

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 10 DECEMBER 1908**

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THURSDAY, 10 DECEMBER, 1908.

The SPEAKER (Hon. John Leahy, *Bullo*) took the chair at half-past 2 o'clock.

WARWICK-MARYVALE RAILWAY.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. W. T. Paget, *Mackay*) laid on the table of the House the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed railway from Warwick to Maryvale, in length 17 miles 25 chains; also the Commissioner's report thereon; and moved that the report be printed.

Question put and passed.

KINGSTHORPE-GOOMBUNGEE  
BRANCH RAILWAY.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS laid on the table of the House the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed branch railway from Kingsthorpe to Goombungee and main ranges, in length 20 miles 60 chains; also the Commissioner's report thereon; and moved that the report be printed.

Question put and passed.

QUESTIONS.

RAILWAY PASS FOR MAYOR OF BRISBANE.

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

1. Is the mayor of the city of Brisbane supplied with a gold pass or the ordinary manuscript or card pass?
2. Does such pass apply to the whole of the State railways?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

1. A gold pass.
2. To all State railways in Queensland.

## CLONCURRY-MOUNT ELLIOTT RAILWAY.

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

1. Can he give me any definite information when the construction of the Cloncurry-Mount Elliott Railway will be commenced?
2. Are all the formalities in connection therewith completed?
3. Which of the three surveys of route has been decided upon?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

1. No. The construction cannot be commenced until the estimated cost has been arrived at and agreed to by the company. This is being determined now.
2. Not yet; but they are well in hand, and I see no likelihood of delay.
3. From Cloncurry *via* Duck Creek, Red Rock, and Granite Creek to Hampden, thence *via* Maggie's and Gidyea Creeks to Mount Elliott by the cheapest route available under the agreement.

## DEEP SINKING AND PROSPECTING VOTES.

Mr. JACKSON (*Kennedy*) asked the Secretary for Mines—

What are the total approximate amounts advanced out of the deep sinking and prospecting votes since 1886 to the following mineral fields:—Charters Towers, Gympie, Croydon, Ravenswood, and Clermont?

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

Deep sinking vote—		£	s.	d.
Charters Towers	...	6,813	14	5
Gympie	...	15,264	13	0
Croydon	...	14,494	4	6
Clermont	...	1,528	16	6
Ravenswood	...	234	5	7
Prospecting vote—				
Charters Towers	...	1,157	19	3
Gympie	...	2,848	1	11
Croydon	...	834	9	8
Clermont (including Anakie)	...	3,905	0	7
Ravenswood	...	453	12	9

## EARTHWORKS ON TOLGA-JOHNSTONE RAILWAY.

Mr. MANN (*Cairns*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. Is the statement in to-day's *Courier* that the earthworks on the Tolga-Johnstone Railway will not be started until after the wet season correct?
2. If correct, what is the reason for the delay?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

1. No; but it has been necessary to temporarily delay the actual construction.
2. Because the working plans are not ready. The surveyor who was engaged on this work resigned to take up a position at Bowen. Another surveyor has been sent, but the change makes some delay unavoidable. The clearing at the Tolga end of the line has been completed.

## CASES COMMITTED FOR TRIAL AT GEORGETOWN.

Mr. NEVITT (*Carpentaria*) asked the Chief Secretary, for the Attorney-General—

Is it not a fact that for some years all cases committed for trial at Georgetown were committed to the circuit court at Normanton?

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

Since 1901 there have been five committals from Georgetown to a circuit court; such committals were to Normanton.

## VESSELS AT PORT OF BROADMOUNT.

Mr. JONES (*Burnett*), for Mr. Hardacre, asked the Treasurer—

1. How many vessels have had to wait twenty-four hours for the tide in order to enter the port of Broadmount during the last five years?
2. What were the names of such vessels, if any?

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

There is no record in Brisbane of any such delays; but the portmaster has instructed the harbour-master, Rockhampton, to supply the information if possible.

## TRAMWAY ACCIDENTS IN BRISBANE.

Mr. McLACHLAN (*Fortitude Valley*), for Mr. Lesina, asked the Home Secretary—

What is the number of accidents, fatal or otherwise, reported to the Police Department as happening upon or in connection with the Brisbane tramways from the date of the passing of the Brisbane Traffic Act of 1905 to the 30th November, 1908?

The HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. T. Bell, *Dalby*) replied—

The number of accidents in connection with the Brisbane tramway traffic, from the date of the passing of the Brisbane Traffic Act to the 30th November, 1908, reported to the police is as follows:—

Fatal	...	...	...	...	5
Serious	...	...	...	...	69
Slight	...	...	...	...	111
Total	...	...	...	...	185

## EXPLOSIVES USED AT MOUNT MORGAN.

Mr. McLACHLAN, for Mr. Lesina, asked the Secretary for Mines—

In connection with the inquiry at the Mount Morgan Mine, will he ascertain what quality of explosives is used in the mine, and if it is true, as stated, that the Mount Morgan Company contemplate using explosives manufactured by the De Beers Company by the aid of black labour in South Africa?

The SECRETARY FOR MINES replied—

The department has no knowledge of the intentions of the company, and has no authority to require the information to be furnished.

## ABORIGINALS ON NORTHERN CANE FARMS.

Mr. MULCAHY (*Gympie*), for Mr. Ryland, asked the Home Secretary—

1. Has an order been issued by the Home Secretary's Department prohibiting the employment of aboriginals on cane farms in the North?
2. Is the Home Secretary aware that aboriginals are being employed on Northern cane farms at 2s. 6d. per week all the year round?

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

1. Yes.
2. No.

## SS. "PORPOISE."

Mr. McLACHLAN, for Mr. Lesina, asked the Treasurer—

Is it a fact that the Government has purchased the iron screw steamer "Porpoise," owned by the A.U.S.N. Company, Limited?

The TREASURER replied—

No.

## COMMISSION TO PRIVATE LAND AGENTS.

Mr. McLACHLAN, for Mr. Lesina, asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

1. Is the number of settlers (1,076), and acres selected (1,023,670), mentioned in the return relating to private agents recently tabled, up to 30th June, 1908, or up to date, 30th November, 1908?
2. If up to 30th June last, what amount is still owing as commission to private agents?
3. Is it true that certain agents have not received their commission yet?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS (Hon. D. F. Denham, *Oxley*) replied—

1. Up to 30th June, 1908.
2. £378 10s. 3d.
3. Yes.

REINSTATEMENT OF JUSTICES OF THE PEACE.

Mr. KEOGH (*Rosewood*), without notice, asked the Chief Secretary—

If it is his intention to have those gentlemen who were removed off the commission of the peace a short time ago reinstated; and if not, whether it will be necessary to have those names resubmitted and approved of?

The PREMIER replied—

There is not the slightest intention of reinstating them *en bloc*, and, if any hon. member wishes any of them reappointed to the commission of the peace, they can nominate them in the ordinary way, and they will be considered just as any ordinary appointment.

Mr. KEOGH: They will have to be reconsidered.

The PREMIER: Yes. The same as any ordinary appointment.

BIDDENHAM PASTORAL HOLDING.

On the motion of Mr. COYNE (*Warrego*), it was formally resolved—

That there be laid on the table of the House copies of all papers in connection with the claim made by the lessees of Biddenham pastoral holding (Charleville land agent's district) on a selector on that run named Harry Smith, for half cost of a dam which was constructed after a portion of the holding was resumed, and of which portion Smith's selection forms part.

PORT ALMA RAILWAY.

LEAVE TO INTRODUCE BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

(Mr. W. J. R. Maughan in the chair.)

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS, in moving—

That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to validate an agreement entered into between the Secretary for Railways, for and on behalf of the Government of Queensland, and the Rockhampton Harbour Board for the construction of a branch line of railway from Port Alma to a point on the main line of railway from Rockhampton to Gladstone, and to authorise the construction of the said railway, and to make provision for certain matters incidental thereto—

said he might be in order, although it was a little unusual at this stage, if he gave particulars of the Bill to be introduced.

Mr. BOWMAN: A very wise course.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: In deference to the wish expressed by hon. members, he would like very briefly to refer to some of the particulars contained in the Bill. The length of the line would be 16 miles 40 chains, and it would leave the main Rockhampton line at a certain point, and would go to a certain wharf, known as the "Port Alma Wharf," on the south side of the Fitzroy River. The estimated cost of the line was £70,000. The Bill was to validate an agreement made by the late Secretary for Railways, Mr. Kerr, between the Secretary for Railways and the Rockhampton Harbour Board for the building of this line. Its object was to give Rockhampton and the Central districts access to a permanent deepwater port. The Port Alma Wharf, which was built some twenty years ago, was to be handed over to the harbour board, he presumed, so that the wharfage might act as a revenue for the harbour board. It was to be a Government line, and not a private line, and the harbour board would make good any deficiency in the working of the line. That was, the harbour board had practically constituted itself a local authority so that the line might be brought under the provisions of the Railway Act of 1906. He would further add, for the information of members, that there was no benefited area. The harbour board itself gave the guarantee as the benefited party, and

he understood there was an arrangement between the shipping companies that their goods and passengers should be sent over that line.

Mr. KERR: There is no agreement.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He simply said that there was an arrangement.

Mr. BRENNAN: In writing?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No. He would mention all about that to-morrow, as he did not wish to detain the Committee at any length. It was understood that the whole of the lighterage plant and tenders that plied between the wharves at Rockhampton and Keppel Bay should be knocked off and the whole of the passenger and goods traffic should pass over the line from Port Alma.

Mr. KERR: Conditionally.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes, conditionally. If there were any deficiency, it was to be the first charge on the wharfage revenue. He did not wish hon. members to understand by that that it was to be the first charge on the board's revenue until the interest and redemption on the board's loans that they had received from the Treasurer were paid. In the event of the deficiency not being paid to the Railway Commissioner, the board can be sued in the ordinary manner. If the line paid interest and working expenses for three consecutive years, then the board, as a local authority, was to be relieved from all further responsibility. That was exactly the same as the provisions in the Railway Act of 1906. The construction of the line was not to be a liability upon any rate-payer or local authority. Then the schedule to the Bill set out that the line was to be constructed and worked by the Government, and it was to be manned and worked by the Commissioner's staff. The wharves were to be handed over to the harbour board.

Mr. BOWMAN: Who owns the wharves?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They were to be handed over to the harbour board.

Mr. WOODS: What rate of wages do you propose to pay on the construction of the line?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The wages are the same as any Government railway.

Mr. WOODS: The wages ruling in the district?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The wages ruling on Government railways. He did not know that it would have been necessary to answer such questions at that stage; but in deference to the wishes of hon. gentlemen opposite, as expressed on the previous day, he took the unusual course of supplying members with information, which he thought was a good thing, as to the provisions of the Bill which he proposed to lay on the table of the House. The approaches to the wharf were to be built by the Government, and the board was to control the wharves, and would appoint their own wharfinger. The rates and fares were not to exceed 10s. per ton from Lake's Creek, and otherwise ordinary fares may be charged.

Mr. KENNA: Does the board get the wharf for nothing?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes.

Mr. KENNA: As a present?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes. At present the wharves were of no value to the Government or the country.

Mr. KENNA: How much did it cost?

*Hon. W. T. Paget.]*

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: About £20,000 or £30,000. It was twenty years ago it was built.

Mr. BRENNAN: What use will Broadmount be to the Government then?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He would reply to that question on the following day if the hon. gentleman gave notice of it. The fares charged on the mileage basis on the Queensland railways might be charged on this line, and there was a further proviso that the Commissioner might agree with those using the line to impose special rates. The importers and exporters and shipping companies who would provide the traffic for the line could enter into a special agreement for special rates and fares, but if such agreement were entered into it must be for at least five years. The Commissioner must be guaranteed against any loss by the running of special trains. That was a mere machinery clause. There was also a clause that the board would induce shippers to use the line, and there was a formal clause that the Government could build branch lines from it, and under no circumstances could the harbour board claim for compensation against the Government.

Mr. KERR (*Barcoo*): He did not speak on this question when it was before the House the previous day. Certain hon. members then drew attention to the fact that he signed this agreement, and the Minister for Railways was kind enough to repeat it that day. When he (Mr. Kerr) signed the agreement a Bill was to be brought down, and he thought it would have been only right and fair, seeing that the Bill was now being introduced by another Secretary for Railways, that he should have signed the agreement.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I have not the slightest objection to do that.

Mr. BOWMAN: But you were against it last session.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The Bill was dropped last session.

Mr. KERR: He went into this matter when he was at the Railway Department, and an estimate was provided. When the new agreement was drawn up it was found that a large item had been left out of the estimate of cost—namely, the taking of water to the wharves. The least amount this would cost was set down at £14,000.

Mr. GRANT: No.

Mr. KERR: The junior member for Rockhampton perhaps knew more about it than the experts in the Railway Department.

Mr. GRANT: I know that is not so.

Mr. KERR: A wharf at which oversea vessels and coastal vessels had to call was useless without a water supply. The Minister said an arrangement had been entered into [3 p.m.] between the shipping companies and the harbour board, but no agreement had been entered into. An agreement had been drawn up, and it ought to have been entered into.

Mr. GRANT: It has been.

Mr. KERR: It had not.

Mr. GRANT: Yes.

Mr. KERR: If the hon. member had listened carefully to the Minister, he would have remembered that he had said that no agreement had been entered into between the harbour board and the shipping company, but only an arrangement.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is so—I said an arrangement.

[*Hon. W. T. Paget.*

Mr. KERR: But the junior member for Rockhampton questioned the statement.

Mr. GRANT: The board's solicitors say it is binding.

Mr. KERR: They could not shut their eyes to the fact that, should any other shipping company coming on to the coast decline to land its goods at Port Alma, and make arrangements to take its goods at a certain rate to Rockhampton, then the shipping companies, as they told them, would not be bound by that arrangement. What they wanted was to have an agreement made and entered into between the harbour board and the shipping companies; and until that agreement was made, the House ought to seriously consider before passing this line.

Mr. GRANT (*Rockhampton*): With regard to the water supply which the hon. member for Barcoo made all this noise about—

Mr. KERR: I am not making a noise.

Mr. GRANT: It was a matter entirely with the harbour board. The board had no intention of getting the water in the way suggested by the railway expert. They had to charge the shipping companies for the water, and would make money out of it. Their intention was to take it down by barge, and, by means of tanks, supply the water as required. They had an agreement with the Australian United Steam Navigation Company, the Adelaide Company, and the Howard Smith Company. Was not this better than taking the water 20 miles?

Mr. BOWMAN: Is it not better to at once drop the line altogether, and go where you can get water?

Mr. GRANT: That was the hon. member's idea. The shipping company sent an open letter to the harbour board in Rockhampton, stating that they would use the wharf, do away with the lighters, and send all the interstate steamers plying up and down the coast to the wharf.

Mr. BRENNAN: Let us have a copy of the letter in this House.

Mr. GRANT: As a matter of fact, the House had nothing to do with it; it was the business of the harbour board in Rockhampton. The harbour board sent that letter to their solicitors in Rockhampton, Messrs. Rees R. and Sydney Jones, whose name was well known to everyone connected with legal work, and they stated that the letter was a binding contract.

Mr. KERR: You would get another lawyer to say it is not.

Mr. GRANT: The reputation of Messrs. Rees R. and Sydney Jones was high enough for every one. He did not know whether the hon. member for Barcoo had read the telegram from Barcaldine this morning, where an enthusiastic meeting was held, and a resolution carried unanimously in favour of the Port Alma Railway, and they wired to that effect.

Mr. KERR: They don't pull me by wires now. Do they pull you by wires?

Several honourable members interjected.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I must ask hon. members to observe the rules of debate.

Mr. GRANT: The hon. member for South Brisbane asked him about a public meeting. He had an experience of a public meeting.

Mr. MURPHY: You will have had experience of a public meeting in Rockhampton directly.

Mr. GRANT: As a matter of fact, he believed that the hon. member for South Brisbane and the hon. member for Barcoo had wired and hired the hall at Blackall, but, after their experience at Barcaldine, they did not go to Blackall.

Mr. KERR rose to a point of order. The hon. member was making an utterly untrue statement when he said that he (Mr. Kerr) engaged the hall at Blackall. If he was a gentleman, he would withdraw it.

Mr. GRANT: That was his information.

Mr. KERR: The hon. member's information was incorrect.

Mr. GRANT could give the name of the man who told him. It was Mr. Mackay, the secretary of the Pastoralists' Association. The hon. member for Barcoo, who conducted the negotiations for this railway, now went back upon it. If the railway was bad this year, it was equally bad last year, and the agreement which they were asked to adopt was the agreement signed by the hon. member for Barcoo, and laid on the table. Surely politics had come to a pretty state! Was it because he was Minister for Railways in the Cabinet last year?

Mr. KERR: The majority were in favour of it.

Mr. GRANT: Did the hon. member desire to retain his position as Minister? What was the reason that he went back upon his action now? He had had many conversations with the hon. member, when Minister for Railways, and had never heard him object to the railway. If it had come under the notice of the hon. member for South Brisbane and the hon. member for Ipswich, would they not have cheerfully voted for it last year?

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: They have seen the light. (Laughter.)

Mr. GRANT: The hon. member for Barcoo spoke about the water supply costing £14,000, but the harbour board scheme would not reach £1,000. It was much more than an agreement. The shipping companies at the present time were losing money over the tender system. They had to keep the tenders there, but if this railway were built their tenders would be taken away. It was to their interest to have the railway, just as it was to the interest of the people there. The hon. member for Mitchell raised the point that if this railway were not a paying line it would fall upon the exporters and importers. He could tell them that the big pastoralists out West who sent their wool down there were in favour of this railway. He could give the names of seven or eight of the biggest pastoralists in Queensland who were in favour of the Port Alma Railway. Fairbairn Brothers, Jowett, Francis Murphy, of Northampton Downs—he was not quite sure of the last-mentioned—most of the stations controlled by Goldsbrough, Mort, and Co., and by Dalgety Limited, and the Mount Morgan Company were enthusiastically in favour of the line. Captain Richard, the manager of the Mount Morgan Company, spoke strongly in favour of it at a public meeting held at Mount Morgan, and he thought that there was a general consensus of opinion favourable to the proposal among the large payers of dues.

Mr. MANN thought it was rather an unusual thing for a private member to give information which ought to have been furnished by the Minister. He did not speak on the motion the previous day because he desired to hear what other members had to say on the question, and he wished to deal with it on its merits. When the Secretary for Railways was speaking he interjected who was to bear the cost of supplying fresh water to the wharf, and the Premier told the hon. gentleman not to reply.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I simply went on with my speech.

Mr. MANN: The Premier did not make that suggestion because the question as to who should bear the cost was not in the interest of the State, but simply because the hon. gentleman had a strong personal pique towards himself. As showing that the hon. gentleman was only nominal leader on that side, and that the hon. member for Townsville was the real leader, he might mention that at the same time the hon. member for Townsville said, "It is only the member for Cairns, do not give him any information." But the question was an important one, and he again asked the Minister who was going to bear the cost of supplying fresh water to the wharf at Port Alma!

Mr. GRANT: The harbour board.

Mr. MANN said he would not take information from the hon. member. He wished to know from the Minister for Railways who was to bear the cost of that service, which he understood would amount to £14,000. He was at Port Alma eighteen or nineteen years ago, just after the wharf was built, and he tried to get down to look at it, but after taking his boots off and wading for a mile or two over the water on the flat he gave up his quest in disgust. He believed that if a man wore kilts, and went there, the mosquitoes would carry him away. Why should they spend £70,000 or £80,000 in the construction of a line to Port Alma, and an additional £14,000 for a water supply, when the port had already got railway communication, and settled districts on the Darling Downs were crying out for facilities to enable them to carry their produce to market? The late Minister for Railways took a trip over the Darling Downs in the early part of this year, and among the places he travelled over was the district from Oakey to Mount Russell, where settlers had been waiting twenty years for a railway.

The PREMIER asked if the remarks of the hon. member were in order.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not in order in referring to the question of railway construction on the Darling Downs. The question before the Committee is a motion for the introduction of a Bill relative to the construction of a railway to Port Alma.

Mr. MANN said he was giving as an illustration of his argument against the building of the Port Alma Railway the fact that railways were more required in other districts where the land had been settled for a long time. The people of the Central district had railway facilities in the shape of a railway to Broadmount, and a little further down the coast they had one of the finest harbours in the whole of Australia. The Committee would be well advised if they assisted small settlers who urgently required a railway rather than pastoralists who were getting big prices for their wool, and who could afford to pay for 33 miles additional railage if they did not care to send their produce *via* Broadmount. Settlers who were growing wheat and other cereals should get a railway before the pastoralists of the Central district.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I tabled two lines this afternoon.

Mr. MANN: Yes; but they wanted more. There was plenty of railway accommodation in the Central district. The hon. gentleman complained about a stonewall. If the Minister had given the information asked for, he pledged his word of honour that he (Mr. Mann) would not have got up to speak. He would also like some information about the 10s. a ton from Lake's Creek. Was it a little sop to North Rockhampton? There was a big meeting held at Mount Morgan the other evening in favour of the

*Mr. Mann.]*

railway, according to the *Courier*—a meeting worked up by Campbell, of the *Western Champion*; but there was also a petition from 2,500 Rockhampton people against the railway.

The PREMIER: Who worked up that petition? And who is working up hon. members?

Mr. MANN: He was not concerned as to who worked up the petition; and he scorned the insinuation that anybody was working him up. It was evidently the desire of the Government to dragoon the Bill through without giving information to the Committee.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You can't make the country believe that. I have given you whips of information this afternoon.

Mr. MANN: When the Cairns Harbour Board Bill was going through the Premier got a wire from the Cairns Chamber of Commerce that almost caused him to drop the Bill. That wire appeared in the *Courier*, but he (Mr. Mann) got a wire giving quite a different view of the matter from certain prominent business men in Cairns.

The PREMIER asked whether the hon. member for Cairns was in order?

The CHAIRMAN: I was listening closely to see how the hon. member was going to connect his remarks with the question before the Committee.

Mr. MANN: He was going to show that the Committee should not be guided by reports that appeared in a biased Press. They wanted information from a more reliable source than the *Courier*, and it would be wise to withdraw the motion until the middle of next week, so that wires might be obtained from reliable sources.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I have the wires.

Mr. MANN: But very likely after they had agreed to the motion—if they agreed to it now—other wires would come in proving that the first wires did not convey correct information. He intended to take his part in keeping the second reading going long enough to enable members to get independent information from Mount Morgan, Barcardine, Gladstone, and Rockhampton. The Hon. Thomas Price, when introducing a railway measure, took as many members of Parliament as cared to go, and showed them the route of the railway, and he thought that was a good way of enabling members to obtain information.

Mr. KENNA (*Bowen*) wished to say a few words on the proposed introduction of the Bill; and he did not think he could be accused of a desire to unduly take up the time of the Committee, seeing that this was only the [3.30 p.m.] second occasion on which he had risen to speak since the session commenced, the other occasion being last night. They were asked to sanction the introduction of a Bill that would build a railway 15 miles in length across a lot of mud flats at a cost of £70,000. The line would cost between £4,000 and £5,000 a mile—an altogether exorbitant amount to spend on a railway that, so far as he could see, was going to benefit Rockhampton very little, and was going to do a great deal of harm indeed to Gladstone.

Mr. GRANT: No. Explain how.

Mr. KENNA: If this railway were built, all the trade that passed through Gladstone now from the North would be diverted to Port Alma.

Mr. GRANT: Not at all. It will not take an ounce away.

