

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 1 DECEMBER 1908

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TUESDAY, 1 DECEMBER, 1908.

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

QUESTIONS.

DEEP SINKING AND PROSPECTING.

Mr. MAXWELL (*Burke*), for Mr. Walker, asked the Secretary for Mines—

1. What amount of money has been spent in aid of deep sinking since 30th June, 1908?
2. The names of the parties or companies who received same, and amount?
3. What amount of money has been spent in aid of prospecting?
4. The name of persons or parties who received same, also amount?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES (Hon. J. G. Appel, *Albert*) replied—

1. £2,825 9s. 5d.	£ s. d.
2. New Monarch Gold Mining Company, Hodgkinson ...	300 0 0
Highland Mary Blocks Limited, Croydon ...	664 7 10
Messrs. Blucher and Simpson, Charters Towers ...	150 0 0
Golden Gate Consolidated Tribune, Croydon ...	618 0 6
Big Hill Gold Mining Company, Warwick ...	147 1 8
3 North Columbia Gold Mining Company, Gympie ...	147 0 0
Bedford's Reefing Syndicate, Clermont ...	47 16 0
Mount Morgan Prospecting Company J. Williamson, Jubilee Mine, Etheridge ...	200 0 0
Bennion's Block, Limited, Croydon ...	143 14 0
Llewellyn and party, West Normanby ...	191 19 8
Mount Warminster Lead and Copper Mines, Limited, Rockhampton ...	133 0 0
	82 9 9
Total	£2,825 9 5
3. £3,112 10s. 10d.	
4. Carriage of ore for prospectors, etc. ...	71 9 4
W. J. Cumming, Rockhampton ...	13 0 0
M. Johnson and party, Morinish ...	27 0 0
E. W. Korn, Cooktown ...	12 15 0
J. Exton, Cardwell ...	9 0 0
W. S. Wilkins, Bowen ...	15 0 0
Dehn and party, Coen ...	30 0 0
Geary and party, Townsville ...	18 0 0
C. Cheffins, Bowen ...	50 0 0
T. Jeffcoat and party, Stanthorpe ...	6 0 0
L. Rosengarten, Cloncurry ...	95 17 7
D. Twaddle and party, Cooktown ...	30 0 0
Thomson and Williams, Cooktown ...	13 10 0
A. Hempsall, Gympie ...	6 10 0
M. Bunney and party, Gympie ...	6 0 0
Crocodile Miners' Progress Association, Boultercombe ...	100 12 6
M. Neil and party, Upper Russell ...	10 0 0
Watson and party, Glastonbury ...	30 0 0
Gympie and District Prospecting Association ...	977 19 1
Pump for Gympie and District Prospecting Association ...	307 0 5
Sapphire Miners' Co-operative Association—Advance on gems ...	1,093 13 0
Classifying gems ...	92 0 0
Expenses, J. C. Kerr, re gems ...	9 0 0
Sinking well, Oaks Rush ...	25 12 0
Sinking well, Dumbutah road ...	42 11 11
Pump for well, Sapphire Town ...	15 0 0
Total	£3,112 10 10

TORRES STRAIT MAIL SERVICE.

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

1. In the advertisements calling for tenders for the Torres Strait mail service, was it stipulated that Broadmount should be the port of call for Central Queensland?

2. If so, why was it that the name of Port Alma was substituted for that of Broadmount, and that at the last moment?

3. Will the British-India Company's steamers on this service carry white crews?

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

1. No.
2. See answer to No. 1.
3. Yes, when contract is confirmed.

HALF-HOLIDAY QUESTION, MUSGRAVE ELECTORATE.

Mr. LAND (*Balonne*), for Mr. Barber, asked the Secretary for Public Works—

1. Has any application been made to allow the electors of the Musgrave electorate to participate in the poll on the half-holiday question, originally advertised to take place on 5th December, but now postponed till 12th December?

2. On whose authority or advice was the date for taking the poll postponed?

3. Has the local inspector at Bundaberg, the Chief Inspector, Brisbane, or the Secretary for Public Works power to postpone the taking of such poll after a specified date has been advertised?

4. Seeing that the request for, and the date originally advertised for, taking the poll only applied to the area then under the provisions of the Shops and Factories Act (namely, the Bundaberg electoral district), have the inspectors or Minister power to allow electors outside that area whose names do not appear on the Bundaberg electoral roll to participate in the poll?

5. Will the Minister state what action has been taken in the matter?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. G. Appel, *Albert*) replied—

1. Yes. Petitions received from both electors of Musgrave and Bundaberg.
2. The Chief Inspector.
3. Yes; Chief Inspector.
4. I think not.
5. None.

JOHNSTONE RIVER DISTRICT.

Mr. LENNON (*Herbert*) asked the Chief Secretary—

Has he received a petition from the Johnstone River Progress Association regarding the opening up of Mourilyan Harbour, and the construction of a railway in connection therewith, for the development of the Johnstone River district?

The PREMIER replied—

Yes.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Mr. MAUGHAN (*Ipswich*): Before I proceed to discuss the matters to which our attention is directed in the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne, I should just like to take the opportunity of referring briefly to a certain mining trouble which has recently taken place in my district. I refer to the colliery trouble at Mr. Black's coalpit at Blackheath, Bundamba. I think that every hon. member would deplore any trouble in connection with one of our great industries, especially the coal industry, at the present time, and the only reason I have for at all referring to this question this afternoon is to endeavour, as briefly as possible, to make known to this House and the country generally that the references made to the dispute in question in the Brisbane daily papers are somewhat erroneous. It seems to be the right thing nowadays to have big black scare headlines in the newspapers, and when the members of the Coalminers' Union—the men who are affected by the dispute—saw the headlines in the daily Press on Saturday morning

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they felt somewhat aggrieved. The following are the headlines which appeared in the *Courier* of Saturday in connection with the trouble:—

STRIKE AT BUNDAMRA.

Trouble at Blackheath Colliery.

Pit to be Closed Down.—200 Men Affected.

And in the *Daily Mail* of Saturday the following headings appeared:—

STRIKE OF COALMINERS.

Trouble at Blackheath Colliery.

Yardage Rates Demanded.—Men Go Out To-day.

Now, I desire to mention this fact: First, that there was no idea on the part of the men affected to strike at all, and another thing—even if they had wanted to strike, they could not have done it without first of all referring the whole question in connection with the dispute to the “district.” It is one great feature of the Queensland Colliery Employees’ Union that a small body of men cannot precipitate a serious industrial crisis without an appeal to the whole body of unionists.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAUGHAN: I should like to say, too, that the coal industry is not in that state at the present time which would make it a convenient occasion for men to go out on strike. At the same time, men are men, and the time may come when they have to stand on their manhood and resist the encroachments which are apt to be made by employers against the rights of the employees. I think I may speak on behalf of the men here to-day, and tell the House and country that, so far as the coalminers of that district are concerned, so long as they are properly treated by way of good conditions of labour and emoluments, there is not likely to be a strike in the industry for a long time to come. Having said that much, which I owe to the men themselves, I just wish to touch on one or two other matters before I come to the Speech. In the first place, I understand there is a disposition to rush through the business of the session and get into recess, and hon. members of this House feel that there is a tendency on the part of the Government of the day to depreciate the value of Parliament as an institution and govern the country by Cabinet—govern it by and through the departments.

Mr. SUMNER: By caucus.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Yes, if you like, by caucus, and fritter away the rights of the representatives of the people to meet here in common, and work out the destinies of the State.

Mr. SUMNER: Has that not always been so?

Mr. MAUGHAN: Yes, it has. The interjection of the hon. member reminds me that about 260 years ago it was considered almost a crime to talk about the opening of Parliament, or even to discuss Parliament at all. In fact, we read in history that men were distinctly against the assembling of Parliament, and there is a great probability, if we are not careful, of the representatives of the people seeing the same thing in a young State like Queensland.

Mr. SUMNER: It is no different now to what it has always been.

Mr. MAUGHAN: As hon. members are aware, a great deal of reference has already been made to the change in the personnel of the Ministry. I should like to say, in connection with the changes which have taken place, and the period covered by the recess since last we met, I am reminded that for several months the Acting Premier was a gentleman who had no

political responsibility to the people of the country. I think that the time has come when it should be a *sine qua non* of responsible government that the Premier, or Chief Secretary, or Prime Minister of this country should be a man elected by the people of the country.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAUGHAN: He should be a Minister representing some constituency. I do not say that in any carping spirit. As a matter of fact, the gentleman who acted in the position of Acting Premier is well known to all of us, and I do not think he has got an enemy in the House politically, but I lay it down as a principle that the Chief Secretary of Queensland should be a gentleman having some direct electoral responsibility to the people. I am also inclined to think that these frequent changes in Ministerial office are not good for the community. It may be good for certain people, but on the whole I think that it is apt to depreciate the value attached to the office of a Cabinet Minister; but as things now stand a man who is appointed a Minister to-day, in six months’ time, or less, probably finds himself out in the cold. He has probably been an industrious Minister, has just got the grip of his department, and desires to accomplish certain reforms, when he finds himself out of office. Now, take the case of the hon. member for Barcoo. I like to be perfectly fair and frank, and I will say this, that while that hon. gentleman was Minister for Railways he attempted to carry out a good many reforms in connection with his particular department.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAUGHAN: And those reforms affected a large number of men who are my own constituents, but we find him now left out in the cold and another gentleman appointed in his place. These changes would not be half so bad if the reforms laid down by an outgoing Minister were carried out by his successor. But as a rule they are not. They are simply pigeon-holed.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Which reforms, might I ask?

Mr. MAUGHAN: If the hon. member wants a list of reforms which the late Minister for Railways was anxious to carry out, and which particularly affect my district, he will find them in the Railway Department. I have no desire to inflict details upon the House at the present time, but all I desire to point out is this, that there is a tendency on the part of Ministers to ignore altogether the promises of their predecessors. Sometimes it is a fortunate thing that it is so; at other times the constituencies suffer a good deal. Why there should be any disposition to rush through the business and adjourn before Christmas I do not know. We have had a very long recess, and we only had a very short session early in the year, although I quite frankly admit that we did in that one session a good deal more work for the country than probably can be recorded in connection with any previous session since we have had responsible Government in Queensland. I think the idea of rushing through the work and adjourning before Christmas is open to very grave question. I find there are precedents for working up to Christmas, adjourning for the holidays, and resuming work after the New Year. In 1868 the House met on the 18th November, and the session ended on the 22nd April, 1869. In 1871 the House met on the 8th November, and carried on business till the 22nd January, 1872. In 1883 the House assembled on the 8th November, and members dispersed on the 10th March, 1884. Perhaps hon. members will say that this is ancient history; but it must be admitted that the proposal to meet towards the end of the year, without hon. members being given ample oppor-

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tunity to air their grievances and bring forward matters affecting their constituents, deserves censure. The Speech which has been submitted by His Excellency the Governor to Parliament contains many matters of interest to the people generally, and also contains certain details which require the utmost attention on the part of hon. members. Reference is made to the Chief Secretary's visit to England. Speaking as a member of the Labour party, I have no particular objection to the Chief Secretary visiting England, and I am sure there is no member of this party so narrow-minded as to prevent the Chief Secretary, or any other Minister, going to the other end of the world, provided he could do some good service for the State. If I can see anything at all in the Speech worthy of particular notice in connection with the Premier's visit to Europe, I think his work in connection with our loans is a matter which redounds to his credit. Any financier, whether politician or not, who can do anything to relieve the taxpayers of burdens, whether by arranging with the Bank of England in connection with the repayment of our loans or otherwise, is doing good service for the country. Therefore, I have no particular objection to his visit to England in connection with that matter. But I think that while he was in England he was apt to allow his immigration proposals to run riot; and I think that is a matter that requires the attention, not only of Ministers, but of all hon. members. Our attention is also directed to the fact that we are to have a Queensland mail service. With the details of the agreement most of us are acquainted, and no doubt an opportunity will be given to discuss the matter subsequently. Reference is made to the Franco-British Exhibition. If I remember aright, every member of the Labour party voted for the money to be expended in connection with the Exhibition, because we realised that it would be a good advertisement for Queensland, and I do not think that anybody regrets the expenditure of the money voted for that purpose. I should like now to refer to another means to which the Government had recourse in connection with advertising the State. I refer to the Sydney Intelligence Bureau. We are all aware that the Premier arranged some time ago for a building in Pitt street to serve as an Intelligence Bureau in the interests of this State, and that a very active, zealous, and able man, Mr. Higgs, was put in charge. I believe all those members who went to Sydney during the time of the American Fleet festivities visited the bureau, and, I think, what struck all of us was the fact that the bureau was far too small. It is a little tin-pot place.

Mr. LESINA: A shabby little place.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Yes, a shabby little place. When we looked round and compared the New South Wales bureau with that of Queensland, one was inclined to question whether the sign-board put up by Mr. Higgs—"The Colossus of Queensland!"—was in keeping with the small office referred to. The money spent on that bureau is money well spent, and I cannot help thinking it is unfortunate that the bureau in Melbourne was not kept going. From what I heard when I was in the South, particularly in connection with people coming to Australia, they are attracted a good deal to the intelligence bureaus of Melbourne and Sydney and the Western portion of Australia, and Queensland as a rule is left out in the cold. If we take steps to advertise Queensland, it should be done properly, and it can only be done properly by establishing properly equipped bureaus of suffi-

cient dimensions. In the Sydney bureau there is no room for exhibits, and the Chief Secretary must know that the present director cannot possibly make a proper show of any exhibit that people might desire to send down. I was commissioned by the Queensland Woollen Company, Ipswich, to make inquiries as to whether the director could find room for an exhibit in the bureau; but Mr. Higgs assured me that, while he would endeavour to find room, he could not make the display that he would like to do. Reference was also made to the Agency-General. I have heard all sorts of rumours in connection with Sir H. Tozer. I suppose we shall hear before very long that Sir Horace has resigned, and that some other dignitary has been appointed in his stead. It is too early to anticipate who that gentleman will be, but I hope that he will be a man thoroughly representative of Queensland, and that he will be able to properly represent the State at the other end of the world. My own opinion about the Agent-General is, that the representative of a State, especially of

a country like Queensland, should

[4 p.m.] be a thoroughly practical man, and the greater experience he has had in trade and commerce, so much the better it will be for the State. Reference has also been made to the producing industries, and under that heading comes agriculture, mining, and land settlement. One thing is certain, so far as agriculture is concerned, I suppose never in the history of the State was that particular industry making greater strides. We have to be very thankful for a series of splendid seasons, and I trust they will continue. Given good seasons, there is nothing to hold Queensland back—nothing at all.

Mr. SUMNER: In what way? Where are the figures?

Mr. MAUGHAN: I say given good seasons, there is nothing to hold Queensland back.

Mr. SUMNER: Give us some proof of that.

Mr. MAUGHAN: I cannot give statistics about the seasons; the hon. member can look them up for himself. What I say is this: Given good seasons, there is nothing to hold Queensland back, and I am sure the majority of members will agree to that.

Mr. SUMNER: That is so, but you made a statement. Give us some proof.

Mr. MAUGHAN: I say the recent good seasons, which is proof sufficient. Take, for instance, dairying. The hon. member knows, as a practical man, that there are hundreds—I might say thousands—taking up land at the present time, a large number of whom have invested everything they have in the world on good stock; and the dairy industry, as is known, is going ahead by leaps and bounds, and should a drought come, it will be a very serious thing for Queensland, and no man in Queensland would suffer more than the dairy farmer. Land settlement and immigration is also referred to in the Speech, and I shall have something to say about these particular matters later on. Reference is also made to the railway policy, and the recent mining disaster at Mount Morgan, and I am sure I can only re-echo the sentiments that have been uttered by hon. members in all parts of the House, when I say it is deplorable that an accident like that should occur, and it is a warning to all concerned for the Government to make mining operations much safer than they have been in the past. Reference is also made to the bêche-de-mer industry, in connection with which a Royal Commission has been taking evidence. The financial relations between the Commonwealth and the State also find reference in the Speech. The usual stereotyped reference to the

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Estimates, which are supposed to be framed with due regard to economy, is also to be found, and the Bills promised are—A Bill to Provide for Advances for Workers' Dwellings; a Bill to Further Amend the Land Act; a Bill to Restrict the Leasing of Land to Aliens; a Bill to Authorise Mining on Private Properties; a Public Service Superannuation Bill; a Trade Disputes Bill; a Bill to Amend the Bills of Sale Act; and a Bill to Amend the Local Authorities Act. I should just like to say in connection with these proposed Bills, and the same statement may be applied to every Bill containing reforms passed by this House—it does not matter how good a Bill may be, it does not matter how just and humane its principles may be, unless that Bill is associated with good, sound, sympathetic administration, then I say that Bill might just as well never become law for all the good it will do. (Hear, hear!) There must be good, healthy, humane administration of those measures, and unless we have that we may just as well save ourselves the trouble of passing measures of this character. I trust that the new Ministers who have taken office, if they have the chance of administering any Bills of this character, will endeavour to see by administration that they are carried out to the letter. There are one or two measures which I must say I was somewhat surprised were not included in the Speech, particularly as they have already appeared in the two previous Speeches from the Throne—an amendment of the Workers' Compensation Act particularly. I am also sorry, and it is a matter that affects my district and I specially urge it on the Minister for Mines, that there is no promise of a Coal Mining Regulation Bill. Such an Act, although it may be a new thing for Queensland, is by no means new to other States. In New Zealand a Coal Mining Regulation Act has been in force for many years. The conditions of coal mining are of such a peculiar nature and character that they demand special legislation. I trust that will receive the attention of the Minister for Mines, if not in the present session, in the very near future, and I can assure him it will be very much welcomed, not only by the coalmasters and coalminers in my district, and in that of the hon. member for Bundamba, but I believe throughout the whole State. While I see a great deal in the Speech about settlement on the land, yet for some years this House has been ignoring altogether another class of enterprise that I think really requires attention. While the House, and particularly the party I am associated with, has shown every inclination to assist the primary producers, it is of equal importance to render some assistance to the men who are dealing with manufactures in Queensland.

Mr. SUMNER: The Federal Parliament do that.

Mr. MAUGHAN: That is so to a certain extent, but the State Parliament could do a great deal also. Only the other day the Government found themselves short of engines, and they ordered twenty locomotives to be built in England. Do you mean to say those engines could not have been built in Queensland?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Certainly they could.

Mr. MAUGHAN: It may be argued that they could not be built in the Government railway workshops, but there are other great engineering firms in Queensland, such as Walkers Limited, Evans, Anderson, and Phelan, Limited, and other important ironworks; and I am quite convinced, in my own mind, that these engines could have been constructed in Queensland without any trouble. Why all this undue haste? Why have sent that order for locomotives 16,000

miles home to the old country, which will involve the expenditure of an enormous amount of public money? We find mechanics walking about idle, and we find parents worrying the life out of hon. members to find work for their sons, and we have numbers of mechanics and coachpainters and others coming in the guise of farm labourers in immigrant ships and asking for employment in the Government railway workshops or iron foundries. We know these engines could have been made in Queensland, and if at that particular time the powers that be found it inconvenient, by stress of work, to manufacture them, then surely arrangements could have been made whereby double shifts could have been put on in the Government and private workshops and so cope with the work in that way. We believe in the principle of Queensland work to be done by Queenslanders as far as possible. (Hear, hear!) The State of Victoria has not imported a single engine for some time. We should do everything we can to encourage manufacturing in Queensland. There is a great avenue for the employment of our people here; and, if we are going to start sending home for our locomotive engines, we shall soon find ourselves sending to America for carriages, wagons, and goodness knows what else.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Was there not a particular reason for that order being sent?

Mr. MAUGHAN: There may have been a particular reason. The hon. member can make a particular reason for anything.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Were not other orders given for engines to be built in the State at the same time?

Mr. MAUGHAN: Yes, there were other orders given; but I say that there was no occasion for the tremendous hurry that was shown. As a matter of fact, if the Locomotive-Engineer had only shown a little more foresight, there would have been no occasion for the manager of our railways to have placed the order for those engines in the old country.

Mr. SUMNER: All your party are not of that opinion.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Well, I am!

LABOUR MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. KERR: But you are aware that local manufacturers could not undertake the order.

Mr. MAUGHAN: That has to be proved. I know that I approached the hon. member about it, and I know that from his point of view he was perfectly sincere. At the same time, it is entirely a matter of opinion, and I cannot help thinking that arrangements might have been made to have those engines made in Queensland.

Mr. MITCHELL: It was purely a question of time.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: A question of time and of the requirements of the railway service.

Mr. MAUGHAN: We have heard all those arguments before.

Mr. MITCHELL: The railways had been neglected up to that time.

Mr. MAUGHAN: It is well known that those engines were ordered in anticipation of several lines which were passed last session being constructed; and we know that those lines have not yet been completed.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: A great number of them have been constructed.

Mr. MAUGHAN: A great deal has been said about the methods of the Labour party in connection with its management. The Premier not

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long ago made some remarks on the subject, a report of which appeared in the *Courier* of 27th April. The hon. gentleman was being banqueted at a citizens' function at which he received a presentation, and he made use of the following remarks:—

A considerable number of the members of the Labour party—he thought the whole of the Labour party—if they settled the business of the House in the House, would do so in such a way that there would be no trouble about the business. (Hear, hear!) But unfortunately that party had got into such a system of party management that their line of conduct in the House was not settled in the House at all. (Applause.) There was no appeal to reason in the House about the matter. Their line of conduct was settled for them outside. The Kidston Government, they would see, under these circumstances, was not only controlled by the Labour party according to popular ideas—they were not only controlled by the Labour party, but the Labour party which controlled them was controlled by someone else outside of Parliament.

