

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

FRIDAY, 13 MARCH 1908

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The SPEAKER (Hon. John Leahy, *Bulloo*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

QUESTIONS.

IMMIGRANTS INTRODUCED UNDER CONTRACT AS SUGAR WORKERS.

Mr. MANN (*Cairns*) asked the Premier—

Will he, before arranging for the introduction of more immigrants to work as farm labourers, have a return compiled showing—

- (a) Number already introduced to work on cane farms and in sugar-mills?
- (b) Number now engaged in abovementioned work?
- (c) Number who were dismissed by their employers before completing their term of agreement?
- (d) Number who broke their agreement without the consent of their employers?
- (e) Number of employers who deducted £5 from immigrants' wages and have refused to refund that amount?

The PREMIER (Hon. W. Kidston, *Rockhampton*) replied—

Yes. The information is being obtained, and will be laid on the table of the House as soon as possible.

MEAT RATION TO PRISONERS.

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

Is it true that the meat ration allowance to prisoners at Boggo road has been reduced by 2 oz. per diem?

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. A. G. C. Hawthorn, *Enoggera*) replied—

No. Under Nos. 3 and 4 ration scales the issue to each prisoner daily of 12 oz. and 16 oz. of meat respectively with bone is authorised. It was discovered that in some cases the full weights were being issued without bone; whereupon instructions were issued that the scales should be strictly adhered to.

RAILWAY TENDERS FOR LOCOMOTIVE ENGINES.

Mr. MITCHELL (*Maryborough*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. How many new locomotive engines does the department intend to call tenders for?
2. What class or classes of engines are to be used?
3. When will the tenders be called?
4. Is it likely tenders will be called shortly for any other rolling-stock besides engines?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. G. Kerr, *Barcoo*) replied—

- 1, 2, 3, 4. Under consideration, but not yet decided.

ALLOWANCE FOR ORPHAN CHILDREN.

Mr. ADAMSON (*Maryborough*) asked the Home Secretary—

1. Why do strangers who have charge of children orphaned of their fathers receive a larger sum per week per child than do the mothers of the children?
2. Will he take steps to have this anomaly rectified, so that the mothers of the children may be placed on an equal footing with the stranger?

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

1. The Secretary for Public Instruction informs me that the present system in Queensland is based on the experience of New South Wales, where the system of boarding-out State children with their widowed or deserted mothers has been in operation for some time. The experience of New South Wales has shown that if the allowances are the same as in the case of stranger foster-parents much imposture arises, and a direct incentive is given to wife desertion.

2. Provision for increasing the allowances on account of the boarding-out of State children has been made on

the Estimates for 1907-8, and the necessary amending regulations have been prepared. Effect will be given to those regulations as soon as the Estimates have been passed.

ELECTION STATISTICS.

On the motion of Mr. SUMNER (*Nundah*), it was formally resolved—

That there be laid on the table of the House a return showing—

1. The total number of votes polled at the late election.
2. The number of women voters.
3. The number of votes polled for—
 - (a) Government candidates ;
 - (b) Opposition candidates ;
 - (c) Labour candidates ;
 - (d) Independent candidates.
4. The number of applications for postal votes issued.
5. The number of postal votes returned.
6. The number of postal votes polled in town electorates.
7. The number of postal votes polled in country electorates.

NEW RAILWAYS.

TABLING OF PLANS AND COMMISSIONER'S REPORTS.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS said: I beg to lay upon the table of the House the plans, sections, and books of reference of the following proposed railways:—

- Caboolture to Woodford (North Coast line), 17 miles 60 chains.
- Boyne Valley Branch (North Coast line), 51 miles 73 chains.
- New Zealand Gully to Yeppoon (Emu Park line), 20 miles 12 chains.
- Extension of the Atherton Railway (Cairns Railway), 31 miles 14 chains; and
- Extension from Kannangur to Blackbutt (Brisbane Valley Branch), 28 miles 29 chains.

I may state that this is the first batch of railways that I have to lay upon the table of the House. The object in bringing down these five is that they may be passed, so that we can get the men who are out of employment to work upon them. (Hear, hear!) I also beg to present the reports of the Commissioner upon the five railways, and move that the papers be printed.

Question put and passed.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

On this Order of the Day being read—

Mr. ARMSTRONG (*Lockyer*): The plans of the railways laid on the table by the Secretary for Railways a few minutes ago is sufficient excuse for me not detaining the House at any great length, but I do not wish, on behalf of my constituents, to give a silent vote on the question of the Address to be presented to His Excellency. With the first and second paragraphs of the Address I agree, and with nearly the whole of the rest of it I disagree. The matter has been debated at great length, and I merely wish to say that my electors, when the question was put before them at the late election, did not look upon the question that had to be decided as the constitutional question and the action taken by His Excellency. The question they thought of most importance was whether the Upper House should be, at the will of the Premier for the time being, swamped in order to give effect to his policy. They looked upon that as the only question, and sent me here unopposed

to voice their views. Their opinion is distinctly in favour of the action taken by His Excellency, and although the matter has been very fully debated, I do not think what transpired up to the dissolution and since have been properly stated. Supposing, instead of granting a dissolution, His Excellency had sent again for Mr. Kidston, would he not have been in the position of being compelled to accept Mr. Kidston's advice? Would he not have had to stultify himself in regard to his former action if he had done so? That is the view my electors took of the situation, and that is the view which I distinctly take. I only wish to deal with two portions of the Address which have been debated here. First of all the postal vote, and then in regard to the inclusion of the farmers in the provisions of the Wages Boards Bill. I very much regret to think that the women of the towns and more populous centres have gone back upon so many of their sisters who live in the country, because, as has been well said by the hon. member for Albert, there are a very large number of country women voters who will be disfranchised unless the postal vote is allowed to them.

Mr. RYLAND: The Government can *Gazette* more polling-places.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: You may create, of course, polling-places at every little centre, and I presume that every country school will be made a polling-booth; but even then there are women living at considerable distances who cannot leave their homes and children and household duties in order to vote. Then, again, apart from the question of travelling, there are numbers of women who are subject to conditions which make it absolutely impossible for them to go to a polling-booth to record their votes. It is no use labouring this question, because we shall have another opportunity of discussing it; but, at any rate, my constituency, as being a country constituency, is distinctly in favour of retaining the postal vote with certain safeguards. Now, dealing with the inclusion of the farmers in the Wages Boards Bill, my constituents were absolutely emphatic on the subject. Whatever hon. members may say, the farmers in the West Moreton district, where the bulk of the farming in Southern Queensland is carried on, were emphatic in regard to this matter. As has been well said, if you are going to include the farmers, and force them to pay a definite rate of wages for certain hours of work, it stands to reason that you will have to pass legislation fixing a value for the produce which they grow. Unless you do that you cannot make a hard-and-fast rule as to the hours to be worked and the wages to be paid. Apart from that, there are conditions attached to the farming industry, as hon. members must know, which do not operate in any other industry. The farming industry, more than any other, is dependent upon a bounteous rainfall, and unless we get that we cannot secure any result. We may spend as much on wages and seed as we like, but the return may be insignificant in consequence of the absence of rainfall. If, therefore, we pay these wages beforehand, it will mean that the industry will suffer very considerably through the farmers being included in the provisions of the Wages Boards Bill. I hope, seeing that such a distinct expression of opinion has been given by the farming constituencies, with the exception of one in Southern Queensland, that it will have some effect on the gentlemen occupying the Treasury benches, and those gentlemen who support them on this side. With regard to the remaining portion of the Address, there is very little to debate at this juncture. Most of the proposed programme has been before us, and the principles of the

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proposed legislation have been accepted by the leader of this side of the House. But the difficulty with us is that, while we accept the principles of proposed legislation, it is the details which worry us. The principles may be good enough, as the principle of the Wages Boards Bill is good, but it is the details upon which we split. The present party in power proposes legislation dictated by the Labour party, who are absolutely opposed to all the interests of the primary producers.

A LABOUR MEMBER: Not at all.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: It appears to me that they are, because they say in regard to the Wages Boards Bill that the farmers must pay a certain wage for a certain day's work.

Mr. COWAP: Who said that?

Mr. ARMSTRONG: The Wages Boards Bill says that.

Mr. MAY: It is a matter of arrangement between the employer and the employee.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: The farmers are paying the wages their business will afford at the present time, and their employees are content with their wages. I ask any farming member in this Chamber if there has ever been a demand in his district, on the part of the employees, for this legislation? It is an attempt to place on the shoulders of the farmers a burden which the industry cannot bear. The class of labour that is required in the farming districts is there, and they are content with the wages we are willing and able to pay. If you force us to pay an amount which is impossible, it stands to reason that the industry has got to suffer.

Mr. COWAP: Who is going to force you?

Mr. ARMSTRONG: The employees will force it upon the employers. It is well known to every member of the Chamber that for every employer there are three or four employees, and they can force the employer into a position which he is absolutely unable to occupy. One of the effects, if this is forced upon the farming industry, will be that we shall only employ the best class of labour. The old men of sixty-five and seventy, who are now pottering on the land, content with the wages they are getting, will have no place amongst the farmers. We shall want the men to be at work by a certain hour, and they will have to be kept going until their eight hours are up. The elderly workers will have to apply for an old age pension or for admission into one of the asylums for the indigent.

Mr. RYLAND: Nothing of the kind.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: People who know least about a business are always those who imagine they know most. These hon. members here who know absolutely nothing about the conditions which prevail in that industry think they can tell us how to manage our business. It strikes me that we know what is best for us. Leaving that question, there is only one other which I wish to refer to, and that is the question raised last night by the hon. member for Albert in regard to the price of land. I would ask the hon. gentlemen on the Treasury bench to consider whether they are not placing too high a price on our lands. The value of land is based on the return that can be obtained from it, where you have a settled community; but where you have a new country like this the conditions are different. It is not generally understood that it matters little to the individual who has to work the land whether the actual value of the land is £1 or £40. The land is the material of his industry, and if the land is of equal quality in both cases it makes no difference in the result.

But if a man of small means has to pay a higher price for his land he has so much the less to spend on its development.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Are you suggesting that we are charging too much for Crown land?

Mr. ARMSTRONG: Yes.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Where?

Mr. ARMSTRONG: Jimbour, I hear, is one. You gave so much for it that you are bound to charge a very high price. I will bring the case home to the Minister for Lands in another way.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Take ordinary Crown land.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I am referring particularly to the repurchased estates, and I wish to show the tendency of the Administration. When the Tarampa Estate was repurchased by the Philp Government the major portion of it was resold to the settlers at 20 or 22 per cent. above cost price. When the present Administration came into power they did one of the most absurd things ever known in the shape of public land improvement by draining a large area of water out of a swamp. The consequence has been that the value of the surrounding land has been fixed at a price equal to that paid for the best lands disposed of to the settlers by the preceding Government. Here is a case in point: they have raised the price of the land.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: What is the result?

Mr. ARMSTRONG: The result is that the people who purchased those lands will have the greatest possible difficulty to make their payments, and will be unable to develop their property.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I don't believe it.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I ask the hon. gentleman to get the reports of his officers. Besides, I know the country from end to end, and surely my testimony is of some value.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I believe you are under a misconception. I have not heard a single complaint. This is the first I have heard.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I dare say the hon. gentleman has received no complaint from those who got their land first, because they got cheap land. Take, again, the Coolabunia Scrub. The value placed on the lands there is very much higher than the value placed in other scrub districts, such as Rosewood, which are close to the metropolis. Those lands were taken up at 2s. 6d. an acre. For the other lands intending selectors are charged £2, £3, £4, and £5 an acre. Some years ago I moved the adjournment of the House to call attention to the high price that was being charged for the repurchased estates. Even the Labour party must admit that if you are going to make your secondary industries a success, the raw product of your industry must be cheap, and is that not equally true of the primary industries? If you are going to make your people successful in your prim-

[4 p.m.] ary industries upon the land, then the raw material of their industry, the land, must be cheap too. I hope to see some effort made in this House to bring about this position of things. I just want to say a word or two with reference to the three-party system in this House. I believe the country requires us to do some work this session. (Hear, hear!) I take it that there are certain questions which have been referred to the country, and upon which the country has given an expression of

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opinion. There is no question that we all hope to see a democratic coalition in the Chamber, and I think that, when these pledges have been carried out, what the country is looking for is to see a strong Government formed with a strong democratic following behind it, which will enable them to carry on without having to worry their heads about how they are going to get business through and attend to the administration of their offices, knowing they have a majority behind them to carry out the necessary work which the country requires. If that can be brought about, the times are auspicious in Queensland to rise and move ahead, and bring about a period of prosperity which she has not enjoyed for many years. I hope hon. members will avoid all personalities. I must say that I think there has been too much of it indulged in. The country does not gain anything from it, and it does not tend to advance business in any shape or form. I shall give support, under the distinct direction of my leader, to the work that he believes should be supported in the future. Until there is a coalition brought about, I recognise that we have to sit as a strong party in Opposition, opposing the Government at every move; but, under the direction of my leader, I shall give all the help I possibly can to carry on the business of the House.

* Mr. ADAMSON (*Maryborough*): In rising to say a few words on the Address in Reply, I desire in the first place to congratulate the mover and the seconder of the Address on getting through the initial stages of parliamentary work, of having made their first speeches, which is generally a particularly nervous period. I also wish to congratulate the hon. member for Albert on the fine effort he has made in his maiden speech, and I hope that these three gentlemen will have a long and useful parliamentary career. I would, however, deprecate some of the personal remarks which have been made in this Chamber during the debate, and I particularly resent the remarks which were made by the hon. member for Fassifern the other night. I am sorry the hon. gentleman is not in his place.

Mr. MANN: He is never in it.

Mr. ADAMSON: No; he is never in it except when he speaks himself. However, that is a side question now. I resent the remarks he made concerning Labour electors and Labour members. He said it would not have mattered what kind of man you put up for a Labour constituency, the Labour electors are of such a class—they had so little intelligence or they were so prejudiced; there was something so undesirable about them—that if there had been a brass monkey put up it would have been returned. I want to say that that is a libel on the Labour electors of Queensland, and also on the members who are here this afternoon.

Mr. RYLAND: No one pays any attention to what he says.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is not in order. The hon. member for Fassifern spoke on the amendment, and consequently a reference to a discussion that took place on the amendment is out of order at the present time. We are dealing with the general question now.

Mr. ADAMSON: I will not pursue that line any further, but address myself to the general question. I desire to congratulate the Government, together with the party that I represent, on the success which we attained at the poll. I think that our combined forces will be able to pass such legislation this session as will make for the welfare of the whole of Queensland, and promote the wellbeing of all classes; but it will particularly advance the interests of the hard-toiling masses—the workers of this State. (Hear, hear!) We stand particularly as a working-

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man's party, and in every way we can we seek to advance their interests, while we also seek to advance the general welfare of the State. I would also assure the head of the Government that this party, during the recent difficulty in appointing a Speaker, and also Chairman of Committees, had no desire at all to embarrass the Government. They only took the stand which the members of the party considered to be right and in harmony with the important and influential position which this party holds in the State and in this Assembly. Representing the number of electors that we do, and knowing that we are one-third of the House, and that but for the postal ballot we would have been the largest party in the House, we wanted greater consideration than the leader of the Government was prepared to give us at first, as we thought we had a right to some of the honours and emoluments which are in the gift of this House. (Hear, hear!) We are glad that this right has been recognised and conceded by the head of the Government, even if he did it under pressure. I regret the unwise and bitter, prejudiced and partisan action which the Opposition has taken up this session.

Hon. R. PHILP: Order! You must not use bad language.

Mr. ADAMSON: You do not always study your language; it would be a good thing if you did sometimes.

Hon. R. PHILP: I do not profess to be a saint like you.

Mr. ADAMSON: I am glad the programme of last session has been taken up, and I think it will be carried to a successful issue. I think I can say that while this party will give the Government their loyal support in seeking to carry out that programme, it will also reserve its undoubted right to criticise, and if necessary amend, the Bills to be brought forward by the Government. I deeply regret that we are not able to take up the Bills which were adopted in this Assembly last session, and send them to the gentlemen in the other place, and ask them to give effect to the will of the people of Queensland as expressed in 1907, and emphasised again in 1908. (Hear, hear!) This, by an easy transition, it seems to me, leads me to the constitutional question. While I do not hold the present Government—and particularly the head of the Government—blameless for the recent political crisis, I do hold that the chief offenders in this matter were the men at present sitting in the cold shades on the Opposition side of the House. (Hear, hear!) I say they are the chief offenders, because they thwarted the will of the people of Queensland, as expressed by the repeated votes of the majority of the newly-elected representatives of this country in this House last session.

Hon. R. PHILP: Mr. Speaker,—I rise to a point of order. Is it in order for an hon. member to come into this House and read his speech word for word as the hon. member for Maryborough is doing? It is a thing unheard of in this House.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: He is only using his notes.

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not know whether the hon. member is reading his speech or not. It is for the hon. gentleman himself to say whether he was reading it or not.

Hon. R. PHILP: He is reading a sermon to us.

The SPEAKER: I cannot say whether the hon. member was reading or not. That is for himself to say.

Hon. R. PHILP: He was reading all the time.

Mr. ADAMSON: I am reading words which suggest other words. I would suggest to the hon. gentleman that it would be a good thing for this House if the hon. gentleman would read his speeches himself, instead of making the kind of speeches he does from time to time.

LABOUR MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. ADAMSON: For a man who has been twenty years in Parliament, and for a man who has had the experience which he has had, I hold that the speech he delivered the other night was a shameful exhibition of an ill-prepared speech, when the hon. gentleman might have been prepared thoroughly on the question. However, that is outside the question.

Hon. R. PHILP: Is that language in order, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER: No; I do not think it is quite parliamentary to say that anything an hon. member does in this House is a shameful exhibition.

Mr. ADAMSON: I will withdraw the words "shameful exhibition," and I will say that it was not such an exhibition as was to be expected from a man of the experience of the hon. the leader of the Opposition. I hold that the advice tendered by the Philp Government to His Excellency the Governor was in spirit unconstitutional advice; and though His Excellency acted, in my opinion, within his undoubted rights in dissolving Parliament, yet the advice given him by Mr. Philp was ill-advice.

Hon. R. PHILP: He is still reading his speech.

Mr. ADAMSON: That advice was injurious to the welfare of this State. It was tendered to His Excellency by men who cared more for their own party interests than they cared for the welfare of the people of Queensland. That is my opinion, at any rate, whatever opinion the hon. gentlemen opposite may hold, and yet Mr. Campbell, the late Minister for Railways, when he spoke at Caboolture, had the audacity to say there that the men in power were men who were not bitterly partisan, but were men who represented their country, and men who cared more for their country than anything else, and he went so far as to implore the aid of the Deity to send to the country such men as these, and he quoted these words from Oliver Wendell Holmes—
God give us men a time like this demands,
Great hearts, strong minds, true faith, and willing hands,
Men whom the lust of office does not kill,

Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy,

Men who possess opinions and a will,

Men who have honour, men who will not lie.

And yet, all the time he belonged to a Government which violated the spirit of the Constitution to obtain office, and who were then clinging to office like limpets to a rock, or like a porous plaster to the chest of a sick man. They cared more about having to do with the Treasury chest than they cared about the welfare of Queensland. With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I will tell this House why I think Mr. Philp and his associates acted unconstitutionally in tendering His Excellency the advice which they did. I am reminded here that, in speaking upon this constitutional question, the hon. member for Albert, Mr. Appel, last night, as a lawyer, said—he did not use the exact words, but he hinted it—that "fools rush in where angels fear to tread." At any rate, he said that laymen sometimes talk about things that lawyers, who are more experienced in these matters, hesitated to speak about. Well, I am a layman, and I claim the right, as a layman, to have my opinion on the constitutional question as it affected the recent political crisis, and I claim the right to utter my opinions on that question just as other men have uttered them here in this Chamber. I would like to

say that, in my opinion, Mr. Philp and those associated with him acted unconstitutionally, because they advised His Excellency to grant a dissolution notwithstanding the fact that the late House carried what was practically a vote of censure on them. It was a vote of want of confidence five times in one day—and that House was only a newly-elected House—a House which had only been in existence about six months. Now, I hold, according to our unwritten Constitution, that the House of Commons in Great Britain and the Legislative Assembly in Queensland are the controlling and governing bodies in these countries. Here, as a layman, I would like to give my authority for making this statement. Professor Freeman, in his "Growth of the English Constitution," says—

We have now a whole system of political morality—a whole code of precepts for the guidance of public men, which will not be found in any page either of the Statutes or common law, but which in practice are held hardly less sacred than any principle embodied in the Great Charter, or in the Petition of Right. In short, by the side of our written law there has grown up an unwritten conventional Constitution. . . . A famous vote of the House of Commons, passed on the motion of a great statesman, once declared that the then Ministers of the Crown did not possess the confidence of the House of Commons, and that their continuance in office was therefore at variance with the spirit of the Constitution.

You will find that quotation on page 109 of Professor Freeman's book. Now, I hold that a similar motion was passed by the late Assembly in this House during last year, and that the taking of office under such circumstances as the Philp Ministry did was a distinct violation of the spirit of the Constitution by Mr. Philp and those associated with him. In order to clinch this argument, let me again quote from Professor Freeman's book—

But in the eye of the unwritten Constitution the Prime Minister and the Cabinet of which he is the head form the main feature of our system of government. It is plain at a moment's glance that the practical power of the Crown is not what it was in the reign of William the Third, or even of George the Third. But the change is due far less to change in the written law than to changes in the unwritten Constitution. The law leaves the power of the Crown untouched, but the Constitution requires that those powers should be exercised by such persons, and in such a manner, as may be acceptable to a majority of the House of Commons. In all these ways, in a manner silent and indirect, the Lower House of Parliament, as it is still deemed in formal rank, has become the really ruling power in the nation. There is no greater contrast than that which exists between the humility of its former dealings with the Crown, and even with the Upper House, and the reality of the irresistible power which it now exercises over both of them.

If this is true—if it is true that this Assembly has the choosing, controlling, and governing power in this House—if it is above the Ministers, above the Governor or King in the local affairs of the State of Queensland—I hold that Mr. Philp violated the spirit of the Constitution when he advised the Governor to grant a dissolution of a six-months-old Parliament, and these words on the Address in Reply are a proof of this matter—

We would also respectfully express our regret—

That Your Excellency should have seen fit to dissolve a Parliament newly elected—a Parliament perfectly able and willing to carry on business provided Your Excellency took to your counsels advisers in whom Parliament had confidence.

That a course was adopted injurious to the State's best interests through the delay involved (by the dissolution of Parliament) in the carrying out of needful public works.

I hold that Mr. Philp and those associated with him violated the spirit of the Constitution in advising His Excellency to grant a dissolution without Supply having been voted. Of course, I know there are constitutional authorities who

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say that the voting of Supply is not at all necessary now, that such a thing is becoming obsolete, that Supply is not needful to the granting of a dissolution. Professor Hearn says that, but I am of opinion that the best authorities are against the Professor. Mr. Kidston was right the other night when he said the power to grant Supply is the only way that the representative Chamber can control the Executive authority. Let me give you my authority for saying this. Walter Bagehot, in his interesting book on the English Constitution, says—

The ultimate authority in the English Constitution is the newly-elected House of Commons. No matter whether the question upon which it decides be administrative or legislative; no matter whether it concerns high matters of essential Constitution or small matters of daily detail; no matter whether it be a question of making a war or continuing a war; no matter whether it be the imposing of a tax or the issuing of a paper currency; no matter whether it be a question relating to India or Ireland or London—a newly-elected House of Commons can despotically and finally resolve.

If that can be done in the British House of Commons, this Assembly can do the same in the local affairs of Queensland. I shall now cite the well-known case of Sir Charles Darling. Sir Charles Darling was reprimanded by Mr. Caldwell, the then Secretary of State for the Colonies, and then recalled for acting in the way indicated—that is, in granting a dissolution without Supply having been voted. The following is what Mr. Caldwell said on that occasion:—

In these three respects—in collecting duties without the sanction of law, in contracting a loan without the sanction of law, and in paying salaries without the sanction of law—the Governor departed from the principle of conduct announced by himself. I deeply regret this. I am quite sure that all right, honest, intelligent colonists will agree with me in thinking the powers of the Crown ought never to be used to cultivate or facilitate any act which is required for an immediate political purpose, but which is forbidden by law.

In my opinion those high authorities are against the advice tendered to His Excellency by Mr. Philp, and I hold that the Address in Reply is perfectly right and perfectly in harmony with our Constitution when it says—

We would further state—

That as representatives of the people of Queensland we desire to place on record our disapproval of the methods employed to obtain control of £687,000 of public moneys, after the Legislative Assembly, in the exercise of its undoubted rights, had not only not given "express authority," but had absolutely refused so to do.

That while we recognise the extensive powers of the Royal prerogative with which Your Excellency is vested, we yet maintain that constitutional practice requires that those powers should be exercised by such persons, and in such manner, as may be acceptable to a majority of this House; and that the manner in which Your Excellency's late advisers counselled the exercise of your powers was an invasion of our rights as a self-governing people, and that this House here reasserts its undoubted right—by granting or withholding Supplies—to control the Executive Government of Queensland.

I hold that in advising His Excellency to grant a dissolution without Supply being voted Mr. Robert Philp and those associated with him violated the spirit of the Constitution.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: No, no!

Mr. ADAMSON: I do not care how often you say "No." I hold that the constitutional authorities say that that is so, and I have heard nothing from this side of the House yet to refute that statement. But, further, I think the advice tendered by Mr. Philp to His Excellency was a violation of the Constitution because it was given for a distinctly party purpose, and in so far as it was given for that purpose it was selfish advice, and Mr. Philp has placed the Governor before many people in Queensland in the light

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of a party man. I do not say, indeed I do not think, His Excellency is a partisan. I do not think he would be so utterly foolish as to degrade his high office by allowing himself to be dragged into party politics. Nevertheless, that is what Mr. Philp has done for His Excellency Lord Chelmsford, and he ought to have known better; he ought to have had more regard for the high position which the Governor holds than to do such a thing. Anent this matter, Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, writing to Sir George Bowen, said—

Remember that the first care of the Governor in a free country is to shun the reproach of being a party man!

