

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 6 AUGUST 1903

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

THURSDAY, 6 AUGUST, 1903.

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

ANSWER TO ADDRESS IN REPLY.

The SPEAKER reported that he had this day proceeded to Government House, and there presented to His Excellency the Governor the Address in Reply to the Opening Speech, and that His Excellency had been pleased to make thereto the following answer :—

“MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,—

“I receive with much pleasure the assurance of your loyalty and affection towards the Throne and Person of His Most Gracious Majesty.

“I am satisfied that you will give the most careful consideration to all matters that may be brought before you, and am confident that it will always be your earnest endeavour to promote the advancement and prosperity of the State.”

ESTIMATES-IN-CHIEF, 1903-4.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Governor forwarding the Estimates-in-Chief for the year ending on the 30th June, 1904.

Ordered to be printed, and referred to Committee of Supply when constituted.

IMPROVEMENT OF HORSE STOCK.

ATTENDANCE OF MEMBERS OF COUNCIL BEFORE SELECT COMMITTEE.

On the motion of Mr. BELL (*Dalby*), it was resolved that a message be sent to the Council requesting that leave be given to the Hon. B. B. Moreton and the Hon. F. I. Power to attend and give evidence before the Select Committee on the Improvement of Horse Stock.

[At a later hour a message was received from the Council intimating that the leave asked for had been granted.]

QUESTIONS.

MINING ACCIDENTS FROM EXPLOSIVES.

Mr. DUNSFORD (*Charters Towers*) asked the Secretary for Mines—

1. In view of the many deplorable accidents occurring in the mining industry from the use of explosives, many of which are defective, will he cause a more strict and effective inspection of all explosives to be made?

2. Will he cause inquiries to be made as to the effectiveness of “liquid air” as an explosive, with a view of introducing it into Queensland mines?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. R. Philp, *Townsville*) replied—

1. Accidents from explosives rarely occur from defects in the explosive. Within the last twelve months 600 cases of explosives have been destroyed by order of the Inspector of Explosives, and a strict supervision will continue to be maintained.

2. The cost of liquid air has hitherto prohibited its use as an explosive, but further inquiry will be made.

ROCKHAMPTON JURIES.

Mr. GRANT (*Rockhampton*) asked the Attorney-General—

Has his attention been directed to the remarks of His Honour Mr. Justice Rea, as reported in this morning's *Courier*, particularly the concluding remarks, in which he stated that Rockhampton juries cared little for the evidence given in trials?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. Sir Arthur Rutledge, *Maranoa*) replied—

I have seen the report containing the remarks of His Honour. I should like to add that judges of the Supreme Court are not answerable to the Attorney-General for any of their utterances made in the course of judicial proceedings.

IMPORTATION OF HIDES INTO QUEENSLAND.

Mr. LINDLEY (*Wide Bay*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

1. Is it a fact that hides are being imported into Queensland?

2. If so, what country are they from?

3. How many have been imported?

4. Is every precaution being taken to prevent the introduction of rinderpest and diseases of a like nature?

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

1. Yes.

2. During the year 1902, from the United Kingdom, New South Wales, New Zealand, and France.

3. 3,465 during 1902. 1903 figures are not yet available.

4. No hides are permitted to enter Queensland from countries where there is rinderpest and diseases of a like nature, and every precaution is taken to prevent the introduction of such diseases.

PROVISIONAL, STATE, AND GRAMMAR SCHOOLS.

Mr. AIREY (*Flinders*) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

1. How many provisional schools are there at present whose attendance warrants their conversion to State schools?

2. How many State schools are there whose attendance warrants an enlargement of the premises—which enlargement the department is at present unable or unwilling to grant?

3. How is it that, with the exception of Rockhampton, the State grammar schools, which are subsidised by the State to the extent of £10,000 per annum, supply Parliament with no account of their progress and proceedings in the annual report to the Department of Public Instruction for 1902?

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

1 and 2. The information will be supplied as soon as practicable.

3. The Grammar Schools Acts do not require the trustees of grammar schools to furnish annual reports for presentation to Parliament. In April, 1901, the trustees of each grammar school were invited to furnish annually a report of the school to be furnished as an appendix to the annual report of the Department of Public Instruction. The reports from the trustees of the grammar schools at Rockhampton were the only reports received for the year 1902.

MONUMENT TO LATE MR. COMMISSIONER GRAY.

Mr. AIREY (*Flinders*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

By whose authority were lists sent round to the railway staff in order to raise funds for a monument to the late Mr. Commissioner Gray?

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

I do not know. There is no official record.

WAGES ON ATHERTON RAILWAY.

Mr. WOODS (*Woothakata*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. Is he aware that the engineer in charge of the Atherton Railway construction emptied the water tanks so as to force the men to accept starvation wages?

2. If so, does he approve of such action?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

No.

COST OF REPAIRS TO DREDGES.

Mr. WOODS asked the Treasurer—

1. What was the contract price of alterations, renewals, and repairs to the dredge "Casuarina"?

2. What is the amount expended on same since being handed over by contractors?

3. What was the result of trial of said dredge?

4. Has said dredge done any successful dredging since such alterations?

5. Will the Treasurer supply the total cost of overhaul to the dredge "Hercules" as promised last session?

The TREASURER (Hon. T. B. Cribb, *Ipswich*) replied—

1. Contract price for alterations to cutter gear of "Casuarina"—Bundaberg Foundry Company	£3,975	0	0
Extras allowed to Bundaberg Foundry Company on above contract	216	10	1
	£4,191	10	1

Contract for alterations to winches— Evans, Anderson, and Co.	256	10	6
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Total	£4,448	0	7
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2. £966 14s. 4d.

3. Satisfactory.

4. The dredge has not been put into commission since alterations were completed.

5. £894 10s. 11d.

ADVERTISING THE TARAMPA ESTATE.

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*) asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

1. Is it a fact that the Lands Department has entered into an arrangement to spend the sum of £200 in advertising the repurchased Tarampa Estate in the *Town and Country Journal* and the *Sydney Mail*, two papers published outside the State?

2. If so, is it the intention of the department, in view of the unsatisfactory result attending previous advertising of the resumed estates in the south, to make any special provision to enable applicants for land coming from a distance to obtain selections?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. J. P. G. Foxtan, *Carnarvon*) replied—

1. Yes.

2. Applicants coming from a distance will have the same facilities afforded to them as afforded to applicants who are local residents.

LEASE OF LAND AT LAIDLLEY.

Mr. LESINA asked the Secretary for Railways—

Was the letting or leasing of the piece of land fronting the railway station yard at Laidley arranged privately between the department and the present tenant, or were tenders called?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

The lease was arranged privately by the Commissioner, same as all other leases at Laidley and other places, after a report from the chief engineer and the General Traffic Manager that the land is not required for railway purposes.

ILLEGAL EMPLOYMENT OF KANAKAS.

Mr. KENNA (*Bowen*) asked the Chief Secretary—

1. Is he aware that in the Ayr, the Nambour, the Rosewood, and many other districts of the State, kanakas

are being employed contrary to the law, while numbers of white workers are unable to obtain employment?

2. Will he instruct the police to see that the law is kept?

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

1. No.

2. If Mr. Kenna will give me a list of those employing kanakas contrary to law, I will instruct the police to take action.

TRAVELLING EXPENSES OF MR. HOLDSWORTH.

Mr. JENKINSON (*Fassifern*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. What is the amount of travelling expenses and cab hire paid on behalf of Mr. Holdsworth, the Comptroller of Stores, Railway Department, from 1st January, 1903, to 21st July, 1903?

2. Has the attention of the Minister been called to the alleged statements of Mr. George Nutt, Chief Mechanical Engineer, with regard to Queensland timber, made to a representative of the *Courier*, and published in that paper on 26th June?

3. If so, will he request Mr. Nutt to give his grounds for making such statements?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

1. Travelling expenses, £35 17s.; cab hire, £6 11s. 6d.

2 and 3. I am arranging to have an interview with Mr. Nutt on the subject.

BREACHES OF THE STAMP ACT.

Mr. JENKINSON asked the Treasurer—

1. Has his attention been called to alleged breaches of the Stamp Act Amendment Act by certain insurance companies?

2. Has he caused any action to be taken in connection with the matter?

3. If so, what?

4. If not, does he propose to take any action?

The TREASURER replied—

1. Yes.

2 and 3. The papers were handed by me to the Attorney-General, who is investigating the matter.