Well, the only agency that I know that controls the members of the Labour party outside are the people themselves—the electors who send them to Parliament. (Hear, hear!) There is no doubt the hon. gentleman had very good reason for saying that. He was preparing the way for the fusion or the coalition of the Kidston and Philp parties, and this was his excuse—probably one of the many excuses he has made in various parts of Queensland and in the South, and probably at home, for all I know—for bringing about this coalition. I do not think there was a member of this party who, on the last day of the last session, did not feel that a coalition was in the air. (Hear, hear!) Anybody on the direct and cross Opposition benches realised that there was to be a fusion of the two parties in the very near future. There was nothing at all surprising about it, and therefore the Premier need not have gone out of his way to point at the management of the Labour party in the way he did, when he himself used to be an active participant in that very management. When members rise in this House they are not speaking merely to their fellow members, they are speaking to the country, and it is just as well to put this matter clear to the country. As a matter of fact, this party knows no controlling influence except the electors who send them here. I know what the hon. gentleman meant. The hon. gentleman has an idea that there is a power called the Central Political Executive which sits, as he calls it, "on the hill" in solemn conclave, and orders this party to do its bidding. Well, I challenge the Premier to prove that statement.

LABOUR MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAUGHAN: I am a member of the Central Political Executive, and I cannot recall one instance where that body has sent a peremptory demand to this party to do a single thing, or to take a certain line of action. As a matter of fact, it is rather the other way. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. HARDACRE: They are careful not to interfere.

Mr. MAUGHAN: That is so; and it is just as well to let the country know exactly what the Central Political Executive is. The basis of that body is simply the political and industrial organisations associated with the Queensland Labour party. The present Central Political Executive was elected at the Rockhampton convention in 1907. It was elected by the votes of the delegates sent there by organised labour throughout the whole of Queensland.

Mr. MAXWELL: No.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Surely nobody will take exception to that!

Mr. HARDACRE: It is copied by every other political party in the world.

Mr. MAUGHAN: There is an old saying that "imitation is the sincerest form of flattery." We already see evidences on the other side of hon. members adopting our methods. They have adopted our method of the caucus—a very much denounced system many years ago; and, if I mistake not, as time goes on, they will find our system of organisation the most convenient for them to adopt. I see there is a new party being formed—the Liberal Democratic party. Now, I would suggest to hon. members opposite to elect a central political executive in connection with that organisation. Now, what is our Central Political Executive composed of? The Convention of 1907 elected eleven members. Four of the members of that executive happened to be members of the Parliamentary Labour party. Although the majority of the members of the Convention—probably 80 per cent. of them—were non-members of Parliament, yet we find that the leader of our party and myself headed the poll for the Central Political Executive, with other members of the party following closely—a good and sufficient answer to those people who say that there is a tendency on the part of the organisations to get rid of the Parliamentary Labour members—to manage our business through the Central Political Executive or some outside body. In addition to the representative members elected at the convention, which include the four members of this party whom I have named, the chairman of the party (Mr. Bowman, member for Fortitude Valley), and the secretary of the party, the hon. member for Bundaberg, are also members of the Central Political Executive. We have also on that body two members of the Federal Labour party, and the president and secretary of the Australian Federation. The then president was Mr. May, the hon. member for Flinders. The secretary of the Central Political Executive is the Hon. A. Hinchcliffe, M.L.C. The personnel of that body also included the secretary of the three branches of the Australian Workers' Union, "or whom they may appoint." As hon. members know very well, it is a very inconvenient for the secretaries of the Australian Workers' Union to come down hundreds of miles to meet with the Central Political Executive in Brisbane, and that is the reason that provision was inserted in the constitution, and this made it possible to appoint my colleague, the hon. member for Mitchell (Mr. Payne), and other Labour members to that particular body. It will be seen, therefore, that all this talk about "the power on the hill" is considerably minimised when we deal with the facts as they exist. The power "on the hill" is, after all, simply ourselves and a few others who are as much interested in the Labour movement as any man in this House. I come now to the question of the management of our party. The Labour party can manage its own business in its own way, and has done so, and does so still. Every Tuesday we meet to consider matters. We are not always unanimous. Still, we agree to differ, and we endeavour to do our business in a proper manner, and I have never known of any occasion when a knock has come to our door with a mandate to the chairman from any outside body to do something or other. It is just as well that these facts should be made known to the public. I notice that the Premier, and more than one Minister and ex-Minister, have gone about the country during the recess, and, taking advantage of public functions, have referred to the party who now sit in direct opposition as dreamers, men with visionary ideas, men who sit occasionally in convention and draft political platforms which are absolutely incompatible with the public welfare of Queensland. Extraordinary things have been said about our

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platform and the management of the party. I should therefore like to take this opportunity to refer to one or two important facts in connection with this party's policy and with its progress during the last few years. I have said more than once, on public platforms, that there is no party in politics in Australia which can come before the people and ask for their suffrages unless that party embraces in its political creed numbers of the planks in the Labour party's platform, (Hear, hear!)

Mr. MAXWELL: Many of those planks were in their programmes before the Labour party thought of them.

Mr. MAUGHAN: We know that a brilliant man like Sir Samuel Griffith, who was leader of the Liberal party in the eighties, included in his manifesto over his signature ideas and reforms which were a long way in advance of his time. As a matter of fact, the Labour party never claimed that there was anything particularly original in their platform. Nearly everything in their platform has been culled from the statute-books of States other than our own.

Mr. SUMNER: They have no Labour party in New Zealand.

Mr. MAUGHAN: That simply bears out my contention. If the conventions, which study advanced forms of legislation, see a desirable reform they adopt it, no matter whether that reform comes from a Labour or a Liberal Government. So long as it is a reform, and is practicable, they adopt it. The object of the party is to bring Queensland up to date in regard to progressive legislation. There is nothing that is absolutely original in the Labour party's platform, and there is nothing in it that cannot be brought within the realm of practical politics right away. Let us go back to 1893. What do we find this party doing in that year? We find that it advocated strongly "one man one vote." Then it was possible for one or two men to record probably a dozen votes before dinner time in Brisbane, Ipswich, Rockhampton, and other places in Queensland. All that sort of thing is wiped away now. Another thing the party advocated at that time was all parliamentary elections on one day. You will remember that in those days parliamentary elections were not all held on the same day, but extended over a fortnight or three weeks sometimes, and when an unpopular Minister or member was defeated in one electorate he sometimes obtained a seat for another constituency. That also is now a thing of the past. Again, we advocated the State control of water conservation and irrigation. That important plank, which has been in our platform for many years, is finding realisation to a certain extent in some proposals which have been made by the Premier and his party. An eight-hour day is another plank in the Labour platform which has been derided and denounced by politicians who did not know any better, and yet we now find that Ministers have been compelled by sheer force of political circumstances to introduce an eight-hour day into Government departments throughout the State. This party also advocated the passing of a Factories and Shops Act, a Machinery Act, the establishment of a State Department of Labour, a revision of the railway tariff, and the exclusion of indented labour; also legislation to insure industrial peace. Many of those planks which were denounced in 1893 are actually on the statute-book to-day. Let us come now to 1898, and see what were the planks in the Labour platform at that time. One was "one adult one vote, or State enrolment of voters, provision to be made for all those persons whose occupations necessi-

tate a constant change of residence." Those principles are recognised to-day. Had they not been at the head of the Labour party's platform, it is very likely that we should still have been following the old way that we used to follow many years ago, when electors did not know where they were, and the Elections Act was practically a dead-letter. Again, in the platform of 1898 we find "Amended Mines Act, inspection of land boilers, minimum wage on all Government contracts, weekly half-holiday, day labour on Government works, organisation of unemployed, progressive income tax, exemption up to £200; mining on private property, measure to facilitate settlement, national storehouses, loans to settlers, State audit of banks, etc., old-age pensions, repeal of Polynesian Labour Act, and exclusion of indented labour." How many of those planks are in active operation to-day? Practically every one of them, even the weekly half-holiday, provision for which is made in the Factories and Shops Act. Then, later on, day labour on Government works. We know there are clauses provided in Government contracts providing for a minimum wage. [4.30 p.m.] The organisation of the unemployed, although perhaps not as perfect a system as it might be, yet does something to meet the trouble. We know perfectly well that the public estate improvement fund, with which the late Minister for Lands was associated, although in some instances it might have been better, yet, speaking generally, that scheme was a very excellent one, and, so far as my district is concerned—and I feel many other hon. members can speak likewise—it afforded a great deal of relief to numbers of unemployed. (Hear, hear!) Then mining on private property. We have the Minister for Lands coming down with a Mining on Private Property Bill, and yet in those days—only a few years ago—the Labour party were held up as visionaries for suggesting such a thing! We also provided for "National storehouses." I would ask the hon. member for Cunningham what he would do without the socialistic wheat storehouses situated in Warwick and other parts of the Darling Downs?

Mr. GRAYSON: It is good business for the farmers all right.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Good business for the farmers, and good business for the State. The hon. gentleman represents a large body of farmers, and they will take as much more socialism of that sort as the House likes to give them.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is State socialism.

Mr. MAUGHAN: The hon. member said last session that he was a State socialist.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Yes; he is a State socialist.

Mr. BOWMAN: Your chief does not believe in it.

Mr. MAUGHAN: When we come to 1901 we find the platform contained a Workers' Compensation Act, now the law of the land. The late member for Gympie, Mr. Fisher, now Federal Prime Minister, the hon. member for Gympie, Mr. Ryland, and others, have all been associated with that humane piece of legislation, and yet we know, as practical men of the world, that, when it was proposed to assist the poor workers who were maimed and injured, a good many of the employers were simply astonished, simply paralysed when it was proposed that workers should be compensated for injuries received, and yet it is the law of the land to-day, thanks to the Labour party—to the foresight of the party in providing for legislation of

that sort. Then in the same year we had a plank in the party's platform—"State assistance to gem-mining." I think it has become a live question to-day, as the hon. member for Clermont and the hon. member for Leichhardt will bear me out. The time must come when those engaged in gem-mining must be assisted, and they have every reason to expect to be just as much assisted in that particular enterprise as the farmers or any other class of our people.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They have had a grant.

Mr. HARDACRE: A small one.

Mr. MAUGHAN: The Minister for Mines says they have already had a grant. That just confirms my statement. Although this may be a small thing, yet it simply confirms my contention that anything that has appeared in the Labour party's platform is thoroughly practicable, and certainly not visionary, as the Chief Secretary and his friends seem to think. Then we come to the 1903 platform. We said there that no Asiatic, Polynesian, or African alien must hold land in freehold or leasehold. What do we find? It is proposed to bring down a Bill very shortly dealing with that very plank, and yet we were told in those days that it was absolutely impracticable, and likely to cause international disputes between Queensland and Japan, or China, and some other places.

Mr. BOWMAN: It was the same old game; they opposed it all along.

Mr. MAUGHAN: We provided for State ownership and control of coalmines; and we had only the other day the Premier discussing the idea of a State coalmine. If that should become the law it will be a great benefit to the State. Only in the *Courier* the other day was reference made to the importance, as far as the Government department was concerned, of the State control of coalmines. I should like to say, with regard to the general principle of State control of industries of this character, that unless the State secured the very best of managers to manage these concerns, they should keep clear of the business altogether. It will be a bad thing, for instance, when the State buys out the coalmines, and gets some person to manage them—

Mr. HARDACRE: Probably imported.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Probably imported—one who will bear "M.A." after his name—and it is discovered later on that the mine has been badly managed. I say it would be far better for the State to touch nothing of that sort, unless it can command the very best of management. Last year the Labour Convention met in Rockhampton. We hear a great deal about the Rockhampton policy of the Premier. The Labour party had a Rockhampton policy as well, and we find embraced in that Rockhampton policy the abolition of the postal vote, and the Machinery Act—only certificated persons to take charge of machinery. We had the principle of perpetual leases, so ably advocated for years by the hon. member for Leichhardt—that was also a plank in our platform. The institution of a State Department of Labour was also an important plank, and one which I am very glad indeed to see is being operated upon at the present time. I should just like to say with regard to the Labour Department, that I believe it is doing good work, and I also believe it could do better work. I believe our Labour Department might be made much more important and beneficial than it is at the present time. No doubt metropolitan members will be more familiar with its methods of procedure than I am, but I can only say that in the country districts the organisation of the Labour Department is com-

paratively a dead letter. There is simply no business in it. As a matter of fact, members of Parliament living in country districts are practically labour agents in their own particular electorates. In my own electorate and Bundaburra the Labour Department system is an absolute farce. As a matter of fact, there is no such department, and I think that in important centres like we have in the country the organisation of the department should be everything that is desired. I think I have proved, as far as the Labour party's platform is concerned during the years I have cited, that there have been many important reforms which have sprung directly from those platforms—platforms which have originated at the Labour conventions so much denounced by the Chief Secretary and others, and that these particular reforms are by no means visionary or impracticable, but have proved absolutely useful realities. (Hear, hear!) But, again, we find in the Speech from the Throne in March last a few more planks from this much abused platform. We find a Workers' Compensation Act Amendment Bill. We had then a promise made of an amending Bill dealing with workers' compensation, and I trust that that will be made an urgent matter. The people in my own district—the coalminers particularly—are most anxious that the Workers' Compensation Act should be amended without any unnecessary delay. There have been many serious cases cropping up of late of injuries to life and limb, and I hope this measure will be treated with the greatest urgency. Only a short amending Bill is required. The employees in the Railway Department can, however, take advantage of the Order-in-Council passed by the Governor in Council, providing for the payment of compensation from the date of injury. Therefore, while I have some hundreds of railway men in my electorate who are provided for, there are others—coalminers, sawmill workers, carters, and others working at various trades—who are not provided for at all. And what applies to my district also applies to every district in Queensland, and the time has come for immediate action in this respect. In the Speech last year we also noticed a State Insurance Bill, which is equally important and equally urgent; also a Mining or Private Property Bill, and a Trade Disputes Bill.

Mr. JONES: That Bill is a bit of a farce.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Now, one reason given by the Chief Secretary for severing his political connection with this party was that he point blank refused to be dominated by the Labour party any more. In other words, he most strongly objected to the Labour party suggesting or proposing that planks of our platform should be introduced into his policy. But what do we find? We find four of five Bills promised in the Governor's Speech now before this House which are planks of our platform. Who dominated the Premier in this way? The Labour party have not been consulted about the inclusion of the planks of their platform in the Governor's Speech, and yet the Premier and the members of his party have introduced them as part of their business. What dominating influence was there at work that caused the introduction of these Bills?

Mr. HARDACRE: Let us see what colour they are when they come in.

Mr. MAUGHAN: It seems extraordinary, if we reflect for a moment, that it was not so long ago that the Chief Secretary said he was done with the Labour party—absolutely done with the Labour party—and yet a few weeks afterwards we see him placing in the Governor's Speech, as part of the policy of the Government, a number of planks of the Labour platform.

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Mr. MAXWELL: He ought to have asked you about them.

Mr. MAUGHAN: They are all coming. I have already enumerated instances this afternoon where they are coming. There are, however, a few planks of our platform which have not been realised yet, but we are still agitating for them, and we are in hopes that it will not be long before they are introduced and carried into law. It is just as well to enumerate some of them here. The first plank is the abolition of the Legislative Council, then there are the establishment of public sugar refineries and smelting works, tax on publicly-created land values and absentees.

Mr. HARDACRE: Hear, hear!

Mr. GRAYSON: It is a land tax all the same.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Cheap land and low railway rates; cessation of sale of public estate; local government reform. By that we mean local government of the people, by the people, and for the people, and that can only be accomplished by having adult suffrage.

Mr. GRAYSON: What about the land tax?

Mr. MAUGHAN: That is a splendid thing to gull the farmers with, but the intelligent farmers realise what the Labour party mean by a tax on publicly-created land values.

Mr. GRAYSON: We have got a land tax already.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAUGHAN: There are very few farmers in the hon. member's electorate who will be affected by the tax on land values as we propose.

Mr. GRAYSON: Many of them will.

Mr. MAUGHAN: A good many of them in the hon. gentleman's electorate are not large farmers at all. They are only carrying on in a small way, and probably they will escape taxation altogether under this particular proposal.

Mr. GRAYSON: But you can lower the exemption at any time.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Then other items in the Labour platform are elective Ministries, taxation reform, public ownership of railways, public ownership of coalmines, and State manufacture and sale of intoxicants. Just here I may state that I hope before long that some Government will be strong enough and determined enough to see that the liquor sold to the people of Queensland is a good deal better than it is at the present time.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAUGHAN: So far as I am personally concerned, I do not care if there is not a pint of liquor sold in the whole State; but I am speaking for the thousands of people who do take it, and I say that it is the duty of the Government to see that they are provided with the purest of liquor. While I do not desire to depreciate the good work done by Dr. Ham and his energetic officers of the Health Department—I admit that they have done splendid work—but there is a tremendous amount of work yet to be done in connection with the adulteration of liquor and food in Queensland to-day. (Hear, hear!) The Labour party considers that it is of sufficient importance to place in our fighting platform—"Pure food for the people." Another plank of the Labour platform is the establishment of a "Sinking fund to meet maturing loans."

LABOUR MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAUGHAN: Now, this reform should appeal to all hon. members, irrespective of party. We are told that the Labour party has no constructive ability at all, and that the Labour party know nothing at all about finance. I should like

to ask you, Mr. Speaker, What of all those great financiers we have had in Queensland for the last fifty years? There does not appear to have been the least attempt made on the part of those financiers to cope with the question of having a sinking fund to meet our loans as they mature. With all respect to the many men who have acted as State Treasurers in the past, I say that there is not one of them who has faced the great problem in the way that it should have been faced. This is not a visionary policy or the policy of a lot of dreamers, but it is a practical policy which we put before the people of Queensland, and which, I am sure, will be carried out in time. We have had many planks of our platform passed into law, and there were others mentioned in the Governor's Speech the other day, while we have members of the present Government giving notice of Bills as part of their policy which are really planks of the Labour platform. I trust that when these Bills become law that they will not have their good effects neutralised by barren administration, for good administration, as you know, Mr. Speaker, is everything. A Government may pass a lot of splendid reforms, and yet it is possible for them to be killed by bad administration. I also desire to say something in connection with the almost unseemly attack which the Hon. the Chief Secretary has made upon the Federal Labour party. From a political point of view he has a perfect right to do it. We are not questioning that at all, but we are questioning his methods, his tactics. We question the reason which he gives for waging war against the Federal Labour party. We can quite understand from a party point of view that it would be to his discredit if he did not oppose the forces which are opposing him. It would at once suggest that he had not the pluck to do it. As a matter of fact, I think that most of us are very pleased that he has waved his flag and declared war so early in the fight. That will give him time for more organisation; it will act as a great stimulus throughout the State; his action will appeal to the men to organise and agitate, and it will enable them to close up the ranks and consolidate them as has never been done before. According to the Premier, one of the reasons he gave as to why he should wage war against the Federal Labour party was to preserve "State rights." Most hon. members are aware that I was an ardent Federalist in 1899-1900. The political position at that time brought about many strange combinations on the political platform when the federation referendum was being discussed. In fact, the hon. the Speaker and myself were addressing meetings on the same platform; the late Hon. W. H. Browne and the Hon. R. Philp were associated on the same platform with the late hon. member for Charters Towers, Mr. Dawson. In fact, we were all mixed up then. (Laughter.) At the same time, we were all agreed that federation would be a good thing for Queensland. One of the best articles I ever read in connection with Federal fallacies appeared in the Brisbane *Daily Mail* in 1906. There is no doubt that it was an ably written article, and it always struck me as being worthy of distribution throughout Queensland. There is one paragraph that is really worth reading to hon. members. The writer says—

Take the fuss made about the Braddon clause, for example. Almost everyone supposes that Queensland has not been returned her full three-fourths of Customs and excise revenue, as prescribed by the Constitution.

That was written in 1906, and it is just as true to-day. Hon. members know quite well that there are thousands of people in Queensland under the impression that the whole of the revenues obtained by the Federal Government from Queensland taxpayers go to Melbourne and

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stop there. They are under the impression that we get nothing back ; that the revenue received from the transferred services all remains in Melbourne ; and that Queensland gets no benefit whatever from them. I remember you getting up in your place, Mr. Speaker, and making a very able speech on what you were pleased to term "Federal fallacies." You went into the matter thoroughly and showed that from 30th June, 1901, to the 30th June, 1906, Queensland had on the whole been refunded more than her three-fourths of the revenue collected ; and you set forth the figures bearing on the matter in such a way as to carry conviction as to their accuracy. You tabled some very important figures which, if I had time, I should very much like to submit to hon. members now. The point I wish to make is that the "Federal fallacies" which existed in 1906 exist to-day ; and it is our duty to let the people of Queensland know exactly how we stand. I will refer to two tables which appeared in Sir William Lyne's Budget Speech for this year. As to those people who think that Queensland has received nothing from the Federal Treasury, I would remind them that since 1901 up to June, 1909, the amount Queensland will have received will amount to no less than £7,153,146. That is the amount we have received back from the Federal Government. And, Sir, may I remind you that this enormous total represents far more than Queensland's three-fourths to which this State was entitled. Then there is the Federal expenditure. As a matter of fact, in addition to the enormous amount I have just stated, the total money expended by the Commonwealth in Queensland since 1901 runs very nearly to £5,000,000. A good many people are under the impression that no Commonwealth money is spent here—that the Federal Government rakes in the shekels from the Queensland people and spends them all in Melbourne. I am sorry to have to admit that ignorance does exist to that extent, but it is a fact all the same, and it is our duty to show the people of Queensland that we are getting a fair deal in connection with our great Federal services. According to Sir William Lyne, the total amount expended in Queensland by the Federal Government has been as follows :—

Year.	Amount.
1901-2	£642,000
1902-3	632,000
1903-4	656,000
1904-5	675,000
1905-6	691,000
1906-7	768,000
1907-8	904,000

or a total of nearly £5,000,000 sterling.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER : And there is the sugar bounty.