Mr. KENNA: All the assurances of the hon. member would not convince him or the people

[*Mr. Mann.*]

of Gladstone that that railway would not take away that source of trade from what had been considered the terminal port of the North. He was opposed to the introduction of the Bill because it would do Gladstone an irretrievable harm. Gladstone would no longer be the terminal port of the Northern mail service. The trains would leave Brisbane and run right through to Port Alma, and put their passengers, cargo, and mails, and whatever else there was for North Queensland, down at Port Alma.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I should think Gladstone was much more convenient than Port Alma.

Mr. KENNA: The hon. gentleman would not convince him of that. Every time he passed through Gladstone he marvelled at a port so richly endowed by nature. If there was any intention in nature, Gladstone was designed by nature to be the port for the whole of Central Queensland, just as she designed Bowen to be the port of the whole of Central Queensland. Another way it would harm Gladstone was that, by virtue of that boat leaving on Friday and getting to Gladstone on Saturday, there was a steamship service direct with Brisbane—a very convenient service for a port of that description. When this railway was built, if it ever would be built, then Gladstone would lose that shipping. They were asked to vote £70,000 to build a railway across a lot of mud flats, with a problematical benefit to a problematical people, as, after all, what public feeling had been engendered in Rockhampton in favour of the railway?

Mr. BOWMAN: None at all.

Mr. KENNA: The public feeling in Rockhampton, as far as members could gauge it, seemed to be against the railway, except probably some few people who had a special design to serve. The Government, some few years ago, went to the country lauding their efforts to settle people on the land, and stating that the keynote of their railway policy was to build railways that would open up Crown lands, and settle a large number of people; and, when he thought how many miles of railway might be constructed to agricultural centres lying idle at present, and languishing for want of communication, it seemed to him nothing less than a scandal that they should be asked to supply £70,000 to construct a railway across a lot of mud flats.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It will give a deepwater port to Central Queensland.

Mr. BOWMAN: There is no necessity for it.

Mr. KENNA: There was no necessity for it in the world. What was the position of Rockhampton? They had a river on which had been spent hundreds and thousands of pounds, and he presumed that if the railway were built to Port Alma that river would be allowed to silt up.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No.

Mr. KENNA: Was the river going to compete, with its heavy harbour dues, with Port Alma? On the other side of the river they had a railway constructed to the mouth of the river which had cost £100,000. What was to become of that railway? He should like to have some estimate prepared which would show the amount of money spent in keeping open the Fitzroy River and the amount of money spent in maintenance and construction of the Broadmount line. If anyone read the report of the Commissioner, they would find in the last paragraph he was very lukewarm indeed—very uncertain as to what the future prospects of the line were. He said the country was "not likely to lose," but he did not say the line would pay. He did not say that there was a possibility of it paying, but he adopted a negative

attitude of saying that they "were not likely to lose." The railway was not only going to do Gladstone an immense amount of harm, but Rockhampton also. What was going to be the position of Rockhampton if all the products from the West and Mount Morgan passed through on railway trucks, dumped down at Port Alma, and sent away oversea? Rockhampton would not get one iota of benefit that it got at the present time from that trade. Why the Premier, if he had the interests of his constituents at heart, should advocate a measure of that description passed the comprehension of all reasonable and intelligent men. There was also the agreement between the harbour board and the Railway Commissioner as regards the cost and working expenses of the line. It was an unprecedented thing for a harbour board, whose duty was primarily and always confined to the levying of charges—

Mr. BOWMAN: This is entirely outside their scope.

Mr. KENNA: Entirely outside their scope, and the Committee were asked to give special privileges to the harbour board which they had never asked for, and which it never was believed a harbour board had power to do. He intended to protest against the agreement at every stage, and his strongest objection was that the harbour board was more or less an irresponsible body, and the majority of members of the harbour board were against the building of the Port Alma Railway. Half a dozen people in Rockhampton called themselves the harbour board. Those people were elected by the payers of dues and the ratepayers. Take the payers of dues—they were nominally the people who go to the Customs and pay the charges made by the harbour board. Who paid those dues?

Mr. RYLAND: The consumer.

Mr. KENNA: The consumer, of course. It meant that the men out at the Diamantina, Tambo, and Blackall—the consumer all over those districts—every time he smoked a pipe of tobacco he was paying the harbour dues levied by the harbour board.

Mr. RYLAND: Indirect taxation.

Mr. KENNA: Yes, indirect taxation; and those people had no choice whatever in the election of members of the harbour board. In other words they were to be taxed for the future cost of this line without having any voice whatever in the taxation levied upon them. It would be a good thing before going any further with this railway to refer it to a Select Committee appointed by the House to inquire into all the pros and cons of it, as the information at their disposal was not sufficient to justify most members in making up their minds what they were going to do about it.

Mr. GRANT: You have had plenty of information about it.

Mr. KENNA: He hoped the hon. gentleman would be able to give him sufficient information about it to enable him to alter his mind. The position was just like that of Bowen and Townsville all over again. Gladstone was one of the finest natural ports in Queensland, yet only a few miles away they were pouring thousands and thousands of pounds into a river endeavouring to keep it open. Only a few miles from Gladstone there was a further attempt being made to open a port to tap Gladstone, which was directly behind it. It would take away Gladstone's trade and would make that place one in which the grass would be seen growing in the streets pretty soon. It was the same with Bowen and Townsville. A lot of money was spent on Townsville, and it was connected with the

Northern Railway, and that left Bowen simply useless. Bowen was one of the finest ports on the coast, and yet it was overlooked. He hoped the finances of the State would not be wasted any further in the way it was proposed now by constructing this railway. He entered his protest against it, and he hoped his protest would be sustained by every lover of fair play. The policy which had characterised the Government for the last three or four years was to jamb as many railways as possible into their own electorates. They fed their own electorates with railways, and afterwards threw the crumbs to others. He knew he was out of order in referring to the railway policy of the Government on this question.

Mr. GRANT: That is an impertinence to the Chairman, anyhow.

Mr. KENNA: It was the Chairman's duty to know that. He knew that he need only assure the Chairman that no impertinence was intended for him to believe him, and it was only a biased and prejudiced mind which saw evil where evil did not exist.

Mr. PAYNE (*Mitchell*): The junior member for Rockhampton in his speech tried to make out that a large public meeting had been held in Barcaldine in favour of this line. It was public property in the Chamber that two members of another Chamber, the Hon. W. H. Campbell and the Hon. A. H. Parnell, went up to Barcaldine for the purpose of getting up a bit of a meeting.

Mr. GRANT: Have they not both got businesses there?

Mr. PAYNE: Anyone who knew anything about Central Queensland would know that Messrs. Campbell and Parnell were old residents of Barcaldine, and they would have only to go to that place and be there for ten minutes when they would be able to get up a great public meeting of ten or twenty people to approve of this particular railway. So far as the meeting in Barcaldine was concerned, the Chamber need not be guided by it one way or the other. The junior member for Rockhampton made the flimsy statement that the Western woolgrowers were in favour of this line. If the woolgrowers of the Central West were in favour of the line, would they not let their representative know of it? The junior member for Rockhampton should bring facts into the Chamber and not be satisfied with making bald statements. He had not heard one word from the Mitchell electors about this line. He had opposed the line when it was first introduced, and he would oppose it again, because he felt it was going to do Central Queensland an injury. There was only one industry in Central Queensland, and if the wool were sent over that line and there was a shortage in the interest, then the woolgrowers would be called upon to pay it.

Mr. RYLAND (*Gympie*) thought that when the Port Alma Railway was dropped from the paper last session that it had disappeared altogether, and he was surprised to see it appear again. The junior member for Rockhampton assumed that members of the Opposition were going to support this line last session, and they should therefore support it now. How did he know they were going to vote for it last session? There was no vote taken and no speeches made. Members now sitting on the Government side of the House were opposed to the line last session, and yet they were going to support it this session. At any rate, their votes last night showed they were going to support it. The senior member for Townsville was against the line last session, and he was going to support it this session.

*Mr. Ryland.*]

Hon. R. PHILP: How do you know I will support it this session? (Laughter.)

Mr. RYLAND: He was strongly suspicious that the hon. gentleman would do so. The Minister had given no explanation when moving the introduction of the Bill. He had made some little reference to the wharf at Port Alma, and he (Mr. Ryland) gathered that it was intended to hand over that wharf, which had cost the State £28,000, to the Rockhampton Harbour Board. Was it to be a gift to the harbour board from the Government?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Why do we continue to make you presents of grants for deep sinking at Gympie?

Mr. RYLAND: That was the policy of the Government.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Well, this is the policy of the Government.

Mr. RYLAND: That was the policy of the late Government; but the old continuous Ministry had never done anything for Gympie, or the mining industry, and he did not suppose that the present coalition would do anything either. He objected very strongly to handing over a public utility, such as a wharf, to the harbour board. Was that wharf to be handed over to the harbour board practically for the benefit of a small section of the Rockhampton people? Reading the report of a recent meeting he found that the inhabitants of Rockhampton were entirely against this railway. There had been great enthusiasm at that meeting, and the leading men of the place were unanimous in passing a resolution condemning the railway. It was true that a mysterious document had been read in that Chamber, dated 9th December, which seemed to have come through some unknown agency—something like certain objects which had been recently materialised, and which had been introduced into Australia without paying Customs duty. It seemed to have emanated from a place called Graceinere, and was signed by a Mr. Archer. Now, who was this Mr. Archer? On looking over the plans, he found that all the privateland along the route of the railway belonged to people named Archer; and it was therefore no wonder that this gentleman was in favour of the railway. The Minister had explained that there was to be no benefited area proclaimed, so that the owners of that land were going to reap the benefit accruing from the construction of the line. The State was not being considered in the matter. Outside Sydney Harbour, there was not a finer port on the Australian coast than Gladstone, which was the natural port of the whole of the Central district. Up-to-date concrete wharves had been built there, and good accommodation provided; but it was now proposed that all the great Western wool trade, and all the trade which would come along in the future was to be side-tracked away from this natural port and taken down to the mud flats of Port Alma. There seemed to be something behind all this. Upon the face of it—he regretted having to say it on the floor of the Chamber—there appeared to be a big political job. The railway was meeting with strong opposition in the country at the present time, and the more that was known about the proposal the stronger would the opposition become. He intended to give a little time to looking into the matter between now and the second reading of the Bill, and he hoped to be able then to give more facts in connection with the line.

Mr. HARDACRE (*Leichhardt*) rose to protest against the introduction of this railway, and on the second-reading stage he should make

[*Mr. Ryland.*

his protest at considerable length, and give his reasons. None of his constituents [4 p.m.] had in any way solicited his support in favour of the proposed railway.

It could not possibly assist people in that part of the Central West, because they would have to pay a higher freight on goods sent to Port Alma than they would to Broadmount. Nearly all the cattle-owners of the Central district were unanimously opposed to the construction of the line—particularly on the guarantee principle. The Rockhampton Harbour Board proposed under this agreement to guarantee the construction of a railway which was going to compete with the Fitzroy River, from which the board obtained its revenue. It was their duty to develop and deepen the river, and increase the revenue derived therefrom.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: And provide shipping facilities generally.

Mr. HARDACRE: If the railway was profitable, the board would lose revenue from the river, and if the railway was unremunerative the loss would have to come out of the river receipts, and it would be passed on to the cattle-owners and woolgrowers of the Central district. It was generally considered that this was a battle of rival interests. It was thought certain interests would be injured if the Broadmount Harbour was opened and made a deepwater port. He thought that nine-tenths of the people of Rockhampton and Central districts looked on it as one of the most sniffling transactions ever put before the House. They talked about the "graft" that was going on in America, but he did not think there was anything to exceed the "graft" behind this proposal. The Rockhampton ratepayers did not want it, and not one of the local bodies represented on the harbour board had voted for it. The only members of the board in favour of it were those put in by a few private interests.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: And who provide the revenue.

Mr. HARDACRE: They did not provide the revenue. They merely paid in the first instance, and added it on the price of the goods.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Do you contend that the cost of handling cargo will be increased, and the facilities for passengers decreased?

Mr. HARDACRE: Undoubtedly.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Oh! Don't argue with him.

Mr. HARDACRE: The cost would be greater, because it would be a greater length of line. There were no more advantages at Port Alma than at Broadmount, and for much less money they could have made Broadmount into as good a harbour as there was in Queensland. Mr. Cullen had stated that for £30,000 it could be made as good as the Brisbane River. In a speech the Premier delivered at Rockhampton, he had promised to support the Port Alma line, but when he came back to Brisbane and got the officer's report, he was simply paralysed with astonishment. (Laughter.) He wrote hurriedly back, telling them that he had changed his opinion, so that they would avoid making a mistake in policy. He told them that Mr. Cullen stated that, if the harbour at Broadmount was made deeper by the expenditure of £30,000, there would be no delay to oversea vessels nor to coasting vessels.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is impossible if they draw 23 feet.

Mr. HARDACRE: They did not then. There might be a few vessels now which drew 23 feet.

Mr. Cullen pointed out that at no time, under the most unfavourable conditions, even just before low tide, would the largest vessel have to wait more than five hours.

Mr. CAMPBELL: Why not have a committee of the House appointed to inquire into the merits of the proposal?

Mr. HARDACRE: He would be very glad to support something of that kind. There was so much agitation and conflict of interests on one side or the other, and so much ignorance was shown by so many hon. members who voted, that they ought to have a committee in order to find out something of the true state of affairs. At this formal stage he once more entered his protest against even passing this formal stage of the proposal.

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*): It had been remarked that the members on this side of the House were opposing this proposal from mere personal animus towards the Premier, but he had always had a very open mind on the matter, and it could not be said for one moment that he opposed the proposal because he had any spite against the Premier. He had read very carefully the reports presented to the House by the two sections of the people in the Rockhampton district, one of which was antagonistic to this proposal and the other of which was in favour of it, and it seemed to him that a question like this, on which there was such a tremendous divergence of opinion, should not be settled by the people of Rockhampton, but rather by those who were more largely interested in it. Having regard to the great difference of opinion which existed on the subject, if the motion went to a division, he should vote against the introduction of the Bill. He thought the motion should be withdrawn, and the matter referred to a Select Committee, who should visit the two ports, inquire into the matter on the spot, and report the results of their investigations to the House. He had studied the charts with the view of ascertaining the depth of water at the two ports—Broadmount and Port Alma. The average depth of water at Port Alma at low water springs was from 5 to 5½ fathoms, and at Broadmount only about 3½ fathoms, so that from that standpoint, there was no doubt that Port Alma was the better port of the two. (Hear, hear!) But there were other matters to be considered in deciding which should be adopted as the port for the district. According to the report furnished by the Rockhampton Harbour Board there was next to no trade carried on at Broadmount. But a reference to the list of vessels which had visited Broadmount during the last seven or eight years, did not bear out that statement. For instance, during the present year several of the largest vessels which trade along our coast, not only intercolonial steamers, but oversea vessels like the "Gulf of Venice," called at Broadmount for cargo. The "Gulf of Venice" had a draught of 24 feet 5 inches, and she loaded at that port. The vessels most interested in Broadmount were deep oversea vessels.

Mr. GRANT: Not entirely.

Mr. BARBER: He did not say entirely; he said it was mostly those vessels that were interested in the port—cargo boats which picked up wool, meat, and stuff of that kind. The "Gulf of Venice" entered there on the 16th September, and left again the next day. The "Ayrshire," another large steamer, shipped frozen meat and 6,000 bales of wool. The "Chang-sha," with a draft of 21 feet 6 inches, entered on the 14th October, and left on the 15th. The "Taiyuan," with a draft of 21 feet 3 inches entered the port on the 13th October, and left the same day. He found that one boat even landed a circus and menagerie at Broadmount in

one day a month or two ago. Anyone who cared to read the long list of vessels which had entered the port of Broadmount during the past seven or eight years, must come to the conclusion that the statement that there was no trade there was unfounded. Hon. members opposite had stated that the "Wyreema" drew 23 feet of water. In a sense that was correct, but he ventured to say that the "Wyreema" was not loaded down to that depth in ten cases out of a hundred.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Yes, when she is going North.

Mr. BARBER: No. She was not loaded down to her full draft in ten cases out of a hundred. It was very rarely that passenger steamers were loaded down to their full draft. For instance, the "Wyandra" drew 19 feet—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but I would point out to him that a speech of the character he is delivering will be more in order when the Bill reaches another stage. The hon. member will not be in order in continuing the discussion on those lines.

Mr. BARBER: He did not expect to be present to-morrow, and therefore he wished to speak on the question this afternoon. If the motion went to a division he would vote against it. He thought the correct course would be for the Minister to withdraw the motion, and during the recess let a Select Committee get to know at first hand the merits of the two ports. His opinion was that Port Alma was the best port, but there were many other facts to take into consideration, one of which was whether there was any need for the line. There were many other districts languishing for railways, and he did not see why all the money should be dumped into the electorates represented by the Premier and the Home Secretary.

Question put and passed.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a resolution, and the resolution was agreed to.

#### FIRST READING.

On the motion of the SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS, the Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

#### SUPPLY.

##### RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

##### FINANCIAL STATEMENT—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

(Mr. W. J. R. Maughan in the chair.)

Question again stated—That there be granted to His Majesty, for the service of the year 1908-9, the sum of £300 to defray the salary of the aide-de-camp of His Excellency the Governor.

Mr. MULCAHY (*Gympie*): In speaking on the Financial Statement I do not intend to take up very much time. Under the head of "Mining" there is this paragraph in the Statement—

Owing to the fall in the prices of industrial metals, the results of last year's operations are not so large as was anticipated, but in spite of the low prices the value of the mineral production reached the satisfactory figure of £4,132,163. Recent developments on our leading goldfields, coupled with the fact that for the month of October the output of gold shows an increase of 1,932 oz., valued at £8,207, over the corresponding month of 1907, may be accepted as an assurance of a substantial increase during the present year.

I just want to mention that there is a good deal of comment as to the amount of money spent on mining, and it is said that the industry should

*Mr. Mulcahy.]*

not receive anything in the way of grants or assistance from the Government. I hardly think that those who say that can have given the question much consideration. No Government having the interests of the State at heart would belittle this great industry. When one comes to consider that one quarter of our population is dependent on that industry, I think it should receive very great consideration and assistance at the hands of whatever Government may be in power. In the other States—Western Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales—they give a great deal more assistance in the way of grants and money to construct roads to mining fields than we have done in Queensland. The Premier, at a deputation the other day, rather threw cold water on our efforts to impress on him the great importance of this

[4.30 p.m.] industry. It is not my intention to-day to quote figures to show the relative importance of the different sums that have been granted in the other States, and make a comparison with the sums granted in Queensland, as I did that some time ago in introducing a deputation, but the point I want to make is this: While the other States of Australia have given very largely in the way of grants for prospecting and deep sinking, Queensland has always been cheereparing in this direction. Last year we waited on the present Premier, and we were led to believe, although he did not say so in so many words—we went away with the impression;—and let me say, not only did the members of that deputation go away with the impression that £50,000 was to be placed on the Estimates to assist the mining industry, but, further, that impression was left on the minds of the then Secretary for Mines and the late Treasurer, and, further, that impression was also left on the minds of the Under Secretary for Mines and his officers; and not only them alone, but the newspapers in the different goldfields of the State felt sure that £50,000 was going to be put down on the Estimates to assist the mining industry. We have the evidence of the late Treasurer that he made up his Estimates so as to put £50,000 down for mining. Then we have the evidence of the late Secretary for Mines, who took the same view of it; and let me say I have no doubt that it was the intention—not only the intention, but those two hon. gentlemen I have named knew, as a matter of fact—that that amount was going to be spent on the mining industry, and they made up their Estimates accordingly. I got a return to-day—I do not want to quote the figures, but I just want to say this: as the applications came in from some goldfields in different parts of the State, they were dealt with, and a sum of money given to them; but the two largest goldfields of the State—Charters Towers and Gympie—although the Government has had geologists there making reports as to whether it would be advisable to subsidise certain mines for deep sinking, and some of their reports are in, but I do not know that they have been dealt with. As a matter of fact, there has not been a single claim that I can find—and I have been up to the Mines Department—there has not been a single claim dealt with from those two fields. There have been very large sums given to other fields, but notwithstanding the fact that the Government sent their principal geologist to Gympie, and the next man to Charters Towers—though they have had these men making examinations into these matters for months and months, yet when their reports come in and have to be dealt with, what do we find? I was speaking to the Secretary for Mines the other night on the subject. We find that all the money that will be available for deep sinking on these two goldfields is about £2,000. The whole of the balance has been absorbed. I find, since

[*Mr. Mulcahy.*

I had that interview, that the hon. member for Kennedy, Mr. Jackson, has succeeded in getting his application dealt with in a favourable way. He managed to work the oracle. Applications for grants for this particular work should be dealt with fairly. I do not think it is a fair thing, simply because some mining constituents return Labour members, that the Treasurer or the Premier should come along and say, "I will give the money to other places; I shall not give it to the two principal goldfields in the State."

The TREASURER: The Treasurer has nothing to do with the applications for money. The Mines Department deals with them.

Mr. MULCAHY: I quite agree that the present Treasurer has nothing to do with the money, or the Secretary for Mines—it is entirely a matter that has been dealt with by the Premier.

The TREASURER: The Treasurer in any case has nothing to do with it.

Mr. MULCAHY: The Treasurer holds the purse strings, although the Secretary for Mines has to make the application. I know the hon. member for Kennedy got his application granted while the two principal goldfields in the State have not had a penny for deep sinking this year. Money was promised two years ago for the Great Northern, and there was some of it spent this year. That is a small matter of £100 or so. Another amount has been spent this year in the 3 North Smithfield, but that money was granted before. What I want to point out is this: The other day when the Premier was speaking he said that the Under Secretary for Mines—I will quote the paragraph. Referring to the amount put down for mining, the Premier goes on to say—

We found, for instance, that there was one item in the mining receipts which hon. members will find given here at £5,000, but which in the Estimates that were there when the present Treasurer took up his duties was down at £10,000. On going over the Estimates to revise them, we found what seemed to be an excessive amount, and we cut it down by one-half.

I have no doubt the Treasurer cut down this item. He said, "after conferring with the Under Secretary for Mines he did that." I said at the time it was a very poor thing to do, and he said the Under Secretary for Mines suggested to cut down his own Estimates. The Treasurer made use of those words after consulting with the Under Secretary.

The TREASURER: There was no justification for the increased amount this year.

Mr. MULCAHY: As a matter of fact the Under Secretary, the late Secretary for Mines, and the late Treasurer, worked out their Estimates, providing £50,000 to be spent on mining. They were quite satisfied that there was going to be £50,000 spent, and so there was to be. We were going to have that money spent all right, only the Prime Minister came back and he altered all that, and instead of having £50,000 to spend he cut out £20,000.

Mr. MANN: And now he is altering the Executive Building and tearing up the floor.

Mr. MULCAHY: I notice that he has got £53,000 down for bringing immigrants here. I have not the slightest objection to bringing people here if there is work for them to do when they come here. But what do we find? We find this is a matter of fact—I know it, and I challenge the Minister for Mines or the Prime Minister to deny it: There are quite 1,000 miners out of work to-day on the different goldfields of the State. It would be a good thing instead of having that amount down for immigration if we spent more money to assist mining. At least I think so. It is no use bringing men

here whilst we have a lot of idle men here at present. Notwithstanding the fact that there is no provision made to give effect to any favourable reports that come in from the principal geologists—as I am sure they will come in—I hope that the Government will see their way to see that the two principal goldfields of the State will get some money to assist them in deep sinking. I say that the amount has been deliberately cut out to penalise them because they are not supporting the Prime Minister at the present time. When the late Premier, the hon. member for Townsville, was in office, I will say this to his credit, that although we had many differences with him, and returned members opposed to his policy, yet it never made the slightest difference to his administration of that department. (Hear hear!)

Mr. AIREY: That is so. He was fair.