Lord Elgin also said—

A Governor must give himself constitutional support. He must not manifest any bias towards any party. He must not give a dissolution merely to strengthen any party.

I am of opinion that Robert Philp advised the Governor to grant a dissolution for purely party purposes—he wished to snatch the reins of power.

HON. R. PHILP: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member is reading his speech, and, in disregard of the forms of the House, he is alluding to me as Robert Philp. I am now member for Townsville. What this man is doing is reading a sermon, and he refers to me as Robert Philp when I should be addressed as the hon. member for Townsville.

The SPEAKER: Of course, the hon. member is not in order in addressing the hon. member for Townsville in that form, and he is more particularly out of order if the hon. member referred to objects to it, but there have been mistakes made by hon. members in that respect all round the House.

HON. R. PHILP: He is deliberately reading his speech.

The SPEAKER: As regards the hon. member reading his speech, that is distinctly out of order. I ask the hon. member whether he is reading his speech or not?

Mr. ADAMSON: I just wish to say, in reply to the leader of the Opposition, that I never intended to be disrespectful. I have no desire to be discourteous or to say anything disrespectful. I have not said a disrespectful word about the hon. member personally.

HON. R. PHILP: Yes, you have.

Mr. ADAMSON: I have referred to what he has done politically, and have not referred to him in his private capacity in any way, or to him as a man. I am speaking about what he has done politically. With regard to the paltry objection he has made, it seems to me that it is just about worthy of his attitude in other matters. I wish to say that I am not reading my speech. The points of my speech are written out in paragraphs that I refer to as I go along, and there are a great many more words uttered than are written here. It is a pitiable thing that Mr. Philp cannot find something better to cavil at. I am of opinion that the Hon. Robert Philp, the member for Townsville, in advising His Excellency to grant a dissolution in the way he did, did it for partisan purposes. He did not do it because he thought about the welfare of Queensland, and I think he has placed His Excellency in a very unenviable position in the eyes of the people of Queensland and in the eyes of the people of the British Empire as well.

Mr. KEOGH: The majority of the people of Queensland said "No."

Mr. ADAMSON: The majority of the people of Queensland said you were in the wrong in every way.

Mr. MAXWELL: They didn't say "No"—they said "Go!"

Mr. ADAMSON: I would like to ask when ought a dissolution to be granted? Constitutional authorities, as far as I have [4.30 p.m.] been able to consult them, seem to agree that a dissolution ought only to be granted in extreme cases, and rarely, if ever, without Supply having been granted. Governor Robinson in New South Wales, and Governor Weld in Tasmania, refused to grant a dissolution unless Supply was first obtained. Governor Weld wrote—

Nothing but the most extreme and clear public necessity would justify the Crown in dissolving after Supply had been refused.

He also told the Premier that, in the event of Supply being refused, he would require him to send in his resignation. The action taken by these Governors was upheld by the leading authorities in England. Can anyone who knows the facts say that the hon. member for Townsville gave advice in an extreme case or in a case of necessity? There was no need for a dissolution of Parliament. The House was willing to go on with the business of the country. Hon. members said that they would do everything that the country had asked them to do, but they would not support people who had got into the position of Ministers in a way that was altogether apart from the spirit of the Constitution.

Mr. KEOGH: Who created that position?

Mr. ADAMSON: There were many things that tended to create that position; but that has nothing to do with the question. They gave wrong advice, in my opinion. That is about all I want to say on the constitutional question. These are the three points in which I think the hon. member for Townsville made a great mistake. He asked for a dissolution without any adequate reason for asking for it; he asked for it without Supplies having been granted, when there was no need for asking for it in that way; and he did it, in my opinion, for distinctly party purposes, in order that he might get on to the Treasury benches with those with whom he was associated. Another question with which I would like to deal briefly is the question of the Upper House, because, after all, that was the thing that led up to the crisis. Everybody knows that it was the reference of the leader of the Opposition to the Hon. Mr. Thynne as the real Premier of Queensland that led to the Kidston Government taking up the position they did last year. I ask, Is it not about time that the Upper House was either mended or ended? I would ask hon. members to remember that since 1903 that House has rejected a Bill to abolish the poll tax. It rejected an adult franchise measure, and a special session was called to pass it. In 1905, in the regular session, four Bills were thrown out; in 1906 other four Bills were thrown out; and in 1907 the Postal Ballot Bill and the Wages Boards Bill were also thrown out.

Mr. JENKINSON: That is not true—they were not thrown out.

Mr. ADAMSON: Well, they were amended in such a way that the majority of the representatives of the people of Queensland were not prepared to accept them. The amendments were such as to destroy the intentions of the Government in passing those measures. I am not going to say what should be done with the Upper House. The head of the Government will deal with that, and is already preparing the way to deal with it; but I want to say that it is not true, as hon. members over here have said, that we were not returned at the polls to support the Government in amending the Upper House. It is perfectly true.

Mr. KEOGH: No; you were returned to make away with them.

Mr. ADAMSON: That is true. We have gone to the country for a number of years upon that cry; but we agreed with the leader of the Government to fight this constitutional battle together, and we agreed that, whatever his policy was in amending the Upper House, if we could not get its abolition, we would stand by him and assist him in every way we could, as a means to an end, and as a step in the right direction. Another thing that has arisen out of this crisis is the question of what is to be done with the position of Governor in this State. Is a State Governor, appointed in England, any longer a necessity?

LABOUR MEMBERS: No, no!

Mr. ADAMSON: If we are to have a Governor, would it not be better to have an Australian—(hear, hear!)—and would it not be better to follow the example of Canada, and, when the Upper House is done away with, simply have a Lieutenant-Governor, appointed by the Federal Parliament? What is the policy of the Labour party in this matter? The abolition of State Governors. We hold that, since we have the Federal Parliament, and have a link with the old country in the person of the Governor-General, that is all that is required, and we can do without a Governor appointed from the old country. As far as this party is concerned, we will try to bring that about as soon as possible. Another thing that it seems to me has arisen out of the crisis is—what is best to be done in regard to the formation of Ministries to control the business of this House? It seems to me that it has become undesirable that any one man—whether it be in a tiff or whether it be in any other way, should be able to disorganise the business of this House and this country in the way it was a few months ago. I have come to the conclusion that the best thing that can be done is to have elective Ministries.

Mr. KEOGH: I am with you there.

Mr. ADAMSON: I am glad there is something upon which we can agree. It would be a good thing to have elective Ministries, and then, if anybody became dissatisfied, or was not able to do just what he wanted, and wanted to get out of the position, or to do something the House did not want him to do, we could dispense with his services, and take somebody else in his place and the business of the country could go on for the whole term of the Parliament. Personally, I advocate elective Ministries, and that is another plank in the Labour platform which we will give effect to as soon as we can. I come now to the question of the postal vote. Some people say that the postal vote ought to be amended. When the time comes for discussing it, I shall give my reasons for holding that the only way to amend the postal ballot is to end it—sweep it out of existence—and prevent the corruption that has been going on in the country at the two last general elections. In relation to the wages boards that the hon. member for Lockyer talked so much about, I want to say that such boards will not do any harm to the farmers. Many of the farmers in this State are intelligent men, who are quite prepared for wages boards.

Mr. KEOGH: No.

Mr. ADAMSON: Well, in the Dallarnil Scrub the farmers, as a whole, signed the nomination paper of the present member for Burnett, and the Maranoa Farmers' Association expressed their belief in wages boards. When members get up and tell us that wages boards

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have to do with hours and with the arbitrary fixing of wages, and all that kind of thing, one cannot help laughing, and feeling that a man who does that is either wilfully misrepresenting things or else he does not know what he is talking about.

Mr. JENKINSON: That is about your position, if you say it does not contain those provisions.

Mr. ADAMSON: Wages boards are simply conciliation boards.

Mr. JENKINSON: That is absolutely untrue, and you ought to know better than say so. You don't know the Bill.

Mr. ADAMSON: Have you read it?

Mr. JENKINSON: I have read it, and understand it, and that is more than you do.

Mr. ADAMSON: The hon. member was referred to yesterday as a walking encyclopædia—there is no doubt his knowledge is gigantic; and when he tells anybody to hold his peace he should be silent; but if the hon. member says that wages boards are arbitrary boards, then he does not know what he is talking about. I worked very hard for the hon. member in the Fassifern district in order to secure his return, and I have been very sorry for it. I am very sorry indeed that I ever helped him.

Mr. JENKINSON: You did it voluntarily; nobody asked you to do it.

Mr. ADAMSON: You were very glad to get the assistance of anybody.

Mr. JENKINSON: So is every member of Parliament.

Mr. ADAMSON: I am sorry I worked for a man of the character of the hon. member for Fassifern.

Mr. JENKINSON: I am not likely to come to you for a character. You have too bad a one yourself.

Mr. ADAMSON: As far as my character is concerned, it will stand putting alongside the hon. member's. However, that is my opinion in regard to the Wages Boards Bill. Instead of hurting the farmers, it will help both the farmer and the farm labourer, and make the difficulty of living a great deal less than it is.

Mr. JENKINSON: You do not believe that.

Mr. ADAMSON: I do. I believe it honestly. Now, we have had during this debate a great deal of talk about rowdiness at public meetings, and the man who has made the most noise and interruption this afternoon is the man from whom we have heard most about it. I want to say that it seems to me that at very many public meetings the difficulty is caused by the men who are speaking. And the Brisbane Press—the unfair Brisbane Press, the base Brisbane Press, the Press that stooped to the lowest depth to which it could stoop—did more to bring about rowdy public meetings in and around Brisbane than anything else. I would just like to read an extract here from John Morley's "Compromise," because it seems to me very appropriate to this particular question. He says—

Then there is the newspaper Press, that huge engine for keeping discussion on a low level and making the political test final. To take off the taxes on knowledge was to place a heavy tax on broad and independent opinion. The multiplication of journals delivering brawling judgments unashamed on all things all day long has done much to deaden the small stock of individuality in public verdicts, and to make vulgar ways of looking at things and vulgar ways of speaking of them stronger and stronger by formulating and repeating and stereotyping them incessantly from morning until afternoon, and from year's end to year's end. For a newspaper must live, and to live it must please, and its conductors suppose, perhaps not altogether rightly, that it can only please by being very cheerful towards

prejudices, very chilly to general theories, loftily disdainful to the men of principle. Their one cry to the advocate of an improvement is some sagacious silliness about recognising the limits of the practicable in politics, and seeing the necessity of adapting theories to facts. As if the fact of taking a broader and wiser view than the vulgar crowd disqualifies a man from knowing what the view of the vulgar crowds happens to be, and from estimating it at the proper value for practical purposes. Why are the men who despair of improvement to be the only persons endowed with the gift of discerning the practicable? It is, however, only too easy to understand how a journal existing for a day should limit its view to the possibilities of the day, and how, being most closely affected by the particular, it should coldly turn its back upon all that is general. And it is easy, too, to understand the reaction of this intellectual timorousness upon the minds of ordinary readers, who have too little natural force and too little cultivation to be able to resist the narrowing and deadly effect of the daily iteration of poor short-sighted common-places.

That extract seems to fit the case of the Brisbane Press. It iterated and reiterated the same things day in and day out for weeks and months until one came to the conclusion that the articles that appeared the day before were the same articles put in on the following day with some sentences transposed. There was nothing original in them on the question of socialism, and they only placed a one-sided and garbled statement concerning its advocates before the electors. And that brings me to another thing I want to refer to—the statements made by the hon. member for Bulimba. He made a statement in some of his speeches to the effect that socialists were seeking to undermine society and to break the marriage tie.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: Some of them, I said; is that not correct?

Mr. ADAMSON: If it is true, it is not only some of the socialists who do that, but also some of the individualists. There are good men on the socialist as well as on the individualist side. There are religious men on the socialist as well as on the individualist side, and if the hon. gentleman knew that—as he admits he knew it—why did he use an argument of that kind?

Mr. W. H. BARNES: Evidently you did not like it.

Mr. ADAMSON: It did not injure me one iota, but I considered that it was unfair.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: You tried to down me.

Mr. ADAMSON: I knew the hon. member to be a good man, but I hold that Tom Mann, and others to whom he alluded, were quite as good men as he is, and as earnest in seeking the good of humanity. Perhaps some hon. members do not know Tom Mann, but I do.

Mr. JENKINSON: Tom Mann was fined for adulterating beer.

Mr. MAXWELL: And you have been fined for libelling people.

Mr. ADAMSON: If the hon. member had been treated as he should have been, the *South Brisbane Herald* would have been suppressed before now. I want to say that one of the leading men in the Christian church in America, Lyman Abbot, utters words like these—

Socialism and Christianity, then, agree in two fundamental respects. They both aim to secure the reorganisation of society, and such a reorganisation of society as shall give greater diffusion of virtue, intelligence, and power to the people. In these two respects they are allied, both are social and both are democratic in their purpose.

And Washington Gladden says—

Every Christian who understands and earnestly accepts the teaching of his Master is at heart a socialist, and every socialist, whatever may be his hatred against all religion, bears within himself an unconscious Christianity.

Those men know more about religion and

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Christianity than the hon. member for Bulimba. In a book just newly published, and written by the Rev. Mr. Campbell, of the City Tabernacle, London, and dealing with the question of Christianity and the social order, he deals with the question of socialism and the marriage tie, and I advise the hon. member to get that book and read it. If he had read a course of socialistic literature he would know that while there are some men who are not all that they should be, there are others who are working in every way for the advancement of all that is highest and best in life. Regarding this matter a recent writer in *London Opinion* says—

The rights and wrongs of socialism still fill columns of the daily papers, and one finds socialists now-a-days everywhere. In the church, Father Adderley, Rev. Percy Dearmer, a few deans, and perhaps a bishop. In the chapel, Mr. Campbell, Dr. Clifford, Mark Guy Pearse, Rev. J. Rattenbury, Rev. Mr. Pugh, and many others. In literature, Mr. Cunningham-Graham, Mr. H. G. Wells, Jerome K. Jerome, Robert Blatchford, and many others. In the theatre, Mr. G. B. Shaw and Mr. Granville Barker. In science, Dr. Alfred Russell Wallace and Sir Oliver Lodge. There are socialists in the House of Commons, and the heir to an earldom has announced his adherence to the faith. It is even rumoured that two socialists are members of the Stock Exchange, but this seems doubtful.

I want to tell the hon. member for Bulimba that whatever he may say about socialism and the marriage tie, it is simply an election cry, and does not reflect any credit on his head, it does not reflect any credit on his heart, and does not reflect any credit on his Christian principles. Now, just a word or two in regard to my own electorate. I hope the Secretary for Lands will take notice of the fact that we are very desirous of having some railways built in the electorate of Maryborough, and we hope that in the next budget of railways our district will be remembered.

Mr. KEOGH: You have done very well up to the present.

Mr. ADAMSON: We want still to do well, both for the public and for our constituents. I will bring my remarks to a close with a word or two from the propagandist standpoint. Why does this party exist at all? It exists in order to better conditions for the hard toilers of the world. It exists in order to make the land laws of the world more humane and more in harmony with what they ought to be than they are at the present time. We hold that the land question is the bedrock question. We hold that the leasehold system is the best system; and, if we could have our way, we would not permit the sale of Crown land in any quantity at all.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: But your party supported the sale of Crown lands.

Mr. ADAMSON: We sanctioned it simply because we were supporting a better lot of people than those who are now on this side, and it must be admitted that they sold land, and not in very small quantities either; whereas, if the Opposition could have their way, they would sell all Queensland if they possibly could. The reason why we take this stand on the land question is that two-thirds of England, nine-tenths of Ireland, and nineteen-twentieths of Scotland are held in ownership by a small group of persons. In New South Wales over 50,000,000 acres have been alienated, and about one-half is in the hands of 703 people or institutions. So, at least, says Coghlan in his latest book, published just before he left this country. There is another reason why this party is here; that is, to try to get some of the wealth that is produced for the wealth producers—to do away with the middleman, who gets far more of it than he ought to get.

Hon. R. PHILP: Have you never been a middleman?

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Mr. ADAMSON: No. Since I was ten years of age I have been a worker, a servant of the people, trying to elevate them to the highest and the best. And the men with whom I am associated are always trying to lead them to something higher and better. Here is how land has been exploited in Great Britain and America: Half of the wealth of Great Britain is held by one fifteen-hundredth part of the population. It is as if a cake were cut in half, one-half being given to one man and the other half being divided amongst 1,499 men. In 1898 the estates of seven persons were proved at over £45,000,000. In America, 1 per cent. of the population owns 54·8 per cent. of the wealth; 10·9 per cent. of the population possess 32·0 per cent. of the wealth; 38·1 per cent. of the population have 13·0 per cent. of the wealth; whilst 6,250,000 families, forming 50 per cent. of the population, are put down as having no wealth. President Roosevelt has been compelled to deal with the trusts and to control the power of the money lords, and the consequence is that the financial magnates of America are fighting against him tooth and nail, and seeking to prevent his reelection in every way they possibly can. An eminent American writer has said—

King power, slave power, money power! Two of them have fallen. Who will tackle the third? It will be no operation of pin pricks, but it will require a sharp knife, a steady hand, and a determined heart. As Andrew Jackson took the United States Bank by the throat, so the selfish gamblers of to-day, whose authentic exploits are chronicled in our magazines month after month, and in the daily reports of investigation committees, and whose pawns are flesh and blood, must be shorn of their privilege and sent back chastened to the place of equal opportunity with their fellow citizens. We need a man who will go into the Senate of the United States, and into the Ways and Means Committee room, with a whip of small cords, and it is high time he was here.

Washington Gladden, lecturing in 1905 before the students of Yale College, said—

There is no man in any prison in this country who has done a hundredth part as much to make society impossible as has been done by any one of our political leaders. The man who by the corrupt use of money, corrupts caucuses and conventions, and debauches candidates and voters, thus poisoning at the source the streams of political power, is the most dangerous man in society to-day—albeit his guilt is shared by those managers of great corporations who furnish him with corruption funds. If our notions of justice were clearer, such men would not be abroad in society. Compared with the destructive influences of such men, how harmless are most of the criminals shut up in our prisons.

We stand here as a propagandist party—a party that wants to make it possible for the use of land to be obtained as cheaply as possible for the toiling mass of men in this country and in the world. We want to do all we can to prevent the products of labour from going to the few, and distributing them among the many. The great problem of to-day is distribution. We have got socialistic production, and the few are getting hold of the money. We want socialistic distribution, and this party with which I am connected stands for a policy which will bring about a fair and just distribution of wealth and the settling of people on the land in the best and most humane manner, and in the way best calculated to cause the prosperity of Queensland to be great in the future. What we want to do is to help men to make a comfortable fireside for “weans and wife,” because we feel that to be “the true pathos and sublime of human life.”

Hon. D. F. DENHAM (*Oxley*): I will not detain the House very long. Indeed, I should not have spoken at all but for the fact that last evening I was unfortunately unable to record my vote owing to an attack of influenza, and I am unwilling that the Address in Reply should

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go through without a protest on my part against the paragraphs in it reflecting on His Excellency. I have not had an opportunity of hearing the various speeches on the Address. I read the speech of the Premier as reported in one of the daily papers, and I gather that he has changed his opinion in regard to the stuffing of the Upper House.

Mr. Cowar: That was his opinion for the time being.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: On the other hand, he has another opinion which is in the direct opposite, namely, that the Council

[5 p.m.] was to be packed to its fullest capacity. Already the numbers have been added to by two appointments, bringing the members of the Upper House to the largest number that I think it has ever had. Yet his private view is that it should be abolished. I say that I think, with regard to the matter that he was discussing, he had two views. Had he been at liberty to exercise his own private and mature judgment, I doubt very much whether he would have included in the Address in Reply all those references to His Excellency. He may have done that, but, if left to himself, I think it would not have contained the references to His Excellency the Governor. It is apparent, in my opinion, that in this he has been stirred by a large section of the House, who have not hesitated at any juncture to express themselves in terms more forcible than polite in regard to the representative of the King. However, as he has chosen to incorporate in the Address in Reply matters which, in my view, are entirely a reflection upon one of the most able Governors who has ever occupied that high position here—(hear, hear!)—I can do no more than enter my protest against it. In my mind there is no business at all in this Address in Reply. If there were business in it, then there would be something in the nature of a concrete resolution which would be visited upon those who had been the transgressors. Further, I am satisfied that there is no business in it, because all those clauses to which the leader of the Opposition has taken exception might surely have been omitted, as there are two Bills referred to here which evidently have reference to the same matter—namely, the Constitutional Referendum Bill and the Audit Act Amendment Bill. I take it that the hon. gentlemen who occupy the Treasury benches have discovered that we acted in a perfectly constitutional way; indeed, the only unconstitutional parties were they who declined to vote Supply when it was asked for. The hon. gentleman who has just resumed his seat referred to Governor Weld, in Tasmania, but the case has been quoted in a very partial degree. If he had quoted fully he would have seen clearly enough, and the House, too, would have seen that His Excellency Governor Weld did not deal with the question of Supply. Lord Chelmsford—I am quoting now from *Hansard* of last year, page 1783—did not refer in his memorandum to the question of Supply, because he thought that the Crown ought not beforehand to express its decision upon a theoretical question not immediately before it, and because he had no right to suppose that Parliament would depart from the most usual and constitutional course of voting the necessary Supply for that period that must elapse before the meeting of Parliament. I say that they who acted in an unconstitutional way were those who refused Supply; it was not unconstitutional, but, as I submitted last session, it was irregular, and the irregularity is to be laid upon those who were desirous of creating the constitutional question. The Address in Reply might have gone through last Thursday night quite easily

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had it been framed in such a manner as the Address in the Upper House, in which all offensive references were omitted; but for reasons best known to the Government themselves, they have chosen to attempt all this display of power, because there is no business in it at all. Happily, the Constitution places the Governor in a perfectly sound position—a good thing it is so, and I hope it may not be amended so as to place any future representative of the King in a position to be unable to grant a dissolution even if Supply is not accorded. It is not usual that any House should refuse Supply; it is most unusual, but it has occurred that a House has been dissolved without Supply being given, not only in Australia, but in the old country first—not lately in the old country, because constitutional usages and practices do not allow of a departure of that class. Now, the Governor's Speech opens by saying—

The programme of business submitted to Parliament last year was interrupted by a political crisis, only three or four of the Bills introduced passing both Houses.

The sixteenth Parliament of Queensland was a failure—a blight in the history of Queensland; and the blame of that rests solely upon the egotistical Premier, who was then Premier, and is Premier to-day. But for his egotism the session would have come to a close in the ordinary way, the business of the Chamber have been completed to a greater or less extent, and the alleged list of railways would have been taken. But the Premier frustrated the work of the session in merely a fit of spleen, and from a purely egotistical spirit. You recollect, Sir, that when he was appealing to the constituencies of Queensland as the leader of a party—and hoping at that time to constitute a new party—he spoke in a very firm tone as to the situation which a Premier should occupy. And here again he appears to have a second entity, because before the constituencies he lays down a certain ideal, and in the House he is prepared to accept the opposite of the ideal. As though there was no other man capable of leading a Parliament, he said: "If I am to be continued in the responsible position of Premier of the State, you must give me a coherent party at the back of me. I will have no more divided allegiance. I will have no more parties pulling different ways."

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: We had that last session.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: I am saying this position is unchanged. Just as the three-party system was introduced in the Assembly last year, so the system is here to-day. I say that was the spirit of the man before the public, but when he comes here he is prepared to accept quite a different situation. Last year he adjourned the House, and he told us on the special adjournment that no man has a right to be Premier unless he has direct power from the country. Now, is there any one in this Chamber would say that that is the position to-day? He says that no man has a right to be Premier unless he has the power, and certainly it is apparent to everybody that he is without the power, otherwise the Address in Reply might have gone through last week. The whole week was lost in securing the appointment of a Chairman of Committees. Had he been in control of the House that might easily and readily have been fixed up, but a week is wasted, and the business of the country to be delayed. I hope the Address in Reply will go through to-night, but I still fondly hope that the good sense of this Assembly will prevail in deleting those words that are a blemish on a reply from this Chamber.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: Hear, hear!

HON. D. F. DENHAM: I say again that the failure of last session entirely lies on the shoulders of the Premier. He failed to make an arrangement on three repeated occasions with the Labour party, especially the last rebuff after having written them that unwise letter in order to direct public attention to the Upper House. It has been said that the Opposition in the appeal to the country omitted the grave question on which this House was dissolved, but that was not so. We claim that we put that question before our constituents in a proper way, but the party headed by Mr. Kidston, and the party headed by Mr. Bowman, did not put the question before their constituents in that form. We clearly understood the situation. We have here the Governor's own words that the question submitted to him was one which affected the constitution of the Upper House. This is what the Governor said in his reply to the address sent from this House—

The paragraphs 2, 3, and 4 of your Address deal with the constitutional position of the Upper House.

That is the great constitutional issue with which my late Premier invited me to deal.

I declined because I considered the matter too grave for a Governor to touch without a mandate from the people.

By the exercise of the prerogative of dissolution the people are asked to say what they wish done.

MR. GRANT: That was the position you would not face in the country.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: That was the position which we did face everywhere. (Government laughter.) Everywhere we had a hearing that was the question which we put before the electors.

MR. GRANT: You had a fair hearing in Rockhampton.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: I never had a better hearing or a quieter audience in my life than I had in Rockhampton.

MR. GRANT: And yet you shirked the question.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: No; I did not. The question was one which affected the Constitution of the Upper House, because Mr. Kidston asked the Governor to recognise the right which lay in him to nominate a number of men to the Upper House. The Labour party were for abolishing the Upper House, while we were for making it an elective Chamber.

MR. MANN: You admitted that something wanted doing.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: These were the questions which were put before the people. All the talk about the difficulty and obstruction with the Upper House was mere fireworks. The only questions which the Legislative Council dealt with in a very firm manner last year were the Elections Acts Amendment Bill and the Wages Boards Bill. Now, so far as the Elections Bill is concerned, there were two more sessions before a general election could come round; and that Bill could have been carried over to this session, and reintroduced, and there would have been very little harm done by that, and it would have obviated the harm that was done by interrupting the business of the country.

