

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 1904

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PURCHASE OF POLICE HORSES.

Mr. LESINA asked the Home Secretary—

Has he any objection to lay upon the table of the House all particulars, etc., in connection with the purchase by the Police Commissioner of thirty-five aged horses, at about £11 per head, for police remount purposes, from a station of which John Leahy is managing director and Mr. Okeden, junr., is manager?

The HOME SECRETARY replied—
No objection.

ELECTIONS TRIBUNAL.

PANEL OF ASSESSORS.

The SPEAKER: Pursuant to the requirements of the Elections Tribunal Act of 1886, I now lay on the table my warrant nominating the panel of assessors for the trial of election petitions during the present session.

PRINTING COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the PREMIER (Hon. A. Morgan, *Warwick*), it was formally resolved—

1. That, in compliance with Standing Order No. 30f, a Select Committee be appointed to assist Mr. Speaker in all matters which relate to the printing to be executed by order of the House; and for the purpose of selecting and arranging for printing returns and papers presented in pursuance of motions made by members.

2. That such committee consist of the following members:—Mr. Speaker, the Chairman of Committees, Mr. Tehnie, Mr. Paget, Mr. Burrows, Mr. Kenna, Mr. P. J. Leahy, Mr. Jenkinson, and Mr. Morgan.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the PREMIER (Hon. A. Morgan), it was formally resolved—

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

THURSDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER, 1904.

The SPEAKER (Hon. A. S. Cowley, *Herbert*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

QUESTIONS.

RE-ENACTMENT OF MARSUPIAL ACT.

Mr. HAMILTON (*Gregory*) asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

Is it his intention to re-enact the Marsupial Act this session, which expires this year?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. D. F. Denham, *Oxley*) replied—
Yes; in an amended form.

BURNETT LANDS.

Mr. NORMAN (*Maryborough*) asked the Secretary for Lands, without notice—

When he intended to lay upon the table of the House the reports of Mr. G. Phillips in connection with the Burnett lands?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. J. T. Bell, *Dalby*) replied—

I do not propose to lay the reports upon the table until they have been considered by Ministers.

BREEDING POLICE HORSES.

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*) asked the Home Secretary—

1. Upon whose recommendation was a stud farm for the breeding of police horses opened at Woodford?

2. What is the estimated annual cost of the innovation?

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. P. Airey, *Flinders*) replied—

1. The Commissioner of Police.
2. £20.

[*Mr. Nielson.*

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS BILL.

FIRST READING.

On the motion of Mr. PAGET (*Mackay*), this Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for Thursday, 6th October.

SUPPRESSION OF JUVENILE SMOKING

BILL.

FIRST READING.

On the motion of Mr. MACARTNEY (*Toowoong*), this Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for Thursday, 20th October.

BALANCE-SHEET, PROSERPINE MILL.

On the motion of Mr. KENNA (*Bowen*), it was formally resolved—

That there be laid on the table of the House a copy of the balance-sheet of the Proserpine mill for the year 1903.

CHINESE AT PROSERPINE MILL.

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

That there be laid on the table of the House copies of all correspondence relating to the employment of Chinese at the Proserpine mill.

PROSERPINE INQUIRY.

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

That there be laid on the table of the House copies of the evidence taken at the recent inquiry at Proserpine, together with Dr. Maxwell's report thereon.

DR. MAXWELL'S EXPENSES.

On the motion, standing in Mr. Kenna's name, to which "Formal" had been called—"That there be laid on the table of the House a return showing (a) the total amount drawn each year by Dr. Maxwell for travelling allowances since his first engagement; (b) the items thereon"—being called—

Mr. KENNA said: With the consent of the House, I wish to alter this motion by adding the words "cab and buggy hire and steamer fares" to the end.

The SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot make that alteration now, as the motion is a formal one. He can only do so by the unanimous leave of the House. Is it the wish of the House that the motion be so amended?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: No.

The SPEAKER: Do I understand the hon. member to say "No"?

The PREMIER: Yes.

The SPEAKER: Then the hon. member for Bowen cannot move the motion in the amended form. He must move it as it stands on the paper.

The motion was then put and carried in its original form.

SITTING DAYS—ORDER OF BUSINESS.

The PREMIER: I move—

That, unless otherwise ordered, the House will meet for the despatch of business at 3 o'clock p.m. on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday in each week; and that on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, and after 7 o'clock p.m. on Thursday, Government business do take precedence of all other business.

I called "Not formal" to this motion because I understand that some hon. members desire to speak upon it. The motion is, as you are aware, offered in the usual form, and in a form that has been found convenient to Parliament for many years past. In recent years there has been a desire expressed by some hon. members to substitute a day sitting on Friday for the evening sitting, so as to close at an hour which would permit members residing in country electorates within reach by railway to get away by the evening trains on Fridays. I understand that that feeling prevails among a certain number of members to-day, and that that is the aspect of the question which it is desired to raise in the discussion which will follow. I am quite prepared to admit that this is a matter which should be determined in a manner which will be most convenient to members generally, but I would ask hon. members on both sides of the House to remember that not only the convenience of members but the convenience of Ministers also should be had in remembrance when the matter is under consideration. In the Federal Parliament the system of Friday day sittings has been observed since the beginning. Whether it works well or not I am not in a position to say, but I have no doubt it is a convenience to members who desire to get to their homes for the week end recess. The proposal to have day sittings on Fridays is not new; indeed, we had Friday day sittings in the Legislative Assembly of Queens-

land many years ago. [Hon. R. PHILP: Only in the morning.] [Hon. E. B. FORREST: They closed at 1 o'clock.] I am not in a position to speak from personal knowledge on the subject, but the information I have been able to possess myself of would lead to the conclusion that the experiment was not altogether a success. At the Friday morning sittings, when there was generally a thin House, advantage was taken by hon. members to raid the Treasury—too often successfully. I do not desire to see that repeated now. No doubt the opportunities for raiding the Treasury are not so frequent now as then, since the management of roads and bridges has been taken over from the Central Parliament by the local authorities. If the majority of the House desires to make any change in regard to Friday sittings, I sincerely hope that a morning sitting will not be initiated, but that members will be content to meet earlier if they desire to rise earlier. I believe that is the object hon. members have in view, and I should like to put one other aspect of the question before the House as preliminary to the discussion, and that is, that with the time at the disposal of the House, if we are to conclude our business before Christmas—and I sincerely hope we shall so conclude it—it will be necessary to devote all our time sitting four days a week to the consideration of business; and if we shorten our sittings there is a prospect of imperilling legislation. That is an aspect of the matter which hon. members who are particularly interested in certain legislation should keep before their view. Ministers have plenty of work to offer the House, and, so far as I am able to see, we shall require all the time we can get sitting four days a week in order to accomplish the whole, or even the larger part, of that legislation. However, I recognise that this is a matter which should be determined in a manner calculated to suit the convenience of the majority of hon. members, and I am prepared to listen to any arguments that may be offered in support of a change. But I hope hon. members will not make a change without a full consideration of the possible consequences. There can be no doubt that it would be a convenience to members residing on the North Coast, the South Coast, and the Darling Downs to be able to get to their homes on Friday evenings. The train service to my own electorate is so wretchedly inefficient that I could not get home on a Friday if the House did rise earlier. However, I am prepared to listen to anything that may be advanced in support of the change I have indicated. At the same time I hope that while members who reside in country districts are naturally desirous of consulting their own convenience they will not take a step which may be inconvenient to others. I submit the motion in the form in which it stands on the paper.

Mr. McDONNELL (*Fortitude Valley*): I am pleased that the Premier has given me the opportunity of discussing this matter. I think this is an opportune time to make any departure so far as the sittings of the House are concerned. There is a feeling among a large number of members that we should have an earlier sitting on Friday so that it may terminate earlier. This mode of doing business has been adopted, I believe, with a good deal of success in the Federal Parliament, and I think that if the Government are prepared to accept an amendment on this motion we shall have exactly the same amount of time for the transaction of business on Friday by beginning earlier in the day as we have had by sitting at half-past 3. Members no doubt recognise that on a Friday, when the weather is hot, there is sometimes no great disposition on the part of many members

Mr. McDonnell.]

to do much business, and, as a matter of fact, there is not a great deal of business done on a Friday night till a late hour. At present there are a large number of country

members, and, if the House met early [4 p.m.] and adjourned early on Friday, they would have an opportunity of getting to their homes; but, if the House sits till the hour that it has heretofore sat on Fridays, those members will be unable to get home. The Premier mentioned that in the early days the House had early sittings on Fridays, and he was doubtful as to whether they were a success; but I would point out that the House is differently constituted now. Questions such as that to which the Premier himself referred—the discussion of divisional board questions—used to occupy a great deal of time in those days. I think there is a disposition on both sides of the House in the present day to do business, and I feel certain that, if the House meets in the early morning, we shall be able to get through much more business than we used to get through when the House sat late on Friday night, and a large number of members would be able to get to their homes fairly early on Friday. I know a good many country members are favourable to this suggestion, and I hope that the Government will consider it favourably. I do not wish, in moving an amendment, to encroach at all upon the time of Ministers, but I think that Ministers will be able to see their way clear to give the time which they will undoubtedly be asked to give if there is an early morning sitting. That is about the only objection to consider: and, from the remarks of the Premier, I imagine that Ministers have very little objection to offer on that score. [The PREMIER: We have an objection to offer to morning sittings—not to afternoon sittings.] The amendment I propose to submit—and I hope the Government will accept it—is: After the word “and” on the 2nd line, to insert the words “at 10 o’clock a.m. on Friday in each week, the sitting on Friday to terminate at 5 p.m.” [Hon. R. PHILP: Say 8 a.m.] I would have no objection. With the usual half-hour’s grace, that would mean that we should meet at half-past 10, adjourning for lunch at 1 o’clock; meeting again at 2 or half-past 2, and going on until 5 o’clock, when the sitting would terminate.

HON. R. PHILP (*Townsville*): I hope that the Government will not accept the amendment. It would be very inconvenient for hon. members who are in business in the city, at all events, to come here at 10 o’clock on Friday mornings. [Mr. McDONNELL: We would not meet till half-past 10.] Well, it would be inconvenient to come here at half-past 10. I should imagine also that it would not be very difficult, with a sitting like that, for three or four hon. members to stonewall any business. Another objection is that Friday is one of the busiest days in the week for members who have other businesses to attend to—it is mail day for the North. With the big majority behind the Government, I do not suppose they will need to keep them all here. They might spare six, or even a dozen, for a day or a week. [The TREASURER: Take it in tr-lays.] Of course we can only protest on this side of the House; but I think it would be very unwise for the Government to accede to the wish of the hon. member for Fortitude Valley. It might suit some hon. members to meet at 2 o’clock and conclude the sitting at 6 o’clock, but I do not think there would be very much business done in the morning. It would be very hard to get a House at 10 in the morning. [Mr. KERR: How do they keep the Federal Parliament together?] Some hon. members are too apt to

quote the Federal Parliament. Only yesterday the seconder of the Address in Reply quoted a bad thing that is done by the Federal Parliament. As the Premier said, we have sat on Friday night for a long time, and I do not think anyone has been much inconvenienced. By and by we shall have to sit on Monday, and perhaps on Saturday. Personally, I dare say I could manage to attend on Friday mornings, but there are a number of business men who could not come, and I hope the Premier will not accept the amendment. Besides, it is not fair to Ministers to expect them to come here on Friday mornings, as their work would all get behind.

The PREMIER: I am not prepared to accept the amendment offered by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley. Ministers are quite prepared to submit to some inconvenience in order to meet the convenience of hon. members generally, but the limitation of the hours of sitting on Friday is a contingency that I cannot regard without some alarm, having regard to the amount of business that we desire to get through. It would be an easy matter to arrest the progress of Government business on a Friday until the conclusion of the sitting, and, if that were done persistently, it might be very unpleasant for hon. members at the close of the session. I have no doubt whatever that certain hon. members in business in the city find Friday evening sittings most inconvenient, for the reason that recent legislation has made Friday the business night of the week, but at the same time I am disposed to think that more hon. members will be inconvenienced by a departure from the system which has prevailed in this Parliament for many years than would be inconvenienced. I think on the whole the arguments are in favour of retaining the hours of sitting which are contemplated in the motion I have submitted. Under these circumstances I hope the House will pass the motion in its original form.

Mr. KERR (*Barcoo*): I must say that I am in favour of the amendment of the member for Fortitude Valley. The leader of the Opposition seems to think that it would be very hard upon business men to have to attend here in the morning. Now, I think the time is opportune for the alteration, and that the fear that Ministers will not get their business through is not altogether warranted. Ministers can easily arrange as they do in the Federal Parliament. The Minister who has business coming before the House can be present, and if others wish to conduct their business in their offices they can absent themselves from the House. I think the majority of hon. members ought to be considered in this matter. [Hon. E. B. FORREST: So they will be.] Yes, so they will be, and I trust hon. members who are in favour of the alteration will determine the matter by their votes. We preach a good deal about economy, and by sitting on Friday morning we could save a good deal of expenditure on the electric lighting. I think if the Federal Parliament can manage their business by meeting on Friday morning and adjourning on Friday evening, this Parliament can do so. The leader of the Opposition has asked, “Why not meet at 8 o’clock?” I have no doubt if the hon. gentleman moves that amendment he will find a number of hon. members who will support him. We are here to do business, and we intend to do it. If hon. members on the other side want to get business through, we are prepared to sit at any time. Some hon. members have raised the question about the mails. Well, Friday is my mail day as much as it is that of other hon. members, and I have as much correspondence as some. [Hon. R. PHILP: You have a mail every day, and ours is only once

[Mr. McDonnell.]

a week.] We have only one mail a week to my electorate, and if I do not get my correspondence away on Friday I miss the coaches. I therefore favour the amendment moved by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, and trust it will be carried.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Burke*): Although I have a limited amount of correspondence, I must say I object to Friday morning sittings. If hon. members are particularly desirous of sitting every day of the week, I am quite prepared to do so, but I point out that the Northern mail comes in on Thursday, and the first opportunity we have of seeing Ministers is on Friday morning. Therefore I say it would be very unfair to sit on Friday morning to meet the requirements of a few Southern members. The Northern members deserve a little consideration as well as a few suburban people.

Mr. P. J. LEAHY (*Warrego*): It is immaterial to me whether the motion or the amendment is carried. If the matter goes to a vote I shall support the motion, because I think the Government should be the best judges of the days which suit them.

Mr. HAWTHORN (*Enoggera*): I fail to see what advantage is to be gained by meeting at 10.30 o'clock on Friday. On the other hand, I see very serious disadvantages, the main one being that the working policy of the Government will be seriously hampered and interfered with. The day-time is the only opportunity Ministers have of attending to their official business, and it would be a serious mistake to take away from them one of the days they have hitherto devoted to departmental business by meeting on Friday morning. The hon. member for Barcoo has expressed the opinion that those in favour of meeting on Friday morning want to get on with business. I think those who are against the amendment are equally prepared to go on with business, and it would be a mistake to interfere in any way with the present working hours of the House. I shall vote against the amendment.

HON. E. B. FORREST (*Brisbane North*): I object altogether to devoting the whole of Friday to the House. It is an experiment that has never yet been tried. [Mr. LESINA: In the House of Commons it has, dozens of times.] Under entirely different circumstances. Reference was made to what was done in this Parliament in the early days. The House then was in the habit of meeting at 10 o'clock and adjourning at 1 o'clock, and the object of that was to enable members to get away to Toowoomba and other places by coach and other means of conveyance. As a matter of fact, there has been no time within my recollection when the House has been called upon to sit during the whole of Friday, and to take the whole day is rather too much. I do not object to coming here at 10 o'clock and adjourning at 1 o'clock, or to coming here at 2 o'clock and adjourning at 6 o'clock, if it would be for the convenience of country members. Friday is a valuable day in a business sense, and for the reason given by the hon. member for Burke I do not think too great an encroachment should be made upon that day. If the question goes to a division I shall vote for the motion as it stands.

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*): On several occasions this matter has been up for discussion. During the last six or seven years, whenever a proposal has been made by the Premier, an amendment has been proposed by hon. members now sitting on this side, who then sat in opposition, with the object of instituting earlier sittings, and the party to which the hon. member for Fortitude Valley belongs has always favoured Friday morning sittings. Moreover, there is

excellent precedent for such sittings. In the House of Commons—the exemplar of all parliamentary institutions—and on the Continent of Europe, it was the practice to sit as early as 8 and 7 o'clock for some considerable time. There are those resolutions on record in connection with this matter in the House of Commons Journals, and it is just as well, considering the interjections that have been made, that I should record them here. On the 16th May, 1614, it was resolved—

That this House shall sit every day at 7 o'clock in the morning, and begin to read Bills secondly at 10 o'clock.

Fancy the hon. member for North Brisbane being a member of Parliament in 1614, and protesting vigorously against meeting at 7 o'clock in the morning and reading Bills a second time at 10 o'clock! How long would he have been allowed to sit in that Parliament? They elected members in those days who were willing to sit at that early hour in the morning. [Hon. E. B. FORREST: They wanted men like you, with nothing else to do.] Again, on the 19th April, 1642, it was resolved—

That whosoever shall not be here at prayer every morning at 8 o'clock shall pay 1s. to the poor.

How would the hon. member for North Brisbane fare under those circumstances? Again, on the 31st May, 1659, it was resolved—

That Mr. Speaker do constantly every morning take the chair by 8 o'clock.

In those times members of Parliament met by daylight, not like conspirators after dark. There is a terrible weakness among parliamentarians to meet late in the afternoon, and carry on their discussion by the electric light. And that is another reason why we should sit during the day. The spectacled legislator is becoming daily more frequent. Nearly every hon. member carries his spectacles with him. If he has good eyesight before the election, he very soon has to begin to wear spectacles. Why? Because he has to sit long hours under the glare of the electric light. If we sat by daylight we should be able to consider the business before us in a much more effectual and intelligent manner than at present. Hon. members like the hon. member for North Brisbane and the hon. member for Enoggera represent the type of business man in the city who finds it convenient to come here in the afternoon. For my part, I should like to see the House meet in the morning at 10 o'clock, adjourn for lunch, and sit on until 6 o'clock. It has been alleged that hon. members representing Northern constituencies will suffer because it is their mail day, but I imagine they can attend to their correspondence at the table here or in the room adjoining just as well as at their own homes or offices. A minor point is this: that a great majority of the seventy-two members are only temporarily in the city while the House is in session, and they are naturally desirous to spend the week-end with their families at home. Why should not their interests—and they constitute the majority—be consulted? If a division is taken on this matter it will illustrate exactly what the feeling is upon it among country members. However, I am satisfied myself, as I have said repeatedly in this Chamber, that much better work will be done if hon. members were to meet here and do their business in the daylight instead of meeting late and sitting until all hours. It strikes me that hon. members from the country are anxious to push their claims for consideration now, and they can determine the matter by voting for the amendment. I shall support it.

The TREASURER (Hon. W. Kidston, *Rockhampton*): I have no objection to offer to a
Hon. W. Kidston.]

morning sitting if it would convenience a very large number of members of the House. It is quite true, as the Premier has pointed out, and as most hon. members know for themselves, that it would be a rather severe tax upon Ministers. I do not consider that that is a very powerful argument against it if it would give extra convenience to a number of other hon. members; but from what I have heard it seems that sitting on Friday mornings would inconvenience as many hon. members as it would convenience. In that respect I am not very careful how it is settled. But there is one reason why we should adopt the motion as moved by the Premier rather than carry the amendment, and that is that it might very seriously hamper the getting through of Government business. We all know very well what Thursday afternoons means when private business comes on. [An honourable member: What it used to be.] And what it will continue to be. So long as a debate must terminate at a fixed hour, so long will stone-wallers have an opportunity for blocking any business they want to block. I do not think hon. gentlemen opposite have any desire to stone-wall or block any Government business this session; but, as we very well know, "Opportunity makes the thief," and if any business to which objection can be taken is brought on on Friday morning, nothing can prevent its being blocked until the time for adjournment. To prevent anything of that kind happening, I hope the House will carry the motion as moved.

