

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 14 DECEMBER 1905**

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

No such agreements are on record.

IMMIGRANT MARY O'BRIEN.

Mr. LESINA asked the Home Secretary, without notice—

Does he propose to do anything for the relief of the destitute immigrant, Mary O'Brien, who nearly fainted at the door of Parliament House to-day through sickness and exhaustion due to insufficient food?

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

I may inform the hon. member that the Government have done much for the person named. She is receiving the indigent allowance and other considerations.

PETITION.

UNEMPLOYED IN MACKAY DISTRICT.

Mr. FUDGE (*Mackay*) presented a petition from 278 residents in the Mackay district praying for the immediate enactment of legislation to assist the unemployed to settle on the land.

Petition read and received.

JOINT COMMITTEES.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Legislative Council, inviting the concurrence of the Assembly in a resolution to the effect that the Buildings, Refreshment-rooms, and Library Committees should continue their functions during the recess.

On the motion of the TREASURER, a message was ordered to be returned to the Legislative Council intimating the concurrence of the Assembly in their resolution.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS.

The TREASURER (Hon. W. Kidston, *Rockhampton*): On behalf of the Premier, I beg to move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended, for the remainder of this session, as would otherwise prevent the receiving of resolutions from the Committees of Supply and Ways and Means on the same day on which they shall have passed in those committees, and the passing of Bills through all their stages in one day.

I am rather surprised that an old and experienced parliamentarian like the leader of the Opposition should have deemed it necessary to have called "Not formal" to what is the usual and necessary procedure at the close of the session.

HON. R. PHILP (*Townsville*): It is usual on this motion for the Premier to inform the House what business he intends to proceed with before the close of the session. I admit that the Treasurer has not been long in his new position; but I think he should tell us what business we have to do before the session closes, and what time will be appointed to take divisions on the various motions which have been discussed. An opportunity to take such division has been accorded by all Premiers, and I hope the present Acting Premier will be no exception to that rule. I suggest that the Treasurer should fix 7 o'clock to-morrow night for the taking of divisions on motions introduced by private members. It will not take more than a quarter of an hour altogether, and I have never known this request to be refused. [The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: It is not refused.] [The HOME SECRETARY: You will know by and by.] It is not sufficient for us to know by and by. We ought to know now, so that hon. members may arrange to be present. I think the Treasurer might also tell us what business the Government intend doing. There is a

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

THURSDAY, 14 DECEMBER, 1905.

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

PAPERS.

The following paper was laid on the table:—Copy of a letter from Mr. John Hamilton, in connection with the report of Dr. Roth.

The following paper, laid on the table, was ordered to be printed:—Regulations under the Income Tax Act of 1903 and the Income Tax Act Amendment Act of 1904.

QUESTIONS.

AGREEMENTS MADE BY DR. ROTH.

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

Has he any objection to lay on the table of the House copies of agreements entered into by Dr. Roth, the trustees of the Brisbane Museum, and Mr. Parry-Okeden, late Commissioner of Police?

[*Hon. A. H. Barlow.*]

motion on the paper for the approval of the plans of a railway from Longreach to Stonehenge. [Mr. KERR: The Premier told you he was not going on with that motion.] This is the time for such a statement to be made.

The TREASURER, in reply, said: I think the leader of the Opposition knows quite well that the Premier is too ill to be here. I was therefore not able to get instructions from him in regard to the matters which have been mentioned. I will find out the wish of the Premier in regard to those matters, and state it to the House when we meet to-morrow. [Hon. R. PHILP: There will not be time to-morrow.] There will be plenty of time. This House has always time to do its business. With regard to Government business, I do not think there is any serious doubt in the mind of the hon. gentleman as to what we intend doing. All the business we propose to submit to the House is on the paper, except two items. One of those is a short Bill relating to the payment of income tax by certain officers of State. It is a Bill of one clause, and will not detain the House, I suppose, more than a quarter of an hour for all its stages, as it is merely declaratory. The other matter is a motion, of which notice will be given by the Secretary for Mines, on behalf of the Premier, empowering the Government to make an agreement for the construction of the Etheridge Railway. Those are the only two matters of business not on the notice paper which the Government intend going on with. The business on the notice paper speaks for itself. The only Bill remaining on the paper is the Mining Act Amendment Bill, a rather extensive measure, and that it is not proposed to proceed with this session. The Premier has already intimated that he will not proceed with the proposal for the construction of a railway from Longreach to Stonehenge. The ordinary financial business of the session will, of course, be completed. I hope that hon. members will try to put through the remaining Estimates, Supplementary Estimates, and Loan and Supplementary Estimates before the House rises, so that we may be able to get the usual Appropriation Bill when we have finished with these motions. [Hon. P. PHILP: What about divisions?] I will tell the House either to-night when we are closing, or when we meet to-morrow. [Hon. R. PHILP: Tell us at 7 o'clock.] I do not know that I shall be able to do it at 7 o'clock, and I think the leader of the Opposition should be satisfied with the information I have given, under the circumstances.

HON. R. PHILP: With the permission of the House, I should like to say a few words.

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

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. R. PHILP: No one regrets the illness of the Premier more than I do, and it is out of no disrespect to him that I ask the Treasurer for this information. It has been usual to give some little notice as to when divisions will take place on motions on the business paper, and if the Treasurer will say that he will take those divisions at 7 o'clock to-morrow members will be present for that purpose. We are all as tired of the session as the hon. gentleman, and there will be no opposition on this side of the House to closing to-morrow night.

Mr. LESINA (*Clemont*): The leader of the Opposition is to be congratulated on having secured what little information he has from the Acting Premier. The hon. gentleman informed us that the Etheridge Railway Bill—[The TREASURER: It is only a resolution]—and one or

two other Bills would be submitted and passed through all their stages in one day. That is a thing that I strongly object to. The whole of the business on the paper in the names of private members ought to be wiped off at the close of the session, and to do that it will be necessary to follow the usual practice and put each motion to the House. I hope that an opportunity will be given to do that, and that the Acting Premier will give us a promise very soon that such opportunity will be given. I doubt very much whether we shall be able to get through all the business mentioned by to-morrow night, as there are one or two discussions to come up on the Appropriation Bill, on which we can discuss every department. If the Treasurer thinks he will get through all those matters in twenty-four hours he is very optimistic.

Question put and passed.

#### CAIRNS HARBOUR BOARD BILL.

##### CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS.

On amendment in clause 3, line 33—omitting "one vote," and inserting "three votes"—

The TREASURER moved that the Committee agree to the amendment. He thought it was a blemish on the Bill, but so many [4 p.m.] improvements were contained in the Bill upon previous Harbour Boards Bills that had been passed, that he intended to agree to the amendment for the sake of passing the Bill.

Mr. MANN (*Cairns*) agreed with the Treasurer that the amendment was a blemish, but it was no use fighting the Council, and they would have to accept it. He hoped next year the Local Government Act would be amended. About three years ago, in Cairns, there were about fifty-one votes recorded by persons who were neither the owners nor occupiers of property. One ratepayer, upon being asked to make a declaration, declared that he lived on two properties at the same time. Some persons took the opinion of a solicitor as to whether the man could be got at for making a false declaration, but it was found that nothing could be done. The Act should be amended so that people who were neither property-owners nor ratepayers should not be allowed to vote.

Question put and passed.

The remaining amendments of the Council in clauses 14, 16, 21, and the schedule, were agreed to.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had agreed to the Council's amendments; and the Bill was ordered to be returned by message in the usual form.

#### WORKERS' COMPENSATION BILL.

##### CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS.

On amendment omitting clause 11—"Piece-work contractors"—

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. J. W. Blair, *Ipswich*): Inasmuch as the other House had agreed to the Assembly's amendment in new clause 12, and did not insist upon their other amendments in clause 16, he moved that the Committee do not insist upon their disagreement to the omission of clause 11. He should prefer to see the Bill go through as it left this Chamber, but seeing that the Council had deleted the amendment to which exception was taken, he moved that motion.

Question put and passed.

*Hon. J. W. Blair.]*

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved that the Chairman leave the chair and report that the Committee did not insist upon their disagreement to the omission of clause 11.

Mr. MULCAHY (*Gympie*): This amendment would affect workers in many ways. If the mineowners let out a number of contracts instead of putting on wages men, they would escape liability altogether, and there would be no protection to the men.

The CHAIRMAN: I would remind the hon. member that the question before the Committee is that I do now leave the chair.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee did not insist upon their disagreement to the omission of clause 11; and the Bill was ordered to be returned to the Council, by message in the usual form.

#### LAND ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

##### CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS.

On amendment omitting clause 13—"Provision for perpetual lease selections similar to agricultural farms"—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The Legislative Council had, he noticed in their message, receded very materially from the position that they had taken up, and, with the exception of two or three amendments which they insisted upon, had given way. He proposed to meet them in the same spirit. The Council insisted on two amendments, and he deemed it his duty to ask the Committee to accept the view of that Chamber on those amendments rather than take the other alternative, the undoubted loss of the Bill. He proposed to accept the lesser of two evils. Of the two amendments which the Council insisted on the first was the omission of the clause which proposed to introduce into our statutes the system of perpetual leases. On that question the Council were apparently of an irreconcilable frame of mind, and all he could say was that they would probably find that principle in the land legislation of Queensland at no distant date. He did not think for a moment that it was ever going to be a popular form of tenure. He was not at all sure that what they called "perpetual leases" would really be perpetual leases. He was of opinion that there would be an agitation to break those leases. But if there were people in the country who wished to take up land in that way, he did not see why they should not be allowed to do so. They could not allow them to do it now, but it would not be many months before they would be able to let them do it. The other amendment insisted upon by the Council was the inclusion of clause 24, which had been inserted by the Council, and dealt with gradients upon roads. It read—

In the surveying of roads through Crown lands, a gradient of one foot in fourteen feet shall be the maximum gradient allowed, except in any special case where the Minister, after due inquiry, is satisfied that it is not reasonably practicable to secure such a gradient, and certifies accordingly.

All the definite information that he had obtained in the matter went to show that to make the maximum gradient 1 in 14 would mean an enormous expense on the local authorities. But the Council seemed to be—if he might use the word—perverse on the point. There was a redeeming feature in the latter part of the clause, which gave the Minister

discretionary power in special cases. However, he did not want to "spoil the ship for an 'aporth of tar," and he suggested that both amendments be agreed to. He moved that the Committee do not insist on its disagreement with the Council's amendment omitting clause 13.

Mr. HARDACRE was extremely sorry that the Minister was inclined to agree to the Council's persistence in rejecting this new form of tenure. The Council's objections were absolutely without foundation. Their first objection was that it would not give the tenant security in his improvements—that his improvements would be taken into account in the reappraisal of the rent of the holding. That was absolutely incorrect. In the reappraisal of rent the value of the holding had to be considered irrespective of improvements altogether. The objection the Council raised now was that—

In addition to the reasons already offered by the Council, the provisions of the clause are not sufficient to effectually regulate a new system of land tenure.

What new regulations were required? All that the clause proposed to do was to continue the same kind of tenure perpetually that already existed in agricultural farms and other holdings. The objections of the Council were made either through ignorance of the provisions of the Land Act or blind prejudice against this new form of settlement. In almost every other State in the Commonwealth there was a provision in their Land Acts for perpetual leases. In New Zealand they had it, and, notwithstanding the dissatisfaction of some politicians, New Zealand was continuing the perpetual leasehold system. In both South Australia and Victoria they had the same system, and in New South Wales, although they had not had a perpetual leasehold system in name, they had one which was practically the same. Yet in Queensland they had the Legislative Council taking the old conservative reactionary stand. [Mr. KERR: We have the most conservative Council in the Commonwealth.] The Minister accepted the provision approving of that form of tenure at the instance of a large party in the Assembly, and the Council took upon themselves to throw the Bill out. [Government members: Hear, hear!] He felt inclined to propose an amendment.

There was absolutely no argument against the system at all.

While he would not blame the Minister for the action he had taken, he was going to give away the wishes of that Chamber to meet the desires of the other House. The hon. gentleman felt that he did not like to lose the Bill for the sake of one or two amendments which he would like to see inserted, but could not get them in. He (Mr. Hardacre) thought the Council at this late stage of the session would incur the odium and indignation of a large number of people if, after they had done so much work in passing the Bill through, that Chamber rejected it. There were certain selectors who were exceedingly anxious to take up land under the perpetual leasing system. He knew some who would like to forfeit their present holdings and take up land under the new form of tenure. The Minister made a statement that he would release the farmers from arrears of rent in certain cases if they gave up their holdings to take up land under the perpetual leasing system. If they did not have the perpetual lease clause in the Bill, those people would not get that advantage, and it would mean ruination to a number of them. On that ground alone they ought to insist on the clause being sent back to the Council.