SHEARERS' ACCOMMODATION BILL.

Mr. W. HAMILTON (*Gregory*) asked the Premier—

Is it his intention to introduce this session a Bill for the better accommodation of shearers, as requested by a deputation last session?

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

Not this session.

DEEP SINKING AND PROSPECTING VOTES.

Mr. BROWNE (*Croydon*) asked the Secretary for Mines—

1. What amount was spent from the vote for deep sinking for year 1902-3?

2. Who were the parties assisted and amounts paid in each case?

3. What amount was spent from prospecting vote for year 1902-3?

4. Who were the parties assisted, amounts paid in each case, and localities prospected?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES replied—

1. £3,920 2s. 4d.

2.—	Amount.
	£ s. d.
Anthracite Coal Mines, No Liability ...	125 0 0
T. P. O'Dwyer and party, Jimna ...	5 0 0
Hodgkinson United G.M. Coy., Ltd. ...	600 0 0
Golden Gate Gold Mines, Ltd., Croydon	2,800 0 0
Harp of Erin Extended United Block, Croydon	273 2 4
Golden King G.M. Coy., Ltd., Nanango	117 0 0

3. £742 4s. 8d.

- 4.—
 McBratney and party—£9. Don River, Mount Morgan district.
 Harvey and party—£26. Bin Bin Ranges, Degilbo. School of Arts and Mines, Gympie—£200. Grant for laboratory, etc.
 Bowden and party—£27. Coen and Palmer districts, Enbley and Archer River, to the coast.
 Party of unemployed—£75 5s. 1d. Chinaman's Creek, Upper Mary River.
 K. R. Kerr—£11. Curtis Island.
 F. Crawley and party—£24. Enoggera Ranges, and towards Gladstone.
 Shekelton and Rich—£1. Gladstone district.
 W. J. Tyndall—£1. Beaudesert.
 T. Junen—£1. Enoggera Ranges.
 Dooley and Fay—£2 1s. 8d. Canoona.
 W. Shipton and party—£24. Collingwood Ranges, Cooktown district.
 Edwards and party—£3 18s. 10d. Rockhampton fields.
 H. H. Knapp—£5. Inspecting and reporting on calyx drill.
 K. Snowdowne and party—£24 5s. 8d. Country between Esk and Nanango.
 Carlin and party—£13 0s. 8d. Between Callide and Langmorn Creeks, Gladstone district.
 Raymond and party—£3 1s. 2d. Mountain Maid Mine, Warwick.
 St. Clair and party—£25. District to north of Cooktown.
 Milliner and party—£39 11s. 7d. Raglan Scrub and Sneaker's Creek Rockhampton district.
 £31. Expenses in connection with the storage of the drill plant at Rockhampton.
 F. McPherson—£6 10s. Palmer district.
 C. Matthews, London—£13 5s. 4d. Cutting Anakie gems.
 Hughes and party—£9. District around Nanango.
 J. D. Buchanan—£2. Ranges to the south-west of Nerang.
 Durham and party—£12. Upper Mary River.
 J. Graff—£4. Between Mount Morgan and Ulam Fields.
 Peterson and party—£12. San José, Rockhampton district.
 Hedges and party—£24. Upper Cape and Flinders Rivers.
 Cameron and party—£12. Between Annamoor and Kadanga Creeks, Gympie.
 Thorn and party—£10 15s. 6d. Bodumba, Gores Ranges, west of Warwick.
 Breat and party—£13. Scrubby Creek, Raglan Scrub, Gladstone district.
 Moore and party—£21 1s. 1d. Scrub near Ulam Gold Field.
 Clermont Prospecting Association—£25 11s. 6d. Clermont district.
 F. S. Hodgson—£8. Between Cooktown Railway and Ebagoolah.
 Dent and Smith—£3 7s. 7d. Crocodile Creek and Peak Downs.
 McQueen and party—£20. Country west from Townsville.

In addition to the above a total amount of £106 3s. 5d. was paid to the Railway Department for passes granted to prospectors travelling to various parts of the State.

EXPENSES RE PREMIER'S NORTHERN TOUR.

MR. WOODS asked the Premier—

Were the expenses of the persons who travelled by special coach with him during his recent tour in the North charged to the State?

THE PREMIER replied—

Mr. Macartney and the representatives of the *Courier* and *Telegraph* who accompanied me to the Gulf paid all their own expenses.

AGREEMENT FEE FOR SOUTH SEA ISLANDERS.

Mr. PAGET (*Maokay*) asked the Chief Secretary—

1. Has the agreement fee on the engagement of South Sea Islanders been raised from 5s. to 10s. per employee, owing to want of funds to cover departmental expenses?

2. If so, is the lessened revenue caused by the restrictions placed upon the introduction of labourers under the provisions of the Federal South Sea Islanders Act of 1901?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied—
 No.

AMENDMENT OF BRANDS ACT.

MR. JENKINSON (*Fassifern*), on behalf of Mr. Plunkett, asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

1. Is it the intention of the Government to introduce this session a Bill to amend the present Brands Act?
2. If so, when?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE replied—

If time permits, a short amending Bill will be introduced.

COST OF TOBACCO FOR DUNWICH INMATES.

Mr. GRANT asked the Secretary for Public Works—

What was the amount paid for tobacco supplied to the inmates of Dunwich for the last two years ended 30th June?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. Leahy, *Bullooi*) replied—

I don't understand whether the hon. member wants the two years in a lump or separately.

Mr. GRANT: Separately.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I have mislaid the paper; but I will give the full information on Tuesday. I think the amounts were £430 last year and about £420 this year.

EXEMPTIONS FROM INCOME TAX.

HON. A. S. COWLEY (*Herbert*) asked the Treasurer—

1. Who reported to the Cabinet and the Commissioner that, owing to deductions made from the salaries of officers of the public service under the Special Retrenchment Act, the payment in addition of income tax would be a hardship?

2. Were all retrenched officers of the public service exempt, or were any compelled to pay income tax on their salaries for the seven months prior to the operation of the Special Retrenchment Act of 1902? If so, how many?

3. Were any officers whose services were dispensed with prior to the 1st August last made to pay income tax on salaries received from the 1st of January to date of their leaving the service?

4. Was any report made to the Cabinet and Commissioner that payment of income tax by Ministers and members on their salaries from 1st January to 1st August last would be a hardship? If so, by whom?

5. If no such report was made, what induced the Commissioner to exempt Ministers and members?

6. If subsection 2 of section 11 of the Income Tax Act of 1902 provides for the exemption of all persons affected by the Special Retrenchment Act of 1902, why was section 85 of the Income Tax Act of 1902, specially dealing with the matter, introduced by the Minister during the committee stage of the Bill?

7. Was an opinion obtained from the Attorney-General or Crown Solicitor on the whole question? If so, will he lay a copy of it upon the table of the House?

8. Is it not a fact that the Minister replied in the affirmative to the following question by the honourable member for the Gregory on the 9th of December last:—

Will Government employees and civil servants who come under the operation of the Special Retrenchment Act have to pay income tax on salary earned between the 1st January and 1st August, the dates respectively of each Act coming into operation?

9. Why was this decision reversed?

10. If employees of private firms and wage-earners generally, who have been retrenched to as great an extent as the officers of the public service, apply for exemption under subsection 2 of section 11, will they be also exempt?

The TREASURER replied—

2. and 3. I believe the Commissioner exercised his discretion in this matter. I will obtain particulars if the House desires.

7. Yes; but I do not deem it advisable to lay the same on the table of the House.

10. They have been or will be dealt with by the Commissioner according to their circumstances.

While always pleased to answer questions which will elicit desirable information, the other questions do not appear to me to be of this character, but partake to some extent of an argument as to the wisdom or otherwise of the exemptions.

CIRCULATION OF "HANSARD" No. 3.

Mr. KERR (*Barcoo*) asked the Treasurer—

1. How many copies of the issue of *Hansard* containing those portions of the speech of the Minister for Railways, delivered on 29th July, 1903, which the House subsequently agreed to have expunged, were permitted to go into circulation?

2. Did any member of this Assembly, Minister or other person, order a particularly large number of extra copies of the abovementioned issue?