MR. MANN: There might have been a by-election.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: There were seventy-two by-elections — or rather elections for seventy-two members as it happened, so a by-election would not have been of such vast moment as interrupting the business of the country to hold a general election. The other measure was the Wages Boards Bill. That question had never been before the country, but we were quite willing for the Wages Boards Bill

to pass—and so were the Legislative Council—all except that part of it which included farmers in its operations.

MR. WOODS: It was your side that brought it into the Bill.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: No. I am not going to discuss that question very much, as there are others who wish to speak. We put that question before the country, and we told the people that the cause of the trouble was in connection with the Upper House over those two Bills, neither of which was any justification for the interruption of the affairs of the country. But, unfortunately, others who went before the country did not put the question that way. They did not tell the people what the Governor said here. They said that the Governor was seeking to deprive the people, through their representatives, of their rights, instead of which no greater act of democracy—if I may use such an expression—could be passed than the appeal which the Governor practically made to the electors to say what they wished done to the Upper House. He wanted a mandate from the people, and he appealed to the people. It was one of the greatest democratic things that any gentleman could do, and yet it was said that “the Governor was seeking to take from you your right of control and your home rule.”

MR. MANN: Hear, hear!

HON. D. F. DENHAM: An hon. gentleman on the other side says “Hear, hear!” which leads me to think that that was the kind of talk which he indulged in at the late election.

MR. MANN: Hear, hear!

HON. D. F. DENHAM: Instead of the Governor depriving the people of their rights, he paid greater respect to them. He said, “Here is a question which the two Houses have failed to determine, and you have to determine it, as it affects a great constitutional issue.” We put the question to the people as it was put by the Governor, but that was avoided by others who went to the country. Now, what is the answer of the people? The House is in just the same state as it was in last year. There are three parties almost equally balanced. If there is any answer at all that has been made by the people, it is that the farmers shall not be included in the provisions of the Wages Boards Bill.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: No, no!

HON. D. F. DENHAM: Yes. Every farming constituency in Queensland, with the exception of Cambooya and Dalby, have returned members who are opposed to the inclusion of the farming industry in that measure. And I think that the hon. member for Cambooya told his electors that he would support an amendment to eliminate the farmers from the operation of that Bill. I think that is so.

MR. SUMNER: Yes, that is so.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: Well, we have every farming constituency, with the exception of Dalby, which is largely a pastoral district as well as farming, returning members opposed to the inclusion of farmers.

MR. MANN: My electors welcome it.

MR. KEOGH: Your electors are nonentities.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: I do not agree with my leader that the electors decided in favour of the abolition of the postal vote. Seeing that the postal vote was used at the last election by 50 per cent. more than the number who used it at the previous election, we must recognise that it is of some value to the country.

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Mr. LENNON: There were 300 new justices of the peace put on to work it up.

The HOME SECRETARY: It also got you five seats.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: Instead of having the postal vote witnessed by a justice of the peace, we might have it witnessed by two electors. I am not sure that it would not be better to have all the election done by postal vote rather than deprive the electors of that means of expressing their views. However, it is a vote I am not much wedded to myself because it is not of much need in Oxley. Only those who were going away or who were sick made use of it at the last election. How are we to look at that answer from the electors? If we look at the number of voters behind the parties we will find that there are more voters behind the Opposition party than there are behind the Labour party, and there are more voters behind the Labour party than there are behind the Government, so we have the extraordinary anomaly of a Government representing the smallest number of voters in the State.

Mr. HUXHAM: No.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: I will quote from an authority which the senior member for South Brisbane will recognise as a good one—the *Brisbane Worker*. It says—

Labour, with 10,000 more votes than Kidston, secured three fewer seats; and Philp, with nearly twice as many votes as Kidston, got only the same number of seats.

So as a matter of fact, the party to which I am allied have the largest number of voters behind them. Therefore, the answer to the question of the Governor, who asked for a mandate from the people, is that the mandate should be voiced by the Opposition and not by the Treasury benches; and, if not by the Opposition, then certainly by the Labour party, because they have far more voters behind them than the other side have.

Mr. KEOGH: It would be far better if the Labour party were in office instead of that crowd over there. (Laughter.)

HON. D. F. DENHAM: If there is one question which stood out more than another at the late election, it is the urgent need for a redistribution of seats. That need is emphasised by the result of the late election, but no reference is made to it in the Governor's Speech. As a party we hope that the Government will find it convenient in the Elections Bill they propose to table to provide, if not for a reduction in the number of members, certainly for a redistribution of seats. When we look at the Speech we see that it is a brief one, but brief as it is there are some inaccuracies in it. One would, however, have little fault to find with the Speech, or with the Bills mentioned in the Speech, if it were not for that which follows. My chief ground of complaint is with regard to the Reply which it is proposed to send to the Governor, and which might be greatly amended. The Speech opens with the statement that—

My advisers are of opinion that it is highly desirable that the remaining portion of that programme should be carried out, and it will accordingly be placed before you for your consideration.

I think that programme will find very little opposition from this side of the House, because the bulk of the measures we thrashed out last year, and there is no use in reiterating the speeches made then. As to railway construction, it was a real pleasure to hear the Minister for Railways introduce five railway proposals this afternoon. Those railways are much needed. There is no doubt that the interregnum, or interruption, in their administration was a convenient thing for the Government, because at the time they went out of office they had not the plans of those rail-

ways ready for submission to Parliament. They were backing and filling, and could not make up their minds what railways they would build, and there was so much political wire-pulling that they had not got the plans ready for presentation to Parliament when the dissolution took place. As far as the railways presented are concerned, I am exceedingly glad to find that the Government are making a start with railway construction.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You know the reason the railways were not tabled.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: Because you were not ready.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: I am glad that some railways have been introduced, and that they are going to be built under the Railways Act passed during the time I was in office. As far as my recollection goes, I was associated with each one of those railways when I was a member of the Kidston Government in January, 1906, immediately after the closing of the session of 1906, during which session I introduced the Railways Bill that afterwards became an Act. I hope that the provisions of that measure will be largely availed of in railway construction. After that measure was passed we early determined that a certain number of railways should be submitted to Parliament under its provisions, the idea being to have plans prepared as soon as possible, so that Parliament might have business to go on with, but, unfortunately, it was October before anything definite was arrived at, and the railways were not submitted. With regard to the statement that—

The result of the recent elections has clearly demonstrated that the people of Queensland are strongly of opinion that the evils arising from the occurrence of disagreements between the two Houses of Parliament should be prevented—

I do not think the Upper House ever obstructed after a question had been settled by a general election. Once a question was submitted to the electors at a general election, and the electors pronounced their verdict on that question, the Upper House offered no obstruction.

Mr. SUMNER: Didn't it throw out the Franchise Bill introduced by the Government of which you were a member after the House came back from a general election?

HON. D. F. DENHAM: There was a short session at the beginning of the year, and that measure was then passed by the Council. If the Wages Boards Bill was such an urgent measure that it was desirable that it should be placed on the statute-book without delay, the Government could have taken the same course and have called Parliament together in January so as to give the Upper House another opportunity of dealing with the Bill. I quite recognise that there may be differences of opinion between the two Houses, but it would be a lamentable thing if the Upper House were to become the mere creature of the Premier for the time being, because then it would be simply a repeating Chamber. At present the measures which are passed here are subject to revision by the other Chamber, and I think that, on the whole, the other Chamber has revised measures with advantage to the State. I may not be in agreement with that House on all points, but it does not necessarily follow that they were wrong when we have differed. However, we shall see what the Government propose to do when the Constitutional Referendum Bill comes before the House. With reference to the mail service, and the possibility of bringing the steamers up to Bulimba, I am glad that the Orient service has been such a success, and I hope the Government will be success-

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ful in bringing the steamers up to Bulimba. I do not know what the members for Brisbane South will have to say about that proposal, but I know that in the past there has been a strenuous objection in South Brisbane to making Bulimba the terminal place for oversea steamers. At one time it was thought that Pinkenba should be the terminal place for oversea steamers, but there were strenuous objections against that.

Mr. SUMNER: It is a step forward bringing them up to Bulimba, and we may get them up to Brisbane in time.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: I consider that Bulimba is distinctly preferable to Pinkenba, because we have the tramway to Bulimba, and passengers by the various boats can come up to the city. At present passengers cannot do that, because the steamers do not stay long enough at Pinkenba. I am not speaking of the Orient steamers, which stay there two or three days, but of the Japanese and other lines of steamers which are there only a few hours, so that there is not time for passengers to come up to Brisbane. Every year oversea steamers are made larger, and, with their increase in size, there will be greater difficulty in getting round the point in the river; but it is possible that in time they will be able to come right up to Brisbane. I congratulate the Government upon their nerve in announcing in this Speech that they contemplate even bringing the steamers up to Bulimba, because I know that in the past Brisbane South has demurred very strongly to a project of that nature. With regard to the Bills to be brought before us, some of them are old friends, and we know their contents pretty well. The Wages Boards Bill I am an admirer of. It is rather significant that in New South Wales they propose to abolish the Conciliation and Arbitration Court and substitute therefor a wages board.

Mr. SUMNER: We have a strike to-day as a protest.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: Yes; they have got a strike in New South Wales. The North Coast Company were paying under the award 1s. 4½d. per hour for overtime, and the other people were paying 1s. 8d. per hour for overtime, but although they were paying the amount awarded by the court, there is a serious strike which may influence the whole coastal trade of Australia. It is apparent, therefore, that a wages board is more effective in dealing with matters of this kind than a compulsory conciliation and arbitration court. The Address in Reply submitted to this House is in marked contrast with that passed by the Legislative Council. Had a similar Address to that adopted by the Legislative Council been presented to this Chamber it would probably have been agreed to in one sitting. It is rather an extraordinary thing that the Government should be championing constitutional practice when they are contravening constitutional practice in a most pronounced manner. On two occasions they have appointed a rejected candidate to the Upper House—on one occasion a non-portfolioed Minister—and on this occasion they have made him a portfolioed Minister although rejected at the polls.

Mr. LESINA: It is indefensible.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: It is indefensible. At the same time they endeavour to pose as constitutionalists while they flout public opinion by these two appointments.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: You were a member of a Ministry that set that rotten example.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: I have no knowledge of any former Government doing such a thing.

Mr. LENNON: What about Mr. Drake's appointment as Postmaster-General after he was defeated for Enoggera?

Hon. R. PHILIP: He was not defeated. He left this Chamber, and went to the Upper House.

Mr. WOODS: What about the Hon. F. I. Power?

HON. D. F. DENHAM: Any way, two wrongs do not make a right; and if the leader of the Government was such a strict constitutionalist as he claims to be, it is a marvel that he makes such strange lapses as these.

Mr. LESINA: That is what the *Worker* points out.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: Then, again, if he is a strict constitutionalist, how is it that he can sanction the waste of time that we have had—nearly two weeks wasted—which would not have eventuated if the hon. gentleman had been in control of the House. He could not get a mere adjournment. He only got the adjournment last week by the consent of the leader of the Labour party. If that hon. member had been determined that evening, the Chairman of Committees could have been appointed, and the business of the House proceeded with the following evening. No; the Premier is not in control. He said last year that no man has a right to be Premier unless he has the power to direct the policy of the country. The hon. gentleman certainly has not the power to direct the policy. He cannot even appoint a Chairman of Committees; and, as was pointed out by the hon. member for Clermont, the *Worker* this week points out that he made it a party question one day, and then climbed down a few days afterwards, and made it a non-party issue. It is a pity that the leader of the Government should have travestied his power and insulted His Excellency the Governor by inserting in the Address in Reply expressions like these—posing as a strong constitutionalist when he is guilty of gross violations of our Constitution himself. He is indeed a Premier by position—a Premier by grace. And yet such a Government as this asks the House to reply to His Excellency's Address in the terms of this motion! I hope the motion will be amended so that it will contain no reflection on, at any rate, a large number of members of this House.

Mr. LESINA: The amendment has been disposed of.

Mr. MAXWELL: You were away when the division took place on the amendment.

HON. D. F. DENHAM: I was away yesterday owing to an attack of influenza, and I would not have been present to-day only that I wanted to voice my views. No Government has ever wasted more time than the present. The whole of last session was lost, and two weeks of this session have been lost. We want to get on with a lot of railways—I am glad some of them have been introduced. We want to get on with our immigration policy and with land settlement. The country is tired of playing with politics. I only hope that the Government will give us some really useful legislation so that this country can thrive, and that all this nonsense and talk about the Constitution will be dropped, because there is no business in it. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. G. P. BARNES (*Warwick*), who was received with Opposition cheers, said: The hon. member for Maryborough claimed for his party certain congratulations, to which I think that party are justly entitled. Indeed, I have been waiting since my advent to the House to hear someone else than a member of that party voice such congratulations. Really they should have come from a source outside the membership of that

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party. I am glad to help to make good the missing link. Everybody will remember that the position of the Government to-day is largely due to the faithful services rendered to them in the country by my friends on my left. Indeed, I doubt whether, if those services had not been rendered, the party opposite, numbering twenty-five, would have numbered half that. Their position is entirely due to the splendid aid rendered them by the Labour party during the late eventful contest.

Mr. HUXHAM: They are very grateful.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: They are very grateful, but we have been waiting for evidence of that gratitude.

Mr. LESINA: The hon. member for Barcoo is no doubt very grateful.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The very little gratitude that has been shown by Ministers was drawn out of them, and, although the members of the Labour party were pretty well pleased with the appointment of the Chairman of Committees, yet that was a very small mite to get in return for all their services. Let us hope that a fuller recognition of those services will yet be given. At any rate, the friends opposite, I can see, are in very joyful anticipation of the benefits that are going to accrue to them as the session proceeds. I am glad that another omission which has struck me in connection with this debate has also been supplied by the hon. member for Maryborough. He referred specially to the mover and seconder of the Address in Reply. I add my word of commendation for the work of the mover and seconder of this Address. It is but tardy recognition for them to have to wait until the end of the debate before such a duty, and so well performed, considering the difficulties of the position, was recognised. Intense sympathy is due to the hon. member for Brisbane North and to the hon. member for Toowong on account of the exceeding difficulty and the great unpleasantness of their task. Their position was indeed an exceedingly arduous one, and I am glad, in some faint way, to make reference to the effort they have made. Under the circumstances, they certainly acquitted themselves to advantage. I hardly see how the performance of that act can meet with the approval of the electors they represent, and it seems to me that it was an unfair thing to ask two men who represent constituencies which are fairly evenly divided in their political opinions to voice the feelings of such a doubtful and compromising nature. It was no kindness to those two gentlemen to ask them to undertake the service they did undertake. Those gentlemen have not only to satisfy their own constituencies, but they have to satisfy a wider constituency outside.

Mr. COWAP: They are satisfied.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I doubt if they could be satisfied. The electors were fairly evenly divided as far as numbers were concerned, and I doubt whether the leading constituency of this State will view with approval the voicing of sentiments which have never previously been heard in this Assembly. It is something for the citizens of Brisbane to remember that the man of their choice conveyed the sentiments of the Ministry, which, put in the most mild way, are of an exceedingly doubtful and unwarrantable nature. I do not think any compliment was paid to the mover and seconder of the Address in asking them to move it, and I do not think any compliment was paid to the constituencies which they represent by asking the members to undertake such a duty. No charge of censure was levelled against the members of the late Ministry, although those gentlemen, or most of

them, are here to answer for themselves, and are perfectly ready and willing to answer any charge that may be made against them.

Mr. SUMNER: We cannot make any impression upon them.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: The trouble is that we cannot make any impression upon the other side. We may pour constitutional truths into your ears, and still you remain "Doubting Thomases." Whatever has been said by the other side does not in the least alter the outstanding fact that what was done by the late Government was done in a perfectly constitutional manner.

Mr. MANN: Does that include the Maryvale Estate purchase?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I am not going to be drawn off the track by references to the Maryvale Estate, although I may here state that it was one of the finest purchases ever made by the Government.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It was a good purchase for you.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: You have to thank it for a lot.

The SPEAKER: I ask hon. members to allow the hon. member for Warwick to speak without interruption. Hon. members should bear in mind that he is a new member, and should not be embarrassed with interruptions. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I will deal with the Maryvale Estate at the proper time, and am perfectly willing to answer any questions in connection with the purchase of that estate as far as my knowledge goes. I may say, in passing, that in the event of that estate being offered for sale, within one week it will go off like ripe cherries. People are hungering for it, and waiting for it. Indeed, during the past few weeks I have been asked to use my efforts in order that certain blocks may be allotted to certain people. (Laughter.) I only mention that to show that the estate is already in considerable demand. I will now return to the point from which I was drawn by the interjection of the hon. member who referred to the Maryvale Estate. In my opinion, the electors have had ample evidence placed before them as regards the constitutional question, at least from the standpoint to which I have referred, and I think few unbiassed people would for a moment doubt the wisdom of His Excellency the Governor's decision in this dispute in allowing the matter to be settled by the people. In so doing, he recognised the people as supreme, apart altogether from the dispute over the Wages Boards Bill and the postal vote. The Governor concluded that in the interests of good government it was essential that the dispute should be referred to the people, and it was about the only course that could have been adopted at the time. The Premier had applied to his allies, the Labour party, for support, and on that being declined, the resignation of the Government followed. Apparently it was not intended that the resignation should be accepted. It was never meant to be taken seriously. It was meant as a kind of object lesson to his friends, in order that they might be healed into action. A more intense support was wanted by the then Government; and the way in which that was to be brought about was on the lines which the hon. the Premier had decided upon. With only twenty-four followers, what could the hon. Mr. Kidston do? He had said that good government under all the circumstances was an impossible thing. Mr. Philp, with thirty-one followers, tried, and he found the task too much for him, and two parties who had previously declined to co-operate in one

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direction, on account of their strong antipathy to the Philp party were brought into line by the action that was taken. Once they agreed upon a common standpoint of endeavouring to thwart the members of the Opposition, they had no difficulty in combining together in their refusal to grant Supply. The Hon. Mr. Kidston failed, The Hon. Mr. Philp failed, and there was no one left to appeal to.

Mr. RYLAND: Yes.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Yes, there was the leader of the Labour party, with seventeen followers.

Mr. RYLAND: The best of the lot.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: What Mr. Bowman requires is a sense of responsibility, and we have seen in the old country how responsibility has sobered down men like John Burns and others. They at once respond to the claim. The claims of the Labour party were not so great as those of the present Government. It seems to me that where a leader representing thirty-one votes failed, and a leader representing twenty-four votes failed, a leader representing only seventeen votes could not have the least possible chance of conducting the government of the country. Why, then, under these circumstances, throw the whole responsibility on His Excellency for following the only course open? A more impartial decision could scarcely have been come to by him. There is one thing in connection with this question that we are apt to lose sight of, and which His Excellency must have been cognisant of. At the election in May the only party that improved their position in the country was the Philp party.

Mr. RYLAND: What about the election in February?

Mr. G. P. BARNES: We had hoped to improve our position, and but for untoward circumstances we would have done so. At the election in May the Kidston party anticipated coming back with increased strength. What was the decision of the country? The country did not hesitate, but sent them back, instead of thirty-seven strong, reduced by one-third of that number. They came back a party of twenty-four—a discredited party. The reply of the country was very emphatic. The Opposition went out seventeen strong, and came back thirty-one strong. Was this not, then, sufficient evidence that the country had lost confidence in the Kidston party? And although the Philp party, in May, were not returned strong enough to govern, they were the only party that had improved their position in the eyes of the electors. His Excellency the Governor was aware of this, and he granted a dissolution to a party enjoying by far the largest share of the confidence of the country, and which no one could cavil at. Apart from that, it was known that there were a number of Mr. Kidston's followers who were then uneasy in their position. It was an open secret that at any moment those hon. members might consider they were studying the best interests of their constituents and of the State generally if they walked across the House. And, with that in view, with their position improving in the country, and the possibility of their position improving in the House, there was ample justification for the stand which His Excellency took on that occasion. Now that the elections are over everything should be done, one would think, to calm the feeling which existed during the late contest. As the elected of the people, it is our duty to get to work and do our best to legislate in the best interests of the country, and endeavour to serve the people to the best of our ability. But we are not helped in this direction by such an Address in Reply as

the one before us, nor are we helped by the knowledge that one of the first acts of the Premier—a Premier with a following of only twenty-four or twenty-five—was to openly insult 322 recently appointed justices of the peace; and, in insulting them, he insulted the community from which they were taken.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Some of them were paid 10s. a day at Charters Towers during the election.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I know nothing of that. So far as my knowledge goes, no doubt as to the eligibility of any one of them has ever been raised. Those that I am acquainted with—and I am acquainted with a number of them—are, without exception, men of the highest character, who would have done honour to the position. It is nothing short of a scandal that some of our best citizens should be insulted as they have been—summarily deposed from a position to which they had been called in the ordinary course of things by the then Ministry. It was a vindictive, a cruel, thing to do; and I trust that, although they may not appreciate the honour, the Government will reinstate the whole of those justices to the positions from which they have been deposed.

Mr. KROGH: They will not accept it.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: I do not know anything about that. At any rate, it would be a righteous thing to do, and is the only just course the Ministry can pursue. I say that a wrong would be inflicted upon them in the event

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of a portion of the number being reinstated, and not the whole number. I trust that further injury will not be added to the insult by that course. I do not intend dwelling to any great extent on the measures proposed to be introduced, as we shall have better opportunities for discussing them when they come before us. I prefer just shortly to consider what has not been said, and to refer to further subjects which have been but barely referred to; and these may be classed, perhaps, under four leading heads, and are recognised to be questions of the greatest moment at the present time—namely, railways, land settlement, immigration, and water conservation, regarding each of which I shall be as brief as possible. We hold the best information to-day, I take it, that we have had for some time, and the way in which that information has been demonstrated to us this afternoon is certainly of a most encouraging type. I refer to the laying on the table of the House of certain books of reference which have to do with the railway proposals of the Government. We are glad to know that railways are going to be pushed on as soon as possible. Just one little bit of disappointment seizes one that, instead of five railways, a larger number have not been named. However, we take this as a small instalment, and trust that the balance of the thirteen or fourteen railways, the particular routes of which are very well known to hon. members, will be introduced in due course. This great State of ours cannot be developed without railways and roads. The country at this time is crying for a forward railway policy. We are helpless to develop our resources unless new country is opened up by the building of railways in various directions, and it will be impossible for this State to compete in the markets of the world unless provision of this kind is found for them. This side of the House, I am sure, will facilitate every movement, so long as it commends itself to them, in connection with the pushing forward by the Government with their railway policy. So long as due consideration is given to the proposals, no better work can be done in the developing of our State than by the building of

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railways. Our railways at present are paying in a manner that we have rarely seen, and which has not been eclipsed in years gone by; and indeed they will pay better still if the number of feeders is increased as the main lines are extended. I hope that, in the five proposals intimated as likely to be carried out by the Ministry, they will not lose sight of the great advantage which will accrue to this State by the linking up of our various railway systems. Hand in hand with the building of railways must be the throwing open of land for close settlement. I notice that we are to have an amended Land Bill, and I agree with the hon. member for Albert that the aim should be to induce settlement under the old homestead clauses, especially in connection with the Act of 1868, under which the most beneficial settlement in connection with our State has taken place. The idea should be to enable settlers to secure land in homestead areas at a low figure. Residence, I repeat, is a matter in this connection of first and paramount importance, and it is the only way in which the speculator can be met. If we secure to the country the settlement of our lands upon those homestead principles we need have little to fear in this connection.

MR. COWAP: Never mind the farmer; give the speculator a chance.

MR. G. P. BARNES: Farmers are the bone and sinew of the country, and we want to increase them as much as we possibly can. While on this subject, I may say that it has often struck me that the country is badly informed if it is never told as to what we possess, and as to what land is available. I would like to see the Minister for Lands issue instructions to every land agent in the State to report upon the area of land available for settlement in their various districts, such reports to state the character of the country, how watered, the rainfall, and for what purpose such areas are most suitable. Out of 670,000 square miles of country, only about 600,000 acres are under cultivation. There must be tens of millions of acres in different parts which are more suitable for the plough, and for closer settlement, than they are for the use to which they are at present put. The position, then, is this: That barely 1 acre out of every 640 acres is being put to the best and most advantageous use in the interests of the State. Of course, it would be absurd to imagine that the whole area of this vast State of ours is suitable for the plough; but, allowing for these great unsuitable areas, there must be a vast area which is suitable, and waiting for close settlement. Well, with the land we have in the State, we want to make it easy for the people to get on to it, and we want to make them contented and satisfied when they are on the land. I disagree, to some extent, with the expressions made by the hon. member for Albert last evening regarding the price of land. He referred to the fact that under the old homestead clauses land was thrown open at 2s. 6d. per acre. While that might be a desirable thing to do under given conditions, the conditions are not identical at the present time to what they were then. I was speaking to a farmer only a few days ago, and he referred to the old times when land was offered under the homestead area clauses at an exceedingly low rate; but, owing to the great advantages which accrue to farmers in these days in the matter of improved machinery, greater facilities in sending produce to the markets, as well as to the fact that there are greater markets existing for those goods, land is worth infinitely more to-day than it was twenty-five or thirty years ago. However, be that as it may, we want to see the land made available for the people and at the lowest possible price. Hand in hand with

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the building of our railways and the opening of our lands must go that bold immigration policy to which the Premier has referred on various occasions. I am not in favour of an indiscriminate importation of people nor of bringing them here before we are ready for them. The thing would be manifestly absurd to dump down all kinds of people ere the land is made available for settlement and ere there is work for them to do. But there is a vast difference between going to the excess in that direction and doing nothing at all. There is room for a steady inflow of people so long as they are of the right kind and of the right stamp. I noticed in a newspaper that I took up just now that reference is made to the fact that in Scotland—providing proper facilities are offered and proper terms come to with the shipping companies—there are thousands of people who are willing to come to this land of ours. Our plan, then, should be in the first instance to get our land scheduled, and then go to the farming centres of the old world and endeavour under good inducements to arrange for men with families and means to come to our State. There is no sense whatever in going to the large cities and to lay out one's officers in order to secure those who stand at the street corners and bring them here. Go to the rural districts, and there you may secure the men we want.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: "A voice crying in the wilderness."

