

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 25 OCTOBER 1899

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

WEDNESDAY, 25 OCTOBER, 1899.

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

PAPERS.

The following papers, laid on the table, were ordered to be printed:—

Order in Council applying the provisions of the British Probates Act, 1898, to Western Australia.

Despatch, dated 25th August, 1899, transmitting Order in Council respecting withdrawal of Montenegro from the International Copyright Convention.

QUESTIONS.

TENDERS FOR TELEPHONE MATERIAL.

Mr. McDONALD (*Flinders*) asked the Premier—

What was the estimated value of the telephone material for which tenders were called by the Acting Under Secretary, Post and Telegraph Department, on 27th September, 1899?

The PREMIER (Hon. J. R. Dickson, *Bulimba*) replied—

The estimated value of the material referred to was £78 1s.

EARTH DEPOSITED IN GOVERNMENT DOMAIN.

Mr. TURLEY (*Brisbane South*) asked the Secretary for Public Works—

1. By whose authority was material excavated from the Government ground in William street deposited in the Domain near Alice street?

2. Is it the intention of the Government to build a retaining-wall or adopt other measures to prevent such material being swept into the river in the event of flood?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. Murray, *Normanby*) replied—

1. The Queensland Defence Force.
2. There is no proposal before this department.

PRICKLY PEAR PEST.

Mr. MOORE (*Murilla*) asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

1. Do the Government intend this session introducing a measure dealing with the prickly pear pest?

2. For what purpose is the £5,000 mentioned in the Treasurer's Statement on this subject to be used?

3. Will the Minister lay on the table of the House the reports of the land commissioners on the prickly pear pest?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. D. H. Dalrymple, *Mackay*) replied—

1. No; pending certain experiments which are now being tried by the Agricultural Department.

2. For the purpose of eradicating prickly pear, and of offering a reward for the discovery of a more economical method of destruction than any at present known.

3. Yes.

Reports laid on table accordingly.

INQUIRY INTO DEATH OF LUNATIC.

Mr. DAWSON, in the absence of Mr. Lesina (*Clermont*), asked the Home Secretary—

1. Was an inquiry held into the circumstances surrounding the death by drowning at Dunwich, on Friday, 13th October, of a lunatic named Chapple?

2. If so, what was the verdict?

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. F. G. Foxton, *Carnarvon*) replied—

1. Yes.
2. No verdict. Evidence forwarded to Department of Justice.

STOREKEEPER AT DUNWICH.

Mr. DAWSON, in the absence of Mr. Lesina, asked the Home Secretary—

1. Is it a fact that the storekeeper at Dunwich has a store provided for him, and gets his goods from Brisbane carriage free.
2. Is it a fact that he charges the inmates 50 per cent. more than Brisbane prices?

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

1. Inmates of the Dunwich Asylum to whom small sums of money were sent from time to time used to order extras such as tea, sugar, cheese, tobacco, etc., through the assistant superintendent, from Brisbane; but as they were dissatisfied with this arrangement, and wished to spend the money themselves, permission was granted to Patrick O'Shea, an inmate, who had lost both legs in a railway accident, to open a small store. Lately the question of this store has been reconsidered, and it has been decided that, as the existence of the store is a convenience to the inmates, O'Shea shall be allowed to carry on the same in an inexpensive building to be erected for the purpose, but that in future his transactions will be under supervision, and his prices shall be so regulated that he shall make a living from the store, and no more, and that the balance of profit shall be devoted to the library and amusement fund.

2. No complaints have been received from inmates as to excessive charges.

PURCHASE OF POLICE HORSES.

Mr. DAWSON, in the absence of Mr. Lesina, asked the Home Secretary—

1. Is it a fact that the Commissioner of Police in purchasing police horses gives the preference to certain stations?
2. Is it true that a mob was purchased in the Burnett twelve months ago for the Bulloo district?
3. Is it a fact that a big percentage of these were brumbies?
4. Is he aware that superior horses can be obtained in the Western districts of Queensland for half the money?

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

1. No.
2. No; but some horses were purchased from five different stations in the Burnett and Port Curtis districts, and were distributed amongst several of the police stations in the colony.
3. No.
4. No.

PROVISIONS AND STORES FOR TRANSVAAL CONTINGENT.

HON. T. MACDONALD - PATERSON (*Brisbane North*) asked the Premier, without notice—Whether it is true—as I am informed—that the victualling stores of the s.s. "Cornwall," which is to convey the Queensland contingent to South Africa, are to be supplied, not in Brisbane, but in Sydney or Melbourne?

The PREMIER (Hon. J. R. Dickson, *Bulimba*) replied: In reply to the hon. member's question—which I regret I did not answer yesterday, owing to the forms of the House—I have to say that on inquiry I ascertain that a considerable portion of the supplies for the provisioning of the "Cornwall" will be obtained in Brisbane.

Mr. KEOGH: Is that fodder?

The PREMIER: I am not referring to fodder, but to stores for the maintenance of the troops on board. I understand that beef, particularly, and beer, and other things are to be obtained from Queensland; but there appears to be a difficulty in obtaining a sufficient quantity of some articles, such as lifebelts and other things, in consequence of which, I believe, those articles will be obtained in Sydney; but I am informed that the majority of the things are to be obtained in Brisbane.

IMPORTED FODDER FOR CONTINGENT TROOP HORSES.

Mr. GROOM (*Drayton and Toowoomba*) asked the Premier, without notice—Is he able to inform the House of the name of the Brigade officer who ordered these 100 tons of fodder?

The PREMIER replied: Since replying to the question asked yesterday afternoon by the hon. member, I have been informed by the Commandant that the officer who ordered the fodder was Lieutenant-Colonel Ricardo.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Ah, ah!

The PREMIER: It appears the circumstances arose in this way—if I may be permitted to enlarge in my reply—that when Lieutenant-Colonel Ricardo visited Melbourne he had instructions to ascertain what was the fodder supplied to the troops in Victoria, and he enlarged upon his commission—so I am informed—which was simply one of inquiry—and ordered, on his own responsibility, 100 tons of compressed fodder, to be offered to the Defence Force here, and, if not accepted, he would take it on his own account.

Mr. KEOGH: He ought to be dismissed the service.

The PREMIER: The supply of fodder has been left entirely to the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. GROOM: Would the hon. gentleman have any objection to laying the papers in connection with this matter on the table of the House?

The PREMIER: Not at all.

Mr. JENKINSON: A scandalous proceeding.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

On the Order of the Day being read for the resumption of Committee of Supply,

The TREASURER (Hon. R. Philp, *Townsville*) said: I move that you do now leave the chair.

PROVISIONING TRANSVAAL CONTINGENT.

Mr. McDONALD (*Blindery*): Mr. Speaker,—Before you leave the chair I think it is only right that we should get some information from the Government as to what action they are going to take in connection with the fodder ordered from Melbourne for the Transvaal contingent. We have just been told by the Premier that an officer of the Defence Force exceeded the instructions given him by his superior officer, or by the Government, and ordered a large supply of fodder on his own account, and we do not know at the present time whether the Government are going to compel him to pay for that fodder, or whether the colony is going to be landed in the expense. When we take into consideration the fact placed before us by the hon. member for Drayton and Toowoomba, Mr. Groom, that there is plenty of fodder available in the colony, I think it was very wrong on the part of that officer to take it upon himself to order a large amount of fodder for our horses. There is another matter in connection with this subject to which I should like to call attention. It has been currently rumoured that Major Ricardo is to have power to draw orders on the Government up to £5,000.

Mr. KERR: Vouchers were not forthcoming in the shearers' strike.

The PREMIER: A most unworthy insinuation.

Mr. McDONALD: I can deal with the question of the shearers' strike when the time comes. There are a lot of things in connection with that strike that the Police Commission should inquire into, but up to the present time no effort appears to have been made to inquire into them. We cannot forget the scandalous action on the part of a portion of the police at that particular period, and there are other little things that

should be inquired into, not only in reference to the action of the police, but also in reference to the action of the Government, as for instance the very serious offence of the burning of tapes in connection with the telegraph business, with which the Government were connected, and which has not been explained.

The HOME SECRETARY: Any more revelations?

Mr. McDONALD: From the way the hon. gentleman got his hair off last night I thought he had had quite sufficient revelations to satisfy him. What I want to know now is whether it is true, as rumoured, that Major Ricardo has been given a free hand by the Government to draw orders or open cheques up to the amount of £5,000. We have been told that the sending of this contingent to South Africa will probably cost £32,000, but from what we can see at the present time it is probably going to cost on to £100,000. I do not think anyone has the slightest notion what it will cost during the next six months.

The PREMIER: You don't believe in the expedition at all.

Mr. McDONALD: Whether I believe in it or not, that is no reason why I should not try to get sufficient information to let this House and the country know what it is going to cost. I ask now whether it is true that £5,000 has been placed at the disposal of Major Ricardo?

The TREASURER (Hon. R. Philp, *Townsville*): The matter only came before me to-day as Treasurer. I was asked by the Auditor-General, as an old army officer, to devise some scheme for the payment of this money, and I may say that the vouchers for it will be forthcoming. The Auditor-General will have to satisfy himself that the vouchers are submitted, and are in proper order.

Mr. McDONALD: It is true, then, that he has got the money at his disposal?

The TREASURER: No, no one has got any money yet.

Mr. McDONALD: I mean he is going to have it.

The TREASURER: There will be money sent to South Africa for the troops, and the disbursement of that money will be supervised by the Auditor-General.

Mr. KEOGH (*Rosewood*): I was not in the House yesterday when this question of the purchase of fodder for the troops going to the Transvaal came up, and I take this opportunity of informing the House that I find no fault with the Department of Agriculture presided over by the Hon. Mr. Chataway. Through me, my wife offered to the department 100 tons of oaten hay, but I was not in a position to have it pressed hydraulically. The Secretary for Agriculture, however, informed me that he thought that could be done in Brisbane. If it is possible that he can procure, as I know he can, fodder in the colony equally as good as any that can be obtained in the southern colonies, why should not the money which that will cost be expended among the people who have to pay the taxes? I think it was very wrong for Mr. Ricardo, or any other officer of the Defence Force, to order fodder from Melbourne without the sanction of the Government. He did not know what fodder would be required, neither was he aware at the time that the contingent would be sent to the Transvaal. Therefore, he exceeded his duty in purchasing fodder in the southern colonies, particularly as he was not authorised to do so by the Administration. I believe I am not the only person who has offered the Government a certain amount of fodder, which, I think, is equally as good as any that can be got in the southern colonies. I met to-day on the railway platform at Ipswich, a gentleman who had sent in samples of fodder to the Government, and

from my own personal knowledge I can say that those samples were equally as good as any hay that can be obtained from the south. I think there should be a severe vote of censure passed upon Mr. Ricardo for acting in this way without authority, and I, for one, am prepared to pass it. A man who takes such authority upon himself has no right to be sent to the Transvaal with troops. We have sufficient produce in the country to supply all requirements and there is no need to go outside the colony for it, and I should be very pleased to see the statement of the Premier carried out, and this man made to pay for this fodder if he ordered it. No matter what side of the House I was on, I would certainly say if a vote came forward for the purchase of this fodder, that if Mr. Ricardo purchased it without the sanction of the Government, he should be made to pay for it.

Mr. DAWSON: What about the quality supplied by Rosewood?

Mr. KEOGH: Whether it is supplied from Rosewood or from West Moreton, the quality will be equal to any supplied from any other part of Australia. The Secretary for Agriculture will bear me out when I say that some twenty-five tons of hay were recently purchased by the police from Mrs. Keogh, and that hay was equal to any sent from New Zealand or Victoria. There were 100 tons more behind that, and if Mrs. Keogh was prepared to supply it, or anyone else in Queensland, I say we have a right to see that the supply required is purchased from Queensland people. We have a better right to the expenditure of the money than the Southern people. I see by the *Courier* that the hon. member for Fassifern last night referred to the remarks of some members who strenuously favoured federation—and this is federation to a large extent; but it is a federation I do not believe in. I believe in doing all we can to foster our own industries. It is a great desideratum with Ministers to see people settled on the land and able to produce something from it. I do not blame the Government in this matter, and I know the Secretary for Agriculture has done all he could to see that hay was purchased from the Queensland people. I say that openly, for I know it to be a fact. But I blame the Government in this way for allowing Mr. Ricardo or any other officer of the Defence Force to purchase fodder outside the colony, and I say he should be made to pay for it. I hope the Secretary for Agriculture will show that he is the right man in the right place, and will put his foot down and not allow Ricardo or any other officer to step in and purchase fodder without the authority of the Government.

The PREMIER: I ask the permission of the House to correct a statement I made and which was attributable to my want of memory of the exact data supplied me. I think I stated that Lieutenant-Colonel Ricardo went south.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: I must withdraw that statement, and I will just read to the House a statement of the exact position. I regret that my statement may have misled hon. members.

Mr. DAWSON: It is not the first time you have led them astray.

The PREMIER: What General Gunter reports to me is this—

When preparations were being made for the despatch of a contingent for South Africa, Lieutenant-Colonel Ricardo, S.O.M.I., with my authority, made preliminary inquiries from several merchants in the city—

That is in Brisbane, and not in the south, as I think I stated before—

as to the possibility of obtaining patent compressed fodder. It appeared that great difficulty was experienced in securing any at all, owing to the demand for this kind of forage for shipment to South Africa,

and no action was authorised. However, seeing that, and in order not to lose the opportunity which was impressed upon him by Messrs. Rich and Co., Lieutenant-Colonel Ricardo, acting upon his own initiative, authorised a purchase, intending that if the Government did not require the fodder he was to keep it himself. This transaction appears to have been conducted entirely through the telephone, and no record of it was kept as an official transaction.

I understand that there was a great scarcity of compressed fodder, but as the result of negotiations I find it can be supplied locally. I do not wish to add any more.

Mr. CURTIS (*Rockhampton*): A majority of the electors having recently voted in favour of federation, it appears to me a strange thing that this objection should be taken. Although the Commonwealth Bill is not yet consummated, and federation is not yet established, we may consider that we are virtually federated, and we know very well that as soon as the Federal Parliament is established anything of this kind will be dealt with by the federal authorities, and they will purchase the chaff or whatever else is required wherever they think fit. In all probability this hay is compressed into so small a space, and is on that account more suitable for transport than anything that could be purchased in the colony. I think I have just as much right to put in a claim for the Rockhampton farmers as the hon. member for Rosewood has for the farmers of the Rosewood district, and I have been assured that the Rockhampton farmers can supply hay of as good if not of a better quality than anything that can be supplied from the Rosewood or any other district in the colony. (Laughter.) The electors of the colony having so recently decided that we should become one people with one destiny, and bearing in mind that as soon as the Federal Parliament is established these military matters will be controlled by the federal authorities, and they will purchase anything required not in Queensland necessarily or in any of the other colonies, but wherever they think fit and can purchase it to the best advantage, I think it is rather absurd for us to make any fuss about this matter. No doubt the military authorities gave this order,

[4 p.m.] whether on special authority or not I can't say; but we can be well assured that they were acting in the best interests of the Defence Force and of the colony. Under all the circumstances, I am not inclined to quarrel with the military authorities over this matter.

Mr. FISHER (*Gympie*): I think the hon. gentleman who has just spoken has altogether missed the point. He declares that the military authorities were justified in purchasing this fodder, and now the Chief Secretary states that the military authorities have not purchased the fodder. The Government denies that these purchases have been made.

The HOME SECRETARY: No. The military authorities deny it.

Mr. FISHER: Yesterday it was denied that the military authorities had any authority at all for making the purchase, yet to-day we have an official letter from the Commandant stating that he gave a general authority to Lieutenant-Colonel Ricardo to make inquiries about this kind of fodder, and that that officer, after making inquiries, said he could not get any suitable fodder in Brisbane, and he therefore purchased it from the south. I have no hesitation in saying that I would advise the authorities to purchase the best material they can get, whether it is in Queensland or from outside. What is the position now? The Government apparently are afraid of some local influence, and they now want to shuffle out of this transaction, and the charge is now to be thrown upon Lieutenant-Colonel Ricardo, who made this

purchase. But there is a very much worse element in the matter. We are now led to believe that Lieutenant-Colonel Ricardo made this purchase as a speculation on his own account. If that is so, do the Government or their officers justify that?

The TREASURER: No, not at all.

Mr. FISHER: Would they justify a commanding officer speculating in goods or stores to be supplied to the contingent for South Africa?

The HOME SECRETARY: No, certainly not.

Mr. FISHER: Such a proceeding would be most disastrous. But that is the position we are in now. According to what the Premier has stated—that Lieutenant-Colonel Ricardo has now in his possession 100 tons of fodder suitable for the contingent that is going to South Africa; and I say that under the circumstances he should not be in that position. I trust the Government will relieve him of all responsibility in the matter, and accept the purchase, if it was made in good faith. I ask the majority of hon. members who voted on this contingent matter the other night, if Lieutenant-Colonel Ricardo is not following the example of the Premier? He pledged the whole of Parliament to a greater cost than Lieutenant-Colonel Ricardo has done, and I say that Lieutenant-Colonel Ricardo is only following the example of the Premier. And why should not the Premier stand loyally by that officer now? As a matter of fact, I believe both acts were wrong; but I say that the position is very humiliating for the Ministry—that they should endeavour to back down because of some local agitation.

* Mr. McDONNELL (*Fortitude Valley*): I think this matter deserves the serious consideration of the House. A few weeks ago, when it was announced in the old country that the British Government were prepared to purchase a large amount of produce, the Premier cabled to the British authorities informing them of the failure of the wheat crop, explaining that we have an enormous quantity of produce for disposal, and asking that they should give a little of their custom to Queensland; and I think it is very inconsistent on the part of one of the heads of the Defence Force that he should go away from Queensland while we know that here we have an enormous amount of fodder at our disposal—that he should go to Victoria and order this parcel of fodder for the Queensland troops. I certainly object to this, and I do not care whether Ipswich or any other place, has a monopoly in supplying these articles. We have a number of produce merchants in the Valley, who are able to supply this article in the best form, and I would like to refer in this respect to my old colleague, Mr. McMaster, who would be able to supply 500 tons of compressed fodder. So the statement of Major Ricardo, that this fodder cannot be obtained in Brisbane, is not borne out by facts. The hon. member for Rockhampton dealt with the matter from a federation point of view. The position is bad enough now, but when we get federation this sort of thing will undoubtedly take place; but I say that until we part with our Defence Force—until the Federal Parliament takes over the Defence Force of this colony—it is the bounden duty of the Government to give preference in this respect to the producers of this colony. We know what the history of Major Ricardo has been; how lax he has been with regard to moneys placed at his disposal, and also in regard to the manner in which he has conducted certain matters connected with the Defence Force, and I think the House should pronounce very strongly against his action in these matters. The Hon. the Premier took exception to the statement of the hon. member for Flinders that certain vouchers in connection with the 1891 strike were not produced. But it is a fact that

this military agent could not produce these vouchers at the time; and I am given to understand that the Commandant has all he can do to keep Major Ricardo in his proper place. It is evident that he wants to boss this Parliament, and also that he wants to become the dictator of the Defence Force of this colony. I say that this is a serious matter, and I am very glad that hon. members representing country constituencies, and particularly the hon. member for Toowoomba, have brought this matter forward, because I can assure you that it is creating a great amount of comment outside at the present time. We know that the market is practically glutted now with this produce and every facility should be given to get that produce locally which the troops who are going to South Africa will require. If we are going to spend £32,000 of the money of the taxpayers to send this contingent to the Transvaal, I say that local men should have the preference. If the Queensland producers and merchants can supply this fodder and other stores, they have a right to claim the preference. I take a very strong objection to the action of Colonel Ricardo in this matter. It is evident that he ordered this fodder on his own account—that he acted as a middleman—in the hope that he could sell it to the Government again. It seems to me that it was merely a speculation on his part. That is exactly the position. I think the feeling of the House has pretty fairly shown up to the present time that this action is strongly resented and I hope the Government will put their foot down and hold Colonel Ricardo himself responsible for the action he has taken.

Mr. STEWART (*Rockhampton North*): I would like to say a word or two in connection with this matter before it is finally closed. I must say that I agree somewhat with the remarks that fell from the senior member for Rockhampton. We are practically federated now with the southern colonies. We are one people, one destiny, or are supposed to be, and I would have imagined that all these local jealousies and suspicions would have vanished with the bringing of federation about, but apparently we have not attained the golden age yet. It appears to me that there is a screw loose in this transaction. Either the Government gave Lieutenant-Colonel Ricardo authority to purchase that fodder in the southern colonies, or Lieutenant-Colonel Ricardo took the authority upon himself to buy the fodder as a private speculation.

Mr. DAWSON: That is exactly the position.

Mr. STEWART: Now, if the Government gave Lieutenant-Colonel Ricardo this authority they are putting themselves in a most unenviable position by making the Lieutenant-Colonel the scapegoat. The action has aroused a great deal of ill-feeling amongst a number of their own supporters, and now the Government shelter themselves from the breeze behind the person of Lieutenant-Colonel Ricardo. If that is the case, I say they are in a mean, and despicable, and unenviable position. Now take the other side of the position. If Lieutenant-Colonel Ricardo started jobbing in army fodder on his own account, then I say he should be deprived of his sword and publicly drummed out of the Queensland army.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. STEWART: If the Government did not give him authority—and they say they did not; and we are bound to believe the Government, for it is composed of honourable men we all know—then if that is the case Lieutenant-Colonel Ricardo acted upon his own authority and without reference to his superior officer or to the Government. He said if the Government would not take the fodder he would buy it himself.