Mr. MAUGHAN : I am glad that the hon. member reminded me of that. I find that the amount of bounty received from the Federal Treasurer by the sugar-growers of Queensland was as follows :—

Year.	Tons of Sugar.	Bounty.
1902	105,000	£24,000
1903	222,000	50,070
1904	378,000	85,000
1905	502,000	111,0 0
1906	1,195,000	285,000
1907	1,432,000	499,000
1908 [Estimate]	1,370,000	470,000

or a total of nearly £1,524,000. I therefore submit that an enormous sum of money is coming back to the State. These

[5 p.m.] are figures which should particularly appeal to the hon. members for Mackay, and other hon. members interested in the welfare of the sugar-growers. As a

matter of fact, my humble opinion is this about the whole business summed up : If Queensland is suffering in any way from any disabilities as a result of federation, and I do not admit that she is, then it is the fault of those statesmen at the head of affairs in years gone by who failed to see that Queensland was represented at the various conferences. (Hear, hear !) There is no doubt about it. We remember—those who took any interest in federation years ago—that there was almost criminal neglect on the part of those in authority with regard to Federal matters. Convention after convention went by, and every other State in the Commonwealth—even little Tasmania—was represented, but not Queensland, and if we are suffering from any financial dislocation at all, all I can say is that our business men in politics in the past should have been alert and sufficiently wide awake to have dealt with this matter. Reference is made in the Speech to the importance of railway construction ; and I think, irrespective of party, every hon. member knows quite well that a great territory like Queensland—larger than France and Germany and two or three subsidiary states in Europe together—can only be properly developed by the aid of the "iron horse" and steel rails. The great trouble is where best to construct those railways which will have due regard to the best conditions, and to see that those localities best adapted get them. In connection with the railway question generally, it is one that many of us feel very interested in ; one cannot help thinking when it is proposed to deviate from the settled policy of railway construction by the State—when it is proposed to build our railways by syndicate methods—one cannot help but go back a few years ago when it was proposed to construct the great trunk lines of Queensland on the land-grant system.

Mr. KEOGH : If that had been done at the time it would have been far better for the country.

Mr. MAUGHAN : The opinion of many people is that it would not have been a good thing for Queensland, and probably I shall be able to prove this contention. Take, for instance, two or three of the land-grant schemes. The Charleville to Cunnamulla Railway, a length of line of 125 miles. It was proposed, under the land-grant system, to grant something like 10,000,000 acres of land to the syndicate in alternate blocks on either side.

Mr. BOWMAN : Some of the best lands on the Warrego.

Mr. MAUGHAN : Yes, some of the best lands on the Warrego. Let me remind the House that that line was not built on the land-grant system. The hon. member for Rosewood says it is a great pity it was not.

Mr. KEOGH : There would have been a larger population there.

Mr. MAUGHAN : I say it is a very good thing for the national exchequer it was not built under the land-grant system. We find that that railway, which was built by the State, is one of the best paying lines in Queensland to-day—that is, if you take the figures submitted in the report of the Commissioner for Railways. If that line had been built by a syndicate, it would very probably be owned by some private individuals living in Berlin or Paris or London. Now it belongs to Queensland, and the revenue derived from that line is assisting the Treasurer to make ends meet.

Mr. KEOGH : You would have had a larger population.

Mr. MAUGHAN : That is open to question. We might, indeed, have had a coloured population. Take another railway it was proposed

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to hand over to a syndicate—from Winton to Hughenden, 130 miles. It was proposed to hand over to the syndicate for the right of building this 130 miles of railway an area of country involving 10,400,000 acres, and yet that line was built years later by the State. It is the property of the State to-day, and the remarks I applied to the Charleville-Cunnamulla extension also apply to this line. If it is not already, it is bound to be one of the best paying lines in the State. Take the Hughenden to Richmond and Cloncurry Railway—415 miles of line. It was proposed to give the syndicate, conditional on building that line, no less an area than 33,200,000 acres of country. Yet what is the position? We find that line to-day is the property of the State.

Mr. LESINA: The land, too.

Mr. MAUGHAN: The Crown land also belongs to the people.

Mr. HARDACRE: And we have the betterment principle in force.

Mr. MAUGHAN: We are getting from that splendid railway a vast revenue which helps us to pay interest on our public debt.

Mr. LESINA: And it relieves taxation.

Mr. MAUGHAN: As the hon. member points out, it relieves taxation, and thus it is a practical business transaction. Then take the Degilbo to Gayndah line. It was actually proposed to hand over all that beautiful country to a syndicate. It was proposed that along that 40 miles of railway the syndicate were to have 1,600,000 acres in alternate blocks. I ask any hon. member whether it was not a splendid thing on the part of those who opposed syndicate railways in those days to prevent these vast areas falling into the hands of syndicates? And I say their action is absolutely justified by facts to-day. The fact is the syndicates were not allowed to build those railways, and as a result the public treasury is benefiting, and—as stated by way of interjection—taxation has been saved to the general taxpayer. Therefore, it is only to be expected that the Labour party, realising the importance of building lines by the State—it is only to be expected that they will offer, and will continue to offer, the most strenuous opposition to any proposal which will deviate in one hair's breadth from what we regard as the settled policy of the country—that is, the State to construct and own its own railways. I should like also to refer to certain railway proposals in my own district. The time has come when the claims of West Moreton, which has been aptly described as "the garden of Queensland," should be considered. As hon. members on both sides of the House know, it is the oldest settled district in Queensland. The first railway was opened from Ipswich to Grandchester in 1865. That was forty-four years ago. Then two years later, in 1867, the wise men of the day continued the line from Grandchester to Toowoomba. Then there was not a sleeper laid down, or a steel rail laid on a sleeper, in the West Moreton district for nearly twenty years. After a lapse of nearly twenty years the claims of that magnificent district were recognised to a degree by the Government of the day running a line from Ipswich towards Fassifern.

The HOME SECRETARY: Did I understand you to say that there was no line opened for twenty years from 1867? There was a line open to Harrisville early in 1882.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Well that is a lapse of nearly twenty years.

The HOME SECRETARY: No; fifteen years.

Mr. MAUGHAN: That is so. Then came a lapse of another five years, and in 1887—or

twenty-two years ago—the line was extended 16 miles to Dugandan. Anybody who knows that magnificent district knows perfectly well that it is no use any Government trying to keep it back, because it will not be kept back. It stands as its own advertisement, as the Home Secretary knows. He knows that the Fassifern district is one which should compel any up-to-date Government to give it railways. The time is not far distant when some of the large estates in that district may be brought under the Agricultural Lands Purchase Act, and when, instead of having large cattle runs as now, we may have them cut up and converted into smiling gardens. In 1884, the railway from Ipswich to Lowood was constructed—that is about 19 miles in length.

The HOME SECRETARY: That rather upsets your previous statement that it was twenty years from 1867 before another line was built.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Yes; I admit it should have been fifteen years.

Mr. KEOGH: The Lowood line was also built in the wrong position.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Two years later that line was extended to Esk—22 miles. Then there was a lapse of seventeen or eighteen years before an extension was made from Esk. And here is a point I desire to make in connection with this line. Of course, I know quite well that the present Administration cannot be blamed for this; but about eighteen years ago the then authorities of the Lands Department opened up a very fine tract of land called the Blackbutt, which was taken up by a lot of sturdy pioneers, under the impression that they would have a railway built to that country. Open promises were made to them, and it was only reasonable to assume that those promises would be realised.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The line is being built to Blackbutt now.

Mr. MAUGHAN: That is so, but it is only recently that those promises have been realised. I cannot understand how the line was not constructed years ago. From the point of view of the Railway Department alone, I cannot understand the delay. Mr. Thallon said years ago that he would like to have the line built, if only for revenue purposes. It is a goldmine, from the railway point of view; and yet we find that it is only now that it is being built.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Some goldmines are not payable, you know.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Well, there is no doubt about the Blackbutt line being payable. There is not a line in West Moreton that is not a goldmine. Practically speaking, every line in West Moreton is paying handsomely.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Let us hope it will go 4 oz. to the ton.

The HOME SECRETARY: Do not forget that the Harrisville line did not pay for years.

Mr. MAUGHAN: I am quite aware of that. Another point in connection with this matter is that I trust that, when any railways are submitted to this House, and money is voted for those railways, that money will not be diverted to other lines. That sort of thing is politically dishonourable, and, although it has not been done for years, still we know it has been done in the past. We know that West Moreton and parts of the Darling Downs have been amongst the biggest sufferers in that direction.

Mr. GRAYSON: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAUGHAN: We know that in 1884 the Government of the day brought down a proposal to construct a railway from the main Brisbane-Toowoomba railway to Laidley Creek. No less than £30,000 was voted on account of that line,

and from that day to this not a single fraction of that money has been spent on that particular railway.

Mr. KROCH : From Esk to Nanango, too.

Mr. MAUGHAN : Yet the Lockyer is one of the finest districts in Queensland. All the country round Laidley, Forest Hill, and Gatton is developing at a tremendous rate. Even the hon. member for Cunningham must admit that it is developing at a rate almost equal to the development which is taking place in his own district.

Mr. GRAYSON : Hear, hear !

Mr. MAUGHAN : The time has come when that part of West Moreton should be considered in connection with railway construction. It would be a good business proposition and it would pay well to develop the country this side of Tarampa, Marburg, Kirchheim, and Lowood. It can all be developed by means of railway communication. To enlarge on the reference I made just now to the appropriation of money voted by Parliament for a specific purpose to some other purpose: In that same year, 1884, no less than £500,000 was voted in all seriousness for a railway from Ipswich to Warwick—the *via recta*—and where is that money now, and where is that railway now? I think the time has come when the *via recta* should become an actual reality. The time has come when the country between Ipswich and Warwick should be opened up by railway communication. The Home Secretary knows that country as well as any man in this House, and he knows quite well—especially in view of the fact that the Maryvale country will soon be cut up and connected with Warwick by rail—that that is a gap in our railway system that really will require to be bridged over before very long. (Hear, hear!) I trust that when the railway proposals are thoroughly gone into by the Cabinet this matter and others that I have referred to will be given every consideration. A few moments ago I alluded to the question of railway freights, and the hon. member for Cunningham pricked his ears, and seemed entertained with the very idea that there was anything going to be done with regard to a reduction of railway freights. This is altogether too big a question to do anything more than casually refer to it on the Address in Reply. The revenue received by the Railway Department for the carriage of farmers' produce during the last five years amounted to no less a sum than £703,000, and the average rates of freight per ton charged was no less than 6s. 6d. The revenue from log and sawn timber got by timber-getters last year amounted to no less than £131,000. Are our railways becoming an engine of oppression, or what? It seems to me that the Railway Department is a department that needs thoroughly inquiring into. Seeing that the gross earnings of the railways last year amounted to £121,000 more than in the year 1906-7, and to £405,000 more than in the year 1905-6, I am inclined to think that the time has arrived when the Government of the day should take into consideration the important question of reducing, not only the freights, but also fares. (Hear, hear!) I do not think there are many members of this House who would regard it as sound administration in connection with our Railway Department, to make it a machine to extract the last shilling from the producers of Queensland. If I had the time I could give a good many instances showing the enormous rates charged for freight. I might quote the high freight rates paid by sugar-growers. I might refer to that £35,000 a year wrung out of the coal industry in the Ipswich and Bundamba districts.

Mr. MAXWELL : Poor fellows !

Mr. MAUGHAN : If the hon. member knew anything about the subject, he would know that we can make our railways a heavy burden upon the people, instead of something to assist them in the prosecution of their several industries. I have always thought that our Railway Department and our Lands Department should run side by side, the one helping the other.

The HOME SECRETARY : Hear, hear !

Mr. MAUGHAN : I am glad to hear the Home Secretary say "Hear, hear" to that. From the knowledge that I possess, from what I have seen and read, and from what I have heard from the hon. member for Cunningham and others, I have come to the conclusion that the whole system of our railway administration, not only in connection with wages, but also in connection with fares and freights, and the construction of rolling-stock, coal contracts, etc., should be reviewed. And I trust that before the Act of 1898 is amended next year, this matter will be given the consideration it deserves.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS : You do not include the Ipswich works in your condemnation, do you ?

Mr. MAUGHAN : Most certainly. I have no desire to refer to that matter particularly. I shall probably have other opportunities of dealing with the administration of the Locomotive Department. If hon. members only knew of the gross mismanagement in the Locomotive Department in Queensland, they would not be long in instituting an inquiry into the whole business. It is absolutely maladministered, and I cannot understand how it is that any Minister who has been long associated with that department cannot see that it is of great importance to the State that that particular department should have a thorough overhaul.

The HOME SECRETARY : Can you point to any particular instance of gross mismanagement?

Mr. MAUGHAN : Gross mismanagement; yes.

The HOME SECRETARY : Then why don't you come along with a motion on the subject?

Mr. MAUGHAN : What I have said in this House, I have said in the country, and what I have said has been said by many members of my own party. But this is not a party question at all; it is a question for the House to deal with. The Home Secretary asks why do not I do this, that, and the other? The hon. gentleman knows quite well that of late years there has been practically no discussion on the Railway Estimates. Hon. members have not had an opportunity of discussing those Estimates.

The HOME SECRETARY : I did not say, "Why did you not do this, that, and the other?" I said that if you regarded the matter as so important it ought to be made the subject of a definite motion submitted to this Chamber.

Mr. MAUGHAN : The hon. gentleman is quite right. But what I want to know is, Why should it be necessary for me, or any other member, to come to this House and discuss a matter of this sort at all? What do we pay a Minister £1,000 a year for if he cannot administer his own department—if he is a mere cypher there? It appears to me that it is becoming a second edition of the state of affairs which was depicted by Henry George in his "Social Problems" years ago, when he said that if the State, meaning the United States of America, did not manage the railway managers, the railway managers would manage the State.

Mr. MAXWELL : What about the Ipswich railway workshops?

Mr. Maughan.]

Mr. MAUGHAN: I would remind the hon. member that although the State railway workshops happen to be in my electorate, they are not Ipswich workshops. They belong to the nation. There are men working there from all parts of Queensland—from Rockhampton, Maryborough, Brisbane, Fortitude Valley, and other places.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: And good men, too.

Mr. MAUGHAN: And good men, too; but as a result of mismanagement we find that good men get broken-hearted and walk out. Good men are going from there. Only the other day an invaluable man—a man whose labour was, I suppose, worth £2,000 to the State—who was in charge of a blast furnace, and who did work which required almost the strength of a lion to do—a man of splendid physique, and a very able man by virtue of the knowledge he possessed of his trade—left the department. For years that man tried to get an increase of a miserable, paltry 1s. a day, but could not get it. A private firm came along, recognised his value, and he is now working for them at an advance of 2s. a day on what he was paid by the Railway Department.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: When was that?

Mr. MAUGHAN: Last year. A young man came to me last year and pointed out that it was very little good young men serving their time in the railway workshops, because when they were out of their time, after serving six years, they did not get tradesmen's wages. They only got 7s. a day for the first year, and the Railway Department is really doing all this to neutralise the union movement. The Railway Department has got a bad name all over the States in that respect. There are boiler-makers' societies, blacksmiths' societies, and amalgamated engineers' associations throughout Australia who look upon the railway workshops at Ipswich as one of the biggest sweating shops in Australia.

Mr. KERR: Boiler-makers are getting union wages.

Mr. MAUGHAN: Boiler-makers may be getting it now, but if they are getting it now it is news to me.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member knows that there is an increase for all the mechanics on the Estimates—that will be from the 1st of July.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAUGHAN: It is all very well to say "Hear, hear," but if the hon. gentleman went up to Ipswich and convened a meeting [5.30 p.m.] of those men he referred to, that meeting would not be in progress five minutes before the men could present him with many just grievances under which they are suffering. It is all very fine to say they are getting the union rate of wages. I am not aware they are getting the union rate of wages.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Let the Railway Estimates be passed, and then they will get those increases.

Mr. MAUGHAN: There are many men in the railway workshops at the present time who have been promised redress for their grievances years ago, and they have never got them to the present day, and they take all the promises Ministers come down to the House with with a grain of salt.

Mr. KERR: There are several men there who ought not to be there.

Mr. MAUGHAN: That is so. I presume the hon. gentleman means the heads of departments?

Mr. KERR: No, I am not referring to them.

[*Mr. Maughan.*]

Mr. MAUGHAN: I am. I have no desire to go into details at present. At the same time, I can assure the Government that I shall be only too happy to move for a Royal Commission to inquire into this department.

Mr. BOWMAN: Hear, hear!

Mr. MAUGHAN: The time has come for this House to very seriously consider the importance of appointing some court of review to inquire into the management of the department. For some years I have had the pleasure and the honour to serve under Mr. Thallon, and, so far as I was personally concerned, I had the best time it was possible for any man to have. I have no personal grievance against the Commissioner—far from it. I say here that almost every case that I have brought under Mr. Thallon's personal notice has been favourably considered. I do not remember going to him, or to the Minister, with unreasonable grievances; but I cannot say the same of some officers who work under him, and particularly the Locomotive Engineer. As the late leader of the Opposition (Mr. Philp) said here, he is a man who is not fit for his work.

Mr. KERR: You ought not to attack him; he is an old man, and has rendered good service.

Mr. MAUGHAN: We are here as public men, and must do our duty. It is no pleasure to me to attack any public servant, but we have sometimes to say things that are not pleasant—indeed, we are forced into saying them.

The HOME SECRETARY: You should not say it in a casual way like this. It ought to be done under cover of a formal motion.

Mr. KERR: He has given good service to the State.

Mr. MAUGHAN: I can only say that it is not the experience of the employees of the department working under him. We are promised a University. Next year we are told that we are going to signalise the jubilee of Queensland by the founding of a University. I do not know any hon. member who is against the principle of a University. I speak now as a member of the foundation committee of the present University Extension Movement. Personally, I would be very pleased to see a University established in Queensland, but I think it is just as well to pause before we go too far in this direction. I notice that the Premier, in a *Courier* interview the other day, expressed himself as follows:

Spoken to last evening on the subject, the Premier said that he had received a letter from the University Extension regarding the position, and that he had stated it was quite impossible to deal with the subject this session. "I said, however," Mr. Kidston continued, "that I hoped to distinguish the jubilee year by inaugurating a Queensland University."

As a matter of fact, it is just as well to acquaint the House with the position that we, as a party, take up in regard to this matter. I have already stated that, while the Premier has a Rockhampton policy, we have a Rockhampton policy also. Our policy in regard to education is this: Secular education; elementary, compulsory; higher education, optional; both absolutely free. The University to be free to all qualified by examination.

Mr. LESINA: We go a little further than that—a training college for teachers.

Mr. HARDACRE: Our Rockhampton policy means their Rockhampton policy.

Mr. MAUGHAN: I am glad the hon. member for Clermont reminds me about that. I do not know any hon. member on this side of the House who does not approve of a University. But I think there is a good deal to be done before we think about a University. I think that our

present system of primary education should be vastly improved. I think the time has come when we should have a system by which there should be free education from the primary school to the University, when it is established, through all grades. (Hear, hear!) It is admitted already, I think, by even hon. members on the Government side of the House, that the time has come when the State should have more direct supervision over the Grammar schools of the State. We have been agitating for a teaching college for many years. Every teacher in Queensland is in favour of it, and it would not matter whether teachers were in favour of it or not, it is a highly desirable institution to have in Queensland. I have no desire to speak in tones of depreciation of our teachers; as a matter of fact, I think it is a very fortunate thing for Queensland, considering that there is no training college, that we have such an excellent staff of teachers as we have. But had it not been for their close application and studious habits, it is very likely that we should not have anything like the excellent staff that we now possess. In visiting the South recently I was very much impressed—as I have no doubt hon. members on both sides of the House were—with the tremendous impetus that has been given to educational matters in Australia, with the exception of Queensland.⁶ We are a long way behind. In South Australia, New South Wales, and Victoria they have all training colleges. Certainly, they have all got their University. But a teachers' training college is a very important institution, and having regard to the great importance of education, especially the education which gives a child of tender years its first knowledge, it is highly important that we should have the very best intellects it is possible to get hold of to teach the children while they are young. I think that no time should be lost in instituting a training college for teachers. It is a matter which the late member for Brisbane South, Mr. Reinhold, was very strong upon, and he ably advocated the proposition when it was placed before the House while he was here. It is a matter which has been brought before the Teachers' Conference for years. The teachers' unions and teachers' conferences have discussed this matter, and passed resolutions and presented these resolutions to the Minister. Where are all these resolutions to-day? And yet we talk about establishing a University with all its expensive appendages. I think that before we do anything in that particular direction we should get our State Education Department into thorough working order. With regard to this matter, I should just like to say that I noticed by to-day's newspapers it is proposed to fill the vacancy which will be caused very soon by the retirement of Mr. Ewart, Director of Education, by an outsider, by somebody who has evidently not had any scholastic connection with Queensland. The essential qualification is that he must be a Master of Arts of some University.

Mr. BOWMAN: What about our senior inspector?

Mr. MAUGHAN: It was only a few months ago that we wanted a Government Printer, and we had to send to Sydney for one. He may be a most excellent man for the position—I am not saying that he is not.

Mr. AIREY: He is a good man.

Mr. MAUGHAN: But I think that that important office could have been filled in Queensland by a Queenslander. Now we want a Director of Education, and he must be a Master of Arts, and an outsider.

Mr. HARDACRE: We have plenty of inspectors here who are quite competent to take up this position.

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Mr. MAUGHAN: Yes; we have amongst our district inspectors many able men. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. AIREY: They are quite competent to fill any position.

Mr. MAUGHAN: And they are quite competent to take up this position. And if they were not competent to take up this position they would not be competent to act as inspectors in our State schools. What the idea is of going outside the service to secure the services of a Master of Arts is best known to the Government. But I can only say—and I say it with due respect to those who have been through a University course, and it may be the experience of other members of this House—that the very fact of a man being able to affix "M.A." to his name does not always imply that he is the best man for the position. A University degree is not always a guarantee the holder of it is absolutely efficient. It is not a guarantee that that appointed individual may be an able administrator. He may be a specialist in some particular department of science or arts, but it does not say that he will be a great administrator, and be able to manage a great department like the Public Instruction Department of Queensland.

Mr. HARDACRE: And having no experience of Queensland.