MR. G. P. BARNES: I do not think so. I am not sure whether the hon. gentleman is referring to myself as "a voice crying in the wilderness" or whether it might be that any lecturer or officer of the State who may be sent home, that his voice might be considered "a voice crying in the wilderness." I do not believe that. If our land is what we say it is, and what I believe it to be, then for any man who wants to settle on the land we can offer the highest advantages and the best inducements to them to come here. I believe that the first thing for us to do or to know is what we have to offer in a broad, general sense. I do not believe that this Assembly—that the members of this House—are aware of what we possess. When this is found out, I believe that the best means for inducing the best stream of settlers would be for a selection to be made of farmers of various nationalities to proceed to the old country. The great bulk of these men were what someone termed paupers when they arrived here; many were in a position of affluence, or at any rate in positions of comfort, and I would deem it a privilege, if it should ever come my way, to nominate worthy citizens who will fill that position with benefit and advantage to the State. Before going on such an errand, certain areas would be reserved for them, and they would make themselves conversant with the character of the country offered. I believe some object to the group system. I do not care myself what system is adopted, or how the land is laid out, so long as people are brought here. It is people we want. Bring them in groups or bring them in single families, it does not matter so long as they are brought here under one system or the other. That seems to me to matter but little, as it is people we want, and people we must have. Another great question is that of water conservation, and, with others who have expressed themselves, I regret exceedingly that nothing has been done in this particular direction. If my memory serves me correctly, a sum of money was placed on the Estimates previously for this special purpose, but, so far as we are aware, nothing whatever has been done in carrying out the wishes of the House. This is a question more important than one is likely to imagine. At the present

time, for instance, vast quantities of water are running to waste. It is a time of plenty, and the idea should be to conserve an amount of this water in times when it is running past our doors. What an important part irrigation and water conservation is playing in the various countries in the world!—India, Egypt, and America in particular; and in the adjoining States great attention is being paid to this matter. I have read of the wonderful transformation which has taken place in connection with some of the great irrigation schemes which have been entered into by other nations of the world, and the wonderful results which have followed, especially in the arid lands of America. I remember in one instance where land was offered for 10s. an acre, but when it was put under a system of irrigation it went up to some £30 per acre; and, indeed, it is said that land so irrigated brought no less a sum than £100 an acre, and in odd instances even up to £400 an acre.

Mr. HUXHAM: That was cultivation.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Yes; it was cultivation. If one had time one could go very fully into this matter. Anyone who reads the reports of what has been done with the arid lands of America will have his eyes opened in a wonderful manner, and will become a better informed man as regards the benefits of irrigation. About six months ago, when the Maryvale Estate was offered to the Kidston Government, the Warwick Chamber of Commerce, realising the advantages which must accrue to the State from the adoption of a system of water conservation and irrigation, suggested that a portion of that splendid estate should be reserved for the special purpose of an irrigation colony. The situation of the estate, with its surrounding hills and ravines, is such that it lends itself to a system of water conservation, and I trust that the Government will see their way to reserve a portion of the land for the purpose I have indicated. Mildura, which has only 9,000 acres of land under irrigation, is supporting a population which numbers 4,500, so that, on an average, there are about 2 acres to the individual.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The latest reports from Mildura are to the effect that male persons cannot get work there, and that only women and children can get employment.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: If that is so, there must be something wrong in the industrial conditions which prevail there. The place may be over-peopled for its size. I do not know whether it is or not, but I do know that some 4,500 persons derive a livelihood from that land at the present time. Anyone who knows the Downs, and knows the character of Maryvale, will realise at once that the country is so rich, and the lay of the country of such a nature, that it offers the finest opportunity for the introduction of a system of water conservation and irrigation. The things I have mentioned will help to bring about what we need, and what we must have if we are to retain our country. There must be the opening up of the country to close settlement, the building of railways to give employment to some who come here, and the adoption of intense cultivation by means of water conservation and irrigation to provide further employment for the people. These things will help to bring people here, and that is what we want. The hon. member for Albert referred yesterday to the East—to the growth of China and Japan; and, to my mind, it is a criminal thing that nothing has been done by the various States of the Commonwealth in order to people this land of ours. A real danger threatens us. Japan is increasing in population at the rate of about one and a-half times our population every year, her

lands are closely settled, and are fast being worked out, and unless we are up and doing—unless we people our land ourselves—it will be the duty of some other nation which does not possess shoulder room to take advantage of the vast areas we have unoccupied. We have a great empty territory, and it should be the duty of Ministers to study how we may, with as little delay as possible, people that territory properly and profitably. We have for about five years enjoyed a time of unexampled prosperity, as is shown by our expanding revenue. Railways in 1902 netted £375,594, and in 1906 they netted £791,949. This increase in net revenue is only in keeping with the increase in our flocks and herds, and other live stock. For instance, horses increased from 399,622 in 1902 to 452,916 in 1906; cattle from 2,543,471 to 3,413,919; and sheep in round numbers from 7,000,000 to 14,000,000. Other live stock increased in proportion. Our exports increased in the same period from £9,171,323 to £12,754,289. These facts prove that we are in a condition of prosperity, and lead to the point which I wish to make, which is, that notwithstanding our growth and development, notwithstanding the evidences of our prosperity, our population has been stagnant. Our population remained the same at the end of 1906 as it was in 1902. Notwithstanding the natural increase in our population, our numbers have increased by only 22,500 during that period. The question arises, What is the cause of this? The times have been prosperous, and the years have been opportune for development. What is the reason, then, that advantage has not been taken of this signal opportunity to see that our population is increased and our resources developed? The verdict the country gave in May last was due to the fact that the Government of the day did not perform their duty satisfactorily to the State, and did not keep pace with our development and see that the population of the country increased correspondingly. The country expects something to be done. The country expects a bold immigration policy to be adopted. We recognise that it would be absurd to dump down innumerable groups of people in the country unless we commence to develop our resources on other lines than those hitherto followed. I had intended to say something about the Wages Boards Bill and other matters, but I know that other members desire to speak, and I shall therefore confine myself to a few brief remarks on the Wages Boards Bill. I trust that, notwithstanding the fact that the Wages Boards Bill is again to be introduced, the sympathy of this House will go out to the men who do not desire to come under [7.30 p.m.] that measure. The farmers have not made any request to be brought under it. They are satisfied with the present position of things, and the voice of the farming communities is altogether against their inclusion in the Bill. At least two of the seats lost to the Government were lost on account of the inclusion of farmers in the Bill. The hours of labour and the conditions are not such as to make the Bill suitable to mixed farming or to the great dairying industry. I notice that an Old Age Pensions Bill is to be introduced. I am very glad of that, and I trust that the allowance will be fairly liberal, so as not to do away with the finer feelings of the people. My earnest attention will be given to a measure of that kind. I wish something had been done to include a Redistribution of Seats Bill in the Government programme. If the people were represented as they should be, this party would be thirty-five strong, the Government party would only be fifteen in numbers, whilst the Labour party would number twenty-two.

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Surely it is high time for the introduction of such a Bill. However, I take it that the matter of greatest concern, in whatever way it may appeal to hon. members, is the desirableness of bringing about a better understanding between capital and labour. Capital and labour are to a large extent at war with each other. This should not be. Why should we set one class against another? Why should one section be seeking to work to the disadvantage of the other? Should the opportunity offer, I will do all I can to improve the lot of the worker and to make his condition in life satisfactory to himself and to the people of this State. (Hear, hear !)

Mr. MITCHELL (*Maryborough*): Perhaps never in the history of Queensland has there been a more important debate than the one before the House at the present time. The unfortunate thing, and the surprise to most members of the House, is the manner in which it has been taken up by the Opposition—or I might say the manner in which it has not been taken up by the Opposition, because this constitutional question is one that should have been defended to the bitter end by those sitting on the Opposition benches. They took up an attitude last year, and occupied the Treasury benches in a manner that has never been known in the history of British politics. The hon. member for Albert last night referred to the fact that laymen made a pretence of understanding law in a manner that his profession sometimes even avoided. Now, this great constitutional question is not so much a question of points of law as it is a question of the Constitution Act—an Act which has not been written for one particular line, but which has been built up first by precedent and then by practice, and it is only where precedent has become practice that it has become a part of the Constitution. Many precedents have been given from time to time; but these precedents have never become practice, and therefore have never become parts of our great Constitution. The manner in which the Opposition have taken up this great question has been an object lesson to us. They have hunted for precedents from every part of the world, and they have brought forth precedents which have never become part of our Constitution. What we want to do at the present time is to find out what is really meant by the Constitution, which we consider has been offended in high places—which has been offended by the attitude which the late Government took up a few months ago; and, after finding out what is really meant by the Constitution, to see how greatly these people offended in the position they took up at the end of last year. If we begin to find out on what our Constitution has been built up, we will find that it has been through certain precedents, which have become practice; and we might go right back to Runnymede, when John Lackland was compelled to sign Magna Charta. That was one of the precedents that established a system of practice—that the Commons were to have a say in the management of the affairs of the country. Then, in jumping along history, we might see what happened to Charles I. when he attempted to resist the people. We might also find out that there was a time when the Constitution was held sacred, and the power was vested in the church. Then the King and the church disputed for supremacy; and the time came when the people of Great Britain demanded, not only a right to say something, but when they demanded the right to say all—when they considered that they were the sovereign authority in determining what was the Constitution, and how it was to affect the people of the country. We know that our Constitution has been built up on the English Constitution, and we know

also that, now that the people have become the sovereign power, it is right not only for the gentlemen who may hold the King's prerogative, but also for advisers who are not in power by the will of the people, to give way to the Assembly, which is all-powerful because it is responsible to the people. In November last a dispute arose between His Majesty's representative and the then Premier, Mr. Kidston. We know that Mr. Kidston resigned, and that Mr. Philp was sent for and formed a Ministry. My object in going back to precedent and practice was to show that in practice we expected and considered, as an Assembly, that it was the duty of the Governor, knowing the weakness of the Philp party in forming a Ministry that could not get Supplies from Parliament, to have recalled Mr. Philp and asked Mr. Kidston to continue his Ministerial work. Some may say that such should not have been the case. Now, we know that in 1890 a case very much of this kind happened in New Zealand. At that time the Earl of Onslow was Governor of New Zealand, and the Atkinson Ministry, who had been in power for a considerable time, were about coming to their end. Sir Harry Atkinson was anticipating a possible serious defeat at the polls, and he decided that it would be necessary for him to try and get a number of members appointed to the Council, so that, in the event of the Balance Ministry getting back to power—which they did—he might be able to block democratic legislation in the other House. He applied to Governor Onslow for eleven nominees to the Council, and he was granted six, which was considered a very fair number under the circumstances. Immediately after that the election took place, and resulted in the Atkinson Ministry being seriously defeated, and Balance coming back to power. Balance, when he returned to power, found things exactly as he anticipated. Legislation was blocked in the other House, and he could not by any means he adopted in the Assembly get his measures through the Council. The result was that he applied to Governor Onslow for the appointment of eighteen nominees to the Council, and Governor Onslow decided, as his term had nearly expired, that it would be wise to await the arrival of the Earl of Glasgow, the new Governor. To this Balance consented, and in 1892, when the new Governor arrived, he asked for the appointment of eighteen nominees, and he was offered twelve. He was determined, however, that he would get what he asked for. Governor Glasgow refused, and communication was opened up with Lord Ripon, who, in communicating with Lord Glasgow, instructed him that when he had any measures to discuss with his advisers he was to discuss them from every point of view, but in the event of his advisers still maintaining that they had a right to what they were asking for, it was his duty to give way because they were responsible to the Assembly, and the higher power, the people. Now, I contend that that case is on all-fours with the case of the Kidston Ministry, Lord Chelmsford, and the Philp Ministry last year. I intend later on to give a quotation from "Todd" referring to a case which happened in Canada, which is almost identical to the present case. The Macdonald Ministry were defeated over a slight incident—the site for a Government House; and Mr. Brown was asked by the Governor-General to form a Ministry, but he was distinctly informed by the Governor-General that on no account would he grant a dissolution, and was told to communicate that fact to his colleagues. The result was that he formed a Ministry, went to the House, was defeated, and returned to the Governor-General to intimate the state of affairs. The Governor-General then

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recalled Macdonald, and refused to grant a dissolution because the Ministry at that time had only been a few months in power, and the season of the year was unsuitable for a general election. That is exactly the same position that the Kidston Ministry were in at the end of last year, and it shows that Mr. Philip, in his advice to the Governor to grant a dissolution, acted wrongly. The Governor, acting on the advice of Mr. Philip, made a most serious mistake.

The SPEAKER: Order! Hon. members are getting into the habit of addressing other hon. members by name. I must ask them to remember that the rule is that hon. members shall be referred to by the name of their constituencies.

Mr. MITCHELL: I say there has been a mistake made, and this mistake was the cause of the people's representatives being sent to the country. When the late Ministry went to the country, instead of taking up the defence of Lord Chelmsford, they introduced into discussion every possible thing but the question at issue. They never for a moment tried under any circumstances to defend their action. They never for a moment tried to defend the mistake into which they had led Lord Chelmsford, but they introduced the cry of socialism *versus* anti-socialism; they introduced the marriage tie question; they introduced the question of the confiscation of property; and I may just say here that in some towns—in the town of Maryborough, for instance—the argument was raised, in order to frighten the people into voting for those who were representing the late Ministry, that if socialism was introduced people would lose their identity. Fathers and mothers would simply become numbered, and the children themselves would simply be numerical incidents in connection with the family. They were told that their cottages would be confiscated by the socialists, with the result that they would become poorer and the socialists would become richer. All these questions were dragged in, and the great constitutional question was left out in the cold.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: What members of the late Ministry spoke in Maryborough during the last election?

Mr. MITCHELL: I did not say the members of the late Ministry spoke there. I referred to persons who were standing in the interests of the late Ministry. In connection with that I say it was a cowardly attitude on the part of the late Ministry and its supporters. Not one of them attempted to defend Lord Chelmsford for what he had done, and not one of them raised the constitutional question in favour of what had been done at that particular time. I say it was very cowardly indeed, because if Lord Chelmsford made a mistake, certainly he was led astray by the gentlemen who were at that time his advisers. The mistake was in granting a dissolution to a Government which could not command a majority, and which could not command the Treasury. The first thing, according to our Constitution, that enables a man, or men, to take up the position of Premier and the positions of Ministers, is to find out if they have the confidence of the Assembly, and if they have the people of the country behind them. The question of the three parties has been dragged in, though for what purpose I do not know, except to hide the real question at issue. We contend that, whatever they may say, they have no right to question what parties are in the House, or from whom the Premier gets his support. All that either the Governor, or the Premier, or anyone in authority has to concern himself about is the Premier who has got a sufficient majority of votes in the House to enable him to carry on. That is the only person who is

entitled to hold the position of Premier. It has been proved over and over again in the debate—from this side and the Government benches—that Mr. Kidston, as Premier at that time, had full control of the House, and that the late Premier had no control of the House. He had neither power to get Supply, nor power to adjourn the House, nor the power to do anything. Yet, when he asked for a dissolution it was granted him, which we consider at that particular time was a mistake. In dealing with those fundamental principles, it is only right to say that the Ministry who had caused the Governor to make the mistake should have defended him, and would have defended him if they had been men of spirit, even if it cost them their seats, because he was not in a position to defend himself. The leader of the Opposition accused the present Premier of cowardice in attacking a gentleman who had not the opportunity to defend himself in this House. Whose duty was it to defend that gentleman if those who were responsible for his action would not do it? They had not the courage to do it; they are to blame, and if there is anything to be done in the way of censure they should get it, whatever may be said about His Excellency. I do not want to dwell longer on this question. I will only say that whether a vote is to be taken upon it or not, it is impossible to get up in the House and speak on it without feeling very warm on the subject—very warm indeed, but not angrily so. There is a difference between being warm and earnest when you see that a great and serious blunder has been made and getting angry with the petty squabbings of little men with little minds who try to obscure the great question by dragging in personalities. Who is to blame is the great question that has to be decided. Before sitting down, I may say I was very pleased indeed to see that, according to the programme of the Government, they intend to reintroduce the Old Age Pensions Bill. This really is a matter that is very desirable. And I do not think we should keep the old people waiting until that Bill is passed. When the Bill was brought forward six months ago the old people were anticipating the possibility of getting their income raised from 5s. to 10s. per week. £60,000 was set aside for that purpose. Six months have gone and the Bill is not ready yet. I contend that it is the duty of the Government—because they have it in their power, without any resolution of the House—to immediately raise the allowance to 10s. per week. We can afterwards deal with the Bill on its merits; and, in case the Bill should be rejected, I think the indigent allowance should stand in that way. We should not wait till next month. Let the increase commence from the 1st March.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: Do you expect the Government to follow the policy of the Opposition?

Mr. MITCHELL: I do not expect the Government to follow any policy that emanates from the Opposition side of the House, but if they adopted my suggestion they would be doing something that would be acceptable to the democratic portion of the electorates.

Mr. BOWMAN: They have stolen some of our planks.

Mr. MITCHELL: They have stolen a lot of our planks, and would steal them again tomorrow if they had an opportunity of doing so. The hon. member for Bulimba claims that it is their policy, and he only adopts the

[3 p.m.] old method of "dishing the Whigs"

by saying that they would begin in January to increase the old age pension to 10s. Did they begin in January as they promised the people? No. It was like many of their

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promises—it went to the winds, and it was never referred to again. I am very anxious in this matter, and I think that the Government, having had that £60,000 on the Estimates, should begin immediately to use it, and let the Bill take its chance when it comes along. Another reason I have for adopting this attitude is that there is a proposition that the Commonwealth should very shortly take up the question of old age pensions, and it is just possible that this State may find it advisable to hold over their old age pension scheme until they see what is going to be done by the Commonwealth. In the event of that taking place, the old people will still be hanging on and only getting 5s. a week.

Mr. LESINA: And dying before they get it.

Mr. MITCHELL: Yes. If the indigent allowance was raised from 5s. to 10s. a week, the Bill, instead of being hurried through, could be considered in a way that would make it not only acceptable to the House but acceptable to the country, so I hope the Government will seriously consider the advisableness of taking that step. I am also glad to see that they are going to bring up their railway policy so quickly, notwithstanding the fact that the hon. member for Moreton and other members intimated that there were no railways ready.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: Only one.

Mr. BOWMAN: There were five laid on the table to-day.

Mr. MITCHELL: If there was only one ready at that particular time, there must have been others just on the verge of readiness, because, if they had not been in an advanced stage of preparation, there would have been no possibility of their being laid on the table to-day, so that I think there must have been some misunderstanding on the part of the late Minister for Railways.

Mr. BOWMAN: Misrepresentation.

Mr. MITCHELL: You might call it misrepresentation.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: It has not been denied by your side.

Mr. MITCHELL: Oh yes; I read where the Premier denied it, and told the people to whom he was speaking that there would have been twelve railways that would have been ready.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: It was a question of faith.

Mr. MITCHELL: It was not a question of faith, but it was knowledge. They had knowledge of what had been done in the department, and they were prepared and ready to place those railways before this Assembly when they had an opportunity of doing so, so if there is any one to blame to-day for the unemployed not having those railways to go on with it is the Minister who advised Lord Chelmsford to dissolve Parliament. There is not the slightest doubt that it was not the interest of the country that tempted them to do that; it was not their patriotism, nor their love for right and duty, but it was their desire to get the salaries and hold the positions of Ministers of the State.

Mr. LESINA: You were after the boodle, brother.

Mr. BOWMAN: Place and power.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: It is satisfactory to know that there are one or two patriots in this House, including yourself.

Mr. MITCHELL: I do not think that I have ever claimed to be a patriot, but I am quite sure that anyone who knows the hon. member for Bulimba will never make the mistake of calling him one. There is one thing I would like to speak about. I have mentioned it every time I

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have spoken on the Address in Reply, and about two years ago I thought I was near getting something done in the matter, and it is this: Nearly all the members on this side of the House have got up and fought for the poor unfortunate farmer who is being starved to death. They are talking about immigration, and the great advantage it would be to have more people settled on the land; but there is one thing we neglect—that is, our secondary industries, and until we devise some method whereby we can assist and increase our secondary industries we will never get the class of immigrants that we want.

Mr. LESINA: Start State workshops.

Mr. MITCHELL: We have men coming here as tailors, machinists, and under various guises, pretending to take up land, but they know nothing about land, and when they come out they trek from Queensland into the other States, where they have an opportunity of getting employment in the industries in which they have been trained. The result is that Queensland has to pay the immigration fees for these people. When they arrive they say, "What is the use of coming here? I am a mechanic; there is no work for me, and it is necessary for me to go to New South Wales." I do not wish to cease offering the money gift they receive—that can be kept going; but there is surely a way of devising some method of manufacturing our own agricultural implements and many other things required here, and by that means to encourage mechanics from other countries to come here. Just let me give an evidence of that. When those engines were about to be constructed for the railways, I know that both Evans, Anderson, and Co. and Walkers Limited had to send out of the country in order to get mechanics to come here to do the work required to be done.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: You said they would not stay here.

Mr. MITCHELL: I say if we were to devise some means by which we could increase our industrial works we would get a class of mechanics to come and stay here. There were a number who came here expecting to get work, but they could not go on the land, and they went out of the country to seek for work.

Mr. LESINA: Why should they stay here when they could go to New South Wales and get an old age pension?

Mr. MITCHELL: I hope that the Government will show sympathy with the old people, and also show sympathy with the mechanic—that they will not only put it in words but put it into action, so that this House will be able to commend it, and the country will be able to approve of their action.

Mr. COYNE (*Warrego*), who was received with Government and Labour cheers, said: I desire to make a few remarks on the Address in Reply before the debate closes. I do not intend to speak at great length, as I understand that it is the intention of the Premier, if he possibly can, to close this debate to-night, in order that we may get on with the work of the country. Like the senior member for Maryborough, who has just resumed his seat, I am very pleased indeed with the number of humane measures that are foreshadowed in the Governor's Speech, and in the main principles of them. I will give the very best support which I can to them. When these measures come before the House I will probably find some reason to disagree with the matters of detail contained in them. However, in the main I will give them my support. The first one that has taken my eye in connection with this matter is the Elections Act

Amendment Bill. (Hear, hear!) If that Bill does nothing else than remove that postal vote horror it will do very good work.

LABOUR AND GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COYNE: Besides that, I understand that there is a provision in it for the grouping of the ballot-boxes of the small polling-booths. I hope that will be carried out. I hope, also, that the law will be made in such a way that it cannot be violated without the official responsible for its violation being severely punished, because in the greater number of instances where the Elections Act has been violated the officials have been to blame. In none of the Elections Acts which have been passed up to the present time have there been any penalties provided for breaches of or violations of the law by the officials administering that law. There should be some provision made for penalties for such corruption as has taken place in the past; and we should, therefore, apply penalties to the officials who are responsible for the wrong administration of that law. I also hail with delight an Old Age Pensions Bill. (Hear, hear!) I trust that the measure will not be surrounded by the humiliating, irritating, unnecessary, and demeaning provisions which were contained in the Bill introduced last year.

Mr. LESINA: That was a scandalous measure.

Mr. KEOGH: Who introduced it?

Mr. COYNE: It does not matter to me who introduced that measure, but if the Bill which is to be introduced this session has those provisions in it then I can assure this House that those humiliating provisions will be met with the greatest possible opposition that I can give to them. (Labour hear, hear!) This indigent allowance, which we have had for a number of years, has been found to be a failure. There is one case in my district which I will relate. An old gentleman who was in receipt of the indigent allowance of 5s. a week tried to keep his aged wife as well as himself on this 5s. a week. She made application for a similar amount for herself. The department said, "We will give you an indigence allowance all right," and they did so. But in what manner did they do it? By taking half-a-crown away from the old chap and giving it to the old woman, making it 2s. 6d. a week for each. I say that is disgraceful. And yet we boast about an advanced, civilised country! I think that to take 2s. 6d. away from a man's 5s. a week, in order to give it to his aged wife as an indigent allowance, was an insult to those people. It is not only an insult to them, but it is an insult to the intelligence of the electors of this State who allow such a thing to obtain in it. I see that there is a Land Act Amendment Bill foreshadowed in the Governor's Speech. I am not too much wrapped up in these Land Act Amendment Bills myself, because I look upon them simply as a matter of patchwork. I think if the Minister for Lands was well advised he would consolidate our land laws. Now, I am not going to lecture the Minister for Lands. I think that I have a right to give expression to my opinion in this House—(hear, hear!)—and I hope that while I am doing so it will be understood that I am not lecturing the Minister for Lands. (Hear, hear!) But I think that the Government would be well advised—and the Minister in charge of the Lands Department would be well advised, too—if he introduced a consolidating Act which would simplify the land laws of this State. I venture to say that among all the lawyers in that very eminent profession there are very few who thoroughly understand our land laws at the present time. Therefore, I say that our land laws should be

consolidated and simplified more than they are at the present time. In connection with our lands administration, I regard as a most important factor in the close settlement of our lands—more especially in the back blocks that are not fit for agriculture—the sinking of artesian bores to provide water in the great immense dry tracts of country that we have out there away from the agricultural districts, and out of the rainfall area.

Mr. LESINA: They should be put on the stock routes, too.

Mr. COYNE: Yes; on the stock routes, too. That interjection of the hon. member for Clermont reminds me, in connection with the stock routes, that in my electorate—in Augathella, which is a main stock route from the Centre and North of Queensland to the South, there is scarcely any water—not sufficient, at any rate, to water stock for the greater portion of the average year which they get in that portion of the country. When the senior member for Fortitude Valley was the member for that district—the Warrego—he endeavoured to get a certain sum placed on the Estimates for half the cost of sinking an artesian bore at Augathella, where the water could be got at a reasonable depth, and the Government promised to lend the other half to the local authority there on the usual terms. Although that has been promised for a number of years it has not been done yet.

Mr. LESINA: Demand it.

Mr. COYNE: Yes; from my place here in the House I demand it. That bore is required not only for the residents of Augathella but for the people of Queensland who send their stock from the Northern Territory and from Central and Northern Queensland to the Southern part of the State, and they all pass through there, as it is one of the main routes.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is one of the most important stock routes in Queensland.