Why, I think the thing is as plain as a pike-staff. He means not only to be Lieutenant-Colonel in the Queensland Defence Force, but means to make a pretty little thing out of jobbing in army stores. Now, the outside contractor who jobs in army stores, and earwigs commanders and generals and officers of the commissariat, and all that sort of thing, is a great danger to any State, but the officer of the army who directly and in his own person jobs in army stores, is an individual who should not be tolerated in the service at all. So that I think what the Government ought to do is this. They ought to own up at once that they gave Lieutenant-Colonel Ricardo power to buy these stores.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: But we did not.

Mr. STEWART: And that now they are sheltering themselves behind that gentleman, or they ought to dismiss him from the public service. I say that the man who does this kind of thing on his own authority should not be a member of the defence force of any country.

Question put and passed.

COMMITTEE.

Question—That there be granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year 1899-1900 a sum not exceeding £300 to defray the salary of the aide-de-camp to His Excellency the Governor.

* Mr. McDONNELL (*Fortitude Valley*): I desire to take advantage of the present opportunity to say a few words in connection with various matters which have been mentioned in the Treasurer's Speech. I fully recognise that the Speech, on the whole, is a very satisfactory exposition of the present state of the colony. It shows the magnificent resources and great natural advantages of the colony, and further that the present state of Queensland cannot in the least be attributed to the action of the Government of the colony during the last few years. I am of opinion that if Queensland had a Government more alive; a more progressive Government, a Government that would introduce liberal and advanced legislation, that these things, taken in conjunction with the great natural resources of the colony, would put the colony of Queensland in even a far better position than she is in to-day. I do not believe that there would be any need for immigration votes, because I am satisfied that then people from all parts of the world would be attracted here. I think the Government have been lucky. They have been lucky because we have had good seasons to help us, and despite the fact that they have not done what they should have done, not only in the interests of the producers, but in the interests of every other class in the community, the colony is at present making wonderful progress. I would wish to refer to one matter which was introduced by the senior member for Brisbane North, Mr. Forrest, and that is the question of the improvement of our harbours and rivers and a scheme for the prevention of floods. I think in these matters the Government have shown a wanton neglect and a criminal carelessness, so far as this city of Brisbane is concerned. In 1893 we had a most disastrous flood here, which cost the Southern part of Queensland some millions of money.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It cost the whole of Queensland a lot of money.

Mr. McDONNELL: Well, it particularly affected the Southern portion of the colony.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: And the North helped to pay to put things right again.

Mr. McDONNELL: Yes, and we paid our share and are always prepared to pay it; but I say, if any other Government had been on those benches they would have done something to cope

with the results of that flood and have taken steps to bring forward legislation that would prevent, or at all events mitigate, the effects of such a catastrophe in future.

The HOME SECRETARY: Without full inquiry?

Mr. McDONNELL: Well, I think six years is a very long time to be inquiring into this matter. I know that in other matters that do not so immediately concern the people the Government have shown that they can conduct their inquiries and receive their information in a much shorter space of time; but in this case not only are the people of Brisbane dissatisfied, but the people of other parts of Southern Queensland are dissatisfied at the action which has been taken by the Government. Why, it is only a few weeks ago that the City Council in Brisbane had to write to the Premier—and write him, I think, a pretty stiff letter—requesting him, earnestly requesting him, to take steps to put into actual operation some scheme, or take some action to bring forward some scheme, to deal comprehensively with flood prevention. During the federation campaign there were one or two points that federalists dwelt upon most particularly. One point was that the great bulk of our exports went to the southern colonies. The hon. member for Brisbane North, Mr. Forrest, in his speech the other night, admitted that what was contended right throughout that agitation was not a fact—that the southern colonies did not take the amount of exports they were credited with. Why, even an hon. gentleman in this House addressed a large number of ladies and gentlemen of the Christian Endeavour Society, telling them the large amount of produce and the large amounts that the southern colonies took from Queensland in the form of exports. What is the position, as the hon. member for Brisbane North said the other night? We are in that position to-day in Queensland, that we are obliged to send our exports to the southern colonies—down to Sydney—in order to have them re-exported again, because our river has been so neglected that large vessels are not able to be accommodated and cannot come up. Then we have been told that the southern colonies have taken these exports for their own use, whereas, at the same time, the great bulk of them have simply gone there for convenience sake—we had not the facilities we should have at our own ports. I was in Melbourne some years ago, and there saw the efforts made by the Government of Victoria to make the river Yarra navigable. The result is that large vessels at present go up the river, and they have direct communication from the wharves to the sea. In Brisbane we have a splendid river, one of the finest rivers in Australia, and it has been neglected; and the reason it has been neglected, in my opinion, is the reason which has been given many times in the Brisbane papers—that we have too much Northern influence in the Queensland Cabinet at the present time; that that consideration has not been paid to Brisbane and the Southern parts of Queensland that they are deserving of. I think that in these matters we should disassociate altogether this selfishness that seems to predominate very largely. This is the capital of the colony.

The TREASURER: Where does the selfishness come in?

Mr. McDONNELL: It does not come from Brisbane. I do not claim for Brisbane one thing more than I claim for Rockhampton, Townsville, and the other ports in Queensland; but this is the capital of the colony, and the greatest amount of the production of the colony goes through this port. I think it is the duty of a Government which wishes to develop the colony and desires to assist the resources of the colony to do all in their power to give every facility to the producers

of the colony, and, in my opinion, the way they have treated us in respect of the Brisbane River, they have not shown that desire in the past. What has been done up till the present time? To my mind, the only decent work which has been carried out is in connection with the training walls. That, I believe, is a good piece of work. I believe it has been carried out under the supervision of Mr. Cullen—one of the engineers—and, when completed, it will be a great advantage to our river. By the way, speaking on that point, I hope that when the work is completed the Government will hold on to all the reclaimed lands—in fact, resume some of the land convenient, and make it a public promenade. We are very badly off, particularly in Brisbane, for open spaces and other promenades. Down by the Hamilton there is a large amount of land convenient to the reclaimed land which could be resumed, which would make a magnificent reserve in that respect.

The HOME SECRETARY: When you say resumed, you mean reclaimed?

Mr. McDONNELL: I think that in order to make this really something that will be of public benefit, it will be necessary to resume some of the land convenient to the land which is being reclaimed. There is another point that was mentioned by Mr. Forrest. That was in connection with the building of wharves. That also was emphasised last night by the hon. member for Brisbane South, Mr. Turley. I should like myself to see the wharves—all the wharves it would be possible—put into the hands of the municipal authorities; or, better still, if possible, into the hands of the Government. Still, if it is not possible, I think there should be no obstacle placed in the way of those persons who, at the present time, are anxious to build wharves here for the convenience of their trade—the coasting trade of the colony. I fully agree with the position taken up by Mr. Forrest the other night, that I think undue obstacles—at any rate, obstacles—have been placed in the way of the construction of wharves at Petrie's Bight. I am particularly interested in this matter, because it affects the electorate I have the honour to represent. It is in the Valley electorate. I think myself it was simply a fight between two companies—a fight between the Australasian United Steam Navigation Company and Howard Smith's. It was simply a matter of competition. The bulk of the evidence that was against the construction of the wharf by the Brisbane Wharves Company was that of employees of the Australasian Steam Navigation Company, and I am rather surprised at the Marine Board, who should desire to see our river developed, and every possible facility given to shippers and shipowners, placing obstacles in the way of men who are prepared at the present time to spend such a large sum of money in the construction of wharves. However, this matter will come up again later, when I have no doubt the question will receive, as I think it deserves, a considerable amount of attention. There is another point which was referred to by one or two of the members who have spoken—the leader of the Labour Opposition and Mr. Turley. That is the remission of the beer duty. I accompanied two deputations to the Premier on this particular question, and the last time we waited on the hon. gentleman he was, I think—at all events from his remarks—favourable to some remission. I believe, too, that if the hon. gentleman had his own way in the matter he would be prepared to remit a portion of that duty. At all events, I could gather that from his remarks, because he admitted that that deputation at the time that the duty was put on when we had a deficit, and that it had answered all its purpose. In fact, we have now, by this

Financial Statement, a surplus to our credit, and I think that the claims put forward by the licensed victuallers—because they are the people who have approached the hon. gentleman—deserve some consideration. Lately there was a

meeting of the Licensed Victuallers' [4.30 p.m.] Association, and a report appeared in a paper, which I believe is their official organ—the *Sporting and Dramatic News*. I will just read a paragraph from that report—

Strong representations had been made to the Ministry with regard to the excise duty upon beer, it having been pointed out to them that granting, for the sake of argument, the desirability of leaving it to the Federal Parliament to review taxation generally, still on the Treasurer's Estimates a reduction of 1d. per gallon as a tentative measure was only an act of common justice to all concerned for the following reasons:—That in 1897 the tax was imposed ostensibly to meet an estimated deficit of £27,000, but was now realising by latest returns upwards of £70,000 per annum.

The TREASURER: No.

Mr. McDONNELL: According to the Financial Statement, the beer duty during the year 1898-9 realised £61,608, or an increase of £13,480 over the figures for the previous year.

The TREASURER: The receipts from the excise on beer last year were £58,000.

Mr. McDONNELL: I quote from the Financial Statement—

The quantity of beer brewed in 1893-9 shows that the industry is recovering from the check experienced by the imposition of the excise tax in 1897, the figures standing—

	Gallons	Duty.
1897-8	4,780,098 ..	£18,128
1893-9	5,287,448 ..	61,608
	Increase ...	£13,480

I suppose £58,000 is the net amount of the duty, after deducting the cost of collection; and, by the way, the cost of collection of this excise duty is remarkably small. This article goes on to say—

And as a matter of fact there was a surplus on general revenue account last year of upwards of £150,000. Leaving this, however, as a thing of the past, although from present indications likely to recur in the future, the Treasurer, on his own figures for the current year, had a surplus of £24,000 on his Estimates, and he (the secretary), in conjunction with the parliamentary sub-committee, had strongly urged upon that gentleman and sundry of his colleagues, the claims of the licensed victuallers to the appropriation of this surplus to a reduction of the existing duty.

The TREASURER: The Transvaal contingent will take all that.

Mr. McDONNELL: It will take a lot more, I think—

Seeing that the same, as previously mentioned, had been imposed to meet an estimated deficiency, and Mr. Philp had publicly acknowledged to the deputation which waited upon him in June last the justice of their claim, and virtually promised its favourable consideration at the first convenient opportunity. He (the secretary) had reason to believe that that gentleman was still favourably disposed towards them; but the fact remained that at a Cabinet meeting held last Tuesday it was finally decided to allow things to remain in *statu quo*, in his opinion solely because a certain influential section of the Ministry were absolutely afraid, under existing circumstances, to introduce into the House matters which, in the smallest degree, might be regarded as of a contentious nature.

That seems to be the secret why the Treasurer himself has taken no action in that respect. It is evident that some of his colleagues were afraid that this would be a contentious matter, and that there would be a division of opinion amongst their own followers; but that consideration should not weigh with the Government if they consider the case of the licensed victuallers is a just one. If they have a claim on the Government—as I believe they have—then the justice of their case should be recognised, and the Treasurer should carry out, at all events, the half promise he made to the deputation which waited on him. I am not advocating this

because I am a beer drinker. I drink a glass of beer, and I often find it very beneficial. At the same time, I opposed the imposition of the tax because I do not believe in an excise duty being imposed on any article that we are able to produce in the colony, even if it is beer. I do not think it is right to handicap local production in any form by the imposition of an excise duty, and when we remember that the duty on beer was taken off before and a duty placed on malt and hops to compensate for the loss of duty on beer, and remembering that we have now got the duty on malt and hops in addition to the duty on beer, the Treasurer should have paid some consideration and acceded to some extent to the request which has been made to him. We may be told that this is one of the questions which is going to be referred to the Federal Parliament; but during the federal campaign the federal organs were day after day telling us that it would be at least three years or three and a-half years before the Federal Parliament would take over the Customs and Excise Departments, and that it would be at least that time before a uniform Customs tariff was imposed. Now, if it is a couple of years—if it is three years—it is the duty of the Government to consider this case, if in the interests of local industry alone—not because it is beer—I advocate the same thing in regard to tobacco, or any other production as well as beer. I recognise that it is a tax on local industry. In view of the double tax on malt and hops, and the tax on beer, the claims put forward by the Licensed Victuallers' Association deserve some consideration. I come now to another point in the Financial Statement, and it is not the least important in it—and that is, the probable expenditure for the year 1899-1900. The Treasurer is in a good position now. He has a surplus, and it seems to me that he is inclined to plunge. There are several items of expenditure here to which I take very great exception, but at the same time, I am glad of one thing—and that is that the Government have recognised, even at last, that the case of the lower paid Civil servants deserves some consideration. I am very pleased to notice that we are to have a restoration of wages of the railway men. That has been advocated very strongly by members on both sides of the House—particularly, I think from this side of the House. We are going also to have an increase in the salaries of the assistant teachers. That has not come a day too soon. But I would like to ask the Treasurer one question in connection with this. Will the increases in the salaries of the assistant teachers date from the beginning of the financial year—the same as increases to officers in other departments? Are these increases to date from 1st July?

The TREASURER: I think so; but I cannot tell you until we come to the Estimates.

Mr. McDONNELL: I know there is a great deal of interest outside amongst the assistant teachers on this point, and I am glad to know from the Treasurer that in his opinion the increases are to take effect from 1st July, because it will satisfy a lot of persons who are interested. There is another department that has got an increase—that is the Shops and Factory Department. I notice that the whole of the staff in that department are to receive increases and I think they are very deserving of them, because as far as my experience goes they have a lot of work to do, and are hard-working officers. Moreover, a factory inspector occupies a somewhat different position from the ordinary Civil servant, and if you have a dishonest man in that position he will be open to bribery and rewards for not doing his duty as he should do it. I

do not for one moment mean to reflect on the present staff in saying that, because I do not believe that any one of them would be influenced in that way. Dealing now with the railway men, there is one little matter that I should like to refer to, and that is that, while the permanent hands have been restored to the rate of wages which they received before 1893, a number of men employed as casuals in the goods-shed at Roma street are paid a miserably small wage compared with the work they have to perform. They work fifty hours a week, when fully employed, and their rate of pay is 5s. a day. I think there should be a minimum wage for men doing any work in the Railway Department. The men to whom I refer work twelve hours a day, out of which they are allowed two hours for meals, so that they work fifty hours a week, and for that labour they receive £1 10s. This matter will come up on the Railway Estimates, but I do not think it is out of place to refer to it now. On an average those men get three days' work a week, and if they want employment they have to call at the shed every morning at 9 o'clock to see if they are required. They are just as necessary in that department as the permanent hands, because they do the bulk of the bullocking work in the goods-shed, and 5s. a day is very little for the work they have to perform. I hope the Minister will be able to give us an assurance when the Estimates are under consideration that there will be some increase in the wages paid to those men. Now I come to the expenditure in connection with the Defence Force. It is astounding what a large amount of money it is proposed to expend on the Defence Force this year. Last year our Defence vote for the federal garrison, the land force, the marine force, the Thursday Island garrison, buildings, ammunition, arms, etc., amounted to £104,340. This year that vote is increased by £24,405. There is an increase of £18,000 in the land force, £2,000 in the marine force, a small increase in the amount for the Thursday Island garrison, and an increase of £10,000 for buildings, arms, ammunition, field guns, and other articles of that kind. The Defence vote for this year amounts to £138,745, and adding to that £32,000, which we are told will be the cost entailed in sending a contingent to the Transvaal, the amount of money that will have to be paid by the taxpayers of the colony for the Defence Force during the current financial year will be £170,745. But the amount which it is said will be required for the Transvaal contingent may be doubled. I think it is high time that Parliament woke up, and took some action in connection with the expenditure of this large amount of money for defence purposes, a considerable proportion of which is in my opinion simply squandered. £170,000 means on an average 7s. 6d. per head for every man, woman, and child in the colony, and that is what we have to pay for our military department, while the expenditure on education, which is an important matter in a young colony like this, where we have a young population growing up, is only 2s. 6d. more, or 10s. per head of the population. My objection to this large military vote would not be so strong if our Defence Force were giving the satisfaction it should. There is a great amount of dissatisfaction among the men. A few years ago the best men in the Volunteer Force were forced to leave the Defence Force—I mean the Irish Volunteers—and though I made an effort with one or two of the officers of the force to try to make some arrangement whereby that corps would be induced to come back again, I was unsuccessful, because the Commandant did not show that desire that he should have done to mend matters in respect of the retirement of those volunteers from the

Defence Force. And the last report of the Commandant discloses the fact that to-day the volunteers are in a worse position than they were in then; for every day, practically, the strength of the Defence Force is going down, whereas the expenditure on it is largely increased. During the last few weeks we have seen a similar state of things in the Naval Brigade to that which existed in the Defence Force. Some of the officers who had given their time for nothing were forced by the action of the naval commander, out of self-respect, to hand in their resignations. The ordinary rank and file of the Defence Force are dissatisfied with the treatment meted out to them; and the great bulk of the money voted by this House is really handed over to a number of men who are simply ornaments to this country—that is the headquarters staff and the Permanent Force. I am of opinion that if we had a thorough, exhaustive inquiry into the Defence Force by a Royal Commission similar to that inquiring into the Police Force, we would find that there is an amount of wilful extravagance and waste in connection with that force that would surprise the taxpayers of Queensland. When we have a force like that of a couple of thousand men, involving a tax upon the country of £140,000, that practically shows nothing for it, that has given no satisfaction to anybody, or to the men who largely give their time for nothing in that force, it is about time the Government instituted a searching inquiry into it, to place it on better lines than at present—on lines which would give encouragement to volunteers to join it, as they were always prepared to do, instead of as at the present time paying large salaries to men who practically do nothing but go on trips to encampments held in the south and simply dabble around the streets of the city. What strikes me is that the Government have no compunction in coming down to this House and asking us to pass this amount of money, and yet, when a question like that of securing a recreation reserve for the people of a closely populated district like that of Fortitude Valley, where there are 21,000 people with not a foot of ground for recreation purposes—when the Premier was asked in the interests of the people and of the children born and reared in that place, and who have no place but the open streets to get a breath of air—when we come to him and ask him to grant £15,000 for a recreation reserve for the Valley which will last for all time and benefit the people of that and of other localities, we get a flat refusal. The Government is not prepared to squander the money of the taxpayers in this respect, and at the same time we have them coming down to this House and asking for enormous sums to keep up an institution that is of no practical benefit to it, and that I believe is not at the present time run on right lines. Then we have on the other side a department I take a particular interest in—the Factories Department. Twenty thousand people in this colony are interested in that department, because the operation of the Act affects nearly that number of people in the colony, and here we have on this year's Estimates the magnificent sum of £1,800 set down to work that department in the interests of those people. Some time ago in this House I advocated the appointment of an extra inspector for that department, and we were told at the time that the Government did not want to run into extra expense—they did not want to incur the extra expense of £150 a year. That is exactly the case right through—wherever the people are concerned the Government are slow to expend one single penny in their interests, and they have not the slightest compunction in coming down and asking this

House to pass enormous votes like this defence vote. From the information I have I think we will never have satisfaction in this matter until we have a searching inquiry into it by independent men, like those inquiring at the present time into the efficiency of the Police Force.

Hon. G. THORN: We want to fix the wages.

Mr. McDONNELL: A matter was referred to last night by the leader of the Opposition and by the hon. member for South Brisbane which created a little heat here at the time. I am not surprised it did, for I know that it created a considerable amount of heat and comment outside. That is the purchase by the Government of this Seaforth Estate at Mackay. It is a very serious matter, and I am rather surprised it has not come up in another form in this House. It is a matter the Government will hear a great deal more about before it is finished. The matter was gone into pretty fully by the hon. member for South Brisbane last night, but I may say that the estate was purchased at a price £3 an acre above what it was valued at by practical men. The Government Crown lands ranger, Mr. Winks, valued it at £1 0s. 10d. an acre, the divisional board valued it at 15s., and on appeal the valuation was reduced to 12s. 6d. an acre—the owners appealed against that as too high; one valuator estimated that it was worth a little over £1 an acre, it has been valued also at 12s. 6d. an acre, and Mr. Hume has said that if it was in the Southern part of the colony it would not be worth more than 15s. an acre; and yet, in the face of all this, we have the Government coming in and purchasing it at £3 13s. an acre. On the face of it this transaction looks of such a very shady nature that it should be the duty of this House—and the Government should, in fact, volunteer themselves—to appoint a select committee or a Royal Commission to inquire into the whole circumstances connected with the purchase of this estate.

Mr. KERR: And of other estates as well.

Mr. McDONNELL: I am referring particularly now to this Seaforth Estate. A few weeks ago we had the defeat of one of the strongest Governments in Australia, the Reid Government in New South Wales, over the paying of £300 to Mr. Neild, unauthorised expenditure for work for which in my opinion he should have been paid. I did not hold that the Government should have been defeated on that question, but the Parliament of New South Wales were so jealous of their powers and so anxious that Government should be pure in its administration that they defeated the Reid Government for paying this amount to Mr. Neild. In my opinion that action pales before the action of the Government here in the purchase of this estate. To me this looks like nothing but a big gigantic job and a piece of corruption, and I do not think this country will be satisfied until the whole matter is cleared up by the appointment either of a select committee to get all the facts, or of a Royal Commission to inquire into it. We have had reports from some of the valuers suppressed and most remarkable discrepancies between the estimates of value by different valuers of the estate and the whole surroundings in connection with it are of the most suspicious nature. I hope this House desires to see purity of government, and that hon. members will insist that we shall have all these things gone into and the whole of the facts placed before us, because I say that, even in the interests of the Government, it is absolutely necessary that the people of the colony should be put in possession of the whole of the facts, or else on the case as it is presented to them now they must come to the con-

clusion that it is nothing but a piece of jobbery and corruption on the part of the Government.