Mr. MAUGHAN: That fact does not altogether weigh with me. The fact that weighs with me most of all is that we have men in the service—and it applies to all branches of the service as well as the Education Department—that we have men in the Education Department who have graduated through the various courses and grades, and who are admitted by all to very ably fulfil all the duties they are called upon to perform. I am sure that men like Mr. Shirley, Mr. Kennedy, and Mr. Gripp, and other inspectors whose names I cannot recollect at the present moment, who have been here for years should—and might with justice expect it when the proper time arrives—reach the blue ribbon of the service. I enter my protest against this everlasting importation of outsiders to occupy important positions in the Queensland Government service. I noticed a paragraph in to-day's *Courier* bemoaning the fact that we have not sufficient engineers in Queensland to supervise our railway construction. Is it any wonder, Mr. Speaker? I do not wonder at Government officers losing interest in their work when they are treated in the way they are.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The extra number of engineers are wanted because of the number of railways that are being constructed.

Mr. MAUGHAN: I can speak with experience of this matter when I say that our draftsmen and engineers are receiving a miserable pittance in the way of salary. I have known many of them to be in frequent communication with the outside world to get positions. These are men I used to work with not many years ago, and they are now employed in the north and south of Africa, in the Malay Archipelago, working on the China railways, and everywhere else where liberal salaries attract them.

Mr. LESINA: We are bringing in labourers and driving out our engineers.

Mr. MAUGHAN: When we are considering the appointment of these officers or members of any particular profession, we should not only endeavour to get good men, but also endeavour to keep them. We are driving many of our officers and professional men out of the State, when we should be doing our level best to keep them here, and train others to take their places.

Mr. Maughan J

There is tremendous competition throughout the States for good men. In the Brisbane daily Press we find the Government of Victoria advertising for school inspectors, and look at the salaries that they are offering them! They are greater than any of the salaries which our school inspectors get. I would not be surprised at all to see that our school inspectors, as a result of the treatment meted out to them by the authorities in regard to the appointment of an Inspector-General of Education—I would not be surprised to hear of some of them leaving the State altogether and seeking employment elsewhere.

A LABOUR MEMBER: Small blame to them.

Mr. MAUGHAN: I should like to see a teachers' training college established before we establish a University, and I would like to see the principle of the Agricultural College at Gatton extended to other centres in Queensland. Anyone who knows anything at all about the Gatton Agricultural College knows that it is an excellent institution. Let me give the House some idea of what it is doing. I got a return from the Principal of that college some time ago, and he told me that in response to a circular letter which he had sent out to former students asking them how they were getting on, that out of 125 circulars sent out 115 replied, and it was found that ninety-eight of the ex-students were engaged in connection with land. That shows the great importance of an institution like that, and the necessity for extending its usefulness to other parts of Queensland. It was discovered that eighty-six of the ex-students are now engaged in cultivating land, five are managers of dairy factories, two are dairy inspectors, and five have graduated as agricultural chemists. Of this number, sixty-three gave particulars showing that they occupied land covering 55,943 acres, of which nearly 5,000 acres were under cultivation. They also owned 831 horses, 3,810 cattle, 8,300 sheep, 989 pigs, and nearly 4,000 poultry. I mention this to show that these boys came to the institution as raw recruits, and probably knew nothing at all about the land in any shape or form, and after a year or two at the college they became practically independent men. They are men who would have had to go hunting around looking for vacancies in the railway or police service, yet they are now enabled to go on the land. As that agricultural college at Gatton has done such good service to the State, why not establish similar institutions in other parts of Queensland? (Hear, hear!) And the same applies to schools of mines. As a matter of fact, the more you go into the education question in Queensland, the more you find it important to pause before going into the University question without putting our existing educational establishments in better order. At the present time, according to the Education report, there are no less than eighty-eight Provisional schools in country districts represented by members on all sides—schools with an attendance of thirty and over, and containing thousands of children, which ought to be classified as State schools.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: All schools will be classified as State schools under the new regulations.

Mr. MAUGHAN: It is not altogether a matter of classification. It is a matter of providing schools and giving people in the country equal educational facilities with those resident in towns. I hope this matter will receive serious attention before the Government embark on the new policy—

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Do you cast a reflection on the ability of the teachers of country schools?

[*Mr. Maughan.*

Mr. MAUGHAN: No. The hon. gentleman knows quite well that the department sends to the bush schools the best teachers that can be sent; but the country teachers themselves admit that under existing conditions they cannot be expected, in the absence of a training college, to be as well equipped and qualified as they would be otherwise. Before I conclude, I would just like to say a few words on the subject of immigration. And while discussing this matter, I take the opportunity of pointing out that in the *Telegraph* of the 17th November, in connection with the anti-immigration meeting held in the Albert Hall, Brisbane, I am reported to have moved a resolution declaring that free immigration to Queensland is detrimental to the interests of the State, and the interests of the immigrants themselves. As a matter of fact, I never moved such a resolution; no such resolution was handed to me to move; and I was very much surprised that the *Telegraph*, a paper of standing, should credit me with a resolution I never moved. I wrote to the *Telegraph* asking that the mistake might be corrected, but from that day to this I have not seen my letter printed. When a public man moves a resolution, I think it is only a fair thing for a newspaper to print it in full, and certainly not to mutilate it. What I did move was the resolution appearing in the *Telegraph* plus the words "under existing conditions." Those words were carefully left out; and I think that did not reflect credit on the newspaper in question. As a general rule, however, I receive very fair treatment from that paper in regard to any remarks I make in public. With regard to the immigration question, I can only endorse many of the sentiments expressed by hon. members sitting on this side of this House. I do not know one man in connection with the Labour party, either inside or outside of this House, who is against immigration. I have never met a member of our party who has proposed to put a barbed wire fence round Queensland and erect a notice, "Trespassers will be prosecuted." As a matter of fact, the Labour party are rather the other way. The Labour party desire to see Queensland become the home of a great white race, and they know as well as any other party that there is room here for millions of people. At the same time they also know that there is little use in bringing out people 16,000 miles unless proper facilities are provided to make them remain in the State. It is something like the land settlement question. It is an easy matter to talk about land settlement; the problem is how to keep people on the land when once they get there. What with heavy railway rates, and all sorts of heavy taxes, it is very difficult to make people, especially the younger race growing up, stick to the land. You, Mr. Speaker, in common with other hon. members, have no doubt frequently been met by big strong stalwart young men wanting letters of introduction to the Commissioner of Police or the Commissioner for Railways, or other public officers in order that they may get work. And after putting a few questions to them you discover that they are farmers' sons from the Stanley, Lockyer, Fassifern, or Bundanba district perhaps. They are only too anxious to get away from the farm. Why is that? It is a most extraordinary thing. I cannot understand a man who is on the land engaged in farming—a splendid occupation—being anxious to leave the farm, and take up work in the Railway Department or in the Police Department.

Mr. CAMPBELL: An easier job, and more life in it.

Mr. MAUGHAN: The hon. gentleman might have said something more—there is more money in it. I am glad to say that many farmers

recognise the importance of paying their sons and daughters for services rendered; but there are farmers who do not pay anything like what they should pay to their own people, and the consequence is that young men leave the farm on which they have been brought up. That is a serious thing for Queensland. The best men to encourage to stay on the land in Queensland are those born and bred on the land—men who have a good knowledge of stock and crops. I have no desire to detain the House longer, as many other hon. members wish to speak. I only hope that good legislation may be passed and the people of the State may greatly benefit as a result.

Mr. MULLAN (*Charters Towers*): You might have noticed the other evening that the Ministry looked aghast when the apostle of

[7 p.m.] black labour, or I should say the Minister for Agriculture and Railways gave the whole show away. In fact, he went to the trouble of doing what I should have had to do myself—that is, condemned his own actions some years ago; and he went to show very clearly—

The PREMIER: And yet you are not grateful.

Mr. MULLAN: I am really extremely grateful to the hon. gentleman for saving me looking up the votes given in the past. It is clear from his remarks that he was in favour of the retention of the kanakas, and I hope to show before I am done that the hon. gentleman, and the party with whom he is now associated, are in favour of the introduction of the kanaka to-day.

Mr. MULCAHY: Or any other cheap labour.

Mr. MULLAN: The hon. gentleman said the question of coloured labour was dead; to use his own words, "dead as Julius Caesar."

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is so.

Mr. MULLAN: Yes, it is so. Here is a sample of the work done at a conference of ladies, representative of the Government party, held in Melbourne in 1907. Just about 23rd October, 1907, a meeting of women delegates of the Anti-socialist Organisation assembled in Melbourne for the purpose of undermining the White Australia policy. They met, says the *Melbourne Herald*, at Cliveden, the residence of Janet Lady Clark, who is president of the Women's National League in Victoria. I hope the hon. gentleman will pay special attention to this.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Of course, I will note anything you say.

Mr. MULLAN: The Philp party had as its representatives, namely—

Miss M. A. Ogg, organising secretary of the Queensland Women's Electoral League, Mrs. Hatton (Toowoomba), Mrs. Mitchell (Mackay), Mrs. Leslie Corrie (Brisbane), Miss Dewing (Brisbane), Mrs. Wilmore (Brisbane), Mrs. Thompson (Mayoress of Brisbane), and Mrs. Chataway (wife of Senator Chataway).

These wonderful ladies were going to work out the destiny of Australia, and there is no doubt about it, as any hon. member will see, they were fairly representative of the hon. gentlemen who now occupy the front Treasury benches. The report goes on—

The conference was presided over by Janet Lady Clark, and it was held in the ballroom at Cliveden, which was tastefully decorated for the occasion. There is a miniature stage, with scenery for private theatricals, at one end of the room, and this served admirably for a dais.

Here is the point I want to draw attention to—

WHITE AUSTRALIA ATTACKED.

In introducing a motion in favour of immigration, Miss M. A. Ogg, in a paper which she read, said—

"Immigration was a beautiful law of adaptation, obedience to which meant a better adjustment of the

human race as it increased. The world had grown old since first necessity revealed this law, and now man took it on himself to adjust the human race, as he, in his wonderful arrogance, presumed that it ought to be adjusted. So we had the strange spectacle of a vast continent practically railled off for the white Australian. What title deeds had the white Australian got to Australia other than those signed in scarlet, and with the old legend, 'Might is right,' inscribed?"

Then followed the treasonable motion against white Australia, Mrs. Molneaux Parkes (N.S.W.) moving—

"That, while the conference approves of the principle of a white Australia from the racial point of view, it considers that the importation of coloured labour is necessary for the development of the tropical territory."

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That was that lady's opinion.

Mr. MULLAN: That was that lady's opinion, and this lady represents the views of your party. Make no mistake about that. You ought to be ashamed of yourself. You ought to stand to your guns like a man, and not for convenience say black labour was dead and buried. The report further states—

The mover said that "there were two points of view in connection with this subject. One was the claim on behalf of a perfectly white community, and the other was the best means of developing the tropical territory, especially the Northern Territory, which was now going to waste because of the prejudice against coloured labour. If they were to draw a geographical line for the restriction of coloured races they should certainly be allowed within the greater part of the tropical territory. There were thousands of the King's Indian subjects who would be suitable for the work in this territory, and might be allowed in with their families."

Mrs. Hatton, of Toowoomba, Queensland, seconded the resolution. She said "the sugar industry was going out of Australia. She agreed with the motion so far as it was possible, and believed that it was possible with discretion to get in coloured labour."

Yet the hon. gentleman says the question was dead and buried.

Mrs. Mitchell, of Mackay, Queensland, said that this was a very important subject, especially to Queensland. That State had accepted the verdict of the other States, and it was trying to manage in the best way it could, but it did not seem quite fair that the kanakas, who were the most harmless of the coloured races, should be the only ones removed. In the Mackay district women and children were now to be seen working in the cane-fields.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: What harm was there in that statement?

Mr. MULLAN: Before I am finished I will show you the harm. The report goes on—

Children who should be at school were obliged to help to make a living.

Mrs. Leslie Corrie, of Brisbane, said that she had "had conversations with a leading sugar-grower, who said that the outlook was most serious, owing to the class of white labour available. It was very low."

White labour was very low when compared with the kanakas.

Now, in the cane districts, the domestic maid-servants were afraid to go out at night, and the heads of families dare not take their eyes off their children. The men were a floating class and included many ex-criminals.

Is that true? Silence. (Laughter.) The hon. gentleman's friends wished to imply that it is true.

The wages were good, but the work hard. The men made a cheque, and then spent it at the public-houses. When these facts as to the danger to women and children were known, it would be seen that it was a very serious matter. The kanakas, on the other hand, were to be trusted absolutely.

Mrs. Thompson, Mayoress of Brisbane, also spoke adversely of the character of the white men employed.

Miss Dewing, of Brisbane, said that she had lived with a leading lady in the sugar district. The lady's husband frequently went up country to another station, leaving his wife and little children with the kanakas. She (Miss Dewing) asked the lady if she were not afraid,

and she said, "No," for she had never suffered by theft or by the least unkind action on the part of the kanakas. The kanakas were very fond of the children.

What a pity they left. We cannot have them for nurses now—

Mrs. Chataway (wife of Senator Chataway, of Mackay) said that it must be recognised that they could never bring the kanakas back again. When quite a girl she lived in Java, and there she saw all black people. There were kanakas, Solomon Islands "boys," and others, with loin-cloths and their bows and arrows, and they looked like savages. When they came up to the house, she was told that they knew she was coming, and this was their way of giving her welcome. The kanaka in Queensland, however, had been civilised and Christianised; and yet they were deported because they had no gunboats. Australia would not dare to insult China or Japan in that way. The white men now employed were of bad character and unreliable.

I have no doubt that she voiced the sentiments of Senator Chataway, and I have no doubt that the Secretary for Railways represents Senator Chataway's sentiments in this Chamber. Then—

Mrs. Molyneux Parkes did not agree with the remark that there was no chance of the kanaka coming back. They should put in a Liberal Ministry favourable to the kanaka, and then the thing would be done.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: She does not belong to Queensland. She represents New South Wales.

Mr. MULLAN: These ladies showed plainly that, if ever there should come a time when their party has a predominating influence in the country, we shall have the kanaka policy once more brought into prominence. (Government laughter.) This motion—which represents the views of the party which has secured the services of Premier Kidston—was carried unanimously at this conference, and goes to prove conclusively that the question of kanaka labour is not dead nor buried, although—as the Secretary for Railways can testify—more than a fair number of the kanakas who came to Queensland have been long since buried in the Mackay district.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I cannot reply to you, as you know.

Mr. MULLAN: The hon. gentleman will have an opportunity of replying to me.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No; my opportunity is gone.

The SPEAKER: There is a latitude in connection with discussing an Address in Reply, which was all very well at one time, because we then had plenary powers of legislation. But our powers of legislation are now somewhat restricted, and, in the nature of things, it follows that any subject that can be dealt with at length on the Address in Reply will be a subject that is within the cognisance and within the sphere of action of this Parliament to deal with. Therefore, a general discussion on the question of black labour will be out of order.

Mr. MULLAN: I just wanted to reply to a few remarks that fell from the Secretary for Railways when speaking the other evening. The hon. gentleman said—

I unhesitatingly say that there is no man on this earth who is better legislated for or better looked after than the kanaka in Queensland.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I was then quoting from a speech I made in 1901.

Mr. MULLAN: Now, the kanakas in Queensland were better legislated for and better looked after than any man on this earth just in the same way as the criminal at St. Helena is better legislated for and better looked after than any man on this earth. The hon. member's friends looked after the kanaka very carefully until he made his escape. I am not surprised at the hon.

gentleman saying that. I know that any association with "blackbirding," or "nigger-driving," or any of those things, has a tendency to brutalise a man. Much as the Premier and his colleagues may try to dissociate themselves with this question, it must not be forgotten that the Secretary for Railways is the representative of black labour in the Ministry, and that he went to Melbourne specially to perpetuate this trouble, and to continue the evil of kanaka labour in Australia. The other night, also, the hon. gentleman distinctly told this House that his main objective was to fight the Labour party at the next Federal election, and to down our senators and substitute his own three-and-ninepenny friends—or, in other words, the gentlemen who advocate 3s. 9d. a day. (Laughter.) It shows clearly that our friends want black labour at any price, and no doubt they will try to get it. Then the hon. gentleman challenged the statement made frequently on this side during the course of this debate that the fields of Queensland have been fertilised with the blood of kanakas. I do not wish to discuss this question to-night—it is a rather painful one—but I would like to say that our statements are borne out by the statistics obtainable from the Registrar-General, if our friends wish to peruse them.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is an absolutely false statement.

Mr. MULLAN: Statistics prove that 147 kanakas per 1,000 died in one year as against a total death rate amongst the whites of about 6 per 1,000. Another point I would ask my friend to remember is that it was not so much those who were reported to have died as those who mysteriously disappeared that are referred to, because it is a well-known fact that during twenty years over 3,000 kanakas were unaccounted for. Probably my hon. friend knows what happened to them.

The SPEAKER: Order! I think the hon. member is proceeding to discuss this question again, notwithstanding my ruling on the matter a while ago. I have no objection to his making a passing reference to it, but I wish him to be as brief as possible.

Mr. MULLAN: I do not intend to pursue the matter further than to say that the hon. gentleman went out of his way the other evening to try to dissociate himself with the kanaka question. He tried to draw the Government from the position in which he has placed them by being the representative of kanaka labour in the Ministry.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: His position, at any rate, is a perfectly honourable one.

Mr. MULLAN: Personally, and apart from his politics, I am quite sure that every hon. member regards the hon. gentleman's position as a perfectly honourable one; but we cannot dissociate the individual from his politics, and it is solely with his politics that I am dealing at the present time.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: Don't you know that the black labour question has to do with the Federal Parliament?

Mr. MULLAN: The Federal Parliament must at all times be governed by the will of the people; and, whenever the time comes in Queensland when a certain policy can be advocated with safety, at that time influence will be brought to bear, directly or indirectly, on the Federal Parliament to reopen this question.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: And where will the Southern representatives be then?

Mr. MULLAN: They may possibly be influenced by the type of men whom the Secretary for Railways said he was going to support at the next Federal election. But I do not wish to be drawn off the track. (Laughter.) In connection with the Mount Morgan disaster, I would like to say that we all deeply deplore the terrible calamity that took place there. If there be one thing more than another that somewhat relieves the terrible state of affairs, it is the heroic deeds that were enacted on that occasion. (Hear, hear!) They go to show that the miner of Queensland is possessed of the characteristic which has always belonged to the miner of Australia, of being willing, at a moment's notice, to lay down his life for his mates. (Hear, hear!) There were two accidents at Mount Morgan, in one of which seven men lost their lives and in the other of which five men lost their lives. It is regrettable that, after the first accident, something was not done to prevent a recurrence. Certainly a kind of inquiry was held, but I really think that something better might have been done. Of course, I quite recognise that we are all wise after the event, and I do not want to pass strictures unduly upon anybody; but it cannot be forgotten that the 750 and 850 feet levels—

Mr. GRANT: Is not an inquiry being held now?

Mr. MULLAN: Not so far as I am concerned.

Mr. MANN: The inquiry is closed.

Mr. MULLAN: It was recognised for some time that work at the 750 and 850 feet levels was of an extra hazardous nature, so much so that—I think the hon. member for Fitzroy will bear me out in this—men were paid 1s. per shift extra.

Mr. COWAP: Can you prove that?

Mr. MULLAN: I went to Mount Morgan specially to make inquiries into this matter, and of course I can only go by the information I received, which I regarded as reliable, seeing that it came from residents of Mount Morgan. I had it verbally, and I have had it by letter; but I have not got the permission of the writers to use their names at the present moment. No man could serve any purpose by misleading me, after my going all the way to Mount Morgan to obtain reliable information on the subject.

Mr. COWAP: They misled you.

Mr. MULLAN: I am not going to dispute that statement, but I say the information was given to me by men connected with mining at Mount Morgan, who, notwithstanding the statement of the hon. member, I believe were as well informed as the hon. member. They stated that the men engaged on those levels were getting 1s. per shift extra.

Mr. COWAP: Can you mention the name of any man who got 1s. a shift extra?

Mr. MULLAN: That fact should have shown the Mines Department that something needed to be done to reduce the hazardous nature of the work.

The SPEAKER: Order! I have listened carefully to the hon. member, and I really think that his remarks are not in order. A board has been appointed to inquire into the matter referred to, and that board has to make a report on the matter. While I do not say that hon. members may not discuss certain phases of the matter itself, still I do not think they should discuss it in such a way as to indicate their views on points which may form the subject of the board's report until we have received that report.

Mr. MULLAN: This is rather an important matter from the mining members' point of view.

I am not questioning your ruling, Sir, but I approached this matter from a sense of duty, and with a disposition to deal with the matter without condemning anybody. I really had intended to say that there was something wrong about the whole affair, but in deference to your ruling I will defer my remarks until a more seasonable occasion. There is another matter that I should like to deal with, and that is the laxity of the Government in regard to the Workers' Compensation Act. I really think the Government should have done something in the way of amending that Act. The Government have themselves acknowledged that the Act is inequitable by the fact that they do not suspend payment of compensation for fourteen days, but pay their own servants immediately after an accident. Why, then, do they not compel outside companies and persons to pay their servants for those fourteen days, by amending the Act so as to make such payment compulsory? Another thing which I think should be done—in fact, it would have been done if the Government were alive to their duty; but I am not surprised that the Government are not alive to their duty in the matter of mining, because I am satisfied, from what I have already seen, that they care very little and do very little for mining—is to make some provision for the protection of tributaries. The latest proof that the Government care very little for mining is found in the fact that they appointed a man to the control of the Mines Department who knows as much about mining as a turkey knows about geometry.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I think he knows a little more than you do. I am afraid that your knowledge of mining is miserably small.

Mr. MULLAN: If the hon. gentleman's knowledge of mining is no greater than his knowledge of other departments in the Public Service, I do not think it is very great.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: He knows how to refuse an application for a grant, and how to justify his refusal.

Mr. MULLAN: And he knows how to make a grant when it suits his convenience to do so. I think the Workers' Compensation Act should be amended in the direction of including contractors and tributaries as workmen entitled to compensation. The Bill as it left this Chamber contained a clause which would have remedied the whole evil of which I complain, as it provided for the payment of compensation to tributaries; but unfortunately, owing to the action of a prominent member of the Council—the Hon. F. I. Power—who strenuously opposed it, that clause was rejected. It was clause 11 of the Bill, and it provided—

Where a contract to perform any work in any mine is let directly to one or more contractors who do not either sublet the contract or employ wages men, or who, though employing wages men, actually perform any part of the work themselves, such contractors shall, for the purposes of this Act, be deemed to be workers.

Had that clause been passed, the whole trouble which now exists would have been obviated, and tributaries and contractors would have been entitled to compensation just the same as any other worker in a mine. It is but reasonable that those men should be included among workers, and I hope the Government will reconsider this matter. It is not too late in the session to introduce an amending Bill including that matter, and a provision for payment for the fourteen days. Such an amendment of the Act would afford a great relief to men engaged in the precarious occupation of mining. Another thing the Government might deal with is the robbery of tributaries which is going on on nearly every

goldfield in Queensland. The methods employed to fleece tributaries of their legitimate earnings are simply scandalous. I know cases on Charters Towers where men have worked for weeks, and even months, and at the end of that time, whilst the company had a substantial cheque to draw, they had not one shilling, and in the meantime they had had to live on the credit they got from the storekeeper. That is not fair. There should be a provision in the Mining Act making it imperative for a mining company to allow a man, say, half wages, plus his costs, before they got any percentage at all. They should not get their percentage out of the gross amount of gold obtained from a crushing, but out of the net amount of gold obtained after paying all expenses, and half wages. If this method were resorted to, the great injustice which now exists would vanish. I could give several instances, if I wished to labour the question, showing how tributaries on Charters Towers Goldfield have been positively robbed by the companies. And they will continue to be so robbed while we have an unsympathetic Government in power and an unsympathetic Minister managing the Mines Department. There is another matter to which I wish to refer, and that is the Labour Bureau. According to official figures, during the month of October last 410 men registered for employment; 332 of those obtained employment, and the balance of seventy-eight did not find employment. It follows, therefore, from the official reasoning, that seventy-eight men only were out of employment in the entire State of Queensland on the 31st October last. A more monstrous misrepresentation of the true state of affairs was never made in this House. To give hon. members an idea of how much reliance can be placed on figures of this kind in future, I will just quote the Charters Towers figures. Officially, at Charters Towers it stands thus: People registered for employment at the Labour Bureau during October, 6; people

[7.30 p.m.] who found employment at the Labour Bureau in Charters Towers during October, 6; therefore, officially, there are no unemployed on Charters Towers. (Laughter.) But the true state of affairs is that we have 400 stalwart, able-bodied men looking for work there, to say nothing of the hundreds of youths and elderly men also who are eligible for employment. This clearly shows that the figures of the Labour Bureau are absolutely unreliable. The Government know, but the Government do not want to show anybody, that Queensland is in a bad state as far as the labour market is concerned. Now, I wish to show why the Government Labour Bureau register so few men. I honestly believe it is a part of the policy of the Government to so manage that Labour Bureau that as few men as possible will register, so that they can prove by their illogical method of reasoning that there are therefore very few out of work. Now, here is one of the reasons why there are very few men registering at that bureau. It is made unworkable so far as the men themselves are concerned. I will show the steps which a man has to take at the local Government bureau in order to obtain employment. In the first place, he has to present himself at a counter looking for work. The first thing they do is to register him on a card—his name, address, and all particulars. This registration card is a very intricate and elaborate affair. They evidently expect him to be continuously employed by this method of registration.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You expect them to be continuously unemployed.

Mr. MULLAN: You are evidently a prophet of what I am going to say. You certainly do

not look like a prophet. This is the first card. This card is a guarantee that he is being registered at the office. By the time a man has got over that card he is beginning to feel faint. He wonders what the intention of the Government is in giving him the card. Then they have as many more cards as you have here to give access to Parliament on the ceremonial day. For one particular class of employment he gets this brand of card. If he were colour blind he would get mixed in his cards, and not know which to present. For another class of employment he gets this class of card.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: A blue card.

Mr. MULLAN: And then for general employment, I believe, another card.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is what you call the three-card system.

Mr. MULLAN: If he happens to be engaged for outside Brisbane he has to give a written guarantee that he will refund the fare, and go through all that paraphernalia. Then he has to bring a friend along, who has to make a statutory declaration, upon oath, that he guarantees payment of this money if his friend does not turn up. But here is the worst thing of all for the unfortunate man who is looking for work. I appeal to any man endowed with reason to say whether it is necessary for an ordinary unskilled labourer to comply with the conditions on this form. In the first place, it says, "How to register for employment." It would take a man almost as long to grasp as to prepare for a public service examination. It requires the applicant to state where he has been previously registered, and to give place of birth, and requires that testimonials, in all cases attested as correct, must be attached to the application. Then he has to fill in this—

I, of , certify that I am desirous of being registered by the Labour Bureau for employment in accordance with the regulations made in that behalf, etc., etc.

What is the reason of a question like that? What has his age to do with the department? What has his place of birth to do with it? Why should he have to give a biography? Why should he have to say whether he is married or single? That is rather an embarrassing question for an official to ask a labourer when he comes along. Then "date of arrival in the State." Why should they require to know that? Then, "Where from. Present employment, or if unemployed, how long?" Now, here is a question that should not be asked of any man. It says, "Give the name of your wife, the number of boys and their ages; the number of girls and their ages," and the total number of dependents upon him. It might be right to ask a man how many dependents on him he had, to see if it was a more urgent case than another, but what on earth has it got to do with the department as to what is the name of a man's wife and her age, or the age of his daughters? These invidious questions should certainly not be asked of any man. Then it says, "Nature of employment desired." The classes of employment may be stated, but they must be distinct. No notice will be taken of general statements. Unless a man specifically states the class of employment he wants, he cannot get work at all. The vast majority of men in Queensland do general work, and they cannot classify their work at all. Then it says testimonials are required. Fancy a man going to look for work at a quarry across the river having to present testimonials that he is of irreproachable character. The thing is monstrous. Then, "As testimonials will not be returned, copies should be attached." They have to make copies of all testimonials, and send them along. I hope the

[*Mr. Mullan.*]

Minister is listening. This is a really ridiculous system. I tried during this year to have this form abolished, but I was unsuccessful. I hope it will be abolished after to-night. A man becomes bewildered—lost. He goes looking for work, and finds it only in trying to fill up this form—

I am the applicant referred to in the testimonial, the originals of which I undertake to produce when called upon, and I further declare that they are genuine and true in that particular, etc.

And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the provisions of the Oaths Act of 1867.

Now, this may be a laughing matter to hon. gentlemen on the opposite side of the House, but if they had half a dozen little children starving at home, and they went up to the Labour Bureau to look for two or three days' work to help them along, I do not think it would be a laughing matter to be presented with this complicated form, and asked to give the information requisite to fill it in order to get employment.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is not that at all; it is the way you presented it.

Mr. MULLAN: I hope I am presenting it in a manner which will meet with the approbation of the hon. gentleman.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It does, I assure you; but I will refer it to the Minister for Works. (Laughter.)

Mr. MULLAN: I am not surprised at the hon. gentleman laughing at it.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: I am listening with pleasure to the very intelligent and honourable gentleman.

Mr. MULLAN: It says—

The following conditions must be complied with by all persons applying to the Department of Labour for registration for employment.

1. The particulars required in the declaration on the face of this sheet must be filled in by each applicant as fully as applicable to his particular case, otherwise the applicant may suffer disadvantage in priority of selection. Copies of testimonials must be attached to application, after being certified by the labour agent or a justice of the peace that they are correct copies. It should be borne in mind by applicants that it is to their advantage to give the fullest information possible.

2. Every person registered will receive a card, which he is required to produce in proof of registration whenever he calls for any purpose on the labour agent, which card will be marked with each successive date of registration. (To renew registration the card should be presented to the labour agent with request for renewal.)

3. All applications will be forwarded to the central office of the division, and will remain in force for one (1) calendar month, when, unless renewed, the registration will lapse.

4. Applicants giving false or misleading information will be deprived of all benefit of the use of the bureau for such time as the director may determine.

That is only something of what he has got to go through. These are the preliminary stages in order to secure employment. This form which I hold in my hand is the next stage. I will not weary the House by reading what is the next stage.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Read it. Read it.

Mr. MULLAN: He has to give the information asked for in this form. I will not read it now, but will allow the Minister for Works to read it for himself in his dull moments.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Why do not you read it?

Mr. MULLAN: I do not believe that the Minister has read this form himself.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: How long has it been in force?

Mr. MULLAN: It has been in force ever since I came into this House.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: And you have only just found it out now?

Mr. MULLAN: It is my duty to find it out and reproach you or any other hon. member for allowing such a form to remain in existence. As I said at the outset, I can well understand why this system is adopted. If it were changed the Labour Bureau would be popularised, and through it becoming popular we would have the true state of the labour market. I might also state, in connection with that office, that I have reason to believe that in some respects the Labour Bureau is practically used as a detective office. It is practically used as a branch of the Criminal Investigation Department. (Hear, hear!) Well, it is well known that police reports, which I have referred to in my remarks already, have to be supplied in connection with men who seek employment, and any member of this House who is inquisitive enough to go down to the Labour Bureau and look at the post on the side of the counter, will see niches in that post indicating all heights up to that of the tallest man, so that the officer in charge can detect the height of the men for police purposes, thus showing that this office which should be popularised is being used practically as a branch of the Criminal Investigation Department.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Dear me!

Mr. MULLAN: I know that it distresses the hon. gentleman very much, but before he has got out of that department he will have reason to worry more than he does now.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Dear me!

Mr. MULLAN: The leading and guiding principle of this business is to make people believe that there is no unemployed and no poverty in Queensland. Here is the official report, which I do not suppose that the hon. gentleman will try to contravert. It is from Mr. Brenan, the officer in charge of the Government Labour Bureau. In one paragraph Mr. Brenan puts the whole show away. He says—

Referring to country relief, it is intended to suspend the issue of rations in Bundaberg and certain other localities between the months of December and May. Some objections may be raised to this action; but I have recommended it, because I am certain that in the sugar districts large numbers of men congregate every year long before there is a likelihood of any work for the sole purpose of living at the expense of the state. Many are utterly unfit for the work they profess to be seeking, others have not the slightest intention of accepting any kind of employment, while some join the crowd demanding Government rations, although they possess money enough to pay their own way. Something must be done, and a suspension of the issue of rations suggests itself to me as the least drastic method of dealing with the question.

What may be deduced from this? Why do men congregate in those places? Why, it is the clearest evidence that it is possible to get that there is a surplus of labour unemployed in Queensland. It is clearly proved by that, otherwise they would not congregate in hundreds, as indicated by Mr. Brenan, in various centres where they hope to get employment.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He says they do not want to get employment.

Mr. MULLAN: He states that the men congregate there, and they are not likely to congregate in these places starving. We have been told Queensland is a very prosperous State, and we want more men to compete with those who are here. Here is an indication of the labour market in Brisbane to-day. This is only Brisbane itself. There were 2,521 families assisted in

Brishane alone during the six months ending on the 30th of June, and there were no less than 9,213 persons receiving outdoor relief during the same period. That goes to prove clearly that there is ample poverty in Queensland to-day, and it is time enough for us to bring additional labour here when we have absorbed that which is here already.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: A great deal of that relief does not necessarily mean unemployment,

Mr. MULLAN: A certain percentage of it is not unemployed, I admit; but I say that a very large percentage of it is the result of unemployed eligible men and women.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not think so.

Mr. GRAYSON: It is not so.

Mr. MULLAN: Then with regard to the Government's immigration policy, the primary object of immigration is to bring about cheap labour. Capital is getting more rapacious every day. In its eagerness to get profits it recognises that the only way to reduce wages is by having a surplus of men—having ten men looking for one man's job. Now, we have seen in Queensland already during the last six months that there is a conspiracy for the purpose of reducing wages. And this conspiracy is not confined to outsiders, as really the Government themselves are interested in it. You have only got to look at the construction of the Cloncurry Railway some months back. The Government there used strenuous efforts to reduce the wages of the men who were engaged there working under the worst possible conditions. The most adverse conditions that a man can work under are those to be found in the Cloncurry district, and yet we find the Government there trying to reduce the men to a miserable pittance. Then go up to the Etheridge line, which is being worked by their syndicate friends, and you will see they made an onslaught on the wages of the men there. It was only about a month or two ago that Senators Chataway, Sayers, and St. Ledger, friends of the Minister for Agriculture—three and ninepenny Senators—waited on the Minister for Trade and Customs.

The SPEAKER: Order! It is not in order to refer in disparaging terms to members of any other Parliament.

Mr. MULLAN: I am glad to have your ruling, Mr. Speaker, that it is disparaging that men should be offered 3s. 9d. a day.

The SPEAKER: Order! I did not give any such ruling. I ruled that any disparaging reference to any member of another Parliament is out of order.

Mr. MULLAN: Senators Chataway, Sayers, and St. Ledger waited on the Minister for Customs in Melbourne some months ago and implored that gentleman to reduce the wages in the cane-fields to 3s. 9d. a day—a wage which, in my opinion, is a miserable pittance, and totally inadequate for the work in the cane-fields. The action of these senators was backed up by a deputation from the Logan and Albert cane-growers. All this shows that there was a conspiracy, and that it was all prearranged. Then a monster deputation of seventeen members of Parliament waited on the Premier prior to his departure for England, and that deputation presented to the hon. gentleman this resolution—

In view of the unprecedented deficiency in the supply of labour which threatens the primary industries generally, and recognising that upon the success of these industries depend the success and prosperity of the state, this deputation would respectfully impress upon your Government the urgent necessity for immediately taking such steps as will secure the introduction

to Queensland at the earliest possible moment of sufficient suitable labour to meet the pressing requirements of the agricultural industry.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Read the names.

Mr. MULLAN: I have not the names by me; but every man in that deputation is now standing behind the present Government; and one of them, the hon. member for Moreton, Mr. Campbell, said—

If they were going to bring men into the country only after they had found work for them, the country would go down.

The country will go down unless the country is flooded with cheap labour. He continued—

They should not wetnurse their immigrants. In the early eighties the country went ahead, because immigrants of a desirable class were brought out and forced to carve out their careers for themselves.

Evidently, from the remarks of the hon. gentleman, he would have the same policy now, and bring men here whether there was work for them or not. And he would force them to do, not what they wanted to do, but what we wanted them to do. This is to all intents and purposes to attempt to reduce the men coming here to a condition of slavery—to force them to carve out the career we think proper. Every man on the other side coincides with that policy; and all these things point to a conspiracy practically to reduce these men to a condition of slavery. The wage system to-day is worse than slavery. If a man had to buy a decent slave and pay a substantial figure for him, he would look after him, and feed and clothe him well, because he would recognise that unless he was well housed and fed he might die, and he would sustain a loss. But in the case of a wage slave, what cares he how the man lives as long as he puts in his eight hours' toil. It does not matter to him whether the man has a decent feed or not; it does not matter whether he is in rags and tatters, or whether he engenders disease as a result of the standard of living—he knows he can get ten men to look for the job in the morning if the man dies. So I say that the conditions under a system of wage slavery are worse than the conditions under a system of absolute slavery. Members on this side are handicapped in their endeavours to frustrate the designs of the Premier in connection with this immigration policy, because he is backed up by the Press and by the financial institutions. There is no doubt the hon. gentleman made his peace at home with those people, and now that he is back again he is able to use those influences against us. And there are no influences in the world harder to fight than financial influences. Our frank and patriotic Premier has told us that the vacant spaces in Queensland must be filled up at any price, and we are told, as an argument in favour of bringing people here, that we must have men to defend the country. What are the facts of the case? If the party with whom the Premier is now associated had had their way in the past, there would be no vacant spaces in Australia—they would have been filled up long ago with black, brown, and brindled people. And if the party he is now associated with had their way, there would be no necessity to defend Australia against the Chow or Jap. or anybody else, because the Jap. would be here in sufficient numbers to take the country at will.

Mr. RYLAND: They would be in possession.

Mr. MULLAN: I cannot understand why the hon. gentleman raises this cry, and talks about self-effacement to bring it about. I wish to state that neither my party nor myself are opposed to legitimate immigration, provided it is conducted on proper lines; that is to say, provided proper discrimination is exercised in the selection, and provided that before we bring

immigrants here we have solved the unemployed difficulty in Queensland. Why should we give to people outside Queensland privileges we deny to Queenslanders? People have been misled in London by being told that if they come here they will get free land. We know from painful experience that the people already here cannot get land; therefore one of two things is going to happen by the promise of free land to outsiders—either they will find that they have been misled, or they are going to have privileges which are denied to Queenslanders. Why should the people of Queensland have to put their hands into their pockets to pay to bring other people here to compete with them for employment? Any reasonable man will recognise that such a thing is not fair. As to the question of proper discrimination and selection of immigrants, the Premier himself, in reply to a question asked by the junior member for Fortitude Valley the other evening, told the House in substance that he knew nothing at all about what the Agent-General was doing—he knew nothing about the agents employed, or how they were paid. This is a painful situation for a Government to be placed in.

The PREMIER: This is a stonewall speech.

Mr. MULLAN: I have made these few remarks in the interests of the public, and I think it is a duty which the Government owe to the public—that they should have complete control of the Agent-General's Department, not only in the matter of immigration, [8 p.m.] but in every other matter. If the Premier knows nothing about the

Agency-General in connection with immigration, is it not just as reasonable to suppose he knows nothing about the control of the Agency-General in its other branches? I know it is very painful for the hon. gentleman to listen to these remarks, but it is not my fault that I have to make them. It is his fault for giving me the opportunity. I know the character of the immigrants brought here is generally good, but that does not alter the fact that a stricter control should be exercised in the selection of these men. One of the strongest evidences that no control is exercised is given here. I saw recently that the Home Government issued a circular to the police magistrates of England pointing out that they were not to recommend prisoners, when they discharged them, to come to Australia. It evidently has been the custom in the past, and I have here a cablegram clipped from one of the papers showing the way they treated Australia in this matter—

A London magistrate has refused to discharge a habitual criminal with the view of allowing him a last chance in Australia. Captain Collins, in a letter to the Press, emphasises that Australia is not a field for dumping undesirables.

It is evidently the custom to give them a last chance, and when they get the last chance they must come to Australia. That sort of thing should not obtain at the present day. I certainly hope the Government will in future exercise proper discrimination in the control of this department. During the last recess I made it my business to travel a good deal through Queensland, and I made inquiries into the state of the labour market to see if immigration was really required, and I found there was abundance of labour everywhere. As I said before, a conspiracy was being entered into to cheapen labour. At present we find labour cheap, and finding labour cheap is the best proof that labour is plentiful, because if labour is scarce, in compliance with the law of supply and demand, the wages rise. If there is a surplus of labour, labour comes down in value. The fact that labour has been particularly cheap in Queensland shows there is ample labour to meet all the requirements, but the gentlemen

who control the financial institutions of Queensland—banks, stations, and plantations—are not content with that. They recognise that anything that tends to bring about a surplus of labour will bring about low wages, and of course low wages mean high profits, and so long as they can bring about a surplus of labour, they do not care whether we have wages boards, arbitration courts, or the Trade Disputes Bill, or anything else. We can have them all so long as they can have a surplus of labour—so long as there are ten men for one man's work, nothing would be effective in keeping up the standard of wages. That is the object of capitalists in securing a surplus of labour. Just to give you a sample of how matters in connection with the labour market here are misrepresented at home, I will refer to an extract which I have taken from a home paper, showing the gross misrepresentation to which they resort in order to flood this country with cheap labour. It is from the *Haywick News* of 30th June, 1908, which says—

Wages are high in Queensland, the average earnings of seventy-five men engaged in loading and discharging steamers for one week, working a good deal of overtime, however, being £5 2s. Sunday labour is discouraged, those so engaged having to be paid according to law at least 3s. per hour.

Now, this statement would lead one to believe it was a weekly occurrence to pay men at the rate of £5 2s. I rang up the secretary of the Seamen's Union the other day, and tried to verify that statement, but I find the wages do not average £2 a week.

Mr. MANN: That statement was written by a Queenslander.

Mr. MULLAN: That statement might be true as far as a particular instance was concerned; but it was printed for the purpose of leading people to believe that it was the average wage in Queensland. With regard to the 3s. per hour for work on Sunday, anybody at all acquainted with the industrial wages of Queensland must look upon that as a gross misrepresentation of facts. At Charters Towers the men who work on Sunday do not get even 1s. per hour in very many cases.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That statement refers to wharf labourers.

Mr. MULLAN: The statement leads us to believe that Sunday labour is discouraged in Queensland, but it does not say Sunday labour of any particular class. The inference that would be drawn from that by men in the old country was any labour. In my own electorate men are receiving less than 1s. an hour for Sunday work. It just shows the depths the people will stoop to in order to misrepresent the actual facts. With regard to the question of immigration, our party are not opposed to immigration, but we do believe the surplus labour should be first absorbed, and we believe Queenslanders should first get the advantages that are being promised to immigrants. That is to say, Queenslanders should have a prior right to cheap or free land. We should make the conditions in Queensland such that men would be induced to come here without bringing them by misrepresentation. People want to know how you will do that. I believe that cheap land would be a solution of the difficulty. What we want is to give the people here a chance to go on the land. That would be the best way to absorb the unemployed. I think there is no way in which you could improve the industrial conditions—conditions of employment—better than by putting the men on the land, and anything that has for its object the reduction of the price of land, and the facilitating of the means of getting on the land, will help to relieve the labour market, and would of itself

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make room for a large amount of immigration. One of the remedies which I suggest in connection with cheapening the land is the imposition of a land value tax.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MULLAN: Some days ago an hon. member wanted to know what was the connection between immigration and the land tax. I hope to show the connection here this evening. Hon. members on the Government side shudder at the very thought of a land tax. It would send their supporters into revolt almost immediately. But that does not alter the fact that it is a good thing. Many valuable things were first enunciated on this side of the House, and have since been carried into effect; and this is also a good thing. People want to know in what way a land tax will cheapen land. Well, it will do it in this way: In travelling through Queensland recently I found that the curse of land monopoly is rampant. Wherever you go along our railways you find land unoccupied in the sense that good agricultural land is not being used. It is being held for speculative purposes by financial institutions and financial speculators. A land tax would lead to those lands being used, because it would not pay any man to hold land for speculative purposes if there was a fair tax imposed. It would not pay any man to hold more land than he could use profitably. The result would be that instead of the Government having to pay an enormous price to repurchase these estates, the holders would put their land on the market, and it would immediately become accessible to poor people. Those poor people would be taken off the labour market, and room would be made for immigrants. But an enormous benefit would also be derived by our railways from the profitable use of those lands. For years past—in fact, ever since the construction of many of our railways—they have not been carrying, perhaps, more than one-fourth of their capacity, and in some cases one-half of their capacity. Now, if these railways were utilised up to anything like their full capacity, the railway revenue would increase proportionately, and we would be able to reduce taxation in some other direction; and, although we might impose a small tax upon the farmer in one direction, indirectly we would relieve him of that tax to, perhaps, a greater extent. Of course, I know there is not much chance of this reform while the present gentlemen occupy the front Treasury bench. The only way to get a land tax, perhaps, is to get them off that bench; and probably that will be sooner than we imagine. I would like now to say a word with respect to the old-age pensions and the way in which the Act is being administered. The Act, as it stands, is no doubt fairly liberal, but I do not think it is being interpreted in the proper spirit. Anybody reading the Act would come to the conclusion that any person holding property up to a maximum of £260 can get a pension of 10s. per week. Now, what are the facts? Supposing a man has £260 worth of property, the first thing that is done is that the Government make a reduction of £50. That gives a net value of £210. Then, for every £15 of such value a deduction is made of £1 in the pension. In the case just mentioned—where the reduced value is £210—that means a reduction of the pension of £26 per annum by £14, giving a net pension of £12—equal to 4s. 7d. per week. I shall now take the case of a man who has a property worth £155; and any house and furniture that are worth having are worth £155. Deducting the £50, the value of the property is £105. Dividing that by 15 gives a reduction from the pension of £7—or a pension of £19—equal to 7s. 3d. per week. This operates very harshly in North Queens-

land, where the purchasing power of money is considerably reduced. The value of property is, therefore, excessively high, and a house worth living in, and with anything like decent furniture, will be valued at £155. A man may have had his house for years, and he does not like to part with the old home. If he sells his house, the Government will reduce his allowance, and he will have to go into some miserable hovel to live. It appears to me that, if a man has a tent on Charters Towers, and lives under the lowest possible conditions, he will get his 10s. a week, whereas the man with a decent little home will have to sell that home before he can get a pension, or, because of his possession of that home, his pension will be reduced by something like 50 per cent. I really think this matter should be taken into consideration by the Government. I have in my mind's eye the case of an old man who had some very nice furniture and a very nice house. He did not like to break up his home or to make away with his furniture. He could have falsified his return, perhaps, by making away with his furniture, but he was too honest to do that. The result is that he is now getting a miserable pittance instead of drawing the maximum pension. We were also given to understand when the Bill was going through that the Government would not interpret strictly the provisions with regard to an applicant's character. It is not fair to impose penalties on a man for a crime for which he has already suffered; but I know that men are suffering severely at the present time on this account. The number of applicants for old-age pensions on Charters Towers was 337. Out of that number only 197 got full pensions, thirty-eight got reduced pensions under the conditions I have described, and forty-one were not able to prove their age. It is a real hardship to men to have to prove their age. Several men left home when they were very young, and they have no data to which they can refer to prove their age, and the Government officer, in consequence, refuses their applications. Sometimes a man referred the officer to his marriage lines as data on which to base his age, and the officer immediately set to work to sift out something which would conflict with that evidence. It is the easiest thing in the world to find conflicting evidence on a matter of this kind. I will give you some cases in point. Among the forty-one persons whose applications were refused were several men whose ages appeared to be over sixty-five years according to their marriage lines, but owing to an unfortunate error made by the wife of the applicant in registering the birth of some members of the family, he was put in the position of having to prove his age by some other method. This, in many cases, was well-nigh impossible. In cases where the Commissioner really believes that a man is over sixty-five years of age he ought to grant the pension without any hesitation. I know several cases where men have been refused the pension because they were not sixty-five, and I am sure that any member of this House would convict the applicant of being over seventy-five. Then we had eleven applications rejected on the ground that the applicants were of intemperate habits—not leading, as the magistrate said, reputable lives. We had a dispute over that matter when the Bill was before this House, and I particularly remember asking the Minister what was meant by that phrase. We were clearly given to understand at that time that the phrase would be interpreted in a most liberal spirit, and that where a man was leading a temperate life for some time immediately preceding the date of his application, his application would be favourably entertained. But that has not been the case. I know that in several cases the

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officer has sifted information on which he could deprive old people of pensions. Again, pensioners were kept unduly long out of their pensions. The pensions were provided for from June last, and in several cases they have not been paid yet. In fact, several persons in my constituency who were entitled to pensions died before receiving any payment. When the Bill was going through the House we raised the question of invalid pensions. We tried to get a clause inserted providing for invalid pensions as well as old-age pensions, and the Minister gave us to understand that he would not only consider that question during the recess, but that he would revise the whole question of indigence allowances, because, as was pointed out, it was illogical to give one man a pension of 10s. and another a pension of 5s. a week. If it be a legitimate thing to give a man who is over sixty-five years a pension of 10s. a week because of his age, and that pension is considered fair and sufficient, it is equally legitimate and fair to give the same pension to a man who is sixty-four years of age and an invalid. The Minister made a solemn promise at the time that he would revise the whole question, but up to the present he has not considered it at all. I hope that the Government, or rather a Government, will not be so remiss over this matter in the next recess as the present Government have been up to the present time. Just one or two words more, and I am done. I wish briefly to refer to the lands administration. I think nobody will deny that the late Minister for Lands made an honest effort to administer the Lands Department impartially and well, and no doubt he partially succeeded. At the same time, it must be patent to any man that there are some serious defects in the system of land administration. Speaking as a layman on this subject of land administration, it seems to me that it should not be necessary in a State like Queensland for a man to have to wait two or three years to obtain land, when at the same time we are telling people in London that we will give them free land. I know several cases where men thought they would have no difficulty in obtaining land, and yet had to wait many months before they got land. The members of the Vance Group, at Charters Towers, thought they would have no difficulty in obtaining land, and yet many of them had consumed their own capital before they were able to secure land. That is most deplorable condition of things. Again, the Evelyn Group had to wait eighteen months before they could get land, and they are not on the land yet, and may not be on the land for a considerable time. There are also, at present fifty-two families in a group at Charters Towers who are looking for land in vain. I am quite satisfied that if the Minister gave me a guarantee to-morrow that he would meet me in the matter of supplying land I would have no difficulty in finding an additional 200 families who would take up land.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Have you been to see the Minister?

Mr. MULLAN: I will show the hon. gentleman the correspondence which has taken place. Those fifty-two families have been applying—almost appealing—to the Minister for Lands. In the last letter I got from a member of the group the writer said, "My particular feeling in the matter is that of despair." That letter I can show the hon. gentleman to-morrow.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I say, have you applied to the Minister?

Mr. MULLAN: We have been to the Lands Department frequently, but we were met with the same old cry, "We are getting on as rapidly as we can in the matter of survey; we are doing

everything in our power to meet the case." And I believe they are doing everything in their power, which is not saying much; but everything in their power is not sufficient for Queensland. Something should be done to remedy this evil of delay. What we want is decentralisation of the Lands Department. It is an immense department, and it is almost impossible for any one human being to administer it efficiently. I say that without intending any reflection on the present or past Minister. It is an enormous department, and in a State so extensive as Queensland, no matter how the Minister may endeavour to meet the requirements of the State, he must, in my opinion, fall short of what is required. I believe decentralisation would to a large extent cope with some of the difficulty. I think that you might break up the management of the Lands Department into about six different districts. I am just giving what is [8.30 p.m.] my opinion. I was asked to supply a remedy, and I want to casually suggest this: I think if we had centres at Brisbane, Toowoomba, Maryborough, Rockhampton, Townsville, and Cairns, much might be done to mitigate what, in my opinion, is unavoidable, owing to the concentration of all the work of this enormous department in one place. Another thing, I think a system might be adopted which would help to bring about this decentralisation; that is, to devise some method—I recognise that there is a difficulty, and it is not a matter which any man can jump hastily at and say he has solved it—but I really think there is sufficient talent in our Lands Department to do this. Why is there not a method adopted by which we can have selection before survey? I believe that would help.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We tried that many years ago, under the 1868 Act.

Mr. MULLAN: The Minister for Lands will tell you that one of the difficulties he has to contend with in settling men on land in the North is that he cannot find surveyors. These men have appealed again and again, as the Minister knows, for permission to go on this land, and take it up subject to survey later on. This proposal may seem at variance with established customs.

The HOME SECRETARY: What they asked was not selection before survey. They wanted to go on after the designing had taken place, and before the permanent survey. One of the troubles was that it was jungle country, and we had to value the timber, and also to value each block before we knew what the price was. That has contributed to the delay.

Mr. MULLAN: The complaint which they gave to me, and which they conveyed as far as I can learn to the Lands Department, was that they were prepared to start straightaway with cattle and horses and money—they were prepared to trek overland. Mr. Solleux made a proposal that he was prepared to trek overland with fifty-two families, with their capital and all their belongings, if the Minister would only ensure the occupancy of the land. All they wanted was to be given a base line, and so long as they were approximately near their own lands they did not mind having to move in several hundred yards.

The HOME SECRETARY: You make a mistake. They do not like to have to remove.

Mr. MULLAN: Where is the difficulty? Take the administration of the Mines Department. Do men wait for a survey before they peg out a goldmine? No, we go out and peg out our land, and sometimes commence to work that land immediately, and within a few

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days we apply to the warden. It may be a considerable time before the warden grants that land.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is selection before survey.

Mr. MULLAN: It may be a long time before it is surveyed, yet this land may advance in value hundreds or thousands of pounds. These men are frequently compelled to bring in their pegs. They peg out the land subject to survey, and subject to the decision of the warden later on, and in the same way I contend that a selector could select his land—could peg out his land approximately, subject to survey later on. There might be one or two cases of hardship where men might have to shift owing to deviation of creeks and other difficulties, but in the aggregate I think a great deal of benefit would be conferred on the people, and I would ask the Department not to approach the suggestion in a conservative spirit, but to consider it for what it is worth. Of course, this is the place to offer opinions as to any methods.

The HOME SECRETARY: Something might be done in that direction, but I do not believe, unless you have enough surveyors, that anything could be done to obviate the difficulty. I am certainly as anxious as any member of that group to put them on the land.

Mr. MULLAN: I admitted at the outset that the hon. gentleman was impartially trying to deal with what was, to my mind, an impossible task for any one man to efficiently and adequately perform in Queensland. I am making no reflection on the hon. gentleman. I honestly believe he used his best endeavours, but his best endeavours in dealing with such an enormous question was perhaps not the best solution, and I think we can vastly improve conditions by adopting some other methods. I do not know what methods we will have to adopt, but something will have to be done to assist men to get on the land.

The HOME SECRETARY: There is no royal road to do it; the only way to do it is to survey the country first.

Mr. HARDACRE: There is a royal road, but they have not discovered it.

Mr. MULLAN: The difficulty is to discover it. I do not think there is any other matter I require to deal with to-night. I hope, in connection with the lands question, that the Minister will sympathetically deal with the few suggestions I have made regarding decentralisation and selection before survey.

Mr. JONES (Burnett): Mr. Speaker,—

The HOME SECRETARY: Are you going in for selection before survey?

Mr. JONES: No. I want to deal with the deplorable disaster at Mount Morgan, and, in common with other hon. members, I express my sympathy with the relatives of the victims. Those of us who have had mining experience can certainly feel for them. I think a mistake has been made in allowing the mining inspector to conduct the inquiry. Certain resolutions were passed by the Miners' Union at Mount Morgan, which, I think, will commend itself to the Minister for Mines, and I purpose reading one or two of the resolutions, which are as follow:—

1. Delete subclause 6 of clause 195, which gives inspectors power to appear at inquiries into accidents, and examine and cross examine witnesses.

2. Make clause 198 read: "The Employees Protective Association may appoint two competent representatives to accompany the inspector in his examination of the workings, and the representatives so appointed shall

record the results of such examination in a book to be kept at the mine for that purpose, and may also publish their report in a local newspaper. For the purposes of this clause the inspector shall notify the Employees' Association of the date of his intended examination."

3. Amend clause 207 by making it include Protective Associations, and make the second paragraph of this clause read: "The warden shall request the Employees' Protective Association to appoint a representative to examine the scene of accident and report to him the result of his examination."

I quote that before reading a letter in the newspaper by a miner who had been working in Mount Morgan, and he predicted another fall. I think every care should be taken in a large dividend-paying mine.

Mr. MANN: In every other mine, too.

Mr. JONES: Yes. There is no excuse for the Mount Morgan Mine, although we cannot attach blame to anyone.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You do not attribute carelessness to anybody?

Mr. JONES: No, not at all; but I think the greatest care should be taken, and there is no excuse for a large dividend-paying mine. I believe the Mount Morgan Mine up to a year or two ago ranked first as a dividend-paying goldmine. The safety of the miner should be the first consideration.

Mr. COWAP: Are they not always taking great care of their men?

Mr. JONES: The inquiry has not proved so. They engaged in a system which was not as safe as the previous chamber system.

Mr. MAXWELL: That was the first time that they ever worked the chamber system.

Mr. MANN: The pigsty system.

Mr. JONES: Although this State is pre-eminently adapted for agriculture, and while I think that agriculture will be the first industry that we shall have, there is another industry that is equally important, and that is the mining industry. While I do not propose to go over other matters that other hon. members have spoken on, such as the financial relations between the Commonwealth and the States. I propose to deal only with the mining and agricultural industries.

Mr. MANN: And land settlement.

Mr. JONES: That pertains to agriculture. While I think that the agricultural industry will be the first in the State, we cannot overlook the fact that the mining industry is a revenue-producing industry, and has been a great help to the State in the past, especially in times of drought. I do not know whether the appointment of the hon. member for Albert to the position of Minister for Mines is to be taken that the Premier ignores this industry, as I am not aware that the hon. member for Albert has had any wide experience of mining.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: But you are aware that he is a member of a profession which is required to delve into all matters. (Laughter.)

Mr. JONES: Some argue that a Minister can administer his department better if he has no special knowledge of the industry at all, because he will be guided by the opinion of his experts, and would not be likely to flaunt his little knowledge over the high opinion held by his officers.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing," you think?

Mr. JONES: Probably there is something in that argument. However, I am going to judge the Minister for Mines by results. It

would be very unfair for me to say this evening that he will not make a good Minister for Mines.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He will make an absolutely good Minister for Mines all right.

Mr. JONES: I do not think he has had a very big mining experience.

Mr. MANN: Do you prefer him to some of the mining members—say, the hon. member for Burke or the hon. member for Fitzroy?

Mr. JONES: I would certainly prefer the present Minister to the hon. member for Fitzroy. I have heard the Minister say in this Chamber that he was a State socialist.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Hear, hear!

Mr. JONES: And he now confirms that statement.

Mr. HARDACRE (to the Minister): Come over to this side of the House.

Mr. JONES: I agree with the Minister that he is sincere in that expression.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: State batteries now.

Mr. JONES: And I trust that we may now see the establishment of State batteries, State metallurgical works and State smelters. That is State socialism. The production of gold for the year 1907 was less than any previous year for the past ten years. In 1898, the State returned gold to the value of £2,750,348; in 1899 it was £2,838,446; in 1900, the value of gold returned was £2,871,000; and it goes on for every year until 1906, when the value was over £2,000,000. In 1907, the value of gold produced was only £1,978,938. So, therefore, although there has been an increase in the production of other minerals, and also in their value, there has been a decided decrease in the production of gold, due, in my opinion, to the lack of assistance that that industry has received from the present Government and also from past Governments. I do not wish here to attach any blame to any officer of the department or to the present Ministry. I think it is due to Parliament in not voting sufficient funds and passing measures which will materially assist in the greater production of that valuable mineral. In my opinion, the best manner of assisting the industry would be by establishing State metallurgical works. Queensland badly needs up-to-date works of that description in some central place, where a miner may send his ore and have it treated. That can be followed by the establishment of State batteries and State smelters. In Western Australia State batteries have been successful, and, although I am very well aware that in the last year, according to the report from the Under-Secretary for Mines in Western Australia, there is a slight shortage, still we can say they have been successful. In the year previous, I think there was a credit balance in favour of State batteries.

Mr. MAXWELL: There never has been a credit balance.

Mr. JONES: Yes, I think the year before last showed a credit balance. They have been successful in this way: In Western Australia they are not credited with the amount of revenue that is produced in other ways, such as opening up of mining fields, which naturally causes a great many more miners' rights to be taken out, and so forth. Now, we have had works in Queensland at Aldershot, privately-owned works, and I know that they were of very great benefit to the miners in the district which I have the honour to

represent. Still they were never thoroughly satisfied, and I do not think the miners will ever be satisfied with privately-owned works.

Mr. MAXWELL: The people who were running the Aldershot works lost £250,000 over them, did they not?

Mr. JONES: Yes, probably they lost something, and I will tell the hon. member how they met with that loss. I do not think that privately-owned works will ever give the satisfaction that State-owned works would give, and now is an opportune time for the State to step in and establish State works. There are no privately-owned works operating in this State, and miners have to send their ore to Southern States or oversea. I maintain that the Government could run their works cheaper, and treat the ore cheaper, than private people can do. The hon. member for Burke interjected a moment ago that the Aldershot people ran their works at a loss. The reason for that was, like other privately-owned works in Australia, they did not confine themselves to their legitimate business.

Mr. MAXWELL: I would like to see you teach them.

Mr. JONES: I am not attempting to teach them, but they engaged largely in mining speculations.

Mr. HARDACRE: Outside the ore?

Mr. JONES: Yes. The first dividends of the shareholders were used for the shareholders in mining and mining speculations.

Mr. MAXWELL: Can you tell me any successful private mining company that did not have a mine of their own?

Mr. JONES: It is not the duty of the Government to engage largely in mining speculation, but it is the duty of the Government to establish State works where the miner can have his ore treated. We know that the charges made by private works are very exorbitant, and we know that the deductions are so great that had they confined themselves to their legitimate business it must have paid handsomely, because the miner, to use a rather hard expression, has in many cases been robbed.

Mr. HARDACRE: Ore has been sent to Germany, and treated at less cost.

Mr. JONES: Yes. I dealt here previously with the question of State works and private works, and I quoted figures, which have not been controverted, showing that ore valued at £30 a ton was smelted at a cost to the miner of £15 per ton; so that half the value went in charges for treatment.

Mr. MAXWELL: Ring off!

Mr. JONES: There is no "ring off" about it. The figures are absolutely true. Of course, I do not mean to say that if the value of the ore had been £100, the cost would have been £50; but, in the case I mentioned, the miner got only half the value of the ore.

Mr. MAXWELL: I sent some ore valued at £13 a ton, and the charges were only £5 a ton.

Mr. JONES: A number of miners presented a petition to the late Minister for Mines asking for the establishment of a State battery at a cost of £1,500. Here was a *bona fide* offer. They guaranteed to keep the battery going a certain number of hours per day; they guaranteed a certain tonnage of ore per week to crush; they guaranteed the interest on the cost of the erection of the battery; and the

paltry sum of £1,500 was refused. There are many places in Queensland where, if there were a small ten-head battery erected for the miner, instead of having to send his ore oversea and by rail, it would not only help him but would help to build up many good mining fields and the State would derive a good amount of revenue in that way. In the Speech under discussion we are promised a Mining on Private Property Bill. I do not know that it will meet with the approval of every mining member, though we certainly believe in mining on private property. I have only had a short glance at the Bill, but my impression is that according to the measure anyone mining for gold will not be able to mine on private property if that property has been alienated prior to the passing of the Act. I would like the Minister to tell me if that interpretation is correct.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I am hardly prepared at the present time to give information which I shall be prepared to give on the second reading of the Bill; but if the hon. gentleman will read the measure he will find that the Crown has always reserved the gold under the land.

Mr. JONES: A Bill to deal with mining on private property in Queensland is very necessary. We have known cases in Cloncurry where miners have been imprisoned for mining on private property. The owners of the property in one case knew that the men were mining there, and waited until they had taken out a large quantity of ore. Then the men were arrested. In Mount Perry a syndicate spent £500 on private property, and after they had sunk a shaft and got going in fair order the owners took possession of the property. There were no arrests in that case. That is due to an unjust Act passed in 1872, whereby a lot of mineral lands were made freehold; and in many cases some of the land is not yet made freehold, but immediately a miner mines on it the land can be made freehold by the payment of a small deed fee of about £2. Going back to the question of the Aldershot Smelting Works, on two or three occasions we have advocated the purchase of those works by the Government. They are up-to-date, and are very conveniently placed, and near coal. The *Maryborough Chronicle*, which is a paper supporting the present Government, referring in a leading article to the works, said this—

The desirableness of establishing State crushing batteries in various parts of the country has already been affirmed, and a State smelting works for the treatment of the more refractory ores and residues is to be regarded as a necessary feature of that policy. In considering the proposition of the State acquisition of the Aldershot Smelting Works, the causes of the company's cessation of operations, and whether they would occur under local and State ownership and management, would of course need investigation, and we feel confident it would be found that some of the chief causes of failure would not apply under the altered conditions, which would be accompanied by special factors which would make for the success of the enterprise both directly and indirectly. At the very least, serious investigation of the merits of the proposal to nationalise the Aldershot works should be made, especially if, as may be assumed, the State can acquire these works at a comparatively low figure. Such an investment should indeed be a bargain for the State. The works are situated on 1,100 acres of land, with permanent water, secured by a dam. They are very extensive and complete in equipment, and with a further moderate expenditure—which we are informed was in contemplation when operations ceased—would be capable of treating 20,300 tons of ore per annum. In the matter of location, the site of the Aldershot works could hardly be improved upon, and this factor, at any rate, cannot be urged as a cause of the present suspension of operations.

[*Mr. Jones.*

I have advocated that previously in this Chamber, and I think it would be of great assistance to the industry if the Secretary for

[9 p.m.] Mines would give that consideration. Why cannot we follow in the lines of Western Australia? Surely, for the expenditure of a few paltry thousands a year, we would receive a corresponding benefit, and it would open up very many fields that are lying idle to-day, and on which fields it is known there is vast mineral wealth. In New Zealand also they have gone as far as having State coalmines, and the hon. member cannot contradict me in that, because I have the figures here. The State coalmines in New Zealand are very profitable. South Australia, too, is arranging to buy a coalmine in another State—in New South Wales.

Mr. GRANT: We have a State coalmine.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They have no coal in South Australia; that is the trouble.

Mr. JONES: Yet here, although we have the mines, we do not work them by the State.

Mr. BOWMAN: They have a live Labour Premier in South Australia.

Mr. JONES: In that respect we are less enterprising than our sister States.

Mr. COWAP: What is wrong with the Dawson coalmines?

Mr. JONES: The hon. member is more adjacent to the Dawson coalmines, and would probably know more about them. With regard to agricultural land settlement, I believe the just distribution of land according to its value and capabilities, especially under leasehold tenure, together with proper encouragement to settlers, would be of lasting benefit to the community. While the Secretary for Public Lands is not in the Chamber this evening to receive any suggestions hon. members on this side may make, I expect he will wade through *Hansard* later on. Land monopoly is undoubtedly one of the worst forms of monopoly, and various State Governments are now attacking this problem. New Zealand has enacted that it is unlawful for a person to acquire any interest in any land beyond an area of 5,000 acres; but this limit applies only to third-class land. The limit for second-class land is 2,000 acres, and for first-class land only 640 acres. Hence that country is committed to a policy of small holdings. In New Zealand the landless people have priority. We heard a lot about priority last week during this debate, and if any people in a State should receive priority, in my opinion it is the landless people—the sons of farmers who want land and have no land. I do not believe in any form of priority or preference, but I say if people should have priority, those landless people should have the preference. I am one of the few members of this Chamber who are opposed to the group system.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You are a member of the Labour party, and yet a freeholder.

Mr. JONES: I am a freeholder because it was the only system under which I could take up land. I would certainly have selected my land under the perpetual lease system if I could have done so. But was I to give up my inclination to settle on the land and lead a country life, which, I think, is the best life after all?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Certainly not.

Mr. JONES: I had to take advantage of the system then prevailing.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You would have been driven into the towns if you had not.

Mr. GRANT: You passed a grant of freehold land the other evening without discussion.

Mr. JONES: Yes. I know that members of my own party sitting round me do not agree with me—that is, being opposed to the group system.

Mr. HARDACRE: I do not disagree with you.

Mr. JONES: The whole of the members of the Labour party, and, rightly so, are opposed to the land-agent system, but I do not think we are at all unanimous on the group system of settling our lands. Personally, I do not see one good feature in it. Some argue that a body of men coming from the Southern States, or from any part of Queensland, should have priority to a block of land, so that they will be neighbours—they come from the one locality and were neighbours, and they can be neighbours now.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: That is not a bad system, is it?

Mr. JONES: That is probably the only good feature in it. But it is a form of priority, and I think in our land settlement there should not be any preference at all. A man from New South Wales should have the same right to take up land as a Queenslander, and a Queenslander should have the same opportunity as a person from the Southern States. That is my opinion, and I believe in this State we have sufficient good agricultural land to meet the demand, and to settle every person who is now seeking for land—that is, if the land were made available for selection, and railways were constructed to the district. Even if the railways were not constructed immediately—if the railways were built to a system and permanent surveys made—the people selecting would know that in the future at some time or other they would have a railway.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: "Sometime or other" is too indefinite.

Mr. JONES: Our experience has been this: Men have gone out 50 or 60 or 70 miles, and settled on small areas of 160 acres, not knowing whether they were going to get a railway or not. The Coolabunia farmers went out 60 odd miles from the Kilkivan station, and settled in the scrub, and they had no promise of a railway at the time they settled there. Later on they had the promise of a railway: they lived for about fifteen years on the promise of a railway, and quite recently a railway has been built, and enhanced the value of their property. Our experience is that people will go out if the land is sufficiently good, and settle there even without a railway. People would certainly go out and settle if they knew that they were going to get a railway in the near future. In New Zealand landless people have the preference, and that is the only form of preference that I believe in. In Victoria the first proposal of the Premier of that State was to secure, by compulsion, 1,000,000 acres of land in the Western district. I believe since that time he has modified his proposal, and now seeks only to acquire one-third of that area. In Queensland I am aware that large estates can be compulsorily acquired under our Closer Settlement Act, and I think the Government should not hesitate in some instances to repurchase estates, and render them available for closer settlement. In New Zealand they repurchase estates.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: And part with them under perpetual lease?

Mr. JONES: Certainly. I believe that the imposition of a land tax would make those estates available for closer settlement, as the owners would be compelled to subdivide them. On one occasion the present Home Secretary submitted a proposal for the repurchase of an estate in the Burnett district—Mount Debatable. I supported that for the very good reason that the worst of all land monopolies was getting a big hold there—that is, the prickly pear. Where prickly pear is beginning to get a hold, especially of agricultural land, the best means of eradicating the pest is to bring it under close settlement. I think this House made a mistake in refusing to purchase that estate, which could have been got for £1 an acre, as the land is valuable. They made a very good deal in buying the neighbouring estate of Ideraway. It would have been a good thing to purchase Mount Debatable, if for no other reason than to get rid of the prickly pear. In the Upper Burnett some very valuable land is becoming overrun with prickly pear, and it will be useless either to close settlers or to the men who are now holding it under pastoral lease. The progress of land settlement is the most important thing in connection with the development of this country. In New Zealand, after large estates are repurchased, they are settled under the perpetual lease system, and people have no very great fault to find with that tenure. In fact, I think a great many people in Queensland would prefer that tenure to freehold. Land here is at too high a price. A little while back men were selecting the very best land for 2s. 6d. an acre, and now the Lands Department is asking 7s. 6d. and even 10s. an acre, for prickly pear infested land. Under the present system, a man selecting land requires a little capital; but under the perpetual lease system a comparatively poor man can go on the land, and make a living right away. We have it on very good authority that the one tenure is just as secure as the other. Under our Mining Act some of the best claims in Queensland are held under a leasehold tenure with a currency of twenty-one years.

Mr. HARDACRE: And all our pastoral leaseholds.

Mr. JONES: Take a mine like the Gympie Scottish. That mine has been held under lease for the last sixteen years, and five years from the expiry of the lease shares do not come down in value because of the insecurity of the tenure.

Mr. MAXWELL: No, because they have another twenty-seven years to run.

Mr. JONES: It would be the same with land. The object of Parliament should be to see that land is utilised, because, after all, land is only valuable for what it will produce. Our present system is a gigantic system of land speculation. Proof of that is to be found in the fact that we paid Mr. Pulsford something like £3,000 in commission for settling people on the land, and some of the land taken up through him is now back on his hands for sale.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What about the thousands of people who take up land to settle on it?

Mr. MANN: They have not got a chance. The speculator gets the first chance.

Mr. JONES: I think the leasehold tenure would lead to more land being utilised, and it would prevent a great deal of the speculation

which exists to-day, and which will always exist under the present system of freehold tenure. I know this is not a very popular thing to advocate, but I do so fearlessly, because I believe it would be more beneficial to the community. Under our unconditional form of selection we have land speculation. Men take up land—scrub land, especially—and keep it just as a breeding ground for pests to annoy their more industrious neighbours. The present Secretary for Public Lands might do away with that form of selection.

The HOME SECRETARY: I think you will admit that I discouraged it as much as I possibly could.

Mr. JONES: Yes; I give the hon. gentleman credit for that. He also enforced the residential provisions.

The HOME SECRETARY: Take care that you do not compromise yourself by saying pleasant things about me.

Mr. MANN: And you got sacked for doing your duty.

Mr. JONES: I never did agree with the hon. gentleman's private land-agent system; and just before he entered the Chamber I was saying that I was opposed to his group system altogether. The group system gives a form of priority, and I hold that everybody should be given an equal chance in regard to land selection.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: I think the group system is a pernicious system.

Mr. HARDACRE: It is really an excellent system, but it works out badly.

The HOME SECRETARY: It works out excellently.

Mr. JONES: I say that if there is any preference given, it should be given to landless people.

The HOME SECRETARY: So it was.

Mr. JONES: The hon. gentleman contradicted the senior member for Charters Towers when that hon. member stated that there were many Queenslanders who could not get land. But it is a fact that a great many Queenslanders cannot get land in their own State.

The HOME SECRETARY: Oh!

Mr. JONES: I know of one case in which an application was made by ten sons in one family to form a group, and that application was refused by the Minister. However, I am not going to deal with this question any further, as I have already dealt with it pretty fully. I have also had my say on the land agency business, which I think is a bad one. I know of an agent who travelled up the line on a free pass with a man to whom he was selling some private land. I do not think the Minister would approve of that kind of thing if it came to his knowledge, but it shows what evils may be connected with the system of private land agents. Another form of selection to which I wish to refer is under the Special Agricultural Selections Act of 1905. I think the only settlement under that Act is on Ideraway, in my own electorate. Some of the charges made upon the selectors who have taken up land there, though entirely in accordance with the principle of the Act—

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The whole of the charge.

Mr. JONES: Yes, the whole of the charges, but I think the selectors are entitled to some reduction in those charges, because the present Minister for Lands, the hon. member for Oxley, when introducing that measure, stated that it was only an experiment. The Premier also made the same statement. If it is an ex-

periment—and it is an experiment—one which I believe will be a success, then certain reductions should be made in the charges, because the experience of the department in connection with that experiment will assist them in establishing another group in some other part of the State. The charges which I would suggest should be reduced are the travelling expenses of the selector and his family, which amount in each case to about £20; a portion of the salary and allowances to the overseer, which amount to £17 5s. for each selector; the cost of the overseer's quarters; the cost of the bore; and the railway freights and interest. I believe the hon. member for Oxley, when he introduced the Bill, said that for the first five years there would be no interest to pay. At any rate, I think these selectors should not be called upon to pay interest for the first five years, and they should certainly not have to pay the manager's salary, seeing that the system is an experiment. A bore was put down on the land to provide water for the whole of the settlement. The selectors get very little water from that bore, and yet they have to pay the cost of putting it down. Some of the selectors have provided water for themselves by sinking wells on their own selections, and still they have to pay their share of the cost of the bore, which is an injustice. Probably I shall deal more fully with this matter, and get an expression of opinion from the Minister for Agriculture, when we consider the Estimates for the Department of Agriculture. The hon. member for Charters Towers, Mr. Mullan, dealt with the question of land value taxation a little while ago, and some hon. member, a Downs member, I think, interjected that such a tax would be an additional burden on the farmer. We on this side recognise that a direct tax is a just tax, and we claim that it will relieve the farmer of a great deal of the pettifogging taxation which exists to-day. I have always advocated a land tax, and I have no hesitation in doing so either in this House or on the public platform: but I deny that this party has advocated an additional tax. There are many ways in which the farmer would benefit by a land tax, and this party, though advocating a land tax, are really the best friends the farmers have. We are more truly representative of the farming industry than hon. members opposite.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: Members opposite opened the country, and made it fit for you to come into the House.

Mr. JONES: A land tax is sound in principle. If by the expenditure of public money the value of private land is enhanced, the owner of that land should pay back to the State some part of that enhanced value. This party do not propose to tax a man's industry, or thrift, or energy. We propose taxing only the unimproved value of land.

Hon. R. PHILP: It is taxed now.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: Can you give us a definition of what the unimproved value of land in a settled district is? You cannot arrive at it. Wiser men than you have tried it for years, and have not been able to do it.

Mr. HARDACRE: The local authorities do it.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: They do not do it.

Mr. JONES: If land is enhanced in value by the expenditure of public money, then the owner of that land should pay some part of that enhanced value back to the State. Take, as an illustration, land in the district which I have the honour to represent. I think Mr. Young paid 10s. an acre for his Kingaroy

[*Mr. Jones.*]

land. The other day half an acre of that land was sold for £845, because the State had enhanced its value by constructing a railway to it. I believe he sold about 2,000 acres of that land the other day at a big land sale, and that the country lands averaged £10 an acre.

Hon. R. PHILP: All the Coolabunia Scrub land was taken up at 2s. 6d. an acre.

Mr. JONES: Yes; and millions of feet of timber were burnt off in the Coolabunia Scrub—the hon. member for Barcoo can bear me out in that statement—because the hon. member for Townsville neglected to build a railway to the land.

Hon. R. PHILP: I built the railway.

Mr. JONES: The hon. member passed it.

Hon. R. PHILP: We built it

Mr. JONES: No; the Morgan Government built the railway.

Hon. R. PHILP: The Philip Government built the line to Kingaroy.

Mr. JONES: That is an instance of the great value of land. Dealing with land value taxation, I think one of the worst

[9.30 p.m.] forms of land tax is our present Railway Act of 1906. That is a very unjust Act, and I predict that in the near future it will have to receive the very serious consideration of this Chamber. I believe the time will come when the country will ask for the repeal of the Act.

Hon. R. PHILP: Did you not vote for it?

Mr. JONES: I voted against it. Under the provisions of the Act, a railway is constructed from a seaport town into the country. The Commissioner strikes the benefited area, and the country landowner must pay the shortage on the working of the line, and 3 per cent. on the capital cost of construction. Strange to say, in nearly all the lines which have been introduced, the benefited area extends a good distance beyond the proposed termini of the line. It does not extend into the city from which the line starts, and which will materially benefit by the construction of the line. Take the Dalby line—I believe the benefited area extends into half the town of Dalby. One side of the street is out of the benefited area, and the other side of the street is in. The shopkeeper on one side will be called upon to pay, and the shopkeeper on the other side will be left free, and yet he receives the same benefit. We know in the case of the Barcoo electorate the people protested against the building of the railway.

Mr. KERR: Not all the people.

Mr. JONES: That is the information we have. The Boyne Valley line will benefit both Bundaberg and Gladstone. The people in Cania mining district and two other districts in the Burnett, within 40 miles of the proposed terminus of the railway, are within the benefited area, and, if the line does not pay, they will be called upon to make up the loss. Yet there is an impassable range between those goldfields and the proposed terminus. They will never use the railway unless a road is built over the hills.

Mr. KERR: They will never be called upon to pay the guarantee on that line—the traffic will more than pay the interest.

Mr. JONES: I am saying if the traffic does not pay. There are many lines where they will not be called upon to pay. On the Blackbutt line the timber traffic will be so heavy that they will never be called upon to pay, and it will be the same in the Kingaroy district. If the line will not pay, it is unfair to

bring people into the benefited area who will not benefit by the construction of the line. In my opinion, it is a very poor attempt to apply the betterment principle. The betterment principle as introduced by the Premier, whereby those landowners whose land increased in value would pay 1½ per cent., was a truer application of the betterment principle than the Railway Act of 1906. I think that we should build more railways into country land. The policy of the Government should be to make our lands available for closer settlement, and also to construct railways. The Burnett district, for instance, which is a very large district, is known to be one of the richest districts in Queensland.

Mr. REDWOOD: Hear, hear!

Mr. JONES: The hon. member for Toowoomba verifies that statement. We have not sufficient railways. I am not advocating this from a district point of view, because I never looked at the construction of railways from a district point of view—in fact, I am rather unpopular that way.

The PREMIER: That is the case with us all.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Port Alma. (Laughter.)

Mr. JONES: I have advocated railways being constructed on the merits of the district, and that expert opinion should be largely used, and that the Minister and Parliament should be guided by the opinion of experts.

Hon. R. PHILP: The opinions of members.

Mr. JONES: No, I do not think there are two members in this House who could show which lines should be built in the Burnett district.

The HOME SECRETARY: Let us have your opinion of it.

Mr. JONES: If I give my personal opinion, I might advocate a railway which would suit me best. I would not attempt to take away the right of the people to advocate the opening up of land by railways.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is an interesting point, and you are the member for the district. It is quite in order to give your opinion now.

Mr. JONES: I advocate the linking up of the lines—Kingaroy terminus with Blackbutt.

The HOME SECRETARY: By which route?

Mr. JONES: No one railway can serve that district. The hon. member for Barcoo will bear me out in that statement. Next, there is the connection between the Downs and the Burnett. By that you would build up a distributing centre that I am sure would be equal to Toowoomba. The Home Secretary knows that district very well.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is why I was anxious to have your opinion. What about the Upper Burnett?

Mr. JONES: With regard to the Upper Burnett, there are two or three routes suggested—one from Gayndah to open up the beautiful Dalgangan land, and the other from Wolca to Dalgangan.

The HOME SECRETARY: Which do you propose?

Mr. JONES: I have not sufficient knowledge to give my personal opinion. (Laughter.) And yet I think I know more about the country than any other member in this Chamber. I believe in the principle that we should be guided by expert opinion in deciding a railway route—that is a democratic view to take.

Mr. Jones.]

The HOME SECRETARY: You have got out of it very well. (Laughter.)

Mr. JONES: I hope the Premier will recognise the potentialities of that district. There are very fine timber areas there, and some good agricultural land—and especially in the lower Burnett district, the connection between the Downs and Blackbutt. I had the pleasure of a trip on two occasions with the late Minister for Railways. He can bear out all I have said. I moved a motion in this Chamber asking for a return of the amount spent by Ministers on tour. I did so simply to get information. I had two trips myself with the late Minister for Railways.

Mr. COYNE: That will add to the total.

Mr. JONES: I can pay tribute to that hon. member's courtesy. I do not think that he overdid it. It did not cost a great deal for him.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: They all had a good time.

The SPEAKER: Order!

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: They had a good time up North.

Mr. MANN: We will get all these details of expenses on the Estimates.

Mr. JONES: I am sure that had the late Minister for Railways remained in office he would have fully recognised the richness of that district. He was sympathetic, and he would have done something, or endeavoured to do something, to persuade the majority of his colleagues to do something for that district, and I hope the Premier will recognise that.

Mr. LENNON: The Good Night Scrub.

Mr. JONES: I do not know much about the Good Night Scrub. I would like to say a word about the Workers' Compensation Act. I regret that the Premier has not introduced an amendment of the Workers' Compensation Act this session.

Mr. MANN: His party will not allow him.

Mr. JONES: I do not think the Premier can accuse us of wasting the time of this House. We only met on the 17th of November, and it was getting near Christmas.

The PREMIER: It is the 1st of December now.

Mr. JONES: But we were many months idle, when we might have been here.

Mr. BOWMAN: We had seven months' recess.

Mr. JONES: So far as I am concerned I am willing to sit here till July.

The PREMIER: Have you been idle since?

Mr. JONES: A Labour man is never idle in the recess, as he has to travel all through his electorate. I am prepared to sit after Christmas, and I hope an amendment of the Workers' Compensation Act will be introduced. We can suggest various amendments from this side. In fact, the payment of the compensation should date from the date of the injury, and not a fortnight after the injury. The employers have to pay the premiums to the insurance companies, and the insurance companies do not pay for the first fortnight, and the good and just employer does not like to see his employee suffer for this fortnight, without getting any wages, and he makes it up himself. In that case it would be a benefit for both the employer and employee.

Mr. BOWMAN: The Government has set an example.

[Mr. Jones.]

Mr. JONES: I would like to see an amending Bill introduced on the lines of the New Zealand Act. They pay full compensation for blindness in New Zealand, and for the loss of two feet they also pay full compensation. For the loss of one foot and one arm they get full compensation also in New Zealand, and they get so much for the loss of a limb and so much for the loss of an eye. I know the cases of two miners in this State each of whom lost an eye, and, while one got £179 compensation, the other only received £30.

Mr. KERR: The Government pay £250 for the loss of an eye.

Mr. BOWMAN: Not in every case.

Mr. JONES: The reason the man only received £30 was because he went to work five weeks after the date of the accident, and thereby he debarred himself from getting a greater amount of compensation, and the man who stood out and said that the injury prevented him from going to work received £179. We also need, in conjunction with that Act, an Act to provide for State insurance. I think that Act was promised two sessions ago. The two Acts could work together. I believe in State insurance, and the Workers' Compensation Act is not perfect until that other Act is passed. In the days of our youth and energy I think we should contribute something towards State insurance, and that would provide a fund out of which compensation could be paid to all persons, no matter what kind of occupation they followed.

Hon. R. PHILP: A lot of people do that now.

Mr. JONES: Yes; but we want to make it a State affair. We want to make it compulsory. I do not think that any person would object to pay £1 if he could dwell in the happy knowledge that if he received an injury he would receive compensation without question, and in the event of death his dependents would be promptly provided for. That is a step towards ideal socialism, and it would be more perfect than the present Workers' Compensation Act. Funds could also be raised in that way for the payment of old-age pensions. I do not propose to deal with the immigration question to-night, as that question has been ably dealt with by others on this side of the House. I would just like to say, in passing, that I am not against immigration, and no member of this party is against immigration, but we do not believe in bringing a lot of people out here while there are people struggling for work here. We know that there is no scarcity of labour at present, especially in the country districts. In the farming districts, where there is supposed to be a scarcity of labour, where there is a job offering there are ten or twelve applicants for it. During the past we have had sufficient evidence of the fact that our present system of government is not a perfect system. Since I have been in the House I do not think that any Ministry has been on those benches for any length of time. I think that Parliament should run for its full term. If a Parliament is elected for three years it should run for three years, and the only way to insure that is to adopt the wise course set by Switzerland, and introduce the system of elective Ministries. There is a very strong feeling in the country against these lightning changes in the Ministries.

Mr. MANN: And in the lightning changes in Ministers.

Mr. JONES: Probably so, but I am dealing with the Ministries and the system of appointing them. When a Minister travels in a district the people go to a lot of trouble to meet

him. He receives deputations, and they bring before him the urgent needs of the district. The Minister makes some promises, probably thinking he will be a Minister for some time and will be able to carry them out, but in the twinkling of an eye there is a change, and the people have to go over the same performance again and invite up the new Minister. If we adopted the Swiss system, and had elective Ministries, they would be assured for the life of the Parliament, better work would be done, and there would not be that uncertainty which exists at present.

Mr. BOWMAN: Is there any uncertainty at present?

Mr. JONES: I think there is. There might be another election in six months. I am prepared for it at any rate.

Mr. MANN: Do not frighten the Premier.

Mr. JONES: Under the present system neither the Premier nor any other member knows how long he will remain here. An election was sprung on us a little while back. After thirty-five years' experience, harmony has reigned in the Parliament of Switzerland, which is the result of the elective system for Ministries. I go further, and think that the whole of the Ministers should be elected by the people; but, in the event of their not being elected by the people, I think they should be elected by members. It would ensure political harmony and better administration. I believe that in Switzerland Ministers are not allowed to engage in private business, but are obliged to devote the whole of their time and ability to the work of the State. I do not wish, however, to go further into that. I hope, whatever Government is in power here, a good railway policy will be adopted, and that our lands will be made available for the people. Then, I do not think any very vigorous immigration policy will be required to induce people to come here and build up prosperous homes for themselves. I have no desire to decry Queensland—I am a native of the State—but I am sorry to say the conditions here are not what they ought to be, or what they could be. If the people here were able to build up bright and happy homes for themselves, they would very soon invite their friends from oversea and we would soon have this country populated as it ought to be.

Mr. HUXHAM (*Brisbane South*): In addressing myself to the question before the House I shall endeavour to be brief and to avoid enlarging upon subjects dealt with at length by other hon. members. In connection with the Mount Morgan disaster, I would like to express my sympathy with the families of the victims who lost their lives. I was very much pleased at the action taken by the Minister for Mines to benefit the sufferers, but I could not help noticing the self-laudation shown by the management of the mine when talking about the compensation granted—that the relatives had been granted full compensation. The fact is, that the relatives were entitled to full compensation: it was granted to them by the Workers' Compensation Act, therefore it was no act of grace on the part of the company. And the display made at the meeting did not show that generosity and consideration that should have been noticed on account of what had taken place. When certain proposals were made for the protection of the men and their mates, one feels as if they were too much lauded, and that a feeling of sympathy should rather have been expressed. I believe the families of the victims had the full sympathy of the men present, and it does not seem to me that they could have been in a mind to say "hear, hear" so

many times as would appear from the report in the Press. Coming to the Opening Speech, I cannot help noticing the difference between the programme now before us and the programme put before us last session. In the programme of last session we had included a Licensing Act Amending Bill, a Workers' Compensation Act Amending Bill, a State Insurance Bill, and a Public Service Superannuation Bill. The first three of these, I think, should have received consideration at the hands of the Government before some of the new measures foreshadowed in the present Speech. The Advances for Workers' Dwellings Bill, the Trade Disputes Bill, the Restriction of Leasing Land to Aliens Bill, and the Mining on Private Property Bill are all essential measures which would have the sympathy of hon. members, but we do not know the extent to which the Government will go in making these Bills effective. I regret very much that we are not to have an amendment of the Workers' Compensation Act this session; I think that and a State Insurance Bill should have been in the forefront of the measures to be dealt with. Reference is made in the Speech to the Premier's trip to England, and I cannot help thinking that the trip was one that entailed very considerable expense and was absolutely unnecessary, because if the Agent-General, Sir Horace Tozer, had been supplied with the required data, the same result would have been effected without the cost to the taxpayers of the Premier's trip. In fact, I think it was a reflection on the Agent-General that all the data was not sent to him, so that he could do what was required for the benefit of the State. In Sir Horace Tozer we have a man well acquainted with the affairs of Queensland, and I feel satisfied that anything the Premier wanted to bring forward could very well have been left in the hands of an expert such as Sir Horace. I admit that the saving of £2,400 a year at the present time is a very considerable saving; I admit also that the sum of money the Premier hopes to save to the State during the next six years is considerable; but I am satisfied that Sir Horace could have brought about the same thing if the data had been sent to him with instructions how to act. I think the Premier has shown during this trip more vanity than any man in Queensland at the present time. I know no man who has such a great conceit of himself.

The SPEAKER: Order, order! Any personal reflection upon hon. members is distinctly out of order.

Mr. HUXHAM: I do not wish to pursue that. I feel that the Premier's trip was absolutely unnecessary, and it [10 p.m.] would have been far better if it had been left in the hands of the Agent-General, rather than that the country should be put to the unnecessary expense of the Premier taking a trip, and also dislocating the affairs of State by calling us together so late in the year, and almost rushing business through, to the detriment of the well-being of the people. I note consideration is to be shown to the public servants in the superannuation scheme, and I am very pleased this is to be brought forward. I hope this Bill will be a very comprehensive one, and will result, not only in the classified officers getting the benefit of the Bill, but that it will pass down to all the employees in the Government service. It seems a regrettable thing to us that men who serve the State for a number of years, because they are not classified, cannot take advantage of the provisions of the superannuation scheme, and have the full benefit when they leave the service of the

State. I also wish to refer to another matter as far as our public servants are concerned. I do not think our public servants should be so readily retired from the service of the State as they are under our present system, at the age of 65, or by the grace of the Minister a public servant may continue till he is 70 years of age. I think the men who are mentally and physically fit—a man who has accumulated wisdom in the administration of his department—should be kept as long as he is able to do the work. Even if he is not kept in as high a position—if he would be prepared to accept a subordinate position—it would be a fair thing he should have an opportunity of doing so, if, as I have said, he is physically and mentally fit to carry out the duties in an efficient manner. A case in point is that of Mr. J. G. McDonald. I do not know any man at the present time, at his advanced age, who is so well fitted to sit on the bench and carry out the duties of a police magistrate as that gentleman. To me it seems an act of cruelty that he should have been dispensed with at the time he was, when he was capable of doing great service in that branch of the public service. We have also inspectors in the same position, and I feel that all these things should be considered by the Government, so that the conditions should be altered to enable these aged public servants to retain their positions as long as they are able to do the work required of them. The Workers' Compensation Act has been referred to by the hon. member for Burnett, Mr. Jones, who showed clearly the benefits derived from the New Zealand Act, which deals with the matter so fully and efficiently that I feel if we followed on the same lines in any Bill brought forward here we should be conferring a great benefit upon all those who would come under its provisions. Under the New Zealand Act the compensation is fixed for the loss of two feet, two eyes, and so on; but even when a man gets full compensation, as provided under the New Zealand Act—£500—that is not sufficient to keep him during the remainder of his life; therefore, it is nothing more than just that the compensation should be made as high as possible, so that, at least, they might feel they are not absolutely dependent on public charity, as a man without any compensation would have to be, if he were thrown on the cold charity of the world. I was very pleased that the present Minister for Lands so readily introduced and carried through the motion with reference to the land grant to the friendly societies. When we went to the previous Minister for Lands on the same question, his opinion was so definite that I was certain that, if he had remained in that position, he would have certainly brought it forward early; and I believe the friendly societies have to thank the present Home Secretary for the strong recommendation he must have made to his colleague, who brought it forward so early this session. There is another matter which I think is due to our friendly societies, and that would be on the lines similar to the Friendly Societies' Act in force in New Zealand. We all hear a great deal about thrift, and that should be commended in every possible way; but when a man reaches the age of sixty-five years, and is not able to keep up the subscriptions to his lodge, he has to fall out of it, and loses the benefits accruing. In the Friendly Societies' Subvention Act of New Zealand, provision is made whereby the contributions of a man at sixty-five years of age and of a woman at sixty years of age, are paid by the Government. And also, as far as sick pay is concerned—so that it shall not be

any strain on the friendly societies, after twelve months the sick allowances are paid by the Government for men over sixty-five years of age and for women over sixty years of age. I commend this to the consideration of the Minister, because it is absolutely necessary that we should show to all those who feel interested in this, that they may rely on Government help at a time of their lives when they are not able to well cope with the hardness of life. The new Licensing Bill has been spoken of in the House during this session. We understand this matter has been set aside until a report is obtained on the conditions that prevail in New Zealand. I often think that our Government does not give much evidence of heroism, when they leave it to other States to undertake the pioneering work in connection with social legislation; and it is time they took a hand in giving a lead to the other States instead of continuing to be laggards. With reference to a new Licensing Bill, there is no need to send an expert to New Zealand. The recent elections clearly show the opinion of the people there on the subject, and that expression of opinion and their Act could be taken as a basis by our Government. We know that our present Licensing Act is not what it should be, and there has been considerable complaint—and advisedly so—of the way in which it has been administered; and I hope that between now and the time a new Act is passed the administration of the present Home Secretary will be of such a character that there will be no complaint. The Bill providing for advances for workers' dwellings will receive the strongest support from this side of the House. In connection with that there is a principle regarding which I may have something to say later on when dealing with our system of finance. Then there is to be a Bill to amend the Bills of Sale Act. The present Act is not as satisfactory as it might be; but it would have been far better for the Government to have brought in an amendment of the Companies Act to deal with debentures. I know nothing that needs so much consideration at the present time as the revision of the Companies Act in that direction. There is such an amount of hanky-panky going on as to justify an amendment of the Act with a view to preventing the continuance of the present unseemly state of affairs. A debenture covers so many things that are not provided for under a bill of sale. In fact, you might have a combination of all the securities in this one document; and, for that reason, debentures should be registered, so that people will thoroughly understand their position in connection with limited liability companies of mushroom growth which spring up from time to time, and which lead eventually to the unfortunate creditors being mulcted. A very remarkable case came under my notice recently, where a company went into liquidation. Some little time ago I was struck by a number of drays and men hanging about the corner of Creek and Adelaide streets. When I made inquiries, I found that these men had come to get information about certain moneys that were due to them. They were cream suppliers. They numbered 485 and were owed a sum of £6,448. This amount of credit had been granted by these cream suppliers because of the apparent strength of the company to whom they supplied the cream. The nominal capital was something like £8,000; but, when the whole thing was boiled down, it turned out that the sum that was actually in the business, so far as pretty well the sole proprietor was concerned, was only £418. On

the strength of that sum, he had floated a company with a nominal capital of £8,000, and he had "touched" these unfortunate suppliers to the tune of £6,448, and sundry other creditors to the extent of over £700. This had been possible because a debenture had been given which protected the debenture-holder, and left the other creditors to whistle for their money. The cream suppliers represented the following localities:—Lowood, 95; Rosewood, 22; Grantham, 39; Gaiton, 46; Oxenford, 2; Murphy's Creek, 24; Laidley, 78; Jimboomba, 11; Forest Hill, 29; Beaudesert, 35; Rosevale, 11; Logan Village, 17; Harrisville, 26; Kanganur, 45; Teviotville, 4; and Mumbilla, 1. One-third of them were creditors for over £20, and two-thirds of them for under £20 each, on the average. The failure of the company entailed suffering on more than these unfortunate cream suppliers, because, I dare say, they, in turn, ran up accounts with storekeepers. The whole of the money was absolutely frittered away, instead of being put into circulation in the State.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: There was another case of a milling company at Maryborough, which bought a lot of wheat.

Mr. HUXHAM: Quite so. This is by no means an isolated case. The amendment of the Companies Act should be the first consideration of the Government, to give people who give credit to limited liability companies a reasonable chance of being paid for the goods supplied. That has been done in the old country, where the abuses that existed were even worse than they are here. But some eight or nine years ago it was stipulated that when debentures were given they should be registered at the Supreme Court of the old land. The hon. member for Herbert, when speaking last night, referred to the possibility of a loan being floated at an early date. I believe, with the hon. member, that there is a possibility of our having to raise a loan of about £5,000,000 at an early date, to meet the loans falling due between now and 1913, and also to provide for a public works policy. But I think the question of loans should be dealt with in a very careful manner. Our public debt is sufficiently high at the present time, and the interest we have to pay per capita is sufficiently great to make us feel that we do not want to carry any more burden. If we agree to the floating of a new loan, we should do so only on the understanding that the loans are raised and provided for on business lines. We should establish a sinking fund which will be sufficient to wipe out the debt in twenty-five or thirty years. In the Bill to provide for advances for the erection of workers' dwellings, provision is made that the debentures to be floated shall be redeemed in twenty-five or thirty years. At the end of that time the debentures will be wiped out, and the Government will stand on a firm basis. The difference between the 4 per cent. paid for debentures and 5 per cent. paid by the borrowers will be sufficient to meet all charges, and, I suppose, leave a profit in hand. If the Government expect the people to whom they are advancing money to pay such a rate of interest as will clear expenses, and leave a profit, it is a fair thing that they should act in the same business-like way in dealing with persons who advance money to the Government, and make provision that in regard to all future loans floated with a currency of twenty-five or fifty years a fund shall be established to liquidate the whole of those loans within that period. If the State establishes a sinking fund, it will be in a far better

position when it has to go to the money market again, just in the same way as a business man who makes ample provision to meet his loan obligations as they fall due, instead of having to fly another "kite" for that purpose, has a better standing in the business world than a man who makes no such provision. The system of floating a loan, and then, when it matures, picking it up by floating another loan, is bad business from beginning to end. It is quite possible that we may strike a time of financial stress when our big loans fall due, and if we have made no provision by way of sinking fund to liquidate them, we shall be in a very awkward position, and possibly have to pay a large advance for any money we require. When floating loans we ought to have regard to the purpose for which the money is to be raised. I am not like many members on this side of the House. I believe that our productive public works should be remunerative in the proper sense of the term. I do not think that when we find our railways showing a difference of £3 19s. 6d. between revenue and expenditure we have a great deal to crow about. If it costs us within a fraction of 4 per cent. for interest on the loans, we must virtually say that our railways do not pay. The profit arising from our railways should be of such an amount as will not only pay the full interest of 4 per cent., but also provide for a reserve fund, especially in these times when traction is undergoing such alterations, and when improvements may come in at any moment. The return from our railways should be sufficient to liquidate the debt in from twenty-five to fifty years, and leave a margin as a reserve fund.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Then you do not agree with the junior member for Ipswich that the time has now arrived when we should reduce railway freights.

Mr. HUXHAM: I can assure the hon. gentleman that I do not. I have been so long in business that I have got wisdom by my experience—(hear, hear!)—and I think ample provision should be made to meet loans when they fall due, in the same way as a business man makes provision to meet his loan obligations. I shall cite only one other instance of the manner in which one of our public works which was intended to be reproductive has been paying, and that is the dry dock at South Brisbane. We have some £660,000 sunk in that undertaking, and yet for the last five years, according to the official figures, the net balance from that work has not averaged more than 1 per cent. Still we have to pay 4 per cent. for the money borrowed to construct that dock. I maintain that it is right that all the vessels which go into that dock should be charged such a rate as would enable us to pay the 4 per cent. interest, and to provide for a sinking fund and a reserve fund to meet expenditure which will be rendered necessary by the obsolescence of its arrangements.

Mr. KERR: If you charged more than you do at the present time you would not get any vessels to go into the dock.

Mr. HUXHAM: I fully recognise that, but other people have built a railway on a far better plan—on the lines I have indicated. The Chillagoe Company's railway, according to their last report, paid interest on their debentures and 21 per cent.

Mr. KERR: They have not the competition you have at the dock. There is a dock in Sydney.

Mr. MANN: And they charge themselves for the carriage of their own material.

Mr. Huxham.]

Mr. HUXHAM: Still the fact remains that they show a profit of 21 per cent. I admit that they lost 18½ per cent. in connection with their mining ventures, but the railway returns were sufficient to pay interest on debentures and leave a profit of 21 per cent., and there was not the least squeal from the people who had to pay the rates charged on that line.

The TREASURER: The people in the district have to use that railway, but shipowners are not compelled to use the dry dock.

Mr. HUXHAM: I am dealing particularly with the railway system at the present time. At the same time I think the same principle should be applied to the dry dock. Do you [10.30 p.m.] think that business people would allow that dock to be used except at rates which would enable them to meet the interest on the capital invested? Would they pay 4 per cent. for the money invested, and be content with a return of 1 per cent. and still have to pay their creditors 4 per cent.?

The TREASURER: They would have to allow people to use that dock at the same rates as they have to pay elsewhere.

Mr. HUXHAM: They would not be satisfied to work the dock at a loss of 3 per cent. on the capital invested. If they want a good dock, they must be prepared to pay a decent price.

Mr. COYNE: Are there any other docks that are a loss?

The TREASURER: They are not running any cheaper than that.

Mr. HUXHAM: However, I will pass on from that, because I can get another illustration, as far as tramway work is concerned, from the Beaudesert Tramway. We find the managers of that tramway make £4 17s. 5½d. per cent., and I say, "good luck to them," and if we could only get a manager who could do the same for our railways—

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They charge a higher rate than we do on our railways.

Mr. HUXHAM: They may do that, but they have done everything they possibly could to charge a low rate. An announcement appeared in the *Daily Mail* of 25th instant, which goes to prove that these men are business men.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: That is correct.

Mr. HUXHAM: It is just as well, under the circumstances, that we fully understand the position of the Beaudesert line.

Mr. KERR: They have not finished with it yet.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is improving every year.

Mr. KERR: It will improve until the repairs are to be made.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: They are keeping it in first-class condition.

Mr. HUXHAM: I will take the hon. gentleman's word for that. The hon. gentleman should consult with the Cabinet, and see if some common-sense view could be adopted as far as our railways are concerned.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The trouble is that the tramway only runs at a certain speed. A much greater speed obtains on our railways, yet passengers are continually grumbling at the speed. That saves a considerable amount in the line.

Mr. HUXHAM: The Beaudesert Tramway gives marked evidence of the business ability of those who manage it. There is another matter I wish to deal with, and that is in reference to

a question asked by the hon. member for Fitzroy as to the "Dolphin." The amount was given at £1,776. Now, I question that being the full cost, for this reason: I want the Treasurer to note this, because we should get further information about the matter. We know that the "Miner" was in attendance on the "Dolphin" for about six months. If you put that down at £5 per day, it would run into no less than £1,100 or £1,200, leaving only £700 for the coffer-dam and the material used, and the work done, and I say that that is ridiculously low.

The TREASURER: Those are the figures up to the time she was put into the dock.

Mr. HUXHAM: I want to know if that included the cost of the necessary attendance of the "Miner"?

The TREASURER: You got the answer just as you gave the question. They are the figures given to me by the department.

Mr. HUXHAM: The hon. member for Fitzroy asked the question, and that was the answer given. I do not dispute that for one moment. I would have dealt with the dry dock in South Brisbane if the return in answer to my question had been tabled, because I believe that that dock can be made to pay better than it is doing at the present time. It requires more careful supervision, and, in common with other remunerative works, should be capitalised, for each department should pay for itself. The Government are working this; no business will go into it at the current rate, and still it is expected to pay. I hold that this matter should be gone into, and the different departments given a chance of working on profitable lines. There is one other interesting matter which has not been touched upon. Just prior to the Premier going home, the Minister for Railways, I understand, had refused a railway ticket to the Mayor of Brisbane, but the Premier, behind the Minister's back, gave this pass. I say that is flouting the responsible Minister. I am not going to say there is any truth in it; but, from what appeared in the daily papers, there seemed to be a great amount of truth in it. It would be naturally thought that, as the member for Brisbane South, I should expect the same courtesy for the Mayor of South Brisbane, but I do not believe that either the Mayor of North Brisbane or South Brisbane should have this privilege.

(Hear, hear!) If privileges of that sort are given, they should be granted to presidents of shire councils, who have to travel over long distances, and have a lot of work to do. But the ratepayers of North and South Brisbane naturally expect their representatives to be here to perform their duties, and there is no time for them to take extended trips. Consequently, I say that this question of giving passes should be carefully guarded. The question of immigration has been brought up, and I am not going to dwell on that at any length, but I could not help noting the remarks passed by the hon. member for Charters Towers on the question of the want of cheap labour in our State. If the Government are sincere in what they propose doing, they will show the strictest supervision as far as the introduction of immigrants is concerned, and see that these people are not dumped down in our State at the rate of 200 per month without providing adequate means of employment for them. It is simply a question of overloading the labour market, and absolutely congealing it. It would mean that the wage rate paid in the State at the present time must suffer, and it would have a tendency to make our people, as the hon. member for Charters Towers pointed out, in a far worse condition than slaves. This matter reminds me

of a quotation by James Russell Lowell, when speaking of the slave trade of 1861 in his "Biglow Papers," when he said—

Slavery ain't o' nary colour,
"Tain't the hide that makes it wus;
All it keers fer in a feller,
'S jest to make him fill his puss.

As the hon. member for Charters Towers said, it did not matter whether it was white, black, or brindle, so far as the labour was concerned, provided it is cheap. We should not take advantage of the unfortunate people who come out from time to time to work at a rate of wage that will be in conflict with the rate of wage in existence here, so that these people will also be compelled to take it because they must have something to live on. If immigration is taken up in a sympathetic way, and carried out properly, no member on this side of the House would be averse to it. I am not against immigration myself. I advanced money to bring immigrants out, but I have taken care that they were well placed when they got here and they did not lower the wages ruling here. That gives an emphatic denial to the statement that we as a Labour party are against immigration. I think it would be better to let them come in that way, so that they would be so satisfied with their conditions of life that they would recommend their friends also to come out here.

Mr. MULCAHY (*Gympie*) : I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed.

The resumption of the debate was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

The House adjourned at fifteen minutes to 11 o'clock.