better pleased. This is a question that concerns every hon. member, and I hope no time will be lost in coming to some clear understanding in regard to it. It should be decided once and for all that upon the debate on the Address in Reply there should be less restriction than there has hitherto been. Many different matters are referred to in the Speech, and therefore the discussion upon the Reply should take priority.

Mr. SMITH: I think the suggestion made by the Acting Chief Secretary will meet the difficulty, and also the wishes of every hon. member. I am sure there is no desire on the part of the Speaker or anyone else to limit the debate upon the Address in Reply. The greatest allowance should be made to hon. members to discuss

subjects of public importance, and there should be scarcely any limit to the subjects which might be introduced provided they are at all relevant to the business mentioned in the Speech. I hope that the hon. member for Leichhardt will accept the suggestion that has been made, and agree to a compromise.

Mr. HARDACRE, in reply: As it is the evident desire of the House that this motion should be withdrawn in order to get over the present difficulty I am quite willing to withdraw it, provided that the ruling does not stand as a precedent in regard to Bills and notices of motion in future. A great deal of dissatisfaction has arisen in regard to this point.

The ACTING PREMIER: We will deal with them when they arise.

Mr. HARDACRE: I do not wish this to be a precedent in future. I may mention in regard to this, that your quotations in regard to the practice of the House of Commons do not appear to me, after careful perusal, to be quite on all-fours with the present ruling at all.

Mr. McDONALD: Then why withdraw your motion?

Mr. HARDACRE: Because we have disposed of the present difficulty. The quotations read as to the practice of the House of Commons do not deal with anything mentioned in the Speech. It has been decided there that a member, by prefixing the remark "There is no mention of such-and-such a Bill in the Speech," might then discuss other Bills which private members had put upon the notice-paper, but it did not block them from discussing anything mentioned in the Speech. Another reason for their practice was that private members had to ballot for places for their Bills upon the business-paper. Without it members who had lost their places in the ballot might anticipate and override those who had won in the ballot. The object there was to protect the rights of hon. members, but in this case the result would be quite the opposite; it would take away the rights of members. I would point out that this would place a powerful weapon in the hands of either party. The Government might bring down a number of notices of motion in regard to Bills which they knew were intended to be brought in by the leader of the Opposition, and would thus block him from introducing his particular question, and on the other hand the leader of the Opposition might come down, as I might have done with my consolidated Land Bill, and so block the Secretary for Lands from introducing a Government measure dealing with the land laws. In that way we might block the whole of the Government business for the session. It was said that this was not blocking business, but only postponing it; but what is to happen if the Acting Premier postpones his Bill from week to week, and then ultimately, when we have lost all opportunity of discussing the question, withdraws it altogether? He will have effectually succeeded in choking the mouths of members upon a question which may be of the greatest importance to the country. For these reasons I would not like to see the ruling stand as a ruling for the future with regard to Bills and notices of motion; but to get over the present difficulty I am content to withdraw the motion. Before I sit down I would like to thank the hon. member for Dalby for the kind way in which he spoke of myself. During the few years I have been here I have learnt, or I hope I am learning, to discuss matters free, as far as possible, from personal rancour and bitter partisan spirit; but I am sorry to say that the hon. member is every year growing worse and worse in imputing unfair charges, without foundation or consideration, in his speeches, and importing into them all the personal and party

animosity he can possibly introduce into them. I regret that, because I think it is spoiling an hon. member who has a great deal of ability. I hope that in the future the hon. member will not be so unfair as he was in speaking of the manner in which the motion from the Chair has been dealt with. I desire, with the permission of the House, to withdraw the motion.

The SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion be withdrawn?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SPEAKER: I understand now that it is the wish of the House that for the future hon. members will be at liberty to debate any question mentioned in the Governor's Speech notwithstanding that a motion or Bill dealing with that specific question is down on the business-paper for consideration?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BELL: That is not in the Standing Orders, and I for one say emphatically that I do not assent to it until the House in a proper way expresses its wish by making a Standing Order to that effect.

The SPEAKER: I think I am right in concluding that the consensus of opinion of hon. members is as I have stated.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SPEAKER: The House is supreme and forms its own precedents.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BARTHOLOMEW: As this matter has taken so long, my remarks will be very brief, and I will not carry on the discussion so far as federation is concerned. The next points of importance in the Vice-Regal Speech are references to immigration, settlement on the land, and the extension of main trunk lines of railway. I hope the lecturers who have gone home will have great success in sending out the right people to settle on the lands. We have in the Wide Bay and Burnett districts areas of lands suitable for the settlement of thousands of people, and the same can be said of the settled districts all along the coast. I hope that when the Land Bill comes before the House we will produce one of the most useful measures passed by the House. I shall give all the assistance I can, and I will reserve any further remarks upon the subject until the Bill is before us. In regard to the extension of railways, we have floated our loan successfully, and we have now at our disposal £1,000,000 for the construction of railways. I am not afraid of borrowing money for the purpose of railway construction, because I am almost certain that the return from our railways for the year ending on the 30th of this month will be found to be 3 per cent., and we are now able in the home markets to borrow money at 3 per cent. I hope the time will soon be near when we can borrow locally. With regard to the Estimates, there are a few difficulties we have to contend with. I am not a captious critic of our finances, and I know we have an able man as Treasurer, but we will be receiving less interest on deposits in the Queensland National Bank than before; we know that the local authorities are agitating for a reduction of the interest on their loans from 5 to 4 per cent.; and we know that the Lands and Agriculture Departments want money for their administration. When the Estimates are before us I hope those difficulties will be overcome. I hope that when the Local Government Bill and the Land Bill come before the House they will have full discussion, and that we will be able to frame our laws in a way to develop our lands very rapidly. I have much pleasure in supporting the Address in Reply.