There are several other matters that are worthy

of considerable comment, but as we [5 p.m.] will have an opportunity on the Estimates of discussing them, I do not think it is necessary for me to refer to them now. One of these matters was referred to by the hon. member for South Brisbane, and that is the appointment of the inspector of totalisators. There is something in that appointment that needs a considerable amount of explanation, and no doubt the matter will be fully discussed when we are dealing with that gentleman's salary. Now, I come to another question, and it is a matter that I need not apologise for referring to. On the debate on the last Financial Statement I brought this matter up, and it is altogether apart from the administration of the Factories Department, because we can fully discuss that on the Estimates, and I intend to do so; but we cannot very well discuss this question except on an occasion like this. Last year I devoted a great deal of my speech to this matter, and this afternoon I am going to refer to a few points in this connection, in order to show that it is absolutely necessary that there should be some legislation in this respect. Now, during the federal campaign, a number of gentleman, some of them members of this House and some members of the Upper House, were loud in their denunciation of the conditions of the factory workers in Brisbane. In fact some of the hon. members were horrified, as they stated on the public platform, at the conditions of these workers, and at the rate of wages they were receiving. I thought, after that, that one of the first things the Government would do this session would be to bring in legislation to improve the conditions of these factory workers. After the federation agitation, a representative deputation waited on the Premier, and placed before him most convincing facts in this respect. The deputation represented not only employees but employers, and the members of that deputation asked him to introduce legislation providing for the creation of wages boards who would have power to arrange the matter of the minimum wage between employer and employee. I asked the Premier a few weeks ago a question dealing with these matters, and I was very much surprised at the reply he gave. He said that the Government were, of course, considering the question, but no legislation would be brought forward this session respecting it. I thought that this year we would have had some legislation with regard to these matters, to ameliorate the present unfair conditions that exist. It is generally supposed that it will take three years before we have a uniform tariff, in operation under the Federal Parliament, but even if it is only two years, in the interval, while we have the power in our own hands to deal with this question, I think it is our duty to show our earnestness and to introduce legislation to alter the present harsh conditions that exist in many of the factories of Queensland. In the report of the Chief Inspector of Factories for 1899 there are several points that I am going to refer to, and one of the chief matters is that of working overtime. I may say here, in this respect, that I do not brand all factories, or workrooms either, in Brisbane or in Queensland as being bad. There are a great many employers who afford their employees first-class conditions, who pay them good wages, and who are always prepared to do so. In the interests of these employers alone, I say it is the duty of the Government to protect them, by compelling other employers to offer similar conditions to their workers. Then dealing with the matter of overtime, on page 7 of this report, the inspector reports on the details

of overtime, and I may say that in a great many cases this overtime is worked without a single penny by way of remuneration. He says—

The details of the amount of overtime worked in the different trades is given in Appendix C, an examination of which table, in conjunction with the others, will show—

- 1st. That of a total of 670 factories in Brisbane 103 worked overtime during the year.
- 2nd. Of a total of 500 male employees under sixteen years of age in factories, 289, or nearly 58 per cent., of these worked overtime to the extent of 9,531 hours.
- 3rd. Of a total of 2,883 females employed in factories, 1,912, or 66½ per cent., were employed overtime to the extent of 63,364 hours.

These figures unfortunately but too forcibly maintain the statement of last year's report—that an undue amount of overtime is worked in Queensland by these employees, and emphasise the necessity for some steps being taken to bring it more under control.

Factory departments in the other colonies have no doubt had similar experiences, which accounts for the increasing stringency of the conditions under which overtime may be worked. Experience seems to indicate that the most satisfactory way of limiting the amount of overtime is to impose such conditions upon it as will make it unremunerative to the employer to use it. Under the present system in many cases the only extra expense to the occupier is the cost of lighting if after dark, so that the whole advantage financially is on his side.

Looked at from the employees' point of view—

And I may say that this paragraph is very emphatic, and should have a considerable amount of influence on this House—

the injustice to which some of them submit is in many instances simply astounding. Take a case—perhaps extreme—but of quite frequent occurrence: A young person earning, say 7s. per week, or 1½d. per hour, is employed four miles from home, and brings lunch from there to be eaten in the factory, and probably only sufficient money for omnibus fare to get home. During the day the order is given to work overtime. There is probably no tea-money given; consequently the only alternative is to get what miserable refreshment may be possible with the amount of the bus or tram fare, and walk home, or do without and ride home; and the occupier benefits by the extra work filched from the employee, who is unable to insist on fair treatment. It seems a reasonable proposition that if an occupier wishes his employees to work overtime he should pay them well for it; and it seems also equally unreasonable that, when overtime is required to be worked, all the sacrifice should be on the part of the employee, who in many cases gets nothing out of it.

I would like to say here—and this is not the first time I have said it, as I made the same remarks I am now making last year on the Factories Inspector's report, but the Government have not taken the slightest notice of what was then said—that in the colonies of Victoria, South Australia, New Zealand, and New South Wales overtime is paid for in every case, and Queensland is the only exception. I hardly see why that should be, seeing that it is a more trying climate to work in and the conditions are altogether more unfavourable. The report goes on to say—

Undoubtedly the best way of all to limit overtime is, as has been found in the other colonies, to increase the cost of production, and when occupiers find that overtime does not pay they will very soon find means of doing without it or make the public pay; and when the public, who cannot make up its mind to order its clothing, etc.

The CHAIRMAN: I fail to see that the hon. member's remarks have anything to do with the Financial Statement. There is no word about the Factories Act in the Statement of the Treasurer, and I therefore must call the hon. member to order.

Mr. McDONNELL: I think that is a very strict ruling on your part, and of course if it is insisted upon, then I shall have to show that I am in order.

The CHAIRMAN: I rule that you are out of order.

Mr. McDONNELL: Well, I will just read a paragraph from page 27 of the Treasurer's Statement which appears to bear on the subject—

The anxiety and depression which so widely prevailed a few years ago have almost entirely disappeared, and business in general has assumed a brightness of aspect and cheerfulness of tone which are the sure indications of growing prosperity. The amicable relations between employers and employed referred to last year have been maintained and, I believe, strengthened. The disposal of the unemployed has ceased to be a difficulty, and on all sides we see evidence of increased spending power on the part of the people.

I am in this position—

The CHAIRMAN: I do not see that that paragraph gives the hon. gentleman justification for entering upon the discussion he has entered upon in relation to the Factories Act. We are now discussing the Financial Statement, and I think the remarks of hon. members should be strictly confined to finance.

Mr. McDONALD (*Flinders*): I think we ought to have this matter settled definitely. I understand that the reason why we take this discussion in Committee is that we may freely discuss everything, and that we practically disregard the strict rule on the subject. It has been understood that during the financial debate hon. members might refer to anything they thought proper. That has always been the rule in Committee—that we should air any grievances we thought proper. The hon. member, I maintain, is airing a grievance which he thinks is of vital importance, and the reason why this debate is not taken in the House is that he and others may have that opportunity. As a matter of fact, if it comes to a question of strictly obeying the rules, the only question before us for discussion is that £300 be granted as salary for an aide-de-camp, and if the Chairman persists in his ruling then he must confine hon. members to that question. The only question now is whether we shall be allowed, as we have always been allowed, to discuss grievances on the debate on the Financial Statement.

The CHAIRMAN: Strictly speaking, the question before the Committee is the vote of £300 as salary for the aide-de-camp to the Governor, but parliamentary usage allows a debate on the subjects mentioned in the Financial Statement. Had the Factories Act been in any way referred to by the Treasurer, then the hon. member would have been in order in referring to it, but relevancy must be observed in committee. Any debate for the redress of grievances should be taken on the motion for the Speaker to leave the chair. When I have taken my position as Chairman I can only do my duty and keep hon. members strictly to the financial debate. I therefore rule that the hon. member is not in order.

Mr. FISHER (*Gympie*): Speaking to the point of order—

The CHAIRMAN: There is no point of order.

Mr. McDONALD (*Flinders*): I beg to move that your ruling be disagreed to.

Mr. FISHER: I would like to say that the effect of your ruling will be that we cannot debate things fully on the Financial Statement, and we will then have to raise the questions when the Speaker is in the chair. I think there is a possibility of getting out of the difficulty. The hon. member is not stonewalling, but is putting important information before the public. I would therefore suggest to the officers and the Premier that it would be desirable not to insist upon this ruling, because we have practically made a custom which I admit is not strictly

within our Standing Orders. I trust that the ruling will be withdrawn, and that we shall go on as usual.

The PREMIER: When I spoke on Friday afternoon in reply to the hon. member for Clermont, I felt it to be my duty to point out that an hon. member in opening a debate on the Financial Statement could open up a very large scope of discussion outside of the Financial Statement, so long as his speech was supposed to be his contribution to the financial debate. In that light I viewed the hon. member for Clermont's speech, although it was confined solely to the Police Commission; and I replied to it as being his contribution to the financial debate. It appears that there has been some misconception on this matter, and the leader of the Opposition referred to it yesterday. Notwithstanding I still hold to my view then expressed—that an hon. member can enlarge upon any subject he chooses, so long as he makes it his contribution to the financial discussion, I think the matter referred to by the hon. member for Clermont would have been better dealt with when the Speaker was in the chair, so that he might have more latitude to discuss the Financial Statement. I must say, however, that I have observed a tendency to discuss matters on this Financial Statement that I think would be far better dealt with when the Estimates were under discussion. The administration departmentally of the Government is far better discussed when the Estimates come before us than in the general discussion, and is sure to be repeated when the vote concerning the departments is submitted.

Mr. TURLEY: I was not referring to the administration of departments at all.

The PREMIER: I understood that the hon. member for Flinders was referring to want of administration of one of the departments. The hon. member for Brisbane South, in dealing with broken-down engines and things of that sort, would have been far more in order when speaking on the Estimates—

Mr. TURLEY: It is referred to in your report.

The PREMIER: Rather than introduce those details into a financial address. However, I think the custom has been to allow hon. gentlemen considerable latitude in this matter, so long as they did not repeat their rhetorical efforts in this particular discussion. I think it would be wise to follow the precedent that has been so long established in this Chamber to allow hon. gentlemen a free hand to discuss, as far as practicable, the unwise administration of the Government.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: Under these circumstances I would respectfully submit whether you might not, Mr. Chairman, reconsider your ruling.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

The CHAIRMAN: I contend, strictly speaking, I am within the Standing Orders in taking up the position I have done, and giving the ruling I have done. The debate on the Financial Statement is more a time for debating the subjects therein mentioned. This, it seemed to me, was quite outside the financial debate.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: So is the Police Commission.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. gentleman will remember that I suggested, with reference to the Police Commission, that it should not be taken as a precedent for the future, and I took the opportunity of mentioning that the hon. member for Clermont was out of order, and could not claim the right to debate that subject again during this debate. I particularly took advantage of the opportunity to express my opinion that this matter could be dealt with at a later stage, when the inspector's salary came before the Committee. That would be a more appropriate time to discuss it than now. However,

if it is the pleasure of the Committee that the hon. gentleman should proceed in this matter I have no objection.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. McDONALD: I beg to ask leave to withdraw my motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. McDONNELL: I intend now to confine my remarks as much as possible to this question. As I said, I thought this might be the only opportunity I might have, and, with all due respect to you, Mr. Grimes, I think that this is the proper time to refer to it. The Financial Statement refers to our exports and imports, and the prosperity of the colony, and I believe it is in the power of the Government, by adopting the legislation I am referring to—and which I believe it is in the power of the Government to do if the facts are placed before them, as I am attempting to do now—to make that prosperity more general. I think I should be quite in order in referring to this question. However, I will not quote very extensively from the inspector's report; but I want to show it is absolutely necessary something should be done. Dealing with the question of overtime there is a paragraph on page 8—

In the dressmaking trade fully half of the 800 employees have worked overtime during the year. Few of these girls are paid for overtime, and in some cases the girls have to provide their own tea when they work late, and also to pay their own fare home, unless they prefer to walk at a late hour and when tired from a long day's work.

In the earlier part of the year much vigilance was needed to ensure conformity with the provisions of section 35, which section was not clearly understood by employers, as evinced by the fact that thirty-eight factory occupiers employed over 200 girls under eighteen years of age after 7 p.m. without having obtained permission to do so. Of this number, four occupiers repeated the breach after having been cautioned.

Eighteen employers have, during the year, employed over 150 females for more than three hours' overtime in one day.

Twelve employers have been keeping the girls at work for long periods without any interval for a meal; sometimes from 1.30 or 2 p.m. until 8 or 8.30 p.m. In all, over 170 girls were, to my knowledge, so treated.

Nearly 2,000 females worked overtime during the year, of whom about 80 per cent. were over eighteen years of age.

I will now refer to the question of wages, as it more pointedly affects the matter I referred to a few minutes ago—that is our present prosperous condition. On page 10, the inspector reports—

The number of females earning 10s. per week and under last year in the Brisbane district was 1,427 (of whom 372 were over eighteen years of age), as compared with 1,350 the previous year; and of these 172 received no pay whatever, as against 104 the previous year. The great and increasing number of persons working in these trades without pay (the increase is actually 65 per cent. during the year) must be a heavy handicap to the many poor people who find it hard enough to make ends meet, and I have no doubt the provision of a minimum wage would be most beneficial in preventing workrooms being filled with such assistants.

Re apprentices to dressmaking, Miss Smith says:—

Out of 800 females employed in registered dressmaking establishments 158 were unpaid apprentices. This does not cover the entire number of apprentices, for a number of smaller establishments do not come under the provisions of the Act, and in such places the girls are frequently employed as learners and receive no pay. In two of the largest workrooms in the city, each employing about the same number of hands, one had no unpaid apprentices during the year, the other had thirty-one.

I think that this state of things existing at the present time is a reflection, and a very serious reflection, on the paragraph I read from page 27 of this Statement. I simply place these facts before the Committee at the present time to show the urgency which exists for the Government to take some action in this matter. Here you have, instead of that prosperity being

extended to our factory workers to any extent, their condition to-day worse, as is shown by your own official report, than it was twelve months ago. You have more children working in factories and receiving no wages at all; you have more overtime; and you have more girls working for less than 10s. a week than were working in Brisbane twelve months ago. I think this is a question which deserves to be brought up here. It may not, perhaps, be altogether acceptable to a good many members of the Chamber; but I feel so strongly on the matter that I should like, if possible, to do something and to show some reasons which would induce the Government to make an effort before the present session expires to introduce legislation that will prevent a continuation of the conditions that at present exist.

Mr. GIVENS: Go to the Federal Parliament.

Mr. McDONNELL: A similar question, or a question bordering on factory legislation, was brought up here, and, in the opinion of the Premier, it was a question which should be submitted to the Federal Parliament, and perhaps we shall be told that this is another question which should stand over, like old age pensions, until the Federal Parliament is established. But I do not think it should stand over for one single day. It is of much greater

[5.30 p.m.] importance than the Bill which is at present on the paper for the establishment of a university; it is of more importance than the Bill for the amendment of the licensing law; it is more important than the Bill providing for the appointment of a railway works committee—in fact, it is one of the most important questions that could be considered in this House. If the present Government had a spark of humanity within their breasts, it is a question that they would attempt to deal with in the interests of the defenceless portion of the community—the females of Queensland. The Government should be ashamed of themselves in this respect. The Chief Inspector has come down here year after year, and, in his reports to Parliament, has pointed out that these conditions exist. He comes down this year and tells us that the conditions are worse than they were last year, and we are told by the Premier that the Government will have no time to discuss the most important question of a minimum wage during the present session. A Government like that shows very little sympathy with the hard-worked people outside. The boot employees, and other factory employees, were addressed by the Treasurer and several members of Parliament during the federal campaign. They were the finest fellows in the world when they were wanted to support federation. These ardent advocates of federation expressed their sympathy at that time for the conditions under which these people had to work, and one would have thought that at the very first available opportunity they would have endeavoured to create some machinery to alter those conditions. Of course I will have an opportunity of discussing this matter when the Estimates are before us. I have not much adverse comment to make so far as the inspectors are concerned, but even now it may not be too late to ask the Government to deal with this question during the present session. I cannot for the life of me see how we are going to get through the business on the paper before Christmas. I feel certain that we will be obliged to come back after the Christmas holidays to transact the business, and if the Government would only devote a day or two to this matter they could pass some amending factory legislation. When the original Bill was brought in—and it has done a considerable amount of good—it went through its second reading and committee stages in

four or five hours. There was a considerable amount of sympathy with the objects of the Bill on the part of hon. members sitting behind the Government, and hon. members sitting on this side were prepared to facilitate the passage of the Bill. No time whatever was wasted in passing the Bill, and no time would now be wasted if the Government would bring down an amending Bill, providing for the adoption of a minimum wage, and for removing the present harsh conditions which are disclosed in the report of the Chief Inspector. The minimum wage has been in actual operation in Victoria for the last two years, and it has proved an entire success. It has increased the wages of the employees to the extent of £100,000 in twelve months, and at the same time it has protected the employers from the undue competition of the sweater. The testimony of the Chief Inspector of Factories in Victoria, and of the Chief Secretary, Mr. Peacock, who has to administer the Act, is to the effect that the Act is an entire success. It has even received the praise and the support of the employers, large and small. In fact, no opposition has been offered to its re-enactment by the employers who are most materially affected by it. At first it was simply put in operation for three years, and it has now expired by effluxion of time. The matter has again been placed on the business-paper. In the old Act the minimum wage only applied to some half-dozen trades, but it is now proposed to include about two dozen more trades, which are to be brought under the operation of the minimum wages clauses. I will go no further with this matter at present. If appeals were of any use, I would appeal to the Government. I hope they are not dead to all appeals, and I hope they will be roused to a sense of their duty in this respect. They have machinery at present at their disposal to carry out an amendment of the Act. The Factories Department is now in working order. It is well manned, although it would be a great advantage if we had more inspectors.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: More billets.

Mr. McDONNELL: There are not sufficient inspectors in Brisbane at present to properly administer the Act. During the federal campaign the Treasurer went to the corner of Albert street and addressed a large meeting of men engaged in the boot factory during their luncheon hour. The hon. gentleman expressed the greatest sympathy with them, and I hope the hon. gentleman will not forget the condition of things which was then placed before him, and that, though some of his colleagues do not feel so strongly on the question, and have not got so many facts before them as the hon. gentleman, I hope the hon. gentleman will try to induce his colleagues to bring in some legislation to alter the condition of things which he so strongly condemned when he addressed that large meeting of bootmakers, in company with my hon. friend, the senior member for Charters Towers, and my colleague, Mr. Higgs. I hope that the Government will show a little earnestness, and some desire to remedy, by the introduction of legislation, what I now advocate. There are one or two other matters that I wanted to refer to, but I will have an opportunity of doing so on the Estimates. I have made my remarks much shorter than I intended, simply because we shall have an opportunity of bringing these matters up on the Estimates. If I had been ruled out of order, I would have been obliged to take advantage of the Standing Orders, and referred to these matters on the motion for the Speaker to leave the chair. However, that necessity does not exist, and I have got in sufficient of what I wanted to say in respect to this question.

Mr. LEAHY: You have got it reported.

Mr. McDONNELL: I am not particular whether it is reported or not. I was elected principally on account of my opinions on this question, and my opinions are well known, so that I am not very particular whether it is known I have been speaking on the subject again or not. However, while I am in this House, whether it be long or short, I intend to advocate this matter until the present Government, or some other Government—and I am in hopes that some day we shall have another Government—bring in that legislation which it is proved has worked so admirably in other parts of Australia.