[Hon. J. W. Blair.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: He was glad the hon. member for Leichhardt had pointed out that the Minister had tried to get the clause passed. He had been attacked from certain quarters when he brought in the clause, and it was said that he was not sincere; but those who had been watching his actions must admit that he had done all he could to get both Chambers to adopt those clauses. (Hear, hear!) The hon. member for Leichhardt referred to the odium and indignation which would be felt by a number of people if the Upper House rejected this Land Bill. Perhaps there would be odium and indignation, but that would be very little consolation to those selectors who would be deprived of the advantages which the Bill, if passed in its present form, held out to them. The hon. member for Leichhardt also said that if the clause were dropped it would prevent a good many selectors taking advantage of the perpetual leasing system; but, so far as he was able to see, he did not think that the perpetual leasing clause was going to be very much of a relief measure to those who were already on the land. There might be some cases—and he should seek for those who wished to come under that system in the Central district—in the electorate of the hon. member. He thought the hon. member somewhat overestimated the benefits of his proposal, but, in any case, the only disadvantage those who wished to come under it would suffer by the omission of the clause was that for a time their object would be postponed. That would be the only inconvenience they would suffer, but if they sent the Bill back to the Legislative Council they ran the undoubted risk—he might almost say certainty—of having the Bill lost, and then the agricultural farm selectors, the grazing farm selectors, the pastoral lessees, and those who took up land under prickly pear selections, would have taken away from them the benefits which this Bill unquestionably conferred upon them. They would be losing the substance and grasping at the shadow.

Mr. MULCAHY: The Minister told them that they should be thankful for small mercies; but, if the House was divided, he would vote against the motion. He recognised that the members of that Chamber, who had to go before the people and seek their suffrages, were not the lawmakers at all. The time had now arrived when the nominee Chamber was running the show. Anything that was acceptable to the Upper House was passed, but anything the Assembly wished to pass the Council said, "If you insist on it, you will lose the Bill altogether." How long were they going to stand that? The time had now arrived when they should make a stand. They would have to meet the Council sooner or later. He noticed they could get syndicate railways through, and he saw one was to be introduced next day. It would be passed, and it would be accepted by the Council.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. MULCAHY: He did not see any valid reason given by the Council why the clause should not be passed. If there was a section who wished to have the perpetual leasehold system—and he believed there were—then why should they not have it? The principle was in operation in New Zealand, and worked very well there. It was only when they got the two systems of tenure working side by side that the people came to see the benefits of the new system. He objected to the business of the

country being run entirely by the nominee Chamber.

Mr. RYLAND (*Gympie*) regretted that the Minister did not insist upon the retention of this clause. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Do you prefer the clause or the Bill?] He preferred the clause, but he did not think they would lose the Bill if they insisted upon retaining the clause. A large section of the people wished to see the principle of perpetual leasehold included in our land legislation. It was a principle which would probably operate more effectively in new townships than in connection with agricultural selection, and he hoped the Minister would stiffen his back and say to the Council that they wanted this clause retained in the Bill. The only argument advanced against it was that it contained a new principle, but that was no real argument at all, and, as a matter of fact, it was not new, for the Land Act of 1884 was built on that principle. With regard to the statement made in the Press, and by those who were opposed to the clause, that they would not get people to put improvements on leased land, that statement was opposed to experience, because many of the largest buildings in London and New York were built on land held under a twenty-one years' lease, with the condition that at the expiration of the term of the lease land and buildings should revert to the owner. He should vote for the retention of the clause.

Mr. BURROWS (*Charters Towers*) urged that the Committee should insist upon their disagreement with the amendment of the Council omitting the clause. It had passed that Committee on the voices, which showed that they were practically unanimous in their desire to embody the principle of perpetual leasehold in the Bill. The disagreement to it by the other Chamber was in effect a declaration that land should only be taken up under the existing systems of tenure in this State. He strongly objected to the dictation of another place as to the way in which they should provide for land settlement. Why should this Committee be told that they must not attempt to keep the lands the property of the State? This provision would afford better facilities for settlement than existed at present, as men would be able under it to take up land at less expense, and to devote the small means at their command to the development of their holdings. He should vote against the motion of the Minister.

Mr. HAWTHORN (*Enoggera*): The question now was not whether it was desirable to have perpetual leaseholds, but whether they were prepared to lose the Bill. In his opinion the Bill was too important for them to risk losing it, as it contained valuable provisions for promoting settlement and for attracting people from other countries to Queensland. It would be a calamity to lose the Bill, which he sincerely believed they would do if they insisted upon the retention of the clause, and he should support the Minister in his proposal not to insist upon their disagreement to the Council's amendment.

Mr. HAMILTON (*Gregory*): One of the chief reasons why he appreciated this Bill was that it contained the principle of perpetual leasehold, and although there were many provisions in the Bill which he should not like to see lost, one of which was inserted at his suggestion, still, he would sooner lose the Bill than lose the principle involved in the clause under consideration. The principle of perpetual leasehold had worked well in New Zea-

*Mr. Hamilton.]*

land, and although lately there had been a little movement there against the system, still the majority of the people of that colony were in favour of it. If the Bill were lost through their insisting on the retention of the clause, then let those who threw out the clause take the blame for the loss of the measure. He did not think they should back down to the Upper House on every occasion. They had backed down more this session than they should have done, and it was high time that members of the Assembly asserted themselves. They were responsible to the electors, and the members of the other place were responsible to no one. He really could not understand why members in another place objected to perpetual leases, because they held their seats on perpetual leases. If the question went to a division he should certainly vote for the retention of the clause.

Mr. MITCHELL (*Maryborough*) thought it was high time they took a stand in this matter. The clause was a very moderate one, and could do no harm to anyone who held land at the present time. Those members of the Assembly who opposed the clause said it would never be taken advantage of. Why, then, did they object to it? If the Minister would take the advice of members sitting on that side of the House, and refuse to agree to the omission of the clause, he thought there would be no doubt as to the result. Should it so happen that members in another place persisted in opposing moderate legislation like this, they would find before very long that they would have to account to the country for their action. He was prepared to vote with those who desired to retain the clause, and to assist in any matter that would compel those in another place to accept the legislation passed by a large majority of the Assembly. It was their duty to accept such legislation, and he hoped the Minister would see his way clear to indicate before the debate closed that he was prepared to reject the amendment of the Council. He did not think there was any likelihood of the Bill being lost through their insisting upon the retention of the clause, as members in another place would probably see that it would be very unwise on their part to cause such a valuable Bill to be thrown out.

Mr. LESINA hoped that, after the expression of opinion they had heard from members of the Committee, the Minister would withdraw his motion that the Committee do not insist upon their disagreement with the amendment of the Council. The principle of perpetual leasehold, although new to our legislation, would not in any way interfere with existing forms of tenure. The proposed provisions would not interfere with the right of selectors and others to take up land under any tenure which existed to-day—it was not compulsory, but permissive. There was no reason why they should not be progressive enough to adopt the perpetual leasehold system, particularly in regard to agricultural selections and town and suburban lands, and thus afford thrifty working men throughout Queensland an opportunity of leasing a block of land from the State. The principle of perpetual leasehold was adopted at the last Labour convention, and placed in their programme, and it had been included in the Labour programme throughout Australia. The Council had deliberately refused to accept it on two occasions, and now it was proposed that the Assembly should weakly back down.

Very likely the reason why the [5 p.m.] principle was opposed by another place was because it was adopted by the Labour convention. But that was one

[*Mr. Hamilton.*

of the reasons why it should be insisted upon. After all, it was about the only principle that the Labour party had succeeded in having inserted in the Bill, and, though surrounded by limitations, they were pleased to have the principle adopted, and could not cavil over the fact that the Minister had a discretionary power. It had been inserted in an unobjectionable way to prune down hostility, and, having waited expectantly for its passage, it was deliberately rejected by the Council. If the Minister would not withdraw his motion, they should vote against it. Let them insist upon their undoubted rights and privileges, and let the Council take the responsibility of their actions. The fact that it was a vital principle of land occupancy which they had secured after many years of fighting for ought to be sufficient inducement for members of the party to insist upon it. If they backed down now, every one of their privileges would be whittled away, and legislation would come back mutilated in such a way as to be practically useless for the purpose intended. They should take a definite stand. Already the Land Monopoly Tax Bill had gone; the Workers' Compensation Bill had been interfered with in a number of vital respects, and more encroachments on their privileges would follow. Those to blame for the rejection of the Bill would be the Council, for crassly and stupidly standing in the way of progress. They had the ball at their feet if they liked to kick it, and if they did not take advantage of the opportunity now it would be lost for ever.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS hoped the Committee would not do anything which would endanger its reputation as an assemblage of practical men. He heard those who recommended the rejection of the motion using such terms as "progress" and "advancement," and demanding that the other place be made to do certain things. If there be any members of that Chamber prepared to carry on a warfare with another place—and there might be good grounds in other respects for such hostilities—they could take it from him that they would not inflict any damage on another place over such a clause as that. Not the slightest demand had been made for such a provision beyond the limited expressions which had reached him, and which he had before referred to. He might be permitted to say that the whip of the party had adopted a somewhat new rôle in his attitude towards the motion before the Committee. He had not rendered that assistance which whips generally rendered to their party on such occasions. He would ask the hon. member for Gregory what demand there was in the Gregory district for the perpetual leaving system? He knew something of that country, and any emphatic demand for such a principle had certainly not come from there. No one in the West of Queensland ever made such a demand. There might be something in the demand that the principle should be applied to town and suburban lots, and he admitted that he should have felt some little appreciation of the application of the principle to such land as that. The hon. member who fathered the clause talked about agricultural farms and homesteads, but it would only be in a limited number of cases in which they would get *bonâ fide* agricultural farmers or homesteaders to take up country under such a clause as that. In fully ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the men who took up country wanted to acquire the freehold. He asked the Committee whether they were prepared to break the agricultural farmer and selector on

the wheel of the suburban workman? If that was the position taken up; if it was said by hon. members that they wanted the clause on account of workmen who desired to lease small allotments in the suburbs, then all he could say was that when the time came they would be able to accomplish that end, but do not let the principle be enforced at the expense of the men who had gone out to reclaim the wilderness, and who were the very backbone of the country. He had consulted with his colleague in charge of the Bill in another place, and was assured by him that the rejection of the Bill was certain if they insisted upon retaining the clause. Were they, in the face of that, going to deprive the agricultural farmer and homesteader of the undoubted concessions contained in the Bill? If his motion was rejected, a vast number of men in the country who had been waiting for the concession contained in the Bill would be bitterly disappointed, and hon. members would not be one step nearer their goal, while the men for whose benefit the Bill was introduced would be as far off as ever. Where was the practical wisdom of any such course as that recommended by that benevolent adviser, the hon. member for Clermont? The chief object of some hon. members was a purely theoretical one. They wanted to make use of the Land Bill to get one in at another place. With regard to another place, depend upon it, if this Chamber wanted to embark on a warfare they would have to adopt some other weapon. They would never get home on the perpetual lease question, because the country would not respond to it. He could only say that the Chamber would be doing an unwise piece of business if it rejected his motion, but if they carried it he would undertake, if he was in office when the House next met, to bring in a Bill to give effect to the principle of perpetual leasing. [Mr. BOWMAN: What show have you of carrying it in another place?] He hoped when they met again, all being well, next year they would be in a vastly better position for carrying their measures in another place than was unfortunately the case now. He could only say that, if the Committee passed the motion, he gave that undertaking, that he would bring in a Bill and would do all a man could, and the Government would do all they could, to put it through.

Mr. HAMILTON: If the Minister had notified the Committee that he would introduce the principle next year, it would have saved a lot of discussion. As for the homily which the hon. gentleman had delivered to him, if he thought because he was Government whip he was going to swallow all his principles the hon. gentleman was much mistaken. If the Government wanted a whip of that sort, they had better look for someone else. He was a member of the Labour party, and had never departed from the principle involved in the clause; but for the sake of being Government whip he was not going to swallow his principles. He knew the opposition and intrigue which the Government had had to fight, and he had done his very best to try and assist them on many occasions, but he was going to stand by the principle of perpetual leases, because he had always believed in it.

Mr. KENNA gave the Minister credit for sincerity in the deliverance he had made, but it seemed to him that his enthusiasm had led him to make a speech which the other House would interpret as a challenge to proceed in

their objection to the clause. The hon. gentleman referred to those who favoured the clause as followers of the hon. member for Clermont. That sort of argument had been used a great deal during the session, and it was time it was pointed out that whoever voted for the clause voted for it because it was included in the Labour platform. Every member of the party was pledged to vote for the principle of perpetual leases which was in the old platform. [Mr. FORSYTH: It is not.] It was, at all events, in the new platform, and, although not expressly referred to in the old platform, it was implied, because if they did not believe in land sales they must believe in land leasing. A crisis seemed to be approaching between the two Houses. It was becoming intolerable that twelve or fifteen or sixteen men not elected by the people should have the right of veto over legislation passed by the representatives of the people. [An honourable member: in New Zealand it is the same.] That sort of thing happened there, but a remedy was found for it pretty quickly. If there was one thing above another he had to complain about the present Government, it was the subservient way in which it accepted the mutilation of its measures. To his mind there was a bigger principle than perpetual leases incorporated in the clause—the principle of the right of that Chamber to insist upon its legislation. They should insist on their measures being carried in other than the mutilated form in which they had been sent back by the Council. It was a scandal and a disgrace that the representatives of the people should have wasted so much time in passing legislation, and then have it ruthlessly hurled aside by sixteen or seventeen persons who had no responsibility whatever to the electors. It was time that they put a stop to that, and not sit down quietly and abide by whatever a minority in the other Chamber dictated to them. Although he recognised the great value of the Bill, there was a still greater principle behind it, and that was the principle of representative Government. He would not like to see the country deprived of the valuable assistance which it was likely to receive from other parts of the Bill, but he was not going to allow the representatives of that Chamber to be put aside when they decided what legislation should be passed for the benefit of the State.