Mr. COYNE: Yes, it is one of the most important stock routes in Queensland. In connection with land settlement and close settlement of land, I take it that the Government intend to facilitate the settling on the land, as much as possible, of landless people. Well, if that is so, I would point out that those landless people, as a rule, have a very limited supply of capital. They might have sufficient to pull through for the first few years—say five years—which are the most trying years of a settler's life even in ordinarily good seasons. Of course, I am in favour of lessees. I am not in favour of any other tenure but leasehold.

LABOUR MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. COYNE: I am in favour of the leasing system, and I think if the Government provided that the lessee should pay no rent for the first five years, provided he effected permanent improvements equal in value to the amount of rent remitted, I think that would be doing something towards bringing about settlement on the land. I was very pleased indeed to hear from the hon. member for Albert, when he made that splendid speech of his yesterday evening, that the farmers were paying a very good wage to their employees. Now, a Wages Board's Bill, I understand, is for the purpose of bringing all the industries that are provided to be brought under it into line in the matter of paying good wages. And it is only those who are paying bad wages, or what is ordinarily called "sweating wages," who have to fear a Wages Board's Bill. I might say, before I proceed further with that subject, that I am not too much wrapped up in a Wages Board's Bill. I would prefer very much to see a Compulsory

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Arbitration Act in place of a Wages Boards Bill. I say that because I do not think there are the same facilities provided in a Wages Boards Bill as there are in a Compulsory Arbitration Act. This opinion I have formed after a study of the operation of wages boards in other States of the Commonwealth.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: What about compulsory arbitration in some of the other States?

Mr. COYNE: I was just going to refer to that. I presume the hon. member is alluding to the Arbitration Act in New South Wales, which everybody admits has signally failed in its object. The reason the Arbitration Act of New South Wales has failed in its object—and I may say that it was doomed from the very time it was passed—was because of the bias of those who administered the Act.

Mr. LESINA: There were lawyers administering it.

Mr. COYNE: Yes. There were men administering that Act who had no sympathy at all with its object. The only man in the Ministry of New South Wales who had any sympathy with the Act was Mr. B. R. Wise, who is now in England. He introduced and forced the Act through Parliament. I do not think that any member of the Ministry who were in office when it was introduced, or any member of any Ministry who have since been in office, had the slightest sympathy with the measure. They did not believe in forcing men to pay a decent wage to their employees. But, if we cannot get a Conciliation and Arbitration Act, we shall have to accept what we can get; and, although a Wages Boards Bill will not go nearly as far as I should like to see a measure of that description go, still it is worth while giving it a trial. It will certainly improve the conditions under which a number of employees live. I might here refer for a moment to the Federal Conciliation and Arbitration Act, which has given complete satisfaction to everyone concerned in the decisions which it has given up to the present time. The people connected with every industry which has sought protection under that Act view it with the greatest satisfaction. The hon. member for Bulimba, the hon. member for Albert, and the hon. member for Lockyer, referred to the Wages Boards Bill as applied to farmers.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: I did not refer to that at all.

Mr. COYNE: The hon. member for Warwick made an *ad misericordiam* appeal to members that they would not for goodness' sake make it apply to farmers. We have been told that farmers pay the highest wages paid in any industry, primary or secondary.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: So they do.

Mr. COYNE: If they do, why do they dread the Wages Boards Bill?

Mr. MACKINTOSH: The farmers do not want it.

Mr. COYNE: We know that the farmers do not want it, but the farmers' employees do want it, and this House is as much called upon to protect the employees as to protect the farmers.

Mr. MACKINTOSH: I mean that the farmers' employees do not want it.

Mr. COYNE: The members who sit behind the Kidston Government will, I take it, vote in favour of the Wages Boards Bill, which the Premier indicated at Allora would apply to every industry as far as he was concerned. The hon. member for Albert and the hon. member for Warwick said they did not mind applying the Wages Boards Bill to the secondary industries.

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I think that is a case of applying it to the other fellow. If it is poison, try it on the dog—try it on the other fellow.

Mr. GRAYSON: The conditions are different.

Mr. COYNE: I do not see that the conditions are different. I take it that an employee in that industry has as much right to be looked after in legislation as the man who employs him. For that reason I firmly believe that that measure, or any similar measure that may be introduced, will get the united support of the party with whom I sit. There is one Bill forecasted in the Governor's Speech that I am going to oppose with all the strength I possess—that is the Bill for a referendum on the question of Bible reading in State schools. I will offer that measure my strenuous opposition. I do not believe it is the function of this House to interfere with people's consciences. I do not think there is any urgent demand for such a measure from the people of this State. It would be a very handy thing at a general election to divert the minds of the people from the real questions which they should be concerned about; but, while I hold that it is the duty of every honest-minded man in this Assembly, or outside it, to support anything that we can justly deal with, I do not think this is a question which comes within the province of the Legislature. In dealing with secular subjects we are on common ground, but when it comes to a question of religion we should halt, and I feel certain that the party with which I sit will vote solidly against that measure. At any rate, whether they do or not, I know what I am going to do. I have dealt with this matter before my constituents, and have told them that I intend to oppose the measure.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: And yet you advocate a general referendum.

Mr. COYNE: Yes, I advocate a general referendum, and if a Bill providing for such a referendum were introduced to-morrow it would have my support; but this is one of the most contentious matters that could be brought before the House or the people, and I do not think a referendum should be taken on the subject of religion. I notice that there is a proposal to amend the Workers' Compensation Act. If that amendment is in the direction, as I believe it is, of allowing compensation from the moment an injury is received by a workman, it will have my heartiest support. I also note that mention is made of a Rabbit Boards Act Amendment Bill. This rabbit board business is something that I have given considerable attention to.

Mr. KEOGH: That is a national question.

Mr. COYNE: Yes. I do not mind the hon. member for Rosewood being a socialist, and shall be glad to receive him with open arms when he becomes sufficiently converted. While I admit that the rabbit boards have done very good work in the past, and are likely under proper management to do fairly good work in the future, still, looking at the experience of other States, I can see that in connection with the rabbits we have a great industry lying hidden because of want of encouragement to export rabbits from Queensland. If encouragement were given to export rabbits, that would go a long way towards exterminating the rabbit, and such a trade could be worked in conjunction with the laws which are in force at the present time. If the Minister intends to do something towards opening up an export trade in rabbits, so that it may assume the dimensions of the rabbit trade in New South Wales, Victoria, and New Zealand, he will have my strongest support. There are a few matters which are not mentioned in the Speech that I should like to draw

the attention of the House to for a moment. I should like to draw the attention of the Secretary for Railways to the fact that the accommodation on our railways at the present time is simply disgraceful. (Hear, hear!) More especially does this apply to the accommodation [8.30 p.m.] tion provided for second-class passengers. The Western mail to Charleville and Cunnamulla is simply a disgrace. Women, children, and men are all huddled together in what can be called by no better term than dog boxes, where the atmosphere is poisonous to little children who may be on their way down here to obtain medical treatment, or are returning after it. They have to live in that stifling atmosphere during the hours of the night and day. There is not one day in the year when that state of things cannot be found on the Western mail, and it is the duty of the Government to make better provision for the travelling public. While I agree with railway extension, I also believe we should make the best possible provision for travellers before we go in for spending too much money in extending our railways.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: Get your leader to make a demand, and it will be carried out at once.

Mr. COYNE: I do not believe that. That is only the hon. member's jocular way of putting things.

The PREMIER: It would be better to do both.

Mr. COYNE: Yes. In the other States the accommodation is palatial compared with the accommodation provided in Queensland. It is not so bad, of course, with regard to first-class passengers. I have seen the Western mail running with five or six empty first-class compartments, while people are huddled together in the second-class carriages like a lot of sheep. Another thing to which I would like to draw the attention of the Secretary for Railways is that it is absolutely cruel to ask people—and more especially women and children—to travel long distances without proper lavatory accommodation. (Hear, hear!)

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Then there are no water bags.

Mr. COYNE: I hope that before the session closes there will be an amendment of the Shearers and Sugar Workers' Accommodation Act, making provision for the better accommodation of station employees. (Hear, hear!) There is a great deal of dissatisfaction among the station employees at the present time at the Act being so one-sided. When shearers and rouseabouts come to a shed, they get very good accommodation. When the station employees are working about the shearing shed they get the accommodation provided under the Act, but when they go to the station they have to live in dog kennels. I am also reminded by the hon. member for Flinders that it would not be a bad idea for the Secretary for Railways to take into consideration the rotten accommodation provided for permanent lengthsmen on our railways. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. W. H. BARNES: And for some of our stationmasters, too.

Mr. COYNE: There is another public department to which I hope some attention will be given by the Government during this year. There is a growing feeling of dissatisfaction in the Police Force at the very bad treatment they are getting from this and past Governments. At the present time the men have to buy their own uniforms. They must also be in a position to go about in plain clothes. They must always be well dressed and look respectable, and the outcome is that some of the very best men that we require for the Police Force are looking for

something else—anything rather than remain in the Police Force. It is also true that men are going to the other States of the Commonwealth to take up positions in the Police Forces there rather than remain in Queensland, where they are being treated so tyrannically. The leader of the Opposition, the hon. member for Bulimba, and the hon. member for Oxley referred to the fact that the late Government were in a quandary as to what they should do in the matter of paying the public servants.

Mr. KEOGH: Well, they paid them.

Mr. COYNE: Exactly so, and so might the hon. member, if he got into a bank, pay the employees in the bank, although he would not have any authority to do so.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: He would have to get authority to get in, though.

Mr. COYNE: Yes; a key would do that.

Mr. LENNON: A skeleton key?

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. COYNE: The leader of the Opposition said that he was compelled to pay the public servants—that there was no alternative for him. He was the principal adviser of His Excellency. I think there was an honourable alternative open to the hon. gentleman, and that was to resign his position and allow someone who had the confidence of this House and of the people to pay them legally. The hon. gentleman who now leads the Government had the confidence of this House.

Mr. KEOGH: I deny that.

Mr. COYNE: The memorial sent to the Governor at the last moment proved that incontestably.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: He had resigned.

Mr. COYNE: I am not forgetting for a moment that the hon. gentleman resigned. He may have done wrong, and I am not here as an apologist for him; and probably before this session closes, or before this Parliament comes to an end, if the hon. gentleman introduces something on which I cannot see eye to eye with him, hon. members will find that I am just as strongly in opposition to him as the members sitting on the direct Opposition benches.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: You will vote for the Government all the time.

Mr. COYNE: I do not see any logic in that position. I am just stating what I came here to do. I am not here to champion the head of the Government, because he can do it better for himself than I can do it for him. But I say that the only honourable course open to the late Premier was to have resigned his position, and hand it over to someone who had the confidence of this House and of the country. (Hear, hear!) I notice the cheerful way in which some of the members sitting in direct Opposition refer to the fact that they came back representing an increased number of voters.

Mr. KEOGH: 83,000.

Mr. COYNE: Another hon. member—and I believe one of the chiefs of the direct Opposition—said over 100,000. Well, I suppose a handful of thousands does not matter either here or there with those hon. members. However, I will take the word of the hon. member for Rosewood that it was 83,000. Now, if the senior member for Townsville went to the country with a lesser number of electors behind him than he has got now, what has happened since then? If he thinks he has the confidence of the people, by what method of logic does he come back to this House and sit in the cold shades of Opposition,

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instead of hanging on to his position by reason of the extra number of voters who are behind him and his party.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: It is the unfair electoral rolls. (Laughter.)

Mr. COYNE: Something always happens.

Mr. COWAP: They always have an excuse.

Mr. COYNE: The honourable course for the hon. gentleman to have followed was to have come back to this House as the leader of the Government—in the same position as he went to the country—drafted his Address from the Throne, as was done by this Government, drafted his Address in Reply, brought it before this House, and stood up and defended his action when he went to the country; and when he went to it in a manner which, I believe, if just that one question had been submitted to them, 90 per cent. of the electors would have declared to be illegal. If he was an honourable man, he would have come back and defended his position, and taken his gruel as a man in this House.

Mr. PAGET: Then he would have been charged with hanging on to office.

Mr. COYNE: They had good reason for hanging on to office. You have the very best reason in the world, and if it is not a good reason, then let us not hear any more about the extra number of voters who were behind the leader of the Opposition at the last election. If that were the only subject submitted to the electors, of course we would get a definite answer; but there is very little chance under our present party system of going to the electors with a clear-cut issue. Something always happens to cloud the issue, and I cannot at this stage help referring to something which has been referred to by some other hon. members, and that is the way in which the hon. member for Bulimba libelled the party with which I have the honour to be associated. The hon. member said, on the 6th January last, in his address in the School of Arts at Bulimba—

Looked at fairly and squarely the present contest was between socialism—the socialism which aimed at religion and the marriage tie; the socialism of Tom Mann and Keir Hardie—and anti-socialism.

The hon. member will not deny those words. They were printed by his chief Press supporter, and sent broadcast throughout Queensland. I am sure the hon. gentleman is heartily ashamed of having used those words, and heartily ashamed of the Press which printed them—a Press which printed lies about the party of the humanity to which I belong—printed lies about me personally, and based a leading article on its own mis-report.

Mr. LESINA: No wonder you were elected.

Mr. COYNE: Now, I firmly believe that the moral character of the hon. member for Bulimba is of the very best—(hear, hear!)—and I also say that the moral character of Mr. Keir Hardie, who is respected by millions of the inhabitants of Great Britain, is equal to, and will bear favourable comparison with, that of the hon. member for Bulimba.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: You successfully kept him from Queensland during the general election.

Mr. COYNE: The Labour party of Queensland would have welcomed him here if it had been possible to get him here. I will conclude by saying that there is one Bill foreshadowed in the Speech which shall have my hearty support. I refer to the Bill to amend the Audit Act. If that Bill only succeeds in preventing a repetition of the brigandage carried out by the hon. member who leads the Opposition and his followers

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when the dissolution was brought about, it will do excellent work, and I say we ought to be thankful to any Government who will bring in a measure of that description which will prevent a repetition of the disgraceful acts of the Opposition members. I trust, before the session closes, that all the Bills foreshadowed in the Speech will be passed, with the exception of the Bible in State Schools Referendum Bill, which will have my most hearty opposition. All other portions of the programme of the Government meet with my most hearty approval, and I will do my best to help them put that programme into active operation for the benefit of the people and the country.

* Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Charters Towers*): It is not my intention to occupy very much time, as I recognise quite fully that I have not been sent down here to try and see how many pages of *Hansard* I can fill, but in order to help in the passage of useful legislation. At the same time, I should be neglecting my duty if I failed to say a few words on this occasion in reference to the constitutional question. I do not propose to deal with it as it has been dealt with this afternoon, but I do want to say that it was one of the prominent questions in my constituency. We were told by the other candidates that there was no constitutional question, or that it had nothing whatever to do with the election. As far as they possibly could they tried to cloud the issue, and throw dust in the eyes of the electors. But the electors were not to be lightly turned aside. They recognised that there was a constitutional question; that their liberties had been infringed, and that their freedom was likely to be curtailed. For that reason the electors of Charters Towers saw fit to return me and my colleague, and a vote was recorded such as has never been recorded at any previous election in the history of the State. In spite of all that was said to the contrary, the people recognised that someone, whoever it might be, had blundered, and I am quite satisfied that they expect something to be said, and something to be done, which will make this kind of thing impossible in the future. Now, a great deal has been said about the regret expressed in the Address in Reply. I am confident that the electors of Charters Towers will be surprised at the moderateness and care with which this regret has been expressed. I am quite satisfied on that point, and I think, for the sake of future generations, it should be made quite clear that the things that have happened during the past few months shall not again happen in this State of Queensland. We have heard it said again and again that the Governor did a perfectly legitimate thing in referring the matter to the people, and if the Parliament had run its course the probabilities are that he would have done a legitimate thing, but the question arises whether it is necessary to go to the people every five or six months for a mandate, or whether the elected representatives cannot be trusted to go on as long as they possibly can, and until all the resources of the House have been exhausted. I think the electors gave their answer clearly and emphatically at the election before last, and they have given it much more emphatically on this occasion. There can be no mistaking the opinion of the electors in most of the electorates. I am confident that the constitutional question was one of the prominent questions on which the electors decided, and the people are expecting that something will be done permanently to prevent the kind of thing that has happened—of advantage being taken to try and score at the expense of the country and with very much inconvenience to all concerned. Now, something has been said about justices of the peace being appointed before the elections, and

it has been pointed out that a very serious wrong was done in striking those men off the Commission of the Peace. I do not think a wrong was done, unless it was when they were put on. I am talking about one I know of. At Charters Towers seventeen additional justices were appointed just previous to the election, although there were quite enough of them before to do all the work that is necessary to be done. Out of those seventeen that were appointed, I am safe in saying that at least ten, if not twelve, were appointed because they were friends of the Ministerial candidates, and for the express purpose of taking part in the election. If there is any doubt about that point it can be cleared away by turning up the applications for postal votes, and finding out who witnessed those applications, and who witnessed the ballot-papers. I am told that the names of those men were not sent in the usual course to the police inspectors—perhaps for good reasons. They were sent to the electoral association, while they took off some of whom they were doubtful. At any rate, these men were appointed for an express purpose, and they did the work they were expected to do as far as was in their power.

Mr. JENKINSON: A certain percentage of them were recommended by the present Premier.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: I know nothing about that, but I am certain he has done the right thing to strike them off the roll. A good deal has been said about the postal vote, and how its abolition is going to deprive women of their right to exercise the franchise. A great interest has been displayed on this side in the women, and yet when they had the opportunity to give them the vote they refused to do so, and deprived them of the right to vote as long as they possibly could. We all know that the right of women to vote was given, not by this side, but by the other. A good deal has been said about people being a long way from the polling-booths, and about women being unwilling or unable to leave their homes to record their votes. I am confident that when that return is placed on the table which was moved for to-day it will be found that where the people live furthest away from the polling-booths most women went to the poll, and where the electorates were most compact the postal vote was most used. (Hear, hear!) Charters Towers is one of the most compact electorates in the State, and there was a larger postal vote recorded there than in any other electorate in the State. There were 2,775 applications made, and over 2,500 postal votes recorded.

Mr. KENNA: What became of the balance?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: I could tell you, but I will not. As to the abolition of the postal vote depriving women of their vote, I make bold to say that more women are deprived of the free exercise of their vote by the postal vote than will lose their vote in the other direction. (Hear, hear!) There is no doubt in my own mind that a very large number of women, at Charters Towers at all events, who exercised the postal vote did so under pressure—under influence that had no right to be brought to bear upon them. It is a well-known fact that enemies of mine went round when the women were by themselves—when their husbands were at work—and told them that if the socialists were returned their husbands would lose their billets, and they would lose their property and everything they possessed—that it was going to be divided up. Last time this was successful, and the men who were returned to this Chamber made it a boast that it was through the postal vote. However, it will be a good thing when not only the postal vote is abolished, but when even canvassing is abolished, and when people are allowed to exercise their

own free will and free choice as to who they will vote for. (Hear, hear!) For those reasons I am pleased to find from the programme of the Government that there is to be an amendment of the Electoral Act. One of the best things that can be done with the postal vote is to abolish it altogether. It is said that the system can be amended, and that this and that can be done. I hope nothing of the kind will be attempted. The postal vote favours the men with money, and I am satisfied that, if it is allowed to continue, moneyed men could win nearly every election in the State. And money is found to a large extent on the one side. I do not think that even the hon. member for Bulimba would recommend a system which places the poor man at such a serious disadvantage as compared with the rich man. Let me say that the question of the Legislative Council occupied a good deal of attention at the Charters Towers election. I am one of those who are in favour of entirely abolishing it. I believe that not only in Queensland, but throughout the Australian Commonwealth and in the old country, those institutions have outlived their usefulness, and are a clog to democratic legislation. Though the other place may not throw out Bills, it may reduce them to an absurdity by its amendments. But if it is not possible to abolish the Upper House, we will do the next best thing; we will bring it into line with the House which represents the people of the country. I am in favour of old age pensions. I believe there are people too independent to ask for the indigent allowance under present conditions—men who have spent their lives in developing the country, and who have given it of their best. Like others who have spoken, I think the present allowance should be doubled even before the Bill is passed. People talk about what the poor deserve and what they do not deserve. If everybody was dealt with according to their deserts things would be very different from what they are at the present time. Some of them may be to blame for their present position, but we ought not to be too severe on them now that they are in the "sere and yellow leaf," and are, some of them, practically starving to death. Mention is also made of a Land Act Amendment Bill. I do not know what is involved in that Bill, but my own personal conviction is that the land question is the root question of every other question, and things will never be what they ought to be until the land question is dealt with in a much more radical manner than has ever been the case up to the present time. Plans and specifications of railways have been laid on the table this afternoon, and we are expecting to see land opened up. A good deal has been said about men being brought from other countries to occupy our land, and yet we find people who are here, and anxious to get on the land, cannot get on unless they are prepared to go 20 or 30 miles from a railway. Then the question arises whether the land

[9 p.m.] along the railways already made is being put to the best use it can be.

I say it is not. One need not go 20 or 30 miles from this great city before you can find land unoccupied and not put to the best use it could be. What is really needed is that the owners, whether large or small men, who are playing a "dog-in-the-manger" policy, should be made to put it into use. They should be compelled to do it, and I am confident there would not be such an outcry for land as there is at the present time, if it was not profitable to keep it out of use and wait for increased value and unearned increment. I know I shall be accused of being hard on the poor farmer, but I have just as much sympathy for the farmer as anyone else. I am satisfied that the farmer who

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is a user of the land would find it to his advantage, but the man who wants to get a rent from someone else, and keep it out of use for future value would, if we had taxation of land values, find it was unprofitable to keep it. I am satisfied that this is one of the lines on which a change will have to take place in the future.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: There is plenty of land in Brisbans which is not worth as much to the owners as it was thirty years ago.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: So much the worse for those who bought it; they thought it was going to increase in value. But take land in Brisbane bought twenty years back, and there is no question whether it has increased in value. People who went and bought land like Mr. Barnes speaks about, and did not view it, and it is in a swamp, find, of course, it is not worth so much, but the land in Brisbane and other growing centres increases in value. I say this belongs not to the individual but to the community, and what belongs to the community should be taken for the community, and used for social purposes.

Mr. KEOGH: That is socialism.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: That is socialism, and it is a very good thing. I do not want to take up much more time, but the thought struck me which the hon. member for Warrego expressed in his speech. We are told that the farmers are the best paid, the best housed, and the best fed of any in the State, and yet they regard with horror the idea of three men from one side and three men from the other being appointed, with a chairman, and discussing from their own point of view whether they are given a fair deal or not. We have heard these employers, and I think it would be interesting to hear some of the employees, and I am confident if we could hear them we should hear a different story from what we have heard already. But from what I have heard of the wages boards, I do not think it is intended that they should impose burdens or anything of an arbitrary nature, but it proposes, and I think rightly, to give these men an equitable deal; and I say that any man who works for wages, if he is not in a position to protect himself, as is often the case, is afraid of expressing his opinions for fear of losing his job. It is the duty of the House to do something to protect him in that direction, and see that he gets a fair and equitable share of what he produces. (Hear, hear!) Then, in connection with the Workers' Compensation Bill, we are told that there is to be an amendment, not only in the direction of compensation commencing immediately a man is disabled, but many other irritating and irksome restrictions are to be removed, and I believe that after the experience the Government have gained the Act will be made more workable—made to apply more smoothly and more effectively to those who are unfortunate enough to be disabled; or, in the event of losing their lives, those they may leave behind them shall have a fair and equitable compensation for the loss they have sustained. Then, too, I think that the Government show that they have some regard for the Northern portion of the State, by stating that they have called tenders for the Torres Strait mail service. I am glad the North is going to receive some consideration in this direction, and I am satisfied that it will be a direct benefit to Northern merchants and importers, and also exporters of minerals and other products, when they send them direct to the European market, instead of by way of the Southern parts of the State. Then there is another question, which is not mentioned in the Government's programme, that concerns us more than anything else which is mentioned

in it; but I do not think that that means that the Government are going to neglect it on that account—and that is the mining industry. Probably something could have been mentioned in that direction. I do think that the mining industry, not only of Charters Towers, but throughout the State, is entitled at the present time to the earnest and serious consideration of the Government. There can be no question that in the times gone by, particularly in the years of famine and drought, when the farming, pastoral, and agricultural industries were suffering, the mining industry of the State was the stand-by, and helped to pull the State through and keep it from a state of insolvency. Now the wheel of fortune has turned, and it is admitted that the farmers and pastoralists are enjoying prosperous times; but the mining industry has evidently fallen on evil times for some reason or other. Many causes contribute to the present depression, but it is there and has to be dealt with; and I think that the Government ought to seriously consider the present position of the industry, and do something really substantial and creditable to encourage it, like the Government has done for other industries in the past. The dairying and pastoral industries have been helped and developed by subsidies as well as by grants, which have placed them in a good position and enabled those engaged in them to earn a fair remuneration; and I claim—not as a privilege, not merely as a pauper's dole, but as a right—that the Government should at the present time consider the number of unemployed there is on most of our mining fields, and not only push on these railways to agricultural districts and mining fields as well, but do something to help the mining industry through the present depressed conditions, and place it on a better footing. I hope during the present session to have an opportunity of helping through some of this useful and much needed legislation, which will help to make the lives of the men and women in Queensland better, help them to earn an honest living, to live in comfort, and to bring up their children so that they shall be a credit to the State, and that the men and women of Queensland in the future will fare better than they have done in the past.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. JACKSON (*Kennedy*): The charge is sometimes made that hon. members in this House often speak to the gallery. I do not think that a charge of that sort can be made to-night, when we look up and see the empty benches in the gallery. I believe, however, that the absence of ladies and others on this occasion is due not to the unimportance of the debate, but to the inclemency of the weather. I would like first of all to congratulate the new members of this House on the excellent speeches which they have delivered. (Hear, hear!) From the clearness with which they have expressed themselves I think they will become creditable members of this House. I am the first member who has risen from this side to speak to-day. It sometimes happens that the Opposition charge us with being muzzled. I have been listening to the observations made by the various speakers on the Address in Reply, and I have noticed that the older members of the House have pretty well confined their remarks to the constitutional question; while the new members, and very naturally too, covered a wider ground, and dealt very largely with the Governor's Speech. As the Governor's Speech is very much a repetition of the Speech which was delivered last year, and gives a précis of the various Bills that were forecast last year, there is no occasion for the older members to deal with

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these measures, because we had that opportunity last session. And although it is a convenient opportunity, when an Address in Reply is moved, for members to deal with matters connected with their electorates, I do not think it would be fair on this occasion for myself to cover any wider ground than the great constitutional question that has been so much discussed during the present week. There are, as I have said, very many questions that a member would like to discuss, but opportunities will be given as the session proceeds to deal with questions affecting one's electorate and with the legislation indicated. There are two reasons why I think we should not indulge in any particular discursiveness during this debate. We should remember that, as I have said, the constitutional question is the big question before the House, and we should also remember that we are in the ninth month of the financial year, and there is a great deal of work to be done, for the Estimates have to be passed again, and we have a very large bill of fare indicated in the Governor's Speech. Now, I have risen not so much for the purpose of making original observations on the constitutional question, but for the purpose of giving a few quotations and precedents. I may say now that I have no special veneration for precedents, laws, customs, or opinions unless those precedents, laws, customs, and opinions appeal to my reason. A man's reason should really be his final court of appeal. My view of the question is, firstly, that no Ministers should be in office after Supply has been refused. Secondly, there should be no dissolution after Supply has been refused. Thirdly, there should be no State money expended by the Government after Supply has been refused. Now, with regard to the first assertion that I made, that no Minister should be in office after Supply has been refused, I would like to point out that the power of the purse, or the right of granting Supply, has been the weapon used for hundreds of years past by the House of Commons to get rid of Ministers of the Crown who were objectionable to the House. In the fourteenth century the House of Commons told one King to remove an obnoxious Minister—Suffolk, the Chancellor—but he at first refused.

