

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 30 JULY 1901

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TUESDAY, 30 JULY, 1901.

The SPEAKER (Hon. Arthur Morgan, *Warwick*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

PAPERS.

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

- (1) Report, for 1900, of the Medical Superintendent, Dunwich Benevolent Asylum.
- (2) Report, for 1900, of the Northern Protector of Aborigines.
- (3) Report of the Commissioner of Public Health upon food preservatives and adulterated and unwholesome food.
- (4) Report upon the Civil Service Superannuation Account for 1900.
- (5) Report, for 1900, of the Brisbane Board of Waterworks.
- (6) Sixth Report of the Auditor-General made under the Supreme Court Funds Act of 1895.

RETURN OF WRIT.

The SPEAKER reported that he had issued his writ for the election of a member for the electoral district of Fortitude Valley, and that the writ had been returned with a certificate endorsed thereon of the election of John McMaster.

NEW MEMBER.

Mr. John McMaster (who on entering the Chamber was received with Ministerial cheers) took the oath and subscribed the roll as member for the electoral district of Fortitude Valley.

PETITIONS.

LICENSING ACT—SUNDAY TRADING.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. A. Rutledge, *Maranoa*) presented a petition from the Roma branch of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, protesting against Sunday trading by licensed victuallers.

Petition read and received.

Petitions of similar purport and prayer were presented and received as follows:—

By Mr. TOLMIE (*Drayton and Toowoomba*), from the Toowoomba branch of the Women's Christian Temperance Union.

By Hon. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON (*Brisbane North*), from the Rev. J. Williams, as chairman of a public meeting held at Bundaberg.

By Mr. RYLAND (*Gympie*), from the Hope of Gympie Tent, Independent Order of Rechabites.

QUESTIONS.

GYMPIE ELECTION.

Mr. BROWNE (*Croydon*) asked the Home Secretary—

1. Is he aware that a number of electors, placed on the electoral roll by the electoral revision courts sitting on 4th June, were not allowed to record their votes at the Gympie election on 8th June; that electors registered same date were allowed to vote at the election for Drayton and Toowoomba on 15th June; and that electors registered same date (4th June) were not allowed to vote at the election for Rockhampton North on 22nd June?

2. Can he give any reasons why a large number of electors at Gympie and Rockhampton North were thus disfranchised?

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

1. In the case of Gympie, only four days elapsed between the holding of the revision court and the date of election. It was, therefore, impossible that the list should be delivered by the electoral registrar to the Principal Electoral Registrar and printed in time for use at such election. In the case of Drayton and Toowoomba eleven days elapsed, thus enabling the roll to be printed and distributed in time for use at the election for that electoral district.

In the case of North Rockhampton, the list was not received by the Principal Electoral Registrar from the local electoral registrar until the 17th of June. Every expedition was used towards getting the roll printed from such list. A sufficient supply for the purposes of the impending election was sent to the returning officer at North Rockhampton, but only reached him on the evening of the 22nd June, too late for use at such election.

2. Inquiry is being made as to the cause of the delay in the transmission of the list from North Rockhampton.

HOSPITAL FOR CHRONIC CASES.

Mr. STEPHENS (*South Brisbane*) asked the Home Secretary—

1. Did he receive a deputation, consisting of the aldermen of South Brisbane, protesting against the establishment of a hospital for chronic cases at Diamantina, South Brisbane, on the ground of the danger to the health of ratepayers in the neighbourhood?

2. Though he could not comply with their request, will he, in order to allay the fear or alarm of the ratepayers, kindly cause the Health Commissioner, Dr. Ham, to examine the premises, and before opening the hospital have his certificate that the premises are properly and satisfactorily drained, and that their use as a hospital will not be a menace to the health of the ratepayers in the neighbourhood?

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

1. Yes.

2. The Commissioner of Public Health has, at my request, inspected the drainage, and has made some suggestions in reference thereto. He also reports that the premises and surroundings are not in any manner detrimental to the health of the community living in the neighbourhood.

CRIBB v. WENDT.

Mr. REID (*Enoggera*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. Is it true that the Railway Department sent one of its officers (a shorthand writer) to take a verbatim report of the case Cribb v. Wendt?
2. Will he place, for the benefit of the members, such report on the table of the House?
3. Is it true that at the said trial Cribb admitted that he had no experience in boiler-riveting whatsoever?
4. Is this the same Cribb who is at present inspector for locomotive boilers that are now under construction in Brisbane?
5. Does the Government after this declaration intend to retain him in that position?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Leahy, *Bulloo*) replied—

1. Yes.
2. Yes.
3. No.
4. Yes.
5. Mr. Cribb is not under the control of the Government, but is on the staff of the Commissioner for Railways, who is the only person empowered to deal with employees. However, for the information of the House, I may say that the Commissioner has decided to retain the services of Mr. Cribb.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I beg to lay on the table the report of the case Cribb v. Wendt, which is referred to in the questions asked by the hon. member for Enoggera.

SALE OF LAND IN NEW GUINEA.

Mr. W. HAMILTON (*Gregory*), in the absence of the hon. member for Clermont, asked the Premier—

1. Is it true, as reported in certain English newspapers, that some 50,000 acres of land in New Guinea are being offered for sale by the Government of British New Guinea, at prices ranging from 1d. to 6d. per acre?
2. Why is it that the sale of these lands has not been advertised in the Australian papers?

The PREMIER (Hon. R. Philp, *Townsville*) replied—

1. The British New Guinea Government have, by advertisement, invited applications for lands under the Land Ordinance of 1899, for freehold or leasehold lands situated in various districts, at prices ranging from 2s. 6d. per acre to 6d. per acre freehold, and 6d. per acre to 1d. per acre for leasehold.
2. In pursuance of the provisions of the above-mentioned Ordinance, advertisements appeared in two of the leading papers and the *Government Gazette* in each of the States and the colony of New Zealand; also in the *London Gazette*.

ALLEGED KANAKA LEPER.

Mr. TURLEY (*Brisbane South*) asked the Home Secretary—

Has a kanaka suffering from leprosy been recently removed from Redland Bay district to the lazarette?

The HOME SECRETARY replied—
No.

APPOINTMENT OF A. S. D. CRIBB.

Mr. W. HAMILTON, in the absence of the hon. member for Clermont, asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. Upon whose recommendation was Arthur Samuel Dunlop Cribb appointed an inspector of rolling-stock in the Railway Department?
2. What were his qualifications for the position?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

1. Upon the recommendation of Mr. W. H. Nisbet, late Chief Mechanical Engineer.
2. He was first employed in the Ipswich workshops as an engine-fitter, and had previously worked in a similar capacity at engineering works in Brisbane and elsewhere. He also had a knowledge of drawing, and was appointed inspector after having had six months' trial.

MINING ON PRIVATE PROPERTY
BILL.

FIRST READING.

On the motion of Mr. JENKINSON (*Wide Bay*) this Bill was read a first time, and the second reading of the Bill made an Order of the Day for Thursday, 8th August.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

* Hon. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON (*Brisbane North*): I am aware that I shall be out of order if I proceed further than merely say that I wish to make a statement. With the permission of the House I should like to make that statement.

The SPEAKER: There is no question before the House. Is it the pleasure of the House that the hon. member shall proceed?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Hon. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON: There are a few persons in this great mercantile and shipping community who have taken a little umbrage at the delay which has occurred with reference to the resignation of the seat that I have the honour to hold for Brisbane North in the State Parliament, or of the seat which I hold for the great division of Brisbane in the Commonwealth Parliament. Those few persons are convulsed, or have got what I may term a quasi fit of political hysteria. In the public interest, not in my own at all, I think it is desirable that this House, containing as it does so many gentlemen whom I respect, should understand the circumstances that I shall now submit to them. I shall be as brief as possible. Everyone in this community is well aware that I stated that it was my intention to resign my seat in the State Parliament if I were elected to a seat in the Commonwealth Parliament. But many a general makes up his mind the night before to do battle with the enemy, and then changes his mind in the morning—(laughter)—in fact, he changes it from day to day and week to week. The general feeling expressed on political platforms in different parts of this State of Queensland at the time of the federal elections was on one side a feeling of great exultation, and on the other a feeling not so exultant or joyous, and the newspapers rang with the victory of the Labour party, and said they had taught us a lesson, and that we should take a leaf out of their book. Everyone will admit that in many parts of their administration they have excelled, and excelled creditably.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Hon. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON: And as it was uncertain what their movements would be after the victory they had achieved in regard to the Commonwealth Senate, it became a question with me whether I should not consult with those whom it was my duty to consult—that is, influential residents and supporters in the Brisbane division whom I represent in the State Parliament as well as in the Commonwealth Parliament. I also consulted the Ministry, or one Minister—the mouthpiece of the Ministry in this matter—with whom I had several conversations a few days before I left for the south, when I was in really very good health. We had a lengthy interview, the result of which was, being in conformity with his own views, that he concurred entirely with my view—that, until the members of the Opposition side of the House—both cross-bench men like Mr. Groom and others who were successful candidates in the Commonwealth contest—had resigned their seats to the last man, it was my duty to hold my seat. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. BROWNE: You are giving the show away now.

HON. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON: Hon. members may laugh or be serious, or say or do what they like—

Mr. JENKINSON: It is a good defence, anyway.

HON. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON: It is no defence at all. I repudiate that idea with scorn. Very well, what was the result? The result was that not a day has been lost. I had the great misfortune to have a very severe attack of pneumonia, and for weeks and weeks I was in a very serious and low condition. I will not refer to that point any more. Suffice it to say that here we are at this moment, and here I wish to place in juxtaposition these points: First, I have kept faith with the pledge—I call it a pledge—that I made with the Ministry of the day, because I was fulfilling a public duty alike to the colony, to the constituency, and to the Ministry which was representing the country. If I had been in the most robust health I could not have resigned earlier, because Mr. Higgs had not done so; for even on hearing of his resignation I would not merely telegraph my resignation. I was not going to throw my resignation on to the foot-path, or on to the floor of this House like a football to be kicked about by anyone. On the contrary, I held in view that it was most desirable that I should be in a position to come and consult with the leading citizens here and others amongst the wage-earners, amongst whom, I am proud to say, I have hundreds of supporters, and amongst whom the Ministry have thousands of supporters. Well, the position is that, healthy and robust as I might have been, it would have been utterly impossible under all the circumstances for me to have resigned my seat more than five, six, seven, or eight days quicker than it will be done—that is, when you, Sir, announce it to-morrow. That is the position. I shall have carried out my pledge to the country. I am satisfied in my own mind that I have done my duty, and I have done it alike in the interests of good government and the maintenance of the present party in power. What has been the advantage, if any? I say there has been a substantial advantage. Had I resigned my seat anterior by weeks, or at the time when there was a clamour all round, the result would have been that Brisbane North would have been contested by at least three men, and the one I think who should not be the member for the seat, according to my political view, would have been the victor. There is no question about that.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Who is he? Name?

Mr. REID: John Cameron.

HON. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON: What is the position now? We have had, after the Commonwealth elections are over, after the glorification over the victory of the Labour men in the Commonwealth Parliament and elsewhere is over, we have had a quiet fight for electorate after electorate with this result—that both sides have had a fair contest. Toowoomba was at any rate, with a result favourable to the Ministry.

Mr. GIVENS: Is this an electioneering speech?

The SPEAKER: Order!

HON. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON: No. I am accounting for the advantages or disadvantages. Then with regard to Fortitude Valley—

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will not, I think, be in order in continuing in the course he is now pursuing. He is making a speech of a controversial nature. As I have

pointed out, there is no question before the House. I understood the hon. member to ask the permission of the House to refer to facts personal to himself. I think he should confine himself to these and not go into contentious matters quite beyond the limits of a personal statement.

HON. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON: Very well, Sir. I have finished all that is to be told, and I believe I have done my duty by leaving the whole matter in the hands of my friends and of supporters of the Government. The result is that by a majority on last Friday—a large majority only counting heads—nothing else but manhood suffrage—they determined that they wish to relieve me—to which I have consented—of my seat in the State Parliament, and that will be done forthwith. I wish to say that I have not pledged myself to resume my position in the Parliament of the Commonwealth. That will be considered. My "pair" lasts for some time yet, although I notice that notice has been given of leave of absence for some weeks for that purpose. Something has happened to the arrangement; but, be that as it may, that is the course that I am pursuing. The moment I was able to make an intimation to the Press, I stated that at the end of July—the last week in July—the whole matter would be arranged by my friends. That promise has been kept to the very letter. That promise was made by my friends; I also made the intimation. I was entirely in the hands of the electors, and, strange to say, some weeks ago one newspaper here—whether it was inspired or not I do not know, but it was very well known by the Government what my views were—this newspaper understood the position exactly. It was intimated in a leading article that I, being a Government supporter, had no ends to serve, and it was understood that I had not resigned, "because he did not wish to do so until all the Labour men had done likewise." Well, I have done very little different to Mr. Higgs. My resignation merely follows his.

Mr. REID: Will you do like Higgs, and give your salary to the "Political Ass"?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He will not bribe the electors with it, anyhow.

The SPEAKER: Order!

HON. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON: To my personal friends and acquaintances here I wish to say that I am leaving this House—at least temporarily—I hope and trust it will only be temporarily.

MEMBERS on the Government side: Hear, hear!

HON. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON: I wish to say that I am obliged to you all for having listened to these few observations, which are a plain, simple statement of facts. That is just the position, and I think the House ought to know it. In conclusion, I may say that I have been actuated in all that I have done, and in all that it is alleged I have not done, purely in the interests of this country of Queensland, and in the interests of the constituency which I have the honour of representing at the present moment.

MEMBERS on the Government side: Hear, hear!

HON. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON: I do not think there is anything to cavil at. I know, as one or two working men said to me the other day at my cottage, "It is a funny member of Parliament as pleases everybody." Well, I have never tried to please anybody, but I am conscious of having done my duty honourably, faithfully, and with pure motives. Lastly, I wish to

say that in the quarter of a century, [4 p.m.] more or less, during which I have been associated with the Parliament of Queensland, in both Houses, I do not think,

if I leave it for all time—if the state of my health should not permit me to return—I do not think, speaking of members on both sides, that I have ever had an angry word with one of them.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. T. MACDONALD-PATERSON: And I wish to say that, as far as I am concerned, my feelings are reciprocal on these points. I am leaving here for the present at any rate, and I believe I am doing so with full respect, goodwill, and amicable relations all round.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ADDRESS IN REPLY. RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Upon the Order of the Day being read for the resumption of the debate on the Address in Reply—

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*) said: I hope I may claim the indulgence of the House for a short time while I try to set forth the few remarks I have to make, which I shall do as briefly as possible. Coming first to the Governor's Speech, I certainly anticipated finding in it something more tangible; but I must say that it is very colourless and unsatisfactory. Considering the ill-repute in which the Government are held in the country generally—speaking on behalf of the electors of the Bundaberg district, which I think will apply nearly all round Queensland—I say that, considering the ill-repute in which the Government are held by the majority of the electors of Queensland, I certainly anticipated seeing something more tangible and something better than is contained in the Speech. I do not think the position of the Government has been improved by the fact that the motion moved by the leader of the Opposition in relation to the guillotine was not carried through. It seems to me that the obsolete system on which Queensland has been governed too long by the so-called continuous Government should certainly be discontinued and legislation on more social and domestic lines should be initiated. I may say that I anticipated seeing something in the Governor's Speech about legislation relating to old age pensions, arbitration, and compulsory conciliation, and drastic legislation dealing with the evil of "sweating" as I understand it exists in Brisbane and other places in the State. I also anticipated seeing an extension of the Factories Act to the various crushing mills in the sugar-growing districts, where it is very necessary. Some of the conditions under which many of the white employees labour in many of the crushing mills are very bad indeed, the sanitary arrangements and the sleeping accommodation being of the worst kind; and I would very much like to have seen the Factories Act extended to them. We have the promise of electoral reform, a promise that has always been in the Governor's Speech ever since I have been in this State. It is placed, as usual, somewhere near the front, but, as usual, it is very indefinite. In connection with the mining industry we are told—

The mining industry continues to develop in a natural and healthy manner. Last year's gold yield was the largest in the history of the State, and whatever falling off has latterly been apparent is due to causes that in no way affect the intrinsic merits of the mines. The advantages of the extension of railway communication to our mineral fields are now being experienced, and you will be asked to consider further proposals for securing to the remoter parts of the State the stimulating influence of cheaper freight and better communication with the coast.

It seems to me that behind that is the land-grant railway racket as we had it last year.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Not land grant!

Mr. BARBER: I mean the syndicate railways. I may say that the majority of the electors in Bundaberg district are totally opposed to syndicate railways, and, last session, when the constitutional Opposition opposed the syndicate railways brought forward, they had the sympathy of every democrat and of a good many who formerly supported the Government. I shall oppose as strenuously as I can any legislation of that kind. In connection with the depleted Treasury, a lot of schemes have been set forth by various members, but I don't know that they could be carried out. Personally, I should favour an absentee tax. Looking over the returns of the Mount Morgan Company for the past year, we find that their total income was £691,040. The dividends paid to the shareholders—most of whom, I believe, are living outside the State—amounted to £350,000; and the miserable amount the Queensland Government received was £25,860 as dividend tax. I think if the shareholders had received 50 per cent. of the total dividends and the Queensland Government had got the other 50 per cent., or £175,000, they would have had a very fair share. Hon. members have spoken on the question of reducing the Governor's salary here, and I thoroughly agree with that proposal. I cannot understand why the Governor of this State, who has only half a million of people to rule over, or to govern, should receive the enormous salary of £5,000. In the State of Ontario, with a population of 2,000,000, the Governor only receives £2,000; and the Governor of Quebec, with a population of 1,500,000, only gets £2,000. The other day an hon. member on the other side interjected—asking an hon. member on this side when he was speaking, whether he wanted our Governor to take in boarders. Now in this respect I have a suggestion to make, which if adopted will help to wipe out the present deficit. It may seem a bit of a farce to a few hon. members, but I think it would be a capital idea to elect our own State Governor, because I think there are many men able enough to fill that position in this colony. And then I don't see why the Government could not let Government House to country members and charge them rent for it. I think that would be a famous idea—a boarding-house could then be carried on there in a first-class style. However, that is by the way. A lot has been said with regard to the withholding of the Royal assent to a certain Bill which this House passed last session, and in regard to that I may say that I feel very much in the same position as the hon. member for Cairns. This is not the first time in our history, I find, that the Royal assent has been withheld from a Bill. I find that away back in 1848, Colonel Anderson, who at one time had been in charge of a settlement in Tasmania, emigrated to Victoria, and became a member of the Legislative Council there. At the outbreak of the goldfields in Victoria, a number of desperadoes and criminals swept over into that colony from various parts of Australia, and Colonel Anderson, or the Government with which he was connected, passed an Act in order to prevent ex-gaol birds and desperadoes from coming into that colony. The Bill was sent home, and Her Majesty's assent was withheld. Although this gentleman was holding military rank, he forgot all about loyalty and his military obedience, and framed a resolution of remonstrance, which the mixed Legislative Council carried, and again the same measure was sent home, accompanied by the remonstrance. This time the Royal assent was given to the measure, and under it any criminal other than Victorian was liable to imprisonment immediately on setting foot in that State. I think that if the people of this State were to

agitate for the assent to be given to the particular Bill which was passed by this House last session, that it would be granted if it were sent home the second time.