Mr. W. THORN: Before speaking on the Address in Reply I desire to make a few remarks upon what has fallen from one or two hon. members on the other side. The senior hon. member

for Maryborough dealt with the repurchase of lands on the Darling Downs, and I can assure him that those lands have all been selected and have now a thriving population on them. The hon. member would like to see some of the lands in the Wide Bay and Burnett districts repurchased, and I have no objection to that at all; but of course the Government will have to see into the matter before they are repurchased. I am sorry to say that some of the lands repurchased have not been so successful as those on the Darling Downs. I refer to the land round about Laidley, and it was well known at the time that that land was in pools of water. The whole place is a quagmire in wet weather, and I am glad to see that the department have taken over 17,000 or 18,000 acres of it for an agricultural college; the students at the college will have ample opportunity of learning the art of drainage. The hon. member quoted from Charters Towers tried to make out that the mining industry is the backbone of the colony, but I contend that the farming population are the backbone of the colony. Just before making that statement the hon. member quoted from a paper to show that every ounce of gold taken out of the earth cost £5 or £6. I am well aware, at all events, that every ounce of gold costs £3 10s. to obtain. I am not one of those who would run down the mining industry. I am pleased to see the splendid show it makes at our exhibition, and the country is to be congratulated upon having such a capable Minister at the head of the Mines Department. Reference is made in the Governor's Speech to the small contingent which has been sent home to take part in the Jubilee celebrations. Personally, I should have liked the Government to have gone a little further, and made the men a more liberal allowance. I know the men who have gone home from No. 2 Company at Toowoomba, and I know that better men would have gone if greater inducements had been offered. I do not wish to occupy the time of the House on the federation question, but in my opinion we do not require federation in any shape or form except for defence purposes. Further than that I believe the mother country will be ready to give us all the assistance in that matter that we may require. I believe, on a matter of that sort, it is our duty to go before our constituents. We are here representing large numbers of people, and as far as I am aware they have never had the question of federation put fairly before them. I notice further, by a recent number of the *Courier*, that the gentlemen whom it is proposed to send to the second Convention as delegates, are all freetraders.

Mr. BATTERSBY: What has that got to do with federation?

Mr. W. THORN: The hon. member, whose constituents are chiefly hard-working farmers, ought to know what it has to do with federation. I observe that the Governor has a lot to say about his recent Northern trip. There is no doubt that he was treated loyally wherever he went, but he makes no mention of the black labour, the Japanese, kanakas, and people of other races who are cultivating not only sugar, but maize and potatoes, and are thus competing with the white farmers of the South. It was only the other day that I read in a paper that these people were shipping corn to Townsville at the rate of £2 a ton.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is not true.

Mr. W. THORN: I believe it was the *Courier* that reported it, and I was told privately by a member of their staff that it was quite true. We are trying to settle a white population upon the lands of the South, and I am sure the Government are not going to allow those

coloured people to compete with our own people. I observe that it is the intention to proceed with a moderate policy of public works, and to extend the main trunk lines of railway. I am a believer in extending our trunk lines both in the North and South, but I also thoroughly believe in the construction of branch lines in the farming centres. I strongly object to lighter lines than we have at present. We have a branch line running from Toowoomba to Crow's Nest, and we are told in the last report of the Commissioner that it does not pay. Now there are two trains a day run on that line every day in the week, four on two extra days, and a special train running in and out almost every day. That line does not pay, for the simple reason that the grades are too steep and an engine cannot draw more than six or seven trucks at a time. It has already cost £3,500 a mile to build, and if the grades were cut down the line would pay handsomely. Only the other day I noticed that an accident happened on the Esk line. A train load of cattle were coming down and the load was an extra heavy one for the road. The consequence was that the trucks were thrown into a heap and were destroyed with the cattle. If we are going to build lighter lines than that, we may as well knock off altogether. I have been advocating a farmers' line to Goombungee. That line was promised by Sir T. McLlwraith in 1888; it was surveyed and surveyed till the surveys cost more than it would cost to build the line. The local divisional board have given the Government a guarantee for the working plans, and now we are told that they are going to give us another route. I would like to hear whether we are to have this railway, seeing that almost thousands of people have settled in the electorate on the understanding that they were going to get the railway. I thoroughly endorse the appointment of the Lands Commission, whose report I have read carefully; and I believe that when we get the Land Bill before us the report will get every consideration, and we shall have a good liberal Land Act. I notice, amongst the Bills promised, one to provide for the registration and inspection of dairies and to regulate the manufacture, sale, and export of dairy produce; and, to my mind, that is a Bill that should have been put on the statute-book long ago. You are all aware of the large amount of cancer, tuberculosis, and other diseases going through the colony. About 30 or 40 per cent. of the deaths in the colony are due to those diseases, and they are spreading. I know that on the Brisbane River there are what are called "pig butchers." They go round the stations, buying all the "mumpies" and "cancers" they can, take them West, and slaughter them. They say they boil them down and give them to the pigs. I do not complain of that; but when they slay the cattle they let the pigs have the blood in its raw state instead of cooking it, and that is where the whole of the disease is coming from. The question was asked at the Gatton conference the other day how it was that the pigs were starting to get tuberculosis, and the answer was given that no pigs got it except those fed on offal. I happened some years ago to be appointed a commissioner under the Diseased Animals Act on the Darling Downs. Being out on a tour of inspection one afternoon with Mr. Tryon, the Government Entomologist, I came across a tuberculous cow. I showed it to Mr. Tryon, and sent word to the inspector, Mr. Gadsden, who went out a day or two afterwards, when the cow was nowhere to be found. This cow was milked by the schoolmaster, who had four or five children, and what milk they did not require was sent round to the neighbours. That is the way disease is spread, and I hope the Minister, when introducing the Bill, will see that power is given to destroy all

those cattle not only in the case of dairies but also in the case of individuals who have only one cow. With regard to the power of the inspector to destroy stock, Mr. Gordon, the Chief Inspector, has written to this effect—

The fact has been overlooked in Toowoomba that the Diseased Animals Act was repealed by the Diseases in Stock Act of 1886. Under section 21 of the Act of last session local authorities have the power to destroy any diseased stock found straying on a public road or reserve. An inspector has no power to destroy any stock except on the authority of the Minister, given under section 13, and the owner is entitled to compensation for stock so destroyed under section 22. It is to be remembered that the Diseases in Stock Act of 1886 was passed to prevent the introduction and spread of diseases in stock, and all its provisions refer to infectious and contagious diseases in stock.

I may say that I, as a commissioner, never received any notice of the repeal of the Diseased Animals Act. Of course, the Act referred to deals with diseases in stock. They never thought anything about the human beings dying of cancer and other things—only of stock. We have been employing inspectors to put the ticks down, and I have been told within the last week that the ticks are dying out. I hope they will die out; and I hope that when the new Act is passed we shall have a duly qualified veterinary surgeon who will know his duty and do it, without fear of any man. Mr. Pound, I believe, says at present we cannot define a cancer. The sooner we have a gentleman who can define one the better for the colony. I must compliment the Secretary for Public Lands on the way in which he has administered his department. It is only within the last six months that the leases in the settled districts have expired; and in my electorate, within the last three months, we have had over 13,000 acres selected, in areas varying from 160 acres to 600 acres. The rent is 4s. an acre per annum, and the purchasing price from 15s. to £1 an acre. For some of those selections there were as many as twenty to forty *bona fide* applications, and I can assure the Minister that when he throws open the balance of those runs he will find that all the land fit for agriculture will be taken up very smartly. But there is no doubt that a large acreage there is not fit for agriculture. The trouble is that the land is in an agricultural area, but I can assure the hon. gentleman that a lot of it is not worth 1s. an acre per year. If a crow had to go down it would want a breaching on before it got to the bottom. I have lived within a few miles of it for the last thirty or forty years—others here know it as well as I do—and I assert that it is not fit for close settlement. I trust the hon. gentleman, when he brings forward his Land Bill, will make provision giving people in the settled districts a better chance of getting on to the Crown lands. In conclusion, I must congratulate the Acting Premier upon the honour he has received from Her Majesty the Queen. I believe I have known him as long as any other member of the House, and I can assure him it gives me the greatest pleasure to see him in that exalted position. I hope he will live long to enjoy his honours.