3. If so, what is the name of that member, Minister, or person?

The TREASURER replied—

1. The order to delete certain matter from *Hansard* of 29th July reached the Government Printing Office at 11:45 p.m. on Thursday, 30th July. The decision of the House on the matter was only arrived at at 10:15 p.m., but before 6 p.m. on that day, being publishing day at the Government Printing Office, 728 copies had been posted and sent away. Amended copies have been sent to each of the recipients, with a request that the originals may be returned. The remaining copies—522—of that issue were destroyed by fire at the Government Printing Office on receipt of the decision of the House.

2 and 3. All other copies issued from the Government Printing Office have been in accordance with the subsequent decision of the House.

SPECIAL TRAIN TO MARYBOROUGH.

Mr. WOODS asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. What was the cost of running a special train to Maryborough on the night of 22nd July for the convenience of three members of this Chamber to enable them to attend the Maryborough show?

2. Is it not a fact that His Excellency the Governor travelled to the same show by the ordinary train the same day?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

1. The cost of wages, coal, oil, etc., was £5 10s. 10d.
2. Yes.

EXPENSES CONNECTED WITH TREASURER'S NORTHERN TOUR.

Mr. WOODS asked the Treasurer—

1. The number of friends who accompanied him on his recent Northern tour in the steamship "Albatross"?

2. Were the expenses of such friends charged to the State?

3. What was the total cost in connection with the steamship "Albatross" on such tour, including wages, coal, and stores?

The TREASURER replied—

1. Four from Rockhampton to Cairns; none on the return journey.
2. The friends of the Treasurer paid their own expenses.
3. £120 3s. 6d.

PAPERS.

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

- (1) Report of the Public Service Board for the year 1902.
- (2) Regulation under the Public Service Act of 1896 and the Public Service Act Amendment Act of 1901.
- (3) Report of the Joint Parliamentary Library Committee for the year 1902-3.
- (4) Report from the Trustees of the Queensland National Art Gallery.
- (5) Annual Report of the Department of Public Lands for the year 1902.

AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENTS COMPENSATION BILL.

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING.

On the motion of Mr. PAGET (*Mackay*), this Bill was introduced and read a first [4 p.m.] time. The second reading was made an Order of the Day for Thursday, 13th August.

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE.

DELETION FROM "HANSARD."

Mr. LESINA said: I would like to raise a question of privilege with reference to the report in *Hansard* of the speech of the Secretary for Railways the other night. I understand from my reading of the remarks made in the course of the discussion that followed my speech in reply to the hon. gentleman the following night that it was the wish of the House that the names of the persons mentioned by the Secretary for Railways should be expunged from the official records of the House—

The SPEAKER: Order! There is no question of privilege in the point raised by the hon. member. He, therefore, cannot proceed. I would like to say, however, that by my instructions the expressed wish of this House was carried out in its entirety.

ARBITRATION AND CONCILIATION.

Mr. KENNA, in moving—

That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that a Bill should be introduced dealing with the settlement of industrial disputes by the State through arbitration and conciliation—

said: I am aware that at the present moment there is a Bill before the Federal Parliament dealing with this important subject, and that in such Bill there is a provision under which this or any other State that has no arbitration and conciliation law of its own may, through its Governor, avail itself of the provisions of the Federal Act. I think that a note of warning should be sounded in this House in reference to the danger of allowing our people to look to the Federal Government for all assistance in the shape of reform. It is apt to act detrimentally upon the status of this Parliament. If we are to maintain our status and integrity as a State Parliament it is advisable for us to bring our legislation into line with that of the Federal Parliament. The powers of the Commonwealth, in respect of arbitration and conciliation, extend only to disputes passing beyond the borders of one State. If no Arbitration and Conciliation Act is passed in this State, it will be in the power of any union that feels so disposed to simply affiliate with a union in some other State, and take joint action in regard to a strike or lockout, in order to bring themselves within the provisions of the Federal Act. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They can do that even if we pass a Bill.] They can, and I am not one of those who think that it would be a bad thing if a Bill is not passed here at all, as it will bring about a greater federation of unionism throughout Australia, which, after all, will serve the purposes of the working classes much better than smaller unions. But I would point out the danger that lies before us in allowing the Federal Parliament—I am not one of those who wish in any way to decry that body—in allowing that Parliament to overshadow the Queensland Parliament. That danger is to be obviated by bringing our laws into line with federal legislation. I hope this subject will be approached from

the point of view neither of the capitalists nor the working classes, but from the point of view of what is best for the whole community. It may be said that there are objections to such legislation; but there is a strong feeling in favour of it in Queensland. A number of petitions have been presented to this House on the subject, and outside, particularly among the working classes, and there is a very strong feeling—due to the success of similar laws in New Zealand and in other States of Australia—that the time is now ripe for the settlement of industrial disputes within the bounds of the law, just as other disputes are settled. It may be said that no strikes have occurred in Queensland for some time. In answer to that, I may say that during the last eight or ten years, since the big bush and maritime strikes, the State has been gradually going on a down grade, and that strikes usually take place on a rising market. I believe that the State has touched bottom, and that the outlook is promising, and that there will be an increase of prosperity here for some few years, and that the danger of strikes occurring during that period will be much greater than it has been during the declining period through which we have passed. A measure dealing with conciliation and arbitration cannot at this time of the day be classed as experimental legislation. Such legislation has been in force in New Zealand with very great success. It has also been in force in New South Wales. Of course, pioneer measures of this kind cannot be made perfect without the result of experience, and though there is some dissatisfaction among the workers in New South Wales, still I believe that the Act there, with the amendments lately brought in by Mr. Wise incorporated in it, will give a large amount of satisfaction to the workers of that State. For the last three or four years a measure of this nature has been in operation in Western Australia, and has worked with success. Judge Backhouse, who was sent as a commissioner from New South Wales to New Zealand to investigate the working of the Act in that colony, speaks in the very highest terms of the Act. The Victorian Factories and Workshops Commission, which took evidence in Queensland and proceeded to New Zealand to thoroughly investigate the working of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act of that colony, think so highly of it that they have recommended it to the Government of Victoria as a substitute for the Wages Boards Act. [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Four years in Western Australia?] I think the Act was passed there in 1900. Judge Backhouse in his report states that the phenomenal career of prosperity that has been in vogue in New Zealand during the last decade was favourable to the Act, and that a declining period of prosperity is the real test of such a measure. The same sentiment is expressed by the Victorian Factories and Workshops Commission. I have spent some considerable time in studying the legislation of New Zealand, and I think a portion of the prosperity which that colony is at present enjoying is due to legislation of this nature. Any legislation that will give security to industry, that will create a better feeling between employers and employees, that will prevent and abolish strikes, that will prevent industrial chaos, must necessarily benefit the State. I affirm unhesitatingly that during the nine years that Act has been in vogue in New Zealand there have been no strikes of any magnitude. I believe there have been two or three minor strikes. One was a strike of bricklayers working on Government contracts, and all Government employees in New Zealand, with the exception of railway employees, are exempt from the provisions of the Act. I

believe that the same elasticity that enabled the Act to adapt itself to the rising grade of prosperity in New Zealand will operate in its favour when that colony comes to a declining grade. An Act that can raise wages and give reasonable hours of labour for certain specified terms when a colony is prospering can equally well adapt itself to reverse conditions. Competition is of a three-fold character. There is the competition between workman and workman for employment, the competition between capitalist and capitalist for profit, and the competition between one industrial country and another for the world's markets. That country whose industries can be carried on uninterruptedly, which enjoys the greatest stability, will be better able to compete for the world's markets than the country which is liable at any moment to be disrupted by industrial disturbance. For that reason I believe that the Conciliation and Arbitration Act has been one of the factors in the prosperity of New Zealand. It has prevented strikes and created a better feeling between employers and employees, and has given a stability to the industries of that country such as is enjoyed nowhere else in the world. With regard to the economic phases of this matter. In all wealth productions there are three factors—labour, land, and capital. Of these three factors labour and capital may be termed the principal. Labour and capital brought together in conjunction with land create wealth. A continual struggle goes on between labour and capital, each striving to obtain its own share of the product. The labourer fights persistently to obtain at least a sufficiency to enable him to live in tolerable comfort, and the capitalist fights persistently for whatever profit he can get, in many cases regardless of the case of the worker. The fluctuations of prices in the world's markets the capitalist expects the labourer to bear, and the labourer expects the capitalist to bear them, and take them out of his profits. The result is that when there is a decline in prices somewhere, and the profits of the capitalist decline, he cuts down the wages of his men. His workers resent that, and industrial chaos ensues. Now, to better enable the worker to maintain his just share of the products, he resorts to co-operation with his fellow-workers in whatever trade or industry he may be employed. These trades, to better protect themselves, federate with other trades, and so we have labour federation. On the other hand, the capitalist in order to better protect himself and to better secure what he conceives to be his share of the products, unites with other capitalists; these capitalists unite with other capitalists in other trades, and so we have employers' federation. Then industry is divided into two great companies. On the one hand we have large co-operative unions of working men, who are determined to maintain their standard of existence, and on the other hand we have large co-operations of capitalists, who are determined to see that they get their share of the products. Each camp is practically in a position of armed neutrality, and when some little dispute arises, it is up in arms and plunges the State into industrial chaos; the police and military are called out; in the long run one or other party is driven to the wall. The result is that class bitterness arises; the dregs keep simmering in the hearts of the party who has lost, and causes no end of trouble in the State. These strikes and lockouts are a source of great loss, not only to the employers but also to the working men and to the State as a whole. The American Commissioner of Labour for the United States reports that from 1890 to 1900 in the United States there were 22,793 strikes, involving 117,509 establishments