Mr. KERR: It would not suit the kanaka employers.

Mr. BARBER: The hon. member for Mackay spoke on the question of advances to farmers and settlers, and I thoroughly agree with that hon. member in that—I mean in connection with small sugar-planters. As far as the Bundaberg district is concerned, I am sure that there are many small farmers there who, in seasons like the present, or the last two seasons, would only be too pleased to obtain cheap money from the Government to assist them in these bad times. In connection with the Millaquin Mill, with which I have been connected for some time, a large manure establishment has been erected there for the purpose of supplying manures to these farmers, but owing to the bad seasons these small planters have not been able to purchase any of these manures. At the same time there are many small farmers who have put what money they have been able to save from their own hard earnings into small selections, and who have started to grow cane, but have been so ground down by some of the mill-owners that they have not cared to go on cultivating cane. If the Government are willing to grant assistance to these small farmers, I am sure that they will only be too pleased to accept it. That will mean better cultivation and better returns from the land. This leads me up to the much-discussed question of coloured labour, and the success of the Labour candidates at the federal elections. One would have thought that, after such a decisive majority had been given in favour of a "white Australia" at the late federal election, that that decision would not have been questioned; but hon. members on the other side, who have spoken during this session—most of them have had something to say with regard to a "white Australia" and with regard to other matters in connection with the federal election. I might say that the statement made by the Hon. Angus Gibson and other hon. gentlemen is not a reflection of the opinion of the electors whom I have the honour to represent. My predecessor, Mr. Glassey, was elected by the Bundaberg electors—an electorate in which there are more kanakas than in any other district in the State—I notice according to the last returns that there are 2,274 in this district. I say that in 1896 Mr. Glassey was elected by a large majority as an out-and-out opponent of black labour. In 1899 he was again elected by a greater majority, and his views with regard to black labour and kanaka labour were not changed one iota. Following on that came the federal election, and the magnificent majority given by the people of the Bundaberg district at the federal election amply confirmed the opinions they gave in 1896 and 1899. Then, on the resignation of Mr. Glassey, I became a Labour candidate for the Bundaberg electorate, and I am proud that I was returned by a majority of 145. I say the opinion of the majority of the electors of the Bundaberg district is still in favour of the abolition of kanaka and alien labour in its entirety. It has been said, and said very often by hon. members on the other side and gentlemen interested and engaged in the sugar industry, that the Labour party are very anxious to destroy it. That statement is not correct. The Labour party, as far as I know, and as far as the district of Bundaberg is concerned, have no desire whatever to cripple or destroy the sugar industry of this State; but what we do want is a definite idea from the Federal Government as to when kanaka labour is to be stopped.

Mr. KERR: You will get it very soon.

Mr. BARBER: If the Government and the sugar-growers are not satisfied with the result of the federal elections, and are not prepared to accept the verdict given in favour of a white Australia, we are prepared at the next general election to take a referendum on the subject whether the importation of kanakas shall cease on 1st January, 1903, or on 1st January, 1906. So you see we are prepared to give the gentlemen engaged in the sugar industry time, from 1903 to 1906—a period of three years; and I am positive that, if a referendum was taken, a most decisive verdict would be given to prevent any further importations after one of those dates.

Mr. KERR: You will never get the referendum.

Mr. BARBER: Hon. members on the other side have stated that to interfere with the kanaka trade would simply mean ruination to the sugar industry, and we have been asked to formulate some scheme by which the industry may be carried on with white labour. My contention is that the gentlemen who form the Government, and the men who have made their fortunes out of the sugar industry, are the men who should formulate some scheme by which to work the industry with white labour. Those gentlemen are legally and morally responsible for the kanaka in our midst; and, seeing that the majority of the electors have declared that alien labour must cease to exist in our midst, it is the business of those who have amassed and accumulated wealth out of the sugar industry to find a substitute for coloured labour. There is a financial aspect to the question, and those gentlemen who are everlastingly drilling into our ears that our efforts to prohibit kanaka labour will end in ruin, tell us that there are £7,000,000 invested in the industry. There may be, and there may not be. The industry has almost become a monopoly for a few. Many of the farmers in the Bundaberg district are simply crippled; some of them have to accept a very small price for the cane grown by them; and the cry about the financial aspect of the industry is simply the result of the relentless and inexorable demands of the capitalists who are engaged in it. In addition to the financial side of the question there is another side which to us as citizens of this State should have greater weight. I cannot think that the Juggernaut car of the capitalists and commercialism should outweigh the moral side of the question. I have taken a great interest in the sugar industry, and the way in which it has been worked for the last eight or ten years, and I say the moral side of the question is one which in many cases is revolting, and a disgrace to our so-called civilisation. Now, in 1881, Sir Arthur Kennedy, who was then Governor of Queensland, said this of the kanaka trade—

I have never concealed my opinion of the traffic in Polynesian savages, and I feel assured that scandals exist which do not reach the public. I have had many years' experience in the African slave trade and the Chinese coolie trade, and I cannot divest myself of grave fears that the Polynesian labour trade partakes of the evils of both.

In 1883, Mr. Walter Coote, who went down to the Islands and returned to London, wrote a book entitled "The Western Pacific," and in it he says—

The labour trade is in a bad state everywhere, whether under the French or the English flag, and what is said here applies equally to all the colonies to which natives are taken. At present the labour trade is merely a disguised slave trade.

Then, again, in 1888, Sir Samuel Griffith, in his manifesto, said—

The action of the Government with respect to the Pacific Island labour trade, which provoked most bitter

opposition and vilification from those persons who profited by the former abuses, has effectually retrieved the character of Queensland in the eyes of the world.

Now, if Queensland had lost her character in the eyes of the world through the shocking abuses and revolting scenes enacted at that time—if the trade was wrong at that time, then I hold it is wrong now.

Mr. JENKINSON: Do those abuses still exist?

Mr. BARBER: Many of them do to my own personal knowledge. I say, again, [4.30 p.m.] no financial consideration should outweigh the moral consideration of this question. A few weeks ago a deputation waited on the members of the council at Cairns regarding the number of Japanese prostitutes that there are within the town boundary of Cairns. The reply they got from a member of the council was this, and I have heard the same reply in Bundaberg when we got up an agitation there—

We knew that if we sent these women away our own wives and daughters would not be safe. We considered it primarily necessary to safeguard our own womenkind from the probabilities of outrage; for, however necessary the kanaka is to sugar-growing—and I think he is essential—after all, he is a mere savage. I need hardly assure you that I would be glad to see every prostitute banished from the town, but we all recognised that while such women were here they serve a purpose, and that, incidentally, our own women are saved from a real and serious peril. Therefore, we had to do what we regarded as expedient under the circumstances.

I say that a system that permits of such shocking abuses as these is a system that cannot be upheld and justified in a white community. I have known the same thing exist in Bundaberg. This system, I hold, is productive of uncleanness, is productive of licentiousness, and is productive of murder. Take the Bundaberg kanaka hovels, for instance. Some few weeks ago Dr. Han visited Bundaberg and made an inspection of those hovels and so-called boarding-houses, and found about three times the number of kanakas and other aliens were living there in contravention of the Act. Take, again, the late Fairymead investigation. Hon. members who have read the result of that investigation cannot help but be shocked, I think, at the statements of some of the witnesses who were called in question. It is a very strange thing—indeed, I should not say it is a strange thing—that whenever the inspector for Bundaberg is likely to make a visit to the various plantations, they always know he is coming, and things are nicely rigged up before he gets there. I have visited some of the plantations, and I have seen conditions existing there not fit for animals, much more for human beings, even looking at it from the standpoint of the poor kanaka. I hold that while the kanaka is here—although I have the utmost antipathy to the kanaka working here in Queensland—yet while he is here under the present system he should be treated as a human being.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BARBER: One of the most bloodthirsty and cruel statements I ever heard was that made some time ago by one of the Federal candidates. That gentleman said—

The kanaka question was a very small evil, because we were civilising him off the face of the earth.

I say that in a Christian community no man should be allowed to stand up and make such a statement as that without being severely censured for it. Take the kanaka death rate. I shall not be exaggerating when I say that since the initiation of this accursed system there have been 30,000 kanakas buried in Queensland. I have seen them dying, and buried with no more ceremony than you would bury a dog or any other

beast. And this is our so-called twentieth century civilization! Take the death-rate in the Bundaberg district for the half-year ended 30th June. Out of a total number of deaths amounting to 140, there were seventy-six kanakas, or over 50 per cent., while the kanakas are only one-sixth or one-seventh of the population. We are told that the kanakas come here, that they can work here, and that no one else can do the work in the cane-fields. I say the white men can do it better, and far better, than the kanaka. I repeat that this system is productive of uncleanness, of licentiousness, and of murder. On looking up some returns, I found that from 1875 to 1891 close on 300 white men have been murdered at the islands. I do not know the exact number from 1891 to the present time, nor the number from the initiation of the system up to 1875. I hold, Sir, that the whole system is stained with evil, that it is red with innocent blood. In fact, some two or three years ago, when Mr. J. J. Kingsbury visited Bundaberg in connection with some matter, he stated that the sugar industry in that district was built up on the blood of the kanaka. I say the system cannot be justified, and that it cannot be and should not be upheld. It has been "boosted" up by the trinity of monopoly, the Press, and the pulpit. I have heard ministers from the pulpit uphold the kanaka labour trade. More shame, I say, to them! Some five or six years ago a friend of mine—almost a brother—was murdered not far outside Bundaberg one Saturday night. Can it be wondered at that we who know the kanaka business best should have such an antipathy to the system? People wonder how it is we have no sympathy with the kanaka being here. When we have looked upon the mangled bodies of those of our friends who have been chopped almost limb from limb by these half savages, we have cause for our antipathy for the kanaka being here in Queensland. I hold that those who still support this system, who still advocate the retention and the further importation of the kanaka into this State, are sowing what by and by their children will reap. They are sowing what other generations will have to reap, and that will be, I predict, another American slave system. Then, I contend, that the gentlemen who still advocate the importation of the kanaka, who still hide themselves behind the Chinese, the Japanese, and the other aliens, and say "we want you to prohibit these races from coming into the country, but save us our kanakas, do not interfere with them"—I say that the gentlemen who still advocate, and intend, if possible, to perpetuate, this horrible, this cursed system in our midst, are simply frustrating the wishes and the aspirations of the people of this State. Those who advocate the further increasing of the number of the kanakas and aliens in this colony will have their names handed down to posterity, covered with dishonour and infamy.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear!

Mr. DIBLEY (*Woolloongabba*): Before I say anything upon the Address in Reply, I would like to add to the expressions of hon. members who have already spoken my regret at the death of the late Sir James R. Dickson and the Hon. J. V. Chataway. I would also like to express my regret at the death of Her late Majesty Queen Victoria. Coming to this Speech, the first thing we notice is the promise that "one of the matters to engage your attention will be that of legislation affecting Parliamentary elections." One hon. member who spoke on the Address in Reply said of this as a sort of surprise packet, and other members of the House spoke in a similar strain. Of course we do not know what is coming. It may be electoral reform in the shape of one man or one adult one vote, or

it may be a reduction of the members of this Parliament. If it is the latter, and I think it will be found that it is, I for one will not object, providing that justice is done to the smaller constituencies. I would not like to see any legislation brought in which would give the townspeople all the voting, and I think that in any attempt to reduce the number of members of the country, or the sparsely populated districts, should have their interests safeguarded. But, as I said before, this is a surprise packet. We do not know what is to come. I hope that among other things we shall get one adult one vote. With regard to the amendment of the local government laws, that has been long wanted, and I am sure that the local authorities will hail with delight some attempt to amend those laws. So many speakers have spoken on this Address in Reply that I do not feel inclined to discuss any of the other matters or of the Bills that have been promised. I would rather speak upon them when they come before the House. There is one matter, however, I would particularly like to bring under the notice of the Minister for Lands and before the House generally. That is the sale which took place on the Baramba Run of about 2,600 acres of land. In addressing myself to that subject, I am not speaking from the reports that have appeared in the papers, from what appeared in the *Maryborough Chronicle* or other papers, but from my personal knowledge, knowing something about the district; and I say unhesitatingly that the manner in which that land was sold, or was advertised for sale in the Brisbane papers, was such that the people in the Nanango district, and the people who really wished to purchase land, did not know anything about the land being advertised for sale until two or three days before the sale took place, and in fact the people in the Nanango district did not know that there were any Crown lands in the neighbourhood at all. The run had been so carefully fenced in and ringbarked that the public, who were looking for land and anxious to purchase, did not know that there was any land there for sale. The whole of the lots advertised for sale had frontages to the best creeks in the Wide Bay district—creeks that are never dry, creeks that always have plenty of water—that is the Baramba Creek and the Moonda-Waamba Creek. I know from people who have been there, and from letters I have received from residents in the district, that there has been—I will not say a swindle, but at least a job in connection with the sale of this land. One gentleman told me that he was certain that the Government by selling this land have lost at least £2,000.

MR. ANNEAR: I do not believe that anyone would give 1s. an acre more than the people who bought it.

MR. DIBLEY: I believe that the people who bought it would have given at least twice as much—I unhesitatingly say that they would have given twice as much rather than lose it. If the hon. member looks at the map he will see that every frontage is towards either Baramba Creek or Moonda-Waamba Creek, and if he knows anything about the district, he knows that they are very valuable creeks, and I defy him to say that the land is not very valuable.

MR. ANNEAR: I have been there, and I know that the land is what is third-class pastoral land. (Opposition laughter.)

MR. REID: Are you an authority on that?

THE SPEAKER: Order!

MR. DIBLEY: I have no hesitation in saying—and I have been all over the run—that I am as good a judge of land as the hon. member for Maryborough. I say that there is no third-class

pastoral land on it. There is plenty of it that is first class, and first class in comparison with any land in the colony.

MR. ANNEAR: That has been sold long ago.

MR. DIBLEY: I wish that I had all the land on Baramba that has not been sold—if I had, I would not trouble this House long. I would like to have all the land on Baramba which has not been sold, and, as I say, I would not trouble this House any longer.

MR. REID: You seldom trouble the House.

MR. DIBLEY: I know that I do not trouble the House very often. I want, however, to draw the attention of the Ministry to the fact that there is an immense area on Baramba Run which falls into the hands of the Government this year, or did last year, if the Ministry issued the notices. Not only on Baramba, but on Manambah, Kilkivan, and Nanango there are some thousands of acres of land that the people want to buy, or want to lease, and I hope the Government will not sell it, but lease it. There is an immense amount of land there. Some 20,000 square miles will be open to selection, so that the Government can deal with it either by selection or by sale. I have no hesitation in saying that this is first-class land, and the people are anxious to buy it or lease it. Notwithstanding what the hon. member for Maryborough has said, I think I know just as much about land as he does, and I think that the people who have written to me know a great deal more. I met a gentleman in town only last Saturday morning, and he told me that if the public had known that the Baramba land was for sale, the Government would have got three times as much for it as they actually received from the purchasers. I have no hesitation in saying that there was some trickery in the sale of that land. The Government may take the blame if they choose. It is their duty to find out if there has been any negligence on the part of the Advertising Board in advertising the land, or else to take the blame upon themselves. I say a great mistake has been made in the matter. The hon. member for the district, Mr. Kent, to whom I spoke on the subject, admits that a great mistake has been made, and the hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Bartholomew, admits that there has been a great blunder or mistake somewhere, and that a job has been perpetrated in some way. At any rate I rose to assert that the country has lost £2,000 through the way in which that land was sold. If land like that, land near a station, near a main road, and about 10 miles from a railway, the Kilkivan-Coolabunia Railway, is to be sold, members of this House have a right to demand that we should get the best value for that land. I do not wish to say anything more, and I should not have said anything at all in this debate if I did not feel so strongly on the question of the sale of this land.

MR. BOWMAN (*Warrego*): I desire to offer a few remarks on the Address in Reply before the debate closes. I may say that, with previous speakers on this side of the House, I am somewhat disappointed at the nature of the Opening Speech delivered by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor. I was fairly hopeful that we should have had something definite laid down this session in the way of an Elections Bill, particularly after the promise that was given last session by the Minister in charge of that measure. On several occasions, when we asked whether it was the intention of the Government to introduce such a Bill, we were told that a compromise would be effected, that if we would restrain our opposition to the passing of syndicate railways the Elections Bill would be brought forward.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE : If there was time.