Mr. PLUNKETT (*Albert*): My remarks on this occasion will be short, but it is only fair that I should add my few words in commendation of the Financial Statement. I do not agree with all that the Treasurer has said, but I agree that the colony is going ahead by leaps and bounds, and that our imports and exports have increased considerably. I wish to say a few words on a question which is not mentioned in the Financial Statement, but which affects the interests of the colony to a large extent. I am sorry to have to disagree with the remarks made by the Secretary for Agriculture at Beaudesert on the tick question with reference to the closing of the line between New South Wales and Queensland. I do not believe that is a right thing to do. It is all very well for men who are fattening cattle on the coast, but it is doing an injustice to a large number of people, particularly those in the South-western portion of the colony, who, it is very well known, only breed cattle, and have not sufficient good land on which to fatten them. The hon. gentleman gave some reasons for his action, and said that the inspectors sent here from Victoria and New South Wales should be dispensed with. We know that inspectors appointed by this Government have been very lax in their efforts to keep the ticks in the Northern portion of the colony, and I believe it is on the cards at the present time that the line is to be removed, and that cattle are to be allowed to come from Rockhampton and the North to Brisbane. The result of such action will be that the people in the South-western portion of the colony will not be able to send their cattle to the coast for the purpose of being converted into tinned meat. Over 600,000 head of cattle were sent from that part of the colony last year into New South Wales, and there is not sufficient room on the Logan to fatten all those cattle, even if they were sent to the coast. It has been said that the whole of those cattle should be killed here, so that we may retain the hides, the tallow, and all the by-products. Only a few people who fatten cattle in the coast districts will be benefited by the proposed action of the Government, and the people outside will be ruined. Coming now to the Financial Statement, I think it has been thrashed out fairly well. It was my intention last night to have asked the question which was put by the hon. member for Drayton and Toowoomba, Mr. Groom, in reference to the purchase of fodder in Melbourne for the horses of the contingent which is going to the Transvaal, but I came in too late to do so. It was most unmitigated impudence on the part of the Brigade Office to jump the claim of the Secretary for Agriculture with regard to the purchase of 100 tons of fodder for the Transvaal contingent. No person, whether he is a friend or foe of the Government, will blame any member of the Ministry for the action which has been taken. I know they feel it just as sorely as we do on this side of the House. I was, however, surprised last night to hear hon. members who during the federation debate sold the farmers and their markets to the south, speak as they did on this question. What has happened in this case

is only a foretaste of what we may expect under intercolonial federation, because when we have freetrade £75 of duty will be remitted on that 100 tons of hay. There are some things in the Treasurer's Statement that I quite agree with; but in regard to the subsidy to divisional boards I do not think the Government go far enough, as they have only increased the endowment to 15s. in the £1, instead of making it £1. Some people say that members speak on this matter and advocate increased endowment to divisional boards for political reasons, but I do not admit that such is the case. The district I represent is very ridgy and mountainous, and it is impossible for the boards to keep the roads in good order with the small subsidy they have received from the Government. Some boards have such a strong feeling on the matter that they are inclined to hand over the roads to the Government and let them do the best they can with them. However, the increased subsidy this year is a step in the right direction, and I hope that ere long the Government will see their way to make further provision for subsidising these local authorities. Another thing I am pleased to see is the proposal to reduce the rate of interest on loans to local bodies from 5 to 4 per cent. A good deal has been said about railways, and some people say that railways in agricultural districts are not paying at the present time. I am not going to question that statement; but I contend that if they do not pay directly they pay indirectly, and I hope the Government will endeavour to assist the farmers by constructing cheap railways in agricultural districts. It is not much use speaking on the question of railways now, because there is a Bill before the House providing for the appointment of a parliamentary standing committee on railway works, and I shall reserve what I have to say on the subject till that measure is under consideration. I look upon such a committee as a buffer between the Government and the people. That it has worked very well in New South Wales I admit, but I assert that it did not work well at the commencement, for there was as much jobbery under that committee as under the Government. However, it is working more smoothly at the present time. A good deal has been said recently in the Chamber of Commerce and in some of the papers against the action of the Secretary for Agriculture in subsidising a weekly service from Brisbane to Sydney. Well, I say that that one action of his, and he has done many a good one, will redound more to his credit in future than anything else he has done. A good many have said that that is not what we want at all, but what we want is a subsidy for a direct line for the shipment of our butter to London. We were promised long ago a subsidy for a direct line that would enable our butter to be sent home at a very much cheaper rate than it is carried at the present time. That promise has not been carried out, but I do not blame the Government for that, as I believe they did the best they could in that matter and did not succeed. I admit that we want that direct line between here and London, but when it is said that what has now been done will lose us that, I say it is foolish to talk in that way. We know very well that at the present time we can overstock our market with butter, and if before we do anything to meet that difficulty we have to wait until we get that direct line between here and London—well, I would be very pleased to think we would get it three years hence; but I am afraid we will not. The subsidising of this line of steamers between here and Sydney will be the means of giving us a chance to place this perishable article, butter, upon the market there in a marketable condition, and will help a good many people to become far more prosperous

than they are at the present time. Consequently I say again that no action of any Government could do more to benefit a large number of our people than that action of the Secretary for Agriculture. It is estimated that we will turn out 1,000 tons of butter this year, and at any rate we know it is a growing industry. It has been said many times that we could not produce an article which would have any possible chance of sale in the London market, but that fallacy has long since been exploded. I want now to say a few words on this question of the repurchase of lands. I am not going into the Seaforth business or anything like that. It might be right or it might be wrong, but I would be long sorry to think—

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Give us your opinion of it.

Mr. PLUNKETT: My opinion, so far as it goes, is that a very great blunder was committed. I heard the Treasurer and the Secretary for Lands say last night that they were doing their best to break up the large estates so that people might be settled upon them. That is not my opinion at all. I consider the district I have the honour to represent has been exceedingly badly treated by the present Government in this matter, in fact no district could be worse treated.

Mr. LEAHY: What about mine?

Mr. PLUNKETT: The land in your district is not worth purchasing. I am speaking of what I know, and I say the Logan and Albert district has not been treated by the present Government as it should be treated. It is quite true that four or five years ago the then hon. member for Murilla, Sir Hugh Nelson, was induced to purchase one property there—the Cryna Estate, and I may say that all I said of that property at that time has been thoroughly proved to be true, and there is not one acre of it now unselected. Later on I asked the Government to purchase a property called the "Townsvale," and another called "Bromelton" was also offered to them. I am not blaming the Government for buying land but for not having bought land. I say that Townsvale was a magnificent property. The Chairman knows it as well as I do, and he knows that every acre of it is good agricultural land. Unfortunately, there was only 1,800 acres in that property, but there are two railway stations on it, it has a long frontage to the railway and to the Logan River, and everything calculated to make farming prosperous. Unfortunately for me, though I tried them many a time, because there were only 1,800 acres in it the Government refused point blank to have it. Bromelton I will not say so much about, but I can say that a great portion of it has since been let at an annual rental of 10s. an acre. Townsvale was offered to the Government for £3 an acre including all the buildings on it, but the Government refused to buy it on the plea that it was not large enough, though they have since purchased a place with only 560 acres in it on the Darling Downs. I do not blame them for that purchase, but I think they should have treated the district I represent as well as other districts in the colony. What was to the disadvantage of the country, has been to the great advantage of the owner of Townsvale, for while it was offered, buildings and all, to the Government for £3 an acre, portions of it have since been sold at £3, £6, £9, and £12 an acre, and the owner has received more for a small portion of it, than he was prepared to take from the Government for the whole of it and the buildings on it. I have said that Cryna, which was purchased by the Government, has proved a success, and it is now studded all over with homesteads, and the people on it are doing well. Some time ago I moved for all the correspondence and papers in connection with the offer of Telemon to be laid on the table. It was offered

to the Government for £3 2s. 6d. an acre, and I must ask the Committee to excuse me while I read the report of the Land Board on that estate. It says—

The Telemon Estate is situated on the Logan River, about sixteen miles southward from the terminus of the railway at Beaudesert. The distance of the estate from Brisbane is about sixty-three miles—namely, forty-seven miles by railway to Beaudesert and sixteen miles by road.

I may tell you that the nearest part of Telemon to the Beaudesert railway station is not more than twelve miles from the station. The report goes on to say—

Messrs. Dalgety and Co., on behalf of the owner, Mr. Charles A. Bruxner, in their letter dated 27th August, 1897, have offered to the Government 11,155 acres 2 roods and 20 perches of land, comprising the whole estate, at the price of £3 2s. 6d. an acre.

The improvements consist of fences on the external boundaries of the property, division fences forming the six paddocks into which the estate is divided, and a large stockyard. In the home paddock there is a head station house built of cedar, together with the out-houses and stables. The owner has supplied no separate valuation of these improvements, which appear to be in good condition.

It would add very much to the value of this property if the adjoining land fronting on Christmas Creek, contained in portions 18, 42, and 34, could be acquired and annexed to Telemon.

The country at the back of these portions is only pastoral land, and has no water on it. In the event of the land in question being added to the property under offer the estate could be easily subdivided into farms on each of which there could be provided both natural water and a fair proportion of agricultural land.

A report by Mr. Watts, land commissioner for the Brisbane district, on the lands offered is appended hereto.

Mr. Mahon, of the Agricultural Department, owing to the weather, was unable to inspect the whole of the estate, but he saw the best portion of it, and vouches for its suitability for agriculture so far as he was in a position to examine it. His report will be appended if received in time.

This property would be worth at least £3 per acre if it were connected by railway with the metropolis. There has been some action taken by the residents with the view of obtaining an extension of the existing railway, but it has not reached a stage upon which it would be safe to offer any prediction as to its success or otherwise. At the present time, and considering the distance of the property from Beaudesert, the Land Board value the land at £2 8s. per acre.

Whilst the Land Board were at Telemon a large number of persons came for the purpose of expressing their views on the subject of the Government acquiring suitable land for agricultural selection. They appeared to be a class of men likely to prove good settlers, and to be well satisfied that the lands on Telemon would suit them if they could be secured by the Government at a fair price. The Land Board have no reason to doubt their sincerity in this matter.

I can accentuate that, as the whole time there was talk about the possible repurchase of this land, I had inquiries from all over the district and from different parts of the country asking if there was any possible chance of getting a piece of this land. On the Logan and Albert we can claim to have as good land as any in the colony; but I may tell you that this is the pick of the lot—it is the garden of the Logan. The report says further—

The Telemon Estate is specially fitted for marking off into agricultural farms. There is fully 9,000 acres of the area suitable for cultivation, upwards of 5,000 of which is plain and ready for the plough. The Land Board saw it in an exceptional season, when the country was looking its best. They cannot give any opinion as to whether water lies on the plains, but so far as appearances go no large areas are affected in that way, and those places on which it was likely that the water would be easily drained by an open cutting into the river or creek.

The report of the Land Commissioner for the Brisbane district furnishes full particulars of the character and suitability of the land for agricultural purposes.

The property is bounded on the west and north by the Logan River and Christmas Creek; a portion of the north-eastern boundary is formed by Christmas Creek.

Oakey Creek, a tributary of the Logan River, runs through the centre of the property. Taking it as a whole, the estate is well watered. There is a well on portion 40, at the back of the land on Christmas Creek, to the desirability of purchasing which, and annexing it to the Teleton Estate, the Land Board referred in the first part of this report.

There is every reason to believe that water can be obtained over almost the whole estate at a moderate depth by sinking wells, but they will be scarcely necessary in consequence of the abundant supply of water in the creeks surrounding and intersecting it. Natural water could be supplied to almost the whole number of the portions into which the estate is likely to be divided in the event of the property being acquired by the Government.

This report further states—

The Land Board have reason to believe that the land would be selected if offered at a moderate upset price. [7 p.m.] There was reasonable evidence of there being a number of persons ready to select the land, but the Land Board were unable to obtain from any of them a statement of the price they were prepared to pay. The value of this estate depends a good deal on the extension of the railway.

You will understand that the board said there were 11,650 acres, 9,000 of which were suitable for agriculture, and 5,000 acres were ready for the plough.

At present, the long haulage by road might prove a bar to agricultural settlement, at the same time it must be acknowledged that the land is exceptionally good, and that in itself would offer strong inducements to select it. Taking all things into consideration, the Land Board are of opinion that the land will be selected at the price they have valued it at, especially under the circumstances of selectors having twenty years to pay the amount due on their farms.

That is the report of the Land Board. The Land Commissioner also states—

Teleton Run was always considered one of the best properties on the Logan River, and Teleton Estate now consists of the best of the run.

IMPROVEMENTS.—The improvements consist of two-rail and wire fencing, a give-and-take fence on the Logan River and Christmas Creek, and fences dividing the estate into six paddocks, beside stockyard, etc., for working a cattle run. In the home paddock (portion 1) is the station house, 50 feet by 26 feet 8 inches, built entirely of cedar with iron roof, in good repair, with servants' quarters, stables, etc.

DEMAND FOR LAND.—There is a demand for land in this district by those already settled there, who wish to increase their area, and from the inquiries made, there is no doubt there will be a great many applicants for this land, and there will be no difficulty in placing a good class of settlers on it provided it can be offered at a reasonable price.

There are no Crown lands in this part of the East Moreton district suitable for agricultural purposes.

I value this land at £2 6s. per acre.

I may say that from one end of the Logan to the other, and from one end of the Albert to the other, and in Brisbane, inquiries have been made as to whether there was any probability of this land being thrown open for selection, and if thrown open it would be all selected the first. That goes without saying. This is another portion of the report—

Notwithstanding the existence of many big estates, a considerable extent of *bond fide* farming is met with to the south of Beaudesert and close up to the New South Wales border, extending back for a distance of nearly twenty miles.

This land which is spoken about, is all rocky and mountainous country right up to the divide of the Logan River, and if men got it for nothing, and were paid for living on it they would not get more than they deserve. This is one of the large runs that have not been purchased by the Government, and I hold them responsible with regard to this matter. The report goes on—

Farming operations hereabouts principally consist of growing maize and fattening pigs for the Brisbane markets, together with a little dairying with small lots of cattle, which frequently find an outlet in the markets of Beaudesert, Southport, or Ipswich, or even across the Range and on to the Darling Downs. In view of the

increased settlement, both present and prospective, the residents recently petitioned the Hon. the Minister for Railways, through Mr. Collins, the local member, for a continuation of the railway from Beaudesert to the fingerpost at Lara, a distance of about nine miles—a very small matter, the importance of the district considered, and one which might well be included in the proposed big railway policy of the Government, which, it is hoped, will take effect during next year. The Beaudesert line of railway, in its present form, would appear to have just tapped the good country, and there came to a sudden stop, the Government of the day no doubt concluding that in doing so a very desirable end had been accomplished.

This line referred to is the railway from Beaudesert to Lara, which has been spoken about for a long time. Nine years ago I got the line surveyed, and the idea was then to push it further on. When the million loan for railways was on I was fortunate enough to get £52,000 put down for the cost of the construction of this line, and £62,800 for the line from Nerang to the border. That loan was stonewalled for eight or nine days—the longest stonewall on record—and the result was that it fell through, otherwise the line would have been in existence long since. An agitation for it has been kept up ever since, and one of the principal reasons was because it was thought that Teleton Station would be purchased by the Government and thrown open for settlement. I am told that the good land is quite capable of giving a decent livelihood to seventy families—that is if it was purchased by the Government, but they have failed to do that. It is further stated with regard to Teleton—

This property enjoys many advantages. In the first place it is beautifully compact and well watered. It comprises an extent of 11,000 acres of freehold land, with a frontage of between six and seven miles to the Logan, besides being watered on the northern side by Christmas Creek, whilst smaller watercourses, including Oakey Creek and a number of never-failing waterholes, spring-fed, occupy central positions on the estate. The property is about equally divided betwixt plains and undulations, but in no place is to be found an acre of land that could be termed profitless country. Teleton is what may be described as one of the properties of the good old times.

This is not at all surprising from the fact that there is no land available, and with a railway extending to the confines of one of the richest farming districts of Southern Queensland, together with a strong prospect of its continuance, any process of close settlement would be hailed both locally and along the South Coast with delight. The operations of the Agricultural Lands Purchase Act of 1894 have worked marvellous results in adding to the general prosperity of the Darling Downs; the same may be said of the estates acquired by the Government and thrown open for selection in other portions of the colony; and if the bountiful operations of the Act were extended to the Upper Logan district, with Teleton as an initiative centre, a few months at the outside would see the estate occupied by several families of industrious people. The working of the property in its present form is no improvement on forty years ago, a manager and a black stockman being the sole occupiers of a large and fertile acreage, to which may be added the fact of an absentee landlord.

The next is a letter saying that they cannot buy at £2 8s., but after a little while they agreed to give £2 8s. an acre, which the owners agreed to accept. Then comes this letter—

Elizabeth street, Brisbane,

24th November, 1898.

SIR.—With reference to our manager's conversation with you to-day, on the subject of the offer of the Teleton Estate, Logan district, we have the honour to state that, being desirous of closing partnership affairs, Mr. Bruxner has authorised us to offer you, for immediate sale, the estate at the Land Board's valuation of £2 8s. per acre, terms cash. The vendors desire to retain the grazing right of the property until 1st April, but, if required, they could arrange to give delivery within one month of acceptance of this offer.

Awaiting your early reply.

We have, etc.,

DAWGTY AND COMPANY, LIMITED.

A. D. Walsh, Manager.

I think nothing could be fairer than that as between man and man. Certainly nothing could be fairer as between a Government and a private individual. The fact remains that the land was not purchased, and the consequence is that hundreds and thousands of people have been deprived of suitable land on which to settle. What is to be thought of a Government which, having agreed to purchase land at £2 8s. an acre, afterwards backs down? But listen to this—

Department of Public Lands,
Brisbane, 2nd December, 1898.

Sir,—Referring to your offer on behalf of Mr. Charles A. Bruxner to surrender to the Crown, under the provisions of the Agricultural Lands Purchase Act of 1894, the Teleton Estate, Logan district, containing an area of 11,155 acres 2 roods 20 perches, at the rate of £2 8s. per acre, being the value of the land as determined by the Land Board, I have the honour, by direction, to inform you that on further consideration it has been decided to take no action in the matter.

I have, etc.,

F. X. HEENEY, Under Secretary.

Then there is a minute upon that by the Minister, "Acknowledge."

Mr. DUNSFORD: Why did they not take action?

Mr. PLUNKETT: It has been asked by one hon. member, why the Government did not accept that land. Well, I prefer not to answer that question. I only know that throughout the whole district there is but one opinion, and there is only one answer, and that is that the Government threw up this opportunity in order to allow some private person to purchase the land. I say that a Government that would act in such a way have not acted fairly towards the district which I have the honour to represent. Mind, this is not a matter in which I have been moved to take action through any personal interest I may have in it. I have none, but I have been asked over and over again, by men who had sons ready to settle on this land, to bring the matter before Parliament, and try to ascertain why the Government did not purchase the land. I had many interviews with the Minister on the subject, the last one that I had with him being on a Thursday, and on the Saturday it appeared in the public Press that a private person had purchased the land. I say I was not treated fairly in the matter; that the Government acted very unfairly and improperly, and that I, as a resident of the district, have a perfect right to protest. I think it is a public duty on my part to bring the matter forward and allow the people to know the circumstances of the case. It is no use people saying that the action of the Government was well intentioned. If I went into that district and said so, no one would believe me. If this property had gone into the hands of persons who wanted it, it would have been a very different matter, but the result of it all is that it has got into the hands of those who have ten or twelve times as much already as they can use. I have not one word to say against the purchaser of that property. He only did what others would have done, and not one acre of land that he has got but has been obtained honestly and fairly; but I do blame the Government for acting in this petty way, which is likely to lead people to have very little confidence in them. I will say no more on that question. I desire to say a few words on the subject of immigration. There is no doubt about it that we need more people in this colony than we have at the present time. I know well that there are many places where there is a great demand for labour which cannot be supplied. I will give you an instance of what I mean. I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that 500 boys of from ten to sixteen years of age could be placed in the Southern portion of Queensland. There is a great desire on the part of many people to

get these boys for work which is not suitable to a grown man—such work as the taking of cows out in the morning and bringing them home in the evening, and I am perfectly right in saying that if 500 boys of those ages were landed in Brisbane to-morrow they would all be absorbed.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Those boys ought to be at school.

Mr. PLUNKETT: A good many of them could go to school as well. I know men who employ boys and send them to school in the morning after they have taken the cows out, and when they come home in the evening send them out again for the cows.

Mr. KERR: That would be working them about sixteen hours a day.

Mr. PLUNKETT: I do not consider going to school work. However, we want more immigrants, and with regard to the amount set down I think it is too small. I think we ought to obtain far better results by the expenditure of this money than we have during the past two years. I think we ought to get far more for our money than we have been getting. A great deal of the money which is spent goes in advertising, wages, and office expenses, the result being that we really do not get full value for our money. There is another question that I would like to speak about, and that is the necessity of doing something to improve the port of Brisbane. Some people will say that I have nothing to do with this question, but I think it concerns us all to endeavour to attract the large ocean-going steamers to our port, and it depends upon the condition of the port as to whether they will come or not. I think a much larger sum of money will have to be spent upon this port than has been spent hitherto. People growl about the steamers bringing goods up from Sydney and Melbourne to the North as cheaply as they carry them to Brisbane, but I do not think it is to be wondered at when we see the advantages that the southern ports have. I will give you an instance of what I mean. I went to Sydney recently and got in at 2 o'clock in the morning, and before it was daylight a great deal of the cargo had been landed on the wharf. On the return journey, when we came back to Brisbane in a comparatively small vessel of 2,500 tons, we were delayed six and a-half hours in the bay waiting for the tide, and we got stuck at Queensport coming up the river. When such things as that happen to a boat of 2,500 tons, how can we hope to get such boats as those of the Peninsular and Oriental or the Orient Company's to visit us? I would, therefore, support a very much larger sum being spent upon the improvement of this port.

Mr. CURTIS: And other ports, too.

Mr. PLUNKETT: Yes, I admit the justice of spending money on other ports too. A great deal of money has been spent on the port of Brisbane, and also on the port which the hon. member represents. What we want is to have things improving, and to keep pace with the other colonies. Then we will have prosperity. With regard to railways, I do not know whether the Government are taking a wise step or not; but I think it is time we had a stop put to what, not only this Government, but the last few Governments have been doing—what I call hoodwinking the people with regard to railways. I do not say the present Premier or the present Secretary for Railways. They all do it. They come before the people just before election time and say, "If you vote for Jones you will get your railway." Jones is voted for, but you hear nothing about the railway for another three years. Then, when another election is coming on, you are going to get it.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Vote for Smith then.

Mr. LEAHY: Vote for Plunkett.

Mr. PLUNKETT: Yes, vote for Smith then; but Smith does not get the railway. The very same thing is repeated year after year. As far as I can see, suppose we get this parliamentary committee—suppose these nine men are appointed—where are we going to get any railways? How are we going to get the Lara railway?

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: And the Bowen railway?

Mr. PLUNKETT: Or any railway? It seems to me to be hopeless. There is not the ghost of a chance of any of these lines being got before the next election, as far as I can see. I can say that the people are getting tired of these promises.

Mr. LEAHY: This is the consolation stakes.

Mr. PLUNKETT: This committee cannot sit when the House is sitting; it can only sit when Parliament is in recess, and then they have to go and examine the land, and, in the case of guarantee railways, value it.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: It is a very nice billet.