The men's loss is computed at £55,000,000 in those twenty years; the masters' loss is computed to have been £24,500,000, and the trade levies were responsible for another £3,500,000; the total loss being computed at £82,000,000. It is estimated in Great Britain that the yearly loss equalled the yearly output of 40,000 men in regular work. After the engineers' strike in 1897, the *Daily News* published the following losses:—

Wages of men	£3,225,000
Union pay levies, subs., loans	£925,000
Savings spent	£500,000
Loss of trade to the employers	£5,696,000
Total	£10,376,000

Our shearers' strikes during 1891-3 cost this State £130,000. If we had had arbitration and conciliation in this State there would have been no strikes; and on the basis of the cost in New Zealand, the amount spent in connection with strikes here would have provided a fund for carrying on arbitration and conciliation for the next twenty-seven years. Now the question is: Is this armed neutrality to be allowed to continue; and, if so, where is it going to end? Is the State to stand idly by and see these two great forces arming themselves to fight, and fighting, drag in subsidiary industries and generally create confusion and anarchy. The State is greater than either party, and it should take up a position that would prevent trouble of this kind arising in the future by appointing a proper tribunal for investigating these matters. Strikes are a public nuisance, and should be treated as such everywhere. The victor in a strike does not necessarily mean that the right person has won; it does not decide the right or wrong of matters; it only proves which is the stronger party. Now, in every other form of dispute a proper tribunal is provided, with arbitrary powers, to which any aggrieved person may bring the other party, and have the matter settled properly, peaceably, and amicably on the basis of justice. I should like to be told why in the case of industrial disputes the States should not provide a tribunal for their settlement, just as a proper tribunal is provided for the settlement of every other dispute. There are three parties in every strike: the State, the employer, and the employee; and when any two of these parties are willing to have the matter thrashed out and decided by an independent and responsible tribunal, then the other party should be compelled also to appear and justify himself. The working classes in this State have always been in favour of arbitration and conciliation. Invariably when the working classes have been forced into conflict, they have always declared their willingness to have the matter settled peaceably and amicably by some independent tribunal. The opposition has always come from the employers. The State should furnish a tribunal, in which case a much better feeling than at present exists between employers and employees would be created. Hon. members on the other side will probably speak highly of the advantages of voluntary arbitration that exists in this State now; but it has been a dead letter. It has failed here just as it has failed in other States in the Commonwealth and in New Zealand. It has been in existence in Great Britain, France, and Germany and the United States, and has been a failure there. According to the English Board of Trade statistics for 1899 to 1901, there were 10,792 strikes in Great Britain. No greater condemnation of the voluntary system of arbitration than that can be forthcoming. The report states that for all practical purposes the voluntary Act was valueless. In France, the Conciliation Board settled 285 disputes directly and 128 indirectly, and during 1893-1900 there were 4,272

strikes. In Germany, it is computed that only 4 per cent. of the strikes were settled by voluntary arbitration. In New South Wales, under the 1894 Act, machinery was provided for dealing with disputes through voluntary boards. These boards had no power to summon witnesses; no power to demand that the contestants should be brought before the tribunal; no power to call for books; in fact, the law was simply valueless. The Act was treated with contempt, and finally in 1899 Parliament refused to grant any further Supplies for the purposes of carrying it on. In 1900 Mr. Wise's Compulsory Arbitration Act was passed in the Assembly, but it was thrown out in the Upper House; and in 1901, on the report of Judge Backhouse, a Compulsory Arbitration Act was introduced and passed. In 1894 South Australia passed an Act—an optional Act—and that also was a failure. The present New Zealand Act was passed in the year 1894. In introducing it Mr. Reeve—than whom I suppose no person is better acquainted with the history of attempts to settle disputes by State processes—gave it as his dictum that in England, throughout America and Europe, and in Australia, voluntary arbitration has failed for generations. "It is necessary," he said, "to try something else, and I ask you to try compulsory arbitration." Mr. Lloyd, an American economist, who has made a close study of the subject, gives it as his opinion "that almost never was any great strike settled by voluntary arbitration—only the little ones." Objection has been raised previously to anything savouring of compulsion; but upon those who continue to take that stand devolves the duty of showing that in any single country in the world voluntary arbitration has succeeded. I am aware that at certain trades union congresses in the old country resolutions of antipathy to compulsory arbitration have been passed; also, that in America there is a strong feeling amongst the working classes against compulsory arbitration; but if anyone will read the deliberations of those conferences he will find that the opinion expressed and the various reasons given for the antipathy were due to the fact that the working classes in those places have no trust in the fairness of the judges in dispensing justice to them. Anyone who reads the American papers and is aware of the rank injustices there against unions in the name of "injunctions" can easily understand that. We have only to remember also the decision in the Taff Vale case to get an idea why English trades unionists have not had the full faith in their judges which under other circumstances they might have. Under compulsory arbitration laws all the machinery for conciliation is provided. Compulsory arbitration does not imply doing away with conciliation, it implies the encouragement of conciliation; and in every Act introduced in Australasia there has been most elaborate provision for exhausting all attempting at conciliation before resorting to compulsion. Under all these Acts there are what are known as industrial agreements. Under an industrial agreement any employer or body of employers may agree to certain conditions with any workman or body of workmen, and may agree to abide by those conditions for a certain time. This agreement may be registered, and it has then the force of law. Any breach of the agreement is treated the same as the breach of any other agreement or contract; and any workman who has subscribed to it and does not keep to his compact can be summarily fined. Any union making an industrial agreement and breaking it can be treated as the breaker of any other contract is treated. [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Can't you do that under the present

law?] I don't think it can be done in Queensland. [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is not illegal to do it.] I don't think the agreement could be registered. It certainly could if we had an Arbitration Act. [The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: There is no law to prohibit it.] The advantage of these industrial agreements is apparent. An employer may want to undertake a large contract extending over two years. He is under heavy penalties if he does not complete his contract in time, and he does not want any interruption. He arranges with men to pay them certain wages for working certain hours, and there are certain other conditions. The men are satisfied, the agreement is signed and registered, and the work proceeds uninterruptedly. He has no worry or anxiety as to whether anything will arise to prevent him from carrying out the work; he enters on the contract with the full assurance that he has the force of the law behind him. On the other hand, the workmen also abide by their agreement loyally, feeling that they have entered into a legal obligation to carry out a certain undertaking. Under the New Zealand Act they have also what are known as "boards of conciliation"; and the country is divided, for purposes of conciliation, into five districts. In each district there is an official, and when any dispute arises there are two nominees of the workmen and two nominees of the employer, who sit with the official to bring about an amicable understanding. The boards have not power to summon witnesses or order books, or to enter any shop or factory. They sit and thrash out the ins and outs of the case; they come to a decision, and that decision is not binding unless both parties are agreeable. If both parties are satisfied, the decision is registered and has the force of law. If either party is dissatisfied with the award, then behind the board of conciliation there is the court of arbitration, and the dissatisfied party brings the matter before the arbitration court. These conciliation boards are not incorporated in any other measure, I believe, except the Western Australian Act; they were dropped out of Mr. Wise's Act, and they were dropped out of the federal measure. Under the federal measure there are no fixed boards, but the court has power to delegate its authority to temporary boards. There is a difference between having a fixed board and the arbitration court being allowed to delegate its powers to any body. In Mr. Wise's Act there are no fixed boards. Both the report of Judge Backhouse and the Victorian Factories Commissioner deal to some extent with the working of the boards; and Mr. Seddon not very long ago raised a note of warning. That note of warning was taken up by the opponents of the Act all over the country, and was used to decry the whole Act. But Mr. Seddon's warning was aimed only at the boards of conciliation, and, no doubt, in certain cases it was warranted. For instance, the nominee members of the boards on either side are paid for attendance, and it was found in some cases that disputes were fomented and unnecessarily prolonged by the parties who were being paid for hearing the disputes. Numbers of disputes were being brought forward that were not justifiable. But, while in some cases these boards of conciliation proved to be failures, in other cases they have done some admirable work. They have thrashed out the preliminaries, and, while they have only succeeded in settling something like one-third of the number of disputes that have been brought before them, they have narrowed the issues down so that the arbitration court is relieved of a great deal of unnecessary detail. Taken as a whole, the boards of conciliation in New Zealand have proved successful; but a recent amendment of the Act