Mr. BOWMAN : There was ample time to deal with that measure, if the Government were desirous of going on with it. There is an absolute necessity for a change in our electoral system. The principle of plural voting exists only in this colony at the present time. All the other Australasian States have adopted the principle of one man one vote, and in some instances of one adult one vote. We adopted the principle of one man one vote at the recent federal elections, and it is an anomaly that we should have two distinct systems of carrying out parliamentary elections in Queensland. The other States have made more rapid advances in this matter than we have done. Not only do I object to plural voting, but I think there should be a great improvement effected in our system of electoral registration. This system of electoral registration in force at the present time has very great disadvantages, particularly in remote parts of the colony. I know that numbers of men in my own electorate have experienced great difficulty in qualifying themselves for enrolment, owing to our system of registration, and the same thing has been experienced by men in other electorates in the West. Men who have property in the shape of teams—that is carriers who possess bullocks, and in some instances horses, and wagons to the value of from £100 to £200, are denied the right to vote in many cases, simply because they have no fixed place of abode, but travel from one starting point and go West and return. Time after time the electoral registrar—I am speaking now of the Charleville district—has refused the applications of such men because they had no fixed place of abode. The Government might very well introduce a Bill this session making liberal provision for the registration of men who have a stake in the country, because it has been the strong argument of the Government that men who have no stake in the country should have no representation. I trust also that, when the Bill is introduced, members on the other side will render us on this side assistance in getting inserted a clause providing that where men reside on stations and vote there the ballot boxes shall be sent to a head centre for the purpose of having the votes counted. Many of us who represent pastoral constituencies have suffered to a very great extent through the want of some such provision. I contend that men are frequently intimidated and are not able to vote according to their convictions under the present system, but have in many instances to vote according to the dictation of the employers whom they serve. I was pleased to hear some hon. members on the other side who have already spoken declare that they intended to do something in connection with our land laws this session. I recognise that there is a necessity for an alteration in our land laws. As one who has travelled a great deal in the Western country, both this year and last year, with the object of gathering exact information as to the conditions under which the Western people are living, I can bear out very largely the remarks made by the hon. member for Balonne when he was relating to this House the disasters which have befallen the Western part of Queensland owing to the drought. There are men there who are in almost a state of bankruptcy—men who have striven to fight against the odds opposed to them, and who have put their all into their selections. I think that very great assistance should be given to such men by the Government. It is said by some that there is no necessity to give any lengthy extension of lease to the pastoralists at the present time. I favour an extension of lease, particularly to those men who have undergone a

great amount of suffering, and whose holdings are in districts where land is not likely to be required for close settlement for some time to come. I object very strongly to the Government granting an extension of lease to men whose leases have a number of years to run, or to men whose holdings are along our railway lines, or in close proximity to some of our Western towns. In the Warrego and Gregory districts there are fifty-four leases which have from twelve to fourteen years yet to run, and it would be absurd for the Government to carry out the proposals of the Pastoralists' Association and grant an extension of twenty-one years beyond the existing term in such cases. Each individual case will have to be taken on its own merits, and the Government, or whoever

is responsible for the granting of extensions of the leases, will have to lay down an equitable basis and not give extensions indiscriminately to persons simply because they are pastoral tenants of the Crown. I believe there is great need on the part of the Government to break down a number of anomalies that exist with regard to the relative positions of the pastoral lessees and the grazing farmers. There is a great discrepancy between the rents paid by the pastoral lessees and those paid by grazing farmers, the advantage being all in favour of the large man. I will give two instances from my own electorate to show the disparity between the rents paid by the two classes. The lessees of Arabella Run, which is a few miles outside Charleville, have 119 square miles of available country, for which they pay 17s. per square mile, the total amount paid in rent being £101 3s. They have in addition 57½ square miles for which they pay nothing; and the railway line runs right alongside the run. The resumed portion of Arabella Run has been taken up by two brothers named Akers. They have 14,000 acres, for which they pay 1½d. per acre. They have, in all, about 22 square miles, for which they are paying £87 10s. I have heard it repeated time after time in this House by hon. members on both sides that the best settler we can have is the small man, and the policy that we are anxious to see carried out is that of closer settlement. Seeing that is so, I would ask whether the Government do not consider it an anomaly that the rent paid for the 176½ square miles of Arabella Run should be only £101 3s., whilst the rent for 14,000 acres is £87 10s.? I am one of those who believe that the Government would act wisely in reducing the rent paid by the grazing farmer, making it on a par with the rent paid by the pastoral lessee. I went over the best portion of this selection with the object of seeing for myself what improvements were being made by these selectors. They have simply been Trojans—men that any Government might be proud of, for the energy with which they have tried to improve their land. They have had bad seasons and other disabilities to contend with, but I will give one illustration of what they have done to show what they were prepared to do. They put down, or attempted to put down, a hand bore, some 8 or 10 miles from their homestead. They put it down 400 feet by hand—and it cost them 10s. a foot to put it down—with the object of getting water. This is only one of many instances I could give of the way in which these men have tried to make their selections a success, and I trust that, when the land question is brought before the House for consideration, the Government will endeavour to rectify some of the anomalies that exist between the two classes of tenants at the present time, and that they will see that if the rent paid in the one instance is unreasonable then it is still more unreasonable in the case of the small man.

Another instance which I may give is Gowrie. On Gowrie the lessees have 270 square miles of available country, and 92 square miles of unavailable country. The total rent paid for the 270 square miles is £486, being at the rate of 36s. per square mile. One of our selectors very close to this run has an agricultural farm—conditional—on Querinda, a resumed portion of Gowrie. The area is 663 acres, and he is paying 4d. an acre for it, his annual payments being £11 1s. Hon. members may say that, as it is an agricultural farm, it is better land than that held by the original lessee, but I deny that. I have been over both, and there is no material difference between them. I may say here that the question of agricultural farming in Western Queensland has proved an absolute failure. Men took the selections up some years ago with the object of going in for cultivation, but beyond Roma the country is unfit for agricultural purposes, and when the question is brought before this House I trust that something will be done to give these people greater advantages than they are enjoying at the present time. Last year there was a conference of grazing farmers held in Brisbane.

MR. W. HAMILTON: What?

MR. BOWMAN: The hon. member for Gregory has a little laugh. I suppose he is laughing at the representatives that were there. At any rate there were some *bona fide* grazing farmers at that conference. There were some, perhaps, who were also the most prominent advocates of pastoral rights that we have in Queensland to-day. They waited on the Minister for Lands and the Premier with the object of getting certain concessions, and on that occasion the Premier stated that the Government would not enforce the payment of rent, and that they could get an extension; but they asked that a remission of one year's rent might be granted to them, particularly in the drought-stricken areas, and I think that request was a reasonable one, particularly when we take into account the amount they pay as selectors in proportion to that paid by the lessees; and if the Government were to allow them a remission of one year's rent, I believe it would have a most encouraging effect on those men who have been fighting to make the land more valuable than it was when they entered upon it. I think I visited between thirty and forty different selections, and I must say that in every instance there was nothing but a very gloomy outlook for them, unless the Government were prepared to render them some assistance, either by way of remission of one year's rent or by the reduction of their rents. It was stated by the hon. member for Balonne that he did not consider there was one property that had paid during the last few years. I do not believe that. I believe there are some properties, even in the hon. member's electorate, that are paying at the present time despite the drought, and as an instance I may mention Charlotte Plains in particular. I believe their success is largely due to good management, and I believe that bad management is responsible for a good deal of what has taken place. I do not mean to say that it is the main factor, because I believe the drought itself has been the prominent factor in bringing about so much destruction in the Western country. I think in the event of an extension of leases being granted to the pastoralists, they should pay the same rates as the small men pay. I consider that it would be unfair to those who are struggling on their land as selectors if they are not to have the same concessions given to them as the pastoral lessees expect to have. I could enumerate the losses of many of those small men, but I do not propose to do so at this stage. I think it will fit in very much better when the question of the

extension of leases and, I trust, an amendment of the Land Act affecting selections are brought forward later in the session. There was one omission from the Governor's Speech at which I was rather disappointed, and that was with regard to the Marsupials Act. Last session I put a question to the Premier, and he said the Government proposed to introduce a Marsupials Act last year, but it was found that time would not permit, and so we had an extension of the old Act for another twelve months. A Marsupials Act is necessary, particularly at this juncture, because of the number of native dogs that exist in the Western parts of Queensland at present. The stock that survived the drought are being attacked by the native dogs, and I believe the Government would do a wise thing if they were to assist both the pastoralists and the selectors in exterminating this pest.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: How are we going to find the money?

MR. BOWMAN: I don't know how you are going to find the money. You seem able to find money for other purposes. I admit that the pastoral industry is an important one, and I admit that the dingoes are creating great havoc in the Western districts by the destruction of sheep, and I think the Government should render greater assistance than they have done towards the extermination of the pest. An hon. member says that the cattle-owners object. I think it should be compulsory on every person who is on those Western lands to pay his proportion of taxation to get rid of a pest which plays such havoc as this is playing at the present time. I know of several selections round the Charleville district that have suffered great loss from this cause. There is one about 20 miles down the Warrego River that has lost about 1,000 sheep, and that is a big loss for a small man who is struggling. In 1894, I think, Mr. Quarrel, formerly of the Ward River, brought 16,000 sheep from Isis Downs, and in 1898 he had only 5,000 sheep left, and he attributed his loss solely to the dingoes. I was speaking to the manager of Listowel when I was in the West a few months ago, and he told me that a large percentage of his losses were due to the dingoes, and he, as well as others who have suffered in that way, were particularly anxious that the Government should nationalise the question.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He wants to get somebody else to pay for his losses.

MR. BOWMAN: A great deal has been said, and I suppose we shall hear a great deal more from the hon. gentleman before the end of the session, particularly when the question of extending the pastoral leases comes on, and I think assistance should be given to those people to enable them to preserve their stock, either by means of a subsidy, or by the Government making a national matter of the destruction of this and other pests. I believe it would pay the Government and the country to do that.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Some of the men out your way say they cannot pay their rent, let alone anything else.

MR. BOWMAN: The hon. member was not in his place when I was dealing with that. At Oakwood and other stations they have the same trouble to contend with in connection with the dingoes, and I read in the report of one of the inspectors that they had created a great deal of destruction on the Barcoo and even farther North-west than that. I think the cattle-owners should pay their quota as well as other people, but there are cattle-owners who will not even allow dingo-poisoners to go on their runs.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They are killing more calves than sheep just now.

Mr. BOWMAN: Perhaps that is so, and that may be one of the results that will force the Government to do their duty and keep down the pest.

Mr. HARDACRE: You should exempt the cattle-owners.

Mr. BOWMAN: I trust that if the Government are going to bring in a Marsupial Bill this session that they will not pay any attention to the arguments of the hon. member for Leichhardt—that cattle-owners should be exempt from payment. Every man who is on the land ought to be prepared to pay his share towards the cost of getting rid of this pest, as I know the native dogs are exterminating a great deal of our stock.

Mr. HARDACRE: They only affect sheep-owners.

Mr. BOWMAN: To my own knowledge there are cattle-owners who would start sheep-farming if it were not for the dread of the dingoes in the Ward River district at the present time. In speaking about the marsupials—to show hon. members the keen interest in which some selectors view the situation—I remember going out one night and finding selectors keeping fires burning within a certain radius, and they kept firing off rifles nearly all night in order to keep the dingoes off. That shows that they were in a bad way in this respect. I was pleased to see in the Speech that the Government propose to introduce this session a measure giving cheap money to farmers, and I trust also to selectors.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: All round.

Mr. BOWMAN: You can do it all round if you like. One or two instances came under my notice where great hardships have been imposed on men who had to borrow money. One of them had £500 locked up in the Queensland National Bank, receiving 3 per cent. for his money. At the crash in 1893 he borrowed £200, and he is paying 7 per cent. for it. There are other instances that I could give where some selectors are paying as high as 10 per cent. interest. I think that if any Government proposed to introduce a measure providing cheap money on similar lines to the Act in New Zealand, that it would be a very great advantage indeed. I shall now quote from the New Zealand Year Book of 1900 a paragraph that might very well be taken to heart by the Government here when they bring in their Agricultural Land Bank Bill. This paragraph says—

The Act is not entrusted to one manager.

There is a general board there—

The first meeting of the general board for the purpose of considering applications for loans was held on 23rd February, 1895, and up to the 31st March, 1900, the board had authorised 8,452 advances, amounting to £2,633,440. The total amount applied for in the 8,452 applications granted in full and partially was £3,012,870; 1,004 applicants declined the partial grants offered to them amounting to £454,009; so that the net advances authorised at 31st March, 1900, numbered 7,448, and amounted to £2,179,440. The security for the net authorised advances was valued at £4,359,983. The number of applications received up to 31st March, 1900, was 10,995, for an aggregate amount of £3,711,033. Sixty per cent. of the total amount applied for was wanted for the purpose of paying off existing mortgages at rates of interest higher than 5 per cent.

I think this Government could take a leaf out of the book of the New Zealand Government in this respect, so as to give an opportunity to men who are at the present time in the hands of mortgagees—small men particularly—to get cheaper money than they are now able to get. I trust that the Government this session will not be behind in adopting a policy that has worked so admirably as this has done in New Zealand. I also hope that the measure that will be introduced this session will be of a more progressive nature than the one

brought in last session by the Government. There was another omission that I felt somewhat disappointed at seeing in the Speech, and that was an arbitration and conciliation Bill.

Mr. STORY: Compulsory?

Mr. BOWMAN: Yes, compulsory arbitration—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Compulsory conciliation!

Mr. BOWMAN: I am not speaking about compulsory conciliation; I am speaking about compulsory arbitration, and I remember that the Minister for Lands was one who fought strongly against the principle of compulsory arbitration last year.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That was compulsory conciliation, was it not?

Mr. BOWMAN: No. The motion was brought forward by Mr. McDonald last session to this effect: That a Bill on similar lines to the Act in New Zealand should be placed on our statute-book for the settlement of industrial disputes. The word "compulsory" was omitted, on the motion of the Home Secretary, Mr. Foxton, and the word "voluntarily" was substituted. From the experience of New Zealand for over six years, they have found that that Act there has worked most satisfactorily.

Mr. STORY: No, certainly not.

Mr. BOWMAN: The hon. member for Balonne says certainly not. Well, I will give the words of Mr. Seddon himself, when addressing a meeting in Sydney during the Commonwealth celebrations.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He is not likely to run down his own child.

Mr. BOWMAN: It is not a matter of running down his own child. Experience has taught us that New Zealand is the most peaceable colony in the whole group; and it seems to me that when any industrial dispute arises, and resort is had to strikes and turmoil, some hon. members on the other side are quite satisfied even to go out as special constables, and to have gatling guns used to put the men of this State down. That is the experience of some hon. members on the other side to-night. Mr. Seddon said, at a meeting held in the Trades Hall in Sydney, at which there were representatives of the Labour parties throughout Australia and delegates from various trades unions, that if there was one Act more than another which he was proud of placing on the statute-book of New Zealand, it was the Arbitration and Conciliation Act for the settlement of industrial disputes. He stated on that occasion that there were a great number of disputes that they were able to settle without work ceasing at all. Only last year, from May to August, there were forty-nine disputes in New Zealand, and each of these disputes were settled by means of the Arbitration Court. This court has settled disputes so satisfactorily that the Federal Parliament proposes to introduce a similar measure. I see also in New South Wales in the Governor's Speech that the Government there propose to introduce an arbitration and conciliation Bill there. There they have a Special Wages Board Act, but they found that Act not sufficiently comprehensive, and now they propose to introduce an arbitration and conciliation Bill in place of this Special Wages Board Act. And yet hon. members tell us that this Act in New Zealand has been a failure. You find legislation of that kind existing in almost every colony but this, and [5.30 p.m.] you cannot expect progress in this colony while you have sitting on the front Treasury benches such men as sit there now. As one who has been engaged in strikes, I may say that I am strongly opposed to them, and all the time I was out West as an organiser I have advised against strikes. I suppose the

hon. member for Balonne will be surprised to hear that. I believe there is a better way of settling disputes, but we have in the past had to resort to strikes because we had no other means of entering our protest against the unjust demands of employers. I have gone through the mill, and know a great deal of the sufferings involved in trade disputes, and for that reason I think it would be much better if the Government introduced legislation providing a more humane method of settling the disputes which arise between employers and employed, and so prevent the recurrence of those barbarous strikes which have taken place in the past. I cannot understand how any hon. member can be opposed to the principle of conciliation and arbitration. They say they do not want strikes, and that they upset the trade of the colony. There is no doubt that a strike of any dimensions does do that. What has been the action of some Ministers of the Crown in other parts of Australia? They have been prepared to act as mediators, and bring about conciliation and arbitration. But have the present Government ever done that? When the hon. member for Enoggera, who at that time represented Toowong, brought under the notice of the Premier the advisability of applying conciliation and arbitration to the bootmakers' strike of 1895, was he not told that if the bootmakers would come to the Premier he would give them some fatherly advice? Probably his advice would have been to accept the terms offered. And what were they? A reduction in wages of from 5 per cent. to 50 per cent., and to-day those unfortunate men are working for not more than an average of 25s. a week. Yet, if they had continued the strike, what would it have meant? The employers would bring men from the other colonies and beat the strikers every time. We want some law by which the men will get a minimum wage, and I think no hon. member here will contend that 25s. a week is a reasonable wage on which a man can maintain a wife and family.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It must be more than in the other colonies or the men would not come here from there.

Mr. BOWMAN: It was in 1895 when men came from the south and filled the places of 400 men, who eventually had to accept the employers' terms. Since then, legislation has been passed in Victoria which provides for a minimum wage, which this Government has refused to provide for and refused to support when the matter was brought forward by the hon. member for Brisbane South, Mr. Turley.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: If you went out on strike now you would be all right.

Mr. BOWMAN: Does the hon. gentleman wish it? If he does not, why does he not use his influence with the Government with which he is associated to bring in a Bill to settle these disputes, and do away with the necessity for going out on strike? It is not only the men I feel for, but it is the unfortunate women and children who suffer most.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Everybody feels for them.

Mr. BOWMAN: Then why not introduce legislation which will protect them? I think it was Mr. Kingston who said that, during the first four years' operation of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act in New Zealand, it saved £1,000,000 to that colony.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He might say anything.

Mr. BOWMAN: I am prepared to believe him in preference to the hon. gentleman. That is my verdict on Kingston. He is a man who

has advanced democracy, and done more good than the hon. gentleman ever did, or is capable of doing.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: And a great deal more harm.

Mr. BOWMAN: We can put up with the harm. We do not get either good or harm from the hon. gentleman. Mr. Kingston's statement that £1,000,000 had been saved to New Zealand through the operation of that legislation was based on a comparison of the number of disputes which had taken place for a certain period prior to the passing of the Act and the number which had taken place during a similar period after the passing of the Act, and I do not think there can be much doubt as to the beneficial effect of that legislation. We have the records of this House to prove what it cost the country to send out the Defence Force and an army of special constables to put down the shearers and maritime men who were fighting for what they considered just and right. Now, before I sit down there is one matter to which I should like to refer, and that is the question so frequently brought before the House by the hon. member for Balonne—the spread of education in the remoter parts of the Western district by means of travelling teachers. I think the Government might wisely do more than they have done up to the present time in the way of extending that system. There are numbers of children in the Western parts of the colony who have no opportunity whatever of getting any education. In view of the fact that the system of sending round a travelling teacher has so far proved a success, I do not think it is too much to ask that it may be extended a little further. In conclusion, I would refer once again to the necessity of extending relief to many of those persons in the Western districts who have suffered by the recent drought, and to whom, if assistance comes, it must come speedily. I believe they are a class of men whom it is well worth while assisting, because they have done much towards developing the State, and have spent what money they had in furthering its progress. Without such assistance many of them will have to abandon their places, and go out on the track like ordinary bagmen, because there can be no doubt whatever as to the extent to which they have suffered. If the Government at the present time come to the rescue of these men, I feel sure that many of them will by that means be enabled to stay on the land and be a credit to the State. As one of these men said to me, "If we do not get assistance, then the only alternative will be for the Government to take the land; we cannot continue to hold it unless we get some concession." I therefore ask the Government to take the matter into their earnest consideration, and when the Bill comes before the House to deal generously with these people. I trust they will take into consideration the question of a reduction in the rents of these selectors who have been in trouble throughout the drought-stricken area, and I do not think it will be at all unreasonable to grant what is asked for, in view of the fact that in some instances they are paying, three, four, or five times as much rent as the pastoral lessees are paying.