Mr. KERR (*Barcoo*) was sorry to see hon. members get so heated over this matter. They were always threatening what they were going to do with the other Chamber. It was like the cry of "Wolf!" and the Council were getting accustomed to it. He believed they ought to do something with the Upper House. He believed the Upper House had been taking liberties with the legislation sent from the Assembly. A member who had just spoken said, Were the Government going to sit down quietly under it? What was their experience of last session? The Government held a special session, and sent back legislation to the Council, and it was passed through. They were not going to gain anything by threatening what they were going to do with the Upper House. He believed in doing, and not threatening to do. Proper action could be taken, and he believed that it would be taken. The Bill that was sent up from the Assembly should have been passed by the Council, except, perhaps, with the inclusion of a few small amendments. He could assure the Minister that there were a good many in the State, and not merely those who held grazing farms, who believed in the perpetual lease system. The benefit that was going to be obtained from that

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system was not confined to grazing lands, but it would be of great benefit to those who took up town and suburban allotments. The Bill was going to confer on many selectors improvements that were wanted very much. He was not one who wished to back down to the Council on any occasion. He thought that some consideration should be given to those who were going to benefit under the Bill, and he believed that the Minister would have saved a great deal of discussion if he had announced—knowing that the bulk of the Labour party were in favour of the perpetual lease system—that he was prepared to bring in an amending Bill next session including the perpetual lease system, and send it up to the Upper House again. That would have done away with a great deal of the talk which they had had that afternoon. Members should look on the matter in a cool frame of mind, and not get heated and lose their heads. Although there was a good deal to be said in favour of many provisions of the Bill, he was one of those who thought it would be better to lose the Bill than to have it without the perpetual leasing clause in it. Although he agreed with the Minister that the abolition of the perpetual lease clause was not going to be a question that would move the people against the Upper House, there were other matters that had taken place in the session which were going to move the people against the Upper House. He believed the electors of the country would cry out for a change after what had taken place. [Mr. J. LEAHY: They will do that all right.] The time was not far distant when they would have a change in the Upper House. Fancy a Government with the majority that the present Government had got passing measures on the voices, and then when they are sent to the Upper House that Chamber had—should he say the audacity—

Mr. J. LEAHY rose to a point of order. Was the hon. member in order in referring to the action of members of the other Chamber—a co-ordinate branch of the Legislature—as audacity. [Government members: Yes.] [Mr. LESINA: I should have said infernal audacity.]

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not in order in using the word “audacity” in reference to members of the other House. It is not parliamentary language.

Mr. KERR: What he said was, should he say “audacity.” If that was not parliamentary language, he would say that the Upper House had the temerity to—[Laughter. Too mild]—throw out the legislation passed by the Assembly. This question was getting to become very acute, and the time was coming when some steps would have to be taken. The Minister in charge of the Bill pointed out that matters could not go on as they had been going for much longer. After the legislation which had been thrown out it made them feel that something must be done. [Mr. FORSYTH: Then why do not you do it?]

He was sorry that he would [5.30 p.m.] have to vote against the Minister's motion, as he thought that the perpetual leasing clause should be left in the Bill.

Mr. LESINA protested strongly against the statement of the leader of the Labour party that he (Mr. Lesina) had not dealt with the matter coolly and dispassionately. The member for Leichhardt was most dispassionate in his utterances, and so were other members, till the Secretary for Public Lands

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got up and deliberately sought out the member for Gregory, the member for Fortitude Valley, and one or two other members, and used language which he should not have used towards those hon. gentlemen, and the result was that they became heated. What the member for Barcoo should have done was to have called attention to the intemperate and extraordinary language of the Secretary for Public Lands. It was that which caused the whole outbreak.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think the hon. member is in order in finding fault with the expressions used by the Minister with reference to other hon. members.

Mr. LESINA: He agreed with the leader of the Labour party that the perpetual leasing clause was not going to be of so much benefit to the agricultural and grazing farmer as it was to the men who took up the town allotments. Under that system workmen would be able to take up leases and make homes for themselves. Townships were springing up all over the State in every direction, and would continue to spring up, and the allotments which at present were being sold would be leased to workmen: the rents would come into the Treasury, and as land values went up the rents would be increased thereby, ensuring an amount of money coming into the Treasury which would take the place of other taxation. These were the people they wanted to assist, and that was why they insisted on the clause remaining in the Bill. Hon. members were discussing the matter calmly until the Secretary for Public Lands, like a red Indian, waved the club of dissolution over their heads, and told them that if they did not pass the amendment the Council would get its hair off. It mattered not to them what the Council did. They disagreed with the Council's amendment and that was sufficient. The Council said, “You shall not have it,” but members of the Assembly said, “We shall.” Then the Minister got up and said, “You dare to do it, and out goes the Bill.” [THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I never used such an expression.] The hon. gentleman said it in effect. Let them take the risk of the measure passing the nominees of past and gone Governments. If they did not pass it, then call a special session in January to deal with it. The Council were tired with the hard work they had been doing, and the best thing would be to tire them right out by bringing them back in January.

Mr. HARDACRE: The Minister promised that he would introduce another Bill next session, if this clause was not passed; but, to show the hollowness of that promise, if they could not get such a provision through when it was accompanied by a valuable Bill in other respects, what possibility was there of getting it through separately? Unless they passed that provision to-day, it seemed that it would be many years before they did get it through. If he had the same fear of losing the Bill as the Minister, he might refrain from insisting on the clause being retained; but he thought the Minister was unduly alarmed. Undoubtedly the farmers and agriculturists would lose a good deal if the Bill were rejected, but so also would the class that the members of the Upper House were interested in. The Council's interests were with the pastoralists, and they would seriously consider those interests before they rejected the Bill. They had accepted fully half of the Council's

amendments, and he believed that if the Bill were sent back to them they would accept this clause. The Minister suggested that the Assembly should accept both amendments. He thought they might accept one—and it was an important one, too—and the Council should accept the other. He knew one member of the Legislative Council was particularly interested in getting the other amendment accepted, and he might give way on this one. That would be a fair compromise.

Mr. RYLAND: The reason given by the Council for omitting the perpetual leasing system was that the provisions of the clause were not sufficient to effectually regulate the new system of land tenure. But the system would be the same as at present existed in the case of agricultural farms, and that objection would therefore not hold water. The perpetual lessees of land would get greater protection for their improvements than any other landowner, because they could only be charged rent on the unimproved value of the land.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: The hon. member for Leichhardt pointed out that if another place would not accept the principle in conjunction with a Bill which contained so many advantageous principles, were they likely to accept it in a Bill of itself? The answer to that was that six months hence they would be a great deal nearer to a general election than they were now, and if they sent the Bill up to another place and it was rejected again, it would add to the list of accusations, charges, and responsibilities to be laid at their door. [Mr. MULCAHY: They will not bother about that.] They would not bother about it, but the Government would bother about it, and if on account of the Council's rejection of this principle they allowed all the rest of the Bill to go, they were not one step nearer getting perpetual leases.

Mr. BOWMAN (*Fortitude Valley*): The attitude of the Secretary for Public Lands was very different to that of one of his colleagues in respect to the Workers' Compensation Bill. The Attorney-General distinctly told them last week that if a certain provision was lost in the Council, he would sooner lose the Bill than allow the thing to pass. In connection with perpetual leasing, he was one who believed in it, not merely from a theoretical point of view, as the Secretary for Public Lands had insinuated, but he had believed in it for years, and had advocated the principle as sincerely and as earnestly as he could. The leader of the Opposition had stated that he had no objection to the particular clause in the original Bill, and the House agreed that no harm could come by its insertion. The Minister himself had also admitted that he had received letters from individuals who were desirous of taking up land on the perpetual lease system, and he (Mr. Bowman) wanted to know were they simply going to be at the beck and call of another place. The principle was desired by the whole Labour party, and he thought the party should have some consideration. Although it was not in the old platform, it was in the new platform, and the Labour party had advocated the principle in season and out of season. He trusted the Minister would insist on the inclusion of the principle, and if the Bill were thrown out in another place they could pile it on top of some other stuff they might have in hand to give them when they came back.

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Question—That the Committee do not insist on their disagreement with the omission of clause 13—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 22.

Mr. Airey	Mr. Kidston
„ Barnes	„ J. Leahy
„ Barton	„ P. J. Leahy
„ Bell	„ Lindley
„ Blair	„ Macartney
„ Bouchard	„ Mann
„ Bridges	„ Maxwell
„ Cameron	„ O'Brien
„ Denham	„ O'Keefe
„ Forrest	„ Paget
„ Forsyth	„ Paull
„ Fox	„ Philp
„ Grayson	„ Plunkett
„ Hargreaves	„ Rankin
„ Hawthorn	„ Spencer
„ Herbertson	„ Stodart
Tellers: Mr. Macartney and Mr. Maxwell.	

NOES, 22.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Kerr
„ Bowman	„ Land
„ Burrows	„ Lesina
„ Cowap	„ Mitchell
„ Dibley	„ Mulcahy
„ Fudge	„ Murphy
„ Grant	„ Nielson
„ Hamilton	„ Payne
„ Hardacre	„ Reinhold
„ Jones	„ Ryland
„ Kenna	„ Woods
Tellers: Mr. Bowman and Mr. Burrows.	

Resolved in the affirmative.

On new clause 24—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS moved that the Committee do not insist on their disagreement to new clause 24.

Question put and passed.

On amendments in clause 42 (now 39)—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS moved that the Committee accept the amendment of the Council in lines 12 to 23. The Council had done that which he had intended to do all along, that was, the substitution of the word “commissioner” for the word “court,” and although they had slightly altered the procedure, he did not think it would impair the clause.

Question put and passed.

On clause 44 (now 41)—

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Hon. members would see that the Council did not insist on the omission of the last two paragraphs of subclause (5), but they offered an addition to the clause by inserting, after the word “and,” “If the Crown tenant has failed to satisfy the Commissioner that he has observed all the foregoing provisions.” Although he preferred the Bill as originally introduced, he did not think it was a serious modification. He moved that the Committee do not insist on their disagreement to the Council's omission of the last two paragraphs of subclause (5), clause 44 (now 41), and agree to the proposed modification of the new subclause.

Question put and passed.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS moved that the Chairman do now leave the chair and report the resolutions to the House.

Mr. HARDACRE: When he called “Divide” on the perpetual lease system, he was under the impression that the Chairman had given the question in favour of the “Ayes.” He had taken a prominent part in the matter, and he thought he was expected to call a division if the vote went against it, and seeing it was

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going against it, he had called "Divide." He could only say he deeply regretted that the mistake had occurred.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee do not insist on their disagreement to the amendments of the Council, and agree to the amendments now offered by the Council.

The report was adopted; and the Bill was ordered to be returned to the Council, by message in the usual form.

#### RABBIT BOARDS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

##### MESSAGE FROM COUNCIL.

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

#### LOCAL AUTHORITIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

##### MESSAGE FROM COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Council re- [7 p.m.] turning this Bill with amendments, in which they requested the concurrence of the Assembly.

Ordered, that the message be taken into consideration in committee to-morrow.

#### HARBOUR DUES AND HARBOUR BOARDS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

##### MESSAGE FROM COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Council returning this Bill with amendments, in which they requested the concurrence of the Assembly.

Ordered, that the message be taken into consideration in committee to-morrow.

#### CARELESS USE OF FIREARMS BILL. CONSIDERATION IN COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS.

On the motion of Mr. PLUNKETT (*Albert*), the several amendments made by the Council in this Bill were agreed to without discussion.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had agreed to the Council's amendments.

The report was adopted; and the Bill was ordered to be returned to the Council, by message in the usual form.

#### SUPPLY.

##### LOAN ESTIMATES. BUILDINGS.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS moved that £18,400 be granted for "Buildings." He regretted that it was necessary to enlarge the hospital for the insane at Goodna. During the six years ended December, 1904, the number of males had increased by 129, and the females by 181, or 21 males and 30 females per year. There was not sufficient accommodation for the females, and it is intended to add an additional story to the two wings of

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No. 2 ward. There is a vote of £1,600 for hospital buildings which would be expended in providing three-fifths of the cost of an operating theatre at Toowoomba, and effecting improvements at Rockhampton Hospital. There is a grant proposed of £300 for the Warwick Technical College, Mr. Gripp, the school inspector, having reported that additional accommodation was very much needed, the teaching being now carried on in three separate places—the school of arts, the Warwick West State School, and the courthouse. The committee desired to add classes in agriculture, agricultural chemistry, mensuration, bookkeeping, cookery, etc. Not only were the students inconvenienced by the teaching being carried on in three separate buildings, but the buildings at present occupied were required for other purposes. The amount of £300 was a preliminary grant. The committee had asked for £600, but would not expend more than £300 this year, and they would depend upon getting the remainder subsequently.