Mr. PLUNKETT: It is a very nice billet. I should very much like to be one of the committee myself. Whoever is on it, it is going to be a very nice billet, but I am not going to be one, so far as I know. As far as I can see, the effect of the appointment of this committee will be to retard the construction of railways, and this famous railway policy of the Government we will hear of three years hence, and no sooner. In connection with this railway, or, rather, this extension to Lara, which was to be built seven years ago, it is all open country, magnificent country without any doubt; but, unfortunately, there are too few people on it. But the day is coming when that will work out its own end, when it will work its own cure. That is, the land will become so valuable that we will very likely have an offer from the Government, and I hope they will then act in a more straightforward—I will say straightforward—manner and purchase it, and let other people have a show.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Last night the Government were blamed for purchasing. Now they are blamed for not purchasing.

Mr. PLUNKETT: That is so. I think this Lara railway was to cost about £52,000. A guarantee was given for its construction, which has been in the hands of the Secretary for Railways for the last eighteen months; but, as far as we can see, we are just as far off a railway now as we were years ago. We are told that we must wait until the appointment of this standing committee; but I hope that when the time comes the Minister will not forget the promise that has been made. This line accentuates my remarks in connection with the sale or, rather, non-sale to the Government of Telemon. The purchase of this property by the Government was a very large factor in the giving of the guarantee. The guarantors actually depended on help from the amount of produce grown on this run to make the line a paying one. I do not think there is likely to be any loss; but, loss or gain, it would not be any loss to the State. But the line is in the same state as it was eight years ago. If this speech will have the result of advancing the matter I will be very glad of it; but as it is, it is wrong side up. I think it is only right again to compliment the Treasurer on his Financial Statement. It is a first-class one. I have nothing to say about that gentleman as Treasurer except praise. I hope that next year, whoever is Treasurer, he will be able to show as good or a better Statement than we have before us at present.

* Mr. JENKINSON (*Wide Bay*): I do not know that I can endorse the last sentiments uttered by the speaker who has just resumed his seat.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We did not expect it.

Mr. JENKINSON:

Blessed are they which expect little, for they shall not be disappointed.

That is an old proverb which I commend to the hon. gentleman. As far as I am concerned, when the Government deserve credit they will get it; when they do not deserve it they will get my condemnation, whether they like it or not. It is a matter of the most perfect indifference to me. I am sent here to do my duty, not to please any particular occupant of any bench in this House.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Who disputes that?

Mr. JENKINSON: The Treasurer cannot help himself presenting a good balance-sheet, for the simple reason that the resources of this colony are so great that, no matter how indifferent a man may be in the management of his department, he cannot help producing a fairly good balance-sheet at this present time. There is very little credit due to the Treasurer for that. As far as the Statement itself is concerned, it certainly is not worthy of the reputation that the hon. gentleman enjoys—whether rightly or wrongly. It seems to me it is simply a tabulated statement of accounts, compiled, perhaps, by the heads of the respective departments—more like the balance-sheets presented to various companies delineating their business of the year.

Mr. JACKSON: Chamber of commerce.

Mr. JENKINSON: Or, as the hon. member for Kennedy says, a chamber of commerce. There is nothing particularly brilliant about it. As far as regards finances, it is not the fault of the hon. gentleman that the finances of the colony are in the position they are in to-day. That is simply because our resources are so great that it could not be otherwise. I want to refer for a short time to various matters that are incidentally touched upon in the Treasurer's Financial Statement, although they are not directly mentioned in that Statement. I am very glad you have changed the ruling you gave this afternoon, and have said that you thought it only fair that any hon. member could get up and traverse a statement, even if the particular item he is discussing does not appear in the Treasurer's Statement. It gives us a little more latitude—latitude, I maintain, that has been tacitly accorded to members of this House for some considerable time, more particularly as the Address in Reply was allowed to go through very speedily in order to allow the Government to bring on the great question of the session—the Address to the Queen regarding federation. As a matter of fact, this is the first time I have spoken this session. The first matter I desire to refer to is the question of unauthorised expenditure. I look upon this question of spending money without the authority of Parliament as a most insidious practice on the part of the Government, and it is a growing practice. Parliament have the controlling of the funds of the colony. It has in its hands a great power, and if the Ministry of the day can go beyond that power, and spend money without the authority of Parliament, they are practically interfering with a liberty which has, perhaps, done more for British subjects than anything else. Our liberty is vitally bound up in the question of

finance, and when we look at the [7.30 p.m.] statements that are made to this House—and particularly to the Auditor-General's reports, and see how this unauthorised expenditure is year by year being increased—it is quite time that the members of

this House should draw attention to the matter, so that the people in the country may see how the Government are carrying on. They are practically going behind us. They spend money without our authority.

Mr. LEAHY: It comes before you, you know.

Mr. JENKINSON: Yes, but it is then too late, because they come down and tell us that the honour of Parliament is pledged, that the money has been spent, and therefore to protect Ministers and the honour of the country the money must be voted. The practice is growing. It is an invidious practice, and a practice that I should like to see put a stop to. There is not the slightest doubt that there are occasions when it is necessary for the Government through unforeseen circumstances to spend a certain amount of money, but the greater part of this unauthorised expenditure, amounting roughly to nearly £150,000, could be foreseen.

Mr. DAWSON: It is about £230,000.

Mr. JENKINSON: That, of course, makes the matter much worse. It appears perfectly clear to me that far the greater portion of this unauthorised expenditure should not have been expended at all. The best part of it could have been brought before Parliament in the customary way, and have received parliamentary sanction. I find on reference to the Auditor-General's reports for the last three years the following amounts have been expended without parliamentary authority:—For the financial year 1896-7, from revenue, £50,302 ls. 1d.; for the financial year 1897-8, £84,122 11s. 10d.; and for the financial year 1898-9, £146,941 19s. 6d.; making a total of unauthorised expenditure from revenue of £281,366 12s. 15d. In addition to that there has been spent from loan:—In 1896-7, £97,696 ls. 11d.; in 1897-8, £35,203 15s. 9d.; and in 1898-9, £33,888 16s. 3d.—or a total of £166,788 13s. 11d.—or an aggregate amount of £448,155 6s. 4d. for three years. Nearly £500,000 has thus been spent without any authority from Parliament. The Government have come down afterwards and said they have spent this money, and they desire to get the sanction of Parliament to legitimise their actions. The majority of these items could, supposing the Ministry to have the capabilities they sometimes arrogate to themselves, have been foreseen, and placed in their ordinary Estimates, or, at all events, Parliament should have been given an opportunity of expressing an opinion before the money was actually spent. It will be noticed that the increase for the year 1898-9 over the preceding year amounts to £61,504 8s. 2d., and it is also worthy of note that a large amount appears under the heading of contingencies, incidentals, and other matters like that, and which apparently we have no means of gauging what they are for. I want to refer to just a few of the items, because I have made an assertion that several amounts might easily have been foreseen, and either placed on the Estimates or else notification made to Parliament that this amount was to be spent. The first item I see in the Chief Secretary's Department—Queensland's share of deficient contribution of South Australia towards cost of defences, Thursday Island, £436 7s. 9d. Parenthetically I may mention that this shows a very fine federal spirit.

Mr. DAWSON: Queensland has never paid her share towards the cost of the defences at Port Darwin.

The TREASURER: There are no defences at Port Darwin.

Mr. DAWSON: Queensland positively refused to pay her share.

Mr. JENKINSON: If Queensland has refused to pay her share of the defences at Port Darwin, that is no excuse for South Australia being a defaulter, when she entered into a contract to contribute towards the cost of the defences at Thursday Island. My point, however, is that this should certainly not appear as unauthorised expenditure. Unauthorised expenditure generally means expenditure for which authority is given by what is generally called the Governor in Council. That might very well have been placed on the ordinary Estimates. The next item set down to which I shall refer is "contingencies—special grant to Queensland Rifle Association, £400; and rifle clubs, new targets, £1,000." Then under the heading of "miscellaneous services" there is an item of £900 for "incidental and miscellaneous expenses." Surely these expenses could have been foreseen at the time the Estimates were framed, instead of including it in this unauthorised expenditure. In the Home Secretary's Department we find an amount down with regard to leper stations—"contingencies, medical fees, incidentals, &c., £1,000." Surely there is no need to go outside Parliament in a matter like that. The Minister in charge of the department ought to have some sort of idea as to what is likely to be needed for his department. To put down an extra £1,000 for leper stations! Why, when we refer to the matter we are indignantly told by the Ministry that the lepers are not increasing. If it is so, why go to the Governor in Council and get authority to spend another £1,000 without consulting Parliament? Also, £600 for provisions, stores and incidentals; Toowoomba prisons, £600; and £700 for reformatories; £250 for the industrial school for girls, River-view, and £450 for the industrial school for boys, Yeronga. For provisions, medical comforts, and incidentals, at Dunwich, £1,300; charitable allowances, on account of Toowoomba Benevolent Society, £250. In the Home Secretary's Department we have altogether an amount of £3,570, which, with a little bit of foresight, could have been placed on the ordinary Estimates. The Department of Public Works comes down with £11,700—£3,000 of which is for furniture and fittings. Has there been anything particular happening in the Department of Works to necessitate £3,000 being expended on furniture and fittings without coming to Parliament? Was there any particular hurry that this amount should be expended? In the Department of Justice we have £100—portion of the salary of Mr. Kellett, which was referred to by the hon. member for South Brisbane last night, and to which I shall refer later on. Also in the Department of the Treasurer, £2,000 for commission, exchange, &c.; £5,000 for the purchase of land for the extension of the Queen's Wharf; and £5,695 for the Queensland National Bank prosecutions. Then there is an amount of £4,662 for the Admiralty survey, amount of claim, and tide-waiters, messengers, etc., £1,000. It is but right that the people in the country, who have not the same opportunity of seeing the Auditor-General's reports that hon. members possess, should be informed through the medium of the *Hansard*, or some other medium, how money is being spent without the authority of Parliament. Under the heading of "General Contingencies" in the Treasurer's Department, there is an item of £5,000 for buoys, etc. That appears to me an enormous sum to be expended between the end of one session and the beginning of another. Then there is £5,000 for the survey of land, and in the Department for Agriculture, £3,737 for the Agricultural College. Hon. members who have the Auditor-General's report will see how these amounts are made up, and

there appears to be very little warrant for them. For wages, travelling expenses, &c., in the Agricultural Department, £2,400; and printing and publishing the *Agricultural Journal*, £350. Surely it was known at the time the Estimates were brought down what would be required for printing the *Agricultural Journal*, without the Government having to go to the Governor in Council for that money. Then the Department of Public Instruction has nearly £1,300 for grants in aid of technical education to schools of arts, and as those grants are made every year it should have been known that that sum was required. There is also a sum of £35,752 for the purchase of mineral specimens. It appears to me that the Secretary for Mines should have known what he was going to spend in that direction. However, I am not going to cavil at that expenditure, because the Government have the specimens as an asset, though it is impossible to say whether they will realise what they paid for them. Again, in the Department of the Postmaster-General there is an item of £1,300 for gratuities to masters of vessels. That is a large sum for such a purpose, and it appears to me that there is very little reason for it, but I hope that the Minister in charge of the Estimates for that department will be able to give the committee some explanation of that expenditure. Commenting on this matter some time during this year, one of the local papers made some remarks which I think are particularly applicable. They are as follows:—

The practice is pernicious, and the country should vigorously condemn the system under which money is spent in anticipation of legislative sanction. It is a practice which renders easy in a high degree bribery of the worst description. . . . Every endeavour should be made by every lover of purity in politics to reduce to the lowest point possible this most vicious practice.

The majority of the members of this Committee will, I am sure, endorse the statement that it is not wise that the Government should go on expending these large amounts of money without the sanction of Parliament. Of course, I know that they do afterwards get the sanction of Parliament to their action, but the votes for the expenditure so incurred are generally passed with very little difficulty, I am sorry to say. A great deal has been said with regard to the purchase of lands under the Agricultural Lands Purchase Act, more particularly with regard to the Seaforth Estate. From the papers which have been placed on the table of the House this year we find that there have been seven estates purchased by the Government. For the first estate—the Glengallan Estate—which consisted of two separate pieces of land, the price paid by the Government was £3 19s. and £3 5s. per acre respectively, and the divisional board valuation of that land was £2 10s. 7d. per acre. For the Fitzroy Park Estate the Government paid £1 10s. per acre, and the divisional board valuation was £1 per acre. For the Pinelands Estate the Government paid £2 an acre, and the divisional board valuation was £1 5s. an acre. For Beauaraba Estate the Government paid £1 12s. per acre, and the divisional board valuation was £1 7s. 6d. per acre. For the Seaforth Estate the Government paid £3 13s. per acre, and the divisional board valuation was 12s. 6d. per acre. For the Clifton Estate No. 2 the Government paid £2 12s. per acre, and the divisional board valuation was £2 2s. per acre. For the Clifton Estate No. 3 the Government paid £2 per acre, and the divisional board valuation was £1 10s. 4d. per acre. I draw attention to those facts because the Secretary for Lands inferred that very little reliance could be placed on the valuations of divisional boards, and also to point out the large discrepancy between the divisional board valuation of the Seaforth Estate and the amount paid by the Government for

that land. Of those seven lots of land the Government paid the highest price for the Seaforth Estate, though the divisional board valuation of the land was the lowest of any of the cases mentioned. I take it that the gentlemen who occupy positions on that divisional board are similar to gentlemen who occupy positions on other divisional boards in other parts of the colony. They generally have local experience, or the valuator has, and they have a fair knowledge of the value of land, whether for revenue purposes or not. In the case of the Seaforth Estate the divisional board valued the land in the first instance at 15s. an acre, but that valuation was afterwards reduced on appeal to 12s. 6d. an acre. And when we find that the officers of the Lands Department valued the land at £1 0s. 10d. per acre, it is somewhat remarkable that the Government should pay £3 13s. for it. I am not at all satisfied with the explanation given last night by the Secretary for Lands, and I do not think the country will be satisfied with it. It will require a little more than the special pleading we had last night to convince the country that there is no more in that transaction than appears on the surface. It is also noteworthy that last year when commenting on the sales of land purchased by the Government under the provisions of the Agricultural Land Purchase Act the Auditor-General said, "There appears to be a good margin between the price paid and that receivable." I do not think it is necessary for an officer of the Government to get up and repeat himself year after year, but it is significant that in this case similar words to those do not appear in the Auditor-General's report for this year, namely—"There appears to be a good margin between the price paid for this land and what is likely to be realised by the Government." And it is a significant fact, it may be only a coincidence, that two members of the Ministry who are particularly identified with the agricultural industry, happen to be members for the particular district where the Seaforth Estate is situated. I think it is time that an alteration was made in the Agricultural Land Purchase Act in the direction of providing that all proposals for the purchase of estates should be submitted to Parliament before they are ratified.

Mr. DRAKE: Hear, hear! That is what we tried to get.

Mr. JENKINSON: I cannot see what objection there can be to such an alteration in the Act, for if everything is clear and aboveboard there is not the slightest doubt but that members of Parliament would ratify any reasonable proposal that was submitted to them, if they thought it was in the best interests of the country. If everything is not clear and aboveboard that is all the more reason why these proposals should be submitted to Parliament and have proper ventilation. Public attention has been particularly drawn to this defect in the present Act, through the purchase by the Government of the Seaforth Estate. At all events it is a matter that will not soon be forgotten, and I hope it will not be forgotten. The Secretary for Public Lands said last night that it was probable the land would be sold, and that the Government would lose nothing whatever by the purchase. That may be so, but I am not going to enter into that matter at all. As I read the papers before me there appears to be something rather fishy about the transaction, something at all events that I am not pleased with. Attention has also been drawn to the increase in the number of Japanese coming to the colony, and already here. The matter is one which should not be lost sight of. It is all very well at election times to get on the platform and say

that it is necessary that these aliens should be kept out of the colony, and then after the election is over, have the matter quietly shunted into the background. It is a matter that requires more active interference on the part of the Government. The Hon. John Douglas, in his report submitted to us a few weeks back, draws particular attention to this matter, and I intend to read a few extracts from that report. In giving the nationality of the men on the shipping articles he starts first with the Japanese, and gives the number at Thursday Island at 790, and he says—

Of these it will be observed that the Japanese far outnumber any other nationality. The number of Europeans is comparatively small; still it seems to indicate that under more favourable circumstances a larger number than eighty-six might find employment.

Referring to the question of Asiatic labour, he says—

It has never been contemplated that it would be politic to surrender the control of a profitable industry to an alien population, however intelligent and industrious they might be. This, I do not hesitate to say, is rapidly being accomplished,

I do not know whether the Government ever read the reports that Mr. Douglas sends in every year or whether it ever strikes them that there is anything in his report, or whether they believe that he only writes these reports for fun or to give himself practice in caligraphy. There is a most startling statement here. He says—

We cannot and ought not to surrender our fisheries to foreigners, and whatever it may be necessary to do to avoid this contingency must be done. The Legislature is now seized of the facts, and a remedy of some kind must be provided.

There is no member of this House who has done more to bring this matter before the attention of this House and of the country than the hon. member for Croydon. In season and out of season, the hon. member has persistently hammered away at the necessity for introducing some legislation whereby the introduction of these aliens shall be stopped. But, as usual, with respect to what is said on this side of the House, the Government simply close their ears to it and forget that we, as well as members on their side, represent the people. As a matter of fact, we represent more people than members on the other side, who represent only a minority of the people of the colony, though, owing to the way in which the constituencies are cut out, they have a majority of members in this House. The Hon. John Douglas further says—

A considerable number of boats have become the property of aliens, and probably not less than forty are owned and manned entirely by aliens. The building and repair of boats is now also exclusively in the hands of Japanese, who are excellent shipwrights. While availing ourselves judiciously of the services of these most intelligent and progressive people, it is manifestly our duty to conserve those rights and privileges which we possess on behalf of our own people. From the figures given, and from the statements made, the present position may be arrived at. The fishery, having been originally worked and developed by the enterprise of European owners, assisted by the casual labour of coloured men, who for the most part were aliens, it is now passing into the hands of the most active and intelligent of these aliens. Of these the Japanese are undoubtedly in the ascendant—they own boats, build boats, lease boats, and work boats chiefly for their own benefit. Of course a considerable number are still employed by Europeans, but this is a diminishing quantity. The Bill of last session, when it comes into operation, either in the form in which it passed the Legislature, or with amendments, will have a tendency to diminish the ascendancy referred to. It is now considered, however, that more stringent preventives are required.

When the hon. member for South Brisbane was addressing the Chamber last night some mem-

bers on the Treasury Bench seemed to get highly indignant at some of the remarks that were made, yet the Hon. John Douglas realises the importance of the leper question. He refers to the increase in the number of them, and to the fact that the accommodation for them is insufficient, and he says—

I would suggest that Dr. Ashburton Thompson, of Sydney, who has directed a good deal of attention to the origin of leprosy, should be asked to visit Thursday Island, and to give the Government the benefit of his observations on the subject. It merits the best attention which can be given to it.

That is his suggestion, and it is, I think, particularly useful, as the disease is one with which we are not familiar, and it is one on which the medical authorities differ. It appears to me that the suggestion of the Hon. John Douglas is one which the Government could very wisely have adopted. The expense would not have been great, certainly not as great as the amount it will cost to send these troops to the Transvaal, and it would be expended, I maintain, in a much more legitimate manner—in looking after the health of the people of this colony. This question of leprosy will have to be tackled with a firm hand before very long; and by the way it is spreading throughout the colony, not only in the North, but in the South and West, it clearly requires more attention than has been given to it up to the present time. The leader of the Labour Opposition, in speaking yesterday, made some very pertinent remarks with regard to the mining industry, drawing particular attention to the statement made by the Treasurer in the Financial Statement, that there was a probability of the dividends from this industry falling off. The hon. member also indicated the manner in which he thought this was likely to be brought about, and that indication will appeal to members acquainted with the industry. It is already beginning to be realised that the proposals of the Government to increase the area and reduce the labour conditions are not to be beneficial to the colony. I am perfectly satisfied that the increase in areas is going to affect us in the direction indicated by the hon. the leader of the Labour Opposition, and we have got the Government to blame for that.

The TREASURER: You would accuse the Government of taking the gold out of the stone.

Mr. JENKINSON: I believe they would if they could do it without being found out. If all accounts are true, some of them are as badly off for money as some members on this side, and I have not the slightest doubt that many of us if we could get the gold out of the stone without being found out would do it. The Government might not go to that extent, but I point out that they can do far more harm to the industry by passing legislation which will interfere with its profitable development. The question of the dividend duty was also referred to by the leader of the Labour Opposition. A matter that is worth referring to here is the fact that many of the regulations issued under the new Act dealing with the mining industry are altogether different from the old regulations, and the alteration has not always been an improvement, particularly with regard to the payment of lease rents. I do not know whether it

[8 p.m.] has been brought under the notice of hon. members who have been on other mining fields, but there has been a great outcry about this on the field on which I have resided for some years. Under the old regulations, a lease could be taken up and the rent could be paid for the unexpired months of the year; but now, if a lease is taken up in December, it is necessary to pay the half-year's rent. That

presses heavily in some degree on the smaller companies, and representations have been made to the Minister to look into the matter, with the hope that he would see the wisdom of going back to the old regulations. The hon. member for Brisbane North, Hon. E. B. Forrest, when speaking the other night, touched on the question of the surplus, and stated that instead of that surplus going to pay off the national debt it should go towards the reduction of taxation; and seeing that in a short time it is anticipated that the Federal Parliament will be an accomplished fact, and in all probability the various debts will be taken over by that Parliament, it seems to me that that suggestion might very wisely be adopted. There is one other matter that the Government seem to have lost sight of, although a definite promise was made, and that is with regard to the distribution of the Government funds in various banks. Now, I understand they are placed in one bank.