Mr. DUNSFORD: What about the rabbit boards?

Mr. BOWMAN: The hon. member asks me whether I am going to say anything about the rabbit boards. I have a good deal to say on that subject, but I propose to reserve my remarks until the matter of the extension of leases comes up for consideration. The incursion of rabbits will no doubt be an argument urged by the pastoralists for an extension of lease, particularly in the South-western portion of the colony.

Mr. MULCAHY (*Gympie*), who, on rising, was greeted with cheers, said: I have but a very few words to say on the Address in Reply, more especially as the Premier has expressed a wish that the debate should finish to-day, and as the leader of the Opposition has promised to do all in his power to bring that about. In addition to that, the subject has been very well thrashed out by the speakers who have preceded me. There is one measure I am pleased to see placed on the Government programme—we have had it before us for a good many years now—and that is electoral reform; and I can assure the Ministry that every hon. member on this side will hail with delight the day when adult suffrage becomes the law of this State. When that is brought about, and when ample provision is made to give the electors every facility to cast their votes, Parliament will be a reflex of the people, which I maintain that under the present system it is not. I will not say more on that subject at present, as I hope to have an opportunity of referring to it again when the Bill comes before us. The next matter I wish to refer to is the Bill to amend the law relating to mining companies. That is a measure which is very much needed. In the electorate I represent this has long been a burning question, and we have for years been trying to bring about a better state of things. I had myself the honour to call a meeting on the subject, at which the opinion was unanimous that an amendment of the law is needed. I have no doubt that if the Act is amended it will be the means of introducing a good deal of capital into the State. We on this side believe in giving every encouragement to the introduction of capital in a legitimate way, while at the same time wishing to conserve what we consider to be the rights of the workers. Under the present Act a man takes up, say, 1,000 shares in a mining company at 5s. or 10s. each. After he has spent £200 or £300 he thinks he has had enough of it and sells his shares, or perhaps gives them away, but his liability does not cease as long as his name remains on the share register. What is wanted is a provision to the effect that when a man has sold his shares his liabilities should cease. That is the chief thing we complain of. I know of a case at Gympie where a man sold his shares four years ago, and yet only the other day, when a liquidation call was made, he was compelled to pay it, because no company will go beyond the men whose names are on its share register. I feel sure that if such an amendment in the law is proposed it will receive our best consideration, and will be passed without hesitation. If it is put before the House in its true light there will be very little trouble in having a measure of that kind placed on the statute-book. It will not only induce men to go into the mining industry, but will protect those who are already in it. Another measure I have very much at heart does not, I am sorry to say, appear in the list of Bills in the Lieutenant-Governor's Speech. During the late election for Gympie my opponent—a man for whom personally I have the highest respect—promised that if returned he would do his best to bring on a Workmen's Compensation Bill. The two members of the Ministry present—the Minister for Railways and the then Acting Premier, Mr. Rutledge—said, "Amen! if you return him you will get all he has promised, and a little more." But there is no mention of it in the Speech. The present law is a very costly one to applicants under it. In one particular case at Gympie, it went first to the District Court, then to the Supreme Court, and at last to the Privy Council. I believe that in the first instance it could have been settled for about £300. I am afraid it will

cost £4,000 before it is finished, and the widow will get very little benefit from it.

Mr. KERR: The lawyers will have got it all.

Mr. MULCAHY: The lawyers have every right to protect themselves, and I do not blame them. A good Workmen's Compensation Bill would not only be a good thing for workmen and those dependent upon them, but it would really in the end be better for mineowners themselves. In Great Britain, in 1897, a measure of the kind was introduced and passed by a Conservative Government, and its work has given very great satisfaction indeed; and I hope that at no distant day such a measure will be in force in the State of Queensland. My firm belief is that it would be a benefit to all concerned. I am pleased to notice in the list a Bill to grant advances to farmers; but on that subject I may have something to say when the Bill is before us. With regard to the mining industry I maintain that it has never received that consideration from the Government that is its due. When we compare the assistance rendered to mining in Queensland and Victoria it will be seen that we are miles behind. From the little that is said about mining here one might imagine that it was a very small industry not worth consideration; yet last year we turned out somewhere about 1,000,000 oz. of gold. I freely admit that the present is not the time to ask the Government for assistance in the shape of grants of money. I know the Government is hard put to it just now to make both ends meet, and as a mining member I would not ask them to give money now. But when the finances of the country get adjusted, and the Treasury has again something in it, the mining representatives may well ask the Government that some reasonable help should be given to the industry in the way of awards to deep sinking, crushing batteries, and so on. This is not an opportune time, but later on, when the Financial Statement is before us, I will avail myself of the privilege of saying a few words in the interests of the mining industry. I am not one of those who have any great fear for the colony or who believe that a collapse or something dreadful is going to happen. I have great faith in the State of Queensland. It has been said, and I think truly said, that we have great natural resources. I think we have, and they only require development. I have no fear but that the colony will right itself in a very few years, and if we have the wrong captain at the helm now, and he is not able to steer the ship of State in the proper course, we shall find it out very soon, and we will make a change which will bring about greater prosperity. I will not say any more, but in conclusion I will thank the hon. members for the way in which they have listened to the few words I have had to say. I would have them remember that we on this side of the House are not talkers, but workers.

MEMBERS of the Opposition: Hear, hear! and laughter.

Mr. J. HAMILTON (*Cook*): I quite agree with the remarks that the hon. member who has just sat down has made in the course of his speech. For instance, he is perfectly correct in saying that it is rather hard when a person sells his scrip he should be liable for three or four years afterwards for calls. I think it is advisable that some action should be taken upon that matter. I think I heard him mention also something about a mining development Bill, and if he did so, I quite agree with him that it is desirable that some measure of that sort should be introduced.

Mr. HARDACRE: There is an Act of that kind in Victoria.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: Yes, we all know that a Bill of that kind was introduced by Mr. Foster in Victoria. However, we must go slowly. We

are just now hard up; still I think it is when we are hard up that we should try to develop our resources, and especially our mineral resources. I think we are very lucky that the Premier did something of this kind some three years ago, or we would have been in a far worse position than we are now, because the development of the mineral resources in the Chillagoe district and in many other districts has tended to give a very large number of people employment. I will now say a little with reference to the federal elections. The Labour party deserve credit for their organisation, because without it they would not have been so successful. Organisation was lamentably absent on the other side, because while the Labour party plumped for their supporters the votes of the Government supporters were spread over eleven men, with the inevitable result. However, the results of the State elections indicate very clearly that the people of Queensland have become thoroughly tired of the so-called policy of the Labour party.

Mr. REID: Question!

Mr. J. HAMILTON: In every instance where Government members went to the vote they have retained their seats.

Mr. REID: You are only thinking of the Valley.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: Well, I must congratulate the hon. member for the Valley upon having caught the 'bus. (Hear, hear! and laughter.) The candidates of the Labour party lost the 'bus both at the Valley and at North Rockhampton. We have not only won every seat previously held by Government supporters, but one from the Independent Opposition and one from the Labour party. Even in the cases where the Labour members have won their seats, the majority by which the members have been elected has been far smaller than was obtained at the general elections.

Mr. BOWMAN: What about plural voting?

Mr. J. HAMILTON: As to plural voting, there was no more plural voting at North Rockhampton this time than there was three years ago. Well, the hon. member for North Rockhampton at the general election won by a majority of 281, and the gentleman who was elected the other day won only by a majority of one.

Mr. RYLANDS: They had all gone down to Lake's Creek.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: Well, they had gone somewhere. This shows that the people are becoming restored to their senses. (Opposition laughter.) We all regret the drought, and the great losses that have been occasioned by it—losses which have been very much accentuated during the last year, because although the Government Registrar states that we have 10,000,000 sheep left, he is going on the records which were obtained in October last. Of course, the drought was very much accentuated after that time, and reliable authorities now state that we have only 7,500,000 sheep left out of the 22,000,000 that we had before.

Mr. REID: Are you bringing it down?

Mr. J. HAMILTON: No; I am only saying what is the result from evidence obtained by experts. It is not in the interests of the pastoralists to bring it down; it is to the interests of the pastoralist to better his position. For instance, some time ago I was talking to a pastoralist who had lost 90,000 sheep out of 180,000, and I said to him, "Why do you not explain this?" He replied, "No, it would do me harm with the bank if I did so. I do not care to let the bank know I have lost so many."

Mr. RYLANDS: The bank would be down on him.

Mr. TURLEY: He has got to wail to the bank this time.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: The leader of the Opposition stated that the hon. member the Premier was responsible for the deficit. Does the hon. member suggest that we should have introduced a Bill to stop the drought?

Mr. REID: Yes.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: Or does he suggest that we should have lessened railway expenditure by refusing to carry at one-third rates millions of sheep and cattle from the parched pastures of the interior to the more generous pastures near the coast, or does he suggest that we should have refused to carry thousands of tons of provender for the same reason? Does he suggest that we should have lessened the expenditure by refusing to do either of these things? He also states that the Government have increased the deficit by raising the salaries of high-salaried men still higher and appointing fresh experts. I cannot find that the advances to high-salaried men come to more than £1,000. Why does not the hon. member, instead of going into vague generalities, specify some of these high-salaried men or some of these experts who he says are not necessary. Does he object to the expenditure of the £18,000 which was put on the Estimates last year to restore the wages of lengthsmen to what they were properly entitled to, or does he object to the £3,000 which was put on the Estimates last year for the purpose of increasing the wages of female teachers? The leader of the Opposition attacked the Mines Department, and has always seemed to do that with great gusto ever since the last

[7 p.m.] Under Secretary was appointed. Without belittling any of his predecessors, I think I may say that he is the best Under Secretary for Mines we have had, although we have had many good ones.

Mr. JACKSON: Has the leader of the Opposition ever attacked him personally?

Mr. J. HAMILTON: If the hon. member had done me the courtesy to listen to what I said he would know that I said nothing of the kind. The leader of the Opposition condemns the system of fines for first offences instead of a forfeiture of the lease. But that is the law, and the Mines Department has simply to administer the law. In connection with these fines the hon. member said that the penalty is £5 or £10 for the first offence, and that the leaseholder then goes on for eight or ten months, when he is again brought up. On every occasion the penalty inflicted has been £10 for the first offence, and there has not been one single instance since the Act was passed where a leaseholder has been convicted of a second offence, which would probably involve him in a penalty of £50. The hon. member further objected to the action of the Premier in not having bought the cyanide patents. Personally, I should very much have liked to have seen those cyanide patents bought, but I noticed that the wealthy mine-owners on Charters Towers very strongly objected to their purchase. I was surprised to hear the leader of the Opposition say that poor men in this State who had not sufficient to fight the company are paying 7½ and as much as 8 per cent.

Mr. BROWNE: I never said anything of the sort.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: Well, I will prove it by reading from *Hansard*. I thought the hon. member would contradict that statement, and am therefore prepared to quote from his speech. Here are his words—

In Victoria the Government have bought the cyanide patent right out, and they charge the mining community 2½ per cent. royalty, and I see that the Victorian Government are getting their money back very

fast, and they are also helping the mining industry in other ways. In this colony, on the other hand, men are paying 5 per cent. and $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and in some cases 8 per cent. to the patentees.

And yet the hon. member says he never said anything of the sort.

Mr. BROWNE: You said I stated that there were poor men paying from $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 8 per cent.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: The hon. member stated that—

In this colony men are paying 5 per cent. and $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and in some cases 8 per cent.

I am surprised at the hon. member making that statement, because it is absolutely incorrect.

Mr. BROWNE: It is perfectly correct.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: I thought the hon. member would say that statement was correct, so I wired to the agent of the cyanide company at Charters Towers, asking him how much they had charged during the last four years. His reply is as follows:—

Five per cent. is the highest royalty ever charged in Queensland during the last four years.

Mr. MAXWELL: What about the extra charges on cyanide?

Mr. J. HAMILTON: That is quibbling. That is the reply I received.

Mr. MAXWELL: It is a bogus one.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: I will lay the telegram on the table so that hon. members can see if it is a bogus one. The statement that I have quoted is made by the agent of the cyanide company at Charters Towers, and it is perfectly correct, and I challenge the leader of the Opposition to mention any poor man who is paying the percentage he has mentioned.

Mr. JACKSON: It is $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. more than is paid in Victoria.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: That is not the question. The telegram I have read contradicts the statement of the leader of the Opposition, and the hon. member cannot squirm out of it by a reference to charges made in Victoria. While on the subject of accuracy, I will quote another remark made by the leader of the Opposition. The hon. member said—

There are mineral fields in Queensland where all the ground has been taken up for two years, and the surface has never been broken.

I say that is preposterous, and I challenge the hon. gentleman to mention any one field in this colony where all the ground has been taken up for two years and the surface has never been broken.

Mr. JACKSON: I can mention a case.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: Will the hon. member name the place?

Mr. JACKSON: The Happy Castle Block, near Ravenswood.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: Has the surface never been broken on that field? What the leader of the Opposition said was—

There are mineral fields in Queensland where all the ground has been taken up for two years, and the surface has never been broken.

"All the ground" has not been taken up on the mineral field of Ravenswood, and the surface has been broken on Ravenswood. Therefore I say that statement is preposterous. The hon. member also said—

With regard to exemptions, petitions are being got up, and have been got up, in different parts of the colony.

Well, I inquired of the Mines Department yesterday, and they informed me that they have not received one such petition. As an argument against exemptions, the leader of the Opposition said—

If a man goes to Croydon or some other field, and, in conjunction with his friends, is prepared to expend

£20,000 in developing some ground, before he can take it up one of these sharks steps to the front and says, "I have that ground; I will sell it to you for £10,000." He wants half the money that man is prepared to spend on the ground; and, of course, in a great many instances, capital is hunted away.

Now, does anyone in this House believe that anyone possessing £20,000 would be fool enough to go on to any goldfield in the colony and point out to some stranger some valuable ground which he was going to peg off next morning? If he did, seeing the first applicant gets the ground, he would be perfectly justified in losing the ground.

Mr. KERR: That is an "Aunt Sally."

Mr. J. HAMILTON: It is simply a fairy tale. It is no argument against exemptions, because a man can peg off the ground even if no exemptions were granted, because the rule is that after the first applicant applies for the ground, thirty days are allowed for the miners to make objection before a lease is granted, and during those thirty days it is not necessary to represent the ground, and therefore it is evident that without any assistance from exemptions whatever, if a 20,000-pounder was foolish enough to point out to somebody else the ground he wanted to take up, that man could, by virtue of this clause that I have just referred to, take it up next morning and hold it. Then, when the Premier stated that most of these leases, if they were not exempted, would be thrown up tomorrow, the leader of the Opposition referred to some exemptions on Croydon which he said would have been worked if they had been forfeited, evidently considering that the persons who had the exemptions were not entitled to them. I shall give hon. members the circumstances of that case, to see whether they do not think that the Minister was perfectly right in granting these exemptions. In April, 1899, Rogers's Golden Gate Mine was sold to an English syndicate for £11,000. That syndicate at once put forty-three men on to work, although the regulations only required thirteen men. They expended £27,000 in the development of the ground, and they only got back some £18,000. In other words, they spent £38,000 on the property and got only £18,000 back, so that they were £20,000 out of pocket. They also had an overdraft of £2,000 at the bank. They saw gold in the face of the drive, but, as any proper miners would, they wanted to develop the ground, and, as their shares had all been paid up in full, they applied for exemption, so that they would have time to communicate with the shareholders at home in order to raise more money. This was objected to, and one of the objections—to which the leader of the Opposition referred—was that some tributaries said, "We are willing to take up the ground." In other words, they were willing to take the expensive shafts, drives, and machinery belonging to this company and "gut" out the gold, and, as soon as the gold ran out, leave the mine, and let the company take it up again. If such an eviction were allowed it would be highway robbery. I can understand that, if Labour leaders are prepared to treat people in that way, it would deter capital from coming into the country. It would be most suicidal if, as is proposed from the other side, no exemptions should be granted until six months' work was done, and I shall give some typical cases in proof of that. We will take Mount Buchanan, 26 miles from Maytown, in the Palmer district. Mount Buchanan has been open for about thirty years, and the country has been prospected over and over again, and no miners have ever thought it worth their while to put in their pegs. The other day a powerful company took it up, their agent being Mr. Higgins, assayer of the Bulimba Smelting Company. They applied for five blocks

of 50 acres each—300 acres in all. They took them up about eighteen months ago, and have been prospecting ever since. There were generally ninety-three men prospecting. He could not have a larger number as he had to have them under his own eyes. He told them to go to certain places and take prospects, which he afterwards assayed. Now, if the department had insisted on their putting seventy-five men on that ground, which, according to the regulations, is desirable, the leases would simply not have been taken up at all. What is the use of having seventy-five men sinking shafts and getting out stone before they knew whether it was good enough to crush? But what has been the result of the fostering care of the Mines Department? Why, that the company are now very well satisfied that the ground will pay. The ore is a very low grade. Working men cannot work it, as it requires capital, but working men will get the advantages of wages when it is developed. The company has paid £16,000 for machinery, and it will cost another £2,000 to take it up and erect it. Then they are going to put a dam there to cost £5,000, and are also talking about a railway. It will be the making of the field, and this is due to the fact that the Minister did what the Labour members on the other side object to—gave six months' exemption. He gave more than six months. He gave eighteen months' exemption, with the result that some men have been working *bona fide* the whole time. Then, again, there was the Cecil Syndicate on Thornborough. That is a similar case. They got exemptions for a considerable time, and the result is that now there are sixty men on that ground. There is machinery there, and there are several other claims on the Hodgkinson just the same—all working—and every one of them would have been deserted if the labour conditions had been insisted upon before the company was formed. In connection with the matter of railways, I notice that when the Premier reminded the leader of the Opposition that only last year he warned him that hard times were ahead, and that private railways should be introduced to give employment, the leader of the Opposition replied, and since he is so ready to contradict my statements I shall just read what he really did say—

So far as he could learn, not one of the private railways passed last year had given one single man employment.