Mr. KERR referred to the fact that last year the Ravenswood Hospital committee asked for a loan to complete their operating theatre which they had erected, but could not get it, and that was one of the things which helped to close the hospital. Toowoomba was now getting a grant for the same purpose. He thought all hospitals should be treated on the same basis.

Mr. MANN: Tenders recently called for a school building at Atherton exceeded the estimate by £70. He had received advice that the contract was not properly advertised. In what papers was it advertised?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He assumed tenders were called for and advertised in the usual papers.

Mr. BOWMAN asked if it was intended to make any additions to the Diamantina Hospital, which had to refuse patients on account of want of accommodation?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: If a request had been made to the department to report on the matter it would have been done; but no request was made, and there was no provision for additions on the Estimates. Hospital committees clearly understood that no money was available unless voted by Parliament.

Mr. BOWMAN: Thought the matter of extending the accommodation at Diamantina Hospital should be taken into consideration.

Mr. MACARTNEY endorsed what had fallen from the hon. member for Fortitude Valley in reference to the need for additional accommodation at Diamantina Hospital. He knew of several cases in which admittance had to be refused. If the Government undertook to provide for that class of patients, they should provide for all. He would like to know the meaning of the grant to the Warwick Technical College. It seemed to be somewhat unusual to make a grant out of loan funds to such institutions, which, after all, were not Government assets.

Mr. GRAYSON: Was it intended to remove the present Allora School buildings to a more convenient site? The committee were prepared to surrender the site, which was worth at least £1,000, and was in the main street, provided the buildings were removed for them to the school reserve of 5 acres, situated 200 or 300 yards from the present site.

Mr. FORSYTH: With regard to the grant of £300 to the Warwick Technical College, they had some discussion last year [7.30 p.m.] when they proposed to grant the sum of £1,515 to the Lady Lamington Hospital, also out of the loan fund. If anything went out of the loan fund they should have an asset for it, but there was no asset in the case of the grant of £300 to the Warwick Technical College. It was not straightforward financing, and he recommended the Treasurer not to make any more grants of that sort from loan fund. [The TREASURER: It is a bad principle, but it is rather late in the day for you to call attention to it.] Attention was called to it during the discussion on the grant to the Lady Lamington Hospital, and some strong language was used on that occasion. The money should have been taken out of revenue and not out of loan fund. He would like to know if the £11,000 set down for school buildings would be sufficient? [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Apparently so.] He should like to know how many contracts had been entered into, and the amount for them; and, if they amounted to the total vote, what would the Minister do in the case of fresh applications? Last year the Government spent £2,361 on school buildings, which was a remarkably small sum, and this year they had £11,000. There were numerous applications made for provisional and State schools. [The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: And every one of them has been responded to.] He wanted to know the number of contracts entered into, the amount of each, and the margin left for applications this year.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The appropriation to 12th December was £9,953. This includes schools for which tenders were invited and contracts duly signed. The local subscriptions amounted to £1,863. In reply to the hon. member for Cunningham, he would say that it was not intended to remove the school at Allora at present.

Question put and passed.

#### BRIDGES.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS moved that £800 be granted for the bridge over the Condamine River at Warwick. The amount was passed last year and was not availed of; and was not likely to be availed of this year.

Question put and passed.

#### HARBOURS AND RIVERS.

The TREASURER moved that £875 be granted for the cost of a hand-power derricking crane at the Dry Dock, South Brisbane. The other crane was inadequate for the work. At the present time they were only able to lift 10 tons with it, and there was a risk of accident. It had been decided to erect a more suitable crane.

Question put and passed.

#### WATER SUPPLY.

The TREASURER moved that £9,300 be granted for "Water Supply." The actual expenditure on that vote last year was £4,847. The most formidable item in this year's Estimates was £4,000 for the bore at Bedourie. They had struck a good supply of water there—2,500,000 gallons daily—at a depth of 1,364 feet, and the cost had only been £2,362. They abandoned the first bore there, and only a few months ago they thought it

likely that they would have to abandon this one, but they agreed to go on with the work, and he was exceedingly pleased that they did go on, because they had got a valuable supply of water. At Eromanga they were not quite so successful. They were getting a daily flow of 10,000 gallons, but he was afraid it was not too promising. It was down 2,600 feet and they were still working there.

HON. R. PHILP: Were there any bores to be put down this year? [The TREASURER: He could not recall any just now.] There ought to be a bore beyond Bedourie on the Western stock route, as cattle had to pass over one dry stage of 40 miles.

Mr. HAMILTON was pleased, like the Treasurer, with the water supply struck at Bedourie. He would have liked the Treasurer to say if they got any water at Windorah bore. The contracts were let for the Windorah and Eromanga bores at the same time as the Bedourie bore, but when the Works Department was transferred to the department over which the hon. member for Bulloo presided the contract for the Bedourie bore was cancelled, and that hon. gentleman kept on the contract for the bore in his own electorate. [Mr. J. LEAHY: That is not true.] It was remarkable that the only place where a good flow of water was struck was the one which the hon. gentleman cancelled, and it was struck at a depth of 1,400 feet. Another bore was required where the leader of the Opposition mentioned, so that stock could travel on that long, dry stage. The South Australian Government had opened up the roads right up to the border, and if an additional bore was put down between Bedourie and Birdsville they would have water pretty well the whole way down to the South Australian border. He was sorry that Augathella was not to receive a bore. An artesian bore had been promised for that district for many years, and it had not got one yet. The shortness of water caused great hardship in the Western districts, and the putting down of bores in that country was the only way the Government could assist the people there by the expenditure of public money. There were no roads wanted, and the construction of dams or tanks, or, better still, the putting down of artesian bores, would not only benefit the residents of any district, but the travelling public as well.

Mr. J. LEAHY: There was no doubt that artesian bores were very useful, and they could sink a great many bores yet in the various districts. He entirely agreed with the remarks of the hon. member for Gregory, that bores were absolutely necessary in some places to keep the roads open. There was a little matter he had brought under the notice of the Treasurer in connection with one of those bores. He did not blame the Treasurer because nothing had been done, because New South Wales was the owner of the bore. At the Hungerford bore they got a fair supply of sub-artesian water. It came within 10 feet of the surface, but the pressure was not very great, although there was a considerable pressure 200 feet down. That bore was on the great international highway of Australia, and although a great deal had been expended in connection with dams, the country was not suited for the construction of dams. The money was thrown away, but, as there was a good supply of water at the place he had mentioned, it was very desirable that some sort of tank should be put there which would not only benefit the travelling public but the whole of Western Queensland. Having struck water within a few feet of the

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surface, it was absurd, for the sake of £100 or so, to allow it to stop there. He had brought the matter before the Treasurer on three or four occasions, and the hon. gentleman had stated that he was willing to contribute any reasonable sum. He would ask the Treasurer if anything had been done with New South Wales in connection with the matter.

The TREASURER agreed with the hon. member that a bore ought to be put down at Hungerford, and he was getting information from the Water Supply Department in regard to the matter, and he would see what could be done. He would be very glad if they could get proper use made of the water lying there a few feet below the surface. [Mr. J. LEAHY: The road is absolutely closed at the present time, and the nearest water is 15 miles away.] He might state that the Government had taken action for the purpose of facilitating the getting of water where it was badly wanted. They had three boring plants constructed for the purpose of providing water for the selectors in various districts.

Mr. BOWMAN agreed with the hon. member for Bulloo with regard to the disabilities caused to the travelling public from Thargomindah right along the New South Wales border through the want of water. He regretted there was no mention made of the Augathella bore, because, when he represented the Warrego, he knew the disabilities the people laboured under there. It was one of the best districts in Queensland, and the whole trouble had been the want of water. The nearest water was about 13 miles away. The wells put down gave out very early, and the Augathella bore was one of the most advantageous bores that could be put down. Some parts of Western Queensland were as bad off for water now as they were in the big drought. The Augathella people had to endure much privation for the want of good water, and he hoped something would be done for them.

Mr. SOMERSET (*Stanley*) was very glad to hear that the Government intended to obtain three boring plants, and he was quite sure it would pay them to have at least 300 boring plants for the use of the country.

Mr. HAMILTON: He knew that the selectors were willing to pay something towards the cost of putting down bores, but there was no machinery by which the Government could charge for the water. In some cases there was no water within 15 or 20 miles. Between Winton and Ayrshire Downs there was a dry stage of 40 miles, and sometimes there was a distance of 50 or 60 miles between the water. There were a number of selectors below the bores who would be quite willing to pay something if the Government put down a bore, and allowed the water to run through their selections.

Mr. JONES (*Burnett*) would like to impress upon the Treasurer the necessity of water conservation in the Burnett district. In many places selectors had to cart water 8 and 10 miles. He had brought the matter under the notice of the Treasurer, and he had stated that there were not sufficient Crown lands available to warrant the expenditure. That seemed to be following out the principle of settling people on the land and not giving them any assistance when they were on the land. He believed the shire council were willing to contribute something towards the cost, and he knew the Treasurer was anxious to do something in the matter.

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The TREASURER: He wanted the Committee to understand that there were few things he would be more willing to advance money towards than for the conservation of water. Where the people were anxious to get water, and were prepared to show their *bona fides* by paying, they would have little difficulty with the Government. With regard to the remarks of the hon. member for Burnett, he would point out that people very often came to the Government to spend money to get a supply of water, but they would not lift a little finger to help themselves. The hon. member's district was a case in point. The

[8 p.m.] department had a bore there, and some of the selectors in the district would not even provide firewood for working it. He laid down the general principle that if a district was in need of water he would help the residents if they were prepared to help themselves; they could not expect the general taxpayer to provide the whole of the cost of providing water in every district.

Mr. HAWTHORN had seen assertions made in the newspapers at different times to the effect that the supply of water in some artesian bores was running out, and he should like to know if the Minister had any report from the expert of the department as to whether there had been any serious or visible diminution of the flow of water in any bores, and if so, in what bores?

The TREASURER replied that so far as he could learn, the data on that subject was as yet too scanty to enable them to form any reliable opinion on the artesian bores all over Queensland. Although it was true that in some cases there seemed to be a diminution in the supply, it would be unwise to make the statement that the supply was running out, as that statement might not be borne out by facts.

Question put and passed.

#### LOANS TO LOCAL BODIES.

The TREASURER moved that £100,000 be granted for "Loans to Local Bodies" under the Local Works Loans Act of 1880. The sum of £117,000 was voted for this purpose last year, but he regretted to say that the amount spent in advances only totalled £36,150. He hoped that the expenditure this year would more nearly correspond with the amount voted. [Mr. FORSYTH: How much have you promised?] About £60,000, but that might not all be made use of by the end of the year.

Question put and passed.

#### LOANS IN AID OF DEEP SINKING IN MINES.

The TREASURER moved that £2,000 be granted for "Loans in Aid of Deep Sinking in Mines." The amount spent last year was £2,818. [Mr. PAGET: How much was repaid?] The hon. member had better not mention repayments; he was afraid that most of these loans were not very easily distinguishable from gifts.

Mr. MAXWELL: For two years he had been pointing out that it was a fallacy to put this money on the Estimates, and that they could better assist the mining industry by passing the Bill he introduced two years ago providing for advances for mining machinery. Under such a measure the Government would have better security for advances than they had now, and the money would be distributed more effectively. He noticed that in New Zealand and Western Australia money for

deep sinking was voted from revenue, and he thought it would be better to vote it from revenue in Queensland instead of from loan.

Question put and passed.

LOANS IN AID OF CO-OPERATIVE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION.

The TREASURER moved that £3,000 be granted for "Loans in Aid of Co-operative Agricultural Production." There was nothing spent from this vote last year.

Question put and passed.

RAILWAYS—GENERAL ESTABLISHMENT.

The TREASURER moved that £14,479 be granted for "Railways—General Establishment." This was nearly £3,000 more than was voted last year, and the reason was that there had been an increase of new work on account of railways proposed necessitating some small increases in the staff, and, in some cases, twelve months' salary instead of the six months' salary put down on last year's Estimates. With those exceptions, the vote was very much the same as last year.

Mr. BARNES wished to know if the amount set down for rolling-stock was sufficient. [Mr. J. LEAHY: That does not come up on this vote.]

Question put and passed.

CIVIL ENGINEERING BRANCH.

CONSTRUCTION—SUBDIVISION—SOUTHERN DIVISION.

The TREASURER moved that £83,000 be granted for "Civil Engineering Branch—Construction—Subdivision." That was a very large decrease of £54,600.