Mr. KEOGH: That was a long time ago.

Mr. JACKSON: Yes, but there were brave men in the House of Commons in those days. The King said that at their behest he would not remove the meanest scullion from his kitchen. But Suffolk was first dismissed, and then impeached. The historian, commenting on the incident, remarked that for many years afterwards Parliaments were weak, and Kings and their Ministers unscrupulous. In Elizabeth's reign, members of the House grew bolder, but Wentworth was imprisoned, and members were frequently imprisoned for criticising the Crown. Whipping, the pillory, slitting the nose, and ear-cropping were frequently resorted to, and fines of £12,000 were inflicted.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: I am afraid that nothing like that would happen nowadays.

Mr. JACKSON: I do not think there is any chance of anything like that happening nowadays. Charles I. once dissolved Parliament, which only sat for three weeks. Now, I think it is fortunate for us that we are living in more democratic days, and the members of the House of Commons or the Legislative Assembly can now discuss the Sovereign's action without running the risk of being subject to fines or imprisonment, or any other of the methods of punishment to which I have referred. I think we are in a much more democratic century than the men whom I have been referring to. I was

going to point out that in these days we have liberty of free speech. We have the right to discuss the King or Governor, if we take the proper means of doing so.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: And yet your leader referred to his actions as similar to things existing in Russia.

Mr. JACKSON: It might have been fairly true in connection with the point he was making. But I am pointing out that we have the right, if we desire to do so, to discuss the action of the Crown. There may be a feeling amongst hon. members that the King or Governor is not open for discussion. The common idea is, of course, that we should criticise the Ministers who gave the King the bad advice as we might think, but, as you are well aware, under a substantive motion the action of the Governor is open for criticism, and we have the right to criticise so long as the motion is drawn in proper terms, and proper language used in the debate. It is then perfectly in order and perfectly parliamentary to criticise the Governor, and to reflect on his actions if we think fit to do so. I have no wish during my remarks to say anything offensive of His Excellency. I was very glad to hear the Minister for Lands, in his speech last night, speak in such nice terms of Lord Chelmsford, and those of us in this House who have come into personal contact with His Excellency will re-echo the words of that hon. gentleman. Although I think the Governor made a mistake in connection with this business, yet I have the highest opinion, not only of himself as a kind and hospitable gentleman, but of his ability. All the same, we venture to think that he made a mistake in accepting the advice which was tendered to him by the late Premier, Mr. Philp. This debate will be historic to some extent, or if the debate is not historic, there is no doubt that the circumstances which led up to it will be historic in the future. I want to point out to hon. members that this Address in Reply is not only a vote of censure on the preceding Government, but it is also a vote of censure on the Governor of Queensland. That is the only conclusion one can come to after reading the Address in Reply, and it was expected, I believe, by the people of Queensland that we should not remain content with censuring the preceding Government, but that some action should be taken by the representatives of the people in connection with the Governor who granted a dissolution of Parliament under the circumstances which existed last year. In order to show hon. members, in a few words, that what I have stated is correct—that is, that the Address in Reply is really a censure on His Excellency—I would ask them to consider what the Address affirms. First, it affirms that the last Parliament was justified in refusing Supply; secondly, it affirms that the Governor should not have dissolved a newly-elected Parliament able to carry on business; thirdly, it affirms that the Governor's action in dissolving Parliament was injurious to the best interests of the State. That is a very strong indictment, but I suppose every one of those assertions can be proved. Fourthly, the Address affirms that the House disapproves of the late Government's methods of obtaining control of £687,000 of public money; fifthly, it affirms that the Governor should only exercise his prerogative in accordance with the will of a majority of this House. Those are briefly the assertions contained in the Address in Reply. I want to go through those various assertions, and justify them as briefly as I can. In order to justify the first assertion—that the last Parliament was justified in refusing Supply—it is necessary to explain briefly why the present Government resigned. We all know, of course, what led up to

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the resignation of the present Premier; but it is necessary to place the reason on record in order to make my argument continuous. We know that the Premier went to the Governor and gave him certain advice—that is, he advised the Governor to grant him the power to remove obstruction in the Upper Chamber—and the Governor declining to take that advice, there was no alternative left but for the Hon. W. Kidston to tender his resignation. I know it has been said that he could have followed the example of Mr. Ballance, of New Zealand; but it is generally held by people with whom I have come in contact that the Premier took the most manly and honourable course in tendering his resignation to the Governor, instead of asking the Imperial Government to intervene. Personally, I think the Premier took the correct view of the matter. As regards the claim made by the Premier that the Governor should have given him the right to nominate members to the Upper House, I shall give one or two quotations in support of that contention. I have not risen for the purpose of making any original observations, but for the purpose of placing on record the opinions of constitutional authorities and eminent writers on the subject. If it can be shown that the Premier in the old country has the right to nominate men to the House of Peers, then I think it follows that the Prime Minister in this State has the same right as regards the Legislative Council. If that right exists in the old country, then the democrats of Queensland will claim that the same right exists here. My first quotation is from Walter Bagehot's "English Constitutions," where the writer says—

The ordinary and common use of the peer creating power is in the hands of the Premier.

My second selection is from the work of Sir Richard Anson, D.C.L., entitled "The Law and Custom of the Constitution." At page 179 Sir Richard says—

With regard to restrictions on the Crown's right to create peers, one may say that the right to confer the dignity of the peerage is as to the United Kingdom unlimited.

We know that under our Constitution there is no limit to the number of members of the Legislative Council.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: There has always been an understanding on that subject.

Mr. JACKSON: I do not know that there has been an understanding, and I do not think the hon. member can show that there has been any understanding on the question. Can the hon. member give me any authority for his statement?

Mr. W. H. BARNES: No; the very fact that it is an understanding shows that I cannot give you an authority for the statement.

Mr. JACKSON: Again, Sir Richard Anson, at page 298, says—

The Queen might, without exceeding her legal rights, double or treble the number of the House of Lords. This prerogative is one which we are in the habit of regarding as a more practical safeguard of the Constitution than the Royal veto on legislation, because from time to time the House of Lords delays measures which a considerable number desire to be passed, and the ultimate resort to a creation of peers is then regarded with satisfaction by those who favour the measure delayed.

Lord Brougham makes the following observations on the subject of the creation of peers:—

This prerogative has, upon several occasions, been exercised to influence the proceedings in Parliament. Lord Oxford carried a question of importance in the Lords by a sudden creation of twelve peers, in the reign of Queen Anne. Mr. Pitt greatly extended the influence of the Crown in the House of Commons, and diminished

the importance of that body, by transferring many of his adherents among the landed gentlemen to the Upper House. In recent times the Government, of which I formed a part, backed by a large majority of the Commons and of the people out of doors, carried the Reform Bill through the Lords by the power which His late Majesty had conferred upon us of an unlimited creation of peers at any stage of the measure.

The Premier's action in making the recommendation to the Governor which he did is supported by the authorities I have quoted; [9.30 p.m.] and, when we consider how the Philp Government were brought into power last year, seeing that they were in a minority in the House, the statement made in the Address, that the last Parliament was justified in refusing Supply, is amply borne out. The next statement in the Address is that the Governor should not have dissolved a newly-elected Parliament able to carry on business. Well, I think the arguments I have already brought forward bear out that contention. The next statement is—

That a course was adopted injurious to the best interests of the State.

The Premier, in the course of his speech, dealt with that matter very satisfactorily. But the best interests of the State were not only injured by the dissolution because railways were not put through the House, and because other things were not done, but what is of as much importance as the material interests that I have just referred to is the fact that the dissolution was an injury to the State from the constitutional point of view.

We desire to place on record our disapproval of the methods employed to obtain control of £687,000 of public moneys.

I would like to read one or two quotations on that point. But before I deal with that point there is another to which I wish to refer. The leader of the Opposition quoted some precedents from "Todd." His desire was to show that our Governor was justified in dissolving Parliament, although Supply was not granted. He quoted very extensively from "Todd," dealing with the well-known case in 1877 in New South Wales, when Sir Hercules Robinson refused to grant a dissolution unless Supply was granted. But the leader of the Opposition did not make out a good case in that quotation. It practically did not bear out his argument at all. The only exception that was taken to Sir Hercules Robinson's action by Sir Erskine May was to the form in which he dealt with the proposal that came from his Prime Minister in connection with the dissolution. In that year Sir Hercules Robinson refused on two occasions to grant a dissolution unless Supply was first granted; and the only censure—if it were a censure—which was passed upon him by the home authorities was that he should not have made the condition that Supply should first be granted. He should have said whether he would grant a dissolution or not without making that condition. There have not been many cases, as the leader of the Opposition tried to make out, where dissolutions have been granted when Supply has been refused. I only know of two. There was one case in New South Wales in 1872—a very well-known case indeed, when Lord Belmore was Governor. I think it would be interesting if I referred to this case, because what happened in New South Wales in 1872 has happened here within the last few weeks. Lord Belmore dissolved the New South Wales Parliament without Supply being granted. Mr. Piddington had moved an amendment for an address to the Governor, protesting against a dissolution, and it was carried by 38 to 19. Now, the same procedure was adopted here by Mr. Kidston. He moved an address, as we all know, asking the Governor

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not to dissolve Parliament; and it was carried by a very large majority. But in New South Wales, on the occasion referred to, the House was prorogued the same day before the Address could be presented. The House was dissolved a few days afterwards, and the Government paid the civil servants by an arrangement with the Bank of New South Wales. The civil servants were paid by the Philp Government directly, on the Governor's warrant, I understand. In New South Wales the Government do not appear to have been game to do what the Philp Government did. I believe there was an Executive minute passed approving of the arrangement that the Bank of New South Wales proposed to make with the civil servants, who gave a kind of order on the Government to the bank for their salaries when Parliament voted them. Although the Government of New South Wales did not take the high-handed course of daring to pay the civil servants when the money had not been appropriated, the electors showed their indignation with regard to what the Government had done by rejecting them at the polls, just in the same way as the electors of Queensland treated the Philp Government only a few weeks ago. The Government resigned in New South Wales—they did not wait to meet the new Parliament—just in the same way as the Philp Government resigned before the House met. A writer, in giving an account of this incident in New South Wales, states that the new Assembly, notwithstanding such resignation, passed and placed on record by thirty-six to eleven an emphatic condemnation of the proceedings of the retiring Government, including, specifically, the transaction entered into with the bank for the payment of the civil servants without the authority of Parliament. I believe the people of Queensland expected some action to be taken by this House, not only in connection with the action of the Government, but in connection with the action of the Governor. We are going a little further than the Parliament of New South Wales. They were satisfied with censuring the retiring Government.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: If you thought that was sufficient, would that not be the proper thing now?

Mr. JACKSON: I am not arguing that that was sufficient in 1872. I am only pointing out that they considered then that it was sufficient. But, as I have already explained, the Government in New South Wales did not use public money, the same as the Philp Government have done, but they made an arrangement with the bank, and therefore were not so guilty as the Philp Government.

The PREMIER: They dodged the question.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: The money was paid, so where was the difference?

Mr. JACKSON: We are supposed to be living in a more democratic age than the people of thirty-six years ago; and I am not sure whether the Parliament of New South Wales should not have taken stronger action than they did as a protest against the action of Lord Belmore. Lord Belmore evidently thought that he had made a great blunder, because he left the colony—in fact, he left before Parliament met. He thought it was desirable so to do. With regard to the question of the Government spending public money that has not been appropriated by Parliament, an authority on that subject might be interesting to the House. On the question of dissolution without Supply being granted, I have not given any authority on that very important matter, but I propose to place on record the opinion of Lord Brougham, because, after all, the question of dissolution by

the Governor without Supply first being granted is the crux of the whole position. Now, Lord Brougham, in "The British Constitution," on page 261, says—

The Sovereign can choose whom he pleases for his Ministers, dismiss them when he pleases, and appoint whom he pleases to succeed them. But then if the Houses of Parliament refuse their confidence to the persons thus named, or require the return to office of those so removed, the Sovereign cannot avoid yielding, else they have the undoubted power of stopping the whole course of Government.

And again he says—

Over the Parliament thus essential to the administration of public affairs the Sovereign no doubt has great influence. He can at any moment dissolve it, provided the Mutiny Bill is passed, and the necessary Supplies are granted.

Lord Brougham there lays down a condition that the King can only dissolve Parliament provided Supplies are first granted. That is the constitutional procedure. Now, with regard to spending money not appropriated by Parliament, the authority from whom I quoted at an earlier stage says—

It is enough to say that none of the public money—that is, of the money constituting the revenue of the Crown—is paid except by parliamentary authority.

In another place he says—

The sums voted to meet the Army, Navy, and Civil Service Estimates cannot be legally paid until they are embodied in the Appropriation Act.

And further on again he says—

If Parliament did not appropriate the Supplies of the year to specific purposes, the money which comes in on account of the various items of taxation could not legally be paid out to meet the services of the year, except in the case of such charges upon the revenue as are permanently authorised by statute.

Now, it is clearly laid down by all constitutional writers that money must be appropriated. It is not sufficient, for instance, that the Lower House should pass an estimate, or even pass a Supply Bill. It must be an Appropriation Bill passed by both Houses. It must become law and receive the assent of the Sovereign before the Government is justified in expending a penny of the money.

Mr. CAMPBELL: The Kidston Government expended £250,000 for railway material without authority.

Mr. WOODS: They knew they had a majority behind them.

Mr. JACKSON: Of course it has been the custom to spend what is known as unforeseen expenditure.

Mr. CAMPBELL: What is the use of quoting that authority?

Mr. JACKSON: That is the constitutional method.

Mr. CAMPBELL: But you have contravened it.

Mr. JACKSON: The Government that spent that money had the confidence of the House. I am not receding from the position. I say that action is unconstitutional and irregular, that money should not be expended without appropriation, and that we should get on to the same track as the House of Commons, where Supplementary Estimates are brought in before the end of the financial year. But we have got into a loose way of spending money, and then asking the following session for an appropriation. I am not defending that custom. I say it is wrong.

Mr. CAMPBELL: Why should you censure one Government while other Governments are equally blameable?

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Mr. JACKSON: This is a very different matter. In the case of the Philp Government Supply was actually refused by Parliament, and everyone knows that, according to the practice which has grown up here, an estimate is only an estimate, and it has generally been considered allowable to exceed the amount of the estimate. But all the same, when the amount voted is exhausted that money should be brought in as a supplementary estimate before the close of the financial year. To get over the difficulty it would be necessary for us to meet in May or June and appropriate the money which had been spent without an appropriation.

Mr. CAMPBELL: The £250,000 was for railway material for railways that have only been tabled to-day.

Mr. JACKSON: Now I come to the most important statement in the Address in Reply. It states that the Governor can only exercise his prerogative in accordance with the will of the majority of the House. Exception has been taken to that by hon. members, and I think by some constitutional writers too, that if a principle of that sort were conceded, it would enable the House to take the power of dissolution from the hands of the Governor into its own hands. The Premier, when he was speaking the other day, whilst contending for this principle which has been embodied in the Address, seemed to admit that there might be special cases in which even the majority of the House should not control the Governor or King in connection with the prerogative of dissolution.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: There have been many cases.

Mr. JACKSON: I am simply pointing out the logical conclusion that I am going to draw from this assertion in the Address in Reply, and that is that a principle of this kind really does take away from the Crown the prerogative of dissolution. But there is another conclusion that one may draw from it, and it is this: If we concede this principle, it will also take away the power from the Premier of dissolving Parliament. I would ask hon. members to note that conclusion. That is to say, that if the Premier of the day wanted a dissolution, whether he had Supply or not, if he could not get a majority he would not be justified in asking the Governor for a dissolution.

Mr. CAMPBELL: Do you think that would be a good position?

Mr. JACKSON: I think it would be a good position. It may not be the position held by most writers on the Constitution, but we know that the British Constitution has been broadened from precedent to precedent. A doctrine that might have been regarded as absurd fifty years ago is accepted to-day. In the same way, a principle which we affirm now, and which may seem outrageous and wrong, may be regarded as quite right in a few years' time. I would like to ask why the majority in a House should not control its own dissolution? Why should not members have the right to say that their Parliament shall last for three years? As a matter of fact, we are supposed to be returned for a three years' term. Why should it be in the power of any Premier to go to the Governor and advise a dissolution before the end of that term?

Mr. CAMPBELL: It might be in the best interests of the country.

Mr. JACKSON: It might be, but I would sooner trust the majority of the House to say what were the best interests of the country than any one man. I am supporting the principle embodied in the Address in Reply, that a dissolution should not be granted except by the

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wish of the majority of the House. We cannot ignore the other fact, that the same principle logically followed out will prevent the Premier of the day, no matter who he may be, from trying to coerce the members of the House to vote in a certain way under the threat of a dissolution. It is often said in Parliament, "There is the Premier trying to force us to vote for a particular measure by holding the threat of dissolution over us." I think it is a reasonable thing that when members of Parliament are elected for three years they should be there for three years—it is a very short time—and leave it to the electors to say whether they have done right or wrong. I have taken up more time than I intended; the quotations I have read have made my speech very much longer than I expected it to be. I may say, in conclusion, that although the constitutional question has been debated to a large extent during the last few days, it has really been settled by the people of Queensland at the general election. But all the same, it will be of interest to those who may read *Hansard* in the days to come. Similar cases may occur in the future, and it will be of great interest to our successors to find out what actually took place, and what the reasons were for and against the dissolution. As to the proposed legislation mentioned in the Governor's Speech, if we feel inclined we can get through a great deal of work in a very short time, and I hope that during the next two or three months we shall get through the programme laid before us by the Government.

* Mr. MULLAN (*Charters Towers*): As there is a general desire to conclude the debate to-night, in order that we may get on to the railway proposals next week, I will only occupy your attention for a very short time. In the first place, I would like to congratulate the Government on the fact that they have placed in the forefront of their programme for the session a policy of railway construction. At the present time there is a very great depression in the gold-mining industry in the North, particularly at Charters Towers, and that has thrown a large number of men out of employment. The low price of industrial metals has also had a similar effect. The sugar industry, which usually absorbs a great amount of surplus labour, employs very little at this time of the year, so you will see that we are really in a very bad way, and that this is a very opportune time to construct railways in order to alleviate the distress, which is very great in the North. In this connection I would like to refer to a remark made by the hon. member for Moreton last evening, when he asked, Where were the men to build these railways? That was an absurd question for any member to ask, but it is the kind of question usually asked by members of the Opposition. They recognise the iron law of supply and demand, that when there is a deficiency of labour in any line wages will go up, and that when there is a surplus of labour they will go down. Therefore, the conclusion they come to is that if railways are constructed there is a probability that wages may increase. Evidently, the hon. member does not desire to see an increase in wages. We on this side do desire to see it, and therefore we are perfectly consistent when we say there is sufficient labour in the State for the construction of those railways, and if it is necessary to increase the wages of labour a little, so much the better for the men concerned. The hon. member wants to see a policy of immigration introduced before the railways are constructed, so that, if there is a large surplus of labour, wages will go down.

Mr. CAMPBELL: What about the United States?

Mr. MULLAN: The example of the United States need not be quoted. There are more paupers and millionaires there in proportion to the population than in any other country in the world. Another matter which has been discussed during the debate is the Upper House, or "another place"—I do not know what is the proper method of describing it here. The three parties went to the country with three distinct and different proposals to deal with that House. The proposal of the leader of the Opposition has been absolutely wiped out by the electors. The proposal of the Labour party was to abolish the Upper House altogether. I believe in that principle as the surest and the best, but if we cannot get the whole of the House to assist us in abolishing the other Chamber, we are prepared to support a method which will pluck its fangs for the time being, and render it practically useless. That was the constitutional referendum. Our party advocated abolition, but gave it to be distinctly understood that they

[10 p.m.] would support the policy of the Premier if they could not have their own, so clearly and unmistakably the majority in the country decided in favour of the method which is to be proposed. But whilst I am prepared to support that proposal, I recognise that it does not go far enough, and I think it is only a matter of time when, after the introduction of the proposal and the uselessness of the other House is demonstrated, it will be completely wiped out altogether. I hold, notwithstanding the fact that I am prepared to conditionally support the proposal of the Premier, that his system does not represent the best way in which the matter can be treated. For instance, why should a measure have to be sent back to the country for sanction if the representatives were sent here to do a certain thing, and they passed the Bill? Why should it be necessary to send that Bill back to the country simply because the men in another place were disposed to reject it? I say if there is to be a referendum at all, that referendum or appeal to the people should be direct from this Chamber, and not from the other Chamber, which, in my opinion, is useless. It is perfectly clear that if this House is in the future, as is asserted under the method proposed by the leader of the Government, able to insist on the passage of a Bill, the other House must become useless, and if it is useless, why should we retain it? You may say it is harmless.

Mr. HAMILTON: It is expensive.

Mr. MULLAN: It is expensive, as my friend interjects, and why should the taxpayer be called upon to defray the unnecessary expense of a House which would practically be useless? I think the proper method of dealing with it is to wipe it out altogether.

Mr. HAMILTON: Hear, hear!

Mr. MULLAN: And so long as the House exists as a nominee Chamber—which, although nominee, is ten times better than the system proposed by Mr. Philp—so long will it be a block on the wheels of progress. Why do we have triennial Parliaments? Because we think if we had Parliaments of longer duration we would get out of touch with electors. Yet many men in another place were appointed nearly forty years ago by the most Conservative of Governments that ever sat on the Treasury benches of Queensland, and these men so appointed, who are supposed to be a check on hasty legislation, are a block on progress in Queensland to-day. It is absurd.

Mr. CAMPBELL: What about your own people during the last three or four years?

Mr. MULLAN: I had not the appointment of them, or some of them would never have got there. (Laughter.) The hon. member for Albert last night, in dealing with another matter, said anything that is possible in Canada should be possible here. Let us follow his argument to its logical conclusion. If it be possible for the States of Canada to get on with one Chamber, it should also be possible for Queensland to get on with one Chamber. Seeing that one of the States in Canada, which has only one Chamber—Ontario—has a population of nearly 2,500,000, it is a reasonable proposition to suppose that Queensland with a little over half a million should also be able to manage very well with one Chamber. Then, again, Canada can get on very well with Lieutenant-Governors, and I think if it be possible for Canada to do it we also should be able to do it, and probably if we had been doing it we might not have had the trouble to endure that Queensland has just passed through; because I consider now that we have a Federal Government and a Governor-General, a Lieutenant-Governor would meet all our requirements; and, whilst I have no desire to sever those "silken bonds," which have been rather grandiloquently referred to by our friends—

Mr. W. H. BARNES: Are you sure you have no desire?

Mr. MULLAN: I have none, and I am just as much in favour of the consolidation of the British Empire as my friend, but I think it would be to our advantage if we had Lieutenant-Governors instead of Governors, and the Lieutenant-Governors were to be elected or appointed from the men of Queensland.

Mr. HAMILTON: Hear, hear!

Mr. LESINA: That will clear the way for Sir Arthur.

Mr. MULLAN: A good deal has been said about the postal vote, and I am very glad the Government propose to wipe it out altogether. I can claim to have had considerable experience in connection with that matter—in connection with Townsville and Charters Towers, the two most notoriously canvassed places of any electorates in the State. The leader of the Opposition would not occupy his seat in this House to-day but for the unfairness of the system of the postal vote. Not only so, but, as we noticed by a question which was answered by the Home Secretary the other day, if the law when introduced in connection with the postal vote had imposed penalties commensurate with the grievous offences that have been committed, many of the immediate supporters of the gentleman who now represents the postal vote of Townsville would probably be in gaol.

Mr. CAMPBELL: That has happened everywhere.

Mr. MULLAN: It has happened to a greater extent at Townsville and Charters Towers than at any other place in the State. It is beyond the conception of all honest men to think of the methods that were employed in connection with this postal vote at Charters Towers. The conditions there, I will admit, lent themselves in an extraordinary degree to it. There is one firm there which controls, perhaps, the majority of the mines. All or nearly all the managers are the professed followers of the same brand of politics as the boss—or the joss, as they are called there. The result of this is that these men have held sway in the mines. And what do they do? Be it said to their discredit, nearly every mine manager on Charters Towers was practically under the thumb of a certain agency there. The manager went round and took a list of the wives of the men employed

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in his mine, calling at each individual house, and practically by intimidation and everything short of personal violence coerced those women to record their votes in favour of his side. My friend may smile. We have challenged contradiction on the public platform. I am not saying it under the shelter of this House; I have said it in Charters Towers.

Mr. PAGET: How many postal votes did you get?

Mr. MULLAN: We got something over 800.

Mr. CAMPBELL: You tried to prove your case before the Elections Tribunal, and you failed.

Mr. MULLAN: I am not responsible for it being tried before the Elections Tribunal. My friend asked me how many postal votes we got. I do not think it is a pertinent question, for this reason; that we did it in self-defence, and for our existence as a party. We had to try to secure postal votes; and I claim that we secured them by honest means, and not by the despicable methods resorted to by your party.

Mr. PAGET: Always virtuous.

Mr. MULLAN: If we had resorted to those despicable methods, which we did not, it would have been justifiable. And for this reason: If my friend who interjects met a man when going home to-night and this man said to him, "Look here, you will have to fight a duel with me. I will give you your choice of one of these modern revolvers, or if you like you can take a pop-gun." What would our friend select? Would he select the antiquated weapon, or would he take the up-to-date weapon? I think he would take the up-to-date weapon just as any other person would do.

Mr. PAGET interjected.

Mr. MULLAN: At any rate, your party went under at the election.

Mr. CAMPBELL: It is a good thing yours did not win.

Mr. MULLAN: In Charters Towers a perfect reign of terror existed during the last election.

Mr. MULCAHY: It was the same at Gympie.

Mr. MULLAN: Every day was polling-day, and every house in Charters Towers was a polling-booth. The tyranny that was resorted to was never resorted to by any party in Queensland, or out of it, before in order to secure the return of their candidates. Then, not content with that, when we beat them fair and square, despite the odds against us, as we were poor men and they were rich men, they turned round and stooped to the meanness of sacking the men who had the hardihood and courage to assert their manhood, and say what they thought in connection with the political situation.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: That is only your statement.

Mr. MULLAN: It is my statement, but it cannot be contraverted. You cannot contravert it. I challenge you to do so. The wires are at your disposal, and you can telegraph to Charters Towers, and my opponents will confirm the statements which I make here to-night. In connection with this postal vote, or rather the amendment of the Elections Act, I very much regret that a clause has not been introduced to deal with canvassers. I quite recognise that there is a principle involved in sending that Bill back to the Legislative Council in the same way in which it was rejected by that Chamber; but I do hope that in the very immediate future some steps will be taken to introduce a clause into that Bill making it impossible for anybody to go round canvassing on behalf of any candidate. There are only two fair and square ways in which an election should be conducted, and they

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are on the public platform and through the Press. There are a great many methods of beating a candidate, but I know of none so despicable and none so degrading as that of the political—I do not know what to call him—political assassin or scoundrel who goes round and whispers a falsehood concerning a candidate to an elector.

Mr. CAMPBELL: Your side are very excellent at that sort of game.

Mr. BARBER: They cannot hold a candle to you.

Mr. MULLAN: Our side have something good and something noble to fight for. Your friends have not that advantage, and consequently they have to stoop to the methods of which I speak. A canvasser whispers these falsehoods into the ears of an elector in such a way that a man has no chance of meeting them. I had some experience of it in Charters Towers.

Mr. CAMPBELL: No side uses intimidation like your own side.

Mr. MULLAN: What power have we got to resort to intimidation? We have no money, no influence, we have no work to give, and we have no men employed to sack, and we have no scurrilous Press to back us up. What chance have we to intimidate anyone? We have to resort to something better than that, and we resort to it successfully too.

Mr. CAMPBELL: What about the intimidation of your organisations?

Mr. MULLAN: I will give my friend who interjects a sample of the intimidation for which he was responsible. I dare say he had a hand in the appointment of those illustrious 300 odd justices of the peace. (Laughter.) When a Government assumes the responsibility of conducting an election, in my opinion that Government is sworn to administer the affairs of this country fearlessly and impartially as between man and man; but your Government, which administered the affairs of Queensland during the three accidental months that you were in power—how did they administer it?

Mr. CAMPBELL: Just as you describe.

Mr. MULLAN: Just as I am going to describe. Just so.

Mr. CAMPBELL: As you described just now—fearlessly and impartially.

Mr. MULLAN: Here is the way you did it. At Charters Towers, about which I can speak specifically, you appointed seventeen justices of the peace. Every man of those seventeen justices was a political agent. Every man of them was nominated by the Electoral Association at Charters Towers. Not one of those men was ever known to be a friend of the Labour party, whilst every man of them was a pledged supporter of yours. What greater and what clearer demonstration of impartiality was ever shown than that?

Mr. CAMPBELL: Were any of yours rejected?

Mr. MULLAN: We did not nominate any. We never asked for them. We never expected that the Government would have descended to such despicable methods, and we never thought they would take advantage of it, but your party took advantage of it. You were playing a huge gamble, as you thought it was the chance of your lives. You thought that if you could once scramble into office as a result of this gamble, you would resort to legislation similar to your administration, and thus manage to keep the reins of power for an indefinite period. But you were very unsuccessful, I am very pleased to say. I am not eager to rush in with praise for any Administration, but I will say this of the Administration which now manages the

affairs in this State: that they are to be congratulated for their justice and honesty in repudiating this unmanly act of the late Administration. A more gross violation of the administration of Queensland, I might say, if I were permitted, and a more corrupt act has never been committed in Queensland than the appointment of those justices of the peace by the late Administration. I therefore think that the Kidston Government is to be complimented and congratulated on repudiating that act; and I hope they will go further and repudiate, so far as the Constitution and so far as the law will allow, every administrative act committed by the Philp Administration.

Mr. CAMPBELL: That is your opinion.

Mr. MULLAN: Yes, and I have a right to my opinion. If a man has an opinion he should not be afraid of expressing it.

Mr. CAMPBELL: He should be fair, anyhow.

Mr. MULLAN: There is no room for a middle course in politics to-day.

Mr. CAMPBELL: There is for a fair course.

Mr. MULLAN: Evidently you were not capable of conducting a fair course when you had the opportunity as one of the administrators of Queensland. With regard to the Wages Boards Bill, I consider this Bill is most desired in the interests of social justice, and I think it is unfair for the farmers to say that it should not be imposed on them. I claim that the clause which included the farming industries should be just as readily imposed as those which include the mining industry, which is also a primary industry.

A LABOUR MEMBER: Or the pastoralists.

Mr. MULLAN: Yes; or the pastoralists. The pastoralists are now affected by the Federal law. Why should the farmer be exempt from this law? Who in this State is more comfortable than the farmer? Who is more socialistic than the farmer when he wants assistance from the State? In every conceivable way the farmer has been spooned, time and again. Why, £21,000 per annum is now being paid in subsidies to a line of steamers to call here and take away the farmers' produce to the best markets in the world.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: What experience of farming have you had?

Mr. MULLAN: Perhaps I have had more than the hon. member. I had the privilege to be born on a farm—(laughter)—and I know something about it, and I am not ashamed of it. Some £25,000,000, roughly speaking, have been spent in railway construction to assist the farming industry, and those railways have helped to develop farming areas, and have enormously increased the values of those areas. I do not begrudge that to the farmer. I say the farmer is entitled to all that, and I would give him more, but, I ask, why should the State assist the farmers, why should farmers be spooned at the expense of the taxpayer, if the farm labourer is not also assisted and protected by money from the same source? That is a reasonable proposition. The farmer is a rank socialist when it suits his purpose to be so, and he is an equally rabid individualist when you ask him to give a fair deal to his men. Why should a farmer be able to "sweat" his employees any more than a factory-owner? Of course, I know that our friends tell us that they do not "sweat" their employees. If they do not, then why should they be afraid of the Wages Boards Bill? It is optional, not mandatory. They need not come under it if the persons engaged in the industry do not desire to do so. The employee in the farming industry is not likely to do anything

which will injure the industry in which he is engaged. He will be a reasonable and moderate man, and will ask for no better conditions than the industry can afford. I believe that once the Bill is passed, if it is properly administered, the farmers, of all men in the State, will most appreciate it. With regard to old age pensions, I should like to make a few passing allusions to them. The indigence allowance as it stands to-day is not satisfactory, and is not acceptable to Queenslanders. We want an old age pension, so that when a man has lived a certain time in Queensland and has attained a certain age, he shall be able to obtain an old age pension as a right, and not as a charity. I hope that no harsh conditions will be imposed in connection with the granting of old age pensions. In the administration of the present indigence allowance a single man is treated better than a married man, and it was proposed in the Old Age Pensions Bill introduced last session to treat a single man better than a married man. At the present time penalties are imposed on married men which should not be possible. If a bachelor is suffering from infirmity or old age, and asks for the indigence allowance, he invariably gets it, but if a married man applies for the allowance he is refused it on the ground, perhaps, that he has a son or a daughter doing well somewhere, and the onus is thrown upon him of proving that he has no means and no one to maintain him. That is deliberately imposing a penalty upon a man because he has got married and has discharged his responsibilities to the State. If one man should be favoured more than another, it is the man who has discharged his responsibility to the State and brought up a family, rather than the man who has remained a bachelor. I hope that the Bill to be introduced will provide a reasonable rate of pension, so that our aged people may be able to live in decency and comfort. I hope also that the system which is adopted in connection with many other Acts will not be adopted in the Old Age Pensions Bill, that is, the system of making Brisbane the standard as to the cost of living, but that some medium place in the State will be taken as the standard. While on this subject, I may say that the leader of the late Government promised that he would increase the indigence allowance to 10s. a week. When he made that promise the old people threw up their hats and became extravagant, anticipating that they would receive the 10s. a week immediately, and some of them managed to get an advance on the strength of that promise by Mr. Philip. They have, however, not received that increased rate up to the present time. I hope the present Government will do something to balance the matter, because these old people have really been "had," and it would be only a fair thing if the Government paid them the additional amount necessary to bring up the allowance to 10s. a week, say, from 1st January last. Ten shillings a week is little enough in all conscience to keep body and soul together in a place like Queensland.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: The Government you are supporting paid 2s. 6d. a week to some people.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: So did your Government.

Mr. MULLAN: I do not know anything about that, but I know that 10s. a week is little enough, and I hope the party the hon. member for Bulimba supports will never have an opportunity of paying 2s. 6d. a week. Now, I should like to make a few remarks regarding the mining industry. At the present time there is a great depression in the mining industry, particularly in goldmining, at Croydon, Charters Towers,

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and Gympie. The present depression is certainly the greatest that has occurred in that industry since I have been in the Commonwealth. When you come to consider the importance of the mining industry, you will, I think, admit that it is entitled to some greater consideration than it has received in the past. Up to 1906 the yield of gold was over £64,000,000. The wages paid in the mining industry in Queensland during 1906 amounted to £2,211,000. There were 23,000 persons engaged in the industry, and 123,000 persons—that is, roughly speaking, a quarter of our population—directly dependent upon the industry. Hon. members will therefore readily understand that the industry is entitled to a great deal more consideration than it has received hitherto. One of the reasons why the industry has not received much consideration in the past is that the people engaged in it did not ask for consideration, probably because they did not want it, as things were going very well. But now things are otherwise, and the industry is badly depressed, and we ask that something substantial should be done in the shape of placing a sum of money on the Estimates to assist in prospecting, deep sinking, cross cutting, and in any other way that may be suggested or recommended by qualified persons appointed to report on the matter. The agricultural industry, and almost every industry in the State, has received a considerable amount of assistance from the State, and they have no doubt deserved it, and I think that now that the mining industry is asking practically for the first time for a substantial sum, it is up to the Government to do something good for it. This is a national and not a party question, as it means the development of our resources. It is a question which affects the farmer almost as much as the miner. The two industries are to a certain extent interdependent. When the mining industry is in a flourishing condition it attracts a large population, and this large population provides a local market for the farmers' products. So that I claim that we are entitled to the support of the farming representatives to assist this industry. Assistance has been given on a very large scale in Western Australia, Victoria, and in other places, and it has been of great benefit to the industry, and it is reasonable [10.30 p.m.] that the Government should do all in their power in this direction. It is intended, I see, to introduce a Superannuation Bill. As I have had some little experience of this matter, I would like to make a passing reference to it. I hope that the gentlemen who frame the Bill will be guided by past experience. One of the things which led to the last scheme being worse than useless, and which led to its repeal at the request of the public servants, was that there was no provision in it by which a man who retired from the service could receive the surrender value of his contributions to the fund. He forfeited everything, even if he had been paying into the fund for thirty or forty years. That was not fair, and it was a serious hardship in a young country like Queensland, where men are constantly leaving the service to better themselves. We are going to have an Old Age Pensions Bill, and, if it is not presumptuous of me, I would suggest that, as public servants are as much entitled to old age pensions as anybody else, if the amount of their old age pensions were paid into the superannuation fund by way of subsidy, it would guarantee its solvency, and I am sure would augur for success. There is one matter which the Government have apparently overlooked in their programme, but about which I hope they will not be remiss in the immediate future—that is, a Trades Disputes Bill. We realise that working men largely depend upon

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unions to protect them. Unions have done more to advance us politically than perhaps Parliament. Unions are responsible for the existence of the Labour party, and I owe my position here to the existence of a union. Working men should therefore advocate these unions. As unions are to the advantage of workers and for their protection, it is the duty of the Government to introduce a Trades Disputes Bill, which will protect the unions which protect the workers. In reference to His Excellency the Governor, I fancy that too much deference has been shown to that distinguished gentleman—too much reverential awe has been displayed altogether. The Commons of England have the right to criticise the actions of the King of England; and, without any disrespect to His Excellency, I claim that it is the right of the representatives of the people of Queensland to criticise the actions of the Governor, provided they do it in a proper and a respectful manner. I do not intend to go into the constitutional question, which has been dealt with ably and exhaustively already; but I do say that the people of Queensland recognise one of two things. The leader of the late Government gave certain advice to His Excellency; the Governor appears to have accepted that advice. Well, the people have not been able so far to shoulder the responsibility. It has been stated in this Chamber that the responsible individual was the leader of the Government who submitted that advice. But it cannot be forgotten that the exercise of the prerogative rested with His Excellency the Governor. It was for him to say whether he would grant a dissolution or not. And, rightly or wrongly, the people are of opinion that the Governor was guilty of a serious indiscretion, if not worse, when he granted that dissolution to the late Premier, who had neither the confidence of this House nor of the country, and who was not able to obtain Supplies from this House. The people of Queensland, recognising that, expect to see something practical done. They are not going to be satisfied with a mere Address in Reply, expressing regret. I admit that a good deal is implied in that Address; and I expect to see, as the result of its adoption, together with the division which took place on the amendment on it, some historic events happening in Queensland. But, if they do not happen, the people of Queensland will want to know why.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Shame! Shame!

Mr. BOWMAN: There is no "Shame!" about it.

Mr. MULLAN: It is no "Shame!" It is a serious matter.

LABOUR MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MULLAN: It is a serious matter that the Parliament should be sent to the electors. The whole of the electors were disfranchised for three months through the action of somebody in power; and it has been laid down by Hallam—one of the greatest constitutional authorities—that there can be no greater sin or crime against the Constitution than the disfranchisement of electors. He claims that the man who is guilty of that is just as bad as if he headed a revolutionary army against the State. Somebody has done a serious wrong to the people of this State. We have been involved in an unjustifiable expenditure of something approaching £25,000, and we have to pay our share of it. It is not a matter that is to be passed over lightly; and, whether this Chamber realises it or not—and I think it does realise it by the fact that it defeated that amendment, and also by the fact that this Address will, if not carried on the voices, be adopted by a substantial majority in division—the people of Queensland want to see something done in connection with

the matter, and somebody will have to pay the penalty for the crime that has been committed upon the people of Queensland. They demand it, and I am certain they are going to have their way; and if this Parliament does not do it, some other Parliament will have to. The danger lies in that if something is not done a precedent will be established, which may be pointed to by future transgressors against the Constitution. We do not want to give any man the power to say in twenty or fifty years that the Hon. Robert Philp, the hon. member for Townsville, did a certain thing, and got off scot-free, or that a certain gentleman holding the distinguished position of Governor of Queensland accepted the advice which was tendered to him, and his act was approved of. We do not want to establish a precedent that will make it possible for that to happen; and, therefore, I think it the bounden duty of this House to see justice done—justice, I hope, tempered with mercy, but justice nevertheless. It is no light matter for a Government to spend £687,000 without parliamentary authority. And if a Government are competent to do this, they are competent to do a great deal more. They even bought the Maryvale Estate; and I hold it was a positive indecency for any Government to hang on to power as they did, and transact any but absolutely necessary administrative business. No self-respecting Government would have ever done the things which have been done by the late Administration without either the authority of the Parliament or the people.

Mr. BOWMAN: Especially when they said they were going to have clean hands.

Mr. MULLAN: Every man speaks according to his own conception. They speak according to their conception of clean hands, but their conception apparently is not as high as it might be. Now, I will conclude by making a reference to a statement made in this House. A gentleman, referring to the Labour party, compared them to brass monkeys, and he said that if seventeen members who were here during the last Parliament had been labelled "brass monkeys"—

The SPEAKER: Order! That was a remark which took place during a discussion which has been closed. I called the hon. member to order at the time, and the discussion upon that point is closed.

Mr. MULLAN: In deference to your ruling, I will not refer to the matter further than to say that as a member of the party to whom allusion was made, I have reason to believe that there is a certain electorate in Queensland where if a brazen monkey were to put up and were branded "Jenkinson" it would be returned to Parliament.

The SPEAKER: Order! I think the hon. member will agree with me that it would be much better to leave such matters unsaid.

Mr. MULLAN: It is with the greatest reluctance that I would encroach upon the dignity of the House or run counter to the Standing Orders, but I claim that any gentleman who abuses his position in the House to cast a slight on the party to which I have the honour to belong must expect to be replied to, and so long as I am in a position to do that without infringing the Standing Orders, I claim that I have the right to retaliate on any man who so grossly acts. I would just say, finally, that the policy of the Government includes some very excellent legislation, and as far as I am concerned, and I believe as far as my party is concerned, though I have no right to speak for them, the democratic measures mentioned are

entitled to our whole-hearted support. As far as I am concerned, I will not falter in the support I intend to give them. So long as this Government introduces measures in accord with my principles, so long will I support them, and I will not look for excuses to offer obstruction or block the path of progress. I also claim the right, if anything obnoxious to my principles, or contrary to the platform which I have signed, is introduced by the Government, of offering it my strong opposition. I think we have much to be pleased with and proud of in the democratic measures which are included in the programme of the Government, and I hope they will be placed on the statute-book of Queensland during the present session.

Mr. BARNES (*Bulinba*): Mr. Speaker—

* Mr. McLACHLAN (*Fortitude Valley*): Mr. Speaker—

The SPEAKER: I think it is the custom of the House to give precedence to a new member.

Mr. McLACHLAN: At the risk of detaining the House a little longer this evening, I propose offering a few remarks on the Address in Reply, and on the Governor's Speech. It is not my intention at this late hour to speak at any great length, as I understand that the Government are anxious to close the debate to-night, so that no time will be occupied next week in further discussion of this matter, and that an opportunity will be afforded them to proceed with their railway policy, a commencement with which has been made this afternoon. I hope that railway policy will prove one which will be acceptable to the members of this House, and that work will be gone on with as speedily as possible, so that the unemployed who are now in Queensland in very large numbers will be relieved to an appreciable extent, and at the same time the development of this great State will progress. I am pleased to note that included in the Bills mentioned in the Governor's Speech are the democratic measures which were interrupted at the close of last year as a result of the interference with the legislative machinery of the State by gentlemen in another place. I recognise that if there is any obstacle in the way of democratic progress, and thought, and legislation, that obstacle should, if possible, be removed, and it is patent to everybody, both in this Chamber and outside, that there is an obstacle in Queensland at the present time, and a very great obstacle, in the pathway of progress. I am in the habit of calling a spade a spade, and I refer to the Legislative Council. I notice in the Governor's Speech there is a proposition for the introduction of a Constitutional Referendum Bill, the object of which measure, I presume, will be to refer to the people measures which have been passed through this House, and thrown out by the Upper Chamber. Well, that is, perhaps, one way of reforming the Upper House, but to my mind it is only tinkering with the question. There is only one way to properly insure the passage into law of legislation passed by this House, and that is to abolish the Upper House altogether. There is a plank in the platform of the Labour party which says that the Upper House should be abolished; and I am perfectly correct in saying that if such a measure were introduced it would find very pronounced support from members sitting in this corner, and also from a number of members sitting on the Government benches. It is just possible, too, that it might receive some support from gentlemen at present occupying positions on the Opposition benches.

Mr. COYNE: You do not believe that?

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Mr. McLACHLAN: I think there are one or two on that side who, perhaps, might be induced to vote for the abolition of the Upper House. At all events, there is not the slightest doubt that if such a measure were introduced there would be sufficient men found in the House to carry it. Whether it would be possible to get a two-thirds majority in the Upper House to carry a measure of that kind I am not prepared to say. But I have it on fairly good authority that it would be possible to so amend the Constitution Act in the first instance that it would not be necessary to carry a measure of that kind by a two-thirds majority. I believe the question is being looked into at the present time by legal men, and it is just possible the Constitution Act can be amended in the way I have indicated. If so, it will be brought under the notice of the Premier, and probably he may see the wisdom of introducing a measure to have that effect.

The PREMIER: If you can show me how it can be done.

Mr. McLACHLAN: I am glad to hear the Premier say so, and I can assure him that such a Bill will receive the hearty and unanimous support of every man sitting in this corner of the Chamber. I notice in the Speech a proposition to amend the Elections Act, I understand by the abolition of the postal vote. I recognise that it is necessary that a measure which was thrown out in the Upper House last session should be returned to that House this session in practically the same form, so that members of that Chamber will be forced, as the result of the general election, to carry the measure in the same form as that which they rejected last year. But I trust that before the expiry of the present Parliament the Premier will see his way to introduce a far more comprehensive amendment of the Elections Act. There are many things in our electoral laws which require amending. Some of those have already been referred to by previous speakers, but there are one or two others to which no reference has been made. At the last election a great number of people were disfranchised through no fault of their own; for some unknown reason their names had been removed from the roll. Some were members of the same family, who had been living in the same house for years. I could give a number of cases of that kind that occurred in Fortitude Valley, and from conversation with others I find that it is not peculiar to Fortitude Valley.

Mr. WOODS: All over the State.

Mr. McLACHLAN: There must be something wrong with an electoral system which permits men and women to be removed from the electoral roll without any cause whatever. I am not prepared to say whose fault it is, but the fact remains that it is so, and I assert that it is the duty of the Minister in charge of this department to see if some means cannot be devised whereby a man or woman who has once secured the right to vote should not have it taken away on some flimsy pretence, such as having moved their residence from one side of a street to the other. There should be some system introduced whereby once the right to vote was secured it could not be easily lost. Another necessary amendment is the fixing of the exact day on which elections are to be held, and the exact time at which the polls shall close. There should not be a repetition of what we saw at the last election, when the polling-day was altered from Saturday to Wednesday, thus putting electors, both male and female, to very great inconvenience.

Mr. CAMPBELL: What about the Federal electoral law?

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Mr. McLACHLAN: I am not concerned about the Federal electoral law. I am referring to this State, and I hope our Act will be so amended that the day of election will be definitely fixed, and that that day will be Saturday. I also hope that the time of closing the poll will be fixed, so that it shall not be in the power of any Minister to say that the poll shall close at 4, 5, or 6 o'clock. I would suggest that the time be fixed for 7 o'clock, and made compulsory. With regard to the Old Age Pensions Bill, it was not my privilege to be a member of this House when that Bill was introduced last session; but I took some considerable interest in the measure and in the discussion which took place upon it. I hope the new Bill which is proposed to introduce will not be a *fac simile* of the one introduced last year, but that it will be so framed as to be acceptable to all the members of the House. I assume that the Opposition are humane men, and are prepared to admit old age pensions as a right. I hope the Bill will not lead to such divisions of opinion as were conspicuous last year, but will make the receiving of old age pensions by those entitled to them an easy matter, which would not have been the case if the Bill of last session had become law. A good deal has been said during the course of this debate, and a good deal was said during the election campaign, about the Wages Boards Bill—the way in which it was going to apply to the different industries, and the tyrannical way in which it would apply to farmers. I

[11 p.m.] do not profess to know anything about farming, but I take this much credit to myself—that I have, perhaps, an average amount of common sense, and can read and understand the provisions of a Bill introduced in this House with, perhaps, most laymen; and, in reading that Wages Boards Bill which was introduced last year, I do not see anything tyrannical about the measure. The Bill simply provided for an amicable settlement of disputes that might arise between employers and employees. If the conditions in an industry were such that either the employer or the employee felt it irksome, they had a right to call into existence the provisions of the Bill. If the conditions in the farming industry are such as we have heard described during the present debate, and there is no possibility of any person engaged in that industry having any reason to come under the Bill, there should be no objection taken by the representatives of the farming constituencies to the Bill becoming law with that particular provision in it. I do not know whether I shall be in order in reading an extract from a letter I have here from the *Courier*, Mr. Speaker; but if I am not in order you will soon pull me up.

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not know what the hon. member is going to read; but a comment from a newspaper or letter on matters that are under the consideration of the House will be out of order. The hon. member will be able to judge for himself how far that applies.

Mr. McLACHLAN: This is a letter written to the *Courier* on 2nd March of the present year. It is on the Wages Boards Bill of last year, and I purpose reading an extract from it. It is written by a farmer, and it shows that some farmers have no fear of the inclusion of a provision in the Wages Boards Bill bringing farmers under the Bill. It is signed by a gentleman named Kalmund, of Moorland Station.

I welcome the measure, which, though only a palliative, tends to raise the standard of the average farm labourer, as also farmers themselves, from veritable slaves to at least the level of their city brothers. No farmer who is economically aware of the fact that all which tends to raise him and those around him to a

higher standard of living will feel any uneasiness if the proposed measure becomes law. Whether the farmer is, as at present situated, able to meet the requirements stipulated in the Bill does not enter into the question, for the measure in principle is one in the right direction. To ask that, because through lack of unity and a want of economic foresight, whereby farmers are themselves reduced to the level of serfs, they should seek to further their interests by striking at the point of least resistance, and deny their still more powerless labourers the right to raise themselves and farmers generally by the improved conditions which would obtain, is both ignorant and cowardly.

Let farmers unite, and if they work six days, and think hard on the seventh, they will come to the conclusion that it is more manly and intelligent to seek justice from those who deny it them—those who stand between producers and consumers, manipulating the fruits of the earth won by his hard toil from nature.

That clearly proves there are some farmers in the community who think that it would be a correct and humane thing to include provisions under which farmers could be brought under the Wages Boards Bill. I may say that the letter I have just read was prompted by a photograph of this gentleman's farm which appeared in the *Courier* of the day before the date of the letter. The *Courier* had taken notice of his farm, and certain references made to it prompted him to write the letter. There are many other matters in the Speech with which I agree, but there is one Bill foreshadowed, and which has been already dealt with to-night by the hon. member for Warrego, which I cannot support. I think it is just as well when a member is addressing the House for the first time, and an opportunity is afforded him of expressing his opinions on the particular measures that are likely to come before the House, that he should express himself fully on any of the Bills with which he agrees or with which he differs. I refer to the proposed referendum in connection with the Bible in State schools. It is just as well that the leader of the Government should know that there are some members of the Labour party who are going to oppose that measure. When the Bill is introduced I intend to oppose it as strongly as I can. During my campaign in Fortitude Valley, the question was brought under my notice by my constituents, and I was asked my opinion and leanings on it. I gave a decided answer that I was opposed to the introduction of any such measure, and opposed altogether to the reading of the Bible in State schools, and to the proposed referendum. I make this statement in the House to-night, and later on, when the measure is introduced, I will vote exactly in accordance with the expressions which I gave to my constituents. I think it is not right that on a matter of conscience the people of the State should be interfered with at all. It may be said that the members of the Labour party are in favour of a referendum. I say that I am in favour of a general referendum, and if the Government is prepared to introduce a general Referendum Bill, then it will have my support, but I am not prepared to support any measure of this kind brought in, whereby the principle of the referendum will be introduced simply for the purpose of an expression of the opinion of the people of this State being taken at the request of a very small minority. It may seem strange that I should make reference to something which is not included in the Speech—I refer to a Mining on Private Property Bill. Although representing a metropolitan constituency, it has been my privilege during my life in this State to have had considerable experience on some of our mining fields; in fact, as both the hon. members for Gympie know, I was reared in the town which they have the honour to represent. I know a good deal about the mining industry, and I feel confident that it would have been a good thing if the Government

could have seen their way clear to have introduced a Mining on Private Property Bill. And in advocating a measure of this kind I am simply advocating one of the planks of the Labour platform. We recognise, and everybody recognises, that the mining industry is one of the greatest industries in this State, and I say that it is not fostered or encouraged to the same extent it ought to be, and not nearly in a proportionate manner to that obtaining in the other States of the Commonwealth. I trust that during the present session the Government will be able to see their way clear to assist this industry in a much more material manner than has been the case in the past in Queensland. There is just one other matter in the Governor's Opening Speech to which I would like to refer, and that is the Central Technical College Bill. I think the establishment of a central technical college will be a good thing, and will no doubt be of great assistance to those people who desire to partake of the privileges that are to be found in those institutions. Another advantage that would result from the introduction of such a measure is that it would have the effect of bringing more actively under the control of the Government the technical education of the technical colleges of Brisbane than is the case at present. While on the subject of education, I would like to make reference to the system that has up to the present been operating in this State whereby teachers in private schools were able to gain admission to the Education Department of the State. It is well known that the channel through which the teachers from the private schools were afforded an opportunity of getting into the Education Department was through the Provisional schools, but I noticed in the last education report that it is proposed—and, in fact, it is now being carried into effect—to grade and staff those Provisional schools with State school teachers. That is being done, and the avenue through which teachers from private schools were able to get into the department is now almost closed to them. I really do not know why there should be any more difficulty in getting into the Education Department of this State than there is in getting into any other branch of the public service. With the exception of the Education Department, every department in the State is open to every boy and girl free, provided they can qualify to get into that department.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Up to a certain age.

Mr. McLACHLAN: Even that is not granted in the Education Department. All I ask is this—and the Premier and the Secretary for Railways will admit that it is a fair proposition—that the same facilities should be afforded to the children of this State, and to the teachers of this State, to get into the Education Department as is afforded in connection with the other departments.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Should not the Provisional schools be staffed with as good teachers as the State schools?

Mr. McLACHLAN: I certainly say make the Provisional schools as efficient as you can, but having closed the channel through which teachers from private schools were able to get into the Education Department, you should make the entrance to that department as free as the entrance to any other department in the State. It is not my intention to delay the House at any greater length. I have spoken a little longer than I intended when I first rose. I trust, in conclusion, that as a result of the legislation that has been foreshadowed in the Governor's Speech, humane

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measures will be introduced, and that this House will pass them, and that the people of the State will benefit thereby. I feel confident that the attention of this House will be carefully given to every measure that is introduced, and when it reaches this Chamber I hope it will leave it in such a way that, if carried into law, the men and women—the masses of the State—will benefit thereby. I hope that there will be no block to legislation of this kind in another place, and that the Wages Boards Bill, and, if possible, a Trades Disputes Bill, and all the democratic measures foreshadowed in the Governor's Speech, will be the law of the land before very long.

Mr. W. H. BARNES (*Bulimba*): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. GRANT: This is your second speech.

The SPEAKER: The hon. gentleman is in order, as he spoke on the amendment before.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: I do not intend to keep the House very long. I recognise, with other hon. gentlemen who have spoken, that the hour is late, and I am sure that it would be in the interest of all parties if we closed the debate as soon as possible. Might I be allowed to say something on the lines stated by the hon. member for Kennedy, Mr. Jackson—something in regard to the new members. I am certain that a majority of the new members who have spoken to-day have certainly impressed the House. I would say just a word in that connection, and it is this: It seems to me that it would be an excellent thing if the hon. member for Charters Towers, Mr. Mullan, were to follow the good example which has just been set by the hon. member for Fortitude Valley. The hon. gentleman will find, if he is spared for any length of time in this House, that it will be to his profit to follow that particular line rather than adopt the tactics which he adopted to-night, and which I am sure no one will regret more than he when he thinks it over in his quiet moments. There is another matter I wish to refer to. There is an impression abroad, apparently, that members who sit on this side of the House are altogether opposed to men who may differ with them in politics. The hon. member for Charters Towers made a statement that an attempt was made on Charters Towers to block certain men because they differed from him in politics.

Mr. MULLAN: I can substantiate it.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: All I have got to say is that any person who tries to interfere with the right of an elector, whether that elector is an employee or somebody else, is doing a positive injustice. (Hear, hear!) I would like, even at this late hour, to remind hon. gentlemen of what occurred in connection with my own business. Mr. Midgley said he wanted to oppose Mr. J. R. Dickson. He got three or four weeks' leave and contested the election, but was defeated, and came back to his work immediately. Sometimes people are led to believe that we on this side of the House are not anxious to do the right thing when a man differs from us in politics. Very often people who say those things are merely making a great deal of noise, and very frequently think so on account of what they would do themselves. The hon. member for Toowong, Mr. Cottell, seconded the Address in Reply, and I regret that he is not in his place now, as I would rather say what I have to say about him to his face than behind his back. However, I am not responsible for his absence.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He is in the House.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: He is certainly not in the Chamber. The hon. gentleman, in speaking

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on the Address in Reply, referred to the Maryvale Estate, and made some reference to the question of clean hands. I wish to say here and now that as ex-Minister for Lands I am personally responsible for the transaction in connection with the Maryvale Estate, and I have no desire to shield myself behind anybody. I should not have taken the slightest notice of the remark made by the hon. member for Toowong, because the majority of people who know him will attach very little importance to any statement he may make—he is so well known in the city that any statement made by him is discounted from the jump. But when the leader of the Labour party and the hon. member for Charters Towers, Mr. Mullan, who has a great deal to learn—and if I mistake not will have a few tumbles in learning—come along and repeat the statement made with regard to the Maryvale Estate, I say there are two things which they ought to do, and I challenge them to do them. If they know there is anything improper in connection with the purchase of the Maryvale Estate, it is their duty in the interest of the country to move for the papers, and to ask for an inquiry into the matter, and I now challenge them on the floor of this House to do that. I commenced life right at the bottom of the tree, and have worked my way up gradually. I have done that by hard work, and I am not ashamed of it. I have been in the city of Brisbane for twenty years, I have been associated with many industries, and I say there is not a man in the community who can point his finger at me and say that in my commercial dealings, or in my private capacity, I have done anything that is not clean. What do we find to-night? That the man who made that charge against me, and who, I suppose, knew I was going to reply to him, is not game to come into this Chamber.

The HOME SECRETARY: He caught the ten past 11 train.

The PREMIER: Do you imagine that Mr. Cottell has stayed out of the Chamber because you are speaking?

Mr. W. H. BARNES: I know that the leader of the Government would himself do anything to avoid an issue. My own conviction is that the men who are so ready to hurl such charges across the floor of the House, who are ready to accuse other men of doing things which are dishonest and wrong, judge others by what they would do themselves. Again I challenge those hon. members to call for the papers, and move for an inquiry if they think there was anything wrong in connection with the purchase of the Maryvale Estate.

Mr. GRANT: Wasn't it an improper thing for you to do such a thing?

Mr. W. H. BARNES: It was not an improper thing—it was done in the interest of the community, who would be benefited by the purchase of that estate. I am reminded by my colleague, the hon. member for Moreton, that it was found that the Maryvale Railway was on the programme of the Government.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Why did you sign the contract on the day of the election?

Mr. W. H. BARNES: I will show that there was nothing wrong in signing the contract on the day of the election, and to do so I will deal with the purchase from its inception. The present Government, I do not think, were in earnest in the matter.

Mr. BOWMAN: Another insinuation.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: The Maryvale Estate was offered to the present Government on the 29th June, 1907. A feature survey of the pro-

perty was ordered on the 22nd August. The surveyor's report was received on the 5th November, and between that date and the 25th November the Philp Government came into office. On the 25th November the matter was referred to the Land Court. The Land Court's report was received on the 29th November. I believe the Minister for Lands will do me the justice to say that the property was under offer to the Government till somewhere about the beginning of December. We felt that in the interest of closer settlement it was exceedingly important that the Maryvale Estate should not be lost to the community, especially in view of the fact that the Maryvale line was among the projects of the Government.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I look for some corroboration of your statement that we were not in earnest in the matter.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: These dates are taken from official records.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They do not add any strength to your statement.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: When we found that the offer of the property expired at the end of November or the beginning of December, the first thing we did was to get a renewal of the offer, and that renewal extended the time to the 10th January, 1908. The owners of the property did not appear to be very anxious about selling, and it was with some difficulty that we obtained an extension of the offer till the 10th January. On the 10th January the offer was accepted by the Government, subject to the terms of payment being arranged. On the 22nd January a formal offer was made under the Closer Settlement Act. On the 24th January the vendors accepted the offer, and on the 24th January a draft agreement was submitted to the vendors. This draft agreement was returned approved on the 29th January. On the 4th February the agreement was received from the vendors signed, and on the 5th February it was signed by the Minister. As a matter of fact the offer of the property was accepted during the month of January, but anyone who knows anything about business knows that you cannot hurry the preparation of legal documents. The explanation I have made is perfectly straightforward and perfectly true, and my reputation is not going to be soiled by statements thrown across the floor of the Chamber by men who, perhaps, have long since lost their own reputations.

Mr. GRANT: What about the Mount Molloy business?

Mr. W. H. BARNES: There is nothing wrong with the Mount Molloy business. Anything that was done was done on the recommendation of the proper officers of the department, [11.30 p.m.] whose recommendations are usually carried out. If the hon. member thinks there was anything wrong in connection with the business, let him call for the papers. We have heard a great deal about the constitutional question, and we have been told that when we were sitting on that side of the House we did a great deal that was wrong. We have been told that we did wrong in asking for a dissolution. Now, at one period in the history of Queensland there was a Government called the Dawson Government. They went to the representative of the King for the time being, and asked for a dissolution.

Mr. BOWMAN: And it was refused because they could not get Supply.

Mr. GRANT: There is no harm in asking for a dissolution.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: What can be said of the men who now denounce that kind of thing? I simply want to show the inconsistency of some members of the Government. They had only a small party then, and yet they were quite

prepared to ask for a dissolution, and they would have been glad if they could have got it.

Mr. COWAP: You got one, and you are very sorry now.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: Indeed, we are very sorry; and, if we had to go through the same experience again, we would do just the same, because the country demanded that we should take the step we did. A great deal has been said about land administration. It is very strange that nothing has been said on the floor of this House about the happenings in connection with Jimbour. I am not here to say that there was anything improper—that would be most unfair; but I do say that the Government who had to do with the purchase of Jimbour did what was an exceedingly improper thing.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Where was the impropriety?

Mr. W. H. BARNES: The impropriety was in putting an extreme price on the land.

Mr. GRANT: That was not their fault.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: It was their fault in paying an extreme price for it; and then, when the Minister found that he had paid an extreme price for the estate, loading the prospective buyer of the Cumkillenbar portion with another 20 per cent.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: And may I ask what was your motive in reducing the price on the eve of an election?

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Votes. (Laughter.)

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. W. H. BARNES: At the risk of taking some time, I shall read a letter written by the Under Secretary, to show that it was done on his recommendation.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: What is the date of the report?

Mr. W. H. BARNES: There is no date on it—

The purchase money paid for Cumkillenbar is at the average rate of £3 10s. per acre payable for the whole estate, but as Cumkillenbar is of better quality than the average of the whole estate the proportionate part of the total price to be attributed to Cumkillenbar, including its share of the legal costs, is £87,370. The minimum total selection price therefore of this land, on this basis, should be £96,107, or an average of £4 6s. 1d. per acre. Detailed valuations obtained from the Land Commissioner on the basis of a total valuation of £100,000 range for particular lots from £2 8s. 6d. to £7 10s. per acre, as shown on the attached plan.

The late Minister considered it desirable to increase these valuations by 20 per cent., so as to provide against loss through the inferior parts of the estate possibly proving unsaleable, except at prices below their proportionate cost, but, in view of the prices being asked for neighbouring land (Dalby Downs, for instance), such prices can scarcely be expected to be realised. The wisdom of unduly loading Cumkillenbar for the sake of the rest of the estate may be questioned. It must be remembered that under normal conditions the other sections of the estate must have improved in value at the time they successively fall into the hands of the Government during the next three years, and meanwhile no payment has to be made on their account. The respective areas, dates of getting possession, and proportionate value (on basis of average of £3 10s. for the whole estate, plus costs), are as follow, namely:—

Area	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
	13,023	40,354	40,354
Date when to be taken possession of, and paid for, at £3 10s. per acre	Aug., 1908.	Aug., 1909.	Aug., 1910.
	£	£	£
Proportionate part of price of whole estate (including costs) to be attributed to area	51,536	135,324	153,094
Minimum total selection price of area	56,690	148,856	173,904
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Minimum average selection price of area	3 2 11	3 13 9	4 6 2

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In the foregoing I have assumed that the several sections of the estate are to be so far regarded as separate purchases as to require that the selection price for each section must be at least 10 per cent. above the proportionate part of the price of the whole estate which should be attributed to that section on the basis of its intrinsic value in relation to the whole. Even if this is not legally necessary, I think that a cautious policy demands it, but I do not think that any further loading of the first section should be attempted. By the time that the third and fourth sections fall into the hands of the Government, two and three years hence respectively, land values in the district must have increased sufficiently to admit of these areas being disposed of on their own merits under better relative conditions than affect Cunkillenbar at the present time. While I think that ordinary caution requires that an attempt shall be made to dispose of Cunkillenbar at an advance of 10 per cent. on its proportionate cost, I should not hesitate, in the event of it hanging fire, to recommend a reduction in its prices, depending on the improved values of the other sections two and three years hence to make good the reduction.

The land now in possession of the Government has been designed into seventy-five portions of from 147 to 501 acres, with two isolated portions of 160 acres and 280 acres respectively. The land can be opened at any time, except that several agents have been given opportunity of forming groups in respect of parts of it. If immediate opening is desired, these agents should be required to report to what extent they have entered into engagements with would-be selectors in regard to any portions.

Now, what actually happened? The agents first of all were approached, and they said they could not succeed in getting people to go upon the land at the price.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Might I ask what agents said that?

Mr. W. H. BARNES: I will not give the agents away.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I challenge you to name a single agent who said the price debarred selection.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: Mr. Pulsford was one, and before we took any action those gentlemen were approached. Then, in addition to that, we were face to face with the fact that the adjoining lands of Dalby Downs, which were equally valuable, were offered at a lesser price. The land was thrown open under the best climatic conditions, and instead of being taken at an advance of 10 per cent. with 20 per cent. off, only a very small proportion was sold, and the balance had to be withdrawn.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Had to be withdrawn?

Mr. W. H. BARNES: At any rate it was withdrawn.

Mr. GRANT: How did you get that letter?

Mr. W. H. BARNES: I got it in a proper way. I am here to defend myself. The hon. gentleman does not like the unpleasant manner in which I am getting home.

Mr. GRANT: I do not think a Minister has a right to carry that away from the office.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: It is a copy, and I do not hesitate to say that in connection with that Cunkillenbar business there has been the greatest bungle.

The PREMIER: You started out to prove impropriety.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: I will tell you where the impropriety comes in. After the Government said the land was worth so much, they wrongfully gave £1 an acre more, and moreover the land in question was in the electorate of the Secretary for Lands.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Are you casting a reflection upon a judicial tribunal?

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Mr. W. H. BARNES: I am not reflecting on a judicial tribunal. A further impropriety was that the bank was willing to sell that land and run the risk.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: They were ready to sell Cunkillenbar.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: Let me say further, without any desire to injure this land, that I believe before we have done with Jimbour—we heard a great deal about the Seaforth Estate—but before we have done with this there will be a tremendous loss.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is not Mr. McDougall's opinion.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You remember your prophecy.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: Yes; and I hope I shall have an opportunity of taking the hon. gentleman round in sackcloth and ashes, when he will have to admit that my prophecy was correct. I am exceedingly sorry at this late hour to have had to go into this matter; but it was my duty, after the attack that had been made, to do so.

Mr. BOWMAN: I will take you up at the first sitting next week.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: I shall be very glad if the hon. gentleman does. I challenge any hon. member to prove any statement that would go in the direction of showing that there has been anything in my conduct of which I need be ashamed.

The PREMIER: Although it is very late I can hardly allow the hon. gentleman's speech to go without a remark or two. I have no desire to charge the hon. gentleman with doing anything improper—anything in a personal or moral sense, or in the sense of working in his own business interest, and I do not think anyone has hinted at that.

Mr. BOWMAN: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman has indignantly repudiated a charge which has not been made.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: It was made.

The PREMIER: But it has been raised as a blind, with a view of preventing people from seeing the charge that was made—namely, the irregular and unconstitutional action of the late Government in buying that estate.

Mr. GRANT: Situated as they were.

The PREMIER: The hon. gentlemen when they went into office found that negotiations had been going on between the late Government and the owners of the estate for its purchase. Why did they hurry the matter through in the way they did?

Mr. W. H. BARNES: Because the offer expired on the 10th January.

The PREMIER: It might have been a pure coincidence that an election happened to take place at that time, and that the hon. gentleman and his colleagues were very anxious to carry the two electorates which the buying of that estate would help them to carry. But it makes ordinary people suspicious of such conduct, when there does not seem to be any good reason for the action taken. They undoubtedly influenced the opinion of people in the two electorates.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: No, no!

The PREMIER: Why, it was well known in Warwick and Cunningham what a good Government the then Government were in buying the Maryvale Estate and building the railway. They did not talk about it like the Kidston Government. They made no idle promises, but

they bought the estate right off. The hon. gentleman knows quite well that it influenced the elections up there, and I say there was not the slightest need for the great hurry. Were they afraid that somebody else would buy it?

Mr. W. H. BARNES : The offer expired on the 10th January.

The PREMIER : These men ought to have remembered that they were in office on sufferance. They had no right there : Parliament had refused them Supplies.

Mr. W. H. BARNES : We were legally there.

The PREMIER : I am not questioning the legal right they had to be there, but the constitutional right they had to be there. Every man has a legal right there whom the Governor appoints there as a Minister, but he has no constitutional right there if he is there against the wishes of a majority of the House. Occupying that position, these men did not scruple to involve the country in an expenditure of nearly £90,000 when no harm would have been done by a few days' delay.

Mr. W. H. BARNES : That is not a fact. They were not prepared to extend the time unduly.

The PREMIER : That is mere moonshine, and would not deceive a child of ten who knew the facts. There is nothing in the papers to show that. As a matter of fact, it is not true.

Mr. W. H. BARNES : It is true.

The PREMIER : As a matter of fact, it is not true.

Mr. W. H. BARNES : I say it is true.

The PREMIER : And here is the remarkable thing : Not only were they holding office in this improper manner ; not only during the election contest did they do this thing ; but they actually signed that agreement after they were defeated at the polls.

Mr. W. H. BARNES : That is not correct. The hon. gentleman is making, no doubt unintentionally, a misstatement of the facts.

The PREMIER : The date of that document is the 5th February. If the hon. gentleman went to the office that day and signed that document—

Mr. W. H. BARNES : With the permission of the House I will explain the facts of the case. On the afternoon of the Tuesday preceding the election—Mr. Scott was away—Mr. Shannon, the officer who was acting for him, told me the documents connected with Maryvale Estate were ready for signature, and asked if I would come in the morning to sign them. I went there at 10 o'clock the next morning and signed them before going round to my polling-booths.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER : You got the benefit of that at Warwick.

The PREMIER : The hon. gentleman got the full benefit by telling the people beforehand that they were purchasing it. The mere fact that the document was signed on the day of the elections, or the day before, or the day after, made no difference. Here is the remarkable fact : that the hon. gentleman signed that document, believing he was exceeding his legal powers.

Mr. W. H. BARNES : No.

The PREMIER : He only signed it after he got a letter from the vendors exonerating him from personal responsibilities. It is a most extraordinary thing that Ministers of the Crown, carrying out their duties as Ministers, should get a communication from the vendors of a property that they should not be held personally responsible if anything turned out wrong. Why

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could they not wait a day or two until they ascertained whether they had legal powers to do it or not? It is impossible for the hon. gentleman to say that that is a proper way to carry on public business.

Mr. W. H. BARNES : It was in the interests of the community.

The PREMIER : The interests of the community had nothing whatever to do with it. I do not believe, myself, nor do I think anyone in the House believes, that the hon. gentleman, or any of his colleagues for that matter, did anything in a morally improper sense. Such a thing, I am glad to say, has never been said of any Ministry in Queensland. But they did this thing in a manner which every man who takes an interest in the proper carrying out of public business must reprehend in the strongest terms of condemnation. They made a deal binding the Parliament to find £90,000—a Parliament that had refused them Supply. The thing deserves the most severe censure from this House. The hon. gentleman has said that no member can point the finger of scorn at him in his private capacity, and I believe that is correct, but it has nothing to do with the way in which he discharged his public duty. As a matter of fact, there was no urgency in the sale at all.

Mr. W. H. BARNES : There was, and you know it.

The PREMIER : I know this—well, I will not say what I was going to say. There was nothing to justify the Ministry in carrying this thing through. And there was the doubt whether they had the power to pledge the country to the extent of £90,000. But they did not buy the estate after all. The agreement is not worth a snap of the fingers.

Mr. WOODS (*Woothakata*) : It is not my intention at this late hour to speak at any length, but there are one or two matters I must mention in justice to my constituents. Before doing so I desire to congratulate the Government on being able to come to the Chamber with the programme they submitted last year—one of the most democratic programmes ever placed before any Parliament in Australia. The late Minister for Railways said the Government had no railway policy. We find, on the contrary, that they have a very extensive railway policy. The hon. gentlemen went to the country and asked the people why they should pay

[12 p.m.] 3 per cent. for their railways. He told the people that there would be no railways built, but we find to-day there are five railways tabled, and in the opinion of the Commissioner they will pay from the jump. In answer to the hon. member for Cairns, the Minister stated that Mount Molloy had concessions granted on the recommendations of the officers of the department.

Mr. W. H. BARNES : The Director of Forests.

Mr. WOODS : I will accept the statement, but the official reply from the department shows that the director made no recommendation. The hon. gentleman is in the same position in this matter as he was in connection with the Maryvale Estate. Perhaps he manufactured a report from the Director of Forests.

Mr. W. H. BARNES : Is it not a fair deal?

Mr. WOODS : The hon. gentleman asks if a revision of the royalty after each year is not a fair thing. Of course it is ; but he knows there is nothing in the agreement to prevent the company from cutting the whole 10,000,000 feet mentioned in the agreement after the first year. It will be just as well for the House to know who are some of the shareholders in Mount Molloy.

Mr. Woods.]

They are John Moffatt, 6,000 shares; T. Linedale, 2,000 shares; Sir Alfred Cowley, 200 shares; E. H. Macartney, 50 shares; Hon. J. F. G. Foxton and Mrs. Foxton, 100 shares; the Hon. Robert Philp, who was at the head of the Government which the hon. member for Bulimba was in when he gave this concession, 1,400 shares. Is it any wonder that this concession was granted? When the papers are laid on the table of the House, I intend to move that they be printed, so that the information can be given to the country. Before this concession was granted there were three or four qualified timber-getters who had timber lying on the ground. When the company got news by wire that the concession was granted, these men were ordered off the land and their timber seized by the company, and the land commissioner in Cairns, in order to preserve the rights of the men, sent a communication up. I sincerely hope there will be sufficient grounds for the Premier and Minister for Lands to tell us it is in the same position as the Maryvale Estate, and that the agreement is not worth the paper it is written on. From a report of the gentleman who interviewed me on the matter, he said that in going along that road there was 1,500,000 feet of Cypress pine in sight, and these people have the sole right over 16,000 acres of that land to remove the timber. I sincerely hope that the Government will take some action in this matter, and prevent this concession from being ratified.

Question—Adoption of the Address in Reply—put and passed.

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

Question put and passed.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER: I move that this House, at its rising, do adjourn until Wednesday next.

Question put and passed.

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