He must be singularly badly informed if he was not aware that one of these railways alone, the Mount Garnet railway, is employing 500 men at the present time. And yet we have hon. members in this House misleading the country by making these statements, when they must know that they are not correct. Not only that, but I have seen in the *Courier* day after day advertisements from the contractors offering men 8s. a day. I saw it in the *Courier* only two or three days ago. There are 400 men working on the railway, and 100 getting sleepers. I am pleased to see that the Premier is not to be deterred from his policy of private railways; and though I regret the fact that Chillagoe shares are down, there is the fact that hundreds and thousands of pounds have been spent in labour, and it has galvanised that country into life. Herberton had a population of 3,200 three years ago, and now that population has doubled. That is due principally to this field. We know that the natural increase for the previous twenty-five years was 3,200; and the natural increase on Chillagoe up to that time was 180, whereas now the number on Chillagoe is 900. Before the Chillagoe Company started Mr. Moffat was the only capitalist in the place employing labour, and he was about to give up; but the place has

been galvanised into life by this company and the railway, and that has caused capital to be directed towards the Hodgkinson. One mine at Herberton got exemption—the Stannary Hills Mine—and that is now spending between £70,000 and £80,000 on a tramway to connect with the Chillagoe line. For the benefit of those hon. members who are so fond of reading what the organs of public thought say with regard to these railways, I will read a small paragraph which appeared in the *Cooktown Independent*—

LABOURISTS AND CAPITAL.—What rubbish it is for Labour leaders to instruct their deluded followers to vote against the introduction of capital when we all know that labour is altogether dependent on capital. What would labour alone do for the Palmer or for any of the quartz or tin mines in the district?

Mr. KERR: Who wrote the paragraph?

Mr. J. HAMILTON: I don't know. I think it was written by the editor of the *Cooktown Independent*, who is one of the cleverest journalists in Queensland, so that when the hon. member insinuates that I wrote the paragraph, of course I feel flattered. I only wish I could write like he does. The paragraph goes on to say—

But it can do a lot of mischief in preventing capitalists from investing in the district by its ridiculous opposition against its own interests. They (the labourists) cannot take up and work any of the Palmer mines without the aid of capital, nor can they develop either the Annan tin mines or the Munburra or Ebagoolah reefs without capital, and yet their leaders lead the deluded fools into the belief that capital is antagonistic to labour, whereas it is its saviour. The men who obey the behests of the Trades Hall oligarchy are bigger slaves than any of the Russian moujiks, and have less to say in extenuation, because they have been warned against sacrificing their individual opinions about right and wrong at the mandate of a self-elected Trades Hall committee. They have been virtually self-elected, because they kipped round for votes in all the electorates.

I was amused at some of the objections urged by the hon. member for Cairns against private railways and syndicates. He says they are bad, because he knows many Brisbane men bought shares at 45s. and hold them at 26s. What a farcical statement! I bought 2,000 Mount Morgans at £15 10s., and they went down to very little, but that does not prove that there should not be such things as companies, though I was sorry that company existed after my speculation. I recollect holding 14,000 shares in the Mark Twain at Croydon. I paid about ten thousand fifteen shilling and ninepenny calls, and had two threepenny dividends, and then the claim was abandoned. We sold the plant for £3,000, but did not get the money. That was no reason, however, why Croydon should be shut up. The greatest profit I ever got out of a claim was when I sold a share for £15 and a pair of trousers to a storekeeper to go to a rush. I do not know whether that indicates that people should not be allowed to take up claims or not.

Mr. LESINA: You got some shares for nothing in the Chillagoe Railway Company.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: That is a deliberate untruth.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. HAMILTON: It is not necessary for me to contradict any statement made by the hon. member. He made a statement against another individual; and although on that occasion he solemnly swore that he did not make the interpolation in the letter containing the statement, the jury had such an opinion of his oath that they gave a verdict of £150 against him.

Mr. LESINA: But you went to dinner with the juryman.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: Of course it is not necessary for me to contradict the hon. gentleman, but if any other individual made that statement I would say that it was not correct.

I recollect on one occasion a member of this House stated there were various kinds of assassins. There was the assassin Luccheni, who murdered the Empress of Austria, and there was the assassin of the same name who murders moral characters; and the latter was the worse assassin of the two. The hon. member for Cairns also stated that the holders of the original shares unloaded to a trusting public and did not care a straw whether they got a single ounce of copper or not. The member for Carpentaria challenged that statement. He said there was not an atom of truth in it, and challenged the member for Cairns to prove his statement, but the hon. gentleman never accepted the challenge. The hon. member also drew a harrowing picture of the poor miner who, he said, was charged 300 per cent. by the Chillagoe Railway Company. The way he made it up was this: At the time of the passing of the Bill the arrangement was that the Chillagoe Company could charge 50 per cent. more for carriage of goods than was charged on the Government lines, since which time he stated that the carriage on a very large quantity of perishable products had been reduced by the Government, and the Chillagoe Company were entitled to charge 50 per cent. on the old rates, and were therefore charging 300 per cent. The hon. member, by some process of mental reasoning which nobody else could understand, said that 30s. was 300 per cent. on 10s. He drew a harrowing picture of the people who, he said, were taxed and ground and starved by these rates. Well, I took the trouble to inquire at the Railway Department, and found that instead of a great quantity of articles being

[7.30 p.m.] under the head of perishable products, the only articles are fish, meat, oysters, and ice. It now costs a miner 5s. 10d. to get 1 cwt. of ice to Chillagoe, if he wants ice—I suppose, for his champagne. If he wants to get 1 cwt. of fish up to Chillagoe, it costs him 3s. 2d. No doubt the hon. member for Cairns longs for the old time when he could take fresh fish up to Chillagoe in a week on a pack-horse. On the other hand, the Chillagoe Company is charging lower prices for many articles than the Government are charging, as the Government have raised some prices since the passing of the Act. For instance, a parcel can be carried for thirty-five miles for 6d. by the Government, and the Chillagoe Company carry the same parcel for the same distance for 4d. The hon. member also wants to know what the unfortunate miner has done to hand him over to the mercy of private railways, while the Government are prepared to build up every other industry in the colony? It is the unfortunate miner who wants these railways built. He knows perfectly well that if these railways are not built to these districts there will be no mining there at all. He knows perfectly well that if a private company does not build a railway to a place like Chillagoe or Cloncurry the Government will never build it. He knows perfectly well that if any Government prefers to spend one million of money in building a railway to Cloncurry, the Labour party would be the first to be up in arms and say that it was a corrupt Government—that it was done solely to benefit the wealthy owners of the 2,000 acres of freehold there. Look at Chillagoe. The miner knows that the building of this line by private enterprise is his only chance, and there is no doubt the miner gets a far better show by the building of these railways by private enterprise than not getting them built at all. The capital cost of the lines at Cairns, Maryborough, Gympie to Brisbane, the Bundaberg line, and Mount Perry line, Mount Morgan branch, Clermont branch, Townsville to Charters Towers, Cooktown Railway, Normanton to Croydon, was over £5,000,000

out of the £18,000,000 invested in railways. There are also other lines running through mining districts, such as the Warwick and other lines. The hon. member for Cairns pleads for the down-trodden miner, and says he is taxed for everything that he uses in his trade. But he gets his dynamite, fuse, powder, wire-rope, drills, picks and shovels, and other implements free. Therefore, that statement is utterly incorrect. Again, his statement that the present Act tends to the acquisition of large areas, by doubling the area of the old Act, is very misleading. Formerly you could take up 25 acres two years after the goldfield was discovered; but now you cannot take up more than 12 acres until seven years after a goldfield is discovered. People can only take up larger areas—up to 50 acres—after fourteen years, if the ground has been abandoned or where the poverty of the ground warrants it, or where there is a large expenditure in developing the ground in connection with machinery. The hon. member also told us that he never saw a local candle worth anything. Well, he has got a very poor opinion of the capacity of our workers when he says that no man in Queensland knows how to make a good candle. Referring to the Sugar Guarantee Act, he insinuated that certain individuals had “got at” the Imperial authorities, and had induced them to refuse the Royal assent to that Act. Now, we know that the Imperial authorities to whom this Act was referred are the Cabinet Ministry, and therefore, when the hon. member says that the Imperial authorities were “got at,” the slander recoils on his own head. He is only too anxious to shift off his shoulders the responsibility of losing the £150,000 which would have been expended in his electorate in connection with sugar mills through his amendment. He persisted in that amendment, although he was warned what would be the result of his action. There is one other little matter that I would like to refer to. In my absence the hon. member for Clermont stated that I delivered an address during the federal campaign.

Mr. LESINA: No.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: I will quote from *Hansard* what he said. There is no getting out of it. He said: “I have here a little extract from an address which he”—that means myself—“delivered.” That statement was made by the hon. member.

Mr. LESINA: I did not make that statement. I said you published the address.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: When I was nearly 1,000 miles from Brisbane, the Brisbane league committee, who were running six candidates for the Senate, decided to issue election pamphlets, with the photographs of the candidates on them. The pamphlet concerning myself consisted of extracts collected by them from the *Sydney Bulletin*, *Melbourne Argus*, *London Graphic*, and other papers, the names of the papers being below each extract.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: And at their own expense?

Mr. J. HAMILTON: Yes, and at their own expense. Where they were printed I don't know. What can you think of a man who coolly rises in this House, omits the names of the papers which are at the bottom of each extract; alters the extracts to suit his own purposes, and then deliberately tells the House that what he is reading is an address delivered by me? This hon. member was fined £150 for a similar slander before. He also stated that it was printed in the *Street*, and that I am interested in that paper. I do not know where it was printed, and I have not and never had any share in that paper. That paper seems a perfect nightmare to him. He has at different times

told the House that the Minister for Mines, Mr. Annear, the hon. member for Maryborough, Mr. Glassey, and myself are shareholders in it. I only wish I was, because I consider it is one of the most powerfully written papers in Queensland. I would be only too glad to have an interest in that paper. If I had the same inordinate curiosity as the hon. gentleman, whom I detected piecing scraps of paper together out of my waste-paper basket, I would go to the expense of 2s. 6d. to inquire at the registrar's office and find out who the shareholders are. By that means he would have more reliable information than he got by foraging through my paper basket and piecing together the scraps he found. He reminds me of Foote, a comedian who lived in the days of the Regency, who at one time lampooned the prince. A very irate officer threatened to assault him. The terrified comedian said, "I cannot help it. I'm always taking people off. I take myself off at times." And then, seeing a hole in the fence just at that moment, he said, "I'm taking myself off now," and bolted through the hole. The hon. member has taken himself off frequently. However, on one occasion he did not do so; not because he did not want to, but because he had not time. It was not his fault, because he was restrained by the affectionate embrace of an indignant stockbroker, who seized him by the nose and dragged him round like a bull-pup in a show ring. The hon. member during his presence in this House has not seen fit to conduct himself in such a way as to earn the respect of members of the Chamber, but outside the House he has shown that he can beat the record in running when followed by any irate individual whom he has insulted.

Mr. LESINA: My remarks must have touched you up, John.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. HAMILTON: By the way I saw a little skit in the *Street* recently—that paper of which the hon. member seems to have such a horror—which I thought very appropriate. Seeing that in the olden days kings had their jesters, I do not see why Parliament should not have its buffoon, and this is how the *Street* deals with the hon. member—

Luken's cackling through the weary hours,
Maddening poor *Hansard* with his dreary powers,
To dance his monkey tricks to apeish tune—
Fitzgerald's circus were a priceless boon.

Now, in connection with the kanaka question, that is a matter which is before the Federal Parliament at the present time, and I should like to give the House a little information which I received from a friend of mine, Mr. Hislop, an old sugar-planter, on the Bloomfield. Hon. members must recollect that the conditions under which persons work in the sugar fields in North Queensland are not the same as the conditions which exist in the South. Many hon. members know Mr. Hislop. He is a magistrate of the territory and a highly respectable man, whose word can be relied upon. He explained to me that on one occasion he had some twelve or fourteen men engaged in scrub cutting. They were on contract, and making something like £3 per week. Well, he had an arrangement with the mill that he must trash the cane three times before it was crushed. He could not get the necessary labour to do this, and he got a notification from the mill that he must comply with the conditions or his cane would not be taken. He told these men who were scrub-cutting that he would give them 10s. a week extra if they would undertake the trashing. After about a week one of the men became affected with cane sickness, and vomiting set in. Shortly after another became similarly affected, and at the end of fourteen days every one of the men was affected in a like manner. The sickness is supposed to arise from

the fluff off the cane, and these small particles are supposed to affect the mucus membrane. The men then said to him, "We cannot do this work; put us at something else." On an adjoining plantation there was a white overseer who had spent some years on the Clarence. This man laughed at the idea that white men could not do such work. He said that it was done on the Clarence, and he undertook to get men from the Clarence to do it. The passages of these men were to be paid; they were to get double the wages paid on the Clarence and rations, but in about fourteen days these men, too, were affected in an exactly similar manner, with the result that they had to go back to the place from whence they came. They declared that the work was not hard, and they could not understand why they could not do it, but the fact remained that they could not do it. Now, not very many months ago I recollect that a Mr. Foley made a statement on the public platform at Townsville that he would work in the field with any kanaka, and the action I took on that occasion was, of course, studiously misrepresented. It was said that I bet this man £50 to £1 that he could not do the work.

Mr. LESINA: Hear, hear!

Mr. J. HAMILTON: It was misrepresented, amongst others, by the very gentleman who interjects "Hear, hear," and whose one idea of politics seems to be misrepresentation. Knowing that my action would be misrepresented, I subsequently wrote a letter to the *Townsville Bulletin*.

Mr. LESINA: You did not put up the money.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: That is another grossly incorrect statement. I did put up the money. If I had known that it was the hon. member for Clermont who made that statement I would not have taken the trouble to contradict it, because I know very well the value the House attaches to any statement made by him. I not only put up the money, but the manager of the bank with whom it was deposited wrote a letter to the paper stating that I had done so. On the following morning, after making the offer, I wired to the Queensland National Bank to place £50 to the credit of the mayor of Townsville, Mr. Murdoch Cameron. On the following evening I was told that Mr. Foley had inquired of Mr. Murdoch Cameron if he knew anything about it. That was on the Friday. I then went to the manager of the bank who said, "I thought you had told Cameron, because I have placed the money to his credit." I then gave Foley a week, commencing from the following Monday, in which to accept my offer, and as I say, the manager wrote a letter to the paper stating that he had placed the money to Mr. Cameron's credit, and Mr. Cameron also wrote a letter to the papers stating that the money had been placed to his credit.

Mr. REID: What about the conditions attached?

Mr. J. HAMILTON: I accepted Mr. Foley's own offer, and now I will show that it is untrue that I made a bet, and hon. members will see by what I read what the conditions were. This letter I wrote to the *Townsville Bulletin* four days after the money was paid into the bank—

The Editor *Townsville Bulletin*.

Sir,—I have deposited £50 in the hands of the mayor of Townsville to be offered to Mr. Foley on the following conditions:—Mr. Foley to proceed to the Johnstone River within a week from date and to work for a fortnight in the cane field at cane trashing alongside any kanaka chosen by the manager of the plantation. If the work done by Mr. Foley is equal to that done by the kanaka, I authorise the mayor to hand over the money to Mr. Foley. The editor of the *Townsville Daily Bulletin* to name the plantation. My sole desire in making this offer is to give Mr. Foley the opportunity he desires to prove that the white man can successfully compete in the cane field with the kanaka. If he

succeeds in doing so no one will be more pleased than myself, and his success will, in my opinion, justify even more stringent legislation against the kanaka than proposed by Mr. Barton. Yours, etc., J.H.

I may say that offer was not accepted. The other day we saw in a southern newspaper—I think the *Herald*—a letter written by Major Reay, in which he said he had been to the North, and was perfectly satisfied white men could do the work. Major Reay's experience was to go in the dead of winter for about an hour in a cane-field. But I recollect hearing something about Mr. Reay from a Melbourne man who was here the other day. This gentleman and some others sent a wire to Lord Kitchener to the following effect:—"Our cup of joy is full owing to the manner in which our colonists have distinguished themselves. If you will only put Reay where he will get shot, our cup will flow over." The Opposition are continually stigmatising this Ministry as a continuous Ministry. I hardly see that it can be a continuous Ministry since this Ministry is only about a year old. As hon. members know there was a stillborn Ministry the year before last, but perhaps they do not know the history of that stillborn Ministry. Mr. Dawson, with the consent of his party, went to the Hon. E. B. Forrest, a gentleman known to represent an institution which is the largest employer of black labour in Australia, and which is the most striking instance of a huge monopolistic syndicate in Australia, asked him to become their Premier, and offered him a free hand to appoint his own Ministers. What can we conclude from that? Did they see through the folly of the protestations they made when they were being elected, or were they anxious, for the sake of place and pay, to ally themselves with a black labour and capitalist syndicate and throw their principles to the wind?

Mr. REID: Perhaps they wanted to convert the syndicate.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: The Trades Hall syndicate proposed to ally themselves with the black labour syndicate, and the Hon. Mr. Forrest refused to have anything to do with them. When Mr. Forrest refused, Mr. Glassey was sent by Mr. Dawson—as he has informed me and other gentlemen—to ask Mr. Philp if he would become their Premier. Mr. Philp refused.

Mr. LESINA: Who told you that? Who told you that?

Mr. J. HAMILTON: After that Mr. Morehead was asked if he would become their trusted leader in the Upper House. So that the anti-black labour, anti-capitalist and socialistic parts were hawked all round unsuccessfully—first to Mr. Forrest, a gentleman for whom we all have the very highest esteem, but whose policy has always been in favour of black labour, and whose syndicate has always been described in the most terrible terms by the Opposition; then to Mr. Philp, whom they have called year after year the representative of boodlers, syndicates, and swindlers; and lastly, to Mr. Morehead, whom they have termed the chief of the bank robbers. These are the gentlemen whom the Labour party have requested to become their leaders.

Mr. LESINA: But who told you this?

Mr. J. HAMILTON: It is very well known. In the first instance, I got the information from Mr. Morehead himself, and it has never been contradicted. Moreover, Mr. Dawson mentioned about Mr. Forrest in his letter to the *Worker*. We all know that it is the case.

Mr. LESINA: Who told you? Who told you?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. HAMILTON: It does not matter who told me. I say Mr. Morehead has told myself and many other persons in this House—Mr. Morehead, whom hon. members on that side said

year after year ought to have been in prison; who was the robber of the widow and the orphan; and who was the worst boodler of the whole lot. That is the gentleman whom they asked and implored to become their trusted leader in the Upper House.

Mr. LESINA: And Morehead told you this, did he?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. LESINA: The hon. member will not admit it.