Mr. WOODS: A few nights ago he made a statement that it was possible to save £10,000 in a certain branch of the service, and the Secretary for Railways asked him where it could be done. He had told the hon. member for Bulloo the same thing when he was Secretary for Railways, but he said the Estimates were cut down to bedrock. He had come to the conclusion that it was useless to ask for increases in wages or automatic increases unless he could show where money could be saved to pay those amounts. He had also brought up the question of the audit by the Auditor-General's staff, which was being conducted in the stores branch, and pointed out that five railway auditors were three days stock-taking at Ipswich. If that kind of thing was going on it was time the Commissioner found means of altering it. According to the Commissioner's report, there was a suspense account of £192,000, the interest on which, at  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., amounted to £7,680; and his contention was that where the department was buying material, instead of acting as storekeeper for the contractors and taking the whole risk, the contractors should be compelled to be their own storekeepers, and pay for the handling of the goods. He knew of one case in which Thos. Brown and Sons had a contract for cement, and the only handling they did was from the ship's side to the lorry. It was handled and stored by servants of the Railway Department, and was transferred from the railway stores to private buyers. There was loss by depreciation in values of stocks on hand through deterioration. This loss, calculated on the above value on a  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent basis, would equal £2,880, and on a 2 per cent basis, which was more equitable, it would

equal £3,840. There was the loss sustained on account of "dead stocks"—i.e., stocks not moving into use—consequently the money was lying idle, and deterioration took place all the time, with its consequent loss in value on that account, as well as on account of interest on first cost, which was accruing all the time. There was the loss sustained on account of "obsolete stocks"—i.e., materials which had been purchased under this account and held in stock for such a length of time that they became practically out of date, and although they might they would not be used. Their first cost was practically lost as well as the interest accruing all the time they lay in stock, and the subsequent price they fetched, if sold, did not cover such wasted interest. There was the loss sustained on account of the extra staff and labour necessary to receive, store, and handle these stocks, estimated at, say, about £1,000 per annum. There was, roughly speaking, between £30,000 and £40,000 worth of dead and obsolete stock on Queensland railways, and of that amount there was, say, about £15,000 standing in stores suspense account, which meant that interest was being paid continuously on that amount and lost. He interpreted the Audit Act to give authority for such stocks as railway permanent way, rolling-stock fittings, and specialities not otherwise easily obtainable locally, to be purchased and charged to a suspense account. If this were done the stocks on hand would not exceed between £80,000 and £100,000, or just about one-half of what they now stood at. He understood that at the same period last year they exceeded over £200,000 in value.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would remind the hon. gentleman that he should confine his remarks to the item before the Committee.

Mr. WOODS: He was reading from notes taken from the Commissioner's report.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the hon member should connect his remarks with the items under the head of "Civil Engineering Branch."

Mr. WOODS: He would leave what he had to say until they came to the suspense account.

Mr. RYLAND referred to the different treatment accorded to small and large contractors for sleepers, the small contractors being obliged to deliver at the railway stations, while the latter could stop the trains and load. This made a very big difference in the earnings of the men, and he thought a concession granted to one class should be granted to all.

The TREASURER: The Commissioner informed him that a charge of 10s. was made for stopping the train, which did not pay when there was only a small quantity of sleepers to load. It was merely a question whether it was cheaper to pay the cost of stopping the train, or take the sleepers to the railway station. The matter was in the hands of the men themselves.

Mr. RYLAND: The small contractors were handicapped if they were not treated the same as the large contractors. These men [8:30 p.m.] had a union amongst themselves called the Axemen's Union, and they were prepared to deliver large quantities collectively at various places, just the same as the large contractors were doing.

The TREASURER: If the small contractors would operate in that way, and if there were a

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sufficient number to justify them being treated in the same way as the large contractor, there would be no difficulty with the Commissioner.

Mr. RYLAND: He had to bring up another grievance on behalf of the relaying gang between Gympie and Maryborough. They were being paid at the rate of 6s. 6d. per day, when they were entitled to 7s. a day, which men were getting elsewhere. In addition to suffering the loss of 6d. per day, the men felt that they were blacklegging on their mates who were getting 7s., and they were cutting down wages; but on account of the bad times they did not like to go on strike. The State should treat the men the same as a private employer. The private employer found that it did not pay to cut down the wages, and the State should not do it.

The TREASURER: The Commissioner informed him that there was no change—that the usual wages were paid. [Mr. RYLAND: They are getting only 6s. 6d. a day.] Statements of that kind were often made to members of Parliament, and it was impossible, without knowing all the particulars, to know just where the inaccuracies were. The hon. member could take the assurance of the Chief Engineer that there was no difference in the rate of wages paid for that work.

Mr. HAWTHORN: When the Estimates for the railway workshops at Ipswich were going through the other night the hon. member for Rosewood endeavoured to get a promise from the Minister for Railways to discontinue the facilities which were granted to a number of railway employees—about twenty-two in all—who were given a free pass to and from Ipswich every day. It cost the Government nothing to grant these facilities, and it was a great convenience to these men. They were compelled to go there, as their offices had been transferred from Brisbane to Ipswich, and they preferred to be allowed to live in Brisbane. The Minister and Commissioner had granted them these facilities for getting up and down. There was some desire on the part of the Ipswich people to get these facilities taken away, and compel these officers to live in Ipswich. On behalf of these men he asked the Minister not to make a promise of that kind, but allow these men to continue as they had been doing.

Question put and passed.

#### CENTRAL DIVISION.

The TREASURER moved that £4,000 be granted for the "Civil Engineering Branch" in the Central division.

Question put and passed.

#### NORTHERN DIVISION.

The TREASURER moved that £9,600 be granted for the "Civil Engineering Branch" in the Northern division.

Mr. J. LEAHY: There was an item with regard to the resleeping of the Normanton Railway with steel sleepers. That line was rather mixed, as some years ago Mr. Stanley replaced some of the wooden sleepers with steel sleepers. He would like to know how the experiment had worked out?

The TREASURER: The Commissioner informed him that they were still experimenting, and he was still not satisfied as to which was the best class of sleeper. In some cases the steel sleepers had turned out unsatisfactory, but in other places they were better, so he was not prepared to give a final expression of opinion on it. [Mr. FORSYTH: What was the life of a sleeper?] [Mr. J. LEAHY: Fifteen to twenty years.] The average life was fifteen years.

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Mr. FORSYTH: So far as he could understand, the sleepers on the Normanton line were standing remarkably well, but some of the old wooden sleepers were not so good. The Normanton district was bad for white ants, and if they got into the wooden sleepers they would not last so long. Wooden sleepers had been employed on the Normanton line for five or six years, and the Commissioner should be able to arrive at some conclusion as to whether the steel sleeper was preferable to the wooden sleeper. As trains were always passing up and down, perhaps that prevented white ants doing damage, otherwise these sleepers would not stand very long.

Question put and passed.

#### GENERAL RAILWAY EXPENDITURE.

The TREASURER moved that £36,600 be granted for "General Expenditure." For the information of the hon. member for Bulimba, he was informed by the Commissioner that the amount of £30,000 for rolling-stock, while not too much, they hoped would be sufficient for this year.

Mr. BARNES was very much obliged to the Treasurer for immediately giving the information, but he did not think the vote set down would be sufficient. He had received a letter from Mitchell, which stated—

One hundred bags which should have left here on Tuesday and Wednesday last, the 5th and 6th instant, being consigned on those dates, has actually been delayed for five days, and only through making complaint by wire and letter to the District Traffic Manager at Toowoomba have those two wagon loads and a good deal of other stuff been removed. We much regret the delay.

That looked as if they were getting back to the days of bullock teams. If it took ten days to bring stuff from Mitchell to Brisbane, surely there must be something wrong, and they could not help coming to the conclusion that there was not sufficient rolling-stock. A firm in the city consigned some goods to Forest Hill last Tuesday week, and last Saturday those goods had not reached Forest Hill. He had noticed in the paper the other day that Henry Dean stated that some barley he had consigned from Nobby had been about a week on the road. He lost the market, and the result was a very serious financial loss to him. If at the present time, when produce had scarcely commenced to come in, there was going to be those delays, what would happen when the rush set in? He sincerely hoped the Government would not starve the rolling-stock department, because, if that were so, they would have to "pay the piper" later on, and the producers and others concerned would suffer.

The TREASURER: He was quite in accord with the attitude of the hon. member for Bulimba in this matter. But the department had not been in any way neglectful. At the present time they had 100 wagons under construction suitable for this class of work, and they would be put into service as quickly as possible, so that the temporary pressure would be very considerably relieved. The fault was certainly not with the officers of the department.

Mr. BARNES was very pleased to hear what the Treasurer had said, and he would state that he had every confidence in the officers of the department. But the fact remained that since he had last spoken on the matter, the three cases mentioned had occurred, and he understood that in the case of Mr. Dean, he had put in a claim against the department for the loss he had sustained. If a claim like that was to be sustained, the money it would cost would go a long way

towards providing more vehicles. He very much feared that the number of wagons mentioned by the Treasurer as under construction was altogether inadequate for what was coming in connection with the Queensland railways.

Mr. RANKIN was sure that no man had shown a greater endeavour to meet the desires of all classes of people than the Commissioner for Railways. He did not think the vote was sufficient, but the money was placed in very good hands, and they had good reasons for feeling very gratified that they had a man at the head of affairs as capable as the present Commissioner. Reference had been made to the necessity for coalboxes in the Southern part of the State, but in his district they had done that themselves by making provision for the export of coal. In the Southern part no effort had been made in that direction, and he was very pleased to see that the Commissioner the other day took up a stand entirely antagonistic to one or two of those people who thought they had a monopoly of that trade.

Mr. WOODS asked what amount it had cost the Government to strengthen the railways to date in order that they might carry the tank engines?

The TREASURER: The expenditure in connection with strengthening the railways to carry more powerful locomotives had been going on for a good many years, and it was hardly correct to say that that cost had been caused by the tank engines. That was only one of the reasons that had made it desirable to strengthen the railways, so as to use heavier locomotives which were more suitable for the traffic.

Mr. J. LEAHY noticed the amount set down for additional telegraph lines this year was £2,000, as against £7,000 last year. He would like to know whether any change had taken place with the Federal Government in regard to the extension of railway telegraph lines?

The TREASURER: There has been no change.

Mr. WOODS stated that at the Ipswich workshops there was over £80,000 worth of stock which was entirely out of proportion to the work that was required to be done. The amount of interest on that stock, storage, and insurance should be paid by the contractors and not by the State. He hoped the Commissioner would see that any material that could be obtained in the State should be stored by the contractor, and not by the Railway Department. As far back as 1887 Sir Samuel Griffith did away with the stores suspense account on the ground that the contractor should be the storekeeper.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I think the hon. member should have raised that matter on the previous vote, under the heading of "General Establishment."

Mr. WOODS: The Treasurer and the Chairman told him when he was speaking before that he could bring it up on this vote.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is quite wrong. I do not know what the Minister said, but I certainly never said the hon. member could bring up the matter on this vote.

Mr. WOODS: Very well, he would refer to the locomotive stores at Townsville.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member be good enough to point out the item on the Estimates dealing with locomotive stores?

Mr. RANKIN thought that some effort should be made to improve our rolling-stock, as in some districts, particularly in the Ipswich district, there was a shortage of hopper wagons.

Mr. WOODS asked how the tank engines had been running since they had been altered by Mr. Horniblow?

The TREASURER replied that they had been running very well.

Question put and passed.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LOAN ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

The TREASURER moved that £200,000 be granted for the four railways specified in the schedule, and said this was simply a vote on account towards the construction of those lines.

Mr. J. LEAHY: The House had authorised the construction of these railways, and in doing so they knew very well that the lines could not be built without money. He did not know that there was anything further to be said on the subject now.

Question put and passed.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1904-5.

##### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

The TREASURER: As hon. members would see, the Supplementary Estimates were very much smaller this year than they had been for any year in the preceding five years. In 1899-1900 the Supplementary Estimates amounted to £401,000, in 1900-1 to £402,000, in 1901-2 to £165,000, in 1902-3 to £298,000, in 1903-4 to £81,000, and this year to £45,000. In the first two years mentioned there were very large items of really unforeseen expenditure. [Mr. PAGET: In connection with the contingents.] Yes; and there would always arise contingencies when the Government would take the responsibility of spending money and consulting Parliament afterwards; but it was not a good thing, nor was it fair to Parliament, to have a large amount of unforeseen expenditure. Last year was a very good one in that respect, the expenditure being kept more nearly to the Estimates than in several years previous. He moved that £81 12s. 4d. be granted for the "Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly."

Question put and passed.

##### CHIEF SECRETARY'S OFFICE.

The TREASURER moved that a sum of £581 7s. be granted for the Chief Secretary's Office. This included a sum of £424 9s. for expenses of the visit of the Federal parliamentary party to Queensland.

Mr. LESINA wished to know what advantage Queensland derived from the expenditure of that £424 on the visit of the Federal Parliamentary party to Queensland. No visible benefit had been derived from the expenditure, and he most earnestly protested against it. He found the greatest difficulty in getting 5s. a week for some poor old destitute man, and yet over £400 was spent in a picnic trip. If those men wanted to be educated, why did they not travel at their own expense? They were told every day that Queensland was so hard up that money could not be found for half a hundred things: No money for the schools of arts, none for the hospitals, and yet plenty for a lot of bloated federal legislators to spend on a picnic. The expenditure was unjustifiable from every point of view, and the expedition had done no good. The only immediate benefit was that the Federal

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Parliament had increased the sugar bonus, which they would have done anyhow. The majority of those who carried it did not come up here. It simply gave a number of southerners a cheap trip to admire Queensland's pretty scenery and its pretty girls, and drink champagne, and yet that very day at Parliament House door he was accosted by a poor immigrant woman, in an exhausted and starving condition, who had been brought out here under false pretences. He was astonished at the Government asking for such a vote.

Mr. KERR thought that the money had been well expended. Those who came here were representatives and senators from southern States who had no knowledge of Queensland. An important measure in connection with one of Queensland's most important primary industries was about to be considered, and it was important that the conditions of the sugar industry should be made known. Nothing like the amount of money was spent as the Western Australian Government spent in entertaining a similar party. As for drinking champagne, he was in a position to say that the majority of those who came here took no intoxicating liquors. The trip had borne good fruit in the passage this week of the sugar bonus, and he was certain the result would be that when legislation affecting Queensland was being considered, federal members would be better acquainted with the conditions which prevailed here.

The TREASURER: The matter had been well put by the member for Barcoo. The Federal Government had promised to reconsider the question of the sugar bonus, to which certain southern representatives were opposed, and they suggested that a number of southern representatives, who knew nothing of the sugar industry, might with advantage go to Queensland and see the industry with their own eyes. He did not think any ordinary man would doubt that that was a wise determination to come to. It did not matter two straws to Queensland whether the money was voted here or in the Federal Parliament. If it cost £400 they would be £400 short all the same. It was not only a gracious thing but a wise thing for Queensland to do.

Mr. LESINA: The question was whether those men were influenced so much by their trip to Queensland that they voted for the bonus, or were they influenced by the arguments used in favour of the bonus, and thus came to the conclusion that the giving of an additional bonus was the right thing. Was it the trip or the arguments used which attained the object? He resented the implication that the free feed and the trip induced them to vote for the Queensland sugar industry. It made the vote a charity vote, but the money had not been given as a charity for the purposes of a white Australia.

Question put and passed.

#### HOME SECRETARY.

The TREASURER moved that £17,815 11s. 8d. be granted for "Outdoor Relief, Dunwich Benevolent Asylum, Industrial and Reformatory Schools, Public Health, Electoral Registration, Steamer 'Otter,' Hospitals and Charitable Institutions, and Registrar-General." There was an increase in outdoor relief of £4,800, or nearly 25 per cent. of the unforeseen expenditure. There was an increase in the vote for Dunwich of £3,000, and an increase of unforeseen expenditure in the Public Health Department, the greater part of which—£7,000—was expended in connection with the bubonic plague.

Mr. LESINA: In connection with the Dunwich vote, he understood there had been one or

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two important alterations with regard to the patients, which he had been advocating for years. He understood the matron had been removed, and that other changes were to take place, and the Government deserved well of the State for their action in this respect. He had battled for these alterations for years with little success, but latterly, owing to the persistent exertion of the hon. member for Fortitude Valley, Mr. Bowman, a change had taken place, and if the reorganisation were carried still further it would be a boon to the inmates of that institution. The vote for outdoor relief was a large one, and unfortunately indicated that there was a considerable amount of poverty in our midst, despite the improvements in the season and the improvement said to have taken place in trade. The total vote was very large to be undertaken without the consent of Parliament, but no one would cavil at the action of the Minister expending the money on his own responsibility in this case. He did not know whether the Minister had to obtain the consent of the Executive, but he could not go far wrong if he gave more charitable relief. It was lamentable with our scattered population that such expenditure should be required at all. He hoped the vote would be smaller next year, not that the Home Secretary should be close-fisted in his expenditure, but that there might not be the same amount of poverty. If the money spent in finding work for the unemployed would reduce some of this expenditure, then that work would be of benefit to the community.

Mr. HAWTHORN: In connection with the cost of charitable institutions, there was an indication that the local authorities around Brisbane, and the associations in Queensland, would perhaps be able to take on that business, but he would like to ask the Treasurer if he could not see his way during the next few months, as the revenue was increasing, to restore the subsidy to the old figure of £1 10s. for every £1.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I scarcely think the hon. gentleman will be in order in bringing up that question on this vote.

Mr. HAWTHORN submitted that it was pardonable on this vote, which was for hospitals and charitable institutions. However, he had mentioned the matter, and hoped the Treasurer would take it to heart.

Mr. LESINA: Did the £40 17s. 10d. for "Hospitals and Charitable Institutions" cover to any extent the correspondence between the Government and the other place with respect to the Hospitals Bill, which seemed to have been lost sight of completely?

Mr. BOWMAN would like to get some information as to the meat supplied to Dunwich, as there seemed to be some dissatisfaction [9.30 p.m.] faction on the subject. He would like to support the remarks of the member for Clermont with regard to the ready way in which the Home Secretary had taken up the grievances that existed at Dunwich. It gave great satisfaction to the inmates to see the ready way in which the hon. gentleman took up the matter, and dispensed with one or two of the officials there.

Mr. HARDACRE protested against the manner in which the outdoor relief was administered. Whenever an application was made for an indigent allowance in the country districts, the invariable rule seemed to be to choke them off with the answer, "Cannot be granted. You can go to Dunwich." He did not know what happened in the towns, but he did not know a single case in the country districts where, in the

first place, there had not been a refusal. They were told to go to Dunwich, when it was known very well that they could not go there.

Mr. REINHOLD pointed out that those who received beef had to go to the Immigration Depot in some instances and to the Pastoral Butchering Company in others. In some cases the old people had to send small children to get it for them, and he believed that ferry tickets were provided in some cases, but not in others. He thought that ferry tickets should be given to the old people to save them going the long journey round by the bridge and through Woolloongabba to Kangaroo Point. They generally had not got the money to buy tram tickets, as, if they had, they would not be wanting relief. With regard to the electoral registration, he would like to know if the Home Secretary could answer the question he asked when the vote was going through with reference to the possibility of granting some pay to the officials in that office who had worked overtime getting out the new rolls. [The HOME SECRETARY: The matter is under consideration. I think something will be done for them.]

Mr. LESINA: With regard to the matter raised by the member for Leichhardt, he (Mr. Lesina) had the same experience in both town and country districts. He knew an old man at the Valley, sixty or seventy years of age, who had to walk several miles to Kangaroo Point, *via* the Victoria Bridge, and in such cases ferry tickets should be provided. In the country he had known men to walk 14 and 16 miles for their rations, but the old men in the cities could not walk that far.

Mr. BOWMAN drew attention to the quality of the beef supplied at the Salvation Army Metropole. Numbers of men who had sheltered there had made complaints regarding the nature of the food, and the Home Secretary had promised to make inquiries into it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. gentleman is not in order in referring to that question on this vote.

Mr. BOWMAN: He was in order in referring to the men sent from the Immigration Depot to the Metropole and paid for the food supplied. Some of the men who went there were very weak, and the food they received was unfit for human consumption.

Mr. RANKIN: Without offering any opposition to the vote, he would like to see some provision made for the Ambulance Brigade.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is out of order in referring to that question on this vote.

Mr. RANKIN thought the vote for hospitals was not sufficient. The hospitals had suffered for two or three years owing to the reduction in their allowances, and a greater vote should be made. The men who used the hospitals should be made to contribute something towards their upkeep. There was a class of men who had to pay for the upkeep of the hospitals, and if their employees became ill they could go to the hospital for nothing. If an employer went there he had to pay, and that was not fair. They should have some system—whether it was a wages tax or otherwise—for getting at all those people.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must confine his remarks to the items in the vote, and not discuss general principles. It is not in order to discuss general principles upon the Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. RANKIN: It was not a question of detail, but a question of principle. He would like the people to recognise that it was the duty

of everyone to contribute something towards the support of those who, in times of distress, were unable to help themselves.

Question put and passed.

#### DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS.

The TREASURER moved that £1,867 12s. 4d. be granted for the "Department of Public Works." The only notable amount in the vote was £1,578 for general repairs, painting, and for State school buildings and additions, etc. The amount was made up of a large number of small amounts, not one of which came to £100.

Mr. WOODS asked how much had been spent in travelling expenses by Mr. Collins, the boiler inspector for the Northern district?

The TREASURER did not know the exact amount represented by Mr. Collins's travelling expenses, but the vote had been exceeded by £149.

Question put and passed.

#### DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

The TREASURER moved that £2,902 13s. 1d. be granted for the "Department of Justice." Like the previous vote, this sum was made up of a great mass of very small details.

Mr. J. LEAHY noticed that there was a vote for fees to Judge Mansfield, Judge Noel, and Sir Arthur Rutledge for acting as Supreme Court judges. He would like to know whether the attention of the Government had been called to the remarks made recently by the Chief Justice to the effect that next year the Full Court would consist of three judges instead of two. He wished to know whether the Government had any policy in regard to the matter, or whether they proposed to continue the system of appointing acting judges? He would also ask whether the remarks of the Chief Justice were official or not?

The TREASURER: The Government had deemed it inexpedient to appoint another judge and pay £2,000 which they might save, or of which they might save the greater part. Events proved that the Government were right, because they had spent only £384 by appointing acting judges when required. His attention had not been called to the remarks of the Chief Justice, and, if it had, he would not have paid any attention to them. The Chief Justice was speaking about a thing he had no business to speak about. When the Government had an announcement to make, they would make it to Parliament either by the Premier or by the Minister in charge of that department, and they would not ask the Chief Justice to state what the intentions of the Government were. He could say a good deal more about the matter.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not think the hon. gentleman is in order in discussing a matter of that kind on this vote. The question is the expenses of the judges, and it will be out of order in discussing the appointment of a judge on the motion.

Mr. J. LEAHY: We are voting salaries for acting judges. I know what it is.

The CHAIRMAN: On looking down I find what the hon. member states is correct. I did not notice the amount for acting judges.

Mr. J. LEAHY: They were there voting the people's money, and the people wanted to know how the business was carried on. As far as he could see, the Estimates had been very carefully prepared, and he did not think there had been any rash expenditure, but he wanted to know

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whether they were going to have those jerry-made judges in the future. If they required a judge they should have one, but if they did not require a judge they should not have jerry-made judges. He held very strong opinions with regard to the relationship which existed between judges and Governments. Judges should be absolutely independent of Governments—they should be in a position to snap their fingers at Governments. They very frequently had to decide cases in which the Crown represented one side and the people represented the other side, and they should not have judges who were going to get an appointment to-day and expected another appointment in three or six months' time. The judges should be in a position so that they could not be interfered with by the Crown, in order to get away from the scandals that existed in times past between the Crown and the judges. The judges should be under no favours from the Crown, and he had yet to learn that a man occupying the supreme and responsible position of Chief Justice, would make a random remark in open court as to what was going to happen, unless he had some reason for doing so. He understood the Treasurer to say that the statement made by the Chief Justice, Sir Pope Cooper, was wrong. [The TREASURER: I know nothing about it. If you want any information about it you had better ask Sir Pope Cooper.] He had nothing to do with Sir Pope Cooper. [The TREASURER: No more have I.] He wanted to know if the statement made by Sir Pope Cooper was right or wrong? He was asking the Treasurer, and they had a right to know from the Treasurer. Were Estimates going to be nothing more than a farce? When they asked for information from time to time, which the public wanted to know, the Treasurer relied on his majority, and said, "I will give no information; go and ask somebody else." He understood the Treasurer to say the Chief Justice had said something he had no business to say. [The TREASURER: I do not know anything about Sir Pope Cooper.] He wanted to know something about the matter.

Mr. LESINA: He entirely disagreed with the view taken by the acting leader of the Opposition in relation to the matter. He thought the position taken up by the Treasurer was the correct one. He thought both were wrong—(laughter)—and he was not sure that he would not be wrong when he had finished. The view he took was that they could not possibly know anything of Judge Cooper as a judge, or the feelings he felt inclined to express from the bench as to the actions of the Government. What he was concerned about was that it was a bad thing for the Government to be constantly trafficking in the appointment of judges. It was a bad thing for the judges themselves, and it was a bad thing for the country. Who was responsible for that? The Government were responsible only indirectly. They could fill the position only when the majority said they must, so that the House was responsible. The House was responsible for voting the salaries. He noticed that Acting Judge Noel received £253 1s., Sir Arthur Rutledge £105, and Mr. Mansfield £26 5s. for the period covered by the Supplementary Estimates. That was the amount expended on three judges for temporary employment, and was only a little over £300. The Government, looking at the matter from an economical point of view, thought by saving the salary of one judge, which would be something like £2,000, then they were saving that amount of money to the Treasury. There was apparently a movement outside to secure the appointment of another judge, and the

[Mr. J. Leahy.

judges themselves were endeavouring to bring pressure to bear on the Government [10 p.m.] for that purpose by constantly drawing attention to the congestion of court business and the probable inconvenience that would be caused to litigants. The members of that Committee should carefully consider the whole matter during the recess, and if they came to the conclusion that another judge was required they should bring pressure to bear on the Government so to secure the appointment of another judge. [Hon. R. PHILP: You supported the Bill which left the third judgeship open.] He did support that Bill, but on second thoughts he was of opinion that they placed an unsafe card in the hand of the Government in allowing them to fill the vacant position temporarily when they pleased. He did not know that any abuse had occurred, but the thing was open to abuse. However, he supposed the Government would fill the position at the right time.