The TREASURER: No. The funds are placed in six or seven banks now.

Mr. JENKINSON: But the amounts that are placed in some of the banks are rather small. The idea was, as I understand, to have an equitable distribution of the funds for the safety of the colony. I do not think that idea has been carried out, although I am informed that to a certain extent, that principle has been adopted. During the last year there have been several appointments made by the Government, which appear to me to deserve a little more criticism than has been given to them. The hon. member for South Brisbane referred to the appointment of a gentleman to look after the totalisators, and in my opinion that appointment was a perfectly unwarrantable one. As he said, it could perhaps be justly described as an act of nepotism. The totalisator receipts have, I take it, been heretofore examined by the Government Auditor, so that the necessity for the appointment of this gentleman does not appear on the surface, and, from the interjection made, sufficient cause has not been shown to warrant the appointment of that particular officer. It may be only a coincidence that that official is a relative of one of the Ministers. But at all events, this matter, like the transaction with regard to the Seaforth Estate, is open to a deal of condemnation. I wish now to refer to the matter touched on by the hon. member for South Brisbane, and I must say he has placed me in the same position as Max Adeler in a book entitled "Out of the Hurly-burly." There it is stated that a man went to a meeting brimful of jokes, but as one speaker after another got up they appropriated his stock, so that when it came to his turn he had very little to say. And the hon. member for South Brisbane has anticipated some of my remarks, particularly with regard to the working of the railways and the appointment of Mr. Nisbet, the papers in connection with which were laid on the table of the House, in accordance with a motion tabled by myself. The Railway Commissioners were appointed in 1889, and in 1887, when Sir Samuel Griffith was Premier, it was decided that locomotives should be manufactured in the colony. Seventy-five locomotives were tendered for, and when the three Commissioners were appointed in 1889, instead of making provision for replacing old engines or having them properly repaired, Mr. Mathieson, then the Chief Commissioner, worked the whole of the rolling-stock to its fullest capacity. Now, that is important, because it is the keynote of many of the grievances that are supposed to exist, particularly with regard to the inquiry into the boiler explosions. The same policy was pursued with regard to carriages, wagons, and the rolling-stock generally, and the return called for by the hon.

member for Leichhardt showed that the contracts let for the years 1890 to 1898 were as follow:—

Year.	Locomotives.	Carriages.	Wagons.
1890	...	16	20
1891	...	22	100
1892	...	1	40
1893	8	...	1
1894	...	1	25
1895	40	18	152
1896	...	16	486
1897	...	22	418
1898	{ 2 ("Abt") 10	31	810

You will notice that in 1895 tenders were called for forty locomotives, and it was not till January, 1896, that the contract was let to Walkers' Limited. In 1896 contracts were let for more wagons than during the whole term of Mr. Mathieson's rule. In 1896 Mr. Mathieson resigned, and the present Commissioner succeeded him. From 1889 to 1896 tenders were only called for eight new engines, and in 1897 the traffic increased to such a large extent—that is, before Walkers' engines were delivered—that it was found impossible to withdraw engines from traffic for the necessary repairs. During the last ten years, as far as I can gather from the reports, the Government have been pressed to provide new railway workshops to enable the necessary repairs to be executed quickly. Now, an interjection was made last night as to what this had to do with the bursting of boilers. I think it had a great deal to do with it, because if there was not sufficient rolling stock to enable engines that wanted repairs to have a spell in the shops, and not sufficient accommodation for making repairs, it stands to reason that there must be accidents, and the wonder is that there have not been more, and that the Government have not had to pay large sums by way of indemnity as the Government had to do in New Zealand. But at the present time, although the Secretary for Railways must be fully acquainted with the facts, very little is being done, and I think a great deal may be learned by reading some of the evidence given before the Commission which inquired into this subject. I am referring to this matter at length, because it appears to me that the gentleman who has been practically penalised, or at any rate disrated, has been made a scapegoat of, and I think it only right that the attention of Parliament and the country should be called to the matter. I may mention that I do not know either Mr. Hornblow or Mr. Darker. I have never seen, that I know of, either of those two gentlemen, and have had no communication with them whatever, but I think that this is a matter that requires investigation, and I am going now to quote some of the evidence that was given before the Commission. On page 8 of the evidence, question 212, Mr. Hornblow was asked—

Have you ever made a request for better means of repairing boilers? Yes, I have. Only lately I have brought it very forcibly before the Commissioner. I had conversations with the Commissioner on the subject two or three years ago, and he has expressed the intention of improving them. He is quite in favour of improving them.

Do you not think your working expenses are rather low as compared with the other colonies—I mean the locomotive expenditure? They are very low indeed. Too low, I think.

Do you not think that should have pointed out to you that you were not doing enough repairs? It tends to do that. I have a statement prepared of the expendi-

ture in the other colonies on the train-mile basis which I think is the fairest to go upon in regard to locomotive expenditure, and our expenditure is considerably below any other colony in regard to either broad or narrow gauge lines.

You have made application several times to have the workshops improved? Yes. It has been mentioned in the annual reports, and I have had several interviews with the Commissioner, who is doing all he can to have them improved. In fact, he is anxious that some of the buildings should be started at once. He was willing to start before the explosion occurred.

So that there has been some influence at work to prevent the necessary outlay when both the Commissioner and locomotive engineer admit the inadequacy of the workshops, and when nothing is done from year to year, and when it was interjected last night that the department had never been stinted, and that whenever money was asked for it was granted, it certainly is not borne out by the evidence given before the Commission. On page 14, Mr. Darker was asked—

378. Have you drawn attention to it from time to time? Yes, I have not only written about it, but I have impressed it personally upon every Minister who has come to Ipswich for a good many years past. In fact, it has been the worry of my life this last few years.

So that it is no use the Government trying to wriggle out of this matter and say they are not to blame. According to Mr. Darker, every Secretary for Railways who has visited Ipswich has had his attention drawn to this matter—

396. *By Mr. Stinton:* I suppose you have very little better facility for doing work now than you had fifteen or twenty years ago? We have not the same facility, because we have more engines while we have no more room.

Is it to be wondered that there seems to be some deficiency in the working of the Railway Department when such evidence as that can be given before the Commission? On page 66, Mr. A. W. Pigott, chief draftsman in the Ipswich workshops, gives evidence, and the following questions are put to him—

2199. Have you got the necessary shed room and appliances for repairing locomotives? No. I do not know how we are able to keep the thing going the way we do, with the accommodation we have.

2200. The department has been put to great shifts in connection with repairs, in consequence of the want of shed room and appliances? Yes. We want sheds and travelling cranes, pits, and all the modern appliances that they have in other shops. The boiler-shop alone, at Everleigh, near Sydney, is about twice the size of the whole of our locomotive shops at Ipswich put together. These are gentlemen occupying responsible positions, whose evidence, I think, should be treated with respect. Then he continues—

2202. And the number of our locomotive and rolling-stock generally? Not at all.

2203. Our shops are behind the times? A long way behind.

2204. Has anything been done to them during the last ten years or during your time? Well, the foreman carriage builder used to have one of the shops that is used as a locomotive repair shop now. That is about the only thing I remember. There is extra room, but no travelling crane or any facilities for lifting. I think they are just about the same as when I came here fourteen years ago.

In questions 2250 to 2260 he goes much deeper into the matter, but I will not read that evidence, because it is rather long. It is, however, well worth the attention of hon. members, as the evidence makes the position of affairs much clearer and more intelligible. On page 95, Mr. Darker is further asked—

2968. I suppose you are not in a position to call these engines in? No.

2969. They are imperatively required to carry out the work of the department? Yes.

2970. And cannot be withdrawn from service? Not without inconvenience to the traffic.

That means if it means anything that we are now running on our lines engines that are not fit to do the work, and presumably an accident may

occur at any time, and the taxpayers of the colony have to pay heavy damages to injured persons. I now come to the evidence of Mr. Gray, the Commissioner. He is asked—

3119. The court would like you to tell us what has been done departmentally with regard to the extension of the Ipswich workshops, and the equipping of them and placing them in a position to cope with the necessary repairs of locomotives and rolling-stock? The necessity for extending or rather increasing the accommodation in the Ipswich workshops has been before the Government for many years, but hitherto the question of building new workshops, I think, has been a matter of finance rather than anything else.

Yet we are told the department is not starved—that if application had been made for the money it would have been found. Here we find the Commissioner himself denying any such thing, because no other inference can be placed on these words. He says—

The Government have not been in a position to provide the necessary funds to build them.

They have been in the position to find funds for other purposes not quite so legitimate as this.

I fancy that was partly the reason; another reason that I think has been advanced is that it was contemplated some years ago to alter the site of the shops owing to the flooded nature of the ground on which the present shops are placed. I think that has also had something to do with delaying the construction of the new shops. On my appointment to my present position, two years ago, I strongly urged on the Government the necessity of at once proceeding with the new buildings either on the present site or elsewhere. The Government could not then see their way to place any money on the Estimates for 1896-7 to make a beginning, but they have done so on the Estimates for the current financial year.

I think that some of the extracts I have made from that evidence will make it pretty clear that, whoever is to blame for this matter, the whole of it is not to be placed on the shoulders of the late locomotive engineer; that Mr. Horniblow appears to have been made the scapegoat for someone else. The Government are partly responsible, I believe. The Commissioner of Railways, at page 30 of this report, appears to indicate that the board which held the inquiry into this matter recommended the appointment of a chief mechanical engineer, and it was consequent on that recommendation that Mr. W. H. Nisbet was appointed to that position; but a reference to their findings indicate nothing of the sort. They have said nothing there about the appointment of a chief mechanical engineer. They have recommended that a works manager be appointed, that a foreman boiler-maker be appointed, and that one or two boiler inspectors be appointed. This report was made on the 24th of June last, and up to the present time none of the recommendations have been given effect to. As I am reminded, an appointment has been made which they did not recommend. What was the use of having that board of inquiry and asking them to make recommendations if they are deliberately ignored? The question of the competency of Mr. Nisbet I am not going to enter into, because I am not qualified to judge; but from what was told us last night by the hon. member for Brisbane South, it seems to me that that requires a little bit of investigation. We have had investigations into the working of the Government Printing Office, and investigations into the working of the Police Force; and I maintain that, with more justice, we could have an investigation into the working and administration of the Railway Department.

Mr. LEAHY: That will be interesting, I think.

Mr. JENKINSON: I think it is necessary—it appears to be almost absolutely necessary—that a commission should be appointed to inquire into the working of the Railway Department. We have lately had before us the question of the totalisators in the colony. According to the

return which has been printed and circulated amongst us, there are 160 permits granted to use totalisators in this colony. In 1889 there was introduced in this House, and passed through, the Totalisator Restriction Bill, and it was never intended, when this Act was passed, to grant permits except to legitimate clubs, and specific reasons were to be given why they should be granted. Mr. UNMACK, in moving the second reading of the Bill, said—

I have one motive only, and that is a sincere and earnest desire to protect the youths of this colony from being corrupted by the many inducements to gamble which are held out to them in this city.

It was thought that the introduction of such a Bill would do a great deal to stop gambling by the younger portion of the community; and, to an extent at the time, that was effected. But during the debate which took place on the introduction of that measure, and while it was in committee, there is not the slightest doubt that the intention was to grant permits only to the large clubs of the colony. In fact, one clause in Mr. UNMACK'S Bill was to the effect that no permit should be granted to any club unless there were at least 100 subscribers to its funds subscribing £200 annually; and, in the case of other clubs in other places, they must have not less than fifty members contributing £50 annually. Certainly colour is given to the statement, when licenses are now granted to small syndicates consisting sometimes of five or six men, that the intention of the Act is practically being frustrated. And then, in addition to charging the customary 10 per cent. and the 2½ per cent., which is supposed to go to the Government—and the 2½ per cent. does not come out of the 10 per cent., but is made a charge on the amount contributed—in the event of there being what is termed a split amount, that is an amount under 1s., which sometimes is 11d., it goes to the benefit of the club. In some cases, where the amount of the prize has been only £15, out of the splits something like £35 or £40 has gone into the pockets of the members of those syndicates. So in some cases they charge not merely the 10 per cent., but more than 20 per cent.

The TREASURER: That is the odd money?

Mr. JENKINSON: This is how it works out: Say the amount is 8s. 11d.; in the division they only pay 8s., and keep the other 11d. themselves. That, I understand, is the principle.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: In addition to the percentage?

Mr. JENKINSON: They keep that in addition to the 10 per cent., and the 2½ per cent. which goes to the Government, because they take off the 12½ per cent.

Mr. LEAHY: The inspector will prevent that.

Mr. JENKINSON: I do not think the inspector is likely to do anything with regard to it. My opinion is that the inspector is not going to alter the law in regard to this one bit. Neither do I believe he will earn 1d. of his salary.

Mr. LEAHY: What is he there for?

Mr. JENKINSON: That is more than I can tell. The plain word for it would be "jobbery." I believe the appointment, like many other of the appointments—the appointment of the son of the Postmaster-General and the appointment of Mr. Dickson to the Police Commission—is a thing which wants to be looked into.

Mr. LEAHY: I think he is doing as good work as any other member of the Commission.

Mr. JENKINSON: I do not know.

Mr. LEAHY: He is.

Mr. JENKINSON: I am not saying anything about that. The idea when this Totalisator Bill was passed was, I take it, to stop young people from spending their money in this particular practice, and it has altogether failed. As to the

other motive—that it would tend to support legitimate horse-racing, and tend to improve the breed of horses—that is entirely done away with. You have only to go to some of the suburbs in Brisbane, and you find races four, five, and six furlongs long, and nothing but weeds running. No improvement whatever is taking place in the breed of racehorses through the

[8.30 p.m.] totalisators, so that inducement has entirely come to the ground. In South Australia I do not think they allow permits to race clubs for more than twelve meetings in the year, and that principle might very wisely be extended to this colony. I am told on very good authority that race meetings are held in Brisbane every week, and that they are dragging the young people out there, with more pernicious results than when Adams's "Tattersall's Sweeps" were in full vogue in this city. It is all very well for us to prohibit one part of this business and allow a larger channel to be opened, where the same obnoxious principle is being carried on week after week.

Mr. LEAHY: Do you know whom that race-course belongs to?

Mr. JENKINSON: I have not the slightest idea—perhaps the hon. member could enlighten me.

Mr. McDONNELL: The Royal Bank owns the Breakfast Creek grounds.

Mr. JENKINSON: I can hardly see the connection. I remember reading some time ago that the Premier was connected with the Royal Bank. I do not know whether the hon. member for Fortitude Valley wants me to gather that there is anything in that.

Mr. McDONNELL: He is out of it now.

Mr. JENKINSON: Then, of course, there can be no connection whatever. Some of the rest of us would be very glad if we could get out of the banks, too. I am led to believe, also—and I can readily understand it—that this is a most serious matter for the business people in this city. I wonder they have not taken up the matter before. I have not the slightest doubt that many of them feel indirectly—if not directly—the effects of the spread of gambling in the city. I hardly think the Home Secretary is cognisant of how the Totalisator Act is being worked. Now that the matter has been mentioned, I hope it will be looked into, particularly with reference to the granting of permits to one particular club—which is really a syndicate—to hold races in one of the suburbs of Brisbane every week. I hope the Home Secretary will see his way clear to put a stop to the practice, and if he could see his way to bring the Act more into line with the law in force in South Australia, it would be better for all parties concerned. Before I resume my seat, I wish to refer to one matter referring to the Home Secretary's Department, which requires speedy attention, as it is in regard to a matter which vitally affects the health of the people of Brisbane, and, indirectly, the health of the whole of the people of this colony. I refer to a letter that was sent to the Central Board of Health by the Home Secretary's Department with regard to scarlet fever. We have in this city what is termed the Central Board of Health, which has a certain amount of power—a power which, it appears to me, can be limited, and is limited, making the efforts of the Board at times abortive. We all know what scarlet fever means to us, and the disease is liable to spread if the present practice initiated by the Home Secretary is allowed to continue. On the 13th September, at a meeting of the Board of Health, a letter was read from the Under Secretary to the Home Secretary's Department, stating that Dr. Jackson knew of only one case of scarlet fever having occurred in

a house just after one of his convalescents had left it. The point was that the patients in the scarlet fever hospital had been allowed to leave before they were properly cured. According to medical authorities, a period of six weeks is supposed to elapse before scarlet fever patients should mix with other people, for fear of infection; but Dr. Jackson, according to this, had reported to the Home Secretary that this time was too long, and in order to provide accommodation for others, it was necessary for them to leave the hospital before that time. Dr. Hardie, in discussing the matter, said—

He considered the position a very serious one. The communication showed that the Government were not prepared to take the advice of the board, but preferred that of an outside practitioner. The Home Secretary said they did not furnish any instances of cases where patients in the peeling stage had communicated the disease to others; but he did not consider it to be the duty of the board to follow up individual cases. They were not nuisance inspectors. All they knew was that in the practice of medical men throughout the world the peeling stage was regarded as infectious. Dr. Jackson said he knew of one case, and that was important; he might not have followed up any others. The Home Secretary spoke of cases of people visiting patients in the hospital. He held that such a thing was wrong, and two wrongs did not make a right. It was evidently a matter of saving expense; but it was questionable if the course followed had not been rather calculated to increase the expense by increasing the number of patients.

The advice of the board had been asked for with regard to this particular matter, but Dr. Hardie said that their advice had been disregarded. Dr. Thomson also referred to the matter as being an insult to the board. Dr. Connolly supported Dr. Thomson's statement, and also made these remarks—

If the advice of the board was not acted upon, then the sooner it went out to the public that the system of quarantine was a farce the better it would be. It would be better for the board to resign altogether. The position showed clearly that a Minister of Health was wanted, or someone who would possess executive power, and would be able to see that things were rightly conducted.

Other members of the Board also spoke strongly on the subject of the Home Secretary's letter, and the *Courier* the following day commented upon the matter very strongly indeed, stating—

If what the board maintains is correct, the loose quarantine now endorsed by Mr. Foxton is responsible for an extension of the mischief. Moreover, we are face to face with a conclusion which must, otherwise, tend to kill any faith in quarantine provisions.

The Home Secretary, according to what I understand, put it that it would not be right to tax local authorities to keep the patients there for the longer period of six weeks, when room had to be made for other people. The *Courier* went on to say—

In arguing as he has done against unnecessary expense, he has made it appear that the whole scheme of quarantine is unnecessary, and in addition has practically told the Board of Health that it does not understand its business. That is to say if the Board, with the medical profession behind it, is wrong in insisting that at the desquamative stage scarlet fever is highly contagious, and errs in contending that the danger is very real after three weeks have passed, no matter what disinfectants may be used, then the country is throwing money away on a useless hospital and on an incompetent body of advisers. Mr. Foxton will find it difficult to convince the community as a whole that his attempt at economy in this instance is justified. Rather does it appear, as Dr. Hardie said on Wednesday, that such economy is likely to spell extravagance.

The matter was also brought up at the Medical Congress when it was sitting in this city. After the matter had been fully ventilated, Dr. Sprout said—

He was simply horrified to hear what went on in Brisbane. As far as his experience went, it was quite a new departure in public health administration. To discharge scarlet fever patients during desquamation must be a very dangerous thing to do, and he knew no

reason why it should be done. The gentleman who was responsible for discharging these patients might very well be asked by the Board of Health, or by the medical men of Brisbane, to state his reasons for so doing. There could be no doubt that the patient continued infectious as long as desquamation existed. (Applause.) So long as desquamation existed, they would get the bacillus from the patient, and you might get it after that stage had been passed. In every case, however mild, the patient should not be discharged from the hospital before the expiration of six or eight weeks. He could not understand the action of the superintendent of the Brisbane fever hospital, and would very much like to hear his reasons.

The doctor then moved the following motion:—

That, in the opinion of this section, the compulsory notification and isolation of infectious diseases by proper hospital accommodation is of much importance to the health of the community, as well as to the best interests of trade and commerce.

That motion was carried. We have had occasion to discuss the Central Board of Health and their actions on previous occasions in this House, but it appears to me that the Home Secretary should not have taken upon himself the responsibility that he seems to have done in this case at the instigation of one man, when the Central Board of Health are unanimous in their opinion that that practice is wrong. The health of the community is of far greater importance than the expenditure of a few pounds of money in a legitimate direction, and it would be much better, not only in the interest of those resident in the city, but also of those living in other parts of the colony, if more effective steps were taken to carry out the suggestion of the Central Board of Health and the resolution of the Medical Congress. I have occupied more time than I had intended to do, and I must conclude by entering my protest on the matter I touched upon at the opening of my speech, that is this unauthorised expenditure by the Government. How long it is going to continue I do not know; in fact, we do not know how long the present Government are going to continue.

Mr. STEWART: They are a continuous Government.

Mr. JENKINSON: They have been very continuous in incurring unauthorised expenditure at all events. It is all very well for the Government to depend upon the majority at their back to assist them to get these matters passed, but hon. members sitting on both sides of the House should recollect that they have privileges to maintain, and a public duty to perform, and I think it would be just as well if some of these items were blocked as a warning to the Government that they must not continue the practice.

Mr. LEAHY: You would assist in that, I suppose?

Mr. JENKINSON: I am quite sure that if the hon. member for Bulloo can carry out his little coup he will get assistance from me and other members on this side, if he can show that he has legitimate reasons for testing the strength of the Government.

Mr. LEAHY: I suppose you would like to be remembered for it.

Mr. JENKINSON: I am quite sure that I would be remembered by somebody, but in what way I will not say.

The TREASURER: On any pretext you would vote against the Government.