has allowed parties to disputes immediate access to the arbitration court, without going through the routine of appealing to that tribunal. Whether these courts are permanent, or whether they have power to delegate their authority, the greatest care is taken to provide that all means of voluntary settlement are availed of before compulsion is resorted to. There can be no conciliation effected without having powers of compulsion behind it. The feeling that, in the event of conciliatory measures failing, a legal tribunal will decide the dispute is the strongest incentive to bringing parties to a dispute to their bearings. The strength of an arbitration court is the feeling that there is finality. The arbitration court itself deserves a little attention. In New Zealand—the mother country from which all the other Acts have been taken, and upon whose tribunal all other arbitration courts have been modelled—is presided over by a judge of the Supreme Court, with whom sit a nominee of the employers and a nominee of the employees of New Zealand. The court is sworn to decide every case upon its merits, with equity and good conscience. It has the power to proceed in secrecy—that is to say, the contents of books and trade secrets shall not be made public. [Mr. McMASTER: You do not believe in that, surely.] I do. [Mr. McMASTER: You do not believe in Star Chambers.] I do not believe in Star Chambers, but I believe it is necessary that a man's business dealings and secrets should not be dragged forth into the light of day because of some dispute that he has with his employees. I am sure the hon. member would not like the whole of his business to be made public in that way. [Mr. McMASTER: That is what your party want.] That is not what our party wants. Where privacy is necessary, that privacy is maintained. Under the New Zealand Act no lawyers are employed. A workman comes along and thrashes out his case as the representative of the union, and the representative of the employers thrashes out their case. The court is simplicity itself. I had the pleasure of attending the New South Wales court on several occasions recently, and the absolute simplicity with which negotiations were conducted, and the good feeling displayed by the belligerents, was quite an object lesson in itself. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They evade that by getting a lawyer to act as secretary.] In New South Wales lawyers may be employed, I am sorry to say, but under the Federal Act no lawyers are to be allowed to appear. Although lawyers may be employed in New South Wales, yet, in some cases, representatives of the parties thrash out the matters in dispute without legal assistance. I believe that, under the New Zealand Act, if both parties are agreeable to the employment of lawyers, lawyers may be employed, but the rule is that none appear. The arbitration court has large powers, but in view of the fact that a Supreme Court judge acts as arbiter, the powers are hardly larger than those entrusted to any judge of the Supreme Court. The court has power to call for books and to summon witnesses, and to examine into the inmost details in disputes. No doubt, two of its powers will be referred to during this discussion—namely, the power to fix a minimum wage, and the power to give preference to unionists. With regard to a minimum wage, I am not one of those who think it wrong for the State to interfere on behalf of any section of its citizens whom it considers to be oppressed, and to say, "Thus far and no farther shalt thou come." I believe that it is the duty of the State to see that none of its citizens are oppressed in the matter of wages or in any other respect. The minimum wage as fixed by this arbitration court is not

founded upon law, but upon the facts of the case as brought before the tribunal. It is founded upon economic facts; and surely that is a better method of establishing a basis than the present method of the bayonet or of the fiat of the capitalist or an employers' union. The minimum wage as fixed by the arbitration court is only fixed after the most serious deliberation and a careful examination of the facts of the case. The court feels that it is not its duty to victimise any party to the dispute, but to decide justly between both claimants. There are several cases in New Zealand in which the arbitration court, instead of increasing wages, has reduced wages, as in the case of the Wellington compositors and the case of certain miners; and in New South Wales the court decreased the hewing rate for coal. I mention these facts, not because I think we should glory over them in any way, but to show that the tribunal acts impartially, and is guided only by the facts of the case as it is brought before it. The power to fix a minimum wage is absolutely essential to the working of an Act of this description. I am inclined to think that the majority of employers—possibly a small majority, but nevertheless a majority—are willing, if circumstances permit them, to pay their employees a decent wage and work them only reasonable hours. But the conditions of any industry are determined, not by the fair employers, but by the unfair employers—not by the scrupulous employers, but by the unscrupulous employers who take every ounce they can out of their employees and work them unreasonable hours. The fixing of wages by an arbitration court gives the fair employer a chance; instead of dragging the fair employer down to the level of the sweater, it lifts the sweater up to the level of the fair employer. In New Zealand an extraordinary thing has been done. When awards have been given, employers have encouraged men to form unions in order that the awards may be made to apply to others competing against them unfairly, and also that unfair competitors may be brought up to the standard they are compelled to maintain. The court has also power to make provision for aged and slow workers—that is to say, that in fixing the minimum wage they may take into consideration the ability of the workers. In dealing with the court and its powers it must be assumed that we are not dealing with unreasonable madmen, but with men skilled in the taking of evidence and having a knowledge of what the effect of their decisions will be. Another power of the court which is likely to cause a good deal of discussion, and possibly a good deal of misrepresentation, is that power which enables them to give the preference to unionists. In the Acts of New Zealand, New South Wales, Western Australia, and the proposed Federal Act provision is made for giving preference to unionists. In New Zealand this provision has been in force almost since the Act came into existence. Each case is decided on its merits. In many cases where preference to unionists has been refused the courts have always insisted that there shall be no discrimination made by employers in employing unionists and non-unionists. We have to recognise that it is only in organised trades that strikes occur. When an organised body of men—and the court only deals with organised bodies—renounces its right to strike, as it does under the Conciliation and Arbitration Act, it is surely entitled to some consideration in return! Only non-unionists retain the power to strike. These Acts are passed not to encourage industrial disputes, but to prevent them, and it is surely fair that some consideration should be shown to those bodies of men who voluntarily renounce

what Mr. Reeve once described as the "sacred right of insurrection." [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: There are cases which have been hanging over for eighteen months, and which they cannot get settled.] That is owing to the press of business. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: That is almost worse than a strike.] Oh, no; these men cannot strike when they have once registered; they have to wait until the court decides the matter, and the industry goes on uninterrupted. In giving preference to unionists, the court first of all demands that the unionists shall be a majority in that particular trade; and then they see to it that the union is not a close corporation, that the rules and entrance fees are such as to allow free access to the union by any decent workman in that particular trade. They further compel the union to keep a book at its office in which are registered all the unemployed in that union, and that book is to be kept open during a certain specified period, and to be subject to inspection by any employer who chooses to avail himself of the men whose names are there registered. The court, in granting preference to unionists, also insists that the unionists must be equally qualified and able to do the work specified. All these provisions show that the utmost care is taken that no injustice shall be done to anybody in granting preference to unionists. In New Zealand, under a recent amendment of the Act, this preference has been made to cut both ways. Employers are to give preference to unionists where unionists are a majority in the trade, and unionists, in turn, to give preference to those employers who are registered under the Act. I think I have pretty well described the working of the Act, without going too much into details. When it is understood that a measure of this nature has been in force in New Zealand for nine years, it must be plain that it has passed beyond the experimental stage. The statistics of New Zealand show that the operation of the Act has in no way hampered the prosperity of the colony, and I claim that it has added to the prosperity of the colony. Mr. Tregear states that from 1894 to 1902, the years during which the Conciliation and Arbitration Act has been in operation, the hands employed in factories have increased from 25,851 to 53,460, or by 100 per cent.; the exports increased from £9,500,000 to £13,000,000, and private wealth from £145,000,000 to £228,000,000. These figures show, to say the least, that this Act there has not militated against the progress and welfare