Mr. PAULL pointed out that there must be some mistake in the last item, as £901 was a large sum for cleaning a courthouse. [The TREASURER: It is a clerical error; it should be "houses."]

Mr. BARNES asked if the arrangement whereby Judge Noel had been appointed to do Land Court business out West recently had been satisfactory? [The TREASURER: I believe so.]

Mr. KENNA: There was an item of £125 for "salary, J. G. Macdonald, police magistrate, South Brisbane, on leave for three months." Was it understood that Mr. Macdonald was retiring? [Mr. KERR: He had to retire.] Was the £125 a retiring allowance? [The TREASURER: No; salary.] Why was he paid a salary when he was retiring? [The TREASURER: Because he was entitled to it.]

Mr. WOODS expressed regret that provision had not been made for the re-establishment of a court of petty sessions at Herberton, and hoped that an effort would be made to do that at an early date.

Question put and passed.

#### THE TREASURER.

The TREASURER moved that £2,034 2s. be granted for the Treasury Department. This sum was made up of a number of small details for seven separate sub-departments.

Mr. KENNA noticed £40 for office and library expenses in connection with the Bureau of Central Sugar-mills. Last year's Estimates included £250 for a similar purpose, together with £100 for furnishing and £100 for miscellaneous purposes. This seemed a very large sum to spend on the office. Perhaps the Treasurer could give some idea of what that apparently extravagant amount was required for.

The TREASURER: The amount seemed to be a somewhat large one, but it must be borne in mind that the office was being established at the time, and there would not be a repetition of the expenditure.

Mr. LESINA asked if the £644 16s. 7d. put down for the inland revenue was to pay the men engaged by Mr. Gabriel in connection with the work of securing convictions for sly grog-selling and breaches of the Licensing Act?

The TREASURER: Yes. As a matter of fact, it was in connection with the Northern business of the Inland Revenue Department.

Mr. REINHOLD asked for an explanation of the item £41 8s. 9d.—"Premium on general guarantee policy." Were all officers covered by a guarantee policy?

The TREASURER: All first-class officers who had the handing of money were so covered. Their honesty was insured, and that was an additional amount required to pay the premium to the end of the year.

Mr. REINHOLD: Was that to cover all defalcations that might occur? [The TREASURER: Yes.] He asked the question, because later on there was £1,300 put down for that purpose.

The TREASURER: Unfortunately, the policy did not always cover the amount of the defalcations.

Question put and passed.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS—HEAD OFFICE.

The TREASURER moved that £7,622 3s. 11d. be granted for the Lands Department—"Head Office." The amount was made up of a number of small details, compensation for improvements on certain properties, constituting two-thirds of the whole.

Mr. FORSYTH would like an explanation of the items of £250 each for Messrs. Henderson, Mills, and Riley under the heading of "Division of Runs."

The TREASURER: Those gentlemen were appointed specially to facilitate the division of runs.

Mr. PLUNKETT referred to £670 16s. 8d. set down as commission on the purchase of Isis and Portland Downs, Maneroo, and Terrica, and would like to have an explanation of the item. On the 5th December, 1902, there was on the then Estimates a vote for auctioneer's commission of £900. The Committee took exception to that, and the vote was thrown out, and after that the late Government allowed no commission. He had asked a question recently in the House as to how much commission had been paid since 1904, and was told that £765 11s. 7d. was the amount, but this did not correspond with the vote. He did not know how it was made up, but he would like to know whether it was the intention of the Government to continue to pay large sums like this for finding purchasers for land?

The TREASURER: It was not a wise policy to pay commission to outside men for doing work which could be done by officers of the department who were paid to do the work, but there were occasions when it was to the advantage of the department and the State to pay a man commission who would do business which they had little chance of getting done except by that means. This was a matter for which the whole of the Government were responsible, and not the particular Minister, and he thought that under the circumstances it was a wise thing to do.

HON. R. PHILP: "Open confession was good for the soul," and he did not blame the Minister. He would like to know who received the commission on these sales—Isis and Portland Downs, £319 14s. 3d.; Maneroo, £220; and Terrica, £131 2s. 5d.

The TREASURER: The commission for introducing purchasers was paid as follows:—New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company, Limited, £319 14s. 3d.; Dalgety and Co., Limited, £220; and Moreheads Limited, £131 2s. 5d.

Mr. FORSYTH thought it was a waste of money. Here was £670 spent, and for what? [The TREASURER: You would not have done it for nothing?] The people who wanted that land should have applied to the Treasurer direct, and there was no occasion to pay the commission. He had nothing to say against these people, but they were simply agents for the various station-owners, who asked them in the usual course of

business to have the land put up. There was no need to pay this money away, except for the fact that the Treasurer was anxious to get the proceeds in before 30th June. He sold 170,000 acres of land shortly before that date, and was so anxious to get people to rush in and buy it as to pay £600 commission. On the Elections Bill the other night they were discussing the question of saving £700 a year in advertising, and yet we wasted money in this manner. [The TREASURER: There was not a penny of it wasted.] Every shilling was wasted, because the Government did not get a shilling more for the land. It was the duty of the purchasers to pay the commission and not the State, and he protested against the Government paying commission for doing other people's work.

Mr. PLUNKETT thought it was money thrown away, and he thought so at the time.

[The TREASURER: You seem to have [10.30 p.m.] an impression that I am a reckless spendthrift.] When he first asked his question he was told that £25 only was spent, but he knew it was wrong at the time. On last Tuesday the Secretary for Lands said—

On Tuesday, 5th December, the hon. member for Albert asked me a series of questions, 5 and 6 of which were as follow:—

5. What was the amount of commission paid for finding purchasers of Crown lands?

6. From what vote were these commissions paid?

The answers which were then given, I am sorry to say, were incorrect, as I have intimated to the hon. member. The correct answers should be—

5. 765 11s. 7d.

6. They were paid on the authority of the Governor in Council, pending vote by Parliament.

Although the Secretary for Lands said on the 12th December that the total amount paid in commission was £765 11s. 7d., the amount on the Supplementary Estimates was given as £670.

Mr. LESINA: This was an evil which he particularly urged the last Government to stop. In 1902 they put £1,000 on the Estimates for Miscellaneous and Lands Estimates, being an increase of £100 for auctioneers' and agents' commissions. He strongly denounced that at the time. [The TREASURER: Was the member for Carpentaria in the House then?] Yes; he was. On that occasion the hon. member for Albert moved the reduction of the vote by £900, and his motion was carried, the voting being as follows:—

AYES, 18.—Messrs. Airey, Barber, Browne, Burrows, Cooper, Cowap, Dibley, Dunsford, Grant, Hamilton, Harlaere, Jackson, Kenna, Kerr, Lesina, Maxwell, Turner, and Woods.

NOES, 14.—Messrs. Campbell, T. B. Cribb, Dalrymple, Dehnam, J. Hamilton, Hamran, Lamont, J. Leahy, Lyons, Macartney, Mackintosh, O'Connell, Philp, and Sir A. Rutledge.

PAIRS—AYES: Messrs. Hodge, Blair, Martin, Norman, Sumnerville, and Ryland. NOES: Messrs. J. C. Cribb, Moore, Lindley, Dr. Garde, Cowley, and P. J. Leahy.

In the speeches made on that occasion hon. members strongly condemned the whole policy. Since that time the Philp Government had done nothing further in that respect, but the evil had grown up again, and they were asked at one fell swoop to pass £670 spent in commissions for the sale of three estates. [The TREASURER: It is a matter which is open to question, but under the circumstances I thought it was a desirable thing to do.] He could understand the desire at that particular juncture, and that brought him to the point he had always raised as to why land should never be sold for revenue purposes. It made the Government sell to anybody who would buy. People who, in the ordinary course of events, would buy the land in this case went to go-betweeners, who secured from the Government

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commission on Isis and Portland Downs amount- to £319 14s. 3d.; Maneroo, £220; and Terrica, £131 2s. 5d. And it was possible that they also secured commission from the purchasers, who rightly should pay the commission. After those statistics, and the difficulty that was experienced by the hon. member for Albert in getting the information he wanted, it showed that this system was an evil one. What was the justification for this? The Government wanted money and they sold land. They sold land although it was against the resolution adopted by the Labour convention; they paid commission to the agents who introduced the buyers, and then they came and flourished a surplus in the faces of hon. members. In the dying hours of the session they found out how the Treasurer made his surplus. Well, he objected to it. If anyone moved that the vote be reduced by £1, he would cheerfully vote for it. But the money was paid, and was evidently lying to the credit of the different agents in the bank. All they could do was either to repudiate the Govern- ment's action and put them in a hole, or else vote for it, and he voted for it under protest.

Mr. HARDACRE: If they were to have land sales at all he did not object to paying commis- sion to the auctioneers who did the selling, but he did object to paying commission for intro- ducing persons who wanted to buy. It might happen that the persons who got the commission in this case were agents for the companies who bought and not for the Crown at all. It might have been a "try on" on the part of the agents by asking the Government if they wanted to sell, and, on the other hand, the Government might have asked the agents if they knew any- one who wanted to buy. He could understand the Treasurer, when near the end of the financial year, saying that if he asked these agencies they might be able to tell him if they could get buyers for land. If that were so, it was some justifica- tion for paying the commission; but if the agents came to the Treasurer and said they had buyers, then the Crown should not pay them commission. [The TREASURER: They would not have got any commission at all in that case.] In the other case there was some justification for the commission being paid.

HON. R. PHILP: The hon. member for Albert would see the hole he put the late Government in by preventing them paying commission and selling land. Then they were a bad Govern- ment, and deserved to be turned out. This Government did not care what they did. They paid a commission to agents who found pur- chasers, and the Treasurer got a surplus. There- fore they were a good Government. The Philp Government did not know how to humbug the people like the present Government. Why should hon. members object to paying a commission to men who worked for it? He would not move a reduction, because the agents found buyers and were entitled to the commission. The Govern- ment were in such dire straits that, in order to get a surplus, he believed they would have paid 3 per cent.

Question put and passed.

#### DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND STOCK.

The TREASURER moved that £1,551 10s. 2d. be granted for the "Department of Agriculture and Stock." Like the previous votes, this amount was made up of a number of small items.

Question put and passed.

#### SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

The TREASURER moved that £553 0s. 9d. be granted for the "Department of Public Instruc- tion." £500 of this was for various small grants in aid of technical education.

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Mr. MANN: The Cairns School of Arts had received an amount of £18 16s. out of this vote. They were in the same fix again this year, and had applied to the Government for sufficient money to enable them to carry on. They pro- posed to give instruction in mineralogy, and he would like the Treasurer to give a promise that the necessary money would be forthcoming. Their annual grant was only £40, and they re- quired a good deal more than that.

The TREASURER could not make any defi- nite promise, but he would suggest that the Committee should ask for a larger grant next year; and, if there was anything left over from the general vote this year, their claim would receive consideration.

Mr. LESINA: The Clermont School of Arts communicated with the Government some time ago, pointing out their distressful condition through the want of funds. Many of the old miners were in the habit of going to the school of arts to read the papers, but the committee had had to close their doors to those people and confine the benefits of the institution to subscribers. He trusted that more generous treatment would be extended to that and similar institutions next year.

Mr. REINHOLD asked if the amount of £50 for "Exhibitions to Universities" was for addi- tional exhibitions?

The TREASURER: No. The amount was previously voted on the Estimates-in-Chief and allowed to lapse, and it was afterwards found that it was wanted.

Question put and passed.

#### DEPARTMENT OF MINES.

The TREASURER moved that £961 11s. 7d. be granted for the "Department of Mines." That was made up of three items—expenses of transfers of officers, a grant to the Gympie School of Mines, while the vote in aid of pro- specting had been exceeded by £486.

Question put and passed.

#### RAILWAYS.

The TREASURER moved that £1,280 15s. 5d. be granted for "Railways—General Establish- ment." That expense was incurred in conse- quence of —, —, and —. The gross amount of the defalcations was £1,879 16s. 2d., but the Government recovered £599 0s. 9d. from the insurance offices. Such things were regrettable, but perhaps they were inevitable in a large estab- lishment like the Railway Department.

Mr. WOODS believed that men should be punished for misappropriating money, but it was hardly fair that their names should be made public through the parliamentary records. Those men had been punished by law, and some of the money had been returned under the fidelity bond, and he would ask that their names be deleted from *Hansard*. [The TREASURER: I have no ob- jection.]

Question put and passed.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY TRUST FUNDS ESTIMATES, 1904-5.

##### CHIEF SECRETARY.

The TREASURER moved that £1,449 15s. 10d. be granted for the department of the "Chief Secretary."

Question put and passed.

##### THE TREASURER.

The TREASURER moved that £14,501 3s. 6d. be granted for the department of "The Trea-

surer." The largest amount was for Brisbane River improvements, including the training-walls.

Question put and passed.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LANDS.

The TREASURER moved that £1,657 18s. be granted for the "Department of Public Lands." This amount was for salaries and wages, Warrego rabbit district fund.

Question put and passed.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND STOCK.