Mr. JENKINSON: No, I would not. I have asserted before in this House that I will support the Government in any good measure they may bring forward. I did that last session, and I will do it as long as I remain in the House. I would not vote against the Government on any petty trifling thing that is brought before the House simply to turn them out. At the same time I am perfectly convinced that they are not the

right people to be there, and that they have been there too long, and I should be exceedingly glad to see better men occupying the position.

Mr. COWLEY: We could all endorse that.

Mr. JENKINSON: I believe so. I am also of opinion that there are better men in this House than the members of the Government now on the Treasury benches, but I hardly think the hon. member for Herbert will endorse that statement. But to return to the matter of unauthorised expenditure. We are sent down here to look after the interests of the people of the colony generally, and not for the support or aggrandisement of any party. To me it seems a pity that the system of party politics has reached its present stage, and I believe that it is responsible for a great deal of this unauthorised expenditure. A great deal is perhaps expended for the glorification of a particular party in order to enable them to retain their positions on the Treasury benches. I hope that, whether the present Treasurer occupies the position next year or not, the Statement then presented will show that the colony is in as good a position as it is at the present time, but that there will not be such a large amount of unauthorised expenditure disclosed in the Financial Statement.

Mr. HARDACRE (*Leichhardt*): I do not propose to detain the House long if I can avoid it. There are a large number of important Bills and the whole of the Estimates to be dealt with, and the session is rapidly approaching its termination. Therefore, I am of opinion that it is advisable that hon. members should speak as little as possible. As far as I am concerned, I was very much inclined to act on the adage that "Speech is silver and silence is gold," but the debate on the Financial Statement is rather an important one, and as I have generally made it a practice to speak on it, I felt rather reluctant to let the occasion pass without saying a few words. It is a usual courtesy to compliment the Treasurer on his Financial Statement, and I desire to pay that compliment on this occasion. The Statement, which I have no doubt is a correct one, shows that we have a surplus, which is as gratifying to the people of the colony as it is to the Treasurer. I may say that the hon. gentleman who occupies the position of Treasurer has filled the position as well as his predecessors—indeed, almost as well as one of his predecessors who earned a colonial reputation as a master of finance—

Mr. STEWART: Who was he?

Mr. HARDACRE: Sir Hugh Nelson, and I think rightly so to some extent. But I cannot help in this connection recalling the allegory about the fly on the wheel. Almost all the Treasurers we have had in the past have been little more than the fly upon the wheel as far as the prosperity of the colony is concerned. I believe so far as the general prosperity of the colony is concerned the present Treasurer has, like other Treasurers, been only a fly upon the wheel. They have not made the prosperity; it has come in spite of them and irrespective of them. The fact is that the great natural resources of the colony have brought us back to prosperity in spite of ourselves. Another very material factor in restoring prosperity is the annual natural increase of population. In this colony, over and above immigration overseas and overland, it amounts to about 14,000 a year. That is an enormous factor in restoring prosperity. It means that every year there is an increase in Customs revenue, the railway traffic is augmented, postal and telegraph receipts are enlarged, and so with every department of the State, and so also with commerce and industry. The wheels of industry are sent round with a swifter motion every year in consequence of this natural increase of popu-

lation. It gives rise to the increased consumption which in turn gives rise to increased demand, and to increased production and so affects the return of commercial prosperity. I find that during the last six years, since 1893, there has been an increase of population in this colony of no less than 80,000, or nearly one-fifth of the total population of the colony previous to 1893. If I may digress, I would just like to put this question: Where is the necessity for State-aided immigration when we have this natural increase from our own people of 14,000 every year? Whilst congratulating the Treasurer on the financial success of the year, and also upon his ability in filling the position, I certainly cannot congratulate him upon the character of the Financial Statement he has delivered on this occasion. In fact, it is properly not a Financial Statement at all, but what might be called a *résumé* of departmental reports—a rehash of what is given to us by the various departments in bulk. It is following one of the bad examples—and there are not many I admit—set us by Sir Hugh Nelson.

The TREASURER: He was the best Treasurer we ever had.

Mr. HARDACRE: I am not saying anything against that. I admitted his exceptional ability in matters of finance, but I say this was a bad example that he set this Committee, and one in which we have degenerated from year to year, until now we have a Statement full of mere details that are utterly unworthy the dignity and importance of a Financial Statement. We actually had a Financial Statement one year which referred to a buoy that had been put somewhere in the Norman River and to a date palm that was planted, I think, at Windorah. This year we are referred to the repair of a jetty, and to a number of trivial things which are utterly out of place here and unworthy the importance of a Financial Statement.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: We will wait until you draw up one.

Mr. HARDACRE: I will endeavour to draw up one that will avoid the miserable details this Statement is full of. If I am ever unfortunate enough to occupy the Treasurership I shall endeavour to deal as this Statement should deal with general financial principles and policies of finance. Just imagine a Gladstone or a Goschen submitting a Financial Statement to the House of Commons with mere details in it explaining the expenditure of a couple of pounds.

Mr. GLASSEY: Gladstone was the greatest detail speaker the world has ever seen.

Mr. HARDACRE: That may be, but he certainly did not weary the House of Commons with matters of detail such as we find here. I say the detailed nature of the Statement is responsible for the detail discussions which we have had on matters of departmental administration and on small questions more fitted for a debate on the Estimates than upon the Financial Statement.

The TREASURER: You set me a bad example.

Mr. HARDACRE: I have not set the hon. gentleman a bad example. I for one protest again, as I have protested before, against this rehash of departmental reports, which might better be called an industrial review of the progress of the colony than a Financial Statement.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: A very useful thing.

Mr. HARDACRE: No doubt it is very useful for purposes of circulation in Great Britain, and no doubt that is one of the objects; but if we are going in for anything of that kind it would be better to have it printed in a separate pamphlet than that members of this Committee should be subjected to the waste of time and wearisomeness of listening to the reading of a Statement of this kind.

Mr. GLASSEY: A very fine exposition of the state of the colony.

Mr. HARDACRE: No doubt it is a very fair exposition of the industrial state of the colony, but let anyone turn up the Statement and see the matters of detail referred to with regard to loans, the number of selections, and so on—I am surprised they have not dealt with the town pump in some place, as it is about worthy of the rest of the details in this Statement. If the Treasurer will accept a suggestion from me, offered in good faith and with no desire to be offensive, he can make his Statement much more interesting and much more of a Financial Statement if he will see that the heads of departments—who make most of it up I believe—will simply cut out the mass of details and give us, instead, a general and brief epitome of the state of their departments and the progress they have made. The present system degenerates the Financial Statement and also the debate upon it. I have said that a Financial Statement should be occupied with a discussion of general principles of finance and policies of taxation and their effect upon the welfare of the people and upon the industries of the colony. I make no apology for taking this opportunity to say what I have said, in the light of the fact that we are about to enter a federation, under a new Constitution and new financial arrangements which will entirely dislocate our own finances and the financial policies of the whole of Australia.

There has been an attempt in New South Wales recently, to form a federal freetrade party. I may say that I for one am an out and out freetrader. I believe that all tariffs—all taxes levied through the Customs upon commodities used by the people are injurious to trade and commerce, and retard the development of any community. I don't think that protection is any protection at all. Instead of encouraging industries, it discourages them. It may encourage some industries, but if it does so, it is at the expense of the rest of the community. It reduces the wages of the masses of the people; it therefore decreases the producing power of the people; and to the extent that it decreases their purchasing power, so it lessens local production and causes less employment for the working classes. It also lessens the profits of employers and increases the expense of production, and so retards the enterprise and progress of any community, especially in a community like Queensland, which is largely engaged in primary industries. These primary industries are of the greatest importance to this colony—the mining, the pastoral, and agricultural industries. But the worst of it is this: That protection has the effect of taking out of the pockets of the people a far larger amount than what the Treasurer receives. The taxation falls on the backs of the working people, reduces the producing power, and contracts the field of employment in many cases. No doubt it causes work in some industries, but it is at the expense of other industries, and, on the whole, it decreases the total amount of employment. A protective tariff is an entirely different thing from the encouragement of industries by the State. There are other and better ways of encouraging industries, for instance, by railways and other public works; by central sugar mills, flour mills, central crushing mills, and also by bonuses, if necessary. Bonuses are not at all antagonistic to freetrade principles. And I think that is a far better way to encourage industries—a hundred times a better way—than through a protective tariff. That tariff may remain on for a long time without at all operating to give rise to the encouragement of any industry. It may be on for years before it has any effect, and all this time the community

is paying these taxes, not merely to the Treasurer—because he receives only part of it—but the principal merchants and others, who, perhaps, hold a monopoly, are enabled to tax the people and put money into their own pockets in addition to what goes into the Treasury. We don't know by a protection tariff how much we are paying, but with the system of bonuses we know exactly how much it costs the State to encourage any particular industry. There is this fact also, that we never give bonuses without having an immediate result. Directly a bonus is given it operates as an encouragement to the industry on whose behalf it is given. And there is also this advantage, that it leaves us at liberty to raise revenue to provide for the bonus in many ways; for instance, in the way of an income tax, a land tax, an absentee tax, or any other method of taxation. The present method of encouraging industries through a tariff is a very crude, cumbrous, and obsolete method. The true principle of taxation in my opinion is upon land values. Adam Smith has laid down, in his "Wealth of Nations," four canons of taxation which have before been quoted in this House. I do not know that I will read them, but if I did it would only be for the purpose of pointing out that they are incorrect. As far as this House is concerned they have been quoted and accepted as the correct principles of taxation, but I will give what I conceive to be the true principles. He says—

The subjects of every State ought to contribute to the cost of government as nearly as possible in proportion to their respective abilities.

That, in my opinion, is an utterly erroneous principle on which to raise revenue. It may be taken perhaps into consideration, but to make a man pay to the revenue because he is wealthy is utterly unjust as a principle of economic justice.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I am afraid that opinions would differ upon that point.

Mr. HARDACRE: I will endeavour to point out why it is unjust. Let us take an illustration—the case of an hotelkeeper. He lets his rooms to various persons who come there, and one man more wealthy than the rest takes a room; and because he is wealthy the hotelkeeper charges him a much larger sum for the use of the same room than he charges the ordinary visitor. Is that a fair or just thing?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I do not know that the analogy holds good.

Mr. HARDACRE: It is not a just thing. The true principle of raising his income is by charging in proportion to the service rendered: and the individuals of the State ought, in my opinion, to be taxed in exactly the same way—not in proportion to their wealth, but in proportion to the service rendered to them by the State. There is no doubt that wealth comes in as a matter to be considered, but not as a question of justice. In my opinion, a writer who is the equal of Adam Smith—great economist as he was—who has recently died, and whose death is not only a national loss but a loss to the whole human race, has laid down the true principles of taxation. I refer, of course, to Henry George. He has also laid down four canons of taxation, which are as follow:—

1. That it bear as lightly as possible upon production—so, at least, to check the increase of the general fund from which taxes must be paid and the community maintained.

2. That it be easily and cheaply collected, and fall as directly as may be upon the ultimate payers, so as to take as little as possible in addition to what it yields the Government.

3. That it be certain, so as to give the least opportunity for tyranny or corruption on the part of officials, and the least temptation to law-breaking and evasion on the part of the taxpayers.

4. That it bear equally, so as to give no citizen an advantage, or put any at a disadvantage as compared with others.

I may point out that the Financial Reform Almanac, which is what I may term the only production which now remains of the Cobden-Bright Freetrade party of Great Britain, has also quoted from Henry George what the true sources of revenue are—

Consider the enormous value of land in such cities as compared with the value of land in such sparsely settled parts of the same country. To what is this due? Is it not due to the density and activity of the populations of those cities—to the very causes that require great public expenditure for streets, drains, public buildings, and all the many things needed for the health, convenience, and safety of such great cities? See how, with the growth of such cities, the one thing that steadily increases in value is land; how the opening of roads, the building of railways, the making of any public improvement, add to the value of land. Is it not clear that here is a natural law—that is to say, a tendency willed by the Creator? Can it mean anything else than that He who ordained the State with all its needs has, in the values which attach to land, provided the means to meet those ends?

That is, I believe, the true source from which everything should come, and if I believe at all in the taxation of incomes, which I do, I believe in it only for the reason that it is the best of bad taxes. It is not a good tax. It falls on production to a small degree, but it is very much better than many of the bad taxes which we have, such as raising revenue through the Customs. We are now as it were at the parting of the ways where Queensland has to decide in company with the other colonies what her policy of taxation shall be in the Federal Government which is sure to be established. A freetrade party is being formed in New South Wales, and there is also a tariff conference about to meet in Melbourne, and I desire to point out that unless Queensland does not watch very closely she will be burdened by a large tariff outside of Australia which may suit Victoria, but which will certainly not suit us or be for our welfare.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You must trust the people.

Mr. HARDACRE: We have to trust the people, certainly, but I am pointing out that it is the duty of the people to watch, and it is desirable to raise the issue, and, as far as possible, point out what ought to be the true policy that should be followed. I do not want to quote John Stuart Mill or Professor Cairnes and other economists as to the wisdom and rightfulness of putting a tax on land values. So far as the past is concerned, I believe the policy of this country, instead of doing good and bringing about prosperity, has retarded it. Both by our tariff and our retrenchment, which reduced the purchasing power of the people, and also by increased taxation, depression has been intensified and our recovery has been retarded. I believe it was false policy, and instead of retrenching so keenly and increasing taxation, if we had put a tax on land values we should have been restored to our former prosperous condition with much more rapidity. I hope now that we are abandoning our retrenchment policy we will also abandon our taxation policy, and that we will go in the direction of all the other colonies of Australia, except Western Australia, and put a tax on land values. In New South Wales £371,000 is received from land tax; in Victoria, £127,000; in South Australia, £75,000; in Tasmania, £49,000; and in New Zealand, £271,000. The amount from income tax in New South Wales is £180,000; in Victoria, £168,000; in South Australia, £83,000; in Tasmania, £46,000; and in New Zealand, £92,000. I think we might at least follow the example of every one of those colonies in at least this direction, and by means of the revenue thus

derived remove some of the burdens that now fall on the people through the Customs taxation. I would like to say a word now about the sinking fund—or the public debt reduction fund, as it is called—and I may say that I agree with the hon. member for Brisbane North in that matter. I think the principle that has been adopted is an injurious and vicious principle; and that so far from being of advantage in keeping the Treasurer's finances right, I believe that if any surplus is to be put away in a separate fund, not for the advantage of the Treasurer himself—or only in an infinitesimal degree—but for the purpose of advantaging some future Treasurer, the tendency will be to take away the inducement to have any surplus at all, because a Treasurer will say, "What is the use of a surplus to me if it is to go into the coffers to be taken by some Treasurer in the future?"

The TREASURER: It cannot be taken by any future Treasurer as long as the present Act is in force.

Mr. HARDACRE: We know that funds like that have been taken in the past by repealing Acts. Sir T. McIlwraith took money from a fund in 1879.

The TREASURER: All our surplus funds are disposed of; we bought Treasury bills with them, and those bills are destroyed.

Mr. HARDACRE: Not with the public debt reduction fund.

The TREASURER: Yes.

Mr. HARDACRE: That may be; but whether it can be taken by a future Treasurer or not, it does not advantage himself in any case.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It advantages the colony.

Mr. HARDACRE: It takes away the inducement to have a surplus, and the tendency—though I do not say it results in that—is to cause him to be wasteful and extravagant, and to live up to his income.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He has not done that.

Mr. HARDACRE: I say that is the tendency, and I agree with the suggestion of the hon. member for Brisbane North, Mr. Forrest, that it should be used for the purpose of reducing taxation—or, what I think equally as good, for a current account loan fund for the purpose of meeting small current loan works, such matters as rolling stock and small current accounts that are almost as properly taken out of consolidated revenue as from loan funds—small amounts which are constantly being required, and which should not come out of loan funds that are floated more particularly for special purposes. Just a word also on the question of the Government Savings Bank account. I also have made a note of this matter, and I was of the same opinion and made the same error as the hon. member for Cairns in thinking that there was lying to the credit of the Government Savings Bank in actual cash a current account of £1,378,000. It is not lying there in cash at all. I find now it is there to the credit of the Government Savings Bank all the same as current account, but there have been two overdrafts operated against it, an overdraft from the general account—

The TREASURER: Loan fund.

Mr. HARDACRE: An overdraft from the general account of nearly £500,000, and from the loan fund account an overdraft of £711,000, which reduces the net current account cash for the total consolidated funds and all the trust accounts to about £225,000. Therefore the colony does not lose—the Treasurer does not lose on account of the large current account of £1,378,000 lying in the Queensland National Bank as current account. But I believe there is something objectionable in this because

the Government Savings Bank as a working department lose, all the same, and the Queensland National Bank to some extent gains. On current account funds at the Queensland National Bank we are receiving 2 per cent. interest; and we are borrowing at the rate of 3 or $3\frac{1}{2}$ or $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent., as the case may be. Even supposing it is only 3 per cent., if the loan fund, instead of coming out of the loan, uses the Government Savings Bank current account fund, it is getting the advantage of the difference between 2 per cent. and 3 or $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., which would have to be paid on any loan floated in the old country; and so on the general account also. If the loan fund and the general account gain that difference, the Government Savings Bank is losing that.

The TREASURER: We make a profit every year at the savings bank.

Mr. HARDACRE: I do not deny that, but we ought to get a bigger profit. Why should the Government Savings Bank money be placed at current account in the Queensland National Bank at 2 per cent. for the purpose of conveniencing the loan fund and general account and letting them have it at $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. less than they would have to pay if they went, as they ought to go, to their own loan fund in the case of loan fund, and to the consolidated revenue fund in the case of general account? I know that if I was manager of the Government Savings Bank I would strongly object to my surplus funds being placed at such a low rate of interest for the advantage of some other department; and as the Government Savings Bank is specially a people's institution, and the result of having a large amount in that bank might give rise to a higher rate of interest to depositors, I think the present method of dealing with the money is objectionable in the people's interest, and I am of opinion that the large surplus money ought to be invested—we have done it in the past with surplus money—in Government debentures, or in Government Savings Bank Treasury bills—or, what might be better, a special new kind of investment, a Government Savings Bank note issue, which might be kept as the Treasury bills are kept, and in case of emergency might be paid to depositors instead of cash.

That would be more flexible and not [9:30 p.m.] so cumbersome as Treasury bills, which, in the case of emergency, would have to be sold in the open market, whereas Treasury notes could simply be paid to the taxpayers equal to their own money. There is one matter that rather interests me; that is with regard to the expenditure of the Lands Department. I am glad to say that this year there has been to some extent an increase in the expenditure provided for this department. For many years past—

Mr. GLASSEY: What about the returns of pastoral property?

Mr. HARDACRE: This is a question of the efficiency of the Lands Department. For years now—for at least twelve years back—there has been pursued a policy of severe retrenchment and starvation of the department, which has curtailed its efficiency and practically emasculated it, and which, I believe, has chiefly led to the large amount of dissatisfaction that exists throughout the whole colony in connection with land settlement. I do not know why a department of such great influence to the colony, and one which, I may say, with the exception of the Treasury, brings a greater net surplus into the Treasury than any other, should be curtailed year after year as it has been by the present Government. Every year for ten years past, in spite of the growing population of the colony and the growing demand for settlement, the amount placed on the Esti-

mates for the Lands Department has decreased, except in "Miscellaneous" items. In 1889 there was expended on that department £132,000. Last year there was only £76,000, or a difference annually in the cost of the administration of that department of £56,000. The Surveyor-General, as far as his department is concerned, called attention to the matter. He says—

Pecuniary curtailment had been carried into effect to such an extent that the department was not as efficient as could be desired in the matter of map production on a scale that would be of best use to the public.

After having had control of the internal economy of the Survey Department I can see plainly that increased strength must annually be provided for quite a number of years to come.

I have pointed out before the state of some of our country lands offices, and I will give the Treasurer a statement of what occurred at one of the most important centres in Queensland—namely, Charters Towers. When I went to Charters Towers during the election—

Mr. DAWSON: You had a very good time.

Mr. HARDACRE: I had a very good time, and the hon. the senior member for Charters Towers helped to make it a good time. He treated me in a most hospitable and courteous manner, and I shall not forget it for some time. I take this opportunity of saying that I met with a hospitable reception from a number of Charters Towers—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Volunteers.

Mr. HARDACRE: People.

Mr. DAWSON: Young ladies.

Mr. LEAHY: Had you a bad headache?

Mr. HARDACRE: I went about there the same as I am in the habit of doing, and went into the lands office. I did not say who I was. I had some difficulty in finding it at first. I was told it was at the clerk of petty sessions' office. There was not a lands office except as a second auxiliary to some extent to the more important work of the clerk of petty sessions. I went there and said, "I want to take up some land in this locality."

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Was that honest? Was it a square deal? Did you intend to take it up?

Mr. HARDACRE: It was a square deal, but I did not get a square acre of land. I said, "Can you tell me what land is available in this locality?" He said, "What land do you want?" I said, "That is what I don't know. I want to find out what particular class of land you have here. Suppose I came from America, or New South Wales, or from one of the other colonies, and desired land here, can you show me the country which is available?" Then he admitted, "I have no maps." I said, "That is a queer state of things—no maps."

The TREASURER: They belong to the Mines Office proper.

Mr. HARDACRE: No.

The TREASURER: That is all the land.

Mr. HARDACRE: Nothing of the kind. That is only on the goldfield. There are large areas to be taken up. I saw in the Townsville papers there of some land, hundreds of miles in extent, not far away from the railway line, that was very suitable for agricultural occupation.

The TREASURER: Who said that?

Mr. HARDACRE: A complaint was made about it not being open. It was suitable for all kinds of agriculture—good soil, and the climate so cool that it was called poor cattle country, because it was too cold for cattle, and was on the high-level country.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Where does the Charters Towers district begin?