Mr. LEAHY: There are several subjects enumerated in His Excellency's Speech on which I shall have a good deal to say when they come before the House for discussion in the form of Bills. At present I do not intend to deal with them, although I should like very much to say something on the question raised to-night; but, as we shall have an opportunity of discussing it in a few days' time, I prefer to wait till then, when we can fight the battle fairly on its merits. I have given a good deal of time and thought to the question of federation, and when the time comes I think I shall be in a position to prove that it is to the interests of Queensland that

we should have federation, or that, at all events, we should be heard in the framing of a federal Constitution. In the meantime it would be just as well to treat the matter apart altogether from the Governor's Speech. I rise more particularly to refer to certain matters connected with the Post Office. The first is the manner in which newspapers from the southern colonies are brought into the south-western part of the colony when they come overland. There are a great many newspapers and parcels coming from New South Wales and Victoria. I would point out that many of the dwellers in South-western Queensland are old residents of Victoria and New South Wales, and as they consequently take a great interest in the everyday occurrences in those colonies they naturally want to have their mails delivered as quickly as possible. What is the case? Up to a recent period mails from the southern colonies came through Bourke and Hungerford, and were delivered in four or five days. At present when papers and parcels reach Hungerford they are turned back; they are carried on to Brisbane, then by railway 500 miles to Charleville, and then 300 or 400 miles by coach before they reach their destination; and those who want their mails have to wait five or six days for them. I do not know whether this is the result of the Gambling Act, which I had some hand in passing, but I certainly should never have voted for it if I had had any idea that a regulation of this kind was to follow the passing of it. I submit it is a matter that wants rectifying badly. It was certainly never contemplated that newspapers coming from the south—respectable newspapers like the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Melbourne Argus*, fit to be placed in the Queen's drawing-room—should be delivered in this colony with great pieces cut out of them, often to the destruction of very important reading matter. I protest against the Postmaster-General or any other man dictating to me what kind of literature I shall read, provided it is reasonable and intelligent, and I shall be surprised if this House will allow itself to be dictated to in such a matter. We are becoming altogether too much the censors of morals when we refuse to allow such newspapers as I have mentioned, which are to be found in every clergyman's reading-room in Australia, to come into Queensland without being mutilated as they are at the present time. It is outrageous. I asked at the Post Office the reason why mails were sent in the way I have described, and the answer I got was that it meant a saving of £2,000 or £3,000 a year. I should like to know how that saving is brought about. They say, so much is saved on the railways; so many papers used to come overland from the south that do not come now. All I can say is that it is a matter for great regret if the dissemination of Melbourne and Sydney newspapers in Queensland has been checked by any action of the Postmaster-General. I want to know, as I said, how that calculation of saving is made. As far as I can see it is only juggling with figures, but even if it were a real saving it would not justify the delay which occurs in those papers reaching their destination, and nothing will justify the mutilation that is carried on in connection with them. Then there is the question of parcels. If a lady at Thargomindah is getting a pair of gloves—she can get nearly everything she wants at Thargomindah, but she may want to change the pattern—they must be sent round by Brisbane. Everything must be centralised in Brisbane before it goes to the Western country. I protest against this over-centralisation. It may be said that these matters are entirely outside the Speech. The practice in all the colonies has been to discuss on the Address in Reply the administration of the Government during the recess, and what

I am referring to at present is the administration of the Post Office during the recess. I hope I shall never again have occasion to stand up in this House and censure such administration in the same manner. Returning to the question of newspapers, supposing they do contain indecent advertisements, which I entirely deny—I am sure that the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Melbourne Argus* would not publish such advertisements—that would not justify the action of the department. While this kind of thing is being done in regard to newspapers coming from the other colonies, you can see posted up in certain shops in the city such publications as the *Police Gazette*, which contain illustrations in which the arms and legs of persons are in most immoral positions. The whole thing brings to my mind something I once read in one of Fielding's novels, and why, I ask, should we strain at a gnat and swallow a camel? The hon. member, Mr. Annear, referred to the appointments which have recently been made to the Upper House. I think I can speak without any prejudice against the Government in the matter, and I am of opinion that those appointments cannot be justified on any ground whatever. Wherever I have been those appointments have been regarded as scandalous. If any principle should govern appointments to the Upper House it is that the whole of the different districts of the colony should be represented in something like the proportion that they are represented in the Lower House. Those parts of the colony which have the largest population should be represented more largely than the sparsely populated districts, but at present we have about three-fourths of Queensland not represented in the Upper Chamber. Matters of the most vital importance to the whole of the Western districts, like the Land, Rabbit Bills, and other measures have to be considered, and there is not one man in that Chamber who has any practical knowledge on those matters.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Not Mr. Allan?

Mr. LEAHY: No, he knows nothing whatever about them; he was never there. I have discussed matters with him often, and he could not himself say that he had a personal knowledge of these particular subjects as affecting the Western districts. At all events, if you go to any colony where there is an elective Upper House you will find that the principle of district representation is adopted, and as nearly as possible that principle should be followed in Queensland. That principle is not followed, and the worst feature of the whole thing is that, whether rightly or wrongly, you cannot get it out of the minds of the people that some of the appointments are made for the purpose of political jobbing. I think the whole of Queensland has been treated very badly in the matter, and that the decision arrived at by the gentlemen responsible for the appointments has been in the nature of a party decision, without proper regard to the various industries and the varied geographical conditions of the colony. I do not believe in parties; I believe in measures not men, and if we are to have a second Chamber with co-ordinate powers with this Chamber it should be elected, or appointed if you like, in such a manner as to secure the trained intellects of the country, and at the same time show due regard to the different interests and the different geographical conditions of the various districts of the colony. There are other matters on which I could speak, but I do not think this is the proper time to dwell on them, as we shall have an early opportunity of dealing with them, and I shall therefore say nothing further on the present occasion.

Mr. O'CONNELL: I am very glad to hear that disapproval with the present method of

appointing members to the Upper House has at last found expression in this Chamber. For some years I have been bringing under the notice of the Government of the day the fact that there is not a solitary member in the Upper House who is practically conversant with the work that is being done in the sugar districts, but without any satisfactory result. The hon. member who last spoke complained of the non-representation in that Chamber of the pastoral industry, especially in Western Queensland. They have Mr. Tyson, Mr. Morehead, Mr. Allan, Mr. Lambert, and Mr. J. C. Smyth.