[5 p.m.] of the colony. It has been amended on two occasions, and on the second occasion there was not one dissentient voice against the Act in the House. I do not wish to weary the House, but I could, if I chose, produce testimony from all classes of manufacturers who have given evidence before these tribunals to show that they are thoroughly satisfied with these boards and with the Act, although a good many believed that by making certain amendments in the Act it would work more beneficially. I propose only to give a few of the opinions to show how the Act is received in that country, and with what satisfaction it is working. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They wanted the Premier to "sack" the judge because he gave a decision against them.] I thank the hon. gentleman for that interjection. I am aware that in New South Wales and in New Zealand there has been some dissatisfaction expressed by working men against certain provisions of the Act, but that is only natural. You will find that in connection with every Act. Is it not better to have such dissatisfaction than for men to go out on strike and create a public nuisance? Let both sides grow! that is all they can do. [The SECRETARY FOR

PUBLIC WORKS: They went to the Premier and said he would have to "sack" the judge.] I don't think they did. I think it was the Wellington painters, who expressed great dissatisfaction because the verdict of the court, went against them. I say that in every case where the decision of the court went against the men, they loyally abided by that decision. Mr. Blackwell, the managing director of the Kaiapoi Woollen Mills, in giving his evidence before the committee of the Assembly there, recently drew attention to, and endorsed, the following paragraph from a manifesto issued by the Canterbury Employers' Association:—

The Canterbury Employers' Association desire to impress upon the Government that they are thoroughly in accord with the principles laid down in the Conciliation and Arbitration Act. Any hostility they may have shown in the past was mainly due to the fact that the Act was made to apply to a certain section of the industrial community only. The Government now propose to remove this, and if the Bill now before the House is amended in the direction suggested by the association, they are strongly of the opinion that it would be impossible to conceive of a more useful measure, properly administered, that would prove of such immense benefit to all sections of the industrial community, and with that in view, the association urge upon the Government to reconsider the decision not to allow the Act to apply to all workers under the Crown. There is no antagonism now, whatever there may have been in the past. We desire to co-operate in making the present Bill a good workable measure.

Mr. Outtrim, the chairman of the Victorian Factories Royal Commission of 1902, when interviewed by the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, said—

We examined a large number of witnesses from both sides, and with the exception of one employer there was a unanimous opinion that the principle of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act is a sound one, and that they would be very sorry indeed to go back to the old order of things. Our witnesses were mainly representatives of large organisations—men like the president of the Chamber of Commerce, secretaries or presidents of employers' associations, and officers of the various industrial unions. They all say that it is a most beneficial law.

Judge Backhouse, after he had investigated the working of the New Zealand Act, said in a general summary—

The Act has prevented strikes of any magnitude, and has, on the whole, brought about a better relation between employers and employees than would exist if there were no Act. It has enabled the increase of wages and the other conditions favourable to the workmen which, under the circumstances of the colony, they are entitled to, to be settled without that friction and bitterness of feeling which otherwise might have existed; it has enabled employers, for a time at least, to know with certainty the conditions of production, and therefore to make contracts with the knowledge that they would be able to fulfil them; and indirectly it has tended to a more harmonious feeling among the people generally, which must have worked for the weal of the colony. A very large majority of the employers of labour whom I interviewed are in favour of the principle of the Act.

Then, in the report of the Victorian Royal Commission on Factories and Workshops, after an investigation into the working of the New Zealand Act, they recommended to the Government the substitution of the New Zealand law of conciliation and arbitration for that then in existence in Victoria. The report says—

Despite certain defects in detail, which have been revealed by experience, the New Zealand Conciliation and Arbitration Acts remain to-day the fairest, the most complete, and the most useful labour law on the statute-books of the Australasian States. And it is, on the whole, a wise social law, on the one hand protecting the fair-minded employer from the dishonest competition of the sweeter who keeps down the cost of production by paying miserably low wages, and, on the other, the toiling thousands, to whom a rise in wages of a few shillings a week when an industry can fairly bear it, often means the difference between gripping poverty and comparative comfort. But beyond that, it has the great merit of providing effective means

for preserving unimpaired the industrial relationship of employer and worker, in forbidding the miserable warfare which displays itself in strikes and lockouts, and the stern reprisals which too often accompany them, while ample opportunity is given for conciliatory methods of settling disputes before compulsion is invoked.

The law may fairly be said to have passed successfully through its period of probation. Its main principles have stood the test of time, and while employers and workers alike keenly criticise each other's actions in connection with its operation in certain industrial centres, in no part of the colony which we visited did we hear any general desire expressed for its repeal. Many suggestions were, indeed, made for minor alterations, but they were put forward with the view of improving the general administration of the Act, while preserving its main principles in their integrity.

I sincerely hope that hon. members in approaching this subject will put aside any class prejudice; that they will recognise, from the reports of these independent tribunals that have fully investigated the Act after nine years' working in New Zealand, that it is worthy of being placed on our statute-book. To argue against the Act is to argue against the judgment of the New Zealand people. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The labour leaders in England are not in favour of it.] I have dealt with that point. I explained that both in England and America the working classes mistrust the judges on account of the decisions that have been given. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Don't they mistrust the judges in New Zealand?] No. There has not been a word of blame or adverse criticism of the judges in New Zealand for their administration of the Act. Mr. Reeves, the founder of the Act, says, in his recently published book on State experiments in Australia, that had it not been for the judges—particularly Judge Edwards, who for the first four years of the existence of the Act was president of the court—had it not been for the splendid way in which they performed their duty the Act would never have attained its present splendid position. Anyone who opposes compulsory arbitration passes a censure on the New Zealand Parliament, on the New South Wales Parliament, on the Western Australian Parliament, and on the Federal Parliament. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The Western Australian Act does not give a preference to unionists.] It does. You could not carry out such an Act without giving preference to unionists. At any rate, I think, taking it on the whole, there is more wisdom concentrated in the New Zealand, the New South Wales, the Victorian, and Federal Parliaments, backed up by the reports of the tribunals to which I have referred, than there is even in this Parliament. I am very sorry to see, while a measure of this importance is being discussed, there are only two hon. members on the Treasury bench, and only two members sitting behind them. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: There are only nine on your side.] I think any man who takes any forethought, or looks into the conditions prevailing all over the world to-day, cannot but view the position with some little trepidation. We see large bodies of workers organising and accumulating fighting funds, backed up by class bitterness; on the other hand, we have employers accumulating large funds, co-operating in wider and wider spheres; and these two bodies of citizens are ready at any moment to fly at each others throats and disorganise industrial conditions. If that goes on uninterruptedly—and as far as we can see it is going to do so—if that co-operation of workmen antagonistic to employers, and that co-operation of employers antagonistic to workmen is allowed to go on, it can lead to only one end. In speaking lately to an American gentleman who belongs to the leisured class—a student of economics who looks at the question without

class prejudice of any kind—I asked him his opinion on the concentration of the great industrial forces in America, and he gave me his candid opinion that America would yet be launched upon a civil war more bloody than anything that has ever yet occurred in her history—that the forces were ripening, and he did not see what there was to prevent it. I think that the one thing to prevent this State being disrupted by the industrial forces maturing within it is a measure of this kind. I believe the assertion by the State of its own power—of its own greatness as against either of those sections of the community—is the proper attitude. I believe in peaceful evolution, and unless every facility is given for aiding peaceful evolution it is inevitable that revolution will ensue. I believe these States will pass through the very same processes as the older industrial countries have passed through. The elements of great trouble already appear in the federation of the unions and the federation of the employers; and I think the finest remedy to bring these forces into line—to harness them and make them subservient to the general weal—is a measure of this kind.

The PREMIER: I am very glad the hon. member has a desire that all class feeling shall be avoided in discussing this motion, and I agree with him that we should give the matter our earnest and careful consideration. I am sure there is not a member who would not like to see some means by which industrial strife could be avoided altogether. [Honourable members: Hear, hear!] But the question is whether that is going to be done by an Act of Parliament. I attribute the prosperity of New Zealand to the fine seasons and the bountiful rains with which she has been blessed, and to her enormous export of frozen mutton. I believe that that colony is the first country in the world to make this experiment, and really it is only yet in its infancy. Nine years is not sufficient to say that it has had a fair trial. Western Australia passed an Act some three or four years ago, and New South Wales has lately followed suit, and we are assured by Mr. Wise that the New South Wales Act is the finest piece of legislation in the world. But Mr. Wise is not a practical man—I do not suppose he has ever employed more than one or two men in his life, and it may take ten or twenty years before we know whether the Act has been a good thing for working men or not, or for the people as a whole, even in New Zealand. [Mr. KENNA: It has, so far.] It may have appeared to be a success so far. We have not been troubled with a strike for some time in Queensland. In fact, the last strike we had I think had its origin in New Zealand. I think a fireman employed by the New Zealand Shipping Company was discharged in Tasmania; New Zealand took it up, and the trouble spread all over Australia. That was the cause of the seamen's strike. We must also remember that New Zealand is a country with very heavy protective duties. At the present time they are pretty well living within themselves. They are not an exporting country like Canada or America, where they are manufacturing goods and competing in the markets of the world. In New Zealand they manufacture a little cloth for themselves, but in the main they depend for their prosperity upon their export of agricultural and pastoral products, in which they have been able to compete successfully with other parts of the world. I dare say the last boom in New Zealand was due to the South African war. But in New Zealand there has been a dispute in the Wabai Mine. That was not satisfactorily settled, so far as I have been able to learn. The Act in Western Australia is very far-reaching. Under its

operations they are putting up the rates of wages. Had the Act been confined to the settlement of disputes there might not have been the same objection to it; but under it they are raising the rate of wages on the goldfields, and a company with cyanide works for the treatment of tailings found there was nothing in it with the higher wages, and they have been compelled to stop work. The result is that there are now numbers of unemployed there, and when a deputation waited on the Premier, he told them that it was not his business to find them work. The Act in Western Australia gives the court power to fix the rate of wages. [Mr. KENNA: It does not deal with the unemployed at all.] No, but by raising the rate of wages, it has caused numbers of men to be thrown out of work. Underlying all commercial prosperity are the rates of wages and the hours of labour. In England the trades do not want compulsory arbitration, and in America the Labour party will not have it either. Mr. John Howell, the well-known author on Labour subjects, and a Labour leader in England, says—

It has been tried in New Zealand, where it is alleged it has signally failed.

I am sure that Mr. Howell is just as anxious for the welfare of the working classes in England as the hon. member for Bowen is for their welfare here—in fact, more so. The trouble is that if a man in business has an award made against him he may be completely ruined. [Mr. KENNA: Oh, no!] He may have invested £50,000, and by the imposition of higher wages and shorter hours, his business may be ruined. [Mr. KENNA: The award is given on the facts.] At any rate, if an award is given against the other side there is nothing to compel them to accept it. [Mr. KENNA: They do in New Zealand.] Because so far every award there has been on the up-grade. I know that if I thought I was worth 10s. a day, fifty Acts of Parliament would not compel me to work for 9s. a day, and I am sure the hon. member for Bowen would feel the same. In Western Australia already men are out of work in consequence of the action of the court in raising wages, and they will have to take lower wages if they want to make industries pay. But, in the meantime, a man's whole business is shut up, and he may be sold out. That is a hardship. [Mr. KENNA: Judge Backhouse says it has not done any injustice.] [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The trouble will be when the decisions are against the men.] For the last eight or nine years the awards made in New Zealand have been upwards as regards wages. They have had splendid seasons and splendid markets, but we know that in the meat industry particularly they are now beginning to feel the competition of Argentina, where there is no compulsory arbitration, and where wages are only one-third or one-fourth of the rates of wages paid in New Zealand. That competition has not been felt hitherto, because it is only during the last three years or so that Argentina has been exporting frozen meat. Before that they only shipped chilled meat. But they are now competing in the South African market with New Zealand, and the hon. member knows that the last Manilla contract went to Argentina owing to the high price of cattle in Queensland. Once New Zealand commences to export manufactured goods, the trouble will begin. Of course, as regards agricultural produce, farmers and farm labourers are not included in the operations of the Act. [Mr. KENNA: Quite so, only secondary industries.] [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: They were in the first Bill, but the farmers made them take them out.] The meatworks and factories are all under the Act. But the danger is to people who

are in business. Why should a third party have the power to say to them, "You must pay so much, whether you like it or not?" [Mr. KENNA: They should make the judge see the state of their business.] That is a very hard thing for them to do sometimes. We know that in our own case, when the Government, as the lessors of all the land in this great State, go before a judge, they [5:30 p.m.] have only one or two witnesses, while every lessee in the country is a witness against them, and the decision goes against the Government. That might be the case under a Conciliation and Arbitration Act. There is one employer, and perhaps 300 or 400 employees. [Mr. KIDSTON: What is the case now?] We have had very little trouble in Queensland; we have had very few industrial disputes. Most of the disputes that have occurred in this State were imported. That great seamen's strike arose through the discharge of a fireman in Tasmania, and the unions took up his case, and paralysed the whole trade of Australia. Since then wages have been raised and lowered by the shipping companies, and there has been no occasion to go to an arbitration court about the matter. [Mr. KENNA: They are all working under the Conciliation and Arbitration Act in New Zealand.] They are not in Australia, and, as far as I can understand, the shipping companies of Australia are in perfect accord with the seamen and all their employees. As I have said, since that strike wages have been lowered and raised. I think the wages have been again lowered, but so far there has been no necessity to go to an arbitration court. That is the fairest way for both parties to settle the matter. A man in business knows what he can afford to pay as wages, and a man in work knows what he is worth, and fifty Acts of Parliament could not compel a man to work for less than he thinks he is worth. [Mr. KIDSTON: You can compel a man to do that without an Act of Parliament.] That may be, but you cannot force these things by Act of Parliament. If I thought for a moment that compulsory arbitration would settle all disputes between employers and employees I would willingly vote for it, but I am informed that that is not the case in New Zealand. I am told that the bulk of employers there are opposed to the Act. In Victoria they have a wages board, and everybody is dissatisfied with it; the men themselves are dissatisfied with it. The other day a man in Melbourne who had a little printing-press which he used for printing books for Australian authors, was giving a lot of people encouragement by the rate of wages which he paid. But the wages board came along and fixed the wages at such a figure that he found he could get the work done very much cheaper in London, with the result that he now sends that printing work home. I refer to Mr. Cole, of the great book arcade in Melbourne. If a man could be sure that on going into a mine he would get stone which would go 4 oz. to the ton, he could afford to pay a good price for labour, but we know that it is quite different. [Mr. KENNA: If we do not pass a Conciliation and Arbitration Act, we shall have people taking advantage of the Federal Act.] They may do so. But that Act is not passed yet. Will it not be time enough to provide for such a case when it arises? If the measure is passed, and we find that it is disadvantageous to this State, that will then be time enough for us to legislate on the subject. So far, federal legislation, as we think, has not been satisfactory to this State. [Mr. BROWNE: And we think it has.] That is the difference. There are a number of gentlemen in Melbourne who know nothing at all of this country, and have had no