Mr. DUNSFORD: It is not true that the Labour party knew anything about it.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: The Labour party did not want to know anything about it. It is very flattering to the present Premier that hon. members opposite are basing their condemnation of the Government on accusations that are actually without foundation. One objection to the policy of the Premier is that he has raised high salaries. Reference to the Estimates will show that, although low salaries have been raised to a very large extent, I think £1,000 would cover the increases to salaries higher than £400 or £450. And I would ask who are fighting for high salaries in the Federal Parliament? As for the railway expenditure, it has been shown that that expenditure has been caused to a very great extent by trying to save the lives of millions of sheep and cattle, in making extra repairs to the lines on account of the large engines we have got, and in giving work to hundreds of unemployed. In addition to the drought there was the bubonic plague, which cost a very large amount of money to cope with. I may say this, that the country would have been in a much worse position, and especially the working man, if the private railway policy of the Government had not been carried into effect.

Mr. LESINA: How many men did they find employment for?

Mr. J. HAMILTON: On Chillagoe there were 1,000 men employed at one time—about 800 on the railway, and about 280 on the mines. In addition to that, employment was given by the produce which was carried to those men on the Government line. Employment was also given to wharf lumpers and sailors. In fact, the ramifications of wages are perfectly astonishing. As an instance of that I may refer to Broken Hill. The secretary of Broken Hill informed me that there were about 4,000 men on wages, and that the population of the place was 35,000. Those 35,000 people were kept in a thriving condition on the wages of those 4,000 men, to say nothing of wharf lumpers, sailors, agriculturists, carpenters, and others, whose services were more or less required.

Mr. W. HAMILTON: There never were 35,000 people at Broken Hill.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: The secretary of the company told me so, and he ought to know better than the hon. member. I consider the deficit is partly due to the policy of the Labour party. The result of their action has been to frighten capital. If it had not been for their action I believe thousands of men would have been employed on mines who are not employed at the present time. I recollect what a leader of the Labour party once said, "We do not want the people happy; we do not want them contented. If they were happy and contented, where should we be?" However, I think there is a great deal in that. I think from what I have seen that if the policy of the Labour party were adopted there would be nothing but desolation and despair.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Burke*): It is marvellous to hear the hon. member get up [8 p.m.] as a monument of virtue, and then start pulling to pieces the utterances of members of this Chamber who have

preceded him. The hon. member for Cook has got up this evening and produced certain wires, because he knew there was a debate coming on in this House, and he thought there was nothing like being correct. I expect he had also in his pocket a wire when he made that memorable speech in Cooktown recently, in which he told the people that the Premier had been offered some sort of decoration and had refused it.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: Yes.

Mr. MAXWELL: I expect that at that time he thought it just as well to have a wire in his pocket to prove that such was the case. I had no intention of saying anything on this Address in Reply, and should not have spoken if it had not been for the way in which the hon. member for Cook has tackled members on this side, especially the hon. member for Croydon, in connection with exemptions. I may say that the hon. member for Cook is altogether wrong in many of the contentions that he has made to-night. It is a well-known fact that since the new Mining Act became law in Queensland there has been no necessity to apply for exemptions. Time after time ground is actually applied for, and allowed to lay idle—for what reason? Simply because no party can come in and take it. Now, in the first instance, they would have to go to law on three or four occasions before they would have a shadow of a chance of getting this land granted to them. I know a mine where for seven or eight years they have not done one tap of work. These people are simply holding on, because they know very well there is no miner can come in and get the land which they hold. We know, in the first place, there is no miner prepared to lose sufficient time to go to court on four or five different occasions just for the pleasure of seeing the holders of these leases fined. If a miner wishes to apply for a piece of ground he does so because he wishes to work it. I can assure you that the Mines Department, since the introduction of the new Act, seem to have lost sight of what ought to be legitimate exemptions. Men apply for exemptions and they are granted to them, and members on this side of the House say nothing about it. We know very well, especially those of us who have followed mining, that it is necessary in some cases to allow exemptions to enable people to raise sufficient funds to enable them to work their ground. We know very well that on some occasions it is necessary to grant exemptions, but what we object to is the continual exemptions, the exemptions from year to year. The hon. member for Cook also started to criticise what the member for Cairns had said with reference to the amount of land that had been taken up, exemptions granted, and the surface never broken up. I can assure hon. members that I know lots of places where ground has been applied for, and exemptions have been granted time after time, and nothing whatever has been done to the leases. In connection with the royalty paid on cyanide, I may say that the member for Cook was right to a certain extent, but he did not tell the House about the extra amount of money that you have to pay for it because you have to buy your cyanide from the people who hold the patents for the cyanide process. He also told the House about the freedom with which the miners get their goods into the colony. Well, so far as dynamite is concerned, the miners are as heavily taxed as they were in Johannesburg prior to the war. He forgot to tell the House that dynamite can be bought in this colony at 50s. per case, that is 1s. per lb., but he forgot to tell the House that the miners here have to pay 1s. 9d. per lb. for their dynamite

subject to the trade discount, and notwithstanding this fact there is a company in Queensland that gets its dynamite at 1s. per lb.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: Who says they do?

Mr. MAXWELL: I am telling you what they do. I want to show that there is not this freedom in connection with dynamite which comes into this colony that the hon. member would have us believe there is.

Mr. LESINA: There was more freedom in Johannesburg that there is here.

Mr. MAXWELL: I wish to refer also to the statement made by the hon. member in connection with the Labour party pandering to Mr. Morehead to lead us in the Upper House at the time that a little bit of disruption took place in this House some time ago. Mr. Morehead stated in the library the other morning—I do not know whether the hon. member for Cook was there—that the whole of the statement made by the hon. member for Cook during a meeting in the Valley was without foundation.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: I do not believe it.

Mr. MAXWELL: The hon. member can meet Mr. Morehead to-morrow, and if he is in the library I can assure him that Mr. Morehead will certainly approach him on the matter.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: What about Mr. Forrest?

Mr. MAXWELL: I am talking about Mr. Morehead just now, not about Mr. Forrest. I say that the relations that existed between Mr. Morehead and the Labour party have been nothing but kindness. There is another thing I want some little light thrown upon; it is in connection with a little bet which the hon. member referred to.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: Not a bet.

Mr. MAXWELL: You offered to bet.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: No, I offered him £50.

Mr. MAXWELL: That is all very well, but let me tell my tale in my own way. The hon. member certainly put up the money, but he made one stipulation in that little wager.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: No wager!

Mr. MAXWELL: That this man had to be somewhere on the Johnstone River at a certain time, but the hon. member did not tell him that the money was not put up until a few days before, and it would take the man a week to get to the Johnstone River.

Mr. J. HAMILTON: Two days, and he had nine days to do it in.

Mr. MAXWELL: I do not know that there is anything else I wish to refer to, except the case of the civil servants in the outlying portions of the State. I wish to draw the Ministers' attention to the fact that many of the civil servants, having no political influence, are shifted out to these uncomfortable places, and are allowed to remain there for years and years. I contend that it would be only just to the civil servants and to the people in those localities, that they should be removed from time to time. I know there are many places in the North where policemen are stationed for years, where they have not the same privileges and opportunities that other Government servants have, in the way of bringing up their families and educating them as they ought to be. I contend that it is the duty of the Ministers of the various departments to see that the civil servants in the outlying districts are brought in from time to time to places where they will have the opportunity of getting their children educated. With regard to the private railways mentioned by the hon. member for Cook, I happened quite recently to go through the district where the Mount Garnet Railway was started, and instead

of seeing 500 men employed there I found there were various people in the district unable to get employment from the builders of the railway. The contractors for the line brought fifty or sixty men from the south. I do not know whether the hon. member put a nought behind the fifty, but that is the way he generally deals with figures where the Labour party are concerned. What has become of all the other railways which were to afford employment to hungry men? Where is all the work they were going to provide? The hon. member only told us of one railway which has been started. Of the various other private lines which were passed last session we have heard nothing; the promoters of only one of them have paid the deposit.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Only one has not paid the deposit.

Mr. MAXWELL: There were four passed, and only one has been started, and two companies have neither paid their deposit nor done anything else. The Government have had to find work for the unemployed in connection with their own railways, and I am quite certain that the system of building railways by the State is much more preferable to waiting for syndicates to find work for the unemployed. My opinion is that those benevolent persons who form syndicates go in for dividends, and not to find work for the unemployed. I am not blaming them for that. Anyone who puts money into a venture wants to get something out of it. I know I never put money into a venture without expecting to get some recompense for my outlay. I do not object to syndicates working mines in the colony under fair and reasonable conditions, but I object to handing over our railways to any syndicates. I object to putting any portion of the colony under the finger of any syndicate. I do not know that I need say any more at present. We shall have plenty of opportunity for dealing with the finances when the Treasurer makes his Financial Statement, and I think that will be the proper time to discuss the subject.

Mr. KENT (*Burnett*): Now that the Federal Parliament has taken over so many of the important matters that were usually dealt with by this Parliament, I think the duties of this House will be limited to assisting to develop our three main industries—Firstly, the pastoral industry; secondly, the agricultural industry; and thirdly, the mining industry. We all know that all other industries must be subservient to those three. If we can drive on those three industries we can very easily wipe out the present deficit, and keep from falling into the same error again. Before dealing with those industries I wish to refer to our present system of education, and the manner in which it affects the deficit. In Queensland we can certainly boast of perhaps the most liberal system of education to be found in the colonies, and the object is no doubt to make each individual unit in the community more valuable to the State by providing him with a good education. Under our present system of State education any boys or girls showing ability are forced on, and are able to take bursaries which give them the chance of higher education; and the number of boys passing, as a rule, gives the schools sending up those boys a higher standing in the Education Department—the number of passes being used to show the value of one school as against another. This, I think, is a mistake. If we send up all our bright boys and give them an education in the higher schools, we are simply educating them to a life of discontent, because we are really educating them to seek their living in a market where only brains are required. If instead of giving them this higher education and

qualifying them for a profession they were enabled to pick up and learn trades, that would be far more to their advantage. Hundreds of boys would be very much better men after serving their three years in the workshops, than they would be after serving three years in our grammar schools. There is no doubt about it that in a new country like Queensland the market for brains is limited, but the market for practical knowledge is unlimited. With regard to the Opening Speech delivered by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, after passing over the patriotic and the sentimental portion, we come to a reference to the pastoral industry. This industry is first of all commiserated with on account of the drought it has passed through. The Speech states that those engaged in the industry "have lost much of their material wealth, but late rains have given them hope." Here is an industry that has suffered greatly, and it has in some portions of the colony received a measure of relief, but not in others, for things there are as bad as they were before. But while some hon. members sympathise with the industry, they state that it is responsible for the deficit. Undeniably it is. It is the greatest industry in the colony; and if it suffers, the Treasury and the whole colony suffer. This industry, with judicious management, can meet that deficit. I am a pastoralist pure and simple, and yet I admit that in a large number of cases the pastoralists can afford to pay a considerably higher rent than they are paying now; and if the Lands Department and the Treasury deal with these lands in a proper way they can get a very much larger revenue from them than they are getting now. If the provisions of the proposed amending Bill will extend the conditions of the 1886 Act, and give extended leases, very few pastoralists will object to pay increased rents. In my own electorate the pastoralists are now entering upon their last period, having only six years to run, while land much nearer to market which has been taken up under the 1884 grazing farm system is held for twenty years. Let those leases be extended, at any rate, say to fourteen years or fifteen, and very few of those pastoralists would object to pay a considerable increase in their rent.

Mr. W. HAMILTON: Would that be near the railways?

Mr. KENT: I do not suggest that with regard to land near the railways. With regard to the land in the far Western portion of the colony, any man who is willing to take it up should have it at a merely nominal rental and with a long term of lease. Very few sane men would take it up unless with a greatly extended tenure. Even if the Crown got nothing from the land it would pay them, as the land would be developed and we would get the produce of the country carried over the railways. I do not want anyone to think that I am advocating extending the leases all over Queensland; but, without the expense of sending commissioners and boards all over the colony, the Government have sufficient information in the Lands Department to say what land in the settled districts, and a large portion of the land in the unsettled districts, will be required for settlement, and the balance could be thrown open under longer leases, and it would be taken up instead of lying idle as it is now. One of the mistakes which is being made by the Lands Department I may mention just now. In my electorate there is a large area of valuable scrub lands. These are lands which a farmer with very small capital can make a living off, so long as he has a little energy. He can fell the scrub, and in a very short time be in a position to get some return from his land. But, unfortunately, the Treasurer wants revenue,

and the Secretary for Lands throws this land open—not in homestead areas—but to unconditional selection. This is obviously unfair to the farmer. Our scrubs are pretty full of vermin in the shape of wallabies, bandicoots, and various other marsupials. Now, if a man takes up an unconditional selection to gain the unearned increment from it when the country becomes settled, he does not bother about clearing his scrub, and when the farmer next him clears his scrub the vermin from the unconditional selection eat him out. That simply prevents the land from being settled.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The agricultural selector has the first chance.

Mr. KENT: I admit that, but when such ground is thrown open any amount of sharks are ready to take it up. It would be far better to throw open these scrub lands as homestead selections. Any man who has a heart big enough to clear the scrub is a good colonist to secure.

Mr. DIBLEY: It would take £10 an acre to clear the scrub.

Mr. KENT: It will not take £10. You can clear it for 25s. an acre. They put in their corn and the stumps die out in a short time. Right at the very bottom of this Speech I see a little Bill for giving advances to farmers. Well, I think that the old saying that borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry is not far wrong. If we give the farmers cheap freights and the means of getting their produce to market we will assist them far better than by getting money for them. Why cannot we open up more of our valuable lands? That settlement follows railways is pretty well proved all over the colony. I will give one instance—that is, a line that did not come before the House last session, although I think it might well have done so—that is the extension from Degilbo to Gayndah.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear! and laughter.

Mr. KENT: Anyone who went over that country fifteen years ago, and who knew it before the line was built in that district at all—as I knew it—will be aware that from a few miles on the Degilbo side of the Mungarr Junction along that line there were not fifteen people settled, but when the census was taken the other day there were over 2,000 people there. Settlement has followed that line, and if we were to continue the line the same thing would happen. The more settlers we have the better for the country, and this would be a better means of assisting settlers than by finding them cheap money. I do not pretend to know much about the mining industry, although I live close to a mining town; but I believe that if we take the gambling element out of mining, and do away with the stockbroking that takes place, we would assist the industry. I will take the case of a field I know thoroughly—Eidsvold. When that show was first found it was taken to Brisbane to float. Brisbane stockbrokers got on the directorate, and the instructions were to follow the shoot of gold and run the shares up. The shoot of gold was followed, and the shares ran up. No great work was done, and the consequence was that the holders in Brisbane, or those who were in the "know," sold out and the thing fizzled out. Another shoot was found, and the same thing done. If we could prevent the gambling in shares we would have far more legitimate mining. I think one way in which this could be done is by the registration of the sale of shares. I know, from being placed in a very unfortunate position, that when a man sells shares and signs the transfer he is not thereby released from his liability. I sold a large number of shares in a claim on Eidsvold, and three years

after there was a liquidation, and I was sued for some three calls that had not been paid. If the Act were amended so that the holder of the shares was made liable immediately the transfer was made, it would do away with a good deal of gambling, and it would make mining much safer. In the Address we also see a reference to a little electoral reform. Well, I certainly think that a little electoral reform is required. Ever since the other side took in charge the purifying of the rolls it has been a great deal harder to keep on the rolls than it was formerly to get on them. The moment a man crosses the road off he goes. Both sides are alike. If he belongs to this side, the other party, by their agents, knock him off, and I admit our party do the same if he belongs to the other side. For myself, I have followed the example of the other side. I have agents all over my electorate, and the moment an elector crosses the road off he goes. I play the same game as was played with me. I am willing to admit that we want some electoral reform, and I hope we are going to get it, but I hope it is not going to take the form of adult suffrage. If it does I am going to oppose it, as I object to adult suffrage. I should like to see every man, if he is entitled to a vote, always hold it, and not be knocked off as has been done heretofore. Give every man a vote, and if a man by his thrift deserves two votes then give him two; but I am afraid that we are not going to carry that in this House. We are getting far too democratic for that. If we are going to reduce expenditure, I think we might start by reducing the strength of this House. Our position now is little more than that of a big divisional board, and we certainly could stand a considerable amount of retrenchment both in the number of members sent to the House and also in the screws they receive. If we reduce all double constituencies to single constituencies, and provide that no electorate shall have less than 3,000 electors, and that every member—you might simply call them divisional boardmen—should receive a remuneration of so much for every day that they sit, we would have very much better work done, and, at the same time, it would be a big saving to the country.

Mr. LESINA: You would have no chance of getting back.

Mr. KENT: I am coming back.

Mr. LESINA: You wouldn't stand a show.

The SPEAKER: I must ask hon. members to refrain from interjections, which are highly disorderly.

Mr. KENT: I think we might reduce the number of members, and also the salaries; and I think it would pay most members [8.30 p.m.] better to get £200 a year than £300. If a member receives £300 a year he is expected to give subscriptions in all directions, but if he received only £200 a year he would be able to say he could not afford to give any away. Further than that, I don't think there would be so many men anxious to get into Parliament, and elections would not be so expensive. Therefore, while assisting the country by reducing the number of members and the amount of salary, we would also be doing a good thing for members themselves, because they would not be put to so much expense when going round their constituencies.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: It's all the same to us. We don't buy votes.

Mr. LESINA: Who put you up to that? Which Minister asked you to say that?

The SPEAKER: Order, order!

Question—That the Address in Reply to His Excellency's Opening Speech be now agreed to—put and passed.

PRESENTATION OF ADDRESS.

The PREMIER (Hon. R. Philp, *Townsville*): I beg to announce that His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor will be prepared to receive the Address at 3 o'clock to-morrow afternoon.

SUPPLY.

The PREMIER: I beg to move that the Speech of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor be taken into consideration at the next sitting of the House.

Question put and passed.

ACTING CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

On the motion of the PREMIER, it was resolved—

That in the absence of the Chairman of Committees, Mr. W. Stephens do act as Chairman of Committees for this day.

THE AGRICULTURAL LANDS PURCHASE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

FIRST READING.

The House, in committee, having affirmed the desirability of introducing this Bill, it was introduced, read a first time, and the second reading was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

ABORIGINALS PROTECTION AND RESTRICTION OF THE SALE OF OPIUM BILL.

SECOND READING.

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. F. G. Foxton *Carnarvon*): Possibly I am somewhat to blame in the matter, but owing to the sudden termination of the debate on the Address in Reply I am taken somewhat unawares, and unfortunately for myself, and possibly for the House, I have not in my possession here all my papers in connection with this Bill. However, it is a Bill for the most part which is familiar to most hon. members who were in this House in the session of 1899, in which year it was read a second time and passed this Chamber, but came to an untimely end owing to a certain amendment being introduced into it in the Legislative Council, which amendment I was unable to ask this House to accept, because it would practically have undermined, to a very large extent, the benefits which the aboriginal population would derive under the original Act as it is on the statute-book—that is the Act of 1897. There have been a large number of cases brought under my notice during the last three years which indicate that, especially in the North and extreme North-west of the colony, the aboriginal population do not receive the benefits from the legislation which was passed in 1897 which it was intended by Parliament they should receive. It is a matter upon which I have myself made a number of inquiries, and I have received a large number of reports from Dr. Roth, the Protector of Aboriginals in the North, and also from the protectors who act under him, and who are, to a very large extent, composed of members of the police—inspectors and sub-inspectors. I have also received reports from Mr. Bennett, who is now, I am pleased to say, Protector of Aboriginals at Thursday Island. This gentleman has had a very great deal to do with, and has an extensive knowledge of, those aboriginals who are chiefly employed on pearling boats; and from all these sources it is quite apparent to me that all the aboriginals in the extreme north of the colony are not treated in the way they should be treated; that they do

not receive that protection which it was the desire of Parliament they should receive when the Act of 1897 was passed.

Mr. JACKSON: Do you mean on the coast especially?

The HOME SECRETARY: Of course the greater number of abuses occur on the coast. There is no question about that. There are two reasons for this, which may be considered to run one into another. The principal reason is that the greater abuses take place on the boats at a distance from land. We have heard of cases of marooning, but I don't think that is so prevalent as it was a few years ago. These aboriginals are mostly employed in what is called swimming diving—that is, diving for pearl-shells in shallow water. It is a moot point whether they should be allowed to go on these boats at all. Some people think they should not. That is one reason why abuses occur more on the coast than inland. Another reason is that it is so easy for wrong-doers to slip up and down the coast and evade the consequences of the law.

Mr. LESINA: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: The abuses are such, perhaps, that it might not be desirable to particularise here at length, but if any hon. member has any doubts respecting them, more especially with regard to the young female portion of the aboriginal population, I shall be very glad to supply them with some very startling particulars.

Mr. TURLEY: The law does not allow them to be taken on these boats.

The HOME SECRETARY: Quite so. But it is just like the case of the man in the stocks. He was in the stocks and a passer-by said, "You can't be put there by law." He said, "But I am here."

Mr. TURLEY: The law prohibits these girls being taken on the boats.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes, but it was just the same with the man in the stocks. He was there all the same. The law prohibits those girls being taken on the boats, but apparently the arm of the law is not strong enough to prevent its breach. The provisions which I ask this House to pass in this Bill are, I believe, a step in the right direction—so as to enable the protectors of aboriginals to enforce the law as it was intended it should be enforced, and as I trust it will be enforced. But it is not altogether the case that these abuses occur wholly on the coast or at sea; there are a very large number of abuses in reference to the aboriginal population inland. I had only laid before me to-day a statement which, if true, is in any case of a most startling character, and betrays an extent of depravity and cruelty that is hardly equalled and scarcely excelled in the pages of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." That case occurred in the North—not far from the coast, I will admit—but it is certainly a case of very great abuse.

Mr. LESINA: Private enterprise again, I suppose—the aboriginals exploited for profit.

The HOME SECRETARY: I do not think that is the case.

Mr. LESINA: I think so.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The HOME SECRETARY: Possibly the hon. member who disorderly interjects may know the case to which I refer, and may possibly hold a brief for the offenders. I do not know whether he does or not, but if he desires by his interjections to identify himself with the case, I do not envy his frame of mind. I do not know whether hon. members desire it, but it appears to me scarcely necessary that I should go through the Bill clause by clause, seeing that it has already passed through the second reading and committee stages on a previous occasion.

Mr. MAXWELL: There are new clauses.

Mr. LESINA: Explain the new clauses, and let the rest go.

The SPEAKER: Order!

The HOME SECRETARY: If the hon. member will allow me to conduct my own business in my own way I shall be obliged. I have said that the principal object of the Bill is the extra protection which it will afford to the aboriginal population. One of the new provisions is that the father of a half-caste child may be compelled to support it at the instance of an officer of the State.

Mr. LESINA: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: In connection with one of the mission stations there is the case of an aboriginal mother with four half-caste children. I believe it was the practice of the father of these children, who is, I understand, a well-known man in a certain district of this State, to send money for their support at one time, but he does not do so now, I am informed. At all events, if he does, it is in such a spasmodic and parsimonious way that it is of very little help to the mission station. Those children are, therefore, to a large extent thrown on the resources of the State and of the people who assist in the maintenance of the institution. That is a condition of things which ought not to be allowed to exist, and it is with a view of bringing to book gentlemen of that kind that this provision is introduced. It is also proposed here to make it a condition precedent to any miner going upon an aboriginal reserve, that he shall not only have a miner's right—I am speaking of prospectors, because it only applies to them—but that he shall also have a permit from the Minister in charge of the Act, or from a protector—preferably from a protector. He is not to be permitted to exercise his calling as a prospector without that permit. The reason for this is not in any way to hamper the *bonâ fide* prospector, but, as the law stands, in accordance with the provisions of the Mining Act, a prospector is at liberty, by virtue of his miner's right, to go upon any aboriginal land and mine for gold. That is the state of the law at present. It will scarcely need mentioning to hon. members that this, in the case of unscrupulous persons, is a provision which is capable of very easy abuse. That is to say, a man who is notoriously unfit to be allowed to go upon an aboriginal reserve has only to arm himself with a miner's right, without the slightest intention of doing anything like *bonâ fide* prospecting, and he can defy the authorities in charge of the reserve.

Mr. JACKSON: For 5s.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes, for 5s. Of course, in the event of a prospector discovering gold and its becoming payable, there would certainly be a cancellation of the reserve so far as that part where gold was found was concerned, and it would be proclaimed a gold or mineral district as the case might be, and the restrictions in regard to miners going into that locality would be at once removed. There can be no hardship upon the *bonâ fide* prospector, if he desires to go upon one of these reserves, being obliged to secure from the local protector of aboriginals a permit which will enable him to do so. That permit would almost invariably in the first instance be granted, but in the event of it being found that the permit was abused, and that the provisions of the Aboriginals Protection Acts were being set at naught, it would be possible for the Minister in charge of the administration of those Acts to cancel the permit and order the prospector off. I think that is a very desirable and necessary provision.

Mr. LESINA: It will interfere with private enterprise again.

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The HOME SECRETARY: We know that the miner's right has been abused for the purpose of enabling trespassers to go upon pastoral properties. I know of instances of that kind. Possibly the temptation to use this illicit means of getting access to an aboriginal reserve is greater than it would be in the case of a pastoral property where the motive is merely to shoot marsupials for their scalps.

In this case the motive would be to consort with the aboriginals.

[9 p.m.] I think those are the two principal provisions which did not appear in the Bill of 1899; and certainly I believe that in many respects, owing to the recent experience we have had of breaches of the present Act, that this Bill is an improvement of that of 1899. It provides against some abuses which it was found impossible to provide for at that time, or were not then thought of. I sincerely hope this Bill will become law. The subject is one which, I think, ought to commend itself to every hon. member. I believe I may say that every member of this House recognises the responsibility which we as a people, as a community, have in regard to the aboriginal population. It is our presence here and our civilisation, with its attendant evils, which are the bane of the aboriginal. We have driven him from his hunting grounds; we have debased him by the vices—

Mr. LESINA: And Christianity!

The HOME SECRETARY: And other accessories of civilisation which he is unable to withstand in the same way that the white population is able to do. And I am bound to say I have no sympathy whatever with the cry which is sometimes set up when men speak of the duty we owe to the aboriginals—

Mr. LESINA: Let them die out!

The SPEAKER: Order!

The HOME SECRETARY: The cry I allude to being that we should attend to our own people first and let the aboriginals look after themselves. I believe that as a matter of strict morals our obligations to the aboriginal population of this colony are of a higher and more exacting nature than those we owe to our own people, who are better able to take care of themselves, are acquainted with our laws, and are civilised like ourselves. It is those unfortunates who really are so helpless in our midst, and are made the sport of unscrupulous persons, who are most deserving of our consideration and aid. If there is any other matter in the Bill to which hon. members would like me to refer more especially I shall be glad to give any explanation with regard to it.

Mr. BOWMAN: What about the minimum wage in the 11th clause?

The HOME SECRETARY: That appeared in the other Bill. Of course there are a great many aboriginals who earn a great deal more than 10s. a month.

Mr. BOWMAN: Many of them take the place of white men on stations.

The HOME SECRETARY: I have no sympathy with the cry that they should be displaced from that. I say the white man has displaced them. The aboriginal population of this State are on a totally different footing from any other coloured people in our midst. It must be borne in mind that we are the interlopers, not they.

Mr. LESINA: We do not admit that by any means.

The SPEAKER: Order! It is highly disorderly to persistently interrupt a speaker in possession of the House. One hon. member has repeatedly and persistently ignored my call to order. I again point out that these interjections are most disorderly; and if attention is not

given to what I have said on the point now, I shall be obliged to take other action to compel obedience.

The HOME SECRETARY: I do not know that I have anything further to say on this subject. It is one in which, personally, I take a very deep interest. As I said before, I have myself travelled throughout the colony wherever there has been an aboriginal mission station established, and have seen for myself the good work that is being done by those missions. Like most Australian-born men of my own age, away from cities, I was reared in districts where I had opportunities of mixing and associating with the aboriginals.

Mr. LESINA: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: I was of the opinion then, and until recent years, that it was useless to attempt to do anything with a black-fellow—that he was not capable of acquiring any degree of civilisation at all.

Mr. LESINA: Hear, hear!

The SPEAKER: Order!

The HOME SECRETARY: I have since satisfied myself by personal and ocular demonstration that that is a fallacy; that if you can catch them young enough you can civilise them. We have at this moment—a point upon which I take some special pride myself—attending schools, which are to all intents and purposes run upon the lines of our provisional schools which the white children of the State attend, very nearly 1,000 children, mostly aboriginals, a few being half-castes—possibly 5 or 10 per cent. The only difference between the education which they receive in those schools and the education which our own children receive in the State schools of the colony is this: that in the schools to which I allude religious instruction is permitted. They are not, therefore, placed under the Department of Public Instruction. Of course, some hon. members may hold that I am in the wrong; but I do hold very strongly that, in the case of the aboriginals, it is very desirable that the secular instruction which they receive should be accompanied and go hand in hand with religious instruction of some kind or another.

Mr. LESINA: Hear, hear! Hear, hear!

The SPEAKER: Order!

The HOME SECRETARY: It must be remembered that those aboriginals have engrained in them their pagan traditions, and that if they are to mix with white people, as they necessarily must if they are to survive at all and are to hold their own, those prejudices and superstitions of theirs must be removed; and it is for that reason, and largely because I have seen in the working of the aboriginal mission stations myself the immense amount of good that can be attained by teaching of this kind, that I hold that it is not desirable that a strictly secular education only should be imparted. It is therefore the practice of the department over which I preside at the present time to pay a provisional school teacher at each mission station. The school teacher can give religious instruction if he chooses, but he is not bound to do so. The religious instruction is necessarily for the most part imparted to the children by the persons who are in charge of the mission. As it is open to any denomination to come forward and set up their mission station, there is no exclusiveness in that with regard to any particular denomination. It is true that only certain denominations have so far taken advantage of this privilege, but I should welcome any offers of a similar character to establish mission stations, for which there is plenty of room, from any other denominations which choose to come forward. I am glad to think that some others are already considering the question. I

think that is about all I have to say on the present occasion. I should have been able to have given greater details and fuller information if I had my papers with me, but I did not anticipate this Bill would come on before to-morrow afternoon. I have pleasure in moving the second reading, and I sincerely trust that this Bill will become law this session, because I can assure hon. members, from my own experience of the working of the present Act, that it is most urgently needed.

Mr. BOWMAN: It did not meet its Waterloo here last session.

Mr. BROWNE (*Croydon*): I am rather sorry that the hon. member was not prepared for this Bill. I do not know how he thought it would not come on to-night, but there is a motto which I think would be very useful to Ministers, and that is "Ready, aye ready," especially when they have to deal with an Opposition like they have at the present time.

MEMBERS on the Government side: Laughter.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is the point.

Mr. BROWNE: As was suggested by the hon. the junior member for Gympie, we believe in work, not in talk. I think the hon. member should have been prepared. The hon. gentleman has made some very interesting remarks in his speech, and I think this Bill is one that does not require any long-winded second-reading speeches. I thoroughly believe in what the hon. gentleman said about our obligations to the aboriginals of this colony. I do not think there is any man in this House who does not agree with him. Late as it is now in the day, I think we ought to do all we can to alleviate the condition of those that are left of the aboriginals. There are only one or two points that I would like to touch upon. I was very glad to hear the hon. member talk as he did about the pearl-shelling industry, and to see that he recognises the abuses that have occurred in past years. I remember, some years ago, when that matter was brought forward in this House by myself and others, it was indignantly denied that these blacks were being ill-treated in those boats at all. I am very glad that the hon. gentleman has found that it is so, and that he is going to take steps to prevent those abuses continuing any longer.

The HOME SECRETARY: I have taken steps already.

Mr. BROWNE: I am very glad to hear the hon. member has taken steps in that direction. There is one thing I do not like in what he said, and that was that the aboriginals are not to be allowed to work in those boats at all.

The HOME SECRETARY: No; I said if it was to take place it would have to be under different conditions.

Mr. BROWNE: I think I said on a previous occasion that if there was one industry where aboriginal labour could be employed it was in connection with this particular industry. I believe that this is an industry which the aboriginals up in the North and on the islands adjacent to the coast are well fitted for. In speaking on this I would just like to refer to the interjection of the hon. member for Warrego on the 11th clause. When the hon. member interjected I do not think he had the slightest intention of conveying the meaning that he did not care to see the blacks employed there. What his contention is, and what I contend is, that although I should agree that this minimum should be put in, still I think that if an aboriginal is employed to do the work that white men are doing for one-eighth of the wages, that is bringing the black man in competition with the white man. If the aboriginal can do the work of a white man as well as a white man, he should get the same pay,

or else he is being used as a means for the reduction of wages. I may say that since that Bill was first passed, I have heard some people raise objections to it. Well, I have travelled about the colony a good deal, and more particularly about the Northern parts of it, and I may say that when people have come to me complaining about some of the provisions of this Act, in about nineteen instances out of twenty, when they have explained their grievances to me, I have had no sympathy for them.

The HOME SECRETARY: Hear, hear!

Mr. BROWNE: Men who in times past have been monopolising the aboriginals and using them practically as slaves, immediately the Government take steps to prevent them continuing their practices, they cry out, like a lot of people who have vested interests in a thing. They claim that they have vested interests, and consider that they are injured, because they are stopped from following up the same game as they have followed in years past. There may be something in connection with stringent administration which occasions dissatisfaction. I do not care what kind of an Act is introduced for the good of the community, there are bound to be some who are hurt a little by it. There may be a few cases of this kind—I am inclined to think there are. I know Dr. Roth, the Northern protector, and he is a man who has taken a great interest in the blacks. He is a perfect enthusiast on the subject, and I believe that he is doing thoroughly good work, but there may be instances—I do not say there are—but there may be some instances in which his enthusiasm may have induced him to go a little bit too far. I do not say that that is so.

The HOME SECRETARY: He sometimes has to act on the information of other people.

Mr. BROWNE: That is perfectly correct. He has to act on the information of other people. I say that on the whole so far as I have been able to hear, this Act has done a great deal of good, and that the complaints against it come from the men that it was passed by this House to interfere with. In regard to this Bill itself, I am going to say only a very few words because I think it is a Bill which can be better dealt with in committee than in second-reading speeches. There are only two or three things I will touch upon. There is clause 14, which provides that any person going within ten chains of a blacks' camp shall be liable to a penalty of £50 or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding three months. I think the hon. member will see that that would be a practically unworkable clause, because in a great many instances—I am not speaking of reserves—the blacks make their camping places within a few yards of the main roads. So that if, as a matter of fact, they camp within ten chains of a main road, any person approaching their camp would be liable to be prosecuted.

Mr. LESINA: Penalising the whitefellow at the expense of the nigger.

Mr. BROWNE: I think the provision must be a little oversight, and that it would be better if the distance were made greater.

The HOME SECRETARY: If you made the distance greater, the operation of the clause would be still more difficult.

Mr. BROWNE: Yes, so it would; but I think some alteration is necessary, because the clause as it stands might lead to difficulty in cases such as I have mentioned. It is very seldom that anyone interferes with a blacks' camp, and this provision refers simply to camps and not to reserves. Travelling blacks do not ask where they should camp, and they may go on to a timber reserve. In such a case a man cutting timber on the reserve would be liable to be prosecuted.

The HOME SECRETARY: He can get a permit from the protector.

Mr. BROWNE: For a good while yet we shall not get all the blacks in the colony gathered into reserves; there will be still some thousands of them knocking about the country, and I am afraid that clause 14 will not be found to work well, because as it is framed anyone going within 10 chains of an aboriginals' camp is liable to be prosecuted. With regard to clause 16, the first part of it I thoroughly agree with. I think it is about time that something was done to alleviate the condition of the half-caste children who are knocking about the country. But subsection 3 goes a little bit too far. It proposes to do what almost any man would protest against. It provides that—

Upon the hearing of such complaint the defendant shall, notwithstanding any law to the contrary, be compellable to answer whether he had or had not sexual intercourse with the mother of the child, and if so at what time or times.

I do not think any court should have the power to compel a man to answer such a question. There is no man in the community worth calling a man who would answer such a question, and I do not think it possible for a judge to compel him to do so. At any rate if a judge did compel a man to answer the question he could not compel him to tell the truth.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is a very difficult question to deal with.

Mr. BROWNE: I admit that, but at the same time I do not consider this provision a good one. I am sure that hon. members on both sides of the House are quite willing to assist the hon. gentleman, or anybody else in charge of legislation of this sort, to get it through the House. It is our duty to do justice to the former owners of this country, and I am sure that all hon. members will render assistance in that direction. I shall certainly support the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Burke*): I welcome this Bill. It is a considerable advance on the Bill we had in 1899. I think it is a step in the right direction, though I must say that I do not think the aboriginals of this country are any better off to-day than they were before the passing of the original Act.

The HOME SECRETARY: Oh, yes, very much.

Mr. MAXWELL: I am not talking about the coast blacks, but about the inland blacks, and it is a well-known fact that the condition of the inland blacks is a great deal worse to-day than it was prior to the passing of the original Act. In many cases where an aboriginal could formerly be got to chop a little wood or carry water, if a policeman wishes to be officious, as I can assure the hon. gentleman happens in many instances, the person so employing an aboriginal can be prosecuted.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is a simple thing to get a permit from the Home Secretary.

Mr. MAXWELL: It is not such a simple thing to get a permit. I have been to the hon. gentleman on behalf of two or three people who wished to get a permit to employ blackboys, and instead of finding it a very simple thing I found it most difficult.