Mr. LEAHY: They are not Western men.

Mr. O'CONNELL: What about Mr. J. C. Smyth and Mr. Morehead? It seems to me that the pastoral industry cannot complain of their representation in the other Chamber.

Mr. LEAHY: I did not say the pastoral industry; I said the West.

Mr. O'CONNELL: At any rate, there is not much advantage to be gained by further discussing the matter. At the same time I think it is very desirable that the House should mark its disapproval of the way in which appointments are continually made to that Chamber—appointments of persons resident in Brisbane or in the Southern districts, for a very large proportion of the members of the Council are residents of Brisbane. Referring to the question of alien races, during my travels lately I observed a danger, and a very potent one, to the realisation of the desire of those people who want to see the colony preserved from inundation by Asiatics. I hope the Government will see their way before very long to prevent the large influx of Japanese who are coming into the colony through Thursday Island. They are coming there, nominally, to assist the pearl-shellers, but they are becoming a host; and if some steps are not taken, before we know where we are we shall have a very large number of Japanese, who will not be all agricultural labourers, but highly intelligent men who will enter into every avocation and trade. I hope it will not be long before the Government take action, by treaty or otherwise, to stop them. I say distinctly, as the representative of a sugar district, that we have no sympathy with any such idea as a large influx of Japanese or Chinese to enable us to carry on our industry. The coloured labour we have is sufficient for a time, and there is very little chance of there ever being such a large number of that class of labour in the colony as to be any danger to the white people. To a certain extent I disagree with the remarks made by the hon. member for Woothakata on the ground that it is not likely for some years at all events that the sugar industry in the North is going to be carried on by small farmers. It will take some years before the tropical lands there can be supplied with sufficient white labour to carry on the industry without assistance. That is not altogether on account of the climate, for, so far as I can see, the climate is not half so bad as it has been represented; but there are other conditions which people who are practically acquainted with the work of sugar plantations will tell you render it very unlikely that for some years they will be able to do without some labour which will work for a small wage and under a long engagement. Of course hon. members are aware that I have had some chance of seeing the mining industry of the colony during the last few months; and I was much struck when I came back with the splendid exhibit that Queensland has in the exhibition. I hope the Secretary for Mines, if he has the welfare of the industry at heart, will see his way to keep that exhibit, and if possible have it exhibited in England and on the continent of Europe. I believe that would be the best advertisement Queensland could

possibly have for an industry which I am certain is yet in its infancy. We have not the slightest idea of the extent of the mineral wealth of Queensland at present. A subject referred to in the Speech, but which I understand it is not the wish of the House to discuss in any detail at present, is that of federation. I am very sorry that Queensland was not represented at the late Convention, and I am pleased to find that the Government are now taking steps to have the interests of the colony represented at the coming Convention. I hope that the men who are to be sent will understand that they go *bona-fide* pledged to do their best in the interests of federation. I do not know exactly what method will be chosen; but I think that the different parties whom the delegates are supposed to represent should have some say in the choice of representatives. When the Bill dealing with the subject was before the House last session, there were several hon. members, who, if they were not absolutely opposed to federation, threw cold water on it, and I hope that those gentlemen, at any rate, will not be asked to represent Queensland at the next Convention.

Mr. DANIELS: Why?

Mr. O'CONNELL: Because I desire that we should go to the Convention with the intention of trying to get a Constitution under which we may work, and not with the view of trying to block that Constitution. If it is not the wish of the House to go *bona-fide* into federation, then by all means do not send representatives at all.

Mr. TURLEY: It is supposed that the delegates will represent the express will of the people they represent.

Mr. O'CONNELL: I do not say that the different sections that are supposed to be represented should not have a voice in the choice of their representatives, but in my opinion it is desirable that our delegates should go to the Convention to assist in framing a workable Constitution. It will be very much to the detriment of Queensland if it is known that we are sending men who will go there predisposed to block federation. The only other matter that I wish to refer to is the promise in the Speech to deal with the question of public instruction. It will be a very fitting thing in this Jubilee year to alter our instruction, and I hope the Secretary for Public Instruction will deal with the question in a liberal spirit, and so that those of the younger generation in this year 1897 will be able to get a wider and fuller amount of culture in our public schools than they are getting now. I have heard it said that it is neither labour nor capital which carries on the industries of a country, but brains, and I believe that is very largely true, especially in the competitive age in which we are living. It is very necessary that the brains should be there to direct both labour and capital in the direction in which they can be most advantageously employed. I am hoping that when the Bill comes before the House the proposals of the Government will be such as will meet with the approval of every member of the House.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: As some reference has been made in the course of this debate to departmental action in the Post Office, and also in regard to the Railway Department, and as some stress has been laid on the postage rate on newspapers by the hon. member for Bulloo, it is but right that I should take some notice of his remarks, and explain the position at the present time. Perhaps it would be more in order if the matter were discussed when the Estimates came on, but as that may be at a period late in the session, it is but right that I should take notice of what has been said just now, with a view to placing before the House and the

country the actual position of affairs in connection with the Post Office, and in regard to some grievances in connection with the Railway Department. The hon. member for Bundaberg also commented upon the eccentricities of the Post Office in charging arbitrary rates upon newspapers, which to him seemed unaccountable. The hon. member did me the justice of saying that he did not accuse me of having introduced these new regulations. Indeed, the hon. member might have gone further and pointed out that when we were discussing the vote on the Estimates for the Post Office last session, I drew attention to the new *régime*, in which I was supported by the hon. member. I then expressed my opinion somewhat adversely to the change in the postal tariff by the substitution on intercolonial papers of a charge of  $\frac{3}{4}$ d. for 2 oz. in lieu of  $\frac{3}{4}$ d. for 10 oz. The hon. member will admit that very little support was given to our representations. Possibly, had fuller weight been attached to the matter, and had it assumed the importance that it now appears to assume, the action which I am now here to defend would have been deferred. The hon. member must understand that a Minister is placed in a very different position when he has to defend the administration of a law or regulation which is in existence, and has been tacitly sanctioned by Parliament, without his approval or even favourable consideration, from the position he would occupy in explaining his objections to the adoption of such measure had he prevented it. Therefore I have to carry on the administration of the Post Office under the new regulations as I find them, and as my predecessor did—in the interests of the Treasury—and, as I believe, in the interests of the public. The trouble in regard to newspapers goes further back than these regulations, and the real trouble is that there is a postal duty upon local papers at all. I think that as long as there is any postal duty levied upon papers, there will be objections raised to the manner in which that tariff is levied. The amended regulations were framed for the purpose of affording protection to local industry, and preventing outside newspapers from flooding the country to the detriment of our own local papers. Therefore the intercolonial tariff was altered from  $\frac{3}{4}$ d. for 10 oz. to  $\frac{3}{4}$ d. for 2 oz., while the inland tariff of 1d. for 2 oz. remains unchanged. So far as the newspaper proprietors of the colony are concerned, I have not heard a single complaint from them on account of this change in the tariff.