Mr. MULCAHY: That was especially the case in the amounts of money to be spent, and he always saw that the goldfields got a fair deal. No man could find fault with him for that. I watched that hon. gentleman very closely when he was Treasurer, and when he was Minister for Mines, and I found that he gave us a fair deal. Now we have a gentleman in power who is running the thing on the American system, and we get nothing. It does not matter how good a case you make out, if you are out you will get nothing and he gives it to his friends. We have the hon. member for Ravenswood as an illustration of that fact. That is a bad system. If that system is going to obtain in the State what will it come to? It will mean that questions of this kind will not be dealt with on their merits at all. It will be simply a matter of votes, and if A gets in we will give nothing to B. I want to go back to the system which was carried out by the late leader of the House, the Hon. Robert Philp. In the matter of assistance to mines and mining, in the matter of subsidies to fields and deep sinking, that hon. gentleman did the fair thing. I do not want the system that is introduced now. But it is quite in keeping with most of the work which the present Prime Minister is doing. The hon. member for Kennedy asked for a return the other day, and he got some information to-day showing the total sum of money spent on the different goldfields, and what do we find? We find that since they started subsidising deep sinking that Gympie has had about £15,000. Well, Gympie has maintained a very big population for forty years, and it has produced gold to the value of—I go: these figures from the Under Secretary to-day—something short of £11,000,000. To the end of this year it will amount to something like £10,800,000. Up to last year it was over £10,600,000. If you have spent £15,000 in the way of Government assistance on a place which has produced £11,000,000 worth of gold and has kept a big population for a number of years, I ask this House in all seriousness, Is it money badly spent? Is it too much? Men get fairly good wages on goldfields, and in and around that district there is a big settlement taking place, and it is owing to the surplus population going out on the land. The Prime Minister proposes to spend £53,000 on immigration. If the people want to come here they are welcome. But he proposes spending £53,000 to bring them here, and all the time Gympie has been a goldfield, or at any rate since it started to receive subsidies twenty-two years ago; all the money spent there has been £15,000.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: Private enterprise is doing most of it.

Mr. MULCAHY: There are a large number of children in that district—fine healthy ones,  
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too—and it would cost £1,000,000 to bring that number out here, and yet they think it is too much to give us £15,000.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: No.

Mr. MULCAHY: Yes; some members say we should not get it.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: It is probably the fault of the two members for Gympie that they did not get more. You went to sleep over it.

Mr. AIREY: You cannot say that.

Mr. MULCAHY: I quite admit that my natural modesty, altogether unlike the junior member for North Brisbane, may have kept me back. There should be more money spent on mining fields. We are told that they only received £37,000 in mining receipts. What about the income tax? What about the taxation the miners have to pay through the Customs? What about the royalties paid on gold? and what about all other taxation received from the miners? Why, goodness gracious! if you are only going to take the mining receipts, which is a little thing that went through the mining office, that is nothing at all.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: You wake up here and you will get more.

Mr. MULCAHY: I am not complaining about the treatment we have received up to this year, but I am complaining—and no doubt the hon. member for Charters Towers will make the same complaint—that £15,000 has been put down for deep sinking on goldfields, and as there has been £13,500 spent so far, all these goldfields will get between them is something less than £2,000.

Mr. DOUGLAS: There is a good time coming in the future.

Mr. MULCAHY: I must say that the hon. member for Cook has done remarkably well this year. He has got a small population in his electorate, and he has got about £1,850 this year.

The TREASURER: You got it last year.

Mr. MULCAHY: I am dealing with this year. Last year we were behind the hon. gentleman, and we had an opportunity of getting something like fair treatment. But I do not want to work on those lines at all. I want to see a fair deal to all parties. (Hear, hear!) Surely, if the hon. gentleman is representing a constituency, and there is a change of Government, would he be satisfied if his district was ignored altogether?

Mr. AIREY: Let him beware.

The TREASURER: It is early yet this year.

Mr. MULCAHY: All we want is to have a fair and reasonable deal. The hon. member for Cook has done remarkably well this year. It is not because of the importance of his constituency from the mining point of view, but because the hon. member has the good luck—or really I think the bad luck—to be sitting behind the Government.

Mr. DOUGLAS: Why, we are getting a lot of miners from Gympie now.

Mr. MULCAHY: I know the circumstances under which they are going. A few of us were foolish enough—for it has been a foolish speculation—to go into a mine in the Cook district. Let me tell the hon. member that the only claim at the Starcke which is showing any promise at all is the Gympie mine. I trust that, when this matter is gone into again, Gympie will get a fair deal. I am bound to say that we have had something this year for prospecting purposes outside deep-sinking. My complaint is not on that score, but that we have not had an opportunity of having our claim for any portion of this money

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for deep-sinking recognised. We had a geologist there, but his report was held over. I saw a paragraph in the *Courier* one day this week—I have no doubt it was inspired—saying that it would have to remain over for consideration; but, reading between the lines, one can see that it is being held over to let the fields represented by hon. members sitting behind the Government get the whole of the vote before our claims are considered at all. The mining industry is a very important one, and the Government are not treating it in anything like the way they should treat it. There are 1,000 miners out of work in the State. Whether the Government want to run those men out of Queensland or not I do not know. There are a lot of local matters that I should deal with, but, before doing so, I wish to say a word or two about Federal matters. I hope that in the near future our Premier, or some representative, will go down to the Premiers' Conference and make the best possible bargain for Queensland. As far as I understand it, the Labour party are not bound to any particular scheme. Like all other hon. members, they want to see the very best thing done for Queensland. They want to see this thing gone into fairly and properly by the best minds we have in Australia. It is a very important matter. We had the Premier telling us the other night that he has not formulated any scheme; and the hon. member for Brisbane South suggested that a day should be set apart for the discussion of the matter, to see if some scheme cannot be drawn up. The only reply the Premier made to hon. members who made such a suggestion was that they did not know anything about it. If the Premier has a scheme, then the floor of this House is the proper place for him to give information about it. He could then get some information from the hon. member for Brisbane South and from the leader of our party which might help him. But I really think what is going to happen in the near future is this—the Premier will go to this new party of his—this fighting party—he has changed the name from National Liberal Union to the "Liberal Democratic party"—they are exactly the same people—I have no doubt that he will go to his new party, and that he will get a big "ad." in the local papers, and they will get up a big anti-Federal cry and a cry of "State rights." That is the cry on which the hon. gentleman wants to fight the next elections—State *versus* Commonwealth. No sane man, and no sane body of men, can think we are going to get any good out of that kind of work. It may suit for political purposes. It may deceive a few people, or it may deceive a number of people; but it is not the proper way to go about this business. The proper way is to get the best minds in the various States to meet and make the best terms they can; and I am quite sure that is the wish of every member of our party. Of course it will be very hard for the Commonwealth Prime Minister to have to go into this matter. He is a man with a splendid political reputation—absolutely clean. He has never stooped to anything like dishonest tactics. It will be very hard indeed for him—and I know he will feel it very much, though I suppose he will get over it—to have to meet in conference men of such loose habits politically, and so unreliable, as the present Premier of Queensland. The hon. gentleman has accused Mr. Fisher of having tried to induce our leader to make friends with him. Mr. Fisher never made such a proposal. Mr. Fisher is a man with a clean record, and I am proud to see him in the position he occupies to-day. I only wish to goodness we could send a clean man down to deal with him, and then we would come to a very fair solution of the diffi-

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culty. There is a local matter that I would now like to refer to. I have received a letter from an I.O.G.T. lodge in my electorate, expressing regret that the Premier has not kept his promise to introduce licensing legislation, and they ask me to bring this under the hon. gentleman's notice, and urge on him the importance of keeping his promise. I think I can safely reply to them that the hon. gentleman who is now leading the Government has never kept his promises unless it suited his own book.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: They sent it to you, I suppose, because you are a good templar.

Mr. MULCAHY: They sent it to me because they know that when a number of my constituents send anything to me in proper form it will always receive my best attention. I am not going to say anything unkind to the hon. member, because I know that he has a lot of sins to carry in connection with a certain big monopoly—the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. I believe they are crippling men, and then sending them back to Italy without compensation. I believe that a man named Torio has gone back to that country, crippled, without receiving one penny by way of compensation.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: Poor fellow.

Mr. MULCAHY: It is one of those heartless acts which you expect from a company like that. The hon. member for Herbert pointed out the heartless treatment they meted out [5 p.m.] to this poor man. I had thought that the Minister for Mines was rather inclined to be sympathetic with the mining industry; but the other day, when we had a deputation at which he was present, and appeared willing to do something to help us, the Premier put up his hand, and all the Minister for Mines was allowed to do was to run out and act as message boy, and not say a word to the deputation at all. He is a young Minister, and quite kindly disposed.

Mr. AIREY: A man who means well.

Mr. MULCAHY: A man who means well, and who has fine feelings, and it was an unkind thing for the Premier to do.

Mr. BOWMAN: That is characteristic of him.

Mr. MULCAHY: That is the way he treats men under him. There is another matter I would like to refer to briefly, and that is the motor cars. We never know what they are going to cost in the end.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: We shall know when they kill four or five people.

Mr. MULCAHY: He has not started to kill men in this country—I suppose that will come later on—but what I am concerned with is this: I saw a number of men at the Executive Buildings, which cost £140,000, and they were undermining the foundations to enable the Premier to draw the motor car quite close to the doors to enable him to step in and hurry away. There is no doubt this thing is becoming almost a public scandal. In a short time, in order to keep his supporters together, he will want to give them a motor car apiece. (Laughter.) He is spending thousands of pounds on motor cars, but he has no money for the mining industry. Then he must have a driver from home, a thoroughbred driver, to come out here and drive these motor cars. The Minister for Mines says there is no man in Queensland or Australia capable of driving them. There are lots of capable young men in this State, and as a native of the State he ought to recognise that fact. Why should we go away to the old world and import men to work at easy billets of this kind? I think that when the Minister for Mines comes to consider this thing seriously, he

will quite agree with me that this should be filled up by some young Australians who are capable of doing it. But if you got an Australian to drive it, he would say "That's Kidston, I knew him at Rockhampton," and he would not touch his hat and bow down to him. The Premier wants to get a man from the old country who has done a certain amount of grovelling. He wants him to style him as Sir William Kidston in the near future, and to stoop down and touch his hat. (Laughter.) No young Australian is good enough to drive Sir William Kidston.

Mr. MURPHY: Show us how he has got to bow. (Laughter.)

Mr. MULCAHY: I am not up to Sir William Kidston's idea; I am only an ordinary Australian. I do not think there is a man in this House who could fulfil the duties. There is a good story told, and it came from Ireland. They say that if you put a beggar on horseback he will go to—

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Where to? (Laughter.)

Mr. MULCAHY: That is the case with our present Prime Minister. He has come from the ranks; the people put him where he is to-day, and the other day he got up in this House, and talked about class. "You are not class enough for me, you are not my class." However, I would ask the House in all seriousness to give some consideration to the question of how to help on the mining industry of this great State of Queensland. At the present time the mining industry is in a very depressed condition, and I would ask the Government to reduce the vote for immigration, and devote the amount to the assistance of that industry.

Mr. MITCHELL (*Marborough*): I may just mention that it is quite evident that the "gang forward" policy of the Government is not at all a correct term, particularly when we see the Press indicating that the whole of the programme laid before the House at the beginning of the session will not be brought forward. The reforms that were mentioned will not be introduced until we get a Government on the Treasury benches who are desirous of carrying them out. In connection with reform, we have our public works arrangements, our social reforms, our political reforms, and various other reforms. I think it is necessary at this stage to consider the possibility of devising some system of what we might call financial reform. Judging from what appears in the Budget or Financial Statement, financial reform is a most desirable thing, and one that should receive the immediate attention of this House. Last year the Treasurer of this State estimated that he would have a surplus of £7,104 at the close of the financial year. The surplus actually shown on the year's transactions is no less than £115,300. The peculiar thing about this matter is that if the Treasurer forecasts a surplus of £7,000, and then shows a surplus of over £100,000, he is credited with being a great financier, and the bigger the mistake the Treasurer makes in that way the greater credit he gets as a financier. What would happen to an accountant in the employ of a private firm if he did that kind of thing? What would happen to him if he calculated that the income of the firm for a certain term would be a certain amount, and it afterwards turned out that he was many thousands out in his calculation; or if he calculated that the expenditure would be a certain amount, and it was afterwards found that he had made a mistake of several thousands of pounds? In all probability the firm would tell him that he was not capable of filling the position he occupied. But the Treasurer of a State who makes a great blunder or

miscalculation in his estimate of revenue and expenditure is hailed as a great financier if that blunder happens to be on the right side of the ledger. The ex-Treasurer pointed out the other night that when he was in office he asked the officers of the Railway Department for an estimate of the probable revenue from that department during the current year, and they told him that they would get £50,000 more this year than they got last year. That is the estimate which was made under an officer who previously occupied the highest financial position in the State, that of Auditor-General, and when the officials of the department were asked to make another calculation they again reported that the revenue would probably be £50,000 more than last year. The Premier afterwards stated in this House that he had consulted Mr. Thallon, and that that gentleman estimated that the revenue would be £100,000 more than it was last year. Mr. Thallon, I understand, got the Deputy Commissioner appointed for the express purpose of looking after the finances of the department, and yet we find that in place of the Government taking Mr. King's estimate, they take Mr. Thallon's. Last year there was exactly £70,000 of a mistake in the railway estimate. If the Commissioner made £70,000 of a mistake last year, is he not just as likely to be £50,000 out in his estimate for the current year? The bottom paragraph on page 1 of the Financial Statement reads thus—

This table shows that in three items—viz., mining, railways, and miscellaneous—the receipts aggregated £90,573 less than anticipated, while, on the other hand, receipts from the Commonwealth taxation, and land, exceeded the estimate by £131,567—a net excess of £40,994.

I wish to direct the attention of hon. members to the fact that the Commonwealth returned to the State £53,000 more than was estimated last year, and yet the Government are continually complaining about the "Rob Roy finance" of the Federal Parliament. They speak of the Federal Parliament as if it were a foreign body seeking the destruction of the State. A leading paper which supports the present Government has shown that in place of the Commonwealth Parliament having taken advantage of the State, it has returned the State a great deal more than it was entitled to return under the Braddon section. The paragraph which I have quoted shows that the Government in their estimate of revenue made a mistake of £90,000 in one case, the receipts being that much under their estimate, while in the other case the receipts were £40,994 above their estimate. Are we not, therefore, justified in saying that the estimate of revenue for last year was not a very careful or accurate estimate? Another paragraph of the Statement, which will be found at page 4, reads as follows:—

The total amount of loan money we are likely to have available this year is £1,652,359—that is, some £49,000 more than we actually spent last year. But the active policy of railway construction authorised by the House last session will necessitate a large increase in our loan expenditure this year. As hon. members will see from the estimates of loan expenditure laid before them, I have estimated that we will require loan money to the extent of £1,598,051 this year.

This is the point to which I wish to draw the attention of the Committee—

It will therefore be desirable, before the close of the session, to make provision for the replenishing of our loan fund.

In connection with the replenishing of our loan fund I would like to state what is really meant by a loan. A loan is generally supposed by the working men of the country, and by a large majority of the merchants of the country, to be an indication that the Government have made

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up their minds to bring large sums of money into the country. That is the idea generally conveyed. When a loan has to be floated in London there is no indication in this country of, or likelihood of, boxes of gold having been imported. All that is done is this: Say we are going to borrow £2,000,000. The bonds are prepared and submitted to our agents in London. Perhaps their value is £100 each, and they are sold at £97 10s., or £98 10s., or £99 10s.—it all depends on the credit of the State and the state of the money market.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: And the rate of interest.

Mr. MITCHELL: And the rate of interest. I think there is only one case in the history of Queensland when the bonds brought more than the face value, and that was a loan bearing interest at 4 per cent. When the bonds are sold the banker advises the Government here that the loan has been realised or the bonds have been sold to that amount. We have to pay them about £80,000 per £1,000,000 for the £2,000,000 we have floated; that is £160,000 actually gone in the first instance.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No.

The TREASURER: Where do you get your figures?

Mr. MITCHELL: From Coghlan. The balance, £1,840,000, is placed to our credit in the bank.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Do we pay 8 per cent. commission for floating a loan?

Mr. MITCHELL: It costs £80,000 per £1,000,000 to float a loan in London; and it has gone as high as £125,000 for the interest and flotation and expenses. That is laid down by Coghlan. As I was saying, we are advised that the loan has been floated. The next step is, we are told, it has been placed to our credit. Now, suppose we want to begin the construction of a railway, this is the way we operate: The bank at home advises our bank here to open an account with the Queensland Treasurer. That is opened by the Queensland Treasurer, and he has, perhaps, to make payments for the first month to the extent of £10,000. He draws to the extent of the £10,000, and pays the wages of the workmen employed on the line. These wages are again paid back to the storekeeper and the draper, and others who have been letting these men have what they require whilst working. This goes right back into the bank again, and the result is that, in place of getting £2,000,000 sent here, all that is done is that we get the use of about £10,000 or £15,000 to operate on to pay the wages of the workmen engaged on that particular class of work. That £10,000 or £15,000 did not come from London; it is our own money, and was here all the time.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We export gold; we do not want to import gold.

Mr. MITCHELL: That is just the point I want to come to. The impression in the country is that capital is being introduced, when all that we are doing is using our own money, the money lying in the Savings Bank, the money that is passing round from the workman to the merchant and going back to the banks again. The very same sovereigns that were paid out the first month may be paid out again; and the result is that all the time the people of the State have been deceived. I use the word advisedly; I mean they are under the delusion that the money has actually come out from the old country—that boxes of gold from time to time have come out in ships and that capital has thus been introduced into Queensland.

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The TREASURER: Do you mean to say we do not get the use of the money?

Mr. MITCHELL: I mean to say we do not require the use of the money. All we do is to use £10,000 or £15,000 of the money raised and placed to our credit.

Mr. HARDACRE: It is a popular superstition.

Mr. MITCHELL: Just a popular superstition. But I will tell you what has to be done. We have to pay the interest on the £2,000,000. And we have been borrowing money in this fashion since Queensland became a separate colony. We have been borrowing to such an extent that we are now in debt to the amount of £42,000,000; and we have paid more than £42,000,000 in interest. Still we owe that amount. During the past ten years we paid over £15,000,000 in interest. I am not condemning the present Government for that; I am not condemning any Government; all I want the Committee to do is to consider the advisableness of trying to determine on some course of financial reform that will enable us to do away with the idea that we are getting money imported into the country—that we are getting gold brought out in boxes. While we think we are doing that, we are simply circulating our own money, and there is not a single new sovereign comes from England to increase our capital.

The TREASURER: Have you only just found out that?

Hon. R. PHILP: What about our exports?

Mr. MITCHELL: Our exports have been very largely in excess of our imports.

Hon. R. PHILP: They belong to the individual, not to the Government.

Mr. MITCHELL: It is simply a piece of bookkeeping—that money is placed in the bank in London, and we are supposed to get the use of it.

The TREASURER: What money?

Mr. MITCHELL: The £2,000,000 that we borrow—that we are supposed to get the use of in circulation. We would still have money in the bank, not for any special benefit we get [5.30 p.m.] from it, but only for the privilege of paying interest on it. All that is done in connection with the matter is that a cablegram is sent from the old country from the agent in London that the money has been obtained. We do not require any more of that money. We do not want to borrow it. We want to adopt some system whereby we will be enabled to use that money without giving the impression to the public that you have actually got the money when we would only have the right to use our own money.

The TREASURER: You say we get only £100,000 for the £2,000,000.

Mr. MITCHELL: I do not blame the Treasurer for that particular matter—but we only imagine we get that £100,000.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We do not imagine we have £25,000,000 worth of railroads.

Mr. MITCHELL: It is time some system were adopted whereby we made our paper money acceptable to the public, the same as we did when the Queensland National Bank was in difficulties. What did the Government of that day do? They did not send £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 worth of gold to the Queensland National Bank at that time—they did not even take the gold out of the bank that the Queensland National Bank was owing to us. All they did to re-establish the credit of the Queensland National Bank at that particular time, was to print across the face of the notes

that they were Treasury notes, which actually made the Government responsible for those notes. That is all we want to do. I am not going to attempt to lay down a system as to how we may accomplish it, but I think it is really worthy of the serious consideration of this Parliament, to try and find some system of managing the affairs of the State by financial reform that will enable them to do without having to pay this large sum in interest that we pay every year.

The TREASURER: You advocate a paper currency.

Mr. MITCHELL: Yes; I would advocate a paper currency. I happened to turn up the *Telegraph* to-day, and I find that Roosevelt, the late President of the American Republic, has taken up the question of a paper currency, and other countries of the world are beginning to see the advantage that would accrue by adopting a paper currency. After the Franco-Prussian War France had a very large indemnity to pay, and they simply issued a paper currency, and they redeemed the debt in a very short time. The adoption of a paper currency would be of great advantage to this country, and to any other country. In connection with Federal matters, the revenue question is one that has been considerably debated in this House, and I am sorry to see the spirit that has been manifested in connection with it—a spirit of antagonism—as if the Federal Parliament was desirous of destroying the power of the States—not this State alone, but all the States. When we examine Sir William Lyne's scheme, or Sir George Turner's, or Mr. Harper's—any of these—they are only tentative schemes—they do not say that is the scheme we are laying down, and when the Braddon clause expires you must accept it. Conferences have met over and over again, and they have tried by some means or another to work out a scheme that would be acceptable to the States, and also acceptable to the Commonwealth, and they are willing to consider any scheme that might be introduced by any Premier or Treasurer from any of the States. The other night, when the Premier was discussing this matter, he referred particularly to the scheme mentioned by the Federal Labour party at their late convention, and in connection with that he tried to show that we would be very considerable losers if we adopted the scheme that was laid down.

The TREASURER: I think he did show it.

Mr. MITCHELL: No; he did not. If you observe, he admitted, after going into the matter, that he had made a mistake. At that particular time I made an interjection, and the man in the gallery who was taking notes at the time for the *Courier* spoke about me as having made a speech. There were a good many interjections being passed across the Chamber at that time, and we had, as usual, the Home Secretary getting up in his place and telling the Chairman that I was out of order. I want to point out this: That I do not know that there is any member in the House who has made a point of watching not to be out of order more carefully than I have done; and when I made that interjection, I made it on the ruling of our present Speaker. Several times this session, when hon. members have been called to order for making interjections, the ruling has been this: That when the member who is addressing the House does not object to the interjections being made, then it is not the duty of the members of the House or the Speaker to interfere in the matter. The Premier, when I was interjecting, listened very carefully to what I was saying, because the interjection I made was bearing directly on the subject. Yet the Home Secretary gets up in his place and says that I was out of order. If

the Home Secretary would give a little more attention to other matters, in place of trying to show his knowledge of the Standing Orders and putting this House right so often as he does, it would be very much more profitable for him. There is one thing that I am pleased with in connection with this matter, and that is that the Premier has thrown aside his claymore and battle-axe. He said some time ago, according to the papers, that he was going to fight the Federal Labour party on the question of this surplus revenue to be returned to the States.

Mr. MAXWELL: He did not say anything of the sort.

Mr. MITCHELL: He says that the papers did not report him correctly, and we are prepared to take his word.

Mr. HARDACRE: No; he said that he took no notice of newspaper reports, but he did not deny that it was correct.

Mr. MITCHELL: That places him in even a worse position than I thought he was. If he does not deny the correctness of what the papers said, and if the papers reported him correctly, then I am pleased now to see that he has thrown aside his armour, that he has washed off his war paint, that he is willing to approach this question in something like a reasonable attitude, and that he is prepared to consider this question, not in a spirit of antagonism, but practically in a spirit of relationship—which is a close relationship between the States and the Federal Parliament.