Mr. MACARTNEY (*Townley*): Out of sympathy to members of the Ministry, if for no other reason, I shall vote against the amendment, although I do not know that that is the very best reason. If it is not, I should certainly do so on the ground of its inconvenience to many hon. members. Besides that, when the question was last before the Chamber the present Attorney-General took the point that hon. members were elected on the condition that the practice of Parliament should be preserved, and no suggestion of any change has since been made. I think we should follow the generally understood conditions, and on that ground I think we ought to vote against the amendment. I certainly shall do so.

The SPEAKER: I would point out to the hon. member for Fortitude Valley that his amendment is not exactly in order as it stands. I shall, therefore, put it in this form: To insert the words "at 10 o'clock a.m. on," and if that is carried it can be followed by a consequential amendment in order to complete it.

Amendment put and negatived.
Original question put and passed.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

The PREMIER, in moving—

That Mr. George Jackson be appointed Chairman of Committees of the whole House—

said: I submit this motion now, because we shall require the services of the Chairman of Committees this session earlier than [4.30 p.m.] usual. I have already given notice of motion for the suspension of the Standing Orders on the next sitting day, which, if carried, will render the services of the Chairman of Committees at once necessary. As to Mr. Jackson's qualifications, I think we have had ample evidence of them, from his conduct in discharging the duties of the office during the last session of the last Parliament. Mr. Jackson then proved himself a most capable Chairman, and I am quite sure that his nomination will commend itself to hon. members sitting on both sides of the House. I hope that the election

of Mr. Jackson will be unanimous, and feel sure that his conduct in the chair will furnish the best warrant for the action of the House in electing him to that position.

HON. R. PHILP (*Townsville*): I second the nomination. We had some experience of Mr. Jackson as Chairman of Committees last session, and I have no doubt that when he has been in the chair a little longer we shall be more satisfied with him than we have been before. He is a personal friend of mine, and I hope he will be much more liberal while sitting in the chair than he was last year, when he was a little inclined to curtail debate. [The PREMIER: I think there was a little misunderstanding.] Quite so. I know that Mr. Jackson is perfectly honourable, and if he erred at all it was not from any intention to favour one side more than the other. I hope Mr. Jackson will be elected unanimously.

Mr. JACKSON: Mr. Speaker—

The SPEAKER: There is no question before the House.

Mr. JACKSON: I am going to ask the permission of the House to take this, the earliest opportunity of thanking hon. members for having elected me unanimously to the responsible position of Chairman of Committees. I thank the Premier very much for the kind and complimentary remarks that he made in allusion to myself. In regard to what the leader of the Opposition has said, I can scarcely take his remark as being altogether too complimentary, but it is possible that he has not remembered the feeling of excitement that permeated the front Opposition bench during last session. If he had done that he would probably have made more allowances for any action that I may have taken in the direction he indicates. [Hon. R. PHILP: You curtailed debate.] If the leader of the Opposition thinks that, then I say I do not think the hon. gentleman has remembered the peculiar state of excitement that existed in committee during the session of last year. My apprenticeship has been a very brief one so far, but I believe that, generally speaking, I have given satisfaction to hon. members on both sides of the House—(Hear, hear)—notwithstanding what the leader of the Opposition has said; in fact, if I thought I had not given satisfaction to hon. members on both sides of the House, I should not care very much about taking the chair again. As I have said, my apprenticeship has been a very short one, and therefore I shall again ask for the forbearance and consideration of hon. members when I take the chair again. On the other hand, I shall certainly try to do my best to be fair and courteous to all members, no matter on which side of the House they may sit. [Honourable members: Hear, hear!]

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

HON. R. PHILP (*Townsville*), who on rising was received with cheers, said: I do not think it is a fair thing to let a matter like this go by default. It is usual on the Address in Reply to refer to many matters, and we sometimes find that election battles are fought over again in the course of this debate. I do not intend to do that, but there are some little things that ought to be referred to. To start with, I wish to compliment the mover and the seconder of the Address in Reply on the moderate tone of their speeches, and if that tone prevails throughout the whole of this Parliament there is every likelihood of good business being done. (Hear, hear!) Now, I must confess that I am disappointed with the Speech; I am surprised that the Premier, with his

[Hon. W. Kidston.

majority of twenty-eight has not enunciated a bold and vigorous policy. That apparently was what was wanted from the late Government, but they never had anything like the majority that the present Government has. I don't suppose that any Premier has ever been returned to any House in Australia with such an overwhelming majority as the present Premier. Why! he ought to be able to move mountains and bring back prosperity and happiness to all sections of the community. But there is nothing new in the Speech at all. In the previous Speech there were one or two new things; for instance, the referendum to find out whether the electors of this State wished the number of members of this House reduced. [THE PREMIER: You don't wish us to commit suicide so suddenly?] I thought the Premier was honest about reducing members. I think there is a necessity for reducing the number of members, and I believe that the bulk of hon. members on both sides wished that to be done. I wish to point out that our Queensland House is the only one in Australia that has not dealt with this very important matter. New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania have all dealt with the question; but Queensland has not. [MR. W. HAMILTON: There is no demand for it outside Brisbane.] [MR. GRANT: You don't want an election in another two months, do you?] I think this House is quite competent to take this matter in hand. Only New South Wales asked for a referendum—the other States were all quite satisfied to leave the matter in the hands of the several Houses. [An honourable member: But you must look at the matter geographically.] Well, look at the size of Western Australia and South Australia. I think the people of Queensland want a reduction in the number of members. When we sent sixteen members to the Federal Parliament I thought we should reduce our members by sixteen. [MR. DUNSFORD: You don't want to lose any on your side.] This should not be a party question at all. I am prepared to vote for fifty members, or for fifty-four, for I think that number could carry on the business of this Assembly. [An honourable member: You had a Bill ready.] Yes: I had a number of Bills prepared to lay on the table, but, fortunately or unfortunately, the present Premier managed to get a majority, and turned us out of office. [MR. W. HAMILTON: And your own party was against it.] I want to talk quietly, and not display any party feeling, and I am sure that the hon. member for Gregory is big enough to talk when he gets up, without interjecting now in this unseemly manner. I want to speak moderately: but I recollect this young man—(Government laughter)—being at Townsville, and trying to influence the electors against me: but he did not make as much impression on them as he makes on that cushion. I am anxious to get on with business, and we shall never do so with constant interruptions. On a previous occasion like this, the discussion took eight weeks, and that was due to interruptions. I do not think it is a fair thing to refer in the Speech to the time occupied last session, for this House has nothing to do with last session, and it was the Premier who was in fault. He could have divided a fortnight before, but he was waiting for Mr. Murphy, from Croydon. Even then he could have done a lot of business in five or six weeks, but he was anxious to get a dissolution. Now he has an overwhelming majority, but there is nothing in this Speech to indicate any policy. There are

a few small things, such as the Income Tax Re-enactment Bill, because this Act will expire at the end of next month. I was in hopes that the Treasurer would do away with this altogether. I say that the better and the bolder policy would be to sell land; that would do more good to the State than taxing the people. [MR. LESINA: To whom are you going to sell it?] There are plenty of people here who will buy our lands, if they are offered on suitable terms. Seeing we own 400,000,000 acres, and only get a paltry return, I have maintained for some time that we should sell our lands at a fair price. If we did that, we could pay off the national debt, and do away with taxation altogether. By that means we should bring people to the State, and that is the only way of bringing a considerable number of people to Queensland, without paying their passages. I am satisfied that we shall never get a large body of immigrants who will pay their own passages from the old country to Queensland unless some such inducements are offered to them. Like the hon. member for South Brisbane, I should also like to know what the proposed £100 exemption in connection with the income tax means. Does that apply to married men, or to single men only, or to both classes? Will a man who is in receipt of £101 a year have to pay the tax, while a man who receives £99 10s. pays nothing at all? Of course we shall be told to wait until we see the Bill, and then we shall get all this information. In that same paragraph there is a statement which I look upon with some suspicion—

The Stamp Duties Act will also be re-enacted, it is hoped, with such modifications as will ensure to the State a considerable amount of revenue to which it is entitled, but which, in consequence of defects in the existing law, it does not now receive.

There was a paragraph exactly like that in the Governor's Speech which was delivered the last session I was in office. I hope the Premier will meet with a better fate than I did when he brings forward that Bill. If it is a Bill on the same lines as that which the late Government brought in, it will have my support, because I am satisfied that at the present time the law is evaded, and a lot of money which should come into the Treasury is not received. [Government members: Hear, hear!] There were no "Hear, hears" from that side when I brought a Bill in—(laughter)—but, on the contrary, it was said that no further taxation was required. The Treasurer now finds that he is not in the happy position he occupied when he sat over here: he has responsibilities now, and only the other day when he found that he had got some £40,000 less than the late Government received, and that the amount that he would obtain from the Federal Government would be £100,000 less than he expected, his heart was filled with dismay, and he was flying his flag half-mast, and saying that the State was going insolvent. I was surprised at the hon. gentleman taking up that attitude, as I had looked upon him as a plucky man and a man of resource. It was said that we lost £1,100,000 by federation, and that we ought to have arranged to provide for that deficiency. The Premier said in his speech delivered at Warwick—I have a copy of it here, but I am not going to read the whole of it—that we had paid about £1,100,000 for federation, and we ought to have taken steps to meet that deficiency. Why, then, does not the present Treasurer take steps to provide for the small deficiency of £100,000, instead of wailing about the matter and saying that the country is becoming insolvent? It is not the place of any Minister to cry stinking fish, and

I am astonished at this being done by the Treasurer, whom I regarded as a man of character and resource. But apparently he lost heart altogether that day, and lost faith. [The PREMIER: Not in the country, but in federal finances.] The late Government lost £1,100,000, and surely £100,000 is not much to the present Government, with their big majority, and a Treasurer who can save £500,000 a year! There is also a Bill to amend the Queensland National Bank Agreement Act. We said last year that we had no objection to passing that measure, so long as the interests of the State are conserved. But I hardly agree with the remark that if that measure becomes law "there will be annually for some years at the disposal of my advisers a considerable sum of money which may be devoted to the construction of public works, without adding to the pecuniary obligations of the State." It is said that if that Bill becomes law the Government will get £86,000 a year from the bank. We have been getting £50,000 a year from that bank for some time, so that the Government will have only £36,000 per annum extra, and that will not do much in the way of public works. The PREMIER could spend more than that on the Goondiwindi railway, which he has promised to extend. [The PREMIER: No, I did not promise it.] This is what the hon. gentleman is reported to have said at Graymare:—

Mr. Morgan said that the last time he addressed the electors at Graymare, he had promised to come by train on a subsequent occasion. He had come by train to speak to them that evening, and he wanted them to distinctly understand that the terminus was not to remain at Thane. If his party were returned with a working majority, he would, as soon as money was available, push on the construction of the Border railway; and they might rest assured that, whether in power or not, while in Parliament he would never cease to urge the construction of that line. There were two candidates in the field for Cunningham. Mr. Grayson he wanted to see in the House; Mr. Watson he did not.

I thought, when I read that, that the hon. gentleman said to those people, "If you return Mr. Grayson, you will get the railway." [The PREMIER: One weak point about that is that I never said it.] The statement appeared in most of the papers. I afterwards saw that the Secretary for Public Lands promised two railways. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Did you not also see that I denied it?] No. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I denied it as soon as I saw the statement, and I denied it at every meeting I addressed afterwards.] In one of his speeches the hon. gentleman said that he was not going to be satisfied with one railway; he would have two. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No.] I can assure the hon. member that that statement was circulated in the Press. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Telegraphed by the other side.] I do not think the other side telegraphed these statements. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It was so certainly in my case, I assure you.] At any rate, here we have three railways which must be built some day. I know the Secretary for Public Lands is never without a railway in his pocket—he accused me once of not getting him a railway—and I know that he can at any time bring forward two or three railways. I mention this to show the House that this "considerable" sum of £86,000 a year will not go far in carrying out public works. We have been getting £50,000 a year from the bank. [The PREMIER: Not lately.] Well, up to the 30th of June last, I do not think £86,000 per annum will go very far in public works in this State. Local bodies will want a great deal more than that. I believe that the

[Hon. R. Philp.

Harbour Board at Rockhampton wants £150,000 for a necessary work. The Townsville Harbour Board wants £40,000 also for a necessary work, and they can afford to pay interest and redemption on any money they borrow without any additional revenue. This £86,000 per annum is, therefore, nothing like sufficient for the works which will be required in different parts of the State. There are only two courses we can adopt in the building of railways—either borrow money to construct lines, or allow other people to build our railways for us. I am very pleased to note that the PREMIER is disposed now to receive offers for the construction of railways. We are told in the Speech that—

To individuals or corporations willing to construct, partly or wholly at their own expense, railways in mining or other districts, my advisers are ready to concede the most generous terms compatible with the interests of the community.

It is amusing to notice that the word "syndicate" is left out of the Speech altogether.

They are called "individuals or [5 p.m.] corporations." Personally, I do not care whether they are called individuals, corporations, or syndicates, so long as the Government are willing to have lines built where they cannot build them themselves. I think the hon. gentleman made one of the biggest blunders he ever made in not agreeing to the terms offered in the first place for the construction of a line from Almaden to Georgetown. The offer he had made was that, if he would guarantee $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. for ten years on £500,000—equal to £7,500 a year—they would undertake to build the railway. [The PREMIER: No. They only negotiated for the building of the railway.] Well, you always find a good deal of negotiation before a line is built. There is no one with half a million in his pocket in Queensland. You will have to come to terms with people here, and they will have to go to London to get the money. I noticed the other day that in South Australia they were offering as much as 80,000 acres per mile to have a line built to the Northern Territory from the head of their line, and they did not get a single offer. Now, if in South Australia they are prepared to give 80,000 acres per mile, besides the right of running the line, we shall have to offer much more liberal terms than the late Government succeeded in getting the Chillagoe people to build their line for. [The PREMIER: Of course the minerals were the attraction there.] There are lots of minerals in the Northern Territory too. There is an hon. member sitting behind the PREMIER now who was anxious to get a line built to Glassford Creek, but he failed, and I am sure he showed his *bona fides*. [The PREMIER: He could not get the capital.] That is so. Instead of the terms we offered being too good, we find they were not good enough for people who have the money. It would be far better if the PREMIER would tell the country or the House on what terms he is prepared to accept offers from syndicates to build railways. It would be much more satisfactory if he would do that—that is, if he is in earnest, and I believe he is, because I believe he is satisfied now that he cannot borrow the money to build railways. Besides, in some cases there is a considerable amount of risk in building lines. Let the country know the terms on which he is prepared to negotiate with people, and very likely he would get some offers. But, if offers that are made are refused, the impression will get abroad that the hon. gentleman is not sincere in his desire to get railways built. In fact, the Treasurer

said last session that he had blocked speculators. Whether the offer was made by speculators or not, it would be a splendid thing for the country if that line were built. There would be no occasion for the Government to find work for the unemployed, as the line would find work for all the unemployed in North Queensland, and I am satisfied that, if the line were built, we would have a large population on that big goldfield. [Mr. MANN: You don't like white people settled in the North.] Let me tell the hon. member that I have given employment to far more white men in the North than he has, and at good wages. There is a lot of splendid land at Atherton, which has been selected—it is more suitable for white settlement than any other area in the North—and I regret to say that the bulk of it has been leased to Chinamen and blackfellows. It is a pity for Queensland that the whole of that land is not occupied by white people to-day. I am very glad to see that the Government are confident that agriculture is prospering. There is no doubt that, with good seasons, the agricultural industry is bound to prosper; but I would like to know if the Government are doing anything themselves in the direction of experimenting with the growth of such crops as cotton and sisal hemp by white labour. It is all very well to go about lecturing, and advising people to grow things, but with the number of State farms we now have it would be far better if an experiment was made by the Government, and the results were published throughout the State. Personally, I do not believe that sisal hemp can be grown at the enormous profit that the Secretary for Agriculture thinks. I think he told the farmers last year that a profit of £20 an acre can be made out of the crop. [The PREMIER: On the basis of present values.] Well, let the Government try it themselves. We have plenty of land of all kinds. [The PREMIER: That is State socialism.] What are the State farms for but to experiment with crops? We do not want them to grow crops that anyone can grow. We want them to grow crops like cotton and sisal hemp—crops that we are not growing at the present time. [The PREMIER: We know we can grow cotton.] Of course we can grow cotton; but the question is whether we can grow it at a profit with the labour at present available in Queensland. We know that all tropical agriculture in the world at the present time outside Queensland is carried on by other than white labour. In America they use negroes; in Egypt their native labour is coloured; in India cotton is grown by coolies. We want to find out whether we can grow cotton in competition with those countries, and I think the Government should try the experiment. Of course I know we grew cotton many years ago. I think that one year we grew something like 10,600 bales, but at that time there was a bonus given of so much per bale for all cotton exported. We know that the Federal Government are anxious to promote white settlement in Queensland. It would be a fair thing to ask them to give a bonus for the export of cotton. If the bonus were big enough, I am satisfied we can grow cotton; but whether we can compete with other countries without a bonus is a matter which can only be determined by someone making the experiment, and the Government are the best people to make that experiment. They have State farms at Gatton and Warwick; there is plenty of land on the North Coast; there is a State farm at Rockhampton; and they might experiment with 200 or 300 acres.

[The PREMIER: An experiment is being made with sisal hemp on a substantial scale at present.] By a private individual? [The PREMIER: Yes.] The Speech says—

Among the various means by which my advisers hope to promote the agricultural industry is the construction of cheap lines of railway on terms which will not burden the taxpayer with any portion of the cost thereof.

Well, I am prepared to assist the Government to build as many hundreds of miles of railway on those terms as they like. I do not know what is meant by the words "on terms which will not burden the taxpayer with any portion of the cost thereof." I do not know whether that means that the lines are to be built on the betterment principle. [The PREMIER: Yes.] Well, that principle has been in operation for some time. We have lent money to various boards, and they have built railways which, up to the present, have paid interest and redemption. That is building light lines of railway without increasing the burdens of the State, and if that is what the Premier means, I hope he will succeed in doing so. I am pleased to see that paragraph in the Speech referring to the pastoral industry, and the promise to accept surrender of leases after reasonable notice. I know at present in North Queensland stations are being sold for the value of their stock because the owners will not come under the Act of 1902, being afraid that they will be compelled to pay the whole rent for forty-two years. [The PREMIER: That is what they asked for.] Yes, and they got it; but the late Government agreed in writing to give this concession, allowing them to surrender their leases, and it was afterwards ratified by the present Secretary for Public Lands, who had some trouble with his colleagues in getting them to agree with it. [The PREMIER: There was only a promise to submit the matter. You promised to submit the matter to the House, and that was all you could do.] [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: What I undertook to do was to carry out the promise you made.] At all events, it now seems that the Government agree to this proposal, and I am very pleased, because it is in the interests of the State. I know six or seven places in North Queensland which have been sold for the value of the stock, which has been taken south and into New South Wales, simply because this concession was not made. A very large institution, which owns a great number of stations, will not come under the Act, and I am pleased that the Government now intend to accept surrender after reasonable notice. I do not know what "reasonable notice" means, but I should say if a man is prepared to leave his improvements behind, that ought to be sufficient for the Crown. An institution will only hold on to these places so long as they pay, and an individual will only hold on as long as the bank will honour his cheques. Why anyone should be worried after he has done his best to make a place pay I do not know. Under the old Act the custom was that forfeiture took place. I hope the Government are quite sincere in telling these men that if they are satisfied to leave their improvements behind they will cancel the leases. That is what they want. The Government cannot expect to worry and harry a man after he is ruined. [The PREMIER: This Government do not do it, and is not likely to do it.] Institutions will not advance money on these places under existing conditions. In time-past, when an institution advanced money on a station property, it got a transfer. Now that they are themselves liable they will not accept any more transfers. [The SECRETARY

FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You know quite well that they are not a bit more liable now than they have been for many years.] They are liable legally. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: So they have been always.] But the custom has been to accept forfeiture. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: So it is now.] Yes; but the fear of a liability exists, and institutions will not advance money on pastoral properties because of that liability. I think when the matter is put plainly to the House members will see that it is a wise thing in the interests of the pastoral industry that this concession should be made. If I were in the Government's place I would be satisfied to forfeit without notice. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It means more rent by giving notice.] [The PREMIER: There is a serious danger.] There is also a serious danger of many of these runs having all the stock taken off them. The meatworks on the coast are getting nothing like the quantity of stock they used to get. I do not know what they are going to do. Quite 140,000 head of cattle have gone South from North Queensland, which would not have gone had this concession been given two years ago, and cattle are going South now which ought to have been kept in the North and fattened. The stock is being sold, and the stations are being abandoned, and that will continue until this concession is given by law. Now, there is a suggestion I would make to the Secretary for Mines about wolfram-mining. A great many men are now getting employment by this means—at Stanthorpe, Bundaberg, 40 miles from Townsville, where 300 men are employed, and all over the Cairns district. I think it would be a wise thing if the Minister sent a geologist out to report on the wolfram fields. [Mr. MAXWELL: A better thing would be to amend the Act, and make the holdings smaller.] I do not remember any big leases being given in my time. [Mr. MAXWELL: Two or three.] However, that can be done by regulation. Wolfram-mining is very much like alluvial goldmining. Anyone can carry it on, but it would be very valuable to have a report on these finds, so that we may see if anything can be done to develop them. The recent finds of wolfram have been a great relief to the unemployed of North Queensland. They have given a great deal of work, and were it not for them the Government would have had to find either work or food for many more unemployed. Fortunately, the price of the mineral has kept very high, but whether it will continue at that price is another question. It has been sold as low as £30 a ton, and now it is £150 a ton. I hope those engaged in the industry will continue to get the larger price. [The HOME SECRETARY: It will pay at £50 a ton.] It all depends upon what kind of a claim one has. Some men are making a great deal of money, and some very little. It is like gold-mining. Gold maintains a splendid price, but many people who are working on gold do not make wages or tucker. Some people even lose a lot of money in goldmining. It all depends upon the claim. We are told in the Speech that “no proposals for the advancement of the State can be complete unless they include some workable plan of attracting hither desirable settlers from other countries.” I am very pleased to see by the Press that 200 Moravian families are coming out to settle in Queensland. If the Premier can give us any information as to how they are coming, whether they are paying their own passages, and on what conditions they are getting the land, I shall be pleased to know. The Government propose also to find outlets

[Hon. R. Philp.

for the commodities we produce, and that is no doubt a very desirable thing to do. This side of the House, and also, I dare say, the other side, will hope that the mistake the Government made last year in sending an agent to the Eastern markets will not be repeated. [An honourable member: Surely we have had enough about Jones.] Let us hope they will be more particular in the agents they appoint than they were last year. I think I have now about gone through the Speech. Among the Bills mentioned is one for the registration of clubs, and in this connection I was very pleased to see the Attorney-General say that he is not in favour of opening public-houses on Sundays. But are the public-houses now being closed on Sundays?—that is the question. From all I can learn, I am afraid they are not. [Hon. E. B. FORRESTER: They ought to be open on Sundays.] Let the question be settled by the House, but I certainly hope the House will never agree to their remaining open. We have passed an early-closing Act, and if a man wants a loaf of bread or a pipe of tobacco he cannot buy it on a Sunday. If a man keeps a draper's shop, he cannot work his men more than five and a-half days a week; but, if he keeps a public-house, he may work them all the seven if he likes. [The PREMIER: It is intended to maintain the law as it is.] I am glad to hear it, but the information I get outside the House is quite different. When the question of electoral reform comes on I want to suggest to the Premier that he should introduce some clauses to try and prevent the unseemly proceedings we have lately witnessed at certain election meetings. In my opinion it is a disgrace to the State that a man cannot get up to speak to his fellow-electors without being interrupted in the manner with which we are all familiar. Near the Premier's own electorate a candidate was not only interrupted, but violent hands were laid on him; and I did not see that the Premier indignantly put his foot down. Then there was the case of a very old member of this House, Mr. McMaster, who, when he attempted to address the electors of Fortitude Valley, was not allowed to be heard. It is a disgrace to the Valley electors that a man of his age and experience, and who has done so much for the Valley, should not have been allowed to be heard. On the other hand, there was no interruption, as far as I can learn, at any Morgan meeting. To violently interfere with a candidate when he is addressing his fellow-electors ought to be made a severely punishable offence under the law.—[The PREMIER: Every man ought to be heard.]—and if the Premier does not introduce a clause of that sort in the electoral law I shall do it myself, and I hope it will be carried. No matter what a man's opinions are—whether for or against a particular party—he ought to be heard. This is supposed to be a free country, and we ought to have freedom of speech; yet we find that a certain section of the community will not allow their opponents to be heard. I hope the Premier will insert a very strong clause, or series of clauses, to stamp that out of Queensland. I notice there is nothing in the Governor's Speech that in any way embodies anything of the Labour platform. The Premier seems to have mesmerised the Labour party in some way, and they promise to do all they possibly can to carry out his policy. Certainly this is a wonderful change in the atmosphere of politics in Queensland. Forty-one of their planks have been dropped altogether; they have only one left—to make a noise at public meetings. Everything else

has gone and disappeared. [A Labour member: Electoral reform.] All parties have been in favour of that for years past. No one was more sincere than myself in that matter. I brought in the most liberal measure that was ever introduced in this House, and the other side would not listen to it. My late colleague, Mr. Foxton, tried to pass a Bill giving the suffrage to women, but it was not accepted. If another measure with that object is again brought in I do not think any exception will be taken to it on this side of the House. I only hope that in any Bill of the kind provision will be made to allow ladies to vote by post. [An honourable member: Why should they not vote openly, as men have to do?] It would be a good thing if they were not allowed to do so. I do not think any man is anxious that his wife or sister or female relations should be compelled to witness the scenes sometimes seen at elections. I am not going into finance on this occasion—I will wait for the Financial Statement; but I would just like to remind the Premier that only two and a-half years ago he made a most vigorous fighting speech in defence of the principles of my financial policy. Now he has quite turned round. I have his latest utterance on the subject here, but I will not weary the House with it. I would also remind the hon. gentleman that when he first came into the House he came in as a supporter of Sir Samuel Griffith, who at that time had a deficit of £455,000, when the State had only two-thirds of its present population, and with a much larger deficit per head than we had. He also supported other Ministers who showed large deficits. And in those days there were good seasons, and the tariff could be altered to increase the revenue. In our time we had the biggest drought ever known in the history of Queensland, and we had no power to alter the tariff. We had to impose further taxation because it was imperatively necessary. We passed the income tax because we knew the country wanted money. The Premier now says he would not have passed the Retrenchment Act. He was a supporter of mine at the time that Act was passed. Why did he not come out of his chair and remonstrate, and tell us on the floor that we were doing wrong? He did not do so. I take it that when he so acted he was quite with us in passing those measures, and I do not think it came with good taste [5.30 p.m.] on his part to get up and condemn me, after having supported me practically in passing those measures. Of course he said when he was in the chair he could not do so. But I have known that gentleman, when he was Speaker, come to this House fast enough if there was any money to be got for his own electorate. When the Thane's Creek Railway was under consideration—[The PREMIER: That was the only occasion.]—the Premier never either publicly or privately remonstrated in any way about the way we carried on; and I take it he tacitly gave his consent, and he had no right to condemn a thing afterwards that he previously approved of. [Mr. COWAP: The country approves of what he has done.] Never mind what the country does. I say a man ought to act according to fixed principles, whether the country approves of his action or not. I passed those measures, and I got my reward, and I am quite satisfied. [Mr. COWAP: It looks like it.] We do not want any more members on this side of the House. At present we are quite satisfied—(Government laughter)—but I shall decidedly object to any man, no matter what his position is, who at first approves of a man's action and afterwards, when he sees the country is against

him, joins in the cry and disapproves of it. That, to my mind, is a sign of weakness. The Premier of the country ought not to be weak; he ought to be strong and brave—(Government laughter)—and now, with the majority he has, he ought to bring in a spirited policy of progress, and try and get us out of the difficulties we have got into through my supposed bad administration. There is another matter I strongly object to—and I do not blame the Labour party in Townsville for it at all. I think when any party consent to publish such an abominable lie as this is, and circulate it, that party is in a very bad way indeed. I think it is just as well that I should read it to the House—

State election! How the Philp Government robbed the country!

That is pretty strong language for any party to use.

Repurchase of Seaforth Estate, not one acre yet selected—£22,622.

As a matter of fact, my Government did not buy the Seaforth Estate at all; it was bought by my predecessors, and bought, as all other estates had been bought, on the recommendation of the Land Court. I think this is strong language for any party to use. I can say that I never robbed the country of a shilling. [Opposition members: Hear, hear!] I worked much harder for the country than I did for myself. If I had looked after my own affairs as well as I did the affairs of the country, it would have been better for me.

Fireworks contract (Duke of York)—£3,500 (Laughter.)

Commonwealth medals job—£1,147.

There was no job about that as far as I was concerned. Then we come to—

Corrupt advertising scandals and Street newspaper jobbery—£2,200.

Four Royal Commissions in 1901, promoted to find billets for Ministerial malcontents—£6,741.

Well, the members now in the House who were on those Royal Commissions are sitting on that side of the House; there are none sitting on this side of the House. I think one of the Premier's own colleagues, Mr. Barlow, was on the railway commission.

Increased defence expenditure at a time just prior to the Federal Government taking over Defence Department—£103,000.

Purchasing unnecessary Brisbane land from financial institutions—£75,000.

I am not aware that we bought any land in connection with financial institutions at all. We bought some land from churches, but you cannot call them financial institutions. I admit that one piece was bought while I was Premier, on the recommendation of the Commissioner for Railways and the Engineer-in-Chief. He said he could not carry on business. [The PREMIER: You are responsible.] That may be. I maintain that, unless you take the advice of your Commissioner and your Engineer-in-Chief, if anything goes wrong you are responsible. The late Engineer-in-Chief (Mr. Stanley) and Mr. Gray (the late Commissioner for Railways) said the land was indispensable. Mr. Leahy was Minister for Railways at the time, and I am certain he would not have bought it unless it was absolutely necessary to do so. So no Government is responsible for that. Then, again, with regard to buying church land. That was bought before I was Premier, and I say the Government were justified in buying it. They were erecting a very large building alongside of it, and they had all the land, practically, from Queen street up to it. It was, perhaps, the only

opportunity they would have of buying the land, and they were justified in buying it at the time.

Schnapper-fishing and wine-drinking excursions on the "Lucinda" and other picnic boats—£7,176.

The present Government are using the "Lucinda" quite as much as ever I did.

Crown briefs of Rutledge, and fees to his legal friends—£11,672.

But Sir Arthur Rutledge explained that the bulk of those fees were received before he was a Minister at all. Another item is—

Cost of introducing into South African goldfields alien labour, and ousting the "Outlanders" (British)—£140,000.

That was the money spent in sending troops to South Africa. I am rather proud of those troops having gone, though I had not the honour of sending the first of them. They were sent by the late Sir James R. Dickson, and the people ought to feel proud that he was the first who did offer troops. I think if the same thing took place again the present Premier would offer troops, too. I hope it won't take place, but if the time comes again I am certain that the majority of Queenslanders will second any effort made by any Premier in that direction. Then we come to—

Worthless dredges bought from Lindon Bates—£180,000.

They were not bought by my Government, strange to say, and I am informed that they were the best dredges we ever had in Queensland. The only dredge when I went North that was working in the Brisbane River was the Lindon Bates dredge, and one of the officers assured me that it is the best dredge we have in Queensland.

Unworkable white-elephant tank engines—£78,264.

I was very sorry to see that the Premier, in Warwick, got very excited over this item. He is now Minister for Railways, and if anything is wanted in the way of engines he has to take the report of his engineer. If they turn out bad, I would not blame him. It may be that in course of time we shall get something made at the railway workshops, and if some day a boiler should burst and injure twenty or thirty people no one will blame him for that. There were two boilers burst before in Brisbane, and I am sorry to see that the Government have back the engineer we had before; he might burst a few more boilers if he stops there. Now, who is to blame for this? [The PREMIER: The policy of allowing the rolling-stock to run down too much.] No. If the man in charge says distinctly that he must have certain work done, and that work is not done, someone must be blamed. I have never heard that that was the case in this instance, for I have known this man for a long time; but I believe his policy is to patch up things. [The PREMIER: The board of inquiry attached no blame to him.] You can never get a proper inquiry. Two boilers burst in Brisbane, and I should not wonder if more burst, for I am told that instead of thoroughly repairing the rolling-stock, it is being patched up, and I think that is penny wise and pound foolish. [The PREMIER: The rolling-stock is being well looked after.] The rolling-stock was never better looked after, or was never in a better condition than when the present Government took office. [The PREMIER: I say it is well looked after now.] We are supposed to have at Ipswich the best works in Australia for repairing our railway rolling-stock, and it should be done. Then we come to—

Unnecessary new Lands Office—£175,000.

I can assure hon. members that long before the Philp Government existed hon. members on both sides of the House—both Labour members and other members—were anxious to get this

[Hon. R. Philp.

building erected. The late member for Toowoong, Mr. Reid, spoke very forcibly about it, as also did Mr. McDonnell, the hon. member for the Valley. We all wanted the new building; and as for the present Premier saying that £5,000 or £6,000 for repairs to the present Lands Office would be sufficient, it was ridiculous, for the old Lands Office has been there for forty years, and it is like a rabbit-warren, and is tumbling to pieces. We must look ahead, and surely a building which will last 100 years is not too good for the capital—Brisbane. I do not represent Brisbane. And, after all, who got the money? The working classes of Brisbane—eighth-tenths of the money went to them. And surely the working classes of Brisbane have stomachs as well as others, and must be fed. [Mr. W. HAMILTON: The working classes never asked for it. It was a sop to Brisbane.] The people in Brisbane find one-fourth of the taxation, for are not one-fourth of the people of Queensland living in Brisbane? [The HOME SECRETARY: No.] Now, I have been astonished at the Home Secretary, Mr. Airey, for he has been engaged in teaching our young ideas to be truthful, never to swear, and to be thoroughly honest; but the hon. gentleman is reported to have said that every time he passed the new Lands Office he cursed the building. [The HOME SECRETARY: I never said any such thing.] Oh, then, it must be the old cry of being misrepresented, for this was stated in the *Townsville Bulletin*. [The HOME SECRETARY: Your *Townsville Bulletin* is not very honourable.] Perhaps it is more honourable than the hon. gentleman. The hon. gentleman got a full report. [The HOME SECRETARY: What? A full report in such a space for a two hours' speech! We all know what the *Townsville Bulletin* is.] It is one of the fairest papers in the State. But, strange to say, both the papers there go as far as to say that the hon. member said that every time he passed the Lands Office he cursed it. Of course, I hope that that is not true, because such a distinguished teacher of our young should not be in the habit of swearing at all. Then we come to—

Cost of bringing collection of unemployed and destitute immigrants from Europe in 1901-2—£53,000.

But I find that the present Government are going in for immigration. [A Government member: Yes; but on different lines.] [An honourable member: We want people to come here as they go to Canada and the United States.] We can't compete with Canada or the United States or the Argentine unless we have something to offer them in the shape of land, practically for nothing, as they get it in Canada, or unless the fares are reduced. I understand that they are taking these people from the Continent of Europe to America for £1 10s. [The PREMIER: The difference between the fare from London to Queensland and to Western Canada is very little.] For immigrants it is very little. To Western Canada they pay their own passage; but how can we compete for these people when you can't get them here under £14 or £15? You will not get the average immigrant to pay that unless you give him something in return—and I say give him land. I do not think we are in a position to pay their passages out here. [The PREMIER: No.] And then I think something should be done for the people here already on the land—(hear, hear!)—and in encouraging capital to come here, so as to give plenty of employment. Unless some extraordinary means are taken at the present time by the Government to get people to come here the country will never be properly opened up. [The HOME SECRETARY: Give them a share of the legacy you left.] The

Home Secretary has not suffered through the action of the late Government. [The HOME SECRETARY: I never complained about the late Government.] You have. Every time the Home Secretary gets on a platform the burden of his song is the wickedness of the Philp Government, and that is the burden of the song of all the Labour party. [The HOME SECRETARY: Don't you talk about the wickedness of ours?]

The SPEAKER: Order!

HON. R. PHILP: Very little. It seems that the most of my time is being taken up in defending ourselves against the charge of having robbed the country of something like £1,000,000. But most of that money was spent, or authorised to be spent, before I was head of the Government; but as a member of the previous Governments, I am prepared to take my share of the responsibility. But when anything good that the previous Governments did is referred to, it is always Nelson, Byrnes, or Dickson, who did it. Now, I was the Treasurer for Nelson, Byrnes, and Dickson, and I do not care what Government is in office, they will not show better balance-sheets than we did under the circumstances. [The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: People have made allowances for you. Every time I have spoken I have done so.] I confess that I have not read the Attorney-General's speeches, but we find an old friend of the late Government making one of his best speeches on my behalf in 1902—I refer to the Premier—and then in 1904, it appears that the speech of 1902 was all wrong. Was the hon. gentleman right in 1902, or in 1904? [The PREMIER: I do not think that is fair.] I think it is. We had a large deficit in 1902, and we had the drought, the Seaforth Estate, and the tank engines to fight, and we fought them successfully. We were aided in that fight by the present Premier, who, in graphic language, said the condition of the finances was due on the one hand to the act of God, and on the other to the will of the people. But the hon. gentleman does not say that now. He lays the whole blame on the late Government. The hon. gentleman talks about our having to pay £1,500,000 per annum in interest. Of course we are paying that sum, and the Premier is just as much responsible for that as I am. [An honourable member: No.] Yes, just as much responsible for that as I am; every member who was in the House at that particular time is responsible. The Government spent no money without first obtaining the sanction of the House to that expenditure. I never knew the Hon. the Premier to vote against any money being expended, except once. When the hon. gentleman came into this House he had a railway in his pocket. This House passed that railway, but the other House did not. Then the little line called the Croydon Railway was brought forward, and because his line was not passed the Premier voted against that railway. [The PREMIER: Oh, no!] Oh, yes; that was the reason the hon. gentleman voted against the Croydon line. Another discovery I have made is that the hon. gentleman, when he first came into the House, voted for the land tax proposed by Sir Samuel Griffith, and I voted against it; and the hon. gentleman voted for it blindfold, not even giving a reason for his vote. Possibly the fact that he once voted for a land tax may make him acceptable to the Labour party; but I think that when men sin together one should not upbraid the other as the hon. gentleman has done. Then, another statement circulated was—

Ninety-seven new billets created for friends of the "continuous" Government during ten years—salaries ranging from £300 to £3,000—total annually, £47,000.

There is no friend of mine, not one, occupying any position in the services. We certainly engaged Dr. Maxwell at £3,000 per annum for three years, and the present Government have extended his engagement for three years longer. Another way in which it is said the Philp Government robbed the country was in procuring

Twenty patent new hopper coal wagons—made abroad at cost of £100 each, could have been made here at £75 each: total—£8,000.

Is it a nice thing for any party to circulate such statements, and state that in those ways the Philp Government robbed the country? [Mr. MURPHY: Where was that printed?] It came either from the *Worker* or from *Truth*, and was circulated in Townsville. Two Labour candidates stood against us, but we did not abuse one another, and when the contest was over we shook hands. Those candidates stated that if they were appointed as Ministers they would not do as Philp did, but that they would go back to their constituents and get their consent before they accepted office. (Laughter.) I sincerely hope that the Hon. the Premier, with his big majority, will rise to the occasion—that he will rise above party considerations—and try to make this country progress as it ought to progress. Any measure which we on this side think is for the good of all will get our hearty support, but we shall oppose any class legislation of any sort. The Premier has now an opportunity which few men in Australia have ever had, and I hope he will grasp it and not be frightened by this or that man. Let him steadfastly keep in view the good of the people in the State, the opening up of our resources, and the progress of Queensland. He knows the foolish fads of some of his followers, one of which is that all railways should be owned and worked by the Government. There is no man who has put a shilling into private railway construction in this State but has regretted it afterwards. What has made Canada progress? Nothing but the building of a line of railway from east to west; and they are now building another line from east to west. In Canada the Government gave a large money grant, and a very large land grant, to private persons in order to get the Canadian Pacific Railway built, and that line has been the making of the country. They had a surplus last year of £2,500,000. In the United States, with its 80,000,000 of people, the railways are owned and worked by companies, not by the Government, and those companies have practically made the United States of America what they are to-day. [Mr. HAMILTON: What about the Cloncurry syndicate? Why did they not build their line?] When the proposal of that company first came before the House copper was £70 per ton. But at that time, owing to the Treasurer's objection and his bringing forward the Withers-Daniels case, I would not go on with the Bill. When the Bill was afterwards passed, the price of copper had fallen to £50 per ton, and that was the reason the line was not built. There was another line which was not built. The hon. member for Port Curtis, Mr. Herbertson, was one of the concessioners in that case, and very likely the reason why the line was not built was because of the speeches, the dastardly speeches in some cases, made in this House. Mr. Moffat, than whom there is no better mining man, no truer gentleman, in Queensland, was black-guarded in this House because of his connection with a syndicate which proposed to build a railway. [Mr. MAXWELL: No.] If hon. members will turn up a speech made by Senator Stewart when the Bill was going through, they will find that he called Mr. Moffat everything but a gentleman. [Mr. MAXWELL: Every man who knows Mr. Moffat agrees that he is one of the

Hon. R. Philp.]

best employers of labour in North (Queensland.) Let the hon. member read what Mr. Stewart said; he specially named Mr. Moffat. I do not wonder that men who are anxious to help the country as well as themselves draw back when they are called such names as "robbers of their country." I am glad that the Premier has got the Labour party to consent to offers being received from "individuals and corporations." [Mr. HAMILTON: On the same terms as Cloncurry?] I think he will have to give better terms than we were giving to the Cloncurry Company. At all events, let it be known publicly what these generous terms are on which the Government are willing to accept offers. I would try myself to get a syndicate to build a few railways. (Government laughter.) I would not vote for anything of that sort if I was an interested party, but I believe it would be a good thing for the country if certain lines were built by private enterprise. I can conscientiously say that I have never had a single shilling invested in any line. If the Government are not prepared to build railways themselves, if they are not prepared to sell land or borrow money for that purpose, then they ought to allow other persons to step in and build railways with their own money. I am very glad to see that it is intended to bring in a Bill to amend the Mining Act.

[7 p.m.] I remember how, in 1893, I tried to get the Mining Bill through—sitting night and day sometimes. I tried to liberalise the conditions, but I was blocked, as far as they were able to block me, by mining members who sat opposite to me. Since then they have had some experience, however. The hon. member for Burke, for instance, has felt the pinch, and I know the Central members have also felt the pinch in regard to mining for coal. I was going to table a Bill last year to liberalise the conditions, and I hope the present Secretary for Mines will carry it out. Mining is not too good at present in Queensland. The big goldfields—Charters Towers and Gympie—are not quite so flourishing as we would all like to see them, and anything that can be done to liberalise the present mining law and induce people to come here and sink deeper shafts and prospect for more minerals, will be a very good thing for the State. Nobody would benefit more than the working miners, as more work would be given. Certainly, if a railway is built to Georgetown it will be a good thing; but, beyond that, inducements should be given to anybody who is prepared to spend money in sinking deep shafts. I understand that at Charters Towers now a company is prepared to sink a deep shaft if they get more ground. [Mr. DUNSFORD: They are a bit too greedy.] Perhaps they are; but two years ago I passed an Act to give some Gympie and Glasgow speculators a larger holding if they would sink a shaft 4,000 feet deep, and, unfortunately, they did not go on with it. But I understand that at Charters Towers the Day Dawn Block Company are prepared to sink a deep shaft if they can get a larger area than the present mining law will give them. [Mr. DUNSFORD: You did not hear anything of that complaint when they were putting their Tramway Bill through.] That is the reason they give now. The land is idle, and is not worth 1s. an acre, but they are prepared to pay £1 per annum for 100 acres, and put down a shaft which will cost a very large sum of money. By all means encouragement should be given them. At Gympie they have already sunk a shaft over 3,000 feet with very poor results. [Mr. DUNSFORD: It would have been a very bad thing for Charters Towers if they had all been 50-acre leases.] That was when the field was first discovered, but it has been worked for over thirty years, and we know where all the shallow

ground is. It has been worked out—no one is working that ground now. In other countries, after a man has spent a certain sum of money, they give him a freehold. That is done in America, which is a far bigger mining country than Australia. We talk about our great natural resources, but what is the use of them if they are allowed to lie dormant? It is only by offering liberal conditions such as are offered in other countries that they can be made available. In Canada, when a man has spent a certain sum of money, he gets a freehold title. [The TREASURER: You have got a great deal of information lately.] I remember, when I was in charge of the Mining Bill, the hon. gentleman wanted to get about 50 per cent. of the gold from one mine. [The TREASURER: A very good proposal.] It might have been a good thing for the hon. gentleman, but it would have been a very bad thing for Queensland, as it would have stopped mining enterprise altogether if the State had collared half the gold. [The TREASURER: We wanted to get a share of the profits.] A very large share of the profits. The hon. gentleman did not propose to share the losses, and they are very considerable in mining. However, now that the hon. gentleman has a big majority behind him he can do anything he likes. I hope he will make the conditions more liberal—so liberal as to induce people to come here and open up some of our dormant fields. We have fields which have far fewer people on them now than they had twenty years ago. There is some reason for that. Either the fields are no good, or else the conditions are so adamant that people will not tackle the fields. [Mr. MAXWELL: They would sooner pay a royalty on gold now.] Those who are getting gold would, but sometimes they get nothing at all. [Mr. MAXWELL: It would be better for the fellow who gets nothing.] The mining industry is one of the big industries of Queensland, and we want to see it prosperous. It is not prosperous at present. On fields like Charters Towers and Gympie there are lots of young men growing up, and they are not getting much work. Lately the wolfram discoveries have been a godsend to some of them, but we want some of the bigger fields opened up. The Etheridge is the largest goldfield we have in Queensland, but it will never be of any use to the State until it gets means of communication. I tried to pass a railway from Croydon to Georgetown, and got it through this House twice, but the Upper House did not see fit to pass it. There is another matter I would also like to enlarge upon if I had more time, but I have trespassed too long already. The Treasurer is very anxious to have a credit balance at the end of the year, and he is also anxious to meet the debentures that fall due ten years ahead. Well, I would advise him to bring in a Bill authorising him to sell a large quantity of land, putting it into the hands of the Land Court to fix the value of the land. Then let him earmark a portion of the proceeds for the retirement of the debentures, another portion going into revenue. [The TREASURER: We might do as well with that as we do with the rents.] I think the Land Court put a very fair value upon some of the lands now. I know the Secretary for Lands has thousands of square miles of country which he would like to lease for 5s. a mile, but no one is coming forward to take it up. [Mr. HAMILTON: There is not much at 5s. a mile.] I don't know. In some districts there are at present thousands of square miles open that no one will take up. Of course there is no stock in the country to put on. At one time we had 20,000,000 sheep in Queensland, and now we have only about 7,000,000; then we used to have 7,000,000 cattle, and now we have only

about 2,500,000. I know a number of men who have abandoned stations in the Gulf country—some of the cattle being brought down here—while some of them are leaving Queensland altogether. It would be a very wise thing to try and induce the people now holding these runs to make them freehold, or to give them such a lease as will enable them to satisfactorily carry on their business. [Mr. HAMILTON: They growl now, and yet they have forty-year leases.] But if you part with the land altogether then, so far as the Crown is concerned, there is an end to it. The divisional boards will tax it sufficiently. Besides, people will not buy land to look at it. They will buy it if they can do good to themselves with it, and for every 1,000,000 acres we sell £1,000,000, I venture to say, will be spent upon improvements. Would that not be a good thing for the State? [Mr. HAMILTON: That has not been the experience of the past.] It has been the experience of other countries. Go to Canada and the Argentine Republic. In the Argentine they have two and a-half times as much land under cultivation that we have, simply because the land is freehold. You do not expect people to put expensive improvements on leasehold. You do not see anyone but Chinamen who cultivate leasehold. We want to see our own people here, and not Chinamen, and we want to give them a decent show. [Mr. HAMILTON: Why did you not give them a show?] [Mr. MANN: You promised us Chinamen at Cairns.] If Mr. Givens' idea had been carried out, a few mean whites would have got the land and leased it to Chinamen. Let us give the same opportunities to our own people as are now given by other countries. We have tried leasing for some time, but in other countries they have sold land and made much more marked advances. In New Zealand more than half the land is already sold. Only one-third of it is left in the hands of the Government and the natives. [Mr. TURNER: They have a land tax there.] When we have sold our land I will vote for a land tax, too, but we have 420,000,000 acres of land, and it would be madness to depreciate it by imposing a land tax upon it. The divisional boards tax the land enough, and it is a fair thing to leave the taxation in the hands of the divisional boards. It is taxed for local purposes, and the money obtained is spent locally, but if there is a land tax brought in by the Treasurer the money will not be spent where it is raised. He will use it in cutting down prickly pear in the Dalby district, or in clearing useless land near Rockhampton, or land near Warwick, which I understand is not worth the money spent upon it. There is some good land at Wondai which has been cleared, and which there was no occasion to clear. I believe it would have been taken up readily without clearing, and I do not think the Minister will get much more for it now that it is cleared than if it had not been cleared. [The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is not the opinion of the people of the district.] That may be so, but wait until the land is opened. The land is announced as being open for selection, but one requires a microscope to see the advertisements. Now, if there is a lot of good land open, it should be advertised in all the States. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The Wondai land will go off very well.] It would go off better if it were well advertised. There is not one-tenth part of our own people who know that it is open. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I have done more advertising than my predecessor.] The hon. gentleman might have done, but even then he might not have been right. We are opening up land for the Moravians who are coming here. Why not open it to the people of all

Australia? Let the people from Victoria and New South Wales come here. We might get plenty of them if we went about it the right way. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I have advertised in New South Wales.] Not that land. There are only about 2 inches of advertising matter in the local Press. Let the Minister look at the way in which the Colinton land was advertised. That was a work of art. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: It did not all go off.] A great deal of it did. About £70,000 worth was sold, and the State could advertise just in the same way. I hope the Minister, who I believe is anxious to see land settlement, will spend more money in advertising. I know the Treasurer is anxious about the finances, and I hope he will put on his considering cap and think what a good thing it would be if, when the debentures are falling due, he had a few millions of money with which to redeem them, and not be in the position of the Government of Victoria, which had to go cap in hand to the London money-lenders, and get money at any price they cared to charge. That is not a good thing for the State. Now we have eleven or twelve years before us in which to meet our debentures, and we have the land. We want to get it settled, and at the same time get something out of it, and I believe selling it is the only way in which the Government of Queensland will get the most out of this asset. There is just one other matter I would like to touch upon. I do not think it would be right to sit down without referring to the loss we have sustained by the defeat of some of the members of this House. Personally, I regret the loss of the late member for Mackay, Mr. Dalrymple, more than any man who sat on this side. He was a great personal friend of mine, and, though I say it, I think he was the ablest man in debate who was ever in this Chamber. The hon. member for Mackay, Mr. Fudge, ought to feel very proud that he was able to oust such an able man, and I hope he will be able to take his place. I am afraid the House and the country will feel the loss of Mr. Dalrymple very much. We have also lost Sir Arthur Rutledge, one of the oldest members of the House. I am sorry to say he was defeated by a man who will not be able to take his place in this House. Then, again, Mr. Foxton, the late member for Carnarvon, was also defeated. [Mr. KERR: He was independent.] I hope we are all independent. At all events, the members who sit on this side are. Mr. Foxton gave twenty years of his life to the service of the country in this House—perhaps more. I think everyone will admit that he was a very able man, a very conscientious man, and a splendid administrator. [Honourable members: Hear, hear!] Then we have lost Mr. McMaster—one of the old Ironsides, he was once termed. He was a good man, and I regret very much that he is out of the House. Then we had Mr. Story, one of the straightest men who ever sat in Parliament, and a very able and capable man. When he got up to speak everyone listened with pleasure to him. The House is the poorer for his not being here. We have lost Mr. T. B. Cribb also. I think Ipswich, for having rejected him, ought to go in sackcloth and ashes. If ever a man worked unselfishly for a place, and worked hard, Mr. Cribb was that man. However, it seems to me that electors have a wonderfully short memory, and that the more a man does for his constituents the more they turn round and rend him. [Mr. KERR: What about the late member for Cook?] The late member for Cook made a very good fight for Gympie. He managed to get 1,000 people to vote for him; and it is unfortunate that more goldfields are not represented by such a man. The result is that we on this side are now only seventeen

Hon. R. Philp.]

all told ; but I admit the quality is unexceptionable. If the quality on the other side is as good we shall have a splendid House. [A Government member: It is a splendid House.] Seriously, I think it is a pity, and I deeply regret that men who have spent half their lives probably in the service of the country should have to go out as these men have gone out. I was in hopes the Premier would have made some of them members of the Upper House. He is not particular as to number, and he might appoint three or four more. I understand that one or two more are to be nominated. [THE PREMIER: No.] All I can say is that some of those men who have been defeated would be far superior to the last batch of nominees. [Mr. COWAP: Was not that the fault of the electors?] I do not say it was not. Some of them did not stand for Mr. Morgan. [Mr. COWAP: If they had they might have lost their deposit.] He must have been a very poor man if he could not have defeated the hon. member for Fitzroy, who reminds me of a story I heard the other day of a lady who told her friends that her little son had made two chairs and a table out of his own head, and there was enough timber left to make half a dozen more.

The PREMIER (Hon. A. Morgan, *Warwick*): I should like to offer my congratulations to the hon. members who moved and seconded the adoption of the Address in Reply to the Governor's Opening Speech. It is the usual practice to offer congratulations to the members who discharge that duty, but I can say, with all sincerity on the present occasion, that the congratulations are thoroughly well deserved. I have heard many members proposing and seconding the motion for the Address in Reply in this Chamber, but I do not recollect any occasion on which, in my judgment, the duty was so thoroughly well done as it was yesterday ; and I think both the hon. member for South Brisbane, Mr. Bouchard, and the hon. member for Musgrave, Mr. Nielson, are entitled to the congratulations which the hon. gentleman opposite has offered to them, and which I am very happy to have an opportunity of endorsing. I might also say that the House is to be congratulated at the tone of the speech which has just been delivered by the hon. member who leads the Opposition. That speech, and those delivered yesterday, were such as I hope will characterise the debates throughout the session now beginning ; and if that should be the case I am sure when we arrive at the conclusion of our labours we shall have a record to show of good work well done. (Hear, hear!) I would like also to say, before I proceed to follow the speech the hon. gentleman has delivered in criticism of the Government policy, that I, too, share the regret he feels that a number of faces once well known in this Chamber are no longer with us. It is one of the results of a general election that is to be regretted, that men who have worked hard and earnestly for what they believed to be the best interests of the country should be given the unhappy despatch. It is a poor requital for long years of service ; and, although I did not agree with some of the gentlemen who were defeated at the recent election, I share in all sincerity the regret expressed by the leader of the Opposition that some of those to whom he has made reference are no longer with us. However, that is the fortune of war, and we must all be prepared to take the risk, at a general election, of sharing the fate which some of those who were with us a few months ago have met. There is another figure missing from this Chamber to whom, I think, it is well I should make allusion. I speak not only for Ministers but for members on this side, and I hope for the House generally,

[*Hon. R. Philp.*

when I say we deeply regret that the late junior member for Toowoomba should not have lived to be with us now. He was a member who was a faithful and devoted servant of his constituency, and not only of his constituency but to the district in which his constituency is situated, and, indeed, of the whole State. He was a man who had done good service not only for the Darling Downs but for the rest of Queensland, and I take this opportunity of expressing my regret, and of tendering to his family, to his colleague, and to his constituency, the regret I myself personally feel—and which is shared by my colleagues and supporters—at Mr. Fogarty's untimely death. The hon. gentleman who leads the Opposition opened his speech by saying that the Speech delivered by his Excellency the Governor at the opening of this session of Parliament yesterday contained nothing. [Hon. R. PHILP: Nothing new.] That is not the phrase the hon. gentleman used. "There is nothing in the Speech" was the statement the hon. gentleman made. If he had said "nothing new," the criticism would have been justified, because there is nothing new in the Speech. The Speech is a small edition of the Speech delivered to the late Parliament in May last, and it has only been condensed because Ministers recognise that in the time at our disposal, if we are to close the business of the House before Christmas, as I hope we will do, it is not likely we shall be able to overtake much more work than is outlined in the Opening Speech. I hope, however, that it may be possible—and, indeed, I am confident it will be possible—not only to pass the Bills outlined in the Speech, but some others that are quite as necessary and ought to be passed if Parliament is to do its duty. Of course it will be well understood that there is not any justification for long speeches in discussing the Opening Speech delivered by His Excellency yesterday, since all the subjects referred to therein were discussed at very great length, as the leader of the Opposition has pointed out, eight weeks ago ; and it would be simply repeating what was then said were we to continue the discussion to an undue length. I hope the debate on the Address in Reply will not be unduly protracted, but that we shall be able to get, as quickly as possible, to the main business of the present session—that is, the financial measures which we are bound to submit to the House, and which we hope to have an opportunity of submitting very shortly. When the financial proposals of the Government are disclosed to the House they will offer a better opportunity for discussion than is afforded by the Opening Speech, which after all is simply a speech of a formal [7.30 p.m.] nature. Now, the leader of the Opposition, whom I propose to follow—not at great length, I hope—particularly regretted that the Speech made no reference to the question of a referendum—a referendum, as I understood him to mean, on the subject of the reduction of members of this House. [Hon. R. PHILP: There is no reference to it.] He chided us with having made a proposal in May last, and for now being silent on the subject. Well, Sir, the altered circumstances are in themselves an ample explanation of the silence now observed on this subject, which was one of pressing importance then. We proposed at that time to remit this matter to the electors for their decision, and we were anxious to do it as early as possible in order that the appeal to the electors might be made sufficiently early to admit of effect being given to the decision in anticipation of the elections which would have taken place in the ordinary course in March next. The Government proposed, but hon. gentlemen opposite disposed otherwise. They, with the assistance of a number of gentlemen then sitting on this side of

the Chamber, who are now absent, succeeded in defeating our general proposals—or, at any rate, in delaying them—and bringing about an appeal to the electors which has resulted in the altered state of parties which we now see in this House. Now, there has been a general election since last May, Parliament is just back from the people, and it would be the height of folly for a Parliament just returned from the people to bring down a measure the passage of which would be an act of political suicide. We do not propose to do anything of the kind. We are back from the people with a mandate from the people. We propose to do our best in accordance with the will of the people as expressed at the elections. The people certainly did not give us any mandate to come here and pass a Bill for a referendum which might have the effect of dissolving this Parliament within the next nine months. [Mr. FORSYTH: Not necessarily.] [Mr. MAXWELL: Where is the hurry for it?] If Parliament passes a measure which in effect declares that it no longer represents the people, then it is the duty of that Parliament to get to the people at the earliest possible moment. That is well understood, and if we passed a Bill and took a referendum of the people which resulted in a decision by the people that the constituencies should be altered as to their boundaries and reduced as to their representation, then it would be the duty of this Parliament to go back to the people at the earliest possible moment. [Mr. FORSYTH: Nonsense! It should have been done at the general election, and you know it. You had no mandate from the people last year.] That is why the Governor's Speech contains no reference to the Referendum Bill. [Mr. FORSYTH: A very poor apology.] Will you allow me to say it is no apology at all, and is not intended as an apology? [Government members: Hear, hear!] It is an explanation of a simple fact; and as for the contention that has been set up—that was set up here in the last session of the last Parliament—that a reduction of members of this House is demanded by the people, what evidence do we find in confirmation of that in the position of parties in this House as now constituted? Absolutely none. [Government members: Hear, hear!] I went through the election, and had an opportunity of judging of the feelings of the people, and only on one occasion did I hear a question put to a candidate even remotely approaching the question. [Hon. R. PHILP: Perhaps that was in your own electorate?] No, but I am not alluding to my own electorate; I am alluding to other electorates in which I had the opportunity of meeting the electors, and in only one did I hear the question raised in any way, and that was raised by an elector who, I fancy, was prompted by the opposing candidate. [Hon. R. PHILP: You said yourself that you believed in a reduction.] [Mr. FORSYTH: Was the question raised last year or any other year?] Whether it was raised before the flood or since the flood—(laughter)—is of little moment if it were not confirmed at the election from which we have just returned. We have got our mandate from the people who polled on the 27th of last month. [Mr. MACARTNEY: A number of hon. members were pledged to it.] We have got our mandate from the electors who recorded their votes on the 27th of last month. [Mr. FORSYTH: Not with regard to that matter.] I want hon. gentlemen opposite to understand that I am not in any way attempting to shirk my responsibility in connection with the matter. I am endeavouring to answer now the opinion expressed that this question should have been referred to the constituencies. The hon. member for Carpentaria, who doubtfully shakes his head at me—[Mr. FORSYTH: Well I might.

We were told one thing last year; now we are told the opposite.—must be perfectly well aware of the fact that the condition of the House itself is the very best answer to the statement that there is a burning desire on the part of the constituencies for the wholesale reduction which we have heard advocated by hon. gentlemen opposite. [Mr. FORSYTH: Was there a burning desire last year?] I do not wish the hon. gentleman to misunderstand me. I am in no way desirous of departing from the view I have expressed on this subject either in this House or in the manifesto I addressed to the electors, or in the speeches I delivered during the contest. I am only answering the statements that we so frequently heard in this House last session, and repeated now by the hon. gentleman at the head of the Opposition, that there is a burning and overweening desire on the part of the people for a wholesale reduction in the membership of this House. That has not been in any way endorsed by the constituencies. [Mr. P. J. LEAHY: It was not put before them.] I stated in my speeches in this House and in the country that I was prepared to remit this matter to the electors, and I am prepared to give effect to that promise at the right moment. [Government members: Hear, hear!] [Mr. FORSYTH: At the right moment?] Yes, at the right moment. [Mr. FORSYTH: Can you tell us when that is?] As to when that moment will be I am not prepared to allow that matter to remain for the decision of the hon. member who represents Carpentaria. [Government members: Hear, hear!] I propose to do it at the right moment, and that will be a moment which will permit the electors to come to a decision on the subject in time to admit of effect being given to their desire, if necessary, on the occasion of the next appeal to the country. [Hon. R. PHILP: You said that before.] Yes, and I repeat it now. [Mr. MACARTNEY: You are doing what you are told.] The hon. member is quite wrong. I am not doing what I am told, and I am not in the least likely to do what the hon. member tells me to do. [Government members: Hear, hear!] [Hon. R. PHILP: Should not all this come together with electoral reform?] We are going to make the programme for this session, and I trust a programme for this Parliament. I am prepared to hear the criticisms of the hon. member for Toowong on the Speech and give due weight to them; but I will not allow the hon. member or any other hon. member opposite to dictate to us the order in which we will present our business to this House. [Government members: Hear, hear!] [Hon. R. PHILP: I don't wish to do so.] I know the hon. member does not wish to do so, but I say that there is no justification for bringing the measures in in the order he has suggested. We shall submit the measures to the House in their proper order, and I hope to secure their passage on to the statute-book. At any rate, we intend to make a sincere effort to that end, and that is much more than the hon. member for Toowong can congratulate himself on having done with regard to electoral reform. [Mr. MACARTNEY: You will hear what I have to say about this matter on.] Now, hon. members opposite are very anxious to know what these several promised Bills mean—what the Income Tax Act Amendment Bill means, and what the Stamp Act Amendment Bill means; it is perfectly natural that they should want to know this, and they will know all in good time. I am not prepared to outline in any detailed way the several Bills promised in the Speech. This is not the time for doing that, as hon. members know. The hon. gentleman who leads the Opposition, and other hon. members also, know that so far as the Income Tax Act Amendment Bill is concerned, its

provisions are, to some extent, outlined in the Speech itself. We have told the House that we propose to re-enact the Income Tax Act, and make exemptions with regard to incomes below £100. [Hon. E. B. FORREST: That is perfectly clear.] [Mr. FORSYTH: What else?] The rest of the good things the Bill contains I must ask the hon. member to wait for. (Laughter.) I hope that this Bill will be before the House in a very short time, and I am quite sure that we may calculate on the hearty support of the hon. member opposite who represents the blue-ribbon constituency of the State when the Bill comes on. [Hon. E. B. FORREST: I don't think so.] I hope the strong common sense of the hon. member will lead him to support the Bill with this exemption. The hon. gentleman who leads the Opposition also expressed the opinion that, instead of levying the income tax again, we should adopt the policy suggested to the country by his late leader, Sir Arthur Rutledge—that the Income Tax Act should be repealed, and that the amount of revenue which it is and has been bringing in should be drawn from sales of Crown lands. But the hon. gentleman advocated something more than that; in other words, he advocated selling our lands at just what they would command in the open market—[Hon. R. PHILP: Yes.]—whether 1s., 2s., or 3s., it was all the same, and also with the guarantee that the purchasers should be exempt from taxation for twenty years. [Hon. R. PHILP: Exempt from land tax.] Now, I object to the money received from such sales of Crown lands being treated as revenue. [Hon. R. PHILP: You may have to do that.] Yes, we may; but it is not a sound principle. I am prepared to strongly advocate the policy of selling land, but I think the proceeds should be treated as capital and devoted to the construction of development works—works that will improve the value of the land left in the hands of the State. [Hon. R. PHILP: Taking up debentures is practically the same thing.] If debentures are taken up, money would have to be borrowed for new works, so that it is six of one and half a dozen of the other—the principle is not affected. I would also provide a guarantee that the State should demand some share of the increment of value. With these provisions I would not hesitate to sell land much more freely than it has been sold in the past. I would do that at even a lower minimum than 10s. per acre; and with these stipulations I think no party in this House would have the slightest objection to the alienation of Crown lands in larger areas than has been the practice for many years past. I think the policy I have enunciated in this respect is a sound one, and I would have no hesitation in submitting it and of justifying it to the House and the country. These remarks I desire to offer the hon. gentleman with regard to his criticism with respect to the income tax and selling of land proposals. Then we are not going to have the exemption confined to married men; we are going to exempt all people—whether married or single men or married or single women—whose incomes do not exceed £100. We are not going to differentiate at all. We are going to follow the common sense which has been displayed in all Income Tax Acts throughout the civilised world. We are not going to make exemptions to married men in the way that a so-called liberal franchise was offered to married men by hon. members opposite when in power. They would give a liberal franchise, provided you submitted to conditions, but they knew perfectly well that the House would never submit to those conditions. We are not going to attach any conditions either to the Franchise Bill or to the income tax exemption. The hon. gentle-

man expressed the opinion that the Queensland National Bank Agreement Act Amendment Bill would afford very little relief to the Treasury. It will supply the Treasurer with an additional £86,000 of loan money per annum. [Hon. R. PHILP: He is getting £50,000 a year now.] He is not; the hon. gentleman is wrong. [Hon. E. B. FORREST: They had £50,000 a year.] Ah! they had £50,000 a year; but the Government get that no longer. The leader of the Opposition must remember that it is twelve months since he was at the Treasury, and that things have happened since then. One of the things which has happened is that an intimation has been received to the effect that the payments which were made up to the time the hon. member was at the head of affairs are no longer to continue. Those payments were purely voluntary, and there was no power under the law to compel the bank to make those payments. [Mr. FORSYTH: There is no power to compel them to pay £86,000 a year.] No; but there will be under the law as we propose to amend it, and the bank will then have to pay £86,000 a year from the locked-up deposits. We are of the opinion that the proposal now made is a good one, and we intend to bring it down to the House and back it. I think the House will recognise that it is one which may safely be adopted in the interest of the country and the interest of the bank. [Mr. FORSYTH: It appears to be a general proposal.] We need not discuss it in detail now. I believe the adoption of the proposal will be advantageous to the country and to the bank. It will give the Treasurer £86,000 of loan money per annum more than he is likely to have otherwise. The hon. gentleman at the head of the Opposition said that would be a very small sum with which to carry on a policy of public works. That is so. But that sum must be added to the available money now standing to the credit of the loan fund account. The money now available, with this £86,000 which we shall get from the Queensland National Bank, will enable us to expend during the next three years a sum of £350,000 per annum. [Hon. R. PHILP: I do not believe you will have that amount.] That is the amount we shall have in round figures. [Hon. R. PHILP: Local authorities could borrow all that.] No doubt they could, and a great deal more. That will give us £350,000 per annum during the next three years, and with that I hope the country will decide to be content. [Hon. E. B. FORREST: Instead of £1,000,000 per annum?] Yes. By comparison with the expenditure that has been going on in recent years it will be a small sum, but it is quite as much as the country can afford. [Government members: Hear, hear!] [Hon. R. PHILP: You supported a Government which was spending £2,000,000 a year once.] Well, some of us had no choice in that matter. [Mr. BARNES: You justified it.] The hon. member for Bulimba says I justified it. [Hon. E. B. FORREST: The best justification that has been made of it.] I have had the Warwick speech of 1902 quoted a good many times. As a matter of fact, the country cannot afford to go on spending loan money at the rate of £1,000,000 a year. Hon. members opposite have placed us in the position that probably if we wanted to spend £1,000,000 a year we would be unable to do so, for the very substantial reason that we would not be able to get the money. We have no intention of attempting to get the money. We think that a restricted loan expenditure is a justifiable policy, and that is the policy we propose to endeavour to carry out as long as we remain on these benches. The leader of the Opposition said that my colleague, the Secretary for Lands, and myself promised

[Hon. A. Morgan.]

railways which would absorb much more money than we are likely to get from the Queensland National Bank, and he based his statement on a newspaper report of something I said at Graymare. I can only say that if he had no more substantial authority than the newspaper paragraphs which were appearing in reference to Government candidates and Ministers in certain papers during the heat of the election, then his authority is a very poor one indeed. [Government members: Hear, hear!] [Hon. E. B. FORREST: A Warwick paper.] Such a statement did not appear in a Warwick paper. [Hon. E. B. FORREST: The *Warwick Argus*; it is on the table.] The hon. gentleman will not find any such statement in the *Warwick Argus*. [Hon. R. PHILP: I did not quote from his paper.] No, the hon. gentleman did not quote from it; but no matter where the hon. member finds the statement it is quite incorrect. I can claim here in this House that I went through the election without having made any promise to any constituency of a railway or any other substantial gift that would have the slightest effect in influencing the vote in that constituency. [Mr. MACARTNEY: You said more than that.] The hon. member is interjecting without any knowledge of the facts, but that seems a matter of very minor consideration to him. As a matter of fact, what I have stated to the House is accurate. I promised no railway or substantial consideration in the way of a reduction of freights, or grant of loans, in order to induce electorates to vote for candidates favourable to the Government, and there is no man in this House or out of it can say with truth that I made any such promise. [Mr. MACARTNEY: That is a much wider statement than you can stand by.] The leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Toowong have referred to a statement I was supposed to have made with reference to the extension of the border line from Thane's Creek. I never made any such statement. The statement I made at Graymare I will repeat here now. I said that when I was seeking the suffrages of the Warwick

[8 p.m.] electors in 1902 I had promised them that when I came electioneering amongst them again I would come by rail, and I was there in fulfilment of my promise.

[Mr. MACARTNEY: And you were not going to stop there.] I am going to continue, and tell the hon. member how I continued at Graymare. Perhaps when he has heard what I said he will not be so smugly satisfied as he is now. I went on to say at Graymare that when I advocated the railway in Parliament I told Parliament that a railway to Thane's Creek would not justify the expenditure necessary for its construction, and that, if the railway was to be any good at all, it must be carried further; and I told the people of Graymare that, when this State was in a position to resume railway construction, I, whether as Secretary for Railways or as a private member of this House, would see that the question of extending the line had full consideration. The leader of the Opposition brought that statement into the House in the vain endeavour to show that I had promised an extension of the railway. I made no such promise. [Hon. E. B. FORREST: You did, conditionally.] Well, I am not prepared to bandy words further over the matter. [Hon. R. PHILP: Where is Graymare?] The hon. gentleman does not know a place he built a railway to. [Hon. R. PHILP: Thane's Creek is where I built the railway to.] The hon. gentleman had also something to say in reference to a promise which was alleged to have been made by the Secretary for Lands. That is a statement also based upon a newspaper paragraph—a statement which my colleague at once challenged when he saw it in print, and which

he challenged when repeated this afternoon by the leader of the Opposition. I trust the leader of the Opposition is prepared to accept my colleague's statement. [Hon. R. PHILP: I must.] I trust the hon. gentleman will accept it in some other sense than that he must do so. I have my colleague's assurance that he made no such promise, and I have every reason to believe that the statement he made to me is absolutely accurate. It is true of myself and it is true of my colleague that we did not win the elections, as we did win them, on the strength of promises we made of railways to our own or to any other constituencies. If the hon. gentleman can find any authentic record of any promise made by myself or by any member of the Government, he is at liberty to bring it forward; but he will search the newspapers in vain for the record of any such promises. [Hon. R. PHILP: I accept your denial.] I am glad to hear the hon. gentleman say so, but he did not seem very ready to accept my denial. The hon. gentleman passed on to private railways. He has always been a strong advocate of the policy of building railways by private enterprise. I can recall the time devoted by this House to the consideration of private railway Bills a few years ago. Six of them were placed on the statute-book, and in only two cases has advantage been taken of the options which were given by Parliament to the promoters. [Mr. BARNES: Much to be regretted.] The hon. member can indulge his regrets; I am stating the facts. The leader of the Opposition says that the reason why advantage was only taken of the options given in two cases is because the terms were not sufficiently liberal. That may be so. I am prepared to receive proposals from syndicates or from individuals on even more favourable terms than the hon. gentleman was. [Government members: Hear, hear!] If a proposal is to construct a railway to a district the opening up of which we think will be of benefit to the whole State, we are prepared—upon the company or the individual proving its or his *bona fides*—its or his ability to raise the capital—to allow the company or the individual to proceed with the work. Indeed, we are prepared to do more than that. In some cases we will be prepared to allow a certain amount of interest upon the capital invested, on condition that the railway, when built, shall be controlled by the State. We stipulate that condition; and to the Government control we attach a very great deal of importance. [Hon. R. PHILP: Do you think anyone will build a railway on those terms?] We are prepared to let the company build, but it must be subject to the condition that the Government shall control the railway, paying a rental for it equal to 2 per cent. upon the capital the company invests in it, and insisting upon the right of purchase when we think it desirable to do so in the interests of the State. [Government members: Hear, hear!] Now, those are better terms for *bona fide* capitalists than the hon. gentleman ever offered. [Government members: Hear, hear!] But we are not prepared to ask this Parliament to spend its time in discussing Bills giving options to company promoters. [Government members: Hear, hear!] Let them prove their *bona fides*, their ability to raise the capital, their willingness to spend it, then they will have every consideration at the hands of the Government on the terms I have indicated, and no other. [Hon. R. PHILP: You will get no offers on those terms.] Well, up to the present in only two cases have the options we gave been taken advantage of. In the other four cases, for some reason or other—the hon. gentleman says because the terms were not sufficiently

liberal—they were the terms which were asked for—advantage has not been taken of the options, although the hon. gentleman was confident they would be. In the case of the Normanton-Cloncurry line, the Burketown-Lilydale line, the Glassford Creek and Callide lines, although the hon. gentleman was confident the money would be forthcoming, it has not been forthcoming. [Hon. R. PHILP: They all paid some deposit.] [Mr. MAXWELL: Not all.] The money has not been forthcoming. I do not think it is because the terms were not liberal enough. [Hon. R. PHILP: What do you think is the reason, then?] It is because the investment is not good enough. I apprehend the hon. gentleman is referring to the terms given by this House. [Hon. R. PHILP: Were the terms sufficiently good to induce capitalists to put their money into it?] Capitalists have failed to respond, and my information from London is that there is not any probability at present of any of those companies finding the necessary capital to enable them to carry out the works authorised by Parliament. I am very sorry to hear it. Some of them have been asking for guarantees larger than the Government are prepared to give. I believe they approached the hon. gentleman before he left office for guarantees, and they approached this Government unsuccessfully. We are not prepared to give a company 3½ per cent. on the money invested in the construction of a railway which when built will be the property of the company. It would be far better for us to borrow the money ourselves, and own the railway when constructed. [Hon. R. PHILP: I do not think you will get any offers.] Possibly not. [Hon. R. PHILP: The great objection would be to the Government running the line when built.] Associated somewhat with that is the subject of constructing light lines of railway in farming districts. We are prepared to do this by a variety of means. We can advance the money to local authorities. [Hon. R. PHILP: That is the safest plan.] It is not necessarily the safest, but it is a safe plan to advance money to local authorities who are prepared to pay interest on the money. Or we may construct the lines under the Railways Guarantee Act; or by a new method of constructing lines to areas of Crown lands, and loading the land with the cost of construction—an experiment which I am anxious to see made, and which I think can be carried out successfully. But in order to ensure that the people who benefit by the construction of such lines shall contribute something, it will be necessary to load the land benefited, other than Crown land, with part of the cost—that is, the land intervening between the main line and the Crown lands. If that land derives benefit from the construction of the line, it should contribute something towards its cost. It will be necessary, therefore, to apply the betterment principle to lands so situated. Those are the lines upon which we are prepared to enter upon the policy of constructing light lines of railway to farming centres. I believe light lines of railway would do much to multiply the areas of dense settlement which we so much desire, and without which we cannot witness a very rapid extension of farming settlement. With regard to the paragraph dealing with the pastoral industry, the hon. gentleman expressed his gratification that we had consented to allow lessees who had gone down through the drought, and other causes, to forfeit their leases. We are prepared to do that upon the lessee giving reasonable notice, and I think that is absolutely necessary. Otherwise we should be placing in the hands of pastoral lessees a weapon which might be used with serious effect against the Treasury. [Mr. P. J. LEAHY: They forfeit their im-

provements.] [Mr. FORSYTH: He did not ask for forfeiture without notice.] The hon. gentleman who leads the Opposition pleaded for giving up the leases without notice. [Hon. R. PHILP: The lessee carries on until the last moment.] That is not the point. The hon. member for Carpentaria contradicted me. I appeal to the leader of the Opposition to confirm my statement. He pleaded that lessees should have the right of forfeiture without notice. Is that not the position? [Hon. R. PHILP: Yes.] That is a position which the Government cannot concede. We are prepared to allow the pastoral lessees who have gone down, or who have to go down through force of circumstances, to surrender their leases upon giving reasonable notice. [Mr. FORSYTH: What is "reasonable notice"?) No reasonable man wants an interpretation of the word "reasonable." I hope the hon. gentleman, when he sees the Bill—and he will see it in a very short time—will be able to say that the term fixed is a reasonable one. We recognise the importance of the pastoral industry, and are prepared to offer such concessions as may be granted, having regard to the higher interests of the State as a whole. It strikes one as a little remarkable that, after the pastoral lessees for many years, through their representatives, have expressed as their greatest desire the securing of long leases, and having succeeded in getting them, they should now come down and want the right to forfeit at will, and at the same time refuse to concede to the Government the right to resume from the lands held under lease when it suits the Crown to resume. There seems to me one who does not understand the matter fully a want of mutuality about such an arrangement. But, as a matter of fact, I believe the pastoralists have good grounds for saying that the existence of long leases, and the conditions to which they are now subjected, are operating to the detriment of the industry, and to the prejudice of the country's interests, and we, having made full inquiry into the matter, have arrived at the conclusion that the long leases do operate to the injury of the industry, and if they have operated to the injury of the industry, they have equally operated to the injury of the country. We want to remove what reasonable objection now exists to the long leases, and we propose to concede the right to surrender upon giving reasonable notice, and further to extend the period during which the lessees can come under the operation of the Act of 1902. I was surprised that the hon. gentleman did not make some reference to the question of the rabbits, and I have not the least doubt the hon. member for Warrego, who I understand is to follow me, will make good the deficiency in that respect. [Hon. R. PHILP: I must leave something out.] [Mr. P. J. LEAHY: It is a very important question.] Though the leader of the Opposition neglected to refer to the matter, I venture to say it has not escaped the attention of the senior member for Brisbane North. As a matter of fact, we recognise that the rabbit is a serious danger to the pastoral industry. That, however, is not a discovery made by the present Government. It will be for the benefit of the country if we can fight successfully the incursion of rabbits. [Hon. R. PHILP: Have you done anything with the Pasteur Institute?] No, we have not yet had communication with the Pasteur people. If it should come, and there are any steps to be taken in that direction, we shall be very happy to join in with them. As to the best means to adopt, there seems to be a common agreement that the means to be adopted are fencing and poisoning. We are doing what we can to carry on the work of fencing, and under the measure to be submitted to the House encouragement

[Hon. A. Morgan.]

will be given to poisoning on a more systematic and wholesale scale in the future than in the past. As a matter of fact, the lessees are rather more to blame for neglect in this respect than this or any other Government. The Government has done a good deal in the past to check the rabbit pest. Possibly if the lessees had been as active in their efforts in that direction better results would have been achieved. However, the system we have been pursuing hitherto seems to have failed to some extent, and we must endeavour to see that when we enter on a new system it will be a more effective one than the one we are abandoning wholly or in part. I hope it will be. More money will be required, and the pastoralists will be expected to find some of that money. One proposal is that we should tax the Crown lands held under lease throughout the State. That is a proposal much easier to make than to carry; but this is quite certain: that if further expenditure is demanded, and is found necessary, to combat the rabbits, the pastoral lessees must be prepared to find their full share of that added expenditure. The Government have contributed a very liberal endowment. [Mr. CAMERON: The pastoralists have spent a large amount, too.] I admit that, and they must continue to do so. Possibly it may be found necessary to tax them more than has been the case in the past, and if so we shall not hesitate to propose it. The hon. member and others have called this a national question. That is a phrase that is used in a manner that would induce one who did not understand the facts of the case to believe that the State had in the past done nothing to check this evil. [Mr. CAMERON: Nobody does that.] Nobody who knows the facts does so, but people outside the State who do not know the facts, and who have heard such statements loosely made, would be perfectly justified in concluding that in Queensland the whole conduct of the matter had been hitherto cast on the pastoral lessees. That is not the case. The State has provided a liberal endowment on the money raised by taxation on the stockowners. It has dealt very fairly with the pastoralists in the past. Possibly something more may be required in the future. I can only say that the State is prepared to continue to do its share, and if more money is required possibly the lessees may require to make up their mind that they will have to pay the full share of that added expenditure. The hon. gentleman referred to other subjects to which I might make a passing reference, but I do not want to take up too much of the time of the House; and I am not desirous of setting the example of making long speeches. He addressed himself very fully to the question of electoral reform, and asked if it was intended to pass the Franchise Bill this session. That is so. It is to be submitted with an earnest purpose of passing it into law, and we shall take the earliest opportunity of enabling the House to express its opinion on the subject. [Mr. FORSYTH: It will not be opposed.] I do not anticipate any opposition. In the recent appeal to the country the leaders of all parties expressed themselves in favour of it. If the opinion of the country has been expressed on any one subject it has been on that of electoral reform. The Bill to be introduced is for one man one vote and one woman one vote. We propose to bring that Bill before the House and give hon. members an opportunity of ratifying the will of the country in respect to that matter. I am thoroughly convinced that it is highly desirable in the interests of the country that the question should be removed from the sphere of contention as soon as possible. It will be dealt with on the lines of the Bill of last session, and we shall take the earliest oppor-

tunity of bringing down the necessary machinery Bill. We are asked, when we provide one adult one vote, to make a provision that one vote shall have one value. That is a provision that is not found in the electoral laws of any State in the Commonwealth. I doubt if it exists in any part of the civilised world. [Mr. FORSYTH: Approximately.] And it will be approximately here. We will arrive at a quota, and give a margin of 20 per cent. above or below the quota; and that is the only way to arrive at one vote one value. [Mr. P. J. LEAHY: That was not in the last Bill.] The hon. member is wrong. The hon. member is possibly referring to the Franchise Bill. There is a group of three Bills to be read together, and the quota is provided in the Referendum Bill, which is its proper place. That is the proposition, and it is a very fair and reasonable one. [Mr. PAGET: What about voting by post?] There will be a provision in the Bill permitting voting by post under certain conditions—(Hear, hear!)—but indiscriminate voting by post—no; for reasons which I think will be apparent to everyone. The leader of the Opposition was earnest in his appeal to me to embark on a spirited works policy. [Hon. R. PHILP: A spirited policy.] I presume that a spirited works policy was meant. If he referred to the policy of legislation, I think he will find it quite sufficiently spirited. [Hon. R. PHILP: I do not want you to borrow millions.] I am glad to hear the hon. gentleman is with me in the view that continual borrowing on a wholesale scale is about the worst policy that this or any other State can enter upon or continue. We will endeavour to have a spirited legislative policy and a spirited administrative policy, but a spirited public works policy based on borrowing will find no place in our proposals to this House. We shall endeavour to carry out such works as we can with the limited loan funds at our disposal.

[8.30 p.m.] We shall endeavour to provide funds for further public works from the sale of land, subject to conditions which I have already indicated to the House. And I may say, with regard to the policy of the Government in connection with railways, that we shall favour State control and State ownership whenever possible. The hon. gentleman is full of admiration for the results which have followed the construction of railways by private enterprise in Canada and America. [Hon. R. PHILP: South America, Great Britain, and Ireland, too.] There is no doubt whatever that those countries have made great progress, but I think that the progress they have made is attributable rather to the climatic conditions which prevail there, and to their contiguity to the large centres of population in the old world, rather than to the policy of building railways by private enterprise as opposed to Government railways. [Government members: Hear, hear!] As a matter of fact, what is the trend of feeling throughout the world in regard to State ownership as opposed to private ownership of railways? The countries which have adopted private ownership are seething with agitation—[Hon. R. PHILP: Nonsense!]—are seething with agitation for the resumption of railways by the Government. [Government members: Hear, hear!] Germany has already taken steps in that direction; Great Britain will have to follow, or she will find herself at a serious disadvantage in competing in the markets of the world. Canada has already begun to feel some of the baleful influence of private ownership, and indeed the greatest danger to the expansion of wheatgrowing in the Canadian Dominion springs from the fact that her railways are in the hands of private companies—[Government members: Hear, hear!]—and the same thing is noticeable in the United States. [Hon. R.

PHILP: The most advanced country in the world.] That is so, but it is not due to the fact that the railways are in private hands rather than in the hands of the State. The advanced state at which the United States has arrived would probably have been much more advanced had the railways been in the hands of the State than it is now. [Hon. R. PHILP: Do you know how many miles of railroads there are there?] I have a pretty good idea. [Hon. R. PHILP: One-half of the mileage of the whole world.] [Mr. KERR: And they are not paying half per cent.] [Mr. FORSYTH: That argument is dead against you.] The broad fact is that, rightly or wrongly, the Government believe that the policy of State ownership and control of the railways is a right policy, and it ought to continue. We will do nothing to depart from that policy, except subject to the conditions I have indicated; and we believe that in continuing that policy we are consulting the ultimate if not the immediate interests of this State. I would just like to say something in reference to the hon. gentleman's reference to a circular which was submitted to the Townsville electors during his election, to which he devoted a great deal of time. So far as I am concerned, I know absolutely nothing of that circular, and was no party to its circulation. It had no authority from the party which I lead, and I am extremely sorry that it was issued. I had never seen nor heard of it before. I made an effort from every platform I spoke from in the election contest to impress the electors with the wisdom of hearing every candidate respectfully. I endeavoured to put it to the electors that elections are won by votes, and not by speeches, but every candidate had a right to be heard patiently. The electors of Cunningham, with the single exception to which he refers, did take my advice, and the occasion of the attack upon Mr. Watson at Freestone, which was made a great deal of in Brisbane, was a very much milder affair than it was represented to be. [Mr. BARNES: Did you try and get at the men who did it?] (Laughter.) I am not at the head of the police; I am not one of the men who have to stay up all night to guard the people. I think if my hon. friend, the member for Bulimba, who is so valiant in debate, had been at Freestone in pursuit of some of those lawbreakers he would have had rather a bad time before he returned. [Hon. R. PHILP: You are encouraging them.] No! As a matter of fact, it was a very innocent election incident; no violence was offered to the candidate, and I should be the last to attempt to justify anything of the kind. I saw no disorder in any part of the constituencies which I visited, and I am glad to hear from the leader of the Opposition that there was very little of that kind in Townsville. He has alluded to one other instance—that of Mr. McMaster in Fortitude Valley. My knowledge of Mr. McMaster is that he was a man who rather liked a lively meeting, and did a good deal to stir up a little liveliness in the proceedings. He would rather make a speech in a lively meeting than to a meeting which was sitting and listening quietly to him. [Hon. R. PHILP: They would not hear him at all.] I am sorry for that. The hon. gentleman wants me to put a provision in the Elections Bill to prevent that occurring. We might put it in, but I am quite sure it would fail in its purpose, and that you would not be able to make a political meeting into an average church meeting. [Mr. FORREST: No prayer meetings.] I think on the whole it may be stated that in the recent electoral campaign there was very little disorder. [The HOME SECRETARY: Very little.] I think there was very little disorder in the consti-

[Hon. A. Morgan.

tuencies; I found very little. [Hon. R. PHILP: But you addressed Labour meetings mostly.] (Laughter.) [Mr. BURROWS: They are very orderly.] I addressed several Labour meetings, and I can only say that they were extremely orderly. Therefore, I can only conclude that disorder came from meetings which were not Labour meetings. (Laughter.) [Hon. R. PHILP: Some were very disorderly.] I am extremely sorry that anything of the kind should have occurred, and would be very glad to assist the hon. gentleman in taking measures to prevent its recurrence, but I think it is a matter which should not be dealt with in the Elections Bill. Any such attempt would, I think, be ineffective. I have occupied the attention of the House at this length because I have been anxious to follow the hon. gentleman on all the points he has dealt with. As I said in opening, I think the debate upon the Speech might be very much shorter this session than it was last session. [Hon. R. PHILP: I hope so.] I hope so sincerely. We have Bills to face in the order in which they are before the House, and I think on the present occasion we should reserve the chief discussion for the Treasurer's Financial Statement, which after all is the most important business that will be submitted to Parliament. I am quite sure the hon. member who leads the Opposition is with me in the view that the debate need not be unduly protracted. I even hope that the hon. member for Bulimba does not intend to return to the subject so dear to his heart, and that we shall be able to get through with the Address in Reply quickly, and then proceed with the real business of the session. [Honourable member: Hear, hear!]

* Mr. P. J. LEAHY (*Warrego*): I regret that some older or more experienced member than myself has not felt inclined to address the House at the present moment. [A Government member: Did you give him a chance?] Yes, I am quite prepared to give any hon. member a chance. But as I noticed a "conspiracy of silence" on the other side, and I have a few observations to make, I may as well make them now. In the Governor's Speech pleasure is expressed that so many new people succeeded at the recent election, and I think that the leader of the Opposition and the Premier were both quite right in expressing regret that so many old faces are missing. [An honourable member: *In memoriam*.] I do not say it is *in memoriam*, but, this being Thursday afternoon, I think it is peculiarly appropriate to refer to the absence of the late hon. member for Mackay, Mr. Dalrymple. He was a brilliant debater, a keen logician, and a scholarly man, and I venture to say that it will be a very long time before this House will have the privilege of listening to such an able debater. It might be fairly said of him, as was said of a greater man—

His imperial fancy laid all Nature under tribute and collected riches from every scene of creation and from every walk of art.

[Mr. KERR: More poetry.] No, it is not poetry. The hon. member for Barcoo does not understand the difference between poetry and prose. Now, it is true that the present Opposition is a small one, and some people inside and outside this House imagine that because the Opposition is small we should not have much to say. But I don't hold with that at all, for, although this Opposition is small, it stands for great principles. The rights of a party do not depend on its size, and because the party opposite have a big majority it does not follow that they have bigger rights than we have on this side. And that being so, no matter how small the party here may be, we should always rise up and express our views. I have no intention of

taking deep excursions into ancient history or speaking at any great length about what has taken place at the recent election. In that connection I think it would be well to "let the dead past bury its dead." No doubt the Government party gained an overwhelming victory. I do not know whether this was due to the Morganites or the Labourites; but I know that throughout the length and breadth of the State Labour socials and other festivities have been held in celebration of the victory. Whether the Morganites or the Labourites achieved the victory, there is no doubt that the electors approved of the present Ministry; and, whilst I think the electors were wrong in most of their selections, I acknowledge that it is the business of the electors to make their own selections. We live in a country in which it is recognised that the majority must rule, and we have to abide by their decisions. There have been times in the history of the world and of Australia, when men who for many years had been associated with a particular party have been put aside by the electors. It occurred in Tasmania, and in Victoria, where the Premier at one time almost lost his deposit. These things must happen because change appears to rule, but although we have been defeated, we have not been disgraced. After all, there are greater things than success; and there are many men more deserving of success than many who gain it, and if hon. members opposite have gained success, I contend that we on this side were more deserving of it. Now, is it any wonder that the party opposite came back with such a majority when, during the whole of the election campaign, a great many of the Labour party and some Morganites indulged in the grossest misrepresentation concerning hon. members on this side. [Government members: Oh, oh!] I have no desire to be offensive or to say anything harsh, but that has been my experience. On many occasions hon. members on this side have been vilified and misrepresented, and things were attributed to them, as the leader of the Opposition pointed out, with which they had nothing whatever to do. There was no charity in their speeches. [Hon. R. PHILP: We don't want charity; only the truth.] Yes. There are several good reasons why the party opposite have come back so strong. The Premier, the Treasurer, and others of the party told the people that this Government was honestly paying its way—living within its income. But that is not the case. When a man is said to live within his income, I take that to mean that he makes the money he earns cover his expenditure, and the Government have not done that. Had it not been for the back moneys received in 1903-4, there would have been a big deficit. [The PREMIER: What moneys?] A considerable portion of back rents—I am not referring to loan money—and interest paid by local bodies and the back interest paid by sugar-mills. [The TREASURER: By sugar-mills?] Yes; interest, not capital. If it had not been for this money there would have been a considerable deficit. And the people thinking the Government had done wonderful things, it is only natural that they thought they were deserving of a fresh lease of power. I do not wish to refer at any great length to the elections, but I must say that the late Government were blamed for the grossest extravagance and all that sort of thing; but we know that the Premier and members of his party tried to get as much money as they could for their districts out of the late Government. The Premier was strongly in favour of the *via recta*, and if he had had his way a very large sum of money would have been spent on that. He was prominent in getting the line from Warwick

to Thane's Creek, and that line will not even pay for the axle-grease for a long time. All these men who did their utmost to get money spent, now, for party purposes, condemn the late Government for doing what they advocated. Now, turning from the past to the present, what do we find in the Governor's Speech? I am not going to deal with it now as a literary composition. I do not think the Home Secretary had anything to do with it, because there are certain expressions in it which I am certain would not have passed his critical eye. I would, however, strongly advise the Government, if they have another Governor's Speech to frame, to hand it over to the Home Secretary. We are told in the Speech that a number of measures of a more or less urgent character will be introduced. Reference is made to the financial question, and in connection with that matter a very remarkable sentence occurs. The Government express regret that they are unable to postpone its consideration. That seems to me a most extraordinary way to refer to the financial question. The Government are quite willing to bring forward electoral reform and other matters which are not urgent, but the plain inference from the sentence to which I have alluded is that if the Government possibly could shirk the financial question they would do so. I am astonished that a gentleman like the Treasurer, who is supposed to have a love for finance, and to meet problems boldly, should put such a statement into the Governor's Speech. Reference is also made to the income tax, and we are told that there is to be an exemption of all incomes below £100. Under present circumstances I think there is no necessity whatever for an income tax. If ever a Government was fortunate, not only in having a big majority, but in being in office at a time favourable to them in regard to finance, it is the present Government. We know that the flocks out West are increasing very rapidly. [An honourable member: So are the rabbits.] Yes, so are the rabbits, and I thank the hon. member for reminding me of that fact. We know also that the farmers have had remarkably good crops, though the prices have not been as high as they might have been. There never was a time when a Government had a better opportunity of squaring the finances of the country than this Ministry has at the present moment. [The HOME SECRETARY: With decreased returns from the Commonwealth.] The hon. gentleman refers to what the Commonwealth Treasurer said a week or two ago, but we have no certain knowledge that his anticipated deficiency of £105,000 will be realised. We know that on one occasion the Commonwealth Treasurer made one estimate as to the amount that would be obtained from Customs duties, and that our own State Treasurer, Mr. Cribb, made another estimate, and that at the end of the year it was found that the State Treasurer was right. And in the present case the Commonwealth Treasurer may be again wrong. But even if he is right, a deficiency of £105,000 is very small compared with the £1,100,000 lost by the late Government while they were in office. We are able to do this year what we could not do two years ago—we can sell large quantities of land; and I should say that if the Government desire to do away with the income tax they could do so by selling land. There is nothing in the world to prevent them doing so. Whatever may be said in favour of an income tax in an old settled country like England or Ireland, or New Zealand or Victoria, where they have plenty of capital and a large wealthy class, there is not the same justification for it in a new country like Queensland, where money is a thing we want very badly. We should not do anything which would frighten

Mr. P. J. Leahy.]

or prevent the free flow of capital into the country. But if an income tax is to be imposed, I think the exemption should be higher than £100. One of the planks of the Labour platform is that the exemption should be £200, and if I should happen to be in the House when this Bill is going through, if no other hon. member will move an amendment to that effect I will do so. [An honourable member: Why didn't you vote for that when the Act was passed?] I voted in favour of a £100 exemption last year, and the hon. member who interjects voted against it. The less his party says about that the better. [Mr. LESINA: You voted against it.] No, I voted for it. If there is any consistency at all in hon. members opposite, when they have the opportunity of giving effect to one of their planks, they should do so; and I trust that when this amendment is moved by myself or some other hon. member on this side, I shall have the pleasure of voting for once with hon. members opposite. [The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Are you sincere?] I am perfectly sincere; and I am surprised that, knowing me as he has done in the past, the Minister should ask me that question. I should be a great deal more warranted in asking the Minister if he is sincere. We are also told that the stamp duties will be increased. I confess that when I read that statement, I thought very hard, knowing what it was that put the present Government in power. I wondered whether hon. members opposite would be so inconsistent as to support a thing which they had denounced when they put out the late Government. But it appears to me that there is no consistency nowadays. Consistency has been defined by some person as "the virtue of fools." When I first read that definition I did not agree with it, but I am now beginning to think there is some truth in it. [The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: It does not say that the stamp duties are to be increased.] It says the Stamp Duties Act will be re-enacted, with such modifications as will ensure a larger amount of revenue than we are now receiving. [The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Justifiably so.] It may be justifiably so, and I am not blaming the Government for that—I am blaming them for their inconsistency in doing the very thing they would not do twelve months ago. The Government are also in the fortunate position of enjoying an increase in the net earnings from the railways. Some time ago the hon. member for Barcoo, and other hon. members on that side, almost endeavoured to shake the heavens with their denunciation of the late Government for raising the railway freights. The hon. member for Barcoo had tears in his eyes when drawing a pathetic picture of women and children in his electorate who had to eat bread without butter or jam because they could not afford to pay the railway freight on those articles. [Mr. KERR: It was John Leahy who did that.] I admit that the late Minister for Railways did raise the freights, but if it was wrong then it is doubly wrong now. Those rates were fixed at a time of great financial stringency, when we had the utmost difficulty in making revenue and expenditure balance, but at the present moment we find that there is a very large increase in the earnings of our railways, and a thing which was proper then might not be a proper thing now. [Mr. COOPER: The Bank of England rate of exchange is higher now than it was then.] I am surprised that an hon. member like the hon. member for Mitchell—who certainly

[9 p.m.] has moments when he can see clearly—should make a statement conveying the idea that there is any connection between the Bank of England rate of exchange

[Mr. P. J. Leahy.

or rate of interest and the net earnings of our railways. [Mr. COOPER: I thought you understood something about finance.] It is precisely because I do understand something about finance that I am endeavouring to dispel the dense cloud of ignorance which hangs like a pall over the hon. member. There is absolutely no connection between the bank rate of exchange or interest and the earnings of our railways. Recently the hon. member for Maranoa and other hon. members expressed their intention of doing all they could to get these railway rates reduced. I represent a constituency a very long distance from Brisbane, and the rates to Charleville are very high. It is true that these rates may press somewhat unduly upon the people of Toowoomba and other parts of the Darling Downs, but, after all, they press very lightly upon them compared with the way they press upon people four or five times as far away. I think this is one of the questions that the Government should give very early and very earnest consideration to; and, if they can possibly see their way to make a reduction in the rail and passenger rates to these remote places, they will be doing an action which will conduce to the settlement of the Western country, and will certainly be very much appreciated by the residents of those remote places. We are told in the Governor's Opening Speech that there is an increase in every branch of our productive industries. That is undoubtedly true, and it only bears out the statement I made a moment ago as to the general prosperity which this country is, or ought to be, enjoying at the present moment. Reference has also been made to agriculture, dairying, and other kindred matters. I think we have gone about as far as it is desirable to go at present in purchasing estates under the Agricultural Lands Purchase Act. I believe that during the past two or three years estates have been purchased for prices considerably higher than they were worth. There is no question that Parliament—because it was not the Government which did it—purchased the Gowrie Estate at probably 20 or 25 per cent. more than the estate was worth, and we find that a considerable portion of the estate is still unselected. I expressed the opinion a few months ago that too much money was given for Glengallan. I am quite certain of it, because a considerable area of that land has not been taken up. There cannot be any getting away from the fact that though the season is a remarkably good one, though the crops are heavy, the prices are low, and they are very likely to remain low for some time. Now, as the value of land is simply what you can make out of it, surely it is obvious that land that was worth a certain amount two years ago, when butter was worth 10d. per lb., is worth less now when butter is only fetching 6d. or 7d. per lb. [The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Where do you get your 7d. now?] Well, it was worth 7d. two or three weeks ago. We know that during the winter the price of milk goes up, but a month or two ago the price of butter was only about 6½d. per lb.; and now you have to pay about 7d. for cream to make 1 lb. of butter. I was about to argue that it is obvious that, when the value of a commodity goes down, the value of the land on which that commodity is produced must also go down; and I do not see any reasonable probability of the price of agricultural products going up during the next year or two. That being so, I think that, if we purchase any more estates, we should be very careful to see that we purchase them at a lower price than we have paid during the last two or three years. [The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: None are in contemplation just now.] I am very pleased to hear

the hon. gentleman say so. We have also been told something about dairying. I shall not refer to that at any great length, because I shall have an opportunity of speaking when the Dairy Bill is introduced. I believe such a Bill is necessary; but, at the same time, I do not think that farmers are as dirty as a class as one hon. member who spoke on the other side last session said they were. [Mr. LESINA: If you knew the man you would know that he did not say any such thing.] I am not possessed of the Mahatma instinct to enter into another man's thoughts, as the hon. member appears able to do, but I read the statement in *Hansard*. I admit that some farmers are not as clean as they might be, although they are not as dirty, as a class, as they were represented to be; and, if a Dairy Bill is brought in, I shall be very glad to support it, as a necessary measure, whatever I may do with regard to its details. Reference has been made to cheap railways, and in this connection the Government have claimed a great deal of credit. They have conveniently forgotten that it was the late Government which, twelve or eighteen months ago, gave instructions to Mr. George Phillips to make surveys into agricultural districts with a view to building light lines of railway. I understand that the Premier—if not in his manifesto, in one of his speeches—said that the intention of the Government was to sell Western lands to build railways to the Darling Downs and other agricultural centres. [The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He said nothing of the kind.] Well, I did not read it myself, but I will give the hon. gentleman my authority for the statement. Mr. Donald Mackintosh made a speech at Pittsworth. He stated that it was the intention of the Government to sell Western lands to build railways on the Darling Downs. A man named Evans got up at the meeting and asked Mr. Mackintosh whether he thought the Western people would object to their lands being sold for such a purpose, and Mr. Mackintosh said "No"—that the Western people were burning with anxiety to have their land sold for the purpose. I was in Pittsworth last week, and this was told me by a dozen men who heard it, and I thought—knowing how friendly Mr. Mackintosh is with the Premier and the Secretary for Agriculture—that he was a competent authority and that I would be perfectly safe in quoting him. The Speech makes reference to the pastoralists, and the Premier touched upon this question at some length. I have spoken on various occasions in favour of the pastoralists, and in favour of the country doing the right thing towards them, but I hold no brief for them. The position I take up is that when the State does a thing it should do it, not to suit the pastoralists or anyone else, but because it is the right thing to do. My view is that the remote Western country, owing to the climatic conditions, liability to drought, and distance from markets, must in the nature of things be a pastoral country, and if close settlement, as we understand it on the coast, cannot take place there, we should do everything that we possibly can to enable the pastoralists to carry on their industry under the most profitable conditions. For four or five years they suffered from the severest and most prolonged drought known in the history of the State. Flocks and herds were practically wiped out; but I am glad to say that the sheep are increasing very rapidly, and the cattle moderately. But the position is that these people lost whatever they had, and there is not one pastoralist in fifty who is worth anything over and above his debts. We know that large areas of land in the Western country have been thrown up because pastoralists were unable to procure stock; those areas are still open, and not taken up, and they will remain open until

the question of facing the rabbit invasion, which is such a serious menace to the country, is successfully taken in hand, and a solution of the difficulty found. Now, as regards the large areas of land that have been thrown up, and the large numbers of stock which have been taken away from the Western country, I should like to quote a few words of an hon. member opposite. He was interviewed in April last with regard to the Northern country, and this is what he said—

How did you find the country?

All the outback runs are splendid, grass and water everywhere. In places the grass is feet high, and some of the stations are clearing it from round the yards and wells, in case of the occurrence of bush fires later on. As far as Middleton on the way in the country looks well. Then the grass commences to get somewhat drier and thinner, but still the runs seem all right.

Stock, I suppose, are scarce?

Well, to give you some idea, we travelled about 120 miles through one run alone without seeing a single beast, though, of course, there were stock on it.

What are the prospects out back?

The practice that is being adopted out back by the big firms of buying up runs and then practically stripping them of stock is causing alarm among the residents out there. It means the employment of less labour, and is a general loss to the community. Every female beast that goes out of the country, whether a sheep or a cow, is a direct loss. When stock is gone there is no employment, and the whole community suffers. The remedy? Ah, that's another matter. You can't prevent anyone from doing what they like with their own --you can't prevent them from taking the stock off the runs. But it may be possible to make it so advantageous to them to leave their stock on the runs—or so disadvantageous to them to shift them—that they would be induced to still leave their holdings stocked.

The hon. member, Mr. Hamilton, is present, and he will admit that that is a fair summary of his views. (Hear, hear!) If those are the facts, it shows that this question of the pastoralists in the Western country is a very serious one. We were told when the Land Act of 1902 was passed that we were practically handing over the country to the squatters, yet, as a fact, not more than 50 per cent. of them came under the Act. And why? Because though at one time stations with improvements on them were considered a valuable asset, yet, owing to the heavy losses that have been made, they are now looked upon as an asset no longer, and the banks and financial institutions do not think it prudent to render themselves liable to pay rent for forty-two years. The Premier told us—and I was very glad to hear the statement—that it was contemplated to allow the lessees to throw up their leases on giving reasonable notice. What is "reasonable notice"? We endeavoured by interjection to get an interpretation of the term, and all we could get was that any reasonable man knew what it was. I trust that by my speeches and actions I convey the impression that I am a reasonable man, but I confess I do not know what reasonable notice is. In New South Wales there is a clause in the Act allowing lessees to give up their runs after twelve months' notice. If a moderate notice like that is required here, there will be no serious objection to it; but if the Government insist upon a notice of three or four years and forfeiture of improvements, I do not call that reasonable. After all, except in the case of financial institutions and banks, what power have the Government to compel lessees to give notice? Suppose I am a lessee and mortgaged to a bank, and the run stands in my name, and I do not choose to pay rent, I can snap my fingers at the Government. [Mr. HAMILTON: Do you know any case in which the lease stands in the name of the lessee when it is mortgaged to a bank?] Yes, I do. [Mr. HAMILTON: Very few. The lease is

Mr. P. J. Leahy.]

the security, and you know it.] The hon. member speaks for his own district. I know that demands can be made upon financial institutions by the Government, but the man who has the lease in his name can snap his fingers at the Government. [The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The late Government refused the concession which is now asked.] The late Government did not refuse it. They refused to put in a clause to that effect, but after it was found that a large percentage of the lessees would not come under the Act they made a promise that they would amend it and put in a provision of the kind asked for. The present Secretary for Lands ratified that promise, though later on—for some mysterious reason—the Government were not prepared to ratify it. I am, however, glad to know that the Government are now prepared to ratify it, and, provided they accept reasonable notice such as is accepted in New South Wales, I will support their proposal. I go with the leader of the Opposition in saying that even if no notice at all were asked for the Government would still have the best of the deal. [The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: An entirely one-sided bargain.] No, it is not. Everything in life is a matter of comparison. We reason by analogy. At least we do so on this side, but I wonder sometimes what peculiar guide hon. members opposite have for their reasoning. I own a piece of land, and let it to a man who makes considerable improvements. If that man wants to throw up his lease, and leaves me with £1,000 or £2,000 worth of improvements, would I not be well off? Did the Secretary for Agriculture ever yet hear of an instance where an owner under such circumstances insisted upon the tenant paying rent for the balance of his term? The owner should rather be delighted at the opportunity of getting his improvements for nothing. On many of the Western runs there are improvements which cost £10,000 and £20,000. I know one case in which they cost £40,000. If a man is unable to carry on, and is willing to give up to the State the whole value of his improvements, then the State has the best of the deal, even if no notice is given. I say there is no generosity about that. Another advantage from carrying on the pastoral industry in the Western country is this: We now produce very largely in the eastern parts of the State. The more people you can settle down in the West the greater likelihood there is of getting better prices for the produce of the Darling Downs. During the recent drought the best purchasers of that produce were the settlers in the West, and when more people are settled there you will find a better market for the products of the Darling Downs than any you are likely to find outside. Nothing has been said about the question of selectors. I understand the Act is to be amended, but whether in any other direction than that referred to by the Premier we are in the dark. I think that wherever it is possible to settle down men of the grazing-farmer class those men are entitled to the very fullest consideration which this or any other Government can give to them. If the conditions are such that the country cannot be occupied by men of that class, then have the larger settlers, but if the conditions are such that men of that class can carry on their industry at a profit, it is our bounden duty to give them every legitimate encouragement. About Thargomindah and elsewhere we have country settled with grazing farmers. Speaking generally, the condition of those men is this: They have lost most of their stock, they are in arrear with their rents, they owe money to the banks, and there is very little hope of their ever being able to pay. There are a great many selectors in the

[Mr. P. J. Leahy.

Charleville district whose farms at the present moment, if not actually forfeited, are liable to forfeiture for non-payment of rent, which they cannot possibly pay. What does the Government propose to do with those people? Are they going to forfeit their selections and confiscate the improvements they have made? This is a very serious matter that will have to be dealt with. I should suggest to the Government that they should wipe off those arrears altogether, for they are never going to get them. If they wipe off the arrears altogether, and do not confiscate the improvements, and so give those selectors a fresh start, they would be able to go to the financial institution or money-lender and raise money and re-stock, and possibly in the course of a few years, with good seasons, you might have an industrious and contented grazing farm population in that Western country. If you do not do that I am certain that they will not only be unable to carry on, but the inevitable result will be that the great majority of those farms will be forfeited. [Mr. HAMILTON: What have you ever done for them? Nothing.] There is absolutely no foundation for such a statement. When the Bill of 1902 was before the House I did as much as any member on either side, perhaps more, on their behalf. There are several clauses in that Act which are a distinct benefit to the selectors which were introduced by me. In fact, I did my utmost to improve the lot of the selectors, and what I have said with regard to them all through has been perfectly consistent. From squatters and selectors to rabbits is not a very wide gulf. To my mind the rabbit question is the most important question which Queensland—I might even say Australia—has to deal at the present moment. We may as well recognise the fact at once that the rabbits are there, that they are increasing very rapidly, and that if we do not settle the rabbit question the rabbit question is going to settle us. We hear a great deal about electoral reform. Electoral reform is a very small question compared with the rabbit question. You may hang up electoral reform for the next twelve months and nobody will suffer any serious injury. On the other hand, if you refrain for twelve months from dealing with the important rabbit question, the State will suffer the most serious injury. As I showed last year, and as you all know, the power of reproduction of the rabbit is simply marvellous. No other animal pest which afflicts us multiplies at anything like so rapid a rate. At any rate, this is a very serious question, and it cannot be adequately dealt with without the expenditure of a considerable sum of [9.30 p.m.] money. I listened with very great interest, and with some pleasure, to the remarks made by the Premier to-night. He, I think, has a fairly accurate grasp of this question, but I was not quite able, from the remarks which fell from him, to judge to what extent the Government are prepared to find money to deal with it. I contend, and have always contended, that it should be treated as a national question. [The PREMIER: What do you mean by a "national question?"] The Premier very properly asks me what I mean by a "national question." What I mean is this—[Mr. KERR: "Socialism in our time."] No; not "socialism in our time," nor in any other time. If there is a particular thing which affects the revenue and the welfare of the whole of the people of the State, then I say that the question should be dealt with at the expense of the whole of the people of the State. [The PREMIER: Is it not so now?] I intend to come to that presently. I think I have explained what a national question is. If it be admitted that the rabbit question is a national question, the next thing to be considered is, Are we dealing on national lines

with it? The Premier asks me if we are not doing so now. Of course I know the hon. gentleman may tell me that something like £1,250,000 has been spent in connection with the rabbit question. I believe that 15,000 miles of fencing have been erected privately and by the Government, and I believe the Government, out of that £1,250,000, have contributed something like £500,000. I admit that to that extent the question has been nationalised, but I do not think that that is as far as we have a right to expect the Government to go. Coming back to analogy again: suppose that I own a house or property of any description which I have let to a tenant, and that this property is attacked by, say, white ants, which undermine the house, which in a few years is likely to tumble down and cease to be rent-paying property. Am I to expect the tenant to bear any portion of the cost of eradicating those ants which are destroying my building? No landlord would think of asking a tenant to do anything of the kind. [The PREMIER: But supposing the tenant has a forty years' lease of that property.] If the tenant has a forty years' lease, there are certain conditions contained in all such leases. There is a condition that when a man agrees to pay rent for, say, forty years or any other term, during that term the property has to be in a condition fit for occupation, and that it is the business of the landlord to keep it in that condition. [The PREMIER: It may be the business of the tenant to do so.] If it is the business of the tenant to keep it in a proper state of occupation, that fact will be stated in the lease. [The PREMIER: Quite so.] And if there ever was a contract between the Government and the pastoralists or selectors to keep the rabbits down, and it was a condition of the lease, I say by all means keep them to that condition. I admit that there are some men who got an extension of lease under the Pastoral Leases Extension Act on the ground of maintaining their fences in rabbit-proof condition—[Mr. KERR: They did not do it.]—which in some cases they did not do. I should like the hon. member for Barcoo to remember that during the long and severe drought it was a very easy matter to keep the rabbits down, but when rain came certain places in the Western country quickly got flooded, and for long distances those fences got washed away, and it was quite impossible to repair them quickly. I do not for one moment deny that there are certain pastoralists who obtained extensions under the Act who perhaps do not interpret their obligations to the Government as strictly as they might have done, and the Government will be perfectly justified in compelling them to act up to the spirit of the bond; but I am dealing now more particularly with men who made no contract at that time, with men who took up land originally under the 1869 Act, most of whom were under the 1884 Act. There was no condition in their leases that they were to keep down the rabbits or any other pest. It is true enough that in 1902 we put in conditions with regard to this and certain other matters, but I am dealing now with those tenants on whom there is no obligation whatever to destroy rabbits. If these men were rented at the present moment on the value of their holdings, which have depreciated owing to the rabbit pest, perhaps there would not be any great injustice in compelling them to keep the rabbits in check, but we know that most of these runs were taken up a great many years before the rabbit pest became a serious one, and that the Land Court has made little or no reduction in consequence of the prevalence of rabbits. One of two things has to be done—either you must make a large allowance to these people in their rents for the

depreciated value of their land through the rabbits; or if the present rents are maintained the State should bear the whole cost of keeping down the rabbits. In the latter case it is the duty of the State to keep that pest down. However, if the Premier and the Government cannot see their way to make this a national question altogether—a charge that every man in the community will directly or indirectly pay something towards—they should compel all lessees and other persons who are affected, no matter what part of Queensland they may be in—they should compel them to do something towards finding money for fighting this pest. [The PREMIER: That is a fair proposition.] I think that is a perfectly fair proposition, and, after all, there is a great deal more reason and justice in expecting the Central and Northern men to do this than in compelling the Southern men to do it. Is it not better for the Central and Northern men that the rabbits should be fought in the Southern runs, and thereby kept away from the rich lands of the Central and Northern divisions and prevented from overrunning those places? But what has been the practice up to the present time? The Southern men have been rated at the maximum amount allowed by law, and many of the Central and Northern people have paid nothing at all, while we have been keeping the rabbits away from them. I think it is time this was altered, and I sincerely trust that the magnitude of the question will be fully recognised by the Government, and that when the promised legislation is introduced it will be found to be quite sufficient to meet the necessities of the case at the present moment. We have been told a great deal about immigration, and how we are to settle people on the land, but I think this is one of those questions that it is a good deal easier to talk about than to carry out in practice. There are many countries more advantageously situated than Queensland is, and these countries are receiving the very best immigrants which at the present time are leaving the older countries of the world. [Mr. KERR: Because it is cheaper.] I refer more particularly to the Argentine, the United States, and Canada. [Mr. LESINA: What about the Transvaal?] That is the peculiar prerogative of the hon. member for Clermont, and I do not wish to interfere with him. I cannot understand the hon. member's sympathy for the Chinese, but there seems to be some affinity between them. The interjection the hon. member for Barcoo just made is quite right—that the passages are cheaper to these places, as they are closer to the old country than Australia. Therefore, is it not obvious that as it will cost suitable immigrants a great deal more to come here we must offer them greater attractions than other countries? I do not think that any Government has in the past risen to a full recognition of their duties in regard to this important matter. I believe the late Government did all they could under the circumstances. During the existence of a long drought it was useless to ask people to come and settle here with any prospect of success. But now things are altogether different, and I do not see why we should not get suitable immigrants if we offer them sufficient inducements. I have a little information here, which I will give briefly, as it is possible some hon. members may not have read it. The late Minister for Lands in New South Wales, Mr. Crick, cabled home and got the following information with regard to how they do things in Canada:—

Total number of homestead free grants issued from the commencement of the year 1874 to 31st December, 1903, 153,292, each of 160 acres. Free grants during

Mr. P. J. Leahy.]

1901, 9,108; during 1902, 22,215; during 1903, 32,682. One hundred and fifty-three thousand two hundred and ninety-two homestead free grants of 160 acres each, from 1874 to the end of 1903, made up a total of 24,526,720 acres. The free grants issued in 1901 accounted for 1,457,280 acres; those in 1902 for 3,514,400 acres, whilst those in 1903 represented 5,229,120 acres.

I have a great many more figures here, but I do not desire to weary the House, and I only quoted these to show that before we can get suitable immigrants to come here we must give them larger inducements than Canada, or the United States, or the Argentine do. Now, we have heard a great deal of talk about electoral reform; but I am not one of those persons who are greatly in love with electoral reform. (Government laughter.) [An honourable member: We quite understand that.] It is perhaps a matter which requires some consideration. I told my electors that I would not vote against it, and I repeat that now; but I also told them that if they got electoral reform they would not find themselves better off than they are now. We have been told by Ministers and others that in this matter Queensland is lagging behind; that this is the only State in the Commonwealth that has not its electoral Acts on the same lines as the Federal Acts. It is true that most of the States have a franchise similar to the Federal franchise, except Queensland, but it is not true that any of the Australian States has an Elections Act similar to the Federal Elections Act. [The HOME SECRETARY: No one said that.] Yes, you will find it in *Hansard*. [The HOME SECRETARY: Who said that?] The Premier and others. [Government members: No, no!] Well, when the Elections Bill comes on, I will turn up *Hansard* and show you. Now, I have taken the trouble to inquire into the truth of this, and I find that in Victoria they have manhood suffrage, electors' rights, residence for twelve months before obtaining right; also, persons can get a vote if they have property worth £50 clear or annual value of £5. I have taken these figures from Coghlan's latest book. In South Australia they have adult suffrage, but they have to be six months on the roll before they can vote. In New South Wales women have votes, but it was only on the 6th August last that they exercised their right. Then in New South Wales you cannot be a voter unless you have lived twelve months in the State and three months in the district. In Tasmania a recent Act gives votes to women, but there must be twelve months' residence in the State; and in Western Australia voters must be six months on the roll before they can vote, and there is more than one qualification. In New Zealand, that so-called paradise of the working man, about which we have heard so much nonsense, they have adult suffrage, but the voter must be one year in the State and three months in the district. We are told that we should come into line with the Federal Acts, but I do not know a single Australian State that has its Elections Acts on the same lines as the Federal Acts. [The HOME SECRETARY: How do you know we are going to propose anything of the sort?] I am very glad if you are not. I should not have referred to the matter but for the repeated assertion during the election campaign that Queensland is lagging behind in this matter. With the single exception that women have not a vote, Queensland is almost as advanced in electoral reform as any State in Australia. [Government members: No, no! Men can't get on the roll.] Why can't they get on the roll? The conditions here are very much the same as in the other States. If there

are 30,000 off the roll, more than half that number would be opponents of Labour, for in my experience the Labour organisers take good care to keep their men on the rolls. If there are 30,000 off the roll, it is their own fault. I heard of one bank manager out West who would not go on the roll for fear that it might injure his business. [Mr. HAMILTON: We'll have them on the roll next election.] I shall be very glad, because if more had been on the roll I would have had a very much bigger majority. I think I am right in my attitude in regard to this question, and I am saying now to the House exactly what I said to my electors when addressing them a few weeks ago. If women are to have votes, then it is only reasonable that they should be allowed to vote by post. We were told by the Press that the Federal elections in December last were decently and properly conducted, but I have been told of polling-places about Brisbane where there were scenes of an improper character, and I think that unless we allow women to vote by post a very large number of them will refrain from exercising the franchise. Possibly it may be desirable that in townships women should be required to go to the polling-booth to record their votes. But is it reasonable that women in the Western districts, who may be living 30 or 40 miles from the nearest polling-booth, should be expected to travel that distance to vote? If the Government cannot see their way to insert a provision in their Bill allowing all women to vote by post, I hope they will make provision for women outside townships to record their votes by post. We are told something in the Speech about the registration of clubs, I think that is a very good measure, but it is possible that it will not go far enough. We certainly want an amendment of the licensing law. [The PREMIER: Since when have you discovered that?] I have said that before, and I have said publicly that the day would probably come when the State would have to deal in a very drastic manner with the liquor traffic. If there is any one particular thing in which it is legitimate that the State should receive a certain amount of profit from the business instead of allowing it all to go to the individual, it is the liquor trade. But certainly an amendment of the present law is required. All over the Western country, wherever the Towns Police Act applies, the license fee for a publican is £30. A licensed victualler in Queen street pays exactly the same fee as a publican in Charleville and in other towns out West. If there is to be an amendment of the law, I would suggest to the Government that they seriously take into consideration whether it is not desirable to reduce the license fees in Western districts, and considerably increase them in places like Brisbane. If an hotel in Queen street paid a license fee of £100 or £150 a year, there would be no more injustice in that than in exacting a fee of £30 from a licensee in the Western districts. Should the Government act on this suggestion, I believe they would receive an increased revenue from license fees; but, whatever the financial result might be, it would be a step in the right direction. I have so far dealt mainly with the contents of the Governor's Speech. I purpose now dealing very briefly with some things which are not in the Speech. The most important omission to which I shall refer is the question of a reduction in the number of members of the Assembly. The Premier has told us that we have no mandate from the people to deal with this question. Why is it that we have no mandate from the people? It is only a few

weeks since that we on this side of the House begged the hon. gentleman to put this question before the electors, but he declined to do so. I do not believe in submitting small matters to the people by means of a referendum, but I certainly think that if the Government are not prepared to take the full responsibility of a matter of this kind on their own shoulders, the next best thing is to submit it to a referendum. But is there anything in the argument that if it is submitted to the people we should have a general election immediately afterwards? If there is anything in that argument, is there not quite as much in the argument that if we pass a Bill providing for adult franchise we should immediately afterwards go to the country? If we decide that all the women in Queensland shall have votes, are we justified in continuing for three years with one-half of the electors in the State disfranchised? If I had my choice as to which of the two measures—the measure for a referendum on the question of a reduction in the number of members of the Assembly and the measure for adult franchise—should be delayed or postponed, I should say the latter. But I think that the two measures should be dealt with about the same time. We have been told that there is no general feeling throughout the country in favour of a reduction in the number of members. I do not know what the feeling may be in the Warwick district, or at that particular place where Mr. Watson was treated so badly—I should not attach much importance to the latter if I did know—but I can say that wherever I went in the Western country, even men who were strongly opposed to me politically applauded any reference I made in favour of a reduction in the number of members. Wherever I went there was practically unanimity as to the absolute necessity for a substantial reduction in the number of members in this House. We are a kind of glorified shire council, in which seventy-two members transact business that probably half that number could transact equally well. Every State in Australia, with the exception of Queensland, has made a very considerable reduction in the number of the members of its Assembly. The New South Wales Government shirked the question until they were compelled to submit the matter to a referendum, and then the country by an overwhelming majority decided that they should be reduced from 125 to 90. And reductions have been made in all the other Australian States. At the present time New South Wales has one member to every 14,754 of the population; Victoria has one member for every 17,758 of the population; while Queensland has one member for every 7,173 of the population. Are we to be told that public sentiment is very different in Queensland from what it is in all the other Australian States—that something which is looked upon as necessary and urgent in those States is not considered at all in Queensland? However correctly the Premier may judge the feeling of Queensland in other matters, he is altogether mistaken when he tells the House that there is no strong or general feeling in favour of a reduction in the number of members of this Assembly. Wherever I have gone I have found the feeling in favour of a reduction very strong and general. But I do not confine my observations to the Warrego district. I was recently on the Darling Downs, and wherever I have met with and spoken to people I have found

[10 p.m.] that nine out of every ten of them are of the opinion that it is perfectly absurd, after one-third of our busi-

ness has been handed over to the Federal Parliament, that we should retain the same number of members as we had before federation came about. It is well known to most members that thirty-nine subjects were handed over to the Federal Parliament, and yet we still retain seventy-two members, and each of the five or six Ministers receives £1,000 a year or will receive it in the course of a few weeks. I do not like to say for one moment that hon. members and the Premier, in opposing a reduction of members, are actuated by any selfish or pecuniary considerations. I am willing to give to every man the same credit as I claim for myself; but I think that, with the exception of the Labour members—who, I understand, are, in the main, opposed to any reduction—the greater number of members of this House, if they voted as they really feel on the subject, would vote in favour of a large reduction of members. I do not speak of a tinpot reduction of five or six. [The PREMIER: The late Government were not unanimous on the subject.] Well, I was not a member of the late Government. I am glad to say I am not a member of the present Government; but what does it amount to, after all, if the late Government were not unanimous on the subject? Is there any Government that is unanimous upon all subjects? I do not care 2½d. whether the late Government were unanimous about it or not. [Mr. KERR: You were against it twelve months ago.] I was never against it. [Mr. HAMILTON: You were twelve months ago.] I defy any hon. member to point to one remark of mine inside this House or outside it that would convey the idea that I was against a reduction of members. As a matter of fact, I have always been consistently in favour of a reduction of members since federation. I trust that the Government will, as soon as possible—if not this session, at any rate next session—bring in a Bill to deal with the reduction of the number of members; and, if there is to be a referendum on the subject, I think they might also put before the country the question of what the payment of members should be. Personally, I do not think we should have any payment of members at all; but we ought to have one of two things: We ought to have either no payment at all, or we ought to have double the present payment. I believe that, whichever of those courses we adopt, we will get a better class of members than we get now; and I believe that, if we were to reduce the number of members considerably, and either have no payment at all or considerably above the present amount, we would probably have a return to the times when we had a higher class of members in all the Australian States than we have at the present moment, and we should have proper legislation, which, though on democratic lines, would be of a broader and juster character than we are likely to have under existing conditions. Before I sit down, I would like to refer to one or two other matters. There is no mention made in the Speech of a re-enactment of the Marsupial Act. [Mr. KERR: It is to be re-enacted. The Secretary for Agriculture told us that to-day.] I am pleased to know that it is to be re-enacted, but I hope it will not be re-enacted without the Government subsidy. We have no proper information on this point, but I think it would be virtually killing the Act if there is no subsidy. In the impoverished condition of the Western country, the stock-owners cannot afford to find the necessary money to keep down the dingos and marsupials. Even with the Government subsidy, they have had the greatest difficulty in keeping

Mr. P. J. Leahy.]

them down, and in some districts they have not been able to do it. In taking me stand I do in this matter. I am arguing against my own political interests, because these scalpers, as a rule, are not given to supporting me. In the electorate I represent there are something like 150 men who are making their living by scalping. In the one district of Angathella there are some forty-seven of them. [Mr. KERR: That is where you got the big vote.] I suppose, if these enlightened electors choose to record an overwhelming vote in my favour, they have a perfect right to do so. [Mr. KERR: You know what you promised them.] I did not promise them anything. If the subsidy is not renewed, a sufficient amount of money will not be available to enable the marsupial boards to carry on their work in the way in which it should be carried out, and this pest will not be kept in check. Most of us, I presume, are aware that dingos are included in the Act as marsupials. The dingo is one of the most serious pests we have to contend with in the West, and it might well be a question for the House to consider whether it would be desirable to leave it optional with the various boards as to whether they shall pay any bonus at all for the destruction of kangaroos, because there are certain times when the price which is paid for kangaroo skins is so high that men can make a very good living destroying kangaroos even if there is no bonus at all paid for their destruction. It will be a great mistake if the Government adopt the case-separating policy of refusing to continue the endowment. I make the suggestion now, in the hope that it may be acted upon, that it is desirable that discretionary power should be given to the marsupial boards either to give or not to give a bonus for the destruction of kangaroos. There is another matter also which is not referred to in the Governor's Speech, and which, apparently, has not been referred to during this debate so far, and I am rather surprised at it. Taking a great interest as I do in the great bulk of the people, particularly those who earn their living by manual labour, I regret exceedingly that no reference has been made to the unemployed question. There was a time when hon. members opposite sympathised with the unemployed. I regret to think that that time has passed away. I remember on several occasions, when there were not so many unemployed as there are now, the adjournment of the House was moved to deal with the question. I assure you that it is a very vital question, and that whatever it is possible for the Government to do on legitimate lines should be done towards finding work for the unemployed. I was told lately that there is one big works where 300 men used to be employed, and the number is now down to forty. There is another place not far away from the district represented by the hon. members for Gympie, and I believe it is practically shut up. There is a great deal of distress in various places, and as far as I have heard the Government are doing nothing to relieve the present distress. [The PREMIER: It is only a few weeks since you were denouncing the Government for starting relief camps.] I am astonished at the Premier making a remark like that. [The PREMIER: You should be astonished at your own short memory.] I will show the hon. gentleman that my memory is not so short. To begin with, it would pain me very much to denounce the Premier for anything. I have always had a great regard for the hon. gentleman, and I should like to think that it was reciprocated. Of course we know that a Government is a

[Mr. P. J. Leahy.

kind of corporation which has neither body to be kicked nor soul to be damned. I am an opponent of the Government, but I trust the Premier will not take anything I have to say against the Government as a denunciation of himself personally. I have nothing but praise for the hon. gentleman. I did not denounce the Government a few weeks ago because they found work for the unemployed. What I blamed them for was that instead of giving work in a number of districts, they confined the work to a few districts near the coast, and particularly districts represented by Ministers. [The PREMIER: But you said just now that they did not do anything: how does that harmonise with your present statement?] I do not think I said they did nothing. I said they were doing nothing. Besides, the hon. gentleman, as a journalist and a man of wide experience, must know that a man, when addressing an audience, leaves something to imagination and intelligence. It appears to me that the Government have no adequate conception of this very important subject, and if they do anything further for the unemployed I hope the work will be distributed in a number of districts, instead of being confined to the coast. [Mr. HAMILTON: If the work that ought to be given to local people was given there would be no unemployed.] There may be something in that statement, but it is quite enough for me to answer for my own sins without taking those of other people on my shoulders. When being interviewed, the hon. member said if a man desired to shift his cattle there was nothing to prevent him. In the same way if a man has employment to give he must be permitted to choose his own employees. I contend that the Government are doing very little at the present time to assist the unemployed, and it seems incredible that a party which professes to be interested in the working man should be so silent on this question. I should like to say, in conclusion, that this Government has a very great opportunity. It has come back with an unprecedented majority. [Mr. HAMILTON: Which you did not anticipate.] Let me tell the hon. gentleman that there are many persons who did not anticipate it, and I venture to think the Labour party most of all. It would be very interesting to consider for a moment the reason for their majority. Was this a Labour triumph or a Morgan triumph? [Mr. HAMILTON: It was not a Leahy triumph.] The Leahy family have come out as well as anyone. They are not weakened in numbers, and have nothing to regret on that score. [Mr. WOODS: You were very near being weakened.] Let me tell the hon. member that if he gets into Paradise by the same majority as I got here he will be all right. It is just as well that we should recognise facts, whether they are pleasant or unpleasant. I recognise that to a large extent this has been a Morgan triumph, and that unless they were made respectable by the Morgan Government no such large number of Labour members would have been returned. I do not use the word offensively, but to be connected with that Government gave them a species of prestige without which they would not have come back as strong as they are. I think that should make them consider very carefully what the future is going to be. I sincerely trust that those hon. members who sit behind the Premier will loyally carry out their pledges to the country. It would be just as well if hon. members would recognise that it was the Morgan platform which was before the country, and that that was what they were elected on. And after all the Morgan

platform is practically the Philp platform, the late Government having endeavoured to carry out all the important items of that platform. [Mr. HAMILTON: They never intended to carry them out.] Let us boil down the Morgan manifesto and see what it amounts to. We are told we shall have light railways into agricultural districts. Who initiated that? It was initiated by the late Government, who instructed Mr. George Phillips, fifteen or eighteen months ago, to make the necessary surveys. Do not we know, also, that the late Government had a Bill prepared to confer the adult franchise? And they were perfectly sincere in it. Two and a-half years ago, when they went before the country, it had the foremost place in their programme. When they met Parliament it was in the front rank of their proposals. It is the same with all the other matters of importance mentioned in the Governor's Speech. Consequently I say that, although the members on the other side have been returned on the Premier's manifesto, we on this side need not consider it as a defeat; because, although it is a defeat for ourselves, it is an endorsement and a triumph of the political principles we have always represented. Our principles have triumphed though another party has been appointed to carry them out. [Mr. KERR: But you stood as an independent.] Two and a-half years ago I stood as a straight-out opponent of the Labour party, and as a follower of Mr. Philp. [Mr. KERR: But not this time.] Let the hon. member turn up my election address of six weeks ago and the reports of my speeches—and I have never complained of being unfairly reported—and he will see that I stood not as an independent candidate, but as an uncompromising opponent of the Labour-Morgan coalition. I approved of the manifesto of Sir Arthur Rutledge, defended his action, and supported him strongly. I never called myself an independent. [Mr. KERR: Did not the *Mail* quote you as an independent?] I read the *Mail* regularly, and never saw such a statement in it. I was about to say that the Premier has a great opportunity before him. The country has returned him by an overwhelming majority to carry out a programme somewhat similar to the programme advocated by the party with which I am associated. Consequently, whatever portion of the Government programme is similar to that enunciated by the late Premier I must vote for, whichever side of the House it comes from. Probably two-thirds of the Premier's manifesto I can vote for, and the same thing may be said with regard to most members on this side of the House. The hon. gentleman having received the endorsement of the electors, has come into power at a time when the long drought has broken, and when there is every sign of a continuance of good seasons. He has an opportunity which no man in Queensland probably for the last quarter of a century has had. As a tree is judged by its fruits so will the present Government be judged by its works; and if they are false to any of the ideals they have put before the country, and do things which they have not led the country to believe they intended to do, the day of reckoning will come round; and when it comes it may be found that this party, small and insignificant as it is at present, will again occupy the Treasury benches.

Mr. CAMERON (*Erisbane North*): I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed; and the resumption of the debate made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER: I beg to move that the House, at its rising, do adjourn until Tuesday next. It was understood that the House would not commence to sit on Friday before next week.

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER: I beg to move that the House do now adjourn. On Tuesday we propose to take the motion for the suspension of the Standing Orders, and if that is carried we will take the Supply Bill. Hon. members will understand, when the House rose last session, we were granted Supply which carried us to the end of this month; that is to say, we require Supply before money can be paid to the services. It is desirable, therefore, that the Supply Bill should be taken on Tuesday next. I hope it will not occupy much time, and thereafter we shall proceed with the adjourned debate on the Address in Reply.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at twenty-eight minutes to 11 o'clock.