The TREASURER moved that £3,988 16s. 3d. be granted for this department. The largest item was special standing account for trading account advances, £1,500; and the next largest item was stud stock trust account for the purchase of stock, £1,350.

Question put and passed.

SUPPLEMENTARY LOAN ESTIMATES, No. 2, 1904-5.  
CHIEF SECRETARY.

The TREASURER moved that £19 5s. 11d. be granted for the department of the "Chief Secretary." This represented some old adjustment account in connection with the Defence Department.

Question put and passed.

THE TREASURER.

The TREASURER moved that £7,740 1s. 2d. be granted for the department of "The Treasurer." The greater part of the item was made up of advances to central sugar-mills—North Eton and Double Peak.

Mr. HARDACRE noticed under the heading, "Loans in Aid of Prospecting," that Mr. G. C. Wilcocks, Cloncurry, received £1,584 19s. 10d.

[11 p.m.] That was the first time he had ever heard of such a large amount of money being given to one company. He did not object to money being given for prospecting, and given very generously, but he had a right to complain of money being given in that way when they could get nothing at all for the Central district. There was on the Central Railway, right close to the line and not on the Dawson, but near the Blackwater district, one of the finest coalfields in the world, and the people there could get no assistance in prospecting. It was not fair to spend money for this purpose in one district and not in another district. He should be glad if the Treasurer would explain why this sum had been spent in the Cloncurry district, and what had been the result from the expenditure?

Mr. MAXWELL: The result of the expenditure of that money in the Cloncurry district was that eight or nine shafts had been sunk. It was one of the best investments the Government had made, and before very long they would be able to get their money back.

The TREASURER: So far as he was aware, there was no preference given to any field in the advance of money for prospecting purposes, and if any other district could make out the same claim as had been made out by the Cloncurry district it would get assistance.

Mr. HARDACRE: Another district had made out the same claim, but had never been able to get any assistance.

Mr. WOODS: He had something to do in trying to induce the Government to advance this money to the Wilcocks' syndicate. Mr. Wilcocks assured him that he had sufficient men behind him to find £1 for £1 advanced by the

Government. That gentleman was doing work in other districts besides Cloncurry, and he paid his men the best wages paid in Queensland.

Question put and passed.

DEPARTMENT OF RAILWAYS.

The TREASURER moved that £5,878 4s. 9d. be granted for the "Department of Railways."

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to certain resolutions, which were read.

The TREASURER moved that the resolutions be agreed to.

Mr. WOODS: I wish to move a reduction of £200 in the vote for the salary of the officer in charge of Pacific Island labourers. In the first place, I do not consider that such an officer is necessary, and, in the second place, I do not consider that that gentleman has been carrying out the duties of his office to the advantage of the State. In January last I brought before the Chamber a transaction that took place on the schooner "Clansman" at the Solomon Islands. I asked the Minister in charge of the department whether it was true that a certain returned islander was landed at the wrong passage, murdered, and his body dragged into the bush by natives. I also mentioned several irregularities that had taken place. The reply given to the Premier by the officer in charge of the department was to the effect that the regulations were carried out in their entirety, and that no outrage had taken place. I asked if the person who gave me the information might be examined at the bar of the House, and the reply was "No." I was then asked by the Premier to formulate a charge, which I did, and the officer in charge of the department was ordered by the Premier, through the Justice Department, to hold an inquiry, which he did, and his evidence at the inquiry proved up to the hilt that this return islander was landed at his wrong passage—at Saltwater Passage, 15 miles away from the place where he was recruited—and that he was murdered by the natives; and also that there were not sufficient rations on board the ship for half the journey, and 2,000 lb. of condemned tobacco, which the officer in charge knew of, as the vessel had been lying at Bundaberg for weeks. The Government agent of the previous trip refused to supply that tobacco to the recruits. Mr. Brennan said he ordered the owner to remove the tobacco. Smith said no such order was given. Before the inquiry was held all the witnesses who were subpoenaed to give evidence, when they arrived in Brisbane, instead of being allowed to go into the witness-box quite independent, were taken to Kangaroo Point, and a statement was taken from them in writing in the presence of the Immigration Agent; and when they went into the witness-box, and were being cross-examined by the barrister for the Crown, if they made one slip they were shown their deposition, and asked, "Did you not say this in the presence of Mr. Brennan?" And here is a curious fact: If any one man in the State had a right to be notified as to the date of the inquiry, it was the man who brought the matter forward in this Chamber and was the cause of the inquiry being held. Yet no notification of it was ever sent to me. Another curious fact is that one of the witnesses was asked to report himself at 10 o'clock in the morning at the Kangaroo Point depot, while at that very hour the inquiry was opened at the police court. Is that the way business should be conducted? Then, Mr. Brennan said he told Smith, the part owner of the boat, that if a pound of that tobacco

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was sold to the Malayta boys, the first white man who went to the island would pay the penalty. Captain Malcolm, the supercargo, produced a statement of the ship's accounts written on two sheets of a penny exercise book. That is the kind of thing that has been going on for years in this trade. The same witness was asked by the barrister for the Crown what he would think of a man who sold that tobacco to the islanders, and he replied that such a man would be a murderer. Yet the evidence showed that 730 lb. of that tobacco was sold to those unfortunate islanders at 3s. 6d. per lb., while the expert evidence proved that at its very best it was never worth more than 1s. per lb. Mr. Brennan could not be ignorant of the irregularities that were going on, and yet the information he gave to the Premier was calculated to mislead the House and the country. What has happened since? According to the evidence, three murders have taken place since [11.30 p.m.] in the islands, and if Mr Brennan honestly believed what he stated on oath in the witness-box that day, he was morally responsible for what took place. That is the position, and one of the men who was murdered has left a poor unfortunate widow. It is just as well to know how that matter took place. This is a reply which came from the immigration agent also—

LABOUR SCHOONER "CLANSMAN."

Mr. WOODS (*Woothakata*) asked the Chief Secretary—

Has he any objection to laying upon the table of the House the evidence taken in connection with the labour schooner "Clansman," together with Police Magistrate Rankin's report thereon?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. A. Morgan, *Warwick*) replied—

As in order to be tabled the evidence and the report must first be copied, and as the copying of so much manuscript would entail considerable labour and expense, I recommend the hon. member to visit the Chief Secretary's Office, and there examine the papers.

It was my intention, if it had not been so late, to have put the whole of the evidence in *Hansard*, as I have it here; but, seeing that the Premier is laid up, I do not intend to do it, but to state briefly my opinion in connection with the matter. I also asked the Premier—

MURDER OF T. P. McCONVILLE.

Mr. WOODS asked the Chief Secretary—

1. Has he any official information in connection with the murder of trader T. P. McConville by natives at the Solomon Islands, as reported in the *Port Douglas Record*, of 30th June, 1905, information supplied from the steamer "Moresby"?

2. If so, will he supply such information to the House?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied—

The answer to No. 1 is "No."

I would like to know if it is possible for the steamer "Moresby" to come from Brisbane, and report in Port Douglas and other ports that this murder took place, and the immigration agent not to know it. He did not know anything about the "Clansman;" but what do we find took place at the inquiry? He gave a reply to the question I asked in the House, evidently trying to make out that what I said was untrue, but I had the sworn statements of the persons affected, otherwise I would not have taken any notice of them. When the inquiry took place, somebody got at that particular seaman, and when he went into the witness-box he was absolutely unfit to give evidence. I am not accusing the immigration agent of doing it, but when they saw how the evidence was going, they turned immediately

[*Mr. Woods.*

round and sheltered themselves behind the poor unfortunate Government agent. I think it is time something was done in connection with this matter. In view of what came out in evidence, I submitted a proposal which the immigration agent put his foot on, and it is just as well to mention the proposal which I made to the Government, which is as follows:—

Brisbane, 24th February, 1905.

To the Hon. the Chief Secretary, Brisbane.

Sir.—I have the honour to inform you that with reference to the matter of the return of "boys" to the islands, as the result of the "Clansman" investigation, I have instituted inquiries regarding the adaptability of the Q.G.S. "Lucinda" for use in place of the present privately-owned vessels. The result of my labours has been to satisfy me that the "Lucinda" would not be a suitable means of transport owing to her insufficient coal-carrying capacity and other reasons of a similar nature. I now, therefore, propose that the s.s. "Otter" should be used for the work of conveying returns to the islands, leaving the "Lucinda" to take up the duties heretofore performed by the "Otter." This boat could take in a further supply of coal at Townsville if found necessary. There will be upwards of 6,000 kanakas to be deported after 31st December, 1906. As employers have to deposit £5 for the return of each boy to his island home, the Treasury would greatly benefit out of the £30,000 thus deposited. The "Otter" should exactly make a trip a month, thereby saving the great expense now incurred, which on the "Clansman's" last trip reached over £700 for 135 returns. This would go into the hands of the Government, less working expenses, instead of into the pockets of private individuals, who hitherto have carried out the duties in such an unsatisfactory manner, as disclosed during the "Clansman" inquiry, as to utterly preclude their further engagement, that is if it is desired not to leave a foul blot on the State records for all time. It is daily growing more and more apparent to me that planters generally are quietly taking an undue advantage of the provisions of the Federal Act by re-engaging "boys" right up to 31st December, 1906, a move which will tend to seriously hamper the State Government in its steps to secure the return of all kanakas by the time specified in the Act.

I have the following proposal to submit to you, with the object of having the same forwarded to the Federal Government for approval:—

My proposition is that the re-engaging of "boys" whose time has expired should cease in the Southern portions of the State altogether from 30th June, 1905, that Bundaberg, Bowen, and Mackay planters be permitted to re-engage for twelve months only; that in the Northern or tropical portions of the State, including Cairns and Mosman, re-engagements be permitted up to eighteen months.

The SPEAKER: Order! I cannot at present see the relevancy between the letter which the hon. member is reading and the amendment he has moved.

Mr. WOODS: If you will allow me, I will show where the relevancy comes in. This proposal was submitted to the Premier, and he refused to accept it.

It is therefore incumbent upon the Queensland Government to take such steps as will prevent any confusion arising from the possibility of having to deport to the islands so large a body of kanakas by the prescribed date of 31st December, 1906. I would also suggest that one or two intelligent islanders be engaged as interpreters so that all islanders may be returned to their own villages, and thus prevent any further outrage and other scandals as disclosed by the "Clansman" inquiry.

I perceive herein a very grave and probable danger and menace to the peace, security, and moral welfare of our population if a large number of unemployed kanakas are permitted to hang about the towns and cities of the State awaiting deportation. Under these circumstances, therefore, I think that the adoption of my proposals above detailed will lead to the happy and satisfactory solution of all difficulties which seem to me as likely to present themselves.

I have, etc.,

M. J. R. WOODS.

The immigration agent reported on this that the "Otter" was entirely unsuitable for the work. I want to show what the immigration

agent wanted. Instead of using the Government ship "Otter," and the funds going into the Treasury that are now going into the pockets of private owners, he wanted the Government to purchase the "Lady Norman" from a private owner, and allow the owner to run the vessel for the return of the islanders. I have not taken any undue advantage of the immigration agent. When the Immigration Estimates came on the other night, it was my intention to have dealt with the matter on that particular vote, but seeing that the Premier was laid up I naturally thought that that Estimate would be held over, and the Treasurer would take his own Estimates; consequently I went away, and the Estimates went through. I sent word through the Under Secretary to the Premier, so that I should not raise a charge in the Chamber against a public officer without first letting the Premier know that I was going to do it. I asked the Under Secretary to send word to Mr. Brennan that when the resolutions were put to the House I intended to deal with the "Clansman" inquiry. I have carried out that duty. Owing to what has taken place, I do not think there is any necessity whatever for that officer at the Immigration Depot. His action in connection with the "Clansman" case is sufficient to prove that he has not done his duty. He did not examine the ship when she came back. As a matter of fact, he did not know the condition of the ship or what stores were in her. There is also this point to be considered: That when the boat was examined during the inquiry something leaked out that was more serious than the tobacco. It was a secret door leading from the cabin to a certain hatch. I ask hon. members to judge for themselves what this secret door was there for. [Mr. PAGET: Was that in evidence?] Yes. The most singular thing was that the captain of the vessel was never summoned to give evidence. The excuse was that he had gone to Honolulu or somewhere, while, as a matter of fact, he was in Sydney. He has been to Brisbane since, and why was he not examined then? I have nothing more to say on this matter. I think I have done my duty as a public man. The Government gave me every assistance so far as the inquiry was concerned, and I do not blame them. The man I blame is the man who tampered with the witnesses. I ask the Attorney-General what he would do with a man who tampered with his witnesses? Every witness that gave evidence at that inquiry was tampered with before he went into the witness-box by the immigration agent, and certainly not by Mr. Woolcock.

The SPEAKER: Is the amendment seconded?  
There being no seconder, the amendment lapsed.  
Original question put and passed.

#### METROPOLITAN FISH MARKET BILL. MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL.

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

#### DAIRY PRODUCE AMENDMENT BILL. MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Council, returning this Bill with an amendment, in which they requested the concurrence of the Assembly.

Ordered, that the message be taken into consideration in committee to-morrow.

The House adjourned at twelve minutes to 12 o'clock.