Mr. LEAHY: I am a newspaper proprietor, and I complained very strongly.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: The hon. member complained, so far as I can learn from him and from the department, of the delay in the arrival of papers, while the hon. member for Bundaberg complained of the tariff. I may say that the question of carrying mail matter is one that has attracted the attention, not only of the Post Office here, but also of the Postal Department in the United States. In the last report published by the Postmaster-General there, he lays particular stress upon the fact that the carriage of second-class mail matter—in which he includes the newspaper literature of the country—entails an annual loss upon the exchequer of 25,000,000 dollars, and he is actually invoking the aid of Congress to alter the tariff so as to cover the deficiency.

Mr. TURLEY: They have private railways and the charges are very heavy.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: Unfortunately the Postal Department here is not conducted under the happy circumstances of Great Britain. The deficiency here has been as much as £80,000 in one year, but happily it was reduced to about £60,000 last year. Still there

is a heavy charge entailed upon the general taxpayer for the carriage of mail matter over this extensive country.

Mr. LEAHY: How did the regulations remedy that?

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: They have increased our postal revenue from newspapers by about £3,000 a year.

Mr. GLASSEY: The new regulations?

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: The new regulations concern the intercolonial tariff upon newspapers. There has been a considerable increase in the postal revenue, and no general complaints have been made about the regulations, which were accepted by a large majority in this House when the Postal Estimates were under consideration last November. I cannot be expected to interfere arbitrarily with the present conditions, particularly without consulting the Treasurer, to see if he is inclined to relinquish the increase in the postal revenue. I do not think there will be any perplexity on the part of the hon. member for Bundaberg as to a charge which depends upon the weight of a newspaper. If those papers on their arrival at the southern border are not sufficiently stamped they will be surcharged, as usual. The hon. member for Bulloo complains—and undoubtedly there is cause for complaint—that his papers do not reach Thargomindah so soon if sent by Wallangarra as if sent *via* Bourke, but I am told that the delay is very moderate. The hon. member is not strictly correct in saying that these papers first come to Brisbane and are then distributed, as they go from Wallangarra to Toowoomba, and are sent on by the Western mail to Charleville and then to Cunnamulla.

Mr. LEAHY: They come to agents in Brisbane by parcel, and are posted from here.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: The newspaper matter carried by the travelling post office is delivered at Toowoomba for transmission to the Western country by the Western mail, but a large bulk of the newspapers sent from Sydney come to agents here and are posted in Brisbane, and go to their destination under the inland tariff, which entails delay. The hon. member's objection will be overcome very largely as soon as the section of the line from Charleville to Cunnamulla, now under construction, is completed, which will be on 1st July. As soon as that happens I do not think there will be more than a day's delay between the two routes, *via* Bourke and *via* Toowoomba.

Mr. LEAHY: That is to Thargomindah, but I am speaking of places hundreds of miles southwest from there.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I am taking Thargomindah as the objective point. This new service will come into operation as soon as the section of railway between Charleville and Wyandra is completed. Newspapers posted in Sydney on Friday *via* Bourke will reach Thargomindah on Tuesday at 10 p.m., while newspapers posted in Sydney on Thursday night will reach Thargomindah *via* Toowoomba on Tuesday evening, two hours before the mail *via* Bourke. In regard to the south-western country, that will all benefit to a certain extent by the better means of communication when the new extension is opened; and as this is merely a temporary delay, I do not think the hon. member's objection has much weight. The chief point is whether this intercolonial tariff upon newspapers should be maintained, and seeing that the newspaper proprietors in the colony would prefer to have the inland tariff removed altogether, and that it provides such a considerable part of the postal revenue, I do not think it is advisable to alter it. We are not in the happy position of the Postmaster-General of Great Britain, whose annual postal revenue exceeds his

expenditure by about £4,000,000, under which the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposes, to reduce the whole cost of the carriage of mail matter within the United Kingdom to 1d. for every 4 oz.

Mr. LEAHY: I think the £3,000 is very doubtful. I should like to know how it is made up.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I cannot give an analysis of it now, but I can assure the hon. member that it has been received. The hon. gentleman attacked the Post Office on account of a censorship of newspapers, but I am not aware that during the time I have been at the head of the department there has been any very severe censorship exercised. The hon. member is, with me, *particeps criminis* as we both assented, after protest, to the Indecent Advertisements Act, under which the postal authorities are not given so much the liberty of judging of the matter, as there is a direction that they shall consider advertisements framed in particular phraseology to be indecent. The present Act provides that certain expressions, although they may be very largely used in a medical sense, shall be considered by the postal authorities as contravening the Act. The utmost that has been done is to make representations to the proprietors of the newspapers in which these advertisements occur that they come within the letter of the Queensland statute. I may say that the proprietors of those journals have endeavoured to meet the spirit and the letter of the Queensland statute. When we have represented to them that something has crept into their papers which contravenes the statute they have met us in a very proper spirit.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: That was not done with all the papers.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I do not know of any selection having been made. I know that I have had several first-class papers, such as the Melbourne *Argus*, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, and others, brought under my notice as containing phrases and expressions of a character which brought them stringently within the provisions of the Indecent Advertisements Act, but considering them as used to give public announcements of men of medical and professional ability, I have not considered that they have come within the designation of indecent advertisements. But it has been represented to the publisher that they were amenable to the law of the colony, and it was hoped that they would exercise such a supervision as would render it unnecessary for the postal authorities to direct their attention to the matter in the future.

Mr. DAWSON: With the local papers you made no representations at all. You simply prosecuted them.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I do not intend at the present time to enter into any very elaborate arguments in connection with the Act, but I am of the opinion that a good deal of judgment should be exercised in its administration, and I openly profess a great desire to relieve the Press of any undue censorship. I believe in the utmost liberty of the Press so long as it does not degenerate into license, or does not contravene the legislation we have passed to keep public literature pure and moral. No doubt the matter will be fully thrashed out in the discussion on the Post Office Estimates, and in the meantime I repeat that, with the exception of the remarks of the hon. member for Bundaberg, no remonstrance has been addressed, to my knowledge, to the postal authorities concerning the new intercolonial tariff on newspapers. The proprietors of newspapers published in this colony have not so much objection to the intercolonial tariff as to the tariff levied on

the inland mail; but in dealing with an extensive country like Queensland, with its sparse or, I may say, its sporadic population, the carriage of heavy mail matter is a great tax upon the community. In the last session hon. members on the other side expressed their views fully on the tariff upon newspapers.

Mr. LEAHY: But you get nothing from it.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I have already explained to the hon. member that by reason of the intercolonial tariff on newspapers we have secured £3,000 per annum. I have not the analysis of the amount to give at the present time; but it has been satisfactorily shown to me by the Post Office authorities that that has been the result of the new regulations. The tariff has not increased the cost of the journals to local subscribers in the larger towns, because the papers are sent in large packets and bundles to the agents, and distributed by them to local subscribers without any additional charge. There may be an increased charge where the proprietors of the papers have not established local agencies.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: If the price has not increased, where does the £3,000 profit come from?

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: From the increased charge upon papers posted in the south and the surcharges upon their delivery at their destination.

Mr. HOOLAN: Make them pay. They have a right to pay. We have to pay postage, and why should not they? Think of a big firm like the Fairfaxes sneaking their papers in here without postage.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: It must be admitted that this was done with a view to protect the newspaper literature of this colony, and also to save the Post Office having to carry a large amount of dead matter at a public loss. I say the Treasurer must be consulted upon this matter, and I do not feel disposed at present to give any promise to the House with respect to an alteration. I will take the matter into consideration, and when the Estimates come on there will be an opportunity to deal with it further. Another matter brought up during the course of the debate was that nothing had been done with regard to increasing the pay of the maintenance gangs on the railways. That is not altogether true, nor yet can it be asserted that a great deal has been done. Before the resolution of the hon. member for Leichhardt was passed, the matter had received the consideration of the Treasurer, and in January last, after the resolution of the hon. member had been carried, arrears of pay to the extent of £14,000 was refunded to the maintenance gangs. To bring these men back to the full amount they enjoyed previous to 1893 would necessitate a large additional expenditure, but I must say that since 1893 there has been an assimilation of the rates of pay on the Central and Southern lines. Formerly there were three grades — one for the South, a slight increase for the Centre, and a further increase for the North. In an interview I had with the hon. member for Leichhardt I promised to give the matter consideration, and perhaps when the Estimates come on again I may have something further to inform him of, but in the meantime it is only right to say that the Government did take action in accordance with the resolution which was passed, and that £14,000 was handed over to the railway employees.

Mr. BROWNE: It is said that on the Normanton-Croydon line they have been reduced since then.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL: I might now be permitted to refer to the meeting of the Federal Council in Hobart, and I do so

because I do not think it will bring me within the scope of a recent discussion, seeing that there is no legislation proposed in connection with the Federal Council; and, further, because I happen to be the only member present who attended that Council on behalf of Queensland. I may say—and it is a very gratifying circumstance for me to announce—that Queensland stood pre-eminent at that meeting, and chiefly through the marked ability—I say it without any undue flattery—of the Hon. the Attorney-General and of the Premier. There is no doubt that Queensland was prepared thoroughly to fulfil the expectations raised in this House when the last Referring Bill was passed—namely, to advocate and endeavour to pass a measure under which the Council might have been enlarged and made elective. I very much regret to say that the representatives of Queensland who endeavoured to impress these views upon the Council, and who were handsomely supported by the local Press of Tasmania, were met by the indifference of the representatives of the other colonies, who considered there was no other scheme of federation feasible or workable than that which they called the “higher movement” of the Federal Convention. Up to a recent date Queensland has had the advantage of being represented at that Council by one of the ablest men in Australasia, Sir Samuel Griffith, and it is only fair that the country should recognise that the reputation of the colony did not suffer by being entrusted to the able hands of the Attorney-General. In support of what I have stated I will read an extract from the *Tasmanian News* of 29th January—

Whatever may be the results or effects of the present session of the Federal Council, it will be conceded that the colony of Queensland has once more proved the sheet anchor of the Council. . . . Had it not been for the representatives of Queensland it is only too evident that the present session of the Council would be tantamount to a case of suicide, or at the best death from inanition. The Victorian delegates were apparently quite prepared to sacrifice the Federal Council as a peace offering to the insatiability of New South Wales on this matter, and there are signs that some of the Tasmanian delegates would have allowed the Council to sink into oblivion without any great protest. To the delegates from West Australia and Queensland, notably Mr. Byrnes, therefore belong the honour—for it is an honour—of being loyal to the Federal Council, and of preventing it from falling into absolute contempt. The debate that took place yesterday and to-day on the motion of Mr. Byrnes—“That, in the opinion of this Council, it is desirable that the functions, powers, and authority of the Federal Council of Australasia should be strengthened by provision being made by the several colonies for placing it on an elective basis”—was of the utmost importance, and we have no hesitation in expressing our opinion that a great majority of the people of Tasmania will be found to endorse many of the sentiments expressed by the Attorney-General of Queensland.

I could quote from other papers to the same effect. I must say that there was entire unanimity on the part of the Tasmanian Press as to the advisability of enlarging the scope of the functions of the Council, which ought to be the true germ of federation; but whatever may be the outcome of the Federal Convention, there was certainly an amount of apathy displayed by other representatives which rendered the efforts of the Queensland delegates entirely nugatory. The Attorney-General introduced four Bills authorised by the Referring Bill of last session—one of them of the greatest importance, a Federal Quarantine Bill, the desirability of which has been affirmed three times by resolution of the Federal Council, and which had been referred to that body by the colonies of Western Australia and Victoria, and yet that most important measure, with another Bill, was set aside for a more convenient occasion. The Tasmanian delegates, as well as those from the other colonies, were so seized with the grand idea of the Federal Convention that they would not consider any effort

to improve the Federal Council. I regret that the prospects of longevity of the Federal Council are not greater, because I believe it would have been found the truest instrument for educating the people of the colonies up to a healthy and accurate appreciation of the benefits of federation. I do not intend to trespass upon the consideration of the Bill which may be presented to us, but I may say that I believe a true and lasting Constitution would be one that should grow like the British Constitution. It should be the outcome of the wants and requirements of the community, and not be modelled on cast-iron conditions which may be found irksome and galling before they have been many years in existence. Had the Federal Council been maintained with a larger scope; had it formed a small executive, based on moderate lines of expenditure, and also a Federal Court of Appeal, I believe it would have been the best feature in educating the people up to a more complete federation than the more heroic attempt which is being made at the present time. Though the Federal Council may cease to exist, the representatives of Queensland have been earnest in their efforts to promote a liberal federation beneficial to all, a federation which in time will of itself develop a healthy Constitution suited to the conditions of the various colonies; and whatever may be the fate of what is known as the higher movement, Queensland has no reason to accept any opprobrium on account of being half-hearted in the cause of federation, because up to the present Queensland has pursued that path which was deemed most likely to bring the movement to an early and satisfactory issue. I do not think there is anything more in the Speech to which I need specially refer. It contains a good deal of matter; at the same time I think it will be interesting and instructive to the people throughout the colony, even to those who are not politicians, because it will place before them the position of public matters in such a guise that they may learn what the Government have done. And from the attitude of the Acting Premier I think the House and the country may expect from him and his colleagues the fullest information in connection with their respective departments when desired.

Mr. McCORD: As hon. members who have spoken have gone into matters at full length, and as most of the Bills mentioned in the Governor's Speech are likely to come before us later on, I shall not refer to them now. I shall have other opportunities of expressing my views upon them then, but there are one or two matters to which I should like to draw attention. I heartily approve of the action of the Government in sending lecturers home to induce people to come, because any means adopted for the purpose of bringing people and money to the colony must be of advantage to the community. In many parts of the old country very little is known of Queensland, and our vast mining, agricultural, and pastoral resources are very little understood in other parts of the world. Some of our pursuits, particularly the pastoral and the agricultural, are in a shaky state at present. Many farmers are labouring under great disabilities owing to the drought; and while we are asking people to come to the colony we must also bear in mind those who are already here. In the electorate of Burnett I know good farmers who have been struggling for the last few years against all sorts of adversities, and who require some consideration and assistance. In that electorate there are 3,317 square miles that have been leased to pastoralists; of that area, there are 3,233 square miles available for settlement; and I agree with the hon. member for Maryborough that while we have these large areas of very good land there is no reason why the Government should buy land. I also approve

of the Premier going home to represent Queensland, which will be one of the first colonies of the Australian group. It has the biggest assets, and only wants people and money to develop it. As an instance of the natural wealth of the colony in reference to mining, I may mention that during last session I waited on the Minister for Mines to get something from the prospecting vote for two deserving men in our neighbourhood who wanted a little assistance. They got a little assistance—it was not much—and they went out. I see by a report that they found a new field where there are already six or seven mines working; and those prospectors are now in a position to support themselves. I mention this to show that we have such an unlimited and undeveloped territory that the more people we have the more chance there will be of developing the country. The farmers have had a great deal to contend with of late. Many of them have had no crops; others have only had half-crops. This not only applies to the ordinary farmers who grow wheat and maize, but to the sugar farmers as well. But, of course, this has been an exceptional year, and we may confidently hope for better times. There is another matter in this connection which I should like to see some younger men of the House take up, and that is to bring the producer and the consumer closer together. It will come eventually, though not probably in my time. One way would be to provide that maize, for instance, before being offered for sale, should be graded into three classes—first, second, and third, and that it should all be pooled and put into a granary to be held, so that the producer would be able eventually to get a reasonable price for it. If all the maize was treated in that way one result would be that a man growing maize at one end of a district would not be competing with a man who grew maize at the other end of it. That maize can be kept for a long period with proper care I know from my own experience. I have kept it for two years, and it was just as sound at the end of that period as at the beginning. Wheat and other products could be treated in the same way. With regard to the Land Bill, the delay that has taken place has done no harm. It is one of the most important measures that could come before us, and the Royal Commission which was appointed to go through the country and ascertain the views of the people on the matter, has done very good work. Judging from the members of the Mining Commission, I fully expect to have to make a similar remark regarding them when they have finished their labours. With reference to education I think more consideration should be given to teaching girls in our State schools how to sew, cook, and wash, and to teaching boys the use of tools, to prepare them for after life. I was much disappointed that the Speech made no reference to any assistance to the farmers in the way of establishing flour-mills. Some time ago a deputation from the Farmers' Union waited upon Sir Hugh Nelson on this matter. He agreed with them that it was desirable that wheat should be grown profitably, and he said he saw no reason why flour-mills should not be established on the same basis as the sugar guarantee mills. Indeed, I was led to believe that it would be one of the measures to be brought forward. However, Sir Hugh Nelson has gone home, and most likely the matter has been overlooked. I trust the Farmers' Union will renew their efforts in this direction, and that a Bill to give effect to it will be one of the measures passed during the present session. It seems absurd that so many million bushels of wheat should be imported every year from California and elsewhere into a colony which ought not only to grow all its breadstuffs, but to be an exporter of them as well. In conclusion,

I congratulate the hon. members for Balonne and Woothakata on their able speeches in moving this motion, which I support heartily.

Mr. BOLES: The hon. member in his opening remarks laid great stress on the question of immigration. It seems to him to be the panacea for all the ills the colony labours under. There is no doubt we want population very badly; still that does not bear out his argument that the Government could not have done better than send home lecturers with the view of bringing out people to settle on the land. The colony has had a good deal of experience in that direction, but I do not think the result so far can be considered a remarkable success. I will ask the hon. member if he has known one man in five coming from the old country and taking up land straight away who has ever made farming pay. In my experience the percentage is even smaller. I am speaking of men who came out with money in their pockets and settled at once on agricultural or grazing farms. Those who have made it a success are men who have been in the colony for some years and have gained practical experience, and who have earned that success by knowledge, energy, and perseverance. To say you can bring men from England without experience, and settle them on the land in a colony like this, and expect them to be prosperous all at once is a perfect farce. But I think that by encouraging the mining industry, and by the adoption of a really good and liberal land system, we should do much to attract a large number of people to the colony. I was sorry to notice that the hon. member, Mr. ANNEAR, referred rather deprecatingly to the mining industry, as in my opinion mining is the foundation of the prosperity not only of Queensland but also of the whole of Australia. Where would the colonies be to-day if it had not been for the great industry of mining? I regret that the hon. member should have referred in disparaging terms to that industry.

Mr. ANNEAR: I did not.

Mr. BOLES: Then it must have been the hon. member's colleague who did it, for I have the matter on my notes. Mining is one of our principal industries, and one that is likely to bring population to the colony. I am quite sure that the Government would only be doing the right thing if they put, say, £15,000 on the Estimates to encourage prospecting and deep-sinking, and that as a result of such encouragement a very desirable class of immigrants would be attracted to the colony. This should be backed up by a liberal land law, not such a law as we have had in the past, but one of the character suggested by the Secretary for Lands last year, under which people would be allowed to take up land at its proper value, and not at a price fixed by statute. Hitherto we have had land classed as agricultural, though much of it was only fit for pastoral purposes. With regard to light railways, while I do not claim to be an expert on that matter, I think that the proposals of the Government will prove beneficial in opening up a large amount of country. Of course such lines may not be suitable for the extension of trunk railways, but I do not see why they should not be of great service in opening up tracts of back country here as they have been in America. I am sorry that we on this side are in the same position that we were in last session—that is to say, that we are without a leader of the Opposition. Speaking honestly, I do not altogether know in what position I am. We, in this part of the House generally, look to the hon. member for Enoggera as our political mentor, but we have another leader on this side in the hon. member for Bundaberg. We do not, however, seem to be able to raise a constitutional leader of the Opposition, consequently I suppose

that in a general way we are all leaders. I mention this matter, because for the sake of the country I think it is a pity that we have not a proper constitutional leader of the Opposition. We all know that a good Government is the outcome of a good Opposition, and I hope that members on this side will take the hint, and that before the session ends we shall be able to form some sort of an Opposition with a proper leader.

Mr. Cross: You declined that.

Mr. BOLES: No, I do not decline it, for I have always been anxious that we should have a properly recognised leader of the Opposition. Before referring to the Address in Reply I wish to say that I feel keen sympathy with the Acting Premier in the great grief he has recently been called upon to bear, a grief that every member, especially those who are parents, can readily sympathise with. At the same time I heartily congratulate him on the distinguished honour he has received in the knighthood bestowed upon him by Her Majesty. I also congratulate our worthy Minister for Railways on the honour Her Majesty has been pleased to bestow upon him. Some members have rather deprecated his appointment to the Ministry, but I think the Premier made a wise selection in appointing him Secretary for Railways and Postmaster-General. He is an old member of the House, and is one of those who for many years were members of the old Liberal party. I am rather pleased to see that the Government have recognised so useful a politician, and I am sure that the appointment does them credit. I believe it will have a good effect, and that the country generally approves of the appointment. I feel pretty sure that the members on this side congratulate the hon. gentleman on his accession to the Government. The opening paragraph of the Speech refers to the Premier's visit to England. Some members have thrown cold water on that visit, and think the hon. gentleman should have been here in his place in Parliament. I am not disposed to take that view. If the Premier really went home with a view to attending the Jubilee celebrations, and for that purpose alone, I should be inclined to say that as he was likely to meet so many leading men from different parts of the world he is likely to do us a great deal of good, and for that reason we can well spare him. He is very ably represented here in his absence, and I do not think we are likely to miss him in any way. By being represented in England at a time like the present, we shall gain more than if he were present in Queensland. In fact, it would have been a mistake had someone not represented us in England. With regard to the visit of the Attorney-General, I accept the statement of the Acting Premier, and I dare say his trip will do him a great deal of good. The hon. member for Maryborough dealt very pointedly with the question of electoral reform. The hon. member, being an old Australian, is likely to carry a good deal of weight. I am quite opposed to the opinion of the hon. member. The electoral laws of Queensland are not so liberal as he tried to make out. He has always represented a town constituency, where, if a man wishes to get his name on the roll, all he has to do is to go to the police magistrate or clerk of petty sessions—he need not lose an hour over it; but in coast districts even—not to speak of the back blocks—a man may have to ride fifty miles to get a justice of the peace to attest his claim, and if he wants to get a claim from a clerk of petty sessions he may have to travel even further. Then the magistrate may not be at home, or he may not be willing to attest the claim. Then, after he has got it attested, the claim has to come before the local bench, where it may be thrown out as informal.

Consequently it is almost impossible for men to get their names on the rolls. I have known men ride thirty miles on a Sunday to get a magistrate to attest their claims, and then the magistrates have refused to witness the signatures on that day.

Mr. McDONALD: Perhaps he told them he did not know them.

Mr. BOLES: That might be so.

Mr. ANNEAR: What about schoolmasters?

Mr. BOLES: In the country districts they are all provisional teachers, and they are not entitled to witness claims.

Mr. HOOLAN: There has never been a solitary case of a school teacher attesting a claim.

Mr. BOLES: I have known of cases in which school teachers have attested claims. I am very pleased that the Government intend to bring in a Bill to enable men to exercise their rights at elections. The next subject dealt with is federation. I am not going to touch on that at all. We have heard a great deal about it to-day already. I suppose the report of the Mining Commission will come later on. I hope it will be a good one, and one which will benefit the industry. With regard to the Land Bill I trust that it will be liberal. It cannot be too liberal. If we assist the mining industry and have a liberal land law, there will be very little necessity to send home lecturers, because people will come here voluntarily—people with money and experience, who will be prepared to settle in the country. There is just one matter to which I shall allude before I sit down, and that is with regard to the tick plague in Central and Northern Queensland. Some people in the South know very little about it, except that they are in a sort of panic over it. At the same time, I believe the pastoralists in the South are having a very good time. They have the pastoralists in the Central and Northern districts "on toast," and hold a monopoly. There has been a great deal of laxity and negligence and maladministration in connection with this tick business. The regulations have been administered and the boundaries fixed in an arbitrary manner, and I expect to hear, from what I know of the way in which clean cattle have been impounded in portions of Central Queensland, that before very long sensational claims for compensation are made on the Government, and I really do not see why they should not get it. This is due to maladministration and to a desire to serve the South at the expense of the other portions of the colony. While the tick was in the North, very little attention was paid to it; but after it had crept down to Central Queensland there was a cry raised that if it came any further it would be detrimental to the people of the South. Immediately the barrier went up, and without due regard to clean cattle. People have clean cattle impounded in such a way that they are not allowed to travel. Just to show how peculiarly the Act has been administered, I may say that in my district, where no ticks have been seen, the boundary cuts off the town from the outside district. All the farmers and diggers in the Port Curtis district who have business with Gladstone have to hunt up the inspector before they can return to their homes, and sometimes the inspector is away and cannot be found for two or three days. Thus these men have to lose their time, as they are liable to a heavy fine if they go without his permission. One small pastoralist—what we term a "cocky"—got permission, and openly bragged that he had worked the department. Then the Monte Christo cattle were permitted to travel, and I agree that they ought to be permitted, seeing that they were clean. But what was most surprising was that the Targinnie cattle were refused permission to travel. This arbitrary way of dealing with

such matters shows the greatest amount of ignorance and incompetence, and Mr. Morgan was perfectly justified in bringing the matter before the New South Wales authorities. I feel sure there are many persons in my district who would rather see a good healthy immigration of ticks than put up with the way in which the regulations are being administered, but the question will come before the House in a very short time and there will be a debate upon it. It is all very fine for the Government to say that New South Wales will not budge, but unless our Government do something to show that they themselves are in no dread of the ticks in the localities I refer to, it is not likely that the New South Wales people will give way. It is a most serious question affecting a large and important industry in Central Queensland, and it is quite possible that the Treasurer will be called upon to meet the case.

Mr. KIDSTON: I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed; and the resumption of the debate made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

The House adjourned at twenty-eight minutes to 10 o'clock.