Mr. HARDACRE: I explained to the land agent who I was, and he said—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He thought you were out of your mind.

Mr. HARDACRE: I did not say what I was, but who I was. If I was out of my mind, I would probably find the hon. gentleman there, too.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That explains the extraordinary areas of fertile soil and the icy climate.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Snowballs.

Mr. HARDACRE: It is pretty cool Herber-ton way.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: But you were speaking of Charters Towers.

Mr. HARDACRE: I believe it is colder at Charters Towers than it is at Brisbane. After-wards I went to the Townsville Land Commis-sioner in order to get some knowledge of the land available in the district generally, and he pointed out a tremendous tract of high-level country that was colder in temperature than it is down in the Southern part of Queensland. I believe he is correct, and that there would be room for millions of white inhabitants growing, not tropical, nor even sub-tropical, products, but the products of temperate climes.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Hear, hear!

Mr. HARDACRE: He admitted he had one map, and he brought a map down from a dusty shelf of a cupboard, which proved to be five years' old. It was sent to him by the Lands Department. But he could not tell more than he said—"It showed certain lands open when it was sent; but I cannot say whether they are open to-day or not." That is the case in one lands office. As a matter of fact, the whole of our lands offices in the country districts generally are manned by police constables who get no pay from the Lands Department at all, and who are under no obligation to anyone except the Police Department.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: It is evident there is not much demand for land if it was only asked for by yourself for the first time for five years.

Mr. HARDACRE: I say I am glad to see that there has been some increase in that depart-ment this year, and I hope that that very valu-able department to the colony—a department which gives such a large net surplus to the Treasurer—will receive greater consideration at the hands of the Treasurer, the Premier, and the Secretary for Lands also. In passing, I have a local grievance, not a grievance of my own dis-trict so much as a grievance of the Central dis-trict. The hon. member for Croydon spoke very complainingly about the mail service to the Gulf; but I wonder what he would say about the mail service to the Central district if he re-presented that district. The Treasurer, in the Financial Statement, makes specially eulogistic remarks with regard to the accelerated service to the North. He says—

The improvement in the service carrying our mails on the Northern coast, to which reference was made in the Financial Statement of last year, has been effected, and although it was not possible to obtain the high rate of speed desired, the gain in time and regularity have been great. Mails and passengers now leave for the North, *via* Gladstone, at 9 p.m. on Friday, and reach Townsville before daylight on Monday—instead of on Tuesday afternoon as formerly—and as they are des-patched thence by the morning train of Monday there is a clear gain of forty-eight hours so far as the inland districts are concerned.

I do not know whether the Treasurer is aware of it or not, but the acceleration of the mail service is absolutely of no advantage to the inland por-tions of the Central district.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They got all the advantage before they got the railway.

Mr. HARDACRE: That has been no advan-tage at all. According to this paragraph, the mails that leave here at 9 o'clock on Friday night are delivered in districts to the west of Towns-ville on Monday morning.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You have three mails a week by train.

Mr. HARDACRE: If the hon. gentleman will allow me, I will explain what the particular grievance in the Central district is. The mails which leave here on Friday night are despatched to the back of Townsville on Monday morning; but the mails that leave for the Central district by the same train are not sent west of Rock-hampton until Tuesday morning, although Townsville is considerably further away than Rockhampton. The mails are actually delivered west of Townsville a day sooner than they are delivered in places west of Rockhampton.

Mr. LESINA: More than a day.

Mr. HARDACRE: Yes; more than a day sooner. I can send mails by the boat which leaves Brisbane at 6 o'clock on Saturday night, and they will catch the mail train at Rock-hampton on Monday night just as quickly as if they had been sent by the train leaving Brisbane at 9 o'clock on Friday night. The mail arrives in Rockhampton on Saturday evening, but the Western mail does not leave Rockhampton till Monday night at 10 o'clock.

The TREASURER: But you have three mails a week, while Townsville has only one.

Mr. HARDACRE: The mail that leaves Brisbane on Friday night arrives at Rockhamp-ton on Saturday night, and the mail train does not leave for the West until Monday night—a break of two days. Let me ask the Treasurer how he would like this if he lived in the Central district: Two letters leave Brisbane by the same train on Friday night—one for a place west of Townsville, and the other for a place west of Rockhampton. The former leaves Townsville for the West on Monday morning, while the latter does not leave Rockhampton till the Mon-day night. Surely the one for the Central dis-trict ought to arrive at its destination sooner than the one for the inland districts of the North! The same thing occurs with reference to the mails for Brisbane. The train arrives in Rock-hampton from the West on Sunday morning, but the mails do not leave *via* Gladstone until Tues-day morning—again a break of two days. Surely there ought to be some better arrangement than that!

The TREASURER: Do you want us to run the trains on Sunday?

Mr. HARDACRE: What do they do in Townsville?

The TREASURER: The trains do not leave on the Sunday.

Mr. HARDACRE: If the train can leave Townsville on the Monday morning, why cannot the train also leave Rockhampton on Monday morning? That would save nearly a day.

Mr. STEWART: Or Sunday night.

The TREASURER: I have no objection.

Mr. HARDACRE: In regard to the mails from the South there is a similar delay of two days between their arrival in Rockhampton and their despatch for the South. There is just one other matter I wish to refer to—that is the question of the administration of New Guinea. I shall have another opportunity of dealing with the question, but I wish to refer specially to the Land Ordinance which is now being prepared by the Lieutenant-Governor, Mr. Le Hunte, and which, I believe, is sanctioned by our Premier. I believe this ordinance is just as objectionable in character as the Lowles-Vine ordinance which aroused such indignation some time ago.

Mr. LESINA: Hear, hear! It is worse.

Mr. HARDACRE: It is perhaps not generally known that just as objectionable proposals have been made to Mr. Le Hunte. I shall quote from the report of an interview with Mr. Le Hunte which appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald*—

Are you to report on the land-grant system?

The original syndicate, with which Mr. Lowles and Sir Somers Vine were connected, does not affect me, although, of course, I am seized of the facts. The arrangements in connection with the settlement of the matter do not form a question for my consideration. But there are other proposals which will demand very serious attention. A syndicate was formed at Liverpool for the acquirement of a large area in New Guinea. Then another company made a similar proposal. In one case the area was for 100,000 acres of land; in the other case the area applied for was larger. Are the proposed concessions similar in character?

I do not exactly understand what you mean by concessions. If a man pays for what he gets there is no concession in the general acceptance of the word.

Is there any difference between the proposals of the original syndicate and the proposals of the two subsequent syndicates you have referred to?

Yes, of course. They are not the same proposals at all. If an application is made for land by persons who are prepared to pay for it, no grant is involved.

That is the kind of idea Mr. Le Hunte has. Only let a syndicate pay for it, and it is a fair transaction.

Mr. GLASSEY: Suppose they pay 1s. an acre for land which is worth £1 per acre?

Mr. HARDACRE: In the Lowles-Vine proposal they were to pay 2s. an acre, but Mr. Le Hunte proposes to lease what he calls pastoral land with a purchasing clause of 1s. an acre. There is no limit as to the area. He may sell 100,000 or 200,000 acres—he may sell 500,000 acres to one company if he likes, at 1s. per acre, and the rent paid is to form part of the purchasing price. Mr. Cameron, the surveyor in New Guinea, has been engaged in surveying certain lands, and I will just give an idea of the class of land he has surveyed. In one case he was engaged in purchasing and surveying a block of 1,900 acres on the right bank of the Veinauri River, forty miles west of Port Moresby, and making a preliminary survey of 1,700 acres on the other bank, which had been previously purchased by the Government. He says—

These two areas contain a lot of first-class land, suitable for growing sugar, coffee, maize, or coconuts. The river is navigable up to the land at high water for small craft drawing 4 feet or 5 feet, and fronting the land is always fresh, although backed by the rising tide. . . . If these two portions were selected by a company I should consider it a good investment.

There was a splendid article in the *Courier* in regard to this business, and the *Courier* remarked at the end: "Another of the eyes of New Guinea!" The article finished by saying—

And so the record runs. Exceptional fertility and accessibility were what Mr. Cameron looked for. In British New Guinea as in this continent, these exceptional advantages are relatively to the aggregate area of the country extremely scarce. The 31,000 acres dealt with by Mr. Cameron are, he says, "now open to selection," so that, if the ordinance is operative, these eyes of the possession are now the valuable property of the syndicate. . . . The truth is that a perusal of Mr. Cameron's report throws a light upon the eagerness of the syndicate to deposit £1,000 with the Queensland Agent-General in London. The eyes of British New Guinea for 2s. per acre.

Now it is proposed under this new ordinance to dispose of the eyes of New Guinea for 1s. an acre, and to allow a long time in which to pay that amount. I hope that this ordinance will receive some discussion in this House before it is finally accepted, as that may save a considerable amount of trouble later on, such as was experienced in regard to the proposed transactions some time ago. We know what evils have resulted from the sale of land in huge

blocks in the early days of Australia, and we do not wish to see those evils repeated in New Guinea. But I would point out that not only is there no maximum fixed in regard to the land that may be acquired, but it is also proposed to give to the purchaser the absolute and sole right to search for and work minerals on his land. That is a very important matter for the Secretary for Mines to consider. Mr. Le Hunte in his report says—

The question of the reservation of minerals in grants of fee-simple presents considerable difficulty. . . . With regard to freeholds, I believe it would be to the best interest of the country not to allow any interference with the proprietor, and not to grant any licenses to anybody but the proprietor to prospect or work for minerals on the land granted. It may be prudent to exact a license to work minerals found on land sold, as proposed, on very easy terms for agricultural or pastoral industries, but, having regard to the indisposition of a capitalist to invest money in land out of which others might be free to reap the richest benefits, I think it would be the wisest and safest course to conserve the right to minerals for the owners of the land, subject to any reserved interest of the Crown. The same remark applies also, in my opinion, to leases. I think it very doubtful if anyone would take up a lease of Crown lands in New Guinea under conditions which allowed anyone else to use the land.

Silver, gold, copper, platinum, and other minerals are to be handed over to the mercy of foreign syndicates, and our own miners are to be prohibited from prospecting for minerals. That is against the settled policy of Australia, and should not be allowed. I will just say a few words on one other matter before I sit down, and that is with regard to the service the Agricultural Department has rendered to the colony. There is no department that is of greater prospective advantage to Queensland than that department, which is commencing quite a new era of things in this colony. Facts of the colony which have been given over to sheep and cattle, and which it has been asserted are unfit for any other occupation, have now been proved suitable for close settlement, and for the growth of various kinds of agricultural products, tropical and sub-tropical, and the department has been the means of introducing into the colony new cereals, new vegetables, and new fruits. Those who have read Professor Draper's History of the Intellectual Development of Europe will remember the brilliant passage where he points out how the Moors of Spain introduced into Europe the Arabian civilisation, astronomy, and various arts and sciences, and how nearly all the orchard and garden fruits were introduced into Europe by the Moors from Arabia. They introduced peaches, apricots, grapes, pineapples, and even sugarcane. Just imagine the enormous benefit the introduction of those fruits has been to Europe. And the Agricultural Department is doing for Queensland something similar to what the Moors did for Europe. It is introducing new cereals, new vegetables, and new fruits, which will very much conduce to the happiness of the people, to the pleasures of the palate, and also to the commercial prosperity of the colony, and I trust that that department will receive fair consideration at the hands of the Treasurer.

Mr. RYLAND (*Gympie*): While I compliment the Treasurer on his surplus, I think it is wise to consider where it came from. The hon. gentleman has displayed a little humour in his Financial Statement in regard to the savings bank, and the money contained therein. He says—

One of the most valuable attributes of the institution is the encouragement it presents to our workers to save their earnings, and so become capitalists in a reasonably short space of time.

From my point of view there is genuine humour in that Statement. The supposition is that the working men of this colony can become capitalists

by putting their penny or a shilling a week into the savings bank. I will want more information on this subject than I have at the

[10 p.m.] present time before I will believe in that theory. We are not going to regenerate the world in this way. I do not think this is a kind of saving that will do much good. I believe more in national saving; if the nation as a whole saves up there may be something good come of it. This saving here proposed is the saving by which each and every colonist reduces his expenditure and carries out the great Christian principle the same as I have had to do, going with one coat and one pair of boots, and so on. The Treasurer says that if we save up in this way we will become rich and respectable and capitalists. But I say, "No," that theory is wrong. I say that the more a working man spends the better. (Laughter.)

Mr. BROWNE: For the Treasurer.

Mr. RYLAND: The Treasurer smiles, but I smile back at him, because I believe my theory will stand argument, and his won't. If you go to those nations of the world where they practise thrift, what do you find? Nothing but abject paupers. Go to the nations of Europe and to my own native land, and what do you find? I say that if they could live on one meal a day they would find it as hard to get that meal as they do now. I say the true solution of the problem is to work less and eat more. (Laughter.) Suppose we, as a community, were to reduce our expenditure and do away with our bicycles, our horses, our buggies, our pianos, and our families. (Laughter.) Supposing we reduced all these, what would be the result? Why, things would be in a worse state than they are at the present time. There would be nobody to consume anything, and consequently everybody would be out of work, and there would be nothing but destitution in the country from one end to the other. If we reduce the standard of living down to the standard of living of the Chinese coolie, we would only get the wages of the Chinese coolie.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYLAND: That is the great curse in the old country. It is in Ireland. Because they reduced the standard of living down to the lowest possible limit, what has been the result? The big man—the landlord—has run away with everything; the poor put no shoes on their children, with the object of sending the landlord's children to college. I say, therefore, that this part of the Statement is humour, and the Treasurer winked the other eye when he wrote it. (Laughter.) Like a good many more Scotchmen, he likes to see the other fellow do the saving. As I said before, it is very nice to have a surplus, but we should inquire where we get it from. As the hon. member for Croydon said at the beginning of this debate, a large amount came from opium. I say, we as a nation, and the Treasurer as the one who holds the purse, are not justified in that. I say that is blood money that is coming into the Treasury. I see from the returns that we got £21,000 in duty upon opium last year. What is the result but the demoralisation of the Northern part of this colony through the use of opium.

Mr. BROWNE: And the South, too.

Mr. RYLAND: And the South, but I say the North because I find that Townsville purchased one-third of the whole amount, so that one-third of the sinners must be residents of that important electorate.

Mr. JENKINSON: Can you wonder at that when they return the Treasurer!

Mr. RYLAND: No, they must have had something to send them to sleep. Another contribution has been from the death duties on the estates of wealthy residents who have been called away.

The TREASURER: Do you object to that?

Mr. RYLAND: I do not think it is anything to be proud over or that we should rejoice because some wealthy residents have been called to a better land. That is another item that I do not rejoice in. I see another item here—stamp duty—which amounts in round numbers to £120,000. As a representative of a mining community I have got a grievance here, because I say we are victimised and paralysed as a community under this Stamp Act. If you have a transaction in scrip only worth £2 or £3 or even £1 you have to put a 6d. stamp on it, and I say it is a great injustice to the mining community. Another unjust tax is the tax upon tea, which has become almost a necessary of life. There was nearly £82,000 collected from a duty of 6d. a lb. on tea, and I think we have arrived at the time when we should take the duty off tea. It is purely a revenue tariff, as there is no argument in its favour as a protective tariff, seeing that it is not possible here in Queensland to produce tea. It is entirely a revenue tariff, and is drawn exclusively from the poor man's pocket.

Mr. LESINA: Take it off tea and put it on absentee.

Mr. RYLAND: I agree with that. I think too that this duty of 8d. per lb on hops should be taken off. £11,000 was raised on this duty last year, and it should be remembered that this is a bread tax because we cannot make bread without hops. It is impossible also to produce hops here, and this is therefore another revenue tax. As has been stated also it is doubly taxed in the beer duty. Another great injustice to the mining industry is the dividend tax. It might be imposed from a reasonable point of view on a graduated scale with 2½ per cent. where it is now 3 per cent. The total amount received last year from the dividend duty was £60,000, and of this amount £37,000 came from mining dividends—that is, three-fifths of the total amount. I think, seeing that the major part of this income is derived from mining, greater facilities should be given for deep sinking prospecting. In many portions of our goldfield, private companies, and capitalists, will not take the risk of deep sinking, but if the Government subsidised deep sinking, that would give them some assistance. That has been done on Gympie with advantage, and in some cases the Government have got their money back again; and I think that, if they move in this direction, they will get their money back again. I think that instead of voting this paltry sum of £10,000, as placed on the Estimates, the amount for deep sinking should be doubled. In fact, the whole of the dividend duty derived from mining should be devoted to that purpose.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: The whole surplus.

Mr. RYLAND: Not the whole surplus, but the whole of the dividend duty, and, perhaps, £10,000 to boot.

Mr. BROWNE: They don't spend half of that now.

Mr. RYLAND: As I see by the papers before me, the mining industry is rapidly progressing. I take this opportunity of saying this because the mining industry has been depreciated by people who should not do so—by people who, but for their ignorance, would not say what they do. Taking Charters Towers and Gympie, together with the other quartz-mining centres of the colony, the average earnings produced for the past year have been £405 4s. 11d., or an increase over the previous year of £18 6s. 6d. for every quartz-miner on these goldfields. I do not think anyone can say that the goldfields are "duffing out" when we have such returns as these. I think the industry is going up, and there is every prospect of a further increase in their importance and

value. They return over £400 a year. Why that would be better than being a member of Parliament, if they had the opportunity of getting it. As to the dividend tax, I contend that it ought to be devoted to prospecting and deep sinking, which will still further increase the output of gold, and therefore increase the average production of the miner. I must not find fault with all the Treasurer's administration. I must commend him in some respects. I commend him for his proposal to increase the endowment to local authorities, not only that he has put an extra £25,000 on the Estimates, but also for the fair spirit—the fair differential spirit on which he has based the distribution. We all know that in outside districts there is practically no unearned increment, but that municipalities and other centres of population are built up by the industry and production of the people in the outside districts; and, consequently, these outside districts should get a far larger endowment than is given to municipalities like Brisbane, Maryborough, and Rockhampton. And yet these places come along and scoop the pool as regards the Government endowment. Of course, we all know that some years ago the municipality of Brisbane made a raid on the Treasury, and got an endowment on all their rates, contrary to the Act of Parliament. The Government winked at this, with the result that the municipality scooped the pool, and got the Government endowment on rates that were not collected. On the other hand, the poor outside districts have been obliged to strike the maximum rate of 2d. in the £1 in municipalities and 1½d. in the £1 in divisional boards.

Mr. GIVENS: Did the Brisbane municipalities get endowment on rates that had not been collected?

Mr. RYLAND: Yes, they struck a loan rate because they were compelled to do so, but they never collected it. But they got endowment upon it as general rates, and thus scooped the pool and robbed the outside districts. There is another item I must congratulate the Treasurer upon, and that is his proposal to administer the Slaughtering Act in the city and establish abattoirs. Now that is good. It is a bit of socialism in our time that I commend the Treasurer for. I would like to see the same thing extended all over the colony, but I suppose he views the matter in the light of an experiment, and that if it is a success he will extend it. I hope that is his intention, and if it is I commend him for it. Under the present system the Act can hardly be properly administered. Every little butcher has his own slaughtering yard, and the only way in which to properly carry out the Act is to have such an army of inspectors that the cost would become a serious burden to these people. It is only by such a method that meat killed for consumption can be properly inspected, but if we have abattoirs there will be a concentration of effort; the inspectors will be able to properly inspect, and everything will be done under the closest Government supervision. The Labour party wondered the other day when they found their planks stolen one after the other. Here is another of our planks, one of the greatest pieces of "socialism in our time" that one could imagine. I hope the Treasurer in his wisdom will extend the system right through Queensland. I also commend the Government for their action in connection with experimental farms, and for deciding to expend another £3,000 upon them. We want one badly in the Gympie district, which, outside the goldfield, is a fine farming district. The average farmer does not know what is the most suitable crop. He has a great many things to contend with—soil, climate, and so forth; and the advice and

experience which he can gain from having an experimental farm close by him would be of very great value indeed. Consequently, I commend the Treasurer and the Government for this piece of "socialism in our time." Now, there is another question—and a very important one—with which the Treasurer has dealt. I may say that I, in company with the rest of this party, have tried to bring about exactly what the hon. gentleman proposes. He says—

The prosperity of our own people, after all, is the greatest inducement we can offer to the surplus population of the old world to come here and participate in our advantages.

Now that is common sense. That is what this side of the House has been trying for years and years to drive into the heads of gentlemen on the other side. I am glad that they have succeeded at last, and I hope they will nail their colours to the mast and say, "We believe the prosperity of the country is sufficient inducement to bring people here from the old land, because when they find it is a prosperous country, where the workmen are well off and contented, they will stay here instead of running away to the other colonies, and they will induce their friends to come out here to them." For that also I commend the Government. But there appears to be a division of opinion on the question in the Cabinet, for while the Treasurer says what I have quoted, the Government propose to continue a system of immigration. I hope the Treasurer will stick to that. I hope the Government will not say one thing in this Statement, and do another thing. I would not like to be disappointed. When I have a good opinion of a man I like to keep it, and I hope the Government will act up to the words of the Treasurer, instead of paying the passages of people out to this country, and sweep up the streets of the cities of the old land in order to get immigrants for this colony. Why, I read the other day that a lot of people from Finland were to be brought here. Only fancy such an idea! A consignment of Finns! But I am glad that at last the Ministry are going to trust to the prosperity of the people as an inducement to bring people here and keep them here when they do come.

The House resumed; the CHAIRMAN reported progress, and the Committee obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

The House adjourned at thirty-one minutes past 10 o'clock.