experience in Queensland, and they claim to know what is necessary for this State better than we do ourselves. But we generally find that a man can talk most on a thing he knows nothing about. I have had a good deal of experience among men, both as an employee and an employer. I never felt the want of compulsory arbitration when I was working for wages. [Mr. KIDSTON: You had a gentlemanly way of working, though.] Perhaps so. I should have thought it hard if a third party came in and told me what I should do. [An honourable member: Would you not like to be protected against low wages?] I would, but I do not think you can protect people in that connection by Act of Parliament. This measure has been longest in operation in New Zealand, and there it has been in force for only nine years, yet because it has been in operation there for that period it is claimed that it is a success. The farmers, who are practically the mainstay of New Zealand, are not included in that Act. [Mr. KENNA: Under the proposed Federal Act they may be.] How can a federal measure affect New Zealand? [Mr. KIDSTON: Cannot this Parliament pass any legislation?] Of course it can, and no doubt would if it was wise legislation. [Mr. BROWNE: We did not wait for much experiment about the poll tax.] No; but I am informed by one or two leading lights on that side that it is not a new tax at all, but one that has been in force for some time in several States of America. We know that America is one of the greatest countries in the world, and we are proud of the fact, and we get advice from America. I can assure this House that I am just as anxious as the hon. member for Bowen to do anything I possibly can for the working classes and employers of this State. I have heard of no strong desire for this measure. When I have been up for election I have never been asked the question: "Are you in favour of a Compulsory Arbitration Act?" I would strongly advise the House to wait and see how legislation of this character works in other countries before putting it on our statute-book. Because a Conciliation and Arbitration Act has been in operation for nine years in New Zealand, that is surely not a sufficient reason for our passing such an Act. In New Zealand they at first proposed to bring everybody under the Act. Then they excluded the farmers, and, after all, it is the farmers who keep New Zealand going. In Western Australia they have raised wages in two or three cases under the Act. I have told you of one where they raised the wages of people on a goldfield, with the result that several mines are not now treating tailings with the cyanide process. At the present time the industries of Queensland are not in a very flourishing condition, and we ought to be very careful about doing anything that might injure them. [Honourable members: Hear, hear!] We want to provide as much employment as possible for the working classes of Queensland. The leader of the Opposition told us that there are a great number of unemployed in this State. Possibly there are some unemployed, and I should like to see them get work. But if we commence and pass restrictive legislation that will prevent people from going into business, that will not be doing the best for the unemployed. Our industries are now, in some cases, in a very bad way, and we want to foster them. I was asked to-day if I would bring in a Bill providing for the better accommodation of shearers. Now, I think we want to get a few more sheep to shear, and see the owners getting on their legs and in possession of a little more wool before we bring in legislation of that nature. [Mr. W. HAMILTON: Then you put property before human lives?] I do not think the

condition of the shearers is as bad as the hon. member for Gregory makes out. [Mr. W. HAMILTON: You have never been amongst them. You don't know.] Well, I think I know something about Queensland, although I have never been shearing. We want plenty of employers and plenty of work for the unemployed, and we should not confine such a Bill to shearers alone, but apply it to all classes of labour. But I think the passing of such a measure as the hon. member for Gregory wants would make the lot of the employer and the employee worse than it is, for the more money you take out of the pockets of the employer the less there is for the employee. We want to make our industries flourish, and then better conditions will prevail. [Mr. W. HAMILTON: Look at the money you spend settling industrial disputes when they arise.] All these matters are intersected together, and if we commence and bring in cast-iron legislation we will not at all improve things. You would want to keep men specially employed to see that people do not run counter to the Act. I don't think it would be wise in a young country like this—we have 660,000 square miles, and only 500,000 people here—to introduce such legislation. If we had a few millions and things were better, then we might do something of the sort. [Mr. KENNA: It only costs £4,900 a year to work the Act in New Zealand.] What has been the tenor of debate here during the last few days? That we have been spending too much money, and all this legislation means the spending of more money. Every Act that is passed costs money to administer. [Mr. KENNA: Dispense with the "Lucinda."] If the hon. member will arrange with the Federal Government to buy her, I shall be very glad to sell her. I have as much sympathy with the working classes as any man in this House. I am anxious to help them; but I honestly believe that passing a Bill of this kind would prevent getting employment, for we know the feeling there is in Australia and outside Australia and in London amongst capitalists. I am glad to know that there are some capitalists on the other side of the House. I think the hon. member for Gregory said last night that they could buy this side of the House out. [Mr. W. HAMILTON: And pay hard cash, too.] I am exceedingly pleased to hear it. We have been accused of being capitalists and boodlers, and I am glad that the hon. member and his friends have so much money. I think that should make them a little more considerate for the people who have only a little money. Now we can say that we represent the workers and they represent the capitalists. We want to encourage capitalists to come here, and to encourage that side of the House to spend money. [Mr. W. HAMILTON: The capitalists on this side are not afraid of this democratic legislation.] I am very glad to hear that, but I would like to see them start a few industries. I don't think hon. members on the other side are doing that, with the exception of one hon. member who has a few grazing farms. I hope he will start more industries. [Mr. W. HAMILTON: He pays the best wages in Queensland. He practises what he preaches.] I am glad to hear that, for most men don't do that. I cannot see my way to vote for this resolution. I want to see a great many more people here, and I want to get a little more experience of the working of this Act elsewhere. I understand that the Appropriation Bill has been returned from the Legislative Council, and, as we wish to put it through, I will move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed; and the resumption of the debate was made an Order of the Day for Thursday, the 27th August.

APPROPRIATION BILL No. 1.

MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Legislative Council, returning this Bill without amendment.

At eleven minutes to 6 p.m. the hon. member for Dalby relieved the Speaker in the chair.

PAYMENT OF INCOME TAX.

On the motion standing in the name of Mr. Kidston, asking for a return showing the number of persons who paid the income tax, being called,

Mr. KIDSTON (*Rockhampton*) said: I wish to withdraw this motion, as I believe the Treasurer is going to furnish the figures in his Financial Statement.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

MINERS' ACCIDENT RELIEF FUND BILL.

On the motion of Mr. DUNSFORD, it was formally resolved—

That the House will, on 13th instant, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the following resolutions:—

1. That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to establish a miners' accident relief fund.
2. That an address be presented to the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to recommend the necessary appropriation to give effect to such Bill.

COMPENSATION TO WORKMEN.

On the motion relating to compensation to workmen for accidental injuries being called,

Mr. RYLAND (*Gympie*) said: It is not my intention to proceed with this motion, as the Attorney-General has promised to introduce legislation with a similar object.

MONEY PAID TO WESTINGHOUSE BRAKE COMPANY.

Mr. WOODS, in moving—

That there be laid on the table of the House a return showing the total amount of money paid to the Westinghouse Brake Company from the time of Mr. Nisbet's appointment as Chief Mechanical Engineer of Queensland Railways to the 30th June, 1903.

said: The reasons why I ask for this information are reasons that were given last session, and very good reasons have been given during the debate that has taken place this session. Certain experts have been introduced into this State, and the result of the introduction of some of these experts has been the expenditure of £310,000 in the Ipswich workshops, which are built 9 feet under flood mark. I am satisfied that the reason why Mr. Nisbet accepted the appointment in the Railway Department was that he was the representative of the Westinghouse Brake Company, and the moment he got the contract for the Westinghouse brake fixed up he left. The Westinghouse brake is attached to the whole of the trucks, and there are brakes attached to wagons lying rotting along the roads. There are ballast wagons standing in the different sidings with Westinghouse brakes absolutely useless and entirely out of date. I think the people of Queensland should know exactly why

and where this money is expended. When Mr. Nisbet was appointed there were two brakes being tested, and it is rumoured that certain officials had their "hands greased" to let this particular company get the contract.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I have no objection to the return being given, but it will involve a great deal of expense. If it is necessary for the purpose of acquiring proper information as to whether anything of the kind suggested by the hon. member has been done, I will not oppose the motion. If any man in the department put his own private interests before those of the department, I would be the first person to put down my foot. The Westinghouse brake has been used very freely; they tell me it has been used indiscriminately, but I do not know that it has been used much during my time. If I can get information to prove what the hon. member has been suggesting, I will be pleased to inquire into the matter.

Question put and passed.

At 6 o'clock the House, in accordance with Sessional Order, proceeded with Government business.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL.

On the motion of the PREMIER, it was resolved—

That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to amend the law with respect to compensation to workmen for injuries suffered in the course of their employment.

JOINT COMMITTEES.

On the motion of the PREMIER, it was resolved that Mr. Speaker, Mr. Jackson, and Mr. Cowley be members of the Joint Library Committee; that Mr. Speaker, Mr. J. Hamilton, and Mr. Dibley be members of the Joint Committee for the Management of the Refreshment-rooms; and that Mr. Speaker, Mr. Petrie, and Mr. Hodge be members of the Joint Committee for the Management and Superintendence of the Parliamentary Buildings; and that these appointments be communicated to the Council, by message in the usual form.

SUPPLY.

OPENING OF COMMITTEE.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER, in accordance with Standing Order No. 16, read so much of His Excellency's Opening Speech as was addressed to the Legislative Assembly.

On the motion of the TREASURER, it was resolved that the House would, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the Supply to be granted to His Majesty.

APPROPRIATION BILL No. 1.

ASSENT.

The SPEAKER (who here resumed the chair) said: I have to inform the House that I attended His Excellency at Government House, and presented to him the Appropriation Bill No. 1, and that His Excellency has been pleased, in my presence, to assent thereto in the name and on behalf of His Majesty.

The House adjourned at nine minutes past 6 o'clock.