The HOME SECRETARY: Perhaps they are not desirable people to employ aboriginals.

Mr. MAXWELL: Ah, that is the point. Who is to say whether he is a desirable person or not? Probably the policeman who has got a set on the man is the person who has to report whether the applicant for a permit to employ an aboriginal is a desirable person to employ one or not. A man may not be allowed to employ a blackboy because he is suspected of being a cattle thief, and not because he would not treat the boy well. Instances have occurred in my

own district where people who have reared blackboys from piccaninnies have had the boys taken from them and have not been granted permits. I know of one case in particular where a person had a boy for fifteen years, and he was refused a permit to employ an aboriginal. I intend, when the Bill is in committee, to try and get an amendment inserted to the effect that when a person makes application for permission to employ an aboriginal the application must go before the police magistrate of the district instead of through the policeman, and that it be heard in open court. Under the present law considerable hardships may occur. In one case that I know of, a man who had reared a boy was afterwards fined £10 for employing an aboriginal without a permit, and I believe was prosecuted simply because he was suspected of something, though nothing was proved against him. With regard to the case to which I am now about to refer, I do not wish it to be inferred that the protector had anything to do with it. A certain young gin was taken from a station; it is needless for me to mention why she was taken away. Hon. members can picture that in their own minds. Perhaps this case was one of those to which the Home Secretary referred as being scarcely creditable to the white population. The girl got into trouble and a policeman took her away, and a week afterwards he got word that he was to send her back to the station where the outrage had been committed. It is a crying shame that such things should be allowed to occur in connection with these people. We have driven them from their homes, and it is our duty to do what we can to protect them. I pointed out to the Home Secretary on a previous occasion that the only way in which we can overcome the whole difficulty with regard to the aboriginals is to place them on reserves. Instead of a squatter, or a man with a few head of cattle, being allowed to have as many as he chooses, the whole of the blacks should be taken away and centred in reserves. While I am desirous of seeing the blacks follow any occupation suitable to them, I do not see that one class in the community should be allowed to employ them while others are refused their services. With regard to clause 14, which has been referred to by the hon. member for Croydon, I would point out that in Georgetown the river runs through the town and the aboriginals' camp is close to the river and within a few chains of the main thoroughfare of the town. The operation of this clause in that case would therefore cause some difficulty, and you would either have to shift the river or the aboriginals. I presume it would be much easier to shift the aboriginals than the river. However, this is a matter which can be amended in committee. When the Bill reaches that stage there are two or three clauses which I wish to see altered, especially that with regard to the protector, as I think the police magistrate and not the policeman should be the protector in any district.

The HOME SECRETARY: Not a bad suggestion.

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*): I would like to say in connection with this measure that the Minister in charge of the Bill is deserving of a [9.30 p.m.] certain amount of congratulation because of the interest he has taken in the aboriginal population of Queensland. There are one or two provisions in the Bill that members of this House should certainly hear arguments in support of before the Bill becomes law. The first point I would take exception to is this: The hon. gentleman is under the impression that members of this House representing the people of Queensland should go out of their way to pass legislation for the purpose of preserving the aboriginal population of Queensland. I do not think there

is any particular necessity why we should step out of our way to preserve the aboriginal population. We have taken possession of this country, and, according to all laws, human and divine—but particularly human—I am under the impression that the aboriginal population of this country must eventually disappear entirely. That is a matter that a study of evolution, a study of biology, a study of ethnology should convince the hon. gentleman is absolutely incontrovertible. In the course of time the aboriginal population of this country will completely disappear—they are doomed to disappear. They are disappearing almost every day of the week, almost every week of the month, every month of the twelve months, every year of the decade. The hon. gentleman says we ought to step in and preserve them, and coddle them and assist them, and we should put them on reserves and assist them in the battle against evolution. The law of evolution says that the nigger shall disappear in the onward progress of the white man. The white man has taken possession of Australia and the nigger must go. In the meantime, the hon. gentleman as a member of this accidental Cabinet—this Japanese Cabinet—without any kind of varnish at all—says that we must step in and assist the nigger in carrying out the fight against the white man. There is really no hope at all. Legislation of this kind is absolutely unnecessary, and its passage will entail an expenditure which is absolutely unnecessary. As a matter of fact, we might just as well do as the Tasmanian people did years ago. We might just as well let the nigger go. He has got to go eventually, and this more or less quixotic attempt at preserving him is utterly unnecessary and unprofitable. He has got to go, but this Government steps in and says, "We will preserve the aboriginal of Queensland. We will pass an Act, and put him on reserves, and will pass laws preserving his morality, and will prevent the utterly immoral, Christian, civilised white man from coming and destroying his morality. We will keep him ageing"; and this particularly Christian Government, led by Mr. Philp—

The SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. LESINA: The member for Townsville—with the particularly moral member for Bulloo—

The SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. LESINA: The Hon. Mr. Leahy—and the still more moral—

The SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. gentleman's language is most disorderly.

Mr. LESINA: Mr. Speaker, if I am disorderly in referring to the hon.—

The SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. gentleman must accept the ruling of the Chair. His language is most disorderly.

MEMBERS on the Government side: Hear, hear!

Mr. LESINA: If the language I have used hitherto is disorderly, I beg to withdraw it, and in any remarks I may make, I shall certainly not refer to the hon. member for Bulloo as "moral."

The SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. LESINA: Very likely the application—

The SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. gentleman must obey the ruling of the Chair. I have ruled that the language he has used is disorderly, and he must accept the ruling of the Chair or prepare to take the consequences.

Mr. LESINA: Well, I accept the consequences, and I also respect the ruling of the Chair. In future I shall not refer to those hon. gentlemen as fulfilling the conditions from a moral standpoint.

The SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. LESINA: And I expect the public generally will ultimately agree with me. I say again that the provisions of this Bill, which propose to lay down certain moral restrictions under which an aboriginal shall be employed in Queensland, are utterly unnecessary. Let me for a moment or two just refer to a principle in this Bill which I take to be more or less thoroughly socialistic and revolutionary, and one which I, as a strong believer in private enterprise, cannot possibly support. I find that this Bill proposes—

(1.) The wages of an aboriginal or half-caste employed under a permit, exclusive of food, accommodation, and other necessities, shall not be less than ten shillings per month, if he is employed on board of, or in connection with, a ship, vessel, or boat, or five shillings per month, if he is employed elsewhere.

(2.) A protector may direct employers or any employer to pay the wages of aboriginals or female half-castes to himself or some officer of police named by him, and any employer who fails to observe such direction shall be deemed to have not paid such wages. The protector or officer of police who receives such wages shall expend the same solely on behalf of the person to whom they were due, and shall keep an account of such expenditure.

That lays down the principle that a minimum wage shall be paid to the friendless aboriginal whose country we have taken possession of. This Government has undertaken in this Bill to assert the principle that henceforth—if this Bill becomes law—any friendless coloured person in Queensland, who happens to have been born here, shall receive a specified wage of 10s. per month as a minimum. This is undoubtedly an interference with the right of private enterprise. Why should we, as representatives of the people, vote for the passage of a measure which proposes that the employer—remember, Mr. Speaker, the person who expends capital and builds up industry—shall be dictated to by this legislature, and compelled to pay a specified wage to his employee? Why should this legislature determine that, if I employ an aboriginal slave in the backblocks to sweep out my yard and chop my firewood, I shall pay him 10s. a month? What right have they to interfere with me as an individual employing labour and expending capital? Is it not an interference with the right of private enterprise to pay such wage as I may think fit? It is manifest. I leave it—not to this House, but to the public outside. What right have they to interfere with an hotel-keeper or a storekeeper in the outside districts in regard to the wages he shall pay? If they have a right to interfere and say what I shall pay the aboriginal who chops my wood or carries water for me, or sweeps my floor or scrubs my house, have not they the right to step in and say I shall pay my white employee a minimum wage? If the Government say they are going to father this principle in connection with aboriginals, we may come along and ask that they shall stand to that principle in connection with white men. I am satisfied myself that although the Government are perfectly willing, because of a more or less sentimental consideration for the nigger who was born in Queensland and who happens to be an aboriginal by accident, to give him 10s. per month as a minimum wage, when we come to deal with Bill Smith and Tom Jones, who happen to be white men and Europeans, they won't advocate and won't lay down in the Bill the principle of a minimum wage for them. What a curious thing it is that we have got this fine Home Secretary of ours, who believes in a minimum wage for aboriginal niggers, who will get up in this House and not only talk against it but will vote against a minimum wage for white men like himself. We have also another hon. gentleman who will support him in his opposition to a

minimum wage—which, by the way, is one of the principles in the Labour platform—the Minister for Railways, “me brither Jannie”——

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. LESINA: I may say that many prominent public men have been known affectionately by——

The SPEAKER: The hon. member is not addressing himself to the subject before the House.

Mr. LESINA: In connection with this principle of a minimum wage, I may tell you—although I am satisfied that you are aware of the fact—that Napoleon Buonaparte was known affectionately to his supporters and admirers as “The Little Corporal.”

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not addressing himself to the subject before the House. I ask him to do so.

Mr. LESINA: I am only using an illustration. I might say also that the Duke of Wellington was known among his admirers as “The Iron Duke.”

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not addressing himself to the subject before the House, and I again request him to do so.

Mr. LESINA: My determination was to use an illustration, which you apparently have determined I shall not use in this debate. I thought one of the important points in debate was to use illustrations if possible; but you have evidently determined that I shall not use illustrations. I was going to use the Duke of Wellington as an illustration, also Napoleon, and Tozer, who is known as the “lyre-bird” in five colonies.

The SPEAKER: Once more I remind the hon. member that he is not addressing himself to the subject. I shall not again call the hon. member to order.

Mr. LESINA: If you are determined that I shall not use illustrations to point my arguments in this debate, I shall have to protest against your ruling.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is defying the Chair.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The SPEAKER: I am not disposed to allow him to do so. If the hon. gentleman does not at once obey my ruling, I shall proceed to name him.

Mr. LESINA: It appears to be evident that you, Sir,—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. LESINA: It appears to be evident. I say it appears to be evident. Mr. Speaker, I say it appears to be evident. I thought you were going to pull me up to order, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. gentleman's conduct is most persistently disorderly. I trust the House will not expect me to submit to such treatment. It is necessary for the protection of the House that action should be taken. The hon. gentleman having defied my ruling repeatedly, I shall present his name to the House. I name you, Mr. Lesina, for disorderly conduct, and I present your name to the House.

Mr. LESINA: Mr. Speaker——

The SPEAKER: Order!

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER.

The PREMIER (Hon. R. Philp, *Townsville*): I regret very much that this should occur at this early stage of the session; but I see no other thing to do than to move that the hon. member

for Clermont, Mr. Lesina, be suspended from the service of this House for a period of twenty-four hours.

Question put, and the House divided.

Mr. LESINA (in the division): The Labour cadgers have gone out instead of staying to vote. They had not the courage to stay. I don't mind you laughing, Mr. Foxton. Your creditors will shake you up by and by. They are hanging about the House now. John Leahy, the usurer—

The SPEAKER: Order, order!

AYES, 18.

Mr. Bartholomew	Mr. Leahy
" Bridges	" Lord
" Campbell	" Macartney
" Dalrymple	" O'Connell
" Forsyth	" Paget
" Fox	" Philp
" Foxton	" Rutledge
" J. Hamilton	" Stodart
" Kent	" W. Thorn.

Tellers: Mr. Campbell and Mr. Forsyth.

NOES, 4.

Mr. Burrows	Mr. Lesina
" Dunsford	" Mulcahy.

Tellers: Mr. Burrows and Mr. Dunsford.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

The SPEAKER: I now call upon the hon. member for Clermont to leave the House and the precincts of the House.

Mr. Lesina then left the Chamber.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—stated.

Mr. W. HAMILTON (*Gregory*): I shall cordially support any measure that will tend to ameliorate the condition of the blacks, but I don't think that this legislation, although well meant, will do the good intended for these aboriginals. I don't know anything about the condition of the blacks on the coast. I know a good deal about their condition in the interior. There has been a lot of controversy in the Press lately, which has left a wrong impression in the people's minds with regard to the treatment of the blacks in the far South-west. Hon. members may remember that about a week ago some long articles appeared in the Press on the condition of the blacks out Boulia way, and people were almost led to believe that the blacks were in a starving condition on the stations—that they were forced to eat dead children and resort to inhuman surgery. I think that is a very incorrect statement for anyone to make. I do not believe the gentleman who was out there is reported correctly. I think a wrong interpretation was put on his utterances. I was out there and travelled a good many miles, and while I did not see large numbers of blacks together I saw a good many scattered about, and I never saw blacks looking in better condition. On the Georgina and Diamantina and down those rivers there were only a few scattered blacks at each of the stations, and they appeared to be very well cared for. The only blacks who appeared to be in an emaciated or a starved state were the blacks around the townships. In Boulia, Mr. Gordon was there as protector, and he had gathered the blacks around the township. He was recalled, and no one was left in his place for some time, and I think a great many of the blacks in the vicinity of Boulia did suffer, but not for long. I must inform hon. members that the whites out there had a hard job to live themselves. So that they had not much to give the blacks. I believe it is mooted that the blacks inland are to be deported into reserves. But I do not believe in the blacks being deported in this

way, because, as a rule, a black does not take to a person, but to the spot in which he was born. Even blacks who live only 30 miles apart will fight, and I know that if there is a great central depôt established for them, the blacks who live on one river will not live peaceably with the blacks who live on another river. They will not associate together. One great thing against this scheme is that you would require a medical man to attend to them. There is no medical man in that country.

The HOME SECRETARY: Which country?

Mr. W. HAMILTON: The South-west country—on the Diamantina, where all the trouble spoken about in the Press has been. That is one great drawback to large reserves for them out there. There are many old blacks who want medical attendance, and if there is to be a protector sent there he should be a medical man. The protector who was out there for fifteen months was getting £400 or £500 a year, and I say that that sum would have fed all the blacks who were there for a considerable time. As soon as Mr. Gordon was withdrawn, the sergeant of police there was appointed protector, there being no police magistrate there. In addition to his ordinary duties as sergeant of police, electoral registrar, and everything else, he was handed over the duties of protector, although the protector got £400 a year for it. I am quite satisfied that if the sergeant of police there is given the same powers as the protector had, a great saving can be effected, and I believe that the blacks will be as well cared for as they were by the other protector.

The HOME SECRETARY: He has the same powers.

Mr. W. HAMILTON: Well, it is only lately that he knew he had the same powers as the protector had.

The HOME SECRETARY: Who is the sergeant?

Mr. W. HAMILTON: Sergeant O'Connor.

The HOME SECRETARY: Is not he a good man?

Mr. W. HAMILTON: Yes, a very good man. I think that if the amount that was paid to Mr. Gordon as his annual salary was judiciously expended it would feed all the destitute blacks in that country. I believe the blacks are far more numerous towards the head of the Georgina and the Mulligan. I have never been there, but I hope to be amongst the people there next year. As I have said, I am against any deportation of the blacks, because I do not believe

[10 p.m.] they will live happily under such conditions. They may be better cared for down here, but I do not believe they are happy when taken away from their own haunts. I do not believe in the system of indenting blacks in the bush, however good it may be on the coast. There are a great many people in the bush who merely employ the blacks in order to save white men's wages, and this 5s. a month is a very small sum. Any number of the blacks do work which, under other circumstances, it would be necessary to get white men to do. On the other hand, there is this to be said, that if the young blacks are employed on a station the old blacks have also to be fed, or the young ones will not work, and perhaps that is one argument against a higher wage being paid. In regard to supplying the blacks with opium, I do not think the penalty is high enough. Time after time, one reads in the papers of Chinamen being brought up and fined, or given three months, for supplying the blacks with opium. I think if a Chinaman is caught committing that offence a second time he should be sent for a very long period to gaol, or else deported from the country. It is evident

that there must be a great profit in the trade, for, although fines of £40 or £50 are inflicted, as soon as the offenders get out of gaol they commit the offence again. There are one or two clauses in the Bill which I do not quite approve of, especially subsection 3 of clause 16, which was mentioned by the leader of the Opposition. I do not think that is necessary or proper. There is another difficulty which I do not see how the Home Secretary is going to overcome. He said he intended to make the fathers of the half-castes support them, but he would be a pretty clever man who could find out the father of a half-caste.

The HOME SECRETARY: That subsection 3 is one way of finding it out.

Mr. W. HAMILTON: How is it possible to make a man go into the box and admit that he is the father of a half-caste child? I do not think that is a nice, or proper, or fair thing to do.

The HOME SECRETARY: Anything is fair with a man of that sort.

Mr. W. HAMILTON: A half-caste may belong to a syndicate, and it is hard to tell who the father is.

The HOME SECRETARY: Then there is joint and several liability.

Mr. W. HAMILTON: If you make every member of the syndicate contribute, of course, that would be right enough, but you are going to give the inspector a very big contract when you invite him to discover the father of a half-caste child. I am in entire sympathy with the object of the Bill, and I hope in committee we will be able to make it as humane a measure as possible.

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

Mr. BROWNE: I do not think it is necessary to adjourn at this hour. The House seems in favour of the Bill, and anything that we do not quite approve of we can deal with in committee. In any case, I do not see the use of adjourning the House at this early hour.

The HOME SECRETARY: I was under the same impression as the leader of the Opposition, that we might pass the second reading and deal with disputed matters in committee, but I find there are a considerable number of members who desire to speak, mostly I believe, in favour of the measure, and it would be quite impossible for them all to speak to-night. Under these circumstances, we might as well adjourn now as half-an-hour later. The hon. gentleman may have gathered from my interjection that I was desirous of seeing the second reading go through, but seeing that this is an opportunity that will not occur again, and that at the committee stage hon. members are limited to discussing the particular clauses of the measure it would be advisable to give them an opportunity to speak now. Although last year my Estimates occupied, I believe, four or five days, I do not think there was much time devoted to the discussion of the aborigines, and I think that is the reason why so many hon. members desire to give expression to their views on the subject on the second reading of this Bill. I therefore offer no opposition to the motion for adjournment.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER: I move that this House do now adjourn. To-morrow we will go on with the second reading of the Aborigines Protection Bill.

Mr. BROWNE: I would like to ask the hon. gentleman when he thinks he will be able to give us the Electoral Reform Bill—one of the most important measures that we shall have to deal with this session.

The PREMIER: I hope to have the Budget Speech delivered on Thursday, and I think the Electoral Reform Bill will be ready as soon as we have finished that debate. I may say that I should like as many members as possible to go to Government House to-morrow to present the Address in Reply.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at ten minutes past 10 o'clock.