The TREASURER: I thought he always showed that at any of the conferences which he attended.

Mr. MITCHELL: I am not speaking of the conferences he attended, I am speaking about the statements he made immediately he landed in Australia.

Mr. RYLAND: In Adelaide.

Mr. MITCHELL: It is reported in the papers that when he landed in Adelaide he declared that he was going to fight the Federal Labour party on this matter. One of my objections the other night was that he was not going to fight the scheme but the party. I have one or two figures here which I have worked out in connection with this matter. In 1901 the amount returned by the Federal Parliament to the States was £3,599,702.

Mr. RYLAND: They are only for the half-year.

The TREASURER: Those are the figures for the half-year ended on the 30th June, 1901.

Mr. MITCHELL: The following figures will show the amounts returnable to the States in the years named:—

	£
Half-year ending 31st June, 1901	3,599,702
1901-2	7,364,236
1902-3	8,244,563
1903-4	7,378,179
1904-5	7,142,769
1905-6	7,384,383
1906-7	7,845,374
1907-8	8,859,596
1908-9	8,063,692

Now, if we take the whole of these eight and a-half years, and divide them by eight and a-half, and then deduct the £1,000,000, which the Federal Labour party say that they are entitled to claim for incidental and miscellaneous expenses, it will leave a balance to be divided amongst the States of about £6,700,000. I have also worked the figures out in another way. I took five years out of these eight and a-half years.

The TREASURER: Did you take the five best years?

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Mr. MITCHELL: No; not the best years. I did not take the three years in which £8,000,000 was returned to the States. I want to be fair in this matter, and I want to bring this point before the House in order that the attempt made to fight the Federal Labour party will, if not destroyed altogether, be at least modified. I have taken the five years during which £7,000,000 odd was returned to the States. The amounts for these years are £7,364,236, £7,378,479, £7,142,769, £7,384,383, £7,845,574; that gives a total of £37,122,872, which, divided by five, gives the average for each year of £7,424,574. Deducting the £1,000,000 which is wanted by the Commonwealth, that will leave a balance of £6,424,574 to be divided amongst the States. The Premier said that the Federal Labour party were seeking to reduce the amount to £4,000,000.

The TREASURER: He said £5,000,000.

Mr. MITCHELL: He did not say £5,000,000 till we corrected him.

Mr. MAXWELL: You have not corrected him yet.

Mr. MITCHELL: Yes; I have corrected him. He said £4,000,000, and then admitted that it was £5,000,000, but you see from those figures it will come to £6,424,574. Now, that does not put such a bad aspect on the affair, because it is quite apparent to anyone who has considered the matter that as we go along the Commonwealth is bound to require more for expenditure than they have been getting. If a scheme can be worked out something on the basis laid down by the Federal Labour party in the convention, then there will be a possibility of a speedy settlement being come to by both the States and the Commonwealth. But if our Premier and our Treasurer—who will probably go down—go down there with a determination to oppose everything that comes before them unless they get their own way—

The TREASURER: Is it likely they will do that?

Mr. MITCHELL: I was very pleased, as I said, to see the Chief Secretary throw aside his warlike implements. Now that he has come to that decision it will be necessary for him to go down to the conference which is to be held with a give-and-take idea before him. If they go in that spirit, and if the representatives from the other States go in that spirit, I am quite satisfied the Federal representatives will meet them in such a manner that the solution of the whole matter will be speedily accomplished. I do not mean to say that it will be accomplished in an hour or two, but I think it could be accomplished in one sitting. The Speaker said the other night that at a time like this—particularly on the Address in Reply—we might box the whole political compass. But I am anxious to see this debate concluded. Along with my colleagues, I am anxious to see the business of the session carried through as quickly as possible, and so I have made a point of not bringing in any collateral subjects, but have confined myself strictly to the financial aspect of the matter. I shall leave the other matters to be discussed in detail when they come before us under their various headings. I sincerely hope that some attention will be paid to what I have said in connection with adopting some system of financial reform, and trying to abolish the great amount of interest that we have to pay annually for loans that we have never got for money that never comes to the State, and the conception that has been given to the people of Queensland that, if they go down to the wharves after a loan has been floated in London, they will see large quantities of cases of sovereigns being landed from the steamers coming from the old country. There is a false conception abroad that capital is being driven out of the country, and that capital is not coming into

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the country. The Labour party have never driven capital out of the country. It has been proved, on the other hand, that ever since the inception of the Labour party this State has stood better financially in the London market than it ever stood before.

The TREASURER: That is since the coming of the Morgan-Kidston party.

Mr. MITCHELL: It is since the advent of the Labour party, and because of the power that was in the Labour party when there were thirty-four of them sitting behind Mr. Morgan. It must not be forgotten that the Labour party at that time had the full dominating power; but they came under the Morgan Ministry to assist in righting the finances, and they did it successfully—so successfully that our loans stand higher than ever before, and our credit is so good that, if it were necessary to float a loan—which I hope it will not be—we should be in a better position than any other State in the Commonwealth.

Mr. SWAYNE (*Mackay*): There are several features in the Financial Statement that are very satisfactory. For instance, there is a reference to the increased amount of land settlement and to the increase in the railway receipts. One noteworthy point in connection with the increase in the railway receipts is that it has been coincident with a reduction in the railway fares and freights. That is a refutation of the argument that is sometimes used that a reduction in fares and freights means a reduction in receipts. As a matter of fact, it often leads to increased traffic, and the Financial Statement proves that that has been the case on this occasion. I am very pleased at the increased amount of land settlement that has taken place. In reference to that I should like to pay a tribute to the energy displayed by the late Secretary for Lands. One could not but be struck with the energy the hon. gentleman put into his work from the first day he took that portfolio. Very soon after he took office I was on the Richmond River, and I found people coming into Queensland from that district, and between then and now there has been a constant stream of settlers coming from there into this State. That has been largely due to the exertions of the hon. gentleman. One item on the Estimates that I do not think was there last year is £20,000 for new school buildings. That is a very desirable object. Knowing as I do the difficulties that parents labour under, I think that is a vote which will meet the very pressing requirements in this direction. Another pleasing item on the Estimates is the amount set down for increasing the number of itinerant teachers. I also notice that there is an increase in the vote for deep sinking and prospecting. The mining representatives seem to think the amount is insufficient. Still, there is an increase, and I believe that anything which tends to encourage our primary industries will have a beneficial effect. At the same time I notice that there is a decrease in the Estimates for the Department of Agriculture. That is a matter for regret, as expenditure in connection with such an important department, I feel certain, would be amply repaid. I shall have more to say upon the subject when the Estimates of the department are under consideration. I desire to congratulate the Minister who has lately taken charge of the department. I have had the pleasure of knowing him for a great number of years, and I feel sure that he will in every way prove himself worthy of the position. Most of the agriculturists of the State will be pleased to have a Minister who has been taken from the ranks of the primary producers. I am sure that most right-thinking people will join in condemning the despicable attempt that was made to cast odium on the Government on account of his appointment; it only shows their poverty in

legitimate arguments. His career is an example to anybody. More than thirty years ago he took up land in an outlying part of the Mackay district, and for a number of years worked as an ordinary pioneer farmer. He then introduced capital, erected a mill, and turned out a large quantity of sugar. It has been stated that he was an employer of black labour, but he was compelled to partly make use of this labour. It must be remembered, however, that at the same time he found employment for a large number of white men, and at various times had hundreds of men working for him. Any man who goes into our electorate now will find that some of the hon. gentleman's warmest supporters, and some of the men who work hardest to secure his return to this House, are men who were at one time his employees. I notice also that there is £200,000 down on the Estimates for loans to local bodies, as against £100,000 last year. It is needless for me to say that these bodies, especially in the country districts, are always short of money, and it is for the general welfare that they require to borrow. I must say, however, that next year I should like to see some provision made to assist local bodies from the consolidated revenue. It seems to me to be unfair that the whole of the burden of making and maintaining roads that are essential to the welfare of the community has had to be thrown on the shoulders of a few. At present in Queensland, with a population of nearly 600,000, the whole of that load is thrown on 80,000 or 90,000 ratepayers, who have to maintain the roads—the avenues through which their products are brought to market, and which are just as essential to the welfare of the other members of the community as it is to them. As a case in point, I notice that, at a recent meeting of the shire council in my electorate, there was a discussion in connection with bridges. They have rebuilt one as a suspension bridge at a cost on this occasion of £7,000. Previous re-erectments have cost them something like £11,000 or £12,000, and altogether they have spent something like £20,000. During the busy time of the year the greater part of the people who use that bridge are not ratepayers; they are commercial travellers, and people going on business, in search of employment, and so on, and I certainly think that some means should be provided by which they should bear their share of the cost of that work. It was pointed out that unless something in that way was done in connection with this bridge an additional rate of 3d. would have to be levied. They are already rated to the extent of 3d., and that 3d. rate means that, in the course of a lifetime, every producer in that district will pay away half the value of his farm for the maintenance of the roads. I think the burden is altogether out of proportion, and it is increasing, and I hope that next year some provision will be made whereby the general public will contribute towards this expense. In connection with the Agricultural Land Bank, there have been several criticisms made. There is no doubt on the whole that it has been a benefit. I know many who have availed themselves of its conditions, and they tell me that it has been of far more advantage to them to do so than to borrow in the ordinary way. I notice that in the report of the committee of management it is stated—

The Agricultural Bank Acts, 1901 to 1905, permit of advances being made for certain specified purposes only, and it sometimes happens that a farmer requires a little assistance in order to defray expenses in other directions. This we are unable to give, and where the security is good in some cases the accounts have been taken up by other banks.

Now, they admit here that they have not been able to advance when securities are good, and, so

far as I can learn, it is more particularly the case in such an incident as this. In the first place, the original Act only allowed of advances for improvements to Government lands and freehold. Then we had an amending Act to enlarge its scope, which allowed of advances being made to pay off mortgages and purchase stock and implements. But one thing seems to have been left out. While it allows a man who is in difficulties to borrow money to redeem his mortgage, it does not allow a man who buys his land on time payment to borrow money for the completion of the purchase. For instance, speaking from memory, a man can borrow one-third the value of the security for the purpose of paying off a debt, but if he buys the land on deferred payments, and has already paid two-thirds, he cannot borrow the remaining third—yet the security in both cases seems to be equally good. I hope that next session we shall have an amending Bill brought down which will meet this objection. I note that there is £50,000 down for immigration, and I should like to say a few words on this matter. It has been asserted that if you bring people here you impair the chances of employment for those who are already here, but it seems to me that, if care is exercised in the selection of immigrants, the reverse will be the case. As a case in point, I might mention that in the district I represent there are more than 1,000 producers, all registered under Federal legislation, so we know exactly how many there are. Fully 75 per cent. of these people came out as immigrants, and are now producers, and each of them produced last year to the value of £500 worth of sugar. Roughly speaking, the output in the district is estimated at £580,000, and, if those men had not been brought out here, we should have been poorer by that extent. Again, every one of these men is now employed. They make work for others, and I am within the mark when I say they each pay fully £300 in wages. That shows that, if the right kind of men are brought out, so far from decreasing employment, they add to the opportunities. Some were brought out last year, and at the time I did not think it was the best system under which they were brought out, but some of them have already got farms of their own. That is another case showing that judicious action in this respect would be beneficial to all. It shows the opportunities of settlement that there are in every direction, and as showing that there is plenty of money to be earned by those who are willing to work in the sugar districts, I should like to read an extract from a paper published in the Tweed district—

Writing from Mosman on 6th September, Edgar Mann says: "Johnson's gang was top last month. At 5s. 6d. a ton, and tucker, they cleared over £23, with Platt's and Fahey's gang close behind. Johnson's gang has now made £63, clear of rations, for fourteen weeks' work."

Mr. WOODS: How many hours a day did they work?

Mr. SWAYNE: They were on contract. The number of hours they worked was entirely an optional matter.

Mr. LENNON: Do you grudge them the amount they got?

Mr. SWAYNE: I do not in any degree grudge them the amount they earned. I am only too pleased that they earned that amount, but when we hear so often the cry that we should not bring anybody here because working men are so badly off that they have to apply for relief rations in Brisbane, I think it is only right to show that there is another side to that question, and that men disposed to work can earn good money. And that is a common occurrence throughout those districts.

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Mr. MANN: They only got two crops in the Mossman district this year, and the crops were poor.

Mr. SWAYNE: There was a reason for the crops being poor. If sufficient labour had been available the crops would have been better in some places than they were. There was a difficulty in some districts in getting labour for cultivation, and to that difficulty is attributable to a certain extent the shortness in production. But to resume my quotations—

Writing from Nelson, via Cairns, on 18th August, W. Coe says: "I wish to report to your popular paper (I see a good many *Heralds* about here) some good news from the North, and I am sure you will be glad to hear that the Tweed boys are making good records in the canefields."

The writer goes on to tell of their success.

Mr. BOWMAN: Wasn't it said years ago that white men could not work in the canefield?

Mr. KEOGH: I remember the time when it was said that you could not grow a cabbage on the Downs. Now it is the garden of Queensland. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. SWAYNE: It does not matter what was said years ago. I am showing that there are plenty of opportunities for men who are brought out here to earn good money. I have a cutting here from the Mackay *Standard*, which clearly indicates the opportunities there are for small capitalists to do well; and, from my own practical knowledge of the business, I can say that the figures given in that cutting are fairly correct. It shows that a man with a capital of between £300 and £400 can pay his first instalments on the land, pay for the necessary improvements, and purchase his working plant, and come out at the end of the first eighteen months £100 to the good. I know, from my own experience, that that is quite correct. Again we are told that there is no land for these people when they come here—that it is all locked up in big estates. In answer to that statement, I say that men can buy land on very easy terms, as the following extract will show:—

Another illustration can be supplied by the following which is merely one example of many concerning lands which are obtainable here:—100 acres of land are for sale on the following terms:—£5 per acre, £500; £50 cash. The balance, £45, repayable with interest at 5 per cent. by a royalty of 2s. per ton on cane grown, with the condition that not less than 20 acres is put under crop the first year, and sufficient thereafter to keep up the average tonnage of 20 acres of plant cane, say, about 400 tons a year.

Hon. members will see that nine-tenths of the payments for the land come out of the crop—that as the crop is grown the land is paid for. I am sure that nobody could desire more favourable terms than those, and there is plenty of land in the sugar districts obtainable on those terms.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: What land is that?

Mr. SWAYNE: I am not certain what land it is, but I take it to be the Barrie land, which is very good land indeed, and you can get good land there at £4 and £5 an acre, on very easy terms. In the *Courier* of the 28th November the following telegram from Melbourne appeared:—

In the Senate to-day Senator Stewart asked if there was any truth in the statement made by Mr. Swayne in the Queensland Parliament that the estimated shortage of the sugar crop was due to the insufficiency of labour to look after the young crop. The reply was that according to the reports of the Queensland officials there was plenty of labour, and the shortness of the crop was due to frosts.

That is not exactly what I said. I said that it was partly due to shortage of labour, and partly to the Federal regulations. Sir William, the year before, referred to the shortage in the

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acreage that was under cane, and in his estimate allowed for a deficiency in the crop on that account. I think I possess a knowledge of the conditions of the industry equal to that of any man, and I can say that the uncertainty regarding Federal action in this matter has had a detrimental effect on the sugar industry. Over twelve months ago the Federal Minister for Customs and Excise issued new regulations, in which provision was made, among other things, for an eight-hour day on farms. That created quite a consternation among cane-farmers. Anybody who knows anything about farming knows that an eight-hour day is impossible. Representations were made to the hon. gentleman on the subject, and he has now dropped the eight-hour day. But still there is always an uncertainty with regard to what action will be taken by the Federal authorities, and this power of Federal interference has a detrimental effect on the industry, where a man with capital can make a rise and wage-earners get good money—an industry which in that respect is second to none in Australia. I would commend this matter to the consideration of those who wish to enlarge the scope of Federal interference in State affairs. The sugar industry is suffering under an advanced edition of the policy of new protection. At any rate, the acreage returns do not show that it is having a very good effect on the industry, and it will be just as well for electors to bear these things in mind when the Federal elections take place.

Mr. BOWMAN: Do you approve of the protective policy?

Mr. WHITE: Certainly. All sugar men do.

Mr. SWAYNE: Now I should like to say a few words about the bounty. The term "bounty" is a misnomer. The proper word is "rebate." What would wheat-growers think if they were placed in the position that for every bushel of wheat they produced they were required to pay 1s. before they could sell it in any Australian market, but that if they complied with certain conditions imposed by a Minister resident in Melbourne, which might or might not be calculated to injure the industry, they would get back 9s. per bushel? Well, that is exactly the position of the sugar industry. I am only placing the facts clearly before the Committee. Nothing has been said about the excise; but I find that in 1902-3 the excise collected on sugar in Australia amounted to £261,517, while the bounty paid was £60,872, leaving a surplus to revenue of £200,690; in 1903-4 the excise was £272,117, and the bounty £97,045, leaving surplus to revenue of £175,072; in 1904-5 the excise was £503,627, and the bounty £128,178, leaving surplus to revenue of £375,449; in 1905-6 the excise was £536,079, and the bounty £154,709, leaving surplus to revenue of £381,370; in 1906-7 the excise collected was £546,653, and the bounty £353,916, leaving surplus of £210,737. During the first two quarters of this period out of the six States in which excise was collected, Queensland paid more than one-fourth. I am not complaining; but so much has been said about the benefit that I thought both sides of the question should be put before the Committee. (Hear, hear!) All the consumer pays is the protective duty, but the bounty comes out of the excise. As showing I am right, when the excise was increased a short time back the price of cane fell. In these five years the receipts in regard to excise amounted to £2,119,993, while the bounty paid was £776,675; so that the industry paid £1,353,318 more than it received. Those are the figures up to 1906-7. Since then sufficient excise has been collected to bring the total excise up to £3,613,771, whilst in Sir William Lyne's last Budget Speech he estimated the margin of excise over bounty at £127,000. A great deal has been said about

paying for a white Australia, and I see no reason why we should not pay for a white Australia; at the same time, the rise in the price of sugar just after federation was not commensurate with the complaint made. During the five years prior to federation, the price of sugar in New South Wales was £19 15s. a ton; in the five years subsequent to federation the price was £21 2s. 6d.; so that New South Wales only paid £1 17s. 6d. more. She also received during that time from the industry, in the shape of excise, the sum of £912,015. Victoria was very well off; she got sugar cheaper after federation than before. For the five years preceding federation the price was £22 10s. per ton; for the five years succeeding federation the price dropped to £20 15s. She also received a revenue of £464,371 from excise.

Mr. BOWMAN: Do you mean to say that Victoria never contributed towards the bounty?

Mr. SWAYNE: She got her sugar cheaper, at any rate. Queensland did pay more for her sugar, because the price jumped £5 a ton as a result of the new system. Before federation we did not receive any benefit from our £5 a ton protective duty. In Tasmania the position is much the same as in Victoria, and South Australia was very much the same as in New South Wales. It is also to be remembered, in connection with this industry, that 45,000 people are getting a living out of it; and as for the wages paid in the sugar industry, no agricultural industry in the world pays so well. Fully 75 per cent. of the returns go in wages. I wish now to say a word with respect to our efforts to promote settlement on our vacant areas. We have large areas of good land still in the hands of the Crown in the North. In my district there are large areas of fertile land on Tunnel Creek, at the head of the Fitzroy waters; and there are points within sight of the sea where you could ride a day without seeing a soul. There is the Bengalla tableland, consisting of large areas of good scrub land and forest land, well adapted for mixed agriculture and dairying. There is a solid block of 5,000 acres on the eastern fall of the range—Silent Grove—within 2 miles of a railway, still in the hands of the Crown, all good sugar land. And as you go north, I understand, the areas of unalienated land increase in size. The question presents itself: What form of industry is most calculated to promote settlement in that part of the State. For the purpose of obtaining information I wrote to the Instructor of Tropical Agriculture. I asked him, quite apart from the sugar industry—of course we know the sugar industry has done yeoman service, and has

[7.30 p.m.] been a big factor in the settlement of those lands—but we should like to see other industries carried on there. There are great possibilities for dairying all over the country, especially on the tablelands at the back, and on the coastal lands as well. I wished to gather information regarding other industries than these, so I wrote to the gentleman in question. I know he is well qualified to give an opinion, and I asked him if he could give me any information on the point. His reply is as follows:—

Sir.—Your letter of the 31st ultimo, I regret delay in reply due to pressure of work. I now attach a list of some of the products that may be cultivated in our tropical North.

Against these I have estimated the average returns per acre and the average value of the product per acre. These figures are, of course, only approximate, to be exact would involve a very great deal of work, time, and differentiation between species and varieties that is not really required.

Your point, I gather, is to ascertain what area and what amount of settlement within our tropics is possible

at present in the cultivation of products consumed in the Commonwealth. This list will help you in the matter, but to complete your information the statistical returns of Commonwealth imports are requisite. I have not got these, but you can no doubt readily obtain them.

As an example: In the agricultural report just issued, page 7, the Under Secretary quotes some figures of value of imports, presumably into Queensland only.

At any rate, as far as these imports are concerned, he only refers to Queensland. I was interested in the Commonwealth, and I will give the Commonwealth figures instead. He goes on to say—

Taking the figures of the whole Commonwealth probably this one item alone (rice), if properly encouraged, would represent at least ten times this—viz., 20,000 acres or 500 families.

So also if the figures of importation of raw rubber were obtained every 500 lb. weight, or £75 worth, would represent 1 acre that might be under cultivation here. And on the same basis every £300 in value represents one possible settler (with his family).

This £100 basis is of course optional, and I only quote it as a suggestion. It would be wearisome and unnecessary to work out in detail the exact cost of production of each staple, and these would all differ somewhat. For approximate calculation 40 per cent. may be taken as a working average. The £300 at this rate represents £120 for cost of production, and £180 profit or wages of the cultivator, or nearly £3 10s. per week. No doubt this may be looked upon as very low by some farmers, etc., but I, I think, nevertheless reasonable. Average wages for farm labour in the North being about £100 per annum.

The prices I have quoted are per acre, and not per lb. or per ton, and are for the raw product as the grower would sell it unless otherwise mentioned. It may be necessary therefore to obtain the current market prices, and to ascertain whether the import returns relate to prepared or raw products. The difference in prices between the raw and prepared products, which will be found to be great in some instances, while small in others, is accounted for by losses in the processes of curing, preparing, the cost of same and transport, &c., as well as middlemen's and retailers' profits.

The matter of the preparation or manufacture of the products for the retail market is another question. Generally it is sooner or later found better and cheaper to manufacture near the source of production. The advancement of these industries would therefore mean also increase of factories somewhere, not to mention the small army of tradesmen that even a comparatively small hamlet will require and support, especially when closely settled, and in small areas as these products mostly require.

At any rate, he made it clear in the letter that there are good opportunities for co-operative manufacturers somewhat on the lines at present in existence in connection with central sugar-mills. He goes on to say—

The items quoted are limited practically to the markets of the Commonwealth; none can be reckoned upon as possible for export. Many goods are imported at present in a manufactured state (for instance, rubber and cotton goods, rice, ropes, brushes, oils, cocoa, etc.) which cannot now be calculated in above figures, but which, if the raw material were available, would be manufactured within our country, and the demand for or consumption of the raw product be far more, really, than is indicated by the figures of present imports of raw material into the Commonwealth. Indeed, the amount of raw material imported may be taken to represent but a moiety of the actual demand or market for a product.

At any rate, regarding the Commonwealth consumption of these articles, I might mention that from the Year Book lately supplied to us I made the following estimates—they are not estimates, they are facts. We import tropical products in Australia to the value of £2,518,014. These are imported from Ceylon, Hongkong, and other parts of China, India, Straits Settlements, Japan, and Java. They are as follows:—Coffee, £22,658; rice, £205,892; oil, £127,406; raw cotton, £20,882; and in a manufactured form, we import the following:—Spices, £46,690; nuts, £73,420; tapioca, £40,935; tea, £877,279; bags and sacks, £1,102,852; manufactured rubber

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goods and cocoa, £335,780; a gross total of £2,854,794. As far as tea and sacks are concerned, under present conditions these could not very well be produced in the State. In regard to the best means of accomplishing this object, as a help it seems to me we might have some educational establishment, on similar lines to the agricultural college, in connection with tropical agriculture. It was mentioned many years ago, and the time has arrived when some such system should be put into effect. I notice there is an amount of £2,500 on the Estimates for the salary of Dr. Maxwell. I understand, and I am very pleased to hear it, that there is no intention of continuing his services. I did not contemplate for one moment, after the resolution that was carried here concerning that gentleman last year, that his services would be continued. I may say I have followed his career here, and when he came here I was prepared to receive him with an open mind; in fact, I was favourably disposed towards him. I do not for one moment question his scientific knowledge, but, as a practical man, I can only say the results have not justified his appointment. There is no doubt a competent officer is required to take charge of the central sugar-mills; but we would get far better results if the Government followed somewhat on the lines of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, as far as the travelling inspectors are concerned. I do not know what the Colonial Sugar Refining Company pay their inspectors, but I think I am quite safe in saying it is not one-half the amount Dr. Maxwell has received. Then, we also want an inspector of agriculture, and we should also get an officer for that at less than one-half the amount spent on this gentleman. I shall refer more particularly to the work of the Victorian Department of Agriculture when our own Agricultural Estimates come before the Committee; and, I might mention now, I have written to the Under Secretary in Victoria, and I have received a list of the amounts they pay the officials of the department there. The highest man was Professor Wallace, a gentleman of very high standing, and they have such men as Dr. Cherry, Dr. Howell, and so on, and not one of these gentlemen get more than £800 or £1000 a year, which is less than one-third the salary paid to Dr. Maxwell. I would like to draw attention to a few matters connected with the electorate I represent, which I consider is as good as any district in the State. We have been very quiet about railway matters in our district, but I would like to point out that no district is superior to that in the opportunities it affords for the construction of light agricultural lines, which we have heard so much of in this House. The lines which belong to the State in the district are working successfully; they have been very remunerative, and they stand high on the list in the returns they give on the capital invested. Last year, in my district, the railways earned per train mile 6s. 8½d., at a cost of 3s. 10½d. Last year the State lines in that district paid 3.752 per cent., and the year before they returned 4 per cent. That shows that the railways there are doing very well. I might also mention that this satisfactory result is largely owing to the extensions made by the shire council. But 32 miles of additional railway are wanted in that district, including 25 miles to Plane Creek, and 7 miles to the Eungella Range. It is estimated that the Plane Creek line would produce a revenue of £6,000, which would leave a balance of clear profit, after providing for expenses and interest, of the sum of £2,000. Another line which is needed is an extension to the Eungella Plateau.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is being surveyed at the present moment.

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Mr. SWAYNE: I am very pleased to hear the Minister say so. I may say that a private company wanted to run a line with a 2-feet gauge to that range from the present railway terminus. I think, though, it would be a misfortune if this district was only tapped by a private line. If a Government line is built there it will lead to the development of the dairying industry, mixed farming, the encouragement of the timber industry, and so on, which a private line will not serve. I thought it was my duty to bring these few matters before the House. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. LENNON (*Herbert*): I cannot understand what purpose the hon. member who has just preceded me had in referring to the low price of land at Mackay. Really it seems remarkable that land can be got at that low price at Mackay.

Mr. SWAYNE: And good land too, don't forget it.

Mr. LENNON: And he emphasises it by saying that it is good land, too. I am not an advocate for high-priced land; I am as great an advocate for cheap land as any other hon. member. (Hear, hear!) But I am astonished to find that land can be got at Mackay, and "good land too, don't forget it," at the price mentioned by the hon. gentleman. If the land is so cheap at Mackay, why should it be so much dearer at Geraldton? I know one man at Geraldton who is paying rent for his land at the rate of £2 per acre per annum for 150 acres, while land can be bought right out at Mackay for £5 an acre.

Mr. SWAYNE: We are too modest at Mackay in not asking for more.

Mr. LENNON: Another remark which the hon. gentleman made was to the effect that the wages paid to the white workers in the carefields amounted to 75 per cent. of the value of the returns. Well, I am prepared to challenge that statement, and I think that hon. members in this House will see that the hon. gentleman is drawing the long bow when he says that. I think if he had put it at 50 per cent. as the very maximum he would have been nearer the mark. There is not a member in this House who will agree with him that it takes 75 per cent. of the value of the returns to pay the wages of the white workers. Now, the junior member for Mackay was guilty of what I may term a discreet indiscretion the other day when he said he would not support the Trade Disputes Bill, and I suppose that is the reason why the Bill has been dropped. We know that the hon. member must have felt that he was too young a member of this House to attempt to dictate to the Government in that way, and that accounts for the eulogy he passed on the Government to-night. Naturally the hon. gentleman shows a proper sense of gratitude when his wishes are met by the Government so readily in the matter of the Trade Disputes Bill, and he knows that it is up to him—to use a current expression—to thank them for their kindness. I will not deal any longer with the hon. gentleman, but I could not resist the temptation of making these few remarks. I had intended to speak at length on the Financial Statement, but, owing to the exhaustive manner in which it has already been dealt with by the leader of this party, and after the strong and searching criticism of the hon. member for Brisbane South, the ex-Treasurer, it would be unnecessary for me to traverse that ground again. I will content myself with reference to a few items in the Financial Statement, and on those references I propose to hang a peg on which again I will hang some other remarks. On page 2 of the Financial

Statement, dealing with the revenue, it is pointed out that the Commonwealth—that terrible Commonwealth that has been so much spoken about lately—increased its contribution to this State during the year by £60,958, while the railways showed an increase for the year of £117,412, there being a total increase in the whole revenue of £221,440. I want to point out that while we have an increased contribution from the Commonwealth, and an accelerated increase in the revenue from the railways, that there is no necessity for the sombre view taken generally by the Treasurer in this Financial Statement.

Mr. GRANT: Do you call it sombre? The hon. member for Brisbane South does not.

Mr. LENNON: I am not fortified by long telegrams and reports from chambers of commerce, and harbour boards, and things of that sort, to enable me to express my opinions in this Chamber. Whatever opinions I express, they are my own, and not manufactured for me by anyone else.

The TREASURER: The hon. member for Brisbane South said that even this estimate would never turn out right.

Mr. LENNON: While I admire the manner of the ex-Treasurer in making his close analytical estimate, I am not bound to accept every one of his conclusions. With all respect to the Treasurer, I think that, nevertheless, this statement is not as optimistic as it might have been. I think we have reason to hope that we have not reached a pause in our finances. We are still likely to go farther before we reach that pause. To come now to the expenditure: It has, unfortunately, increased in greater ratio than has the revenue. That is the blot on our finances at present. The revenue has only increased moderately, while the expenditure has increased at a much more rapid rate. The expenditure wants taking hold of with both hands and dealing seriously with. One example of that is shown here in a comparatively small department, the Department of Justice, which shows an increase of nearly £3,000.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: The new judge.

Mr. LENNON: How can it be the new judge when it refers to the year ending 1907-8. He was not appointed then. There is an increase of 4 per cent. in the cost of the administration of justice in this State, and when we get the expenses of the new judge added to that it will be still greater, and it will probably show an increase of 5½ per cent. on last year. Whilst it is necessary to have justice fully and carefully administered, the rapid increase of expenditure in such a small department is worthy of the attention of the Treasurer. Now with regard to loans. A great deal has been said about loans, and here we have in the Financial Statement a reference to the fact that before the close of the session some provision will have to be made for replenishing the loan fund. I would like to direct the attention of hon. members to the fact that in a little over six years we have to find £15,000,000 of money to meet our maturing loans.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: It is only a question of bookkeeping.

Mr. LENNON: It is not only a question of bookkeeping. I know very well that we shall have to pay the debt, convert it, or renew it. Any one of these three processes will be very difficult for us at the present time. We certainly cannot do it very easily. But what I am advocating is that we should take steps at the earliest possible moment to arrange for a sinking fund, under which we shall be able to meet our loans when they fall due.

Mr. WHITE: That would not be good business.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: No; bad business.

Mr. LENNON: It is the kind of business I want to see, whether it be good or bad. If it is bad business, why is it that the Government insist, in connection with all loans made by them to local governing bodies, that they shall pay interest and redemption. If the principle is bad, why do the Government insist on it? It is a new thing for me to discover that it is a bad system to meet one's obligations as they fall due. I am glad to say I have not yet learned it, though, perhaps, after a few years of parliamentary life, I may bring myself up to the level of believing it, as the interjecting hon. members do. If we are going to adopt a vigorous policy of railway construction, it cannot be done without money, and I am aware that, if our revenue does not increase—and I do not anticipate that it will increase sufficiently for the purpose—a loan must be raised. But before we start raising more loans, a very much more important duty devolves upon us—that of arranging for meeting existing loans.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is rather early yet, is it not?

Mr. LENNON: Why it is nearly ten years since the so-called Braddon Blot was instituted, and here we are confronted at the end of next year with the termination of the present condition of things; and, when we have to meet £15,000,000 in six and a-half years, our experience in regard to the Braddon blot should teach us the lesson that we ought to take time by the forelock, and establish some system by which those loans can be met on arriving at maturity. If a Loan Bill is passed by this House, let me express the hope that it will not be a big loan of £5,000,000 or £3,000,000. If we have a loan at all, half a million should meet all requirements for a year or two. We have got on very well for the last four years without a loan.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes, but we have been spending loan money.

Mr. LENNON: I am aware of that, and I am aware that we have over £1,000,000 of loan money still available; and there is no need to borrow a whole lot of money for the purpose of holding it here at a low rate of interest, probably—in fact, certainly—at a lower rate of interest than we are paying for it. If we are going to resume the great loan industry, let us proceed very slowly. Let me advocate a policy of "hastening slowly" in this matter, and not being too eager to rush into the market to raise heavy loans. We know very well it becomes a craze with some people to borrow money. We know very well what happened some years ago when the celebrated £10,000,000 loan was authorised. I am sure hon. members are not anxious to see a recurrence of that kind of thing, and I hope it will never again find a place in the proposals of any Government controlling the affairs of this State. If we want a loan at all, let us be content with a small one. Do not let us borrow as much as we can, but let us bear in mind that we should borrow as little as we can. Under the heading of "Trust Funds," I find this statement in the Budget Speech—

Our transactions under trust account last year amounted to £295,195, being £108,391 less than the previous year, owing to reduced transactions on account of central sugar mills.

I therefore want to say something about central sugar-mills. I do not need to remind the Committee that the proposed Daradgee Central Mill has been mentioned many times in this Chamber. However, I am under the painful necessity of referring to it again. It is only a few months ago that a deputation—the twelfth or thirteenth

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deputation on the subject—met the Premier in the room adjoining this Chamber, and, after a long discussion, the hon. gentleman stated that we had asked so long and so hard for this mill that “he had not the heart to refuse us”—I am quoting his exact words—and he promised a loan of £45,000 on that occasion. A few days later we received an official notification by memorandum from the Treasurer that the £45,000 loan money would be advanced to the promoters of this project; but it was shackled with an absurd condition that the £45,000 should be repaid in five years. The words I used to the Premier were that he might as well have said five minutes. However, as I stated recently, I practically dogged the hon. gentleman's footsteps, and I had an interview with him when he was rather shy of being pulled up, being anxious to get away to England at the time; and he promised me to modify the terms, and extend the time to ten years.

Mr. BOWMAN: Shyness is not one of his characteristics.

Mr. LENNON: The gentlemen with whom I was associated were very pleased, and at once replied, accepting those terms. What was our surprise when, a day or two later, we received a letter from the Treasurer, telling us that, on further consideration, and after consulting the Comptroller, a loan could not be granted. A further deputation came down. Of course, that was all right—or, rather, it was not all right; but that was the position. The Treasurer said that on further consideration, and after consulting the Comptroller, no loan could be granted. The deputation wired to the Premier in Melbourne, and he wired back, stating that he would not, or could not, alter the decision of the Cabinet, and that the loan was refused. The hon. gentleman repudiated his promise—absolutely and deliberately repudiated his promise, made in writing, for an advance of £45,000. But why should I be surprised when his action in joining the late Opposition is a repudiation of his whole career? Compared with that, the repudiation of his promise to advance a loan of £45,000 is a very small matter. We pass on, and deputation No. 14 comes down here some five weeks ago; and we have been waiting for nearly four weeks for an answer from the Premier or the Treasurer. After waiting so long, and after repeated applications to the Treasury and repeated personal inquiries to the Premier, we received, on 7th December, this reply—

Gentlemen.—With reference to your letter of the 2nd November last, submitting proposals in connection with the application for the erection of a central sugar-mill at Daradgee, I have the honour, by direction, to inform you that, after full consideration of the matter, it has been decided that no action can be taken by the Government for the erection of a central sugar-mill at that place.

I have, etc.,

W. L. FOWLES,  
Under Secretary.

Messrs. J. R. Waugh, T. Backhaus, and others,  
Geraldton.

There is an unqualified refusal—the first ever received in this connection. Hitherto there has always been a kind of promise that the matter would receive consideration at a future time. It was only postponed for the present; it would not be granted now for this, that,

[8 p.m.] and the other reason; but, after all the trouble and expense they have been put to, there is an answer—an unqualified refusal of the request. To what are we to attribute the change? The change in the hon. gentleman's politics. He is associated now with a party that does not want this Bill.

Mr. THORN: They always supported the sugar industry.

[Mr. Lennon.

Mr. LENNON: It is quite evident that the Colonial Sugar Company do not want a mill, because, in my humble judgment, they have practically jockeyed the central mill people out of their mill. The Philp Government advanced £900, and a wharf and manager's residence have been erected there. He passed a measure through this House for an advance of £50,000. The £900 has been wasted in the erection of a wharf and manager's house, being portion of the money which the present Chief Secretary said was all wasted and “blown.” The hon. senior member for Townsville has always expressed himself in a friendly way to this project. He was within the district at the last election, and so satisfied were the people that the report got about that he was going to promise a mill.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Was he electioneering?

Mr. LENNON: I am just stating the facts.

Hon. R. PHILP: He did not promise the mill.

Mr. LENNON: The people thought the hon. member was promising the mill—he did not promise anything at all, but he told the people there that he was a supporter of their interests, that he was friendly to the mill—in fact, that Codlin was their friend, not Short.

Mr. W. H. BARNES: Have you not been proving by your arguments that such was the case?

Mr. LENNON: I do not want to be always thanking the hon. gentleman. I have frequently credited the hon. member for Townsville with the desire to give us something, but whilst the hon. gentleman has always expressed himself favourably to this project, and has shown evidence of a friendly attitude in the past, now that he has the power of dictation over there, how is it that he refuses to exercise it? The hon. member for Townsville is well known as the dictator of that party; the Chief Secretary is the nominal leader, but it is not King William at all, it is King Robert. (Laughter.) I am very much surprised at the hon. gentleman, because I have always been prepared to take his assurance, and I hope that he will exercise his influence on that side of the House and give the people of the Johnstone River district and Geraldton the mill they deserve. It is a great shame to deprive them of that mill any longer. Now it is absolutely gone, because the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, Limited, have jockeyed them out of their mill.

The TREASURER: And they are prepared to take all the cane that is grown there. The hon. member for Brisbane North says that.

Mr. LENNON: Here we have got the apologist of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company in the person of the present Treasurer. I ask members of this House, or the apologist of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, if he can name any electorate in the State of Queensland that would prefer to have the Colonial Sugar Refining Company controlling the destinies of the sugar-growing of the district, or whether they would rather have a central mill to compete with them?

Hon. E. B. FORREST: Every time.

Mr. LENNON: Notwithstanding the interjection of the somewhat explosive member for Brisbane North—

Hon. E. B. FORREST: You leave him alone. He can take care of himself. (Laughter.)

Mr. LENNON: It goes without saying that any sugar district would prefer to have some competition. I do not believe it should be left to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company alone.

No town would like to have only one butcher, one baker, or one bank. Does it not stand to reason that competition is the soul of business?

The TREASURER: A lot of the land is under agreement now to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company.

Mr. LENNON: That is all very well. It is easy to see that the Treasurer is actually in collusion with the hon. member for Brisbane North. It is only by and by that we shall find the inwardness of the matter. "When rogues fall out, honest men come to their own." I am not using that in a personal sense, but as a mode of expressing my thoughts. At present we cannot gauge the matter, but there is some little hanky-panky work, as the hon. member for Brisbane North says. He poses as an authority on hanky-panky, and no doubt he will be able to understand the full force of my remarks.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: Just the remark I applied to yourself.

Mr. LENNON: That has been the result of all that agitation. The Colonial Sugar Refining Company have come out triumphant. They are monarch of all they survey in that district. Owing to the Premier's scandalous treatment of that deputation, his act of repudiation is condemned by all just laws. No one knows it better than the hon. member for Townsville, and I thought he would have managed even now to acknowledge that they should have the mill. But the present Treasurer comes as the apologist of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company—of course, we can draw our own conclusions.

The TREASURER: The Comptroller advised strongly against it.

Mr. LENNON: Still, under the trust fund, I think the Treasurer is justified in drawing certain deductions from the large increase in the Savings Bank deposits, but not all the deductions. He has had a gratifying increase in the two last comparisons, 1905-6 against 1906-7, and 1906-7 against 1907-8—£400,000 increase for the first term, and £380,000 for the second term. That is a gratifying index of the saving qualities of the people, and the only fault I have to find is that we have only some 100,000 odd depositors. The number ought to be double that figure. It is all very well to say that 100,000 people in Queensland have each £50 in the Savings Bank. It would be much better if the Treasurer was in a position to say that we had 200,000 with £25 or £30 each.

The TREASURER: We hope to be able to say that that is so.

Mr. LENNON: I do not think you will, but I should be very glad if you could say it. In regard to the agricultural and the sugar industry, the Treasurer regrets that his Estimates have not been reached by reason of the many pests, frosts, and what not. In the North, I am sorry to say, there is a new pest in the shape of bush rats, which are doing injury in that district. I am sorry the Premier does not make any reference to railways in the North of Queensland. Except for the Cloncurry line, which involves a large expenditure, I do not know of any large work which has been going on in the North of Queensland for the last ten years. In the Mackay district they have had considerable sums spent in making a road over the Eungella Range, and no doubt we shall hear presently of a further indication of goodwill towards the hon. member for Mackay in the shape of an extension of the Mackay Railway. But it is not remarkable that in my district, which embraces over 100 miles of coastline, you never hear of any expenditure nor of any talk of building a railway

there? As to giving a sugar-mill to that part of the country, that is entirely out of the question. If the junior member for Mackay and I could change our respective places we should not be long in getting a mill, and possibly one or two prospective railways. I asked the Premier the other day if he had 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, and he told me that he had. Later on I asked him if he had given the petition consideration, and he replied that he had not, and he gave the further unsatisfactory information that it was under consideration. The hon. gentleman has been considering the question of a central sugar mill for about four years. Since the time the Morgan Administration came into power a deputation has waited on the Premier once or twice a year with reference to necessary improvements to the harbour. The matter has been reported upon by the Engineer for Harbours and Rivers, and he estimated that £3,500 would make the entrance perfectly safe, but we cannot get the work done. Once inside that harbour you are in the safest harbour in Queensland, and beyond all question the most picturesque harbour. The Progress Association urged the Government to take over from the Mourilyan syndicate their wharves, sheds, and a 2-foot gauge tramline, and to convert the tramline into a 3 feet 6 inch railway, and extend it towards the Range. If we had an instalment of that we should be satisfied, but what sort of chance have we of getting anything from a Premier so pachydermatous as the hon. gentleman is, so long as, to quote the words of Shakespeare, he can show "a fair round belly with good capon lined"? What does he care for the North so long as he can ride about in a motor car? Speaking of motor cars, I have been assured by a Brisbane dealer in motor cars—I suppose an importer or agent for a particular make of motor cars, and a supporter not, perhaps, of the present nominal Premier, but certainly of the Philp party—that those motor cars which cost £2,100 could have been landed in Brisbane for £500 less than that sum. What does the Premier care for the North so long as he can pose as the great man in Queensland who hands out much Government largess with a free hand? He cares nought for the people up there, because he has entered into a compact with the party of boodle, with the capitalistic power, whose representatives are sitting behind him. No man writhed more under the criticism than did the hon. gentleman, but before he left for England he told a Southern Press representative that he had then one newspaper supporting him, and that he would soon have two. There was a time when he had no newspaper in the metropolis supporting him, and he started a paper of his own called *The Freeman*, but now he wants nothing of that sort. He has the power of the Press and of a sugar company at his back. Why not? Does he not do their bidding? And, if he does their bidding, as a good, obedient servant, he expects to be paid.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: Oh, oh! You should not say that.

Mr. LENNON: I do not wish to offend the tender susceptibilities of the hon. member for Brisbane North, and when I say that I do not say they are bribing the Premier—

The TREASURER: You said in so many words—that he wanted to be paid.

Mr. LENNON: I am glad to see that the hon. gentleman is not so pachydermatous as his leader.

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Hon. E. B. FORREST: Come, come; do a fair thing.

The TREASURER: Give a fair deal.

Mr. LENNON: I give as fair a deal as the hon. gentleman does. I have never had a fair deal from the Treasury bench since I have been in the House.

The TREASURER: You have had a fair deal from me. There was no beating about the bush in that matter.

Mr. LENNON: The fair deal I have had from the hon. gentleman is an unqualified refusal. For five or six years the Government have been dargling a promise like a bunch of carrots before my constituents, and then they give them an unqualified refusal. That is the fair deal we have got. The Government practically said, "What do we care about you now that we have the force of the capitalists behind us?" The Treasurer gave me a candid reply, but I say it was a distinct and unqualified refusal which was not justified by the circumstances, and which is not fair. Now I pass on to another matter under the heading of "Railways." The Cardwell Shire is about 80 miles further south than the Johnstone River. It is only a small shire as far as income is concerned, but it has a large territory. It has some good land, but it has also a large quantity of poor land; and it has an abundance of very good timber. The people of that district applied to the Railway Department for the survey of a railway from a place called Oyster Point to the Tully River. The reply they got was that the department had no surveyor to spare for that work. Then they went to the Home Secretary, and asked if they could get anything or anyone from the Government to enable them to have a survey made, and to get a report and an estimate of the cost of building the railway. But the reply was, No, they had no money for that purpose. After a lot of correspondence, they wrote to the Home Secretary's Department for advice, and the department recommended that they should incur no expense in employing a surveyor of their own, which would cost about £300 or so, but to apply to the Treasurer for a loan to enable them to build a tramline under the Local Works Loans Act. After waiting a considerable time poor little Cardwell got this reply—

The Clerk, Cardwell Shire Council, Cardwell.

The Treasury,  
Brisbane, 7th December, 1908.

Sir.—With reference to your letter of the 12th ultimo inquiring if a loan would be granted for the construction of a tramway from Oyster Point to the Tully River, I have the honour, by direction, to inform you that the Government are not prepared to grant a loan for the purpose named.—I have, etc.,

W. L. FOWLES,  
Under Secretary.

Another very curt and absolutely unqualified refusal. The Shire of Cardwell owes the Government no money, and, as far as my knowledge goes, never owed them any money, and never had a loan from them, and this is the way they treat a district like that. They have not had any Government money spent there for the last ten years, except such necessary expenditure as that required for a school building or something of that kind. Compare that treatment with the treatment they mete out to the Dalby district, where they can get anything they like—railways, bores, and what not.

Hon. R. PHILP: They have two tramlines in that district.

Mr. LENNON: The hon. member has been carrying on a conversation with the member next to him, and cannot possibly have followed me,

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because I was referring just now to Cardwell. I have left Johnstone River, and I am now in Cardwell.

Hon. R. PHILP: I thought you were talking about the Johnstone River.

Mr. LENNON: I was talking of a proposed railway from Oyster Point to the Tully River in the Cardwell district. Here is a shire that always keeps its obligations and is wanting a loan and cannot get it, possibly because they do not support the present Government. If that is the reason, it is a reason that has come to stay. I can say that the people of Cardwell are very much disappointed. Other districts can get loans without trouble, while they are refused. The hon. member for Bowen got a loan for the Proserpine, and it is fortunate that he got it when he did, because he is one of the members that are said not to be supporting the Government so heartily now as a short time back. I now approach a matter which I feel to be of very great importance—that is, dealing with the references to Commonwealth affairs in the Financial Statement. On page 8 of the Statement, we are told that under the Surplus Revenue Act the Federal Government have power to appropriate the whole of the unexpended balance of the one-fourth part of the Customs and Excise revenue. I say it is owing to the great economy exercised by the Federal Government that there is any surplus revenue at all. If they had spent the money, as they might have done, in repairing telegraph lines and building new post offices and repairing others, and carrying out other services, there would have been no necessity for the Surplus Revenue Act, because there would have been no surplus revenue. It reminds me of the boy who was eating a rosy apple, and was asked by another boy for a bite. It was refused. "Then give me the core," said the other boy. "There ain't going to be no core," was the answer. If the Commonwealth Government had chosen they could have spent all the money, and then there would have been no core. And I would ask whether it is right that they should be twitted for spending what was their own. As to the fear of what the Federal Government will do, I think what they have done in the past is a pretty good indication of what we may expect; and, as they have treated us well in the past, I think we may expect them to treat us fairly well in the future. I make allowance for the Premier, who is soon to attend a conference on this question; but while I commend him for trying to make the best bargain he can for the State of Queensland, I do not commend him for the bellicose attitude he adopts. He is going to fight the Federal senators; and I think he will get quite enough fight before he has done. This is such an important matter, and so surrounded and permeated with difficulties, that I approach any discussion on the question with the greatest diffidence. I say that the Chief Secretary, realising the gravity of the matter, which is one that is really only capable of being treated by a body of experts, should approach it with an open mind. Fortunately, the Federal Labour party is in power, and when he goes South he won't be so cocky. We know that "every cock crow's best on his own dunghill"; but when the hon. gentleman gets to Melbourne he will crow in quite a minor key, and not in the major key we are accustomed to hear. I want now to speak about immigration, which is in the air as well as in the Financial Statement. From the date of separation until the end of the financial year 1907-8, we have spent in immigration from revenue, £573,000; from loan, £2,767,000; and from trust funds, £452,000; making a total of £3,793,569, less contributions

by immigrants amounting to £445,000, or a grand net total of £3,347,637 19s. 8d. Roughly speaking, that is one-thirteenth, or about 8 per cent., of our entire debt spent on immigration.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: That money was spent over twenty years ago.

Mr. LENNON: We were spending it in sums of £166,000 in 1884-5, £193,000 in 1885-6; last year we spent £36,550; and this year it is proposed to spend £50,000 on bringing people here, and £3,000 for necessary expenses on their arrival. That brings me up to the fact that, in spending money on immigration, we should have a care as to the kind of immigrants that are brought here. We know very well that some of the so-called domestic servants that have been brought here quite recently are not quite so domesticated as they ought to be. We know of one unhappy occurrence that took place over the way—to which I will not refer. We also know that there has been some trouble in connection with Antonio Torio.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: Ah!

Mr. LENNON: I will give the hon. member for North Brisbane, Hon. E. B. Forrest, time to recover from that shock. Coming to the subject of advertising the State, we have [8.30 p.m.] already had a sample of the kind of advertising that is going on. We have spent £3,500 during the last four years, and I say that money spent on advertisements like those we have seen recently in some of the issues of the *London Daily Mail* is absolutely wasted. And it is worse than that, because it is directly misleading people. Why, the advertisement in the *Daily Mail* to which I refer, and which I understand cost £250 for one issue—I say it tells deliberate lies. All the tales of Alice in Wonderland and the Arabian Nights and such things are much more moderate than the advertisement in the *Daily Mail*. They make it to appear that we have thousands of acres of virgin soil waiting for the plough, waiting for John Hodge of Plymouth or some other place to come here and make it their own. In no part of Australia is there good land which is unalienated near a railway or within access of a railway or good road where a man could go and take it up immediately.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: Yes, there is. What about the Capella and Emerald lands? As good as any in Australia.

Mr. LENNON: The land in the neighbourhood of Capella is some of the best land I have ever set eyes upon, but the best of that land is freehold, and if it is not freehold it is taken up under leasehold.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: Leasehold is not freehold.

Mr. COYNE: Some of it is locked up for years.

Mr. LENNON: What about Mount Fox? The Government sent out men to survey the land before it can be opened for selection; but by reason of the miserable pay they give surveyors they compel a capable young surveyor to leave our shores and seek profitable work elsewhere. If it is leasehold, and the property of the Government, still people cannot go and take it up. They cannot say, "Come along Jones, Brown, or Smith, this land is for you." They have to give notice of resumption.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: It is precisely the same the world over.

Mr. LENNON: I am speaking about the advertisement. They say there are thousands of acres ready for the plough.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: So there are.

Mr. LENNON: There is no good land open for selection either here or in New South Wales within a reasonable distance of a railway, or

within access of a road, that a man can come from England and go to work upon straight away.

Mr. ARMSTRONG: Of course not.

Mr. LENNON: Then why advertise it, if it is not true? The hon. member recognises I am right. Why throw dust in the eyes of the people in England? It is absurd. Then they speak about the wonderful mining industry—the number of minerals—our tin, copper, wolfram, and all the other things too numerous to read. They speak about the wonderful riches of Mount Morgan; the total yield of gold from Charters Towers and Gympie. They say the Government are offering a reward of £500 or £1,000 to discover new fields, and you can get a miner's right for 5s. They wish to make these people believe that all they have to do is to come here and pay 5s. for a miner's right, and then go to work and get this reward of £500, or find a Mount Morgan. They are trying to make these poor deluded people believe that they can come out here and do these things. Why make ourselves ridiculous in the eyes of the world? Let us act like sensible people. Let us tell the bare, plain facts of the country. They can bear investigation. We have a splendid country—an enormous territory with rich soils, splendid climate, and every mineral under the sun. Tell the plain facts, and let them speak for themselves, but do not let us make ourselves ridiculous, as we are doing at the rate of £250 a day in the *Daily Mail*. I leave that subject for the present, and continue my remarks about immigration. We ought to be very particular in regard to the immigrants we bring here. I have no doubt of that. I depicted how these advertisements may delude the people about the country here, but I say the treatment meted out to Antonio Torio would do more harm if it was put in the *Daily Mail* than all the advertisements put in the *Daily Mail* for twelve months. Let me, first of all, say, before I approach this matter, I have already spoken briefly, and my remarks have not received the cordiality I expected. I first of all desire to express my thanks to the senior member for North Brisbane for his courtesy in offering me a sight of the papers in connection with this case. I think it is due to the hon. member for me to make this statement, and I thank him for his kindness and courtesy in offering to allow me to peruse those papers. But I, as a representative of a constituency, consider that I have privileges of my own, and I should not be under any obligation in a matter connected with the business of the country to the hon. member. I should be able to go to a Government department and see those papers myself. I went to the Chief Secretary's Office a couple of days ago, and I saw the Under Secretary and asked permission to peruse the papers relating to Antonio Torio, and the Under Secretary said he could not give me permission. I asked for the papers to be tabled in the House. I did that first, but the Premier refused to table them, with a shrug of his shoulders, and said it was only a Federal matter, and of no importance whatever. That is his idea. I followed the matter up, and saw the Under Secretary and asked him, as I think I have a right to ask as a representative of the people of that district. The people take a very great interest in this man's case. This man has been a burden on the public charity of the Ingham people for the last twelve months, and they asked me to investigate it, and I am only doing my duty in investigating it. The Under Secretary told me he could not let me see the papers without the permission of the Chief Secretary. I did not think I would be justified, after his refusal to table the papers, in asking the Hon. the Chief Secretary to let me see the papers. Consequently I have not

*Mr. Lennon.]*

seen the papers. I am therefore not aware of the arrangement substituted by the Colonial Sugar Refining Company for the Compensation Act. No doubt they may have many provisions in their substituted agreement that are of benefit to the participators, but the fact remains that they practically contract themselves out of any liability under the Act. This thing should not be tolerated by any democratic country. The Government have promised to bring in amendments to this Act, like many others, and they drop them at the dictation of the junior member for Mackay, or possibly the senior member for Townsville. Having tried all I could to see those papers, and having failed—having asked in a straightforward manner for the papers to be produced in this House, and refused—I am thrown back on the necessity of reading the affidavit of Antonio Torio himself. Let me say this: This is a copy of the affidavit containing the man's sworn statement in connection with his injuries. I am not responsible for the statement. I do not know from my own knowledge whether they are understated, or whether they are overstated. I do not know anything further of the facts than what is stated in this paper in my hands. I have seen the man now in the dépôt, and he appears to be unable to work. He came out here from Trieste, Austria, at the age of nineteen years, a little over a year ago, and he is therefore, only twenty years of age. He assures me his people in Austria are poor people, and we cannot send him home to Austria, a cripple, to be a burden on their hands. The Colonial Sugar Refining Company has offered him a free passage back to Trieste, in Austria. But what is the good of him going back to his parents a burden on their hands for the rest of his life; and he very properly, according to my view, refused their offer. I think a duty devolves upon the Government to do something in this matter, and to see if they cannot bring to book some person, and make them pay proper and adequate compensation for the injury.

Hon. E. B. FORREST: We will hear all about it directly. I have all the papers with reference to it.

Mr. LENNON: I had hoped that after the very kindly references I made to the hon. member, he would have endeavoured to curb that turbulent spirit, and listened in peace and quietness to me. I hope he will listen to this story of Antonio Torio, and with the permission of hon. members I will read the affidavit of that young man. It is as follows:—

Ingham, 9th May, 1908.

I, Antonio Torio, make oath and state: I am nineteen years of age. I am a native of Cruseiza, in Austria; my father and mother reside there; on 4th June, 1907, I signed an agreement at Trieste, Austria, to come to Queensland to work for the Colonial Sugar Refining Company; the company paid my fare; I was examined by a medical officer, and received a certificate stating that I was of sound bodily health before leaving Austria; the certificate is now in my box at Macknade Sugar Plantation, Herbert River, North Queensland. I arrived at Macknade about the 11th day of August, 1907; I worked one week at Macknade Plantation; by instructions from an interpreter, who was working for the Colonial Sugar Refining Company at Macknade Sugar Plantation, I proceeded to the farm of Mr. —, near Macknade; I at once went to work for Mr. — at cane cutting and loading cane on trucks, and worked for about five weeks. When I was loading a truck the ladder I was climbing slipped, and I fell down on the ground and on the tram rail. The fall caused an injury to my left shoulder. I was unable to work, and went to Mr. —, and told him what had happened to me. He gave me a lotion to rub on my shoulder. I was unable to go back and work amongst the cane, but did some light work (chipping) about the house for three weeks. At the end of the three weeks my shoulder got so stiff that I could do no work at all, and remained four days at Mr. — without working, for which Mr. — charged me 6s.

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for board. At the end of the four days Mr. — gave me a letter and sent me to Macknade mill. During the three weeks and four days that I was at Mr. — he did not get me any medical attendance.

I draw your attention to that, Mr. Maughan—three weeks and four days without medical attendance.

When I reached Macknade I gave Mr. Waring the letter that Mr. — gave to me. I gave Mr. Waring to understand that my shoulder was sore, and that I could not work. Mr. Waring told me, through an interpreter, to go to work, go away, or go to gaol. I asked Mr. Waring, through the interpreter, to send me to the hospital. Mr. Waring, through the interpreter, said the company would not pay for hospital attendance for me. I remained at Macknade for two weeks, living with other men in the barracks. I did no work during that time. Then a doctor examined me. That was five weeks and four days after I met with the accident. I did not understand what the doctor said to me. A week after the doctor examined me a countryman of mine, who has now left Queensland and gone to America, came and spoke to me and Mr. Waring, through my countryman, who acted as interpreter. Mr. Waring said I was to go to the hospital, and if I got right to come back and work, and the hospital fees would be stopped out of my wages. I went to the Ingham Hospital, and remained there three weeks. The doctor visited me, and attended to me daily. He attended to my shoulder that was hurt at —. After I left the hospital I went back to Macknade; the doctor told me to go to Macknade. I went there direct from the hospital. When I went back to Macknade from the hospital Mr. Waring told me go away. I did not do so. I stayed at Macknade until about three weeks ago, when the storekeeper told me there was no more food for me, and to go back to where I got hurt.

You will see, Mr. Maughan, he was a kind of battledore and shuttlecock between these two men—

During all this time I was unable to work. I still remained at Macknade, living on the charity of my countrymen and others. At Halifax a Greek gave me 3s., and a countryman gave me 1s. and told me to come to Ingham. I came to Ingham on the tram, and arrived at Ingham on the 7th day of May. When I arrived in Ingham I was destitute. I told two men my condition when I got to Ingham, and they collected some money for me, and I am now staying at an hotel. I am still unable to work, owing to the accident, my arm being quite useless. When the money that has been collected for me is spent I do not know how I will get a living, as I am unable to work. I never at any time broke the agreement I made to work for the Colonial Sugar Refining Company.

ANTONIO TORIO.

(his X mark).

Taken and sworn before me at Ingham, in the State of Queensland, this ninth day of May, 1908.

MATTHEW NOLAN, J.P.

Ingham, 9th May, 1908.

Louis Sertori, duly sworn, states:—I understand the Italian language, which Antonio Torio speaks; I have interpreted the attached statement truthfully and correctly.

L. SERTORI.

Taken and sworn before me at Ingham, in the State of Queensland, this ninth day of May, 1908.

MATTHEW NOLAN, J.P.

Now, Sir, there is the simple narrative of the accident that has befallen this man. I never had anything to do with the preparation of that document any more than you had. It has reached me because of the way he has been treated. As my attempts to get the papers laid on the table of the House failed, and as I was refused access to all papers in connection with the matter at the Treasurer's office, I have taken the only course open to me, and that is by reading that affidavit on the floor of this House. It is a duty which I owed to my constituents—because this man has been living on public charity there for the past twelve months—to get to the bottom of this matter.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LENNON: The hon. member for North Brisbane says he is going to make me sit up.

HON. E. B. FORREST: Oh no, I am not.

Mr. LENNON: Well, I do not care a snap of the fingers for the hon. member for North Brisbane—

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LENNON: I have not been guilty of anything that I need be ashamed of in connection with this matter. It is a duty I owe to my constituents that caused me to take it up. I have had numbers of telegrams and letters from them in connection with it. Only yesterday I received a telegram asking me if the papers had been tabled. You know, Sir, what it is to try to get papers tabled in this House. The mere fact that I was refused the request I made to have the papers tabled shows that there is something crooked about it. If everything was fair and square, and aboveboard, why would they refuse to table those papers? There is something about it that they do not want to see the light. I cannot speak about the other papers which I have not seen. I have only done my duty to my constituents, and I thank this Committee sincerely for the patient hearing they have given me.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. E. B. FORREST (*Brisbane North*): It is surprising how interested the hon. member for Herbert is in the Colonial Sugar Refining Company since there has been a change of parties here. And he has made a charge against the Treasurer that that hon. gentleman has done everything he possibly can to assist the Colonial Sugar Refining Company.

Mr. LENNON: He has the boodle vote now.

HON. E. B. FORREST: I do not know that he has. I say deliberately, just as deliberately as my friend spoke just now, that it is news to me to hear that the Treasurer has been assisting the Colonial Sugar Refining Company in any way.

THE TREASURER: I do not know them at all.

HON. E. B. FORREST: The hon. gentleman does not know them, and, so far as I know, he has no connection with them at all. I have not approached him at all in connection with any Colonial Sugar Refinery business, and really it is not fair to saddle the Treasurer with these innuendoes because it is only done with a desire to damage him.

Mr. BOWMAN: Through being associated with them. (Opposition laughter.)

HON. E. B. FORREST: I have heard for the first time to-night of the letter which the hon. member for Herbert has received from the Treasurer. I knew nothing whatever about it before.

Mr. LENNON: Have I not admitted that it was a perfectly candid reply?

HON. E. B. FORREST: You have. The Colonial Sugar Refining Company are not trusting to the Treasurer or to the Ministry for anything they want.

Mr. LENNON: They jockeyed us out of our mill.

HON. E. B. FORREST: I will come to that presently. Let us deal with one thing at a time. If the Treasurer had been desirous of working with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company in any way he would have mentioned that letter to me. He would have told me that a reply had been sent to the hon. member.

THE TREASURER: I never spoke to you about it after you spoke about the matter in the House the other night.

HON. E. B. FORREST: Then the hon. member for Herbert has had the letter for three days, and this is the first time that I have heard of it.

Mr. LENNON: I have been waiting for three days to speak.

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HON. E. B. FORREST: I am trying to explain that the Colonial Sugar Refining Company have never had any communication with this present Government, and as regards this central mill question, it is now the 10th of December and I have heard for the first time to-night the letter addressed to the hon. member for Herbert dated the 7th of December.

THE TREASURER: I had no reason to communicate with you. I do not know the Colonial Sugar Refining Company in the matter at all.

HON. E. B. FORREST: Not at all. There is one matter to which I must refer, and of which I think this Committee should take some notice, and that is the reference made by the hon. member to the Premier. The hon. member said that the Premier has been paid for his services to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. That is not a statement I should have expected from the hon. member.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LENNON: What about his repudiation?

HON. E. B. FORREST: You threw out a slur upon the Premier. I want to say that I am ashamed of you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order! I am sorry to stop the hon. member, but I would ask him to address the Chair. (Laughter.)

HON. E. B. FORREST: Certainly. I promise not to transgress any more in that direction if I can avoid it. The hon. member for Herbert attacked the Premier in what I consider an unmanly way.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LENNON: He is a repudiator.

HON. E. B. FORREST: That is not the point I am discussing. The hon. member has a perfect right to make a charge of that sort; but when he states deliberately that the Premier has been paid for what he has done for the Colonial Sugar Refining Company—a company that he knows nothing about beyond its name—I venture to say that there is not a soul connected with the company, except myself, of whom the Premier has personal knowledge—

Mr. HARDACRE: He may be getting paid by political support.

HON. E. B. FORREST: Is anybody prepared to tell this Chamber—I am sure the leader of the Opposition is not—that the Premier has been paid for his services to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company?

Mr. LENNON: Political services.

HON. E. B. FORREST: Political services! Payment for political services. It is "tip!" It is "tip!" I say it is a cowardly charge to make against a man.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. E. B. FORREST: I am more particular about referring to this, because there is another gentleman not now connected with this Committee, but who at one time occupied the very dignified position of Speaker of this House—I refer to Sir Alfred Cowley—against whom practically the same charge has been made in the past. From time to time I have heard similar statements made with regard to Sir Alfred Cowley. We have been told that he is connected with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company—that he is a large shareholder in the company, that he was paid by them for services rendered, and all that sort of thing. Now, I am glad that the subject has cropped up in connection with the Premier, because it gives me the opportunity of giving an absolute and flat denial to any statement of the sort.

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Mr. LENNON: Did not the senior member for Townsville state on a public platform that the gentleman you are speaking of treated him worse than a dog?

HON. E. B. FORREST: Is that dealing with the matter to which I am now referring? Such statements regarding Sir Alfred Cowley are absolutely false, and they always were. As a matter of fact, Sir Alfred Cowley never had a copper in the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. He never had a share in the company—I think enough of him to wish that he had. He never got a red cent from the company for any services rendered to them. He was member for the district of Herbert, and he came into contact with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company and the people in the district. My friend who has ousted him has espoused the cause of the people of the district with great warmth against the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. I am not complaining about anything the hon. member said about Sir Alfred Cowley, but I draw attention to it.

Mr. LENNON: I never mentioned his name.

HON. E. B. FORREST: Well, I mentioned his name in connection with the charge which the hon. member has made against the Premier. I would remind him that a statement of that sort catches on; and, if allowed to go uncontradicted, goes throughout the length and breadth of the land; and in two or three years a great many people will state as a fact that the Premier was publicly charged in this House with having accepted a bribe from the Colonial Sugar Refining Company for work done for them.

Mr. LENNON: You are doing him a good turn.

HON. E. B. FORREST: I am glad to have the opportunity of doing the hon. gentleman a good turn. If the hon. member were in my place—notwithstanding the fact that he would not altogether follow on my lines—I am inclined to think that even he would do that good turn as readily as I am now doing it. We have had so much about the Colonial Sugar Refining Company since the hon. member came into this Chamber that one might think the hon. member's mission here was to tell us all about the company, and that we had never heard of it before. One would think that the hon. member had fopped down into this Chamber from Daradgee or somewhere else in order to enlighten hon. members about the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. But he is overlooking the fact that there are a few people here who do know something about the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. Take the leader of the Opposition, sitting in front of the hon. member for Herbert! Ask that hon. member what he knows about the Colonial Sugar Refining Company! Ask him what he thinks of the refinery at New Farm! (Government hear hears, and laughter.)

Mr. BOWMAN: One of the biggest monopolies in Australia—that is what I think.

HON. E. B. FORREST: Quite so—one of the biggest supporters that the hon. member has got.

Mr. LENNON: It is a menace to Australia.

HON. E. B. FORREST: Ask the hon. member for Fertitude Valley whether the men employed at the refinery at New Farm look as if they were sat upon, as if they were being killed by this Colonial Sugar Refining crowd. (Loud laughter and interjections.)

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must ask hon. members to refrain from these constant interjections. The hon. member for Brisbane

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North does not speak very frequently, and I think he is entitled to be heard without interjection. (Laughter.)

Mr. LENNON: We all hear him. (Laughter.)

HON. E. B. FORREST: I shall not be sorry if you stop the interjections, Mr. Maughan, so that I may have time to think about what I am going to say. The hon. member for Herbert is quite under a misapprehension if he thinks he was sent here to tell us that the Colonial Sugar Refining Company consists of a lot of ruffians who should not be allowed to exist any longer. Some of the hon. member's friends know well what the Colonial Sugar Refining Company is doing. Notwithstanding all that has been said about this central mill project, some of the hon. member's friends, according to information I got to-day, are crushing with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, and are glad to do it.

Mr. HAMILTON: There is nobody else to crush with.

HON. E. B. FORREST: Never mind! Some of the men we have been talking about have been crushing with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company for years. They have made a pot of money out of the company. Their land is their own freehold now, owing to the assistance they have got from the company, showing that they are not such a ruffianly lot as some people would have us imagine. Let hon. members look at the people down at the New Farm refinery if they want to know what the company is. There are 130 or 140 men at work there, and every time I see them they look to me as if they were as happy as they could be. The greater number of them have been there ever since the refinery was opened, and, judging by their appearance, they are likely to stop there. I am quite willing to leave my case to the leader of the Opposition, and, if he tells me that the company is a bad lot then I am done with him. (Laughter.) The hon. member for Herbert incidentally referred to the Johnstone River lands. I thought we had disposed of that matter the other night, and I am not going to reopen it. The other night I informed the House as to the exact facts connected with those lands. I quoted a copy of the proposal signed by me, and I quoted the acceptance of that offer. We need not go beyond that; and there is no doubt it was a fair, straightforward, *bona fide* agreement. As the House is already in possession of the facts, I do not desire to say any more about it. I am now coming to Señor Antonio. (Laughter.) We have been informed that the Government know all about Antonio.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Have you seen the man?

HON. E. B. FORREST: No; I have not seen him. We have been informed by the hon.

member for Herbert that the Government know all about it; that they have got some papers in their possession. The hon. member for Herbert has not been able to get these papers. I have offered to show him a copy of these papers, as he has already informed the House. He declined to accept them from me. I have a suspicion of my friend's reason for not having a look at the papers. He told me that he was going to make a speech in the House on the financial question, and I think he was rather afraid that they would spoil his case.

Mr. LENNON: Nothing of the sort.

HON. E. B. FORREST: Now for the Antonio business. We have heard what the Government know, and I think it is time that the House should get at what the Government knows. I have got the correspondence here,

a copy of which is in the possession of the Government, and I will read it to the House, so that everybody will know all about it.

Here is a copy of the letter, dated 5th October, 1908, from the manager of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, Brisbane, to the Under Secretary, Chief Secretary's Office, Brisbane. He says—

The case of Florian Antonio, about which you received a communication from the Chief Secretary's Office, had previously been brought under our notice by the Austrian Consul in Sydney, and the facts of the case will be found in the enclosed copy of a report received from Macknade.

That is one of the company's plantations.

However, as a result of the representations made to us by the Vice-Consul we agreed to defray the cost of the immigrant's passage back to Trieste, and Mr. Waring (the manager of Macknade Mill) was authorised early in July to provide him with a steerage passage in time to reach Sydney for leaving by the N.D.L. steamer on the 8th August, but until receipt of the correspondence you forwarded, nothing further has been heard of the matter.

Mr. LENNON: How generous to return a crippled youth to his father and mother.

HON. E. B. FORREST: It appears to me that the party to which you belong wish to keep him here for show purposes. I do not know that there is any necessity for Antonio being kept here to be looked at.

Mr. LENNON: Antonio won't go.

HON. E. B. FORREST: That is his business. If he is fool enough to stop here, we cannot help it. This is not all.

A copy of the report sent by our Macknade manager, dated 16th January last, is enclosed herewith.

Here is a copy of that report. Antonio was allotted to a sugar-grower named Lacaze, in the Herbert district. I do not personally know him, but the hon. member for Herbert does—

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Florian Antonio was one of those allotted to Lacaze. At first they were only put weeding, but afterwards they went on cutting and loading cane, when the rest of the men in the gang went and complained of this man not being able to cut and load cane properly.

This is the first complaint we hear of about Antonio.

Lacaze took him out of the gang and put him on weeding again. This the man refused to do, wanting to stop in the cutting gang. However, when he saw this was not to be, he came back to the mill when I offered him work, but he then stated he could not use his arm, so I paid Dr. Macdonald to examine him, when he gave me a certificate to the effect the man was suffering from muscular paralysis. I there and then offered to break his agreement and send him home, but this he refused to do, so I insisted on him going to Ingham Hospital, we paying his hospital expenses in the meantime, which he promised to refund later, but has not done so as he has not worked since.

He remained in the hospital about a fortnight and then returned, apparently in the same condition as he went up, still refusing my offer to send him home.

He then for the first time told me he hurt his arm falling off a cane truck at Lacaze's; I went to Lacaze immediately and made inquiries as to the truth of this statement. Lacaze, however, indignantly denied it, and said he never met with an accident of any kind on his place, and that he has men still there that can prove when he came out to him he had not then the proper use of his arm.

I might state here I made it my business to be present when the doctor examined him with the aid of an interpreter (Antonio Serola), and he never then made any allusion to an accident, simply stating he lost the use of his arm since arriving in Queensland. Be that as it may, the man has certainly no use in his left arm now; but my firm belief is, it is an old-standing complaint, and one not easily detected without a careful examination, as the man looks otherwise healthy enough.

Lately I have not seen the man, and I was under the impression he had cleared out with two of his countrymen that recently ran away from our service.

That is the story as far as we know it.

Mr. LENNON: Are these all the papers you have?

HON. E. B. FORREST: That is all. I understand that since this correspondence was received, Antonio has arrived in Brisbane, and is here now. The last I heard of him was that he was handed over to the doctors here for examination, with what result I do not know. We have heard no more about him—we want to know some more about him.

Mr. LENNON: I want to hear about him.

HON. E. B. FORREST: So do I. So we agree about Antonio. This is, in a sense, public property, although I do not think that the House can take any particular interest in it.

Mr. LENNON: It is a good advertisement to get out more Austrians.

HON. E. B. FORREST: Let me say that some very excellent Austrians have come out to Queensland.

Mr. LENNON: I think so, too.

HON. E. B. FORREST: I do not believe this man is one of them. I have never seen him, but I have reason to believe that he never did a day's work in his life, and I think if he is again examined, that that will be shown beyond all doubt.

Mr. LENNON: You think him an imposter?

HON. E. B. FORREST: I am not going to use those words. You like this strong language. You use them to the Treasurer and the Premier, but I would not like to see a word like that used even to Antonio.

Mr. LENNON: You are as mild as mother's milk.

HON. E. B. FORREST: Yes, sometimes. There is one other matter I would like to mention. The hon. member said that he had had nothing to do with the preparation of that affidavit. Is he prepared to say that nobody else had anything to do with it?

Mr. LENNON: The justice of the peace had necessarily something to do with it, because he signed it.

HON. E. B. FORREST: Quite so, and so had somebody else.

Mr. LENNON: It might be your friend.

HON. E. B. FORREST: It is not my friend. It is more likely to be the hon. member for Herbert's friend, but we are not going to discuss that now.

Mr. LENNON: It is beside the matter, anyhow.

HON. E. B. FORREST: I refer to the matter because the hon. member for Herbert did so.

Mr. LENNON: The man cannot speak our language, and somebody must write it for him.

HON. E. B. FORREST: The hon. member wants to drag me into a further discussion of the case of Antonio. We had this matter before the House eight or ten days ago, and the company were then charged with having a man in their employ seeking the benefit of the Compensation Act who could not speak English. I then said I knew nothing about it, but that if he could not speak English the man should be given work, and should have the benefit of the Act if injured when in their employ.

Mr. LENNON: He was brought out by your company.

HON. E. B. FORREST: He was never in the company's service. He was brought out as other Austrians were brought out—at the request of certain farmers in those particular districts. Some went to the hon. member's district, and some to the Ingham district. This man went to Macknade, and was never in the employ of the company. He was never

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injured, and it will take him all his time to prove that he ever was.

MR. HAMILTON: Then why did your company agree to pay his passage back to Austria?

HON. E. B. FORREST: Simply because the Austrian Consul wrote to the company, and asked them if they would pay his passage back, and they said they would. They sent instructions to their manager at Macknade, Mr. Waring, to give him his passage down to Sydney, and they were prepared, through the Austrian Consul in Melbourne, to pay his passage back to his own country. And I think that if those persons who are interested in this case studied their own interest, his interest, and the interest of this State, they would induce him to go back. He is no good to the country, and he is no good to himself.

MR. LENNON: He is no good to your company. He is like a worn-out horse.

HON. E. B. FORREST: I admit straight away that a man who cannot work is no good to the company. I do not think the House would expect the company to employ a man who cannot work and will not work. I have now done with that matter, and wish to say a few words on another subject, which, though not directly connected with the Treasurer's Financial Statement, is indirectly connected with it, and that is the Auditor-General's report on the Brisbane Harbour Act. The Auditor-General has given us information in his last annual report that we never possessed before. I do not intend to read what he has written, but I will summarise it for the information of the House. The remarks of the Auditor-General will be found in his report for the year 1907-8, page 36, and those remarks I summarise thus: The report shows that after debiting—for the hire of the dredging plant, etc.—£45,000. We had no knowledge that we had to pay for the dredge plant. It has always been understood that the dredge plant was presented to the port free of cost, but now we find for the first time, although the arrangement has been in existence for five or six years, that the hire of the dredge plant has been debited to the harbour trust account, notwithstanding the fact that four other harbour boards got their dredging plant presented to them free of cost.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Not Mackay.

HON. E. B. FORREST: I know nothing about Mackay, but I know that other harbours have had their dredging plant presented to them. The report shows that after debiting—

For the hire of the dredging plant, etc. ... £45,700  
—covering the period of ten years, prior to 1903—

As well as the balance for working expenses, at the debit of the account at £  
that date ... .. 74,985

A total debit was put up on 30th June, 1903, of ... .. 120,775

Starting then with the £120,775, debits have since been made—for the following five years, 1903-8—

For working expenses ... ..	200,943
Rent of plant ... ..	20,300
Interest on the debit balance ... ..	29,319
Redemption ... ..	8,500
	<hr/>
	259,122

Less receipts for the same period, five years 1903-8 ... .. 176,051

83,071

[Hon. E. B. Forrest.]

Which, added to the balance, 1903, 30th June, of £120,775, raises the balance on 30th June, 1908, to £203,849. Practically, during the five years 1903-8, permanent improvements costing £221,243 have been carried out by adding £83,071 only to the debit balance, 30th June, 1903, and during the same five years the account has also been debited with interest and redemption on loan money—£37,879. Such a system simply establishes an overdraft instead of carrying out the proposal to place permanent improvements on a loan basis, repayable in forty years, debiting capital account with the amount, and charging maintenance and interest on loan, as well as redemption, to revenue. I contend that those are the only items which ought to go into the consolidated revenue. It is perfectly correct to debit the account with them, but different treatment should be given to expenditure on permanent improvements. The training walls and the deepening of the river are good, not only for the present generation, but also for the generations which will come after, and the cost of those works should be charged to loan. The total cost of permanent improvements should be charged to capital account. The correctness of the debit balance, 30th June, 1903, has always been challenged, and the treatment of the account since 1903, as now disclosed, can only be described as an outrage in Treasury manipulation. No wonder the Auditor-General asks whether such treatment of the account can be justified!

The TREASURER: I think that system was inaugurated while he was in the Treasury.

HON. E. B. FORREST: It may be wrong, notwithstanding, and I am calling attention to it now, so that the hon. gentleman may not fall into the same mistake as he tumbled into. Just to show you what he thinks of it, his estimate of the indebtedness on the 30th June, 1908, is £99,876, instead of the £203,849. That is over £100,000 improperly worked into the account. Here is what he says in his report. He refers to a letter he sent to the Treasurer, and here is an extract that bears on the subject—

In view of the yearly increasing indebtedness under the present system, and the very doubtful recovery of the amount in full, it appears to me questionable whether a continuance of the practice of debiting the account and crediting consolidated revenue with the interest—which may never be received—as has been done during the past five years, is justifiable.

I do not think it is; and I will just give an idea of what the working out ought to be. The rent of plant last year was £4,742; interest and redemption, £10,814; maintenance, according to the engineer's report, £7,500. That gives a total of £23,000. The receipts amounted to £46,000 for harbour dues. That would leave £23,000 to the good.

The TREASURER: That is excess revenue on your basis.

HON. E. B. FORREST: I say there was £23,000 to the good on last year's transactions, and that would provide interest and redemption on a loan of £500,000. We want to put the thing on a proper footing. I think the deduction drawn by the Auditor-General is not borne out altogether, but nothing would justify the way they are treating the account—paying for permanent improvements out of revenue each year. It simply means the putting up of a big overdraft. Instead of putting up a big overdraft, I say that permanent works should be paid for out of loan on a forty years' basis.

The TREASURER: It comes to the same thing. They get the money whenever they want it.

HON. E. B. FORREST: It does not. The Treasurer is the "board" here. If he continues paying for the improvements wanted here—the extensive improvements in view of the change taking place in shipping all over the world—if he intends to carry on these out of harbour dues receipts, we shall never be able to carry out the improvements that are required in the port of Brisbane. We want to know now what is the complete system of port improvement to be.

The PREMIER: Who wants to know that?

HON. E. B. FORREST: I do; and so does Brisbane.

The PREMIER: Do you know we have stopped doing anything for want of money?

HON. E. B. FORREST: That is what I complain of. If you give us a loan on a forty years' basis, and pay the interest on that loan, instead of paying for improvements out of revenue, you would do a bigger and better thing.

The PREMIER: It is a very difficult thing in harbour works to distinguish between maintenance and permanent improvements. Practically all our work consists of permanent improvements.

HON. E. B. FORREST: No man living would dream of calling the river walls and the dredging of the river maintenance. We want to know what is the complete system of port improvement to be; approximately what it is likely to cost; and when and how the money is to be provided. There can be no satisfactory or comprehensive scheme until wharfage and wharf frontages are in the hands of the Crown. It is a great misfortune they ever went out of the hands of the Government. In Sydney they parted with them—it was a big blunder—and there they have had to spend from £6,000,000 to £8,000,000 in resuming water frontages. In Melbourne they spent over £5,000,000 of borrowed money, in addition to funds they had by way of endowment, for the same purpose, and now they have a perfect harbour trust with good wharves.

Mr. LESINA: Why does not the Government establish a board in Brisbane?

HON. E. B. FORREST: It would not cost anything like the money that had to be spent in Sydney or Melbourne; it could be done here for a million or a million and a-half.

Mr. LESINA: It will have to be done sooner or later.

HON. E. B. FORREST: The sooner it is done the better. In conclusion, I will say that I consider the Torres Strait service is an excellent contract, and the only mistake made by the Premier was in not paying the £91,000 and having the round service. That would have been better for the North and for Queensland as a whole. Let us have a service outwards through Torres Strait, and let us have a service homewards through Torres Strait.

Mr. HARDACRE: We had a better service twenty-three years ago.

HON. E. B. FORREST: We had a good one then, and we have a good one now.

Mr. DOUGLAS (*Cook*): I just want to make a few remarks on one or two points that appeal

to me in connection with this Financial Statement, and dealing with the sub-  
[9.30 p.m.] ject the hon. member for North Brisbane has just touched upon—the Torres Strait mail contract—I think that this is one of the pleasing features in the Statement we have been discussing. I notice in the *Daily Mail* of to-day's date a telegram announcing the arrival of the first steamer under this service, the "Perthshire." I wish to quote this, because it has some little bearing on the few remarks I wish to make. The telegram reads as follows:—

Thursday Island Wednesday.

The steamer "Perthshire," the first of the new line subsidised by the Queensland Government arrived to-day and was berthed by Pilot Bruce at the jetty without a hitch. It had been rumoured that she would anchor off the port and her cargo would be lightered or placed on a hulk which was much disapproved of by business people here. General satisfaction was expressed when the steamer arrived at the jetty. This service is considered an excellent arrangement. The "Banffshire's" cargo shipped a month before the Perthshire left was landed from the "Warrego" yesterday afternoon.

That is the point I wish to make. The telegram goes on to deal with the departure of another vessel. That telegram indicates that this service will confer an immense benefit upon the North. There we have an instance. The "Perthshire," the first vessel of the service, arrived and delivered cargo from London on the same day that cargo arrived which was shipped a month prior to the "Perthshire" leaving port. That instance shows—the bulk of the cargo for these extreme Northern ports is transhipped—it shows the benefit that will be derived from a direct service to the North. I agree fully with the remarks of the hon. member for North Brisbane, that a homeward service would have been a very desirable thing. Personally, I cannot see the benefits that are to be derived, so far as the shipment of frozen produce by Northern ports is concerned, unless the vessels take a homeward route *via* Torres Strait. The space that is usually allotted to frozen cargo will be filled, as these ships always have a full cargo on their outward voyage, and I cannot see how the space for frozen produce will be available from Townsville, Cairns, or other Northern ports, so that, in my opinion, the advantages that would have been derived by paying an extra subsidy to have a homeward service *via* Torres Strait would have been very great indeed; and if, during the three or four years this contract has to run, it is proved successful, I hope that the House, or whatever Government may be in power at the time, will endeavour to see their way to provide a homeward service as well. I have no doubt when that time comes the pastoral industry, the meat industry, and other industries, will be in a flourishing condition. There is every indication—our seasons give promise of being prosperous, and there is every indication that after the course of three years, when this present service comes to a termination, there will be justification for providing a homeward service as well as an outward service. There is another benefit to be derived by the Northern people in connection with this service, and that is under clause 6 of the agreement, which provides—

The rates of freight to be charged by the contractors to shippers from London to all the Northern ports of Queensland at which the steamers may call shall not be higher than those charged by them to Brisbane, such freight to cover delivery over the ship's side, but not lighterage.

I say that is a distinct benefit that the North is going to derive from this service, because

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under existing arrangements, by which vessels come to the Southern ports, and tranship the cargo, there has been the extra freight, and that has been detrimental to the interests of the people who endeavour to get their goods landed at the lowest possible cost. I should like to point out that, in the clause I have read, there seems to be a very serious loophole. It goes on to say towards the termination, that—

All shipments outwards or homewards shall be made upon the terms of the bill of lading for the time being in use by the contractors subject as to homeward shipments to Sea Carriage of Goods Act, and also subject to any special bargain made between the contractors and any special shipper.

I maintain that that allows a serious loophole so far as possible rebates are concerned. It is possible, under that clause, that shippers at the London side will be able to make some arrangement with the contractors to get certain rebates for shippers of a certain quantity of cargo. Of course we know in the shipping service that system more or less obtains, but it seems to me possible that people who are able to import large quantities of cargo may be able to secure a benefit, which it may not be in the power of the people in the North to obtain by reason of their requirements being less than the requirements of the people in the South. The idea is, that the rate of freight should be the same to all ports, but there is a loophole there that might possibly be omitted in future contracts. The subsidy is £37,000 a year, and with various small items, it will probably mean in the whole, a subsidy of about £40,000. The justification for this, more or less, is in the fact that it will mean that a number of immigrants will be arriving monthly—people who will, in all probability, have some little capital, and they will be able to take advantage of our Northern lands in the way of settlement, and those lands will possibly be availed of far more freely than under the present system of bringing immigrants to Brisbane. It is only natural that people coming to a country like this for the first time, and coming to the attractive parts of the country, such as we have in the South—they are more or less inclined to remain there, although they may not be fully aware of the advantages to be derived from settlement in the North. I say they are more inclined to take up land in the Southern parts because they have not had an opportunity of examining the Northern parts. In connection with the ports of call of these steamers, it seems to me that, for the sake of another thousand pounds or so, it would have been a very wise thing to have provided that the vessels should call at more ports than has been arranged for. It is unnecessary to point out that many places, such as Cooktown, Port Douglas, Bowen, Mackay—all those places have immense areas of splendid agricultural soil in the back parts, and if those vessels called at each of those ports on their way to the South, it would probably mean they would not be detained more than a few hours at each place—they would give facilities to the people at those places to get their cargo delivered, and the immigrants and passengers by this route would have an opportunity of obtaining some little information about the attractions of the country outside those ports, and it would be possible for the North to derive even a greater benefit than it is going to derive under the present arrangement of only calling at three or four ports on the coast. I am rather sorry to see that provision has not been made for the vessels calling at every port on the coast, such as used to be the case under the contract many years ago. Of course, we know that there is a provision in the contract

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that where 150 tons of cargo is available the vessels will call and discharge and take cargo at any port. At most of these ports—with the exception, perhaps, of Mackay, which is a go-ahead place at the present time—namely, Cooktown, Port Douglas, and Bowen, and other ports, the quantities of cargo available will possibly not amount to the total 150 tons per month required under this provision. I would bring that point under the notice of the Chief Secretary, in the hope that it may not even now be too late to make some provision whereby the whole of our Northern ports will get the full advantage of this very good service. In connection with the telegram which I read with reference to the arrival of the "Perthshire," I might draw attention to the amount paid for dredging our Southern ports. I recognise that the recent work performed by the dredge at Thursday Island and Cooktown has given these ports a bigger advantage than they previously obtained.

Mr. KENNA: Can they get into Cooktown now?

Mr. DOUGLAS: That is a matter I have taken some trouble about. I am sorry to see that the work required at Cooktown was not done. The port of Cooktown does not get a very large revenue from harbour dues, but a proposition has been put forward to increase the harbour dues, and the business people who pay the dues are agreeable to the increase in the dues, provided they can get this extra work done. I am sorry that that work was not done. Unfortunately, the shipping company which at the present time holds the mail contract between Melbourne and Cooktown do not seem to be prepared at the end of their present contract to send their larger vessels to the port. I understand that is the case.

The TREASURER: I do not think that it is likely that they will go further north than Cairns.

Mr. DOUGLAS: I presume the Treasurer has some definite knowledge in making that statement. I understand that a consultation was arranged between the general manager of the Australasian Steam Navigation Company and the present Premier and Treasurer on this subject. When the present contract expires, although it is a matter for the Federal Government to deal with, it may be urged that these large vessels cannot enter Cooktown under the present circumstances. This may be a reason alleged why the present service should not be continued. I would like to mention that, had every facility been offered by the authorities in connection with this matter, the work would have been done and the large vessels sent in there. However, the onus for the future must rest with the Australasian Steam Navigation Company, I was speaking just now with regard to our available coastal lands, and I am very pleased to note that an area has been brought under the notice of the Lands Department by the Mines Department in the vicinity of Cooktown. At Mount Windsor, about 130 miles inland from Cooktown, there is a tableland 4,000 feet above sea level, and I am glad to know that that particular locality is likely to receive some consideration from the present Administration. I was pleased to notice the Minister speak on that matter the other night as he did.

The HOME SECRETARY: One of the most valuable assets in Queensland.

Mr. DOUGLAS: It is situated 4,000 feet above sea level and eclipses even the far-famed Atherton district. In discussing this matter I would urge on the Committee the need for establishing a State farm. It has

been brought under the notice of the department by Northern members from time to time, and the late Minister for Agriculture, while on a Northern tour recently, made some inquiry about it. A State farm would confer a great benefit on the people in the North, and they are justly entitled to something of the kind. I hope some interest will be taken in this matter, and possibly at no distant date that we will see a State farm established in our Northern district.

Mr. MACKINTOSH: There are too many of them already.

Mr. DOUGLAS: I do not profess to have the same knowledge as the hon. member for Cambooya, but I think the dissemination of knowledge generally on these matters is a good thing. Now, the item which calls for some little remark is that relating to the mining industry, and as representative of a mining constituency I would be lacking in my duty if I did not make some reference to the remarks in the Financial Statement concerning this industry. In speaking on this matter I speak in general terms and not merely in relation to my own particular district. I speak more with reference to mining in the whole State. We notice that there is an increase, or supposed increase, in the vote of something like £14,500 in monetary assistance to this industry during the present year.

The TREASURER: And an extra £5,600 under the Mining Machinery Advances Act.

Mr. DOUGLAS: That brings it up to £19,000, which is the increase over the previous year. In connection with the Mining Machinery Advances Act, I sincerely hope that the administration will be liberal. I know it must be confined within the four corners of the Act, but it seems to me that some more liberal assistance could be given. Something like £4,000 was on the Estimates last year, but only £2,450 was made available. The amount of £10,000 which appears on this year's Estimates might seem a fairly large sum, but if the money is not going to be available there is no use in putting it there at all. While commending the action of the Government in placing an extra amount on the Estimates, I think it was understood, when a very large and representative deputation waited upon the Premier and the Secretary for Mines in March last, that, if it could be shown that the mining industry would be benefited in different ways, there would be no difficulty in making a much larger sum, even to the extent of £50,000, available on this year's Estimates. Possibly it is the duty of hon. members representing mining constituencies to show in what way money might be profitably expended and the industry assisted. Ever since I have been a member of this Chamber I have advocated assistance in the form of State batteries. In Queensland, one-third of the population depend upon the mining industry, and we know that in Western Australia and Victoria a system of State batteries has come into general operation. In Victoria at the present time, according to the latest report of the Mines Department, there are twenty State batteries working under arrangement with miners in approved places, and there are also a number of other batteries in course of construction. The system they work under, so far as I can gather, is this: In nine cases out of the twenty the batteries are managed by local committees, who indemnify the Government from any loss on the working of the batteries. In the remaining eleven cases, I think the total loss of working the batteries by the Government for the year amounted to something like £1,835. Speaking for the more sparsely populated dis-

tricts, and particularly for new fields which give promise of success, I think this would be a satisfactory way of helping men with little or no capital. Under the Mining Machinery Advances Act companies or men can obtain loans under certain conditions, but something might be done in the direction of erecting State batteries. In Western Australia the system is carried on on rather a large scale. The amount of stone treated last year was 95,000 tons at the Government mills alone. The revenue was £31,000, and the expenses amounted to £22,200, leaving a small loss. For a country which is almost dependent upon the mining industry, that is not a very large loss, although those figures do not provide for depreciation. I do not wish to take up too much time on this particular question, but before I sit down I wish to make a few remarks with regard to the pearling industry. (Hear, hear!) I wish to say something about that industry, because certain base charges have been levelled at me by a member sitting on the opposite side of the Chamber; and, unless I deal with this matter, hon. members may get a wrong impression. However insignificant those remarks may be, it is perhaps as well for me to throw some light upon the appointment of the recent Royal Commission. On 12th March of this year, in company with the hon. members for Cairns, Woothakata, Bowen, and Croydon, I waited upon the Premier in connection with the shelling industry. Hon. members know that ever since I became a member of this House I have advocated a certain line of policy in connection with that industry. The object of the deputation was more or less in connection with a petition which was sent to me for presentation to the Premier. This petition was signed by all the shellers resident on Thursday Island, and by other people connected with the industry. The petition made request for certain regulations to be passed in connection with the system of working vessels and the licensing. The first of those requests was this—that the tonnage of vessels licensed in the industry should be limited to 25 tons. The second request was that no foreign-built vessel, or vessel which had flown a foreign flag, should in future be licensed. In those two matters I had the support of the hon. members whom I have mentioned as accompanying me. Other points which I have advocated since I became a member of this House are that there should be no further issue of divers' licenses to aliens, but that the existing rights which those men had acquired in the industry should be renewable for vessels at present licensed. It would be unwise and injudicious to interfere with existing licenses, and it might give rise to serious international complications. It was expected that in the course of a little time the aliens at present in the industry would drop out, and their places would be taken by men of our own race. In order to assist in establishing the industry on the basis of a white man's industry, the deputation to the Premier suggested that a training school should be established for white divers, and also that a Government cultivation station should be established, with a view to bringing about a system of leasing the foreshores, and so getting away to a great extent from the arduous, exacting, and trying life of the ordinary diver. The Premier no doubt recognised that this was an important matter that had been placed before him, and probably that it required some serious reflection. It was intimated at the time that inquiry would be made into the matter dealt with by the deputation, and, if possible, some action taken. Following that

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matter up, I have from time to time spoken in this Chamber, as the records of the Assembly will show, in connection with the subject, and have urged upon the Premier that it was highly necessary that immediate action should be taken. The result of my representations was that a restriction was placed upon the issue of all licenses, both licenses for boats and licenses for divers. I recognised that this was a serious feature in connection with the welfare of this industry, and I urged that the matter should not be allowed to rest there, but that something definite should be done. As hon.

[10 p.m.] members know, when speaking on the Estimates on the last occasion they were before the House, I could get no satisfactory reply from the Government at that time, and I do not think it was a fair position for me to be placed in—that there should be a total restriction of all licenses without a definite assurance that the matter would be fully considered. In discussing the matter with the Premier, the suggestion came from himself that it would perhaps be a wise thing to appoint a Royal Commission. The success the Sugar Commission had met with would, he considered, be a justification for appointing a commission in connection with this industry. So long as I could be certain that a correct view of the system existing at the present time could be placed on record, and that the people whom I represented, and who were interested in this valuable industry, would have an opportunity of expressing their opinion, I thought it would be a good thing. In order to prevent any question of my being personally interested in the matter, I informed the Premier that I did not wish particularly to be on this commission. I suggested that it should be made a parliamentary commission. I considered that, if I came down here and talked to hon. members upon a subject which few of them know much about, it would be difficult for them to realise the importance of it. I was rather anxious, when the Premier decided that a commission should be appointed, to have certain members appointed on it. I want the position to be clearly understood, in order that no stigma may attach to me by the statement of the hon. member for Cairns that I insisted on being placed on this commission. But I did inform the Premier that if he intended to appoint a parliamentary commission I had no doubt that the knowledge I possessed would be of some advantage. I am sorry the Premier is not in his place, so that he could confirm that statement. I contradict the charges made by the hon. member for Cairns, so that the country will know there is no truth in the assertion. I sincerely hope the Government will take some interest in this industry. The position of the industry is not satisfactory. The total cessation of the issue of licenses is very detrimental to the industry, and it simply means that a monopoly is being created, more particularly in connection with divers' licenses. Aliens have been given a monopoly of the diving. The members of the commission urged that regulations should be immediately made by which any European would be able to get a license forthwith. The desire exists to place this industry on the basis of a white man's industry, but at the present time if a European should apply for a license it would be refused.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Has that been done?

Mr. DOUGLAS: Yes. I think this is an important feature in connection with the

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matter. I suppose the report of the commission has not yet been closely studied by hon. members.

Mr. LESINA: No; there have been too many other matters in the field.

Mr. DOUGLAS: I do not wish to say that the Government are lax in this matter. During the recess the Treasurer paid a visit to the North, and he must, from the fact of having been a fortnight in the locality, have a considerable insight into the industry. I hope the Premier will arrive at a definite policy in this matter. I commend the report of the commission to the Government for their careful consideration. I think they would not go far wrong if they took a lead from the present Federal Government in regard to dealing with the prohibition of aliens from working in this industry. I may quote, for the benefit of the House, a telegram from Melbourne which appeared in the *Daily Mail* of 24th November—

Mr. Batchelor Minister for External Affairs to-day dealt with certain applications for permits to engage coloured divers in the pearling fleets of Queensland and approves of permits being granted to replace men whose deaths had been certified to by the sub-collector and to replace members of crews who had left the Commonwealth on condition that the men must have left the Commonwealth before the permit was granted for successors. Applications to fill vacancies must be made within six months of such vacancies occurring and permits used within six months of their issue. No increase in the present number of coloured divers will be allowed.

I have no wish to go any further into the matter at the present time. I have probably said enough. There are other items in the Financial Statement I should like to have touched upon, but I will not detain the House at this late hour.

Mr. MACKINTOSH (*Cambooya*): I would like to say a few words in connection with the Financial Statement, but I will not keep the House very long. The Statement has been debated to such an extent that it is needless for me to say much on the subject. It has been stated that the country has enjoyed good seasons, and I hope it will continue to do so. I would like to say something about the coalition of parties which has recently taken place. As far as I can understand, it has given every satisfaction in the towns and in the country.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MACKINTOSH: I think the people will be more satisfied when the Government have had an opportunity of placing a programme before the country, and have had time to carry it into effect. Certain changes have taken place in the Cabinet, which I rather regret. I am rather sorry that the late Minister for Lands, the present Home Secretary, did not keep the position he was in from the point of view that he has been as active a Minister for Lands as I have ever known in this country, and I have known him from his boyhood up to the present time. He has been courteous and easy of approach, and I am sure he was animated by a desire to deal justly with everybody, and to settle people on the land in large numbers. I do not say I agreed with him in everything that he did, but I am bound to say that as far as his activity as a Minister is concerned his successor will have some difficulty in surpassing him. There is another change which has taken place in the Ministry that I regret even more than that, and that is the change which resulted from the hon. member for Barcoo in a fit of temper leaving the office he so creditably and honourably filled. Had he continued in the position of Minister for Railways I feel certain that new railways would have been

constructed with advantage to the country. I trust it will not be long before he repents, and I am sure that he will be received back with open arms. With regard to immigration, I am in favour of immigration in large numbers, but under a different system from that which has prevailed hitherto. Some members have advocated that we should advertise extensively in the old country the advantages which this State offers to immigrants. That is all very well as far as reaching the people in the large towns of Great Britain and on the continent of Europe is concerned, but that is not all that is required. Then it has been suggested that we should send lecturers home to lecture in great cities like London, Dublin, Glasgow, and Edinburgh. There is no doubt that lecturers would induce people in such places to come to Queensland, and no doubt such people would be good enough in their own particular lines of business. Sailors, tailors, shoemakers, painters, and that class of people would be very useful in their own line of business, but my idea is that we should send home a practical man to visit the small towns and villages which supply labourers to large farms in the busy harvest time, and to talk to the people there collectively and individually. I am sure that if that were done, and the people were shown the advantages which this country possesses as compared with the old country, many of them would be induced to come to Queensland. I do not mean that we should send home fluent speakers, whose lectures would be reported in the newspapers, because those reports, while they might be an admirable advertisement for the State, might never be read by the class of people we want as immigrants. A good deal has been said about wages. What wages did we all get when we commenced to work here? What wages did the prominent men in Australia, particularly in Queensland, get when they commenced? They did not get high wages.

Mr. MAY: What wages did you get?

Mr. MACKINTOSH: I got different amounts, and I did very well. We all like to get good wages—the wages which any business can afford—but it is not the remuneration a man gets that helps him on in the world. It is the reputation he earns in working for an employer, which enables him to do well for himself afterwards. A man in Brisbane may have money, but he must also have a good reputation in order to be able to establish himself in business, and become a successful and prominent member of the community. A wage of 18s. a week and found seems to be despised nowadays. I have had men in my employ who in the course of a few years started on their own account, and are to-day in as good a position as I am. I worked for 12s. 6d. a week, and was glad to get it. But I was not long before I got £1 5s. a week, and then I came to the conclusion that my employer could not do without me. And I was not far wrong, for soon afterwards I went into partnership with him. But hard times came, and we lost everything. We want people who will open up the country. How are we going to build railways or settle the lands which railways will open up if we have not population? Some hon. members opposite seem to be opposed to immigration. I would not say they do not know what they are talking about, because we are very good friends, and I am sure that every member of the House is animated by a desire to do something to advance the interests of the country from their point of view. A member may be right according to his own way of thinking, but he may be wrong from my point of view. I think we need immigration. The land in this country is superior to

anything in Australia. I have been over the greater portion of the Southern States, and I can say that, though they may have isolated spots of land equal to ours, they have not the extensive area of splendid land that we have got in Queensland. We have millions of acres that people could live comfortably upon, if railways were constructed to enable them to get their produce to market. I do not care to prolong this debate, but there are one or two matters to which I wish to refer, to show that my constituency is neglected and has been neglected for years. When I first came into this House I was under the impression that, with my wide practical knowledge, I would be able to give the greatest help in shaping the destinies of this country on much better lines than had been attempted before, but I have not been able to get many members to fall in with my ideas. If they did so, it would be a good thing for themselves and for the country. (Laughter.) A short time ago the hon. member for Barcoo, whose retirement from the position of Secretary for Railways is a great loss—in fact, I may say a calamity, to this country—visited my district, and can back me up in what I am about to say as to the quality of the land there, the conditions of the people, and the urgent need for railway construction. Beyond Pittsworth there is as fine a tract of country as ever man saw, but what is wanted is railway communication. Cheese from that district took the first prize at the last Exhibition, and it had to come 60 miles to a railway. Butter made in the district takes top price in the London market, and it has to be carted 50 miles to a railway. If we had a railway to enable the cream to be expeditiously sent to the factory, it would all be superfine butter—beyond all the grades.

Mr. BOWMAN: What is the reason they won't give you the railway?

Mr. MACKINTOSH: One reason is that there is a belt of private land of about 5 miles which a railway will increase in value, and people who wished to purchase and settle on that land would have to pay the increased value, and the original owners would pocket the profit. I have taken six Ministerial parties there at different times, and the hon. member for Barcoo was the seventh. I believe it is not the fault of the late Minister for Public Lands that we have not got a railway there. If we are going to have the development of our agricultural lands, we must have railways. This property is now cut up by the owners into small sections—close settlement areas—and it only requires a railway to go there to bring about development that will give employment to thousands of working men. There is the Mount Russell property; that was taken up at my suggestion. A reservation for a railway was made on that property, and no doubt people were induced to select there in the belief that a railway would be constructed. The present Home Secretary, when Minister for Lands, went through the property, and pronounced it to be the finest in the universe. I trust that when the Government gets into working order all these things will be done. In order to develop the country, we must have money. There is any amount of money to be got in London; and if the Government go in for a loan it will be a good investment. Reference has been made by the hon. member for Cook to the establishment of an agricultural farm in the North. There is a place near Cairns called Kamerunga. That experimental farm cost £14,000 to establish, and its upkeep costs £1,600 a year; but there is no return to be seen for the expenditure. I saw 10 acres of as fine land as there is on the banks of the Barron for growing tobacco, and

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there was less than a quarter of an acre growing amongst weeds on that farm. And they were putting up sheds for curing the tobacco that was not growing. At Bowen they were making at the rate of £120 an acre profit by growing tobacco. I hope the Treasurer will put his foot down and stop the useless expenditure at Kamerunga. I am only giving that instance, although I can give many instances. I do not wish to tire the House out on these matters. I never

saw such a disgraceful piece of [10.30 p.m.] farming in my life. Alongside that farm there were the despised Chinese and Japanese, and those Chinese were growing splendid crops without any assistance from the Government at all. That was the example of that £14,000 establishment that costs £1,600 a year. They imported a lot of rubber trees and other things that were sent out there to rot. That is what we get in these experimental farms. The Treasurer will not have a credit on the right side of the ledger at the end of the next financial year if he does not look out and put a stop to these things. It would pay the country to give them away for a song. And what matters more than anything else, these experimental farms are supposed to instruct the surrounding farmers how to carry on. The farmers during the week have no time to visit these experimental stations; and as regards the Kamerunga Farm, there was a board up with the notice, "No admittance on Sundays," and they took jolly good care that the gates were locked, so that the farmers would not see how the place was carried on. These experimental farms were established because they caused a little trade near the town. In several other places I have gone I inquired of many of the farmers if they took advantage of it, and they said they never went near it. People go, out of curiosity, and see them, and that is all they do. What I want to point out is this: If this £40,000 or £50,000—it does not matter whether it is a few pounds more or less, a motor car would cover the lot—I hope the experience with the motor cars will be a more successful one than the trip we had on the Downs. (Laughter.) If this £40,000 a year was expended in building railways, every constituency in Queensland would be satisfied with railways in about ten or fifteen years, and when we have money in abundance let us go in for these experimental farms for curiosity. They are nothing else. If they grow a pumpkin it will cost £2 2s. (Laughter.)

Mr. MAY: Put on a land tax, and you will get enough railways.

Mr. MACKINTOSH: You will have enough taxes by and by.

Mr. MAY: What about the colleges?

Mr. MACKINTOSH: Everyone knows the colleges are not a success. A great many people come to me as an experienced farmer, and ask me what to do with their sons, and I tell them not to send them to the colleges. I tell them to send their sons to some industrious practical farmer, and get something for their money. They only go to the colleges for pastime.

Mr. MAY: I know several good men turned out by the colleges, and they are now farmers in Queensland.

Mr. MACKINTOSH: I know a great many who, instead of learning to grub out trees and so forth, are taught how to extract teeth. (Laughter.) I would advise the Treasurer to devote this £40,000 or £50,000 to the construction of railways. Then he would get any amount of practical men to take up land along-

side those railways, and it would be more remunerative to the country generally and to the people who go on the land. There is another matter I would like to mention—that is, in connection with the aboriginal vote. There is a lot of money spent on that, and it would be better if they kept the blacks in food and clothing, and never mind the officials. We went to one place called Lloyd's Bay, where there were supposed to be 300 blacks, and a royal prince named Frederick. We had any amount of food, clothes, and blankets, but when we got there there was not a single black at all. We stayed there three days, and a blackfellow who came from another place was looking for them, and he could not find a track of any blacks there. In my opinion, there is not one-half the aboriginal blacks in Queensland that we have on the records. There is a whole lot of money expended in that line, and the poor blacks do not get one sixpence of it.

Mr. AIREY: What about Prince Frederick?

Mr. MACKINTOSH: We could not find him. There is a reward out for Prince Frederick, and they cannot find him. (Laughter.) If the Treasurer does not put his foot down on these matters, I am sure the balance at the end of the year will not be as creditable as he anticipates. I hope hon. members will now settle down to proper work, and will help the Government to carry out the programme they put before the country, or give them a chance, at any rate; and, if they do not do the right thing, we will kick them out in no time. They must get a chance, because without a chance no man will succeed in anything.

Mr. MURPHY: It would not be a bad thing to kick them out first. (Laughter.)

Mr. MACKINTOSH: No. A man is entitled to a chance to prove whether he is an efficient individual or not. I intended to say something about motor cars, but so much has been said about them already that I will curtail my remarks about them. I would suggest, though, that those hon. members who live a long distance from the House, and who are kept here late at night after all the trams and trains have stopped running, should be allowed to have one of those motor cars at their disposal. (Laughter.) I trust that the Financial Statement will be passed to-night, so that we can get on with business to-morrow. I remember that some years ago the sum of £30,000 was spent on Wallumbilla Estate to make it available for closer settlement, but the people who went there debated about it all night and slept all day. They did all the work by resolution, and this House has been doing the same thing for the last three weeks. I hope that now we will get to work and get something to say against the Government in reality. I trust that the Budget anticipations will be realised, and if they are, then there is no doubt that we will have prosperity in the country.

Mr. WOODS (*Woothakata*): It is not my intention to deal at length with the Financial Statement to-night, but I am going to take the full time I am entitled to in discussing it. I first wish to refer to a discourteous act on the part of the leader of the Government at the opening of this debate. I understand it is usual, according to parliamentary etiquette, for the leader of the Government to follow the leader of the Opposition in discussing the Budget Statement. That has been invariably the case in Queensland. I have gone to the trouble of looking into this matter, and I have gone back to 1875, and I find that since then it has been almost invariably the custom for the leader of the Government to follow the leader

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of the Opposition in debating the Financial Statement. It was an act of discourtesy meted out to this side of the House that the leader of the Government did not get up to reply to the leader of the Opposition. Whether the hon. gentleman agreed with the political principles of the leader of the Opposition or not, he must remember that he was the leader of the Opposition, and he ought to have respected his position. In 1875, in debating the Financial Statement, the Premier followed the leader of the Opposition, and the same practice was followed in 1876, 1877, 1878, 1879, 1880, 1881, 1882, 1883, 1884, 1885, and 1886. In 1887 the Premier did not follow the leader of the Opposition. In 1888 the Premier followed the leader of the Opposition, and it was the same in 1889, 1890, and 1891. In 1892 the leader of the Government did not follow the leader of the Opposition. In 1893, 1894, and 1895 the Premier followed the leader of the Opposition. In 1896, Sir Hugh Nelson, who was Premier and Treasurer, followed the leader of the Opposition, Mr. Browne. In 1897 the Acting Premier, Mr. Tozer, followed Mr. Glassey, the Premier, Mr. T. J. Byrnes, being ill. In 1898, Mr. Bartholomew followed Mr. Glassey, and the Premier, Mr. Byrnes, died that year. In 1899 Mr. Dawson was sick, and Mr. Lesina took his place, following the Treasurer, and he was immediately followed by the Premier. In the years 1900 to 1907 inclusive, the leader of the Government followed the leader of the Opposition. In 1908, what happened? The leader of the Government allowed another Minister to follow the leader of the Opposition. What was the reason of that? The reason is patent to every hon. member here and to the people outside. It was because the hon. gentleman knew that the ex-Treasurer was in the Chamber and was going to deal with the Financial Statement. Although the Premier followed the ex-Treasurer, he made a very poor attempt at replying.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: He knocked him out.

Mr. WOODS: The member for nowhere says he knocked him out. I notice the hon. member for Woolloongabba interjecting, and I venture to say that, after next election, that hon. gentleman will not be seen inside this House, except as a visitor. In the programme for last year the Premier had a Barron Falls scheme, and in his Rockhampton manifesto in 1907, in dealing with the Barron Falls Electric Power Bill, the hon. gentleman said—

It has long been known that in the Barron Falls we have not only a picturesque spot of great natural beauty, but also a valuable motive power running to waste. Several attempts have been made by private companies to lease the Falls at a nominal figure from the Government. The Government, before deciding on any course of action, engaged the services of an expert, Mr. Corn, of Launceston, who made a very valuable report, which has been published. It is perfectly clear from that report that, without interfering in any way with the picturesque beauty of the Falls, many thousands of horse-power of electrical energy can be developed and utilised in a variety of profitable ways. The Government have received an offer from a private company to lease the whole of the power of the Falls; but it seems to us that a natural monopoly of that kind ought really to be managed by the Government, so that the power may be made available for commercial purposes without saddling industries with undue charges. The matter is now being discussed with a company which is prepared to establish a new and important industry at Cairns, and I hope in the next session to be prepared to submit to Parliament a practical, business-like scheme for the utilisation of the Barron Falls on the lines indicated.

We were told in the beginning of the session of 1907 that the Bill was in the hon. gentleman's despatch box, and yet up to now,

twelve months afterwards, nothing has been heard of it. I would ask the Kidstonite members who were returned to support a democratic platform to look at the list of measures foreshadowed in the Governor's Speech, and I would ask them what has become of that programme? That programme has been the means of keeping the majority behind the Government. When the Secretary for Lands was discussing the want of confidence motion, he held that programme up to this side of the House, and said, "Not a single member on that side of the House has criticised the programme." Why? Because we knew perfectly well then that what has since happened would happen. We know that the whole thing was only a bogey, and that, when it had served its purpose, it would be dropped overboard. It had to be dropped overboard. The members on that side of the Chamber who were returned as democrats are now in the bag; they cannot help themselves; and the whole thing is now dumped overboard. In the interests of the district I represent, and in view of the promises I made to the electors, I am bound to support no coalition except a coalition of the democratic parties. I want to say that, while I am prepared on reasonable and honest grounds to vote to turn the Government out of office, I am not one of a party which is going to buy any man sitting behind the present Government by giving him a portfolio for his support in turning the Government out of office. If another Government is to be put in power, then it should be a Government consisting of the members sitting on the front Opposition bench. Those are the members I am prepared to support to place in office, and to support them in remaining there. If there are members sitting on the Government side who are desirous of putting the Government out, their proper place is on this side. How can we accept the support of members who say to us, "We will come over if you will give us portfolios"? I always believe in fighting a man from the front.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. WOODS: If I have any say in the matter, no man will be bought by the promise of a portfolio. If the Government are going to be put out, the people who should sit on the Treasury benches are the people who have a majority on this side, and who have stuck to their colours. Coming now to the question of the Railway Department. In 1905 the Etheridge Railway Bill was passed, and I was desirous of seeing a Bill passed to amend the Railways Act, with the object of giving the Minister more power than he has under the present Act. It was not known at the time the Etheridge Railway Bill was passed what power the Minister actually possessed; but we found when a strike took place on the Etheridge Railway, that, although the Act provided that the men employed in the construction of the line should be paid the wages ruling in the district, the Minister had not the slightest power to put that section into operation. I contend that it is time the Railways Act was amended in such a way that some person in this Chamber shall be responsible to this Chamber for the management and construction of all our railways. I now want to refer to one or two questions which have arisen in this Chamber during the course of the week. At the Local Authorities' Conference in August last, at which every local authority in Queensland was represented, a resolution was passed unanimously approving of the issue of railway passes to members of local authorities when travelling on local authority business. A deputation from the conference

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waited on the late Secretary for Railways, the hon. member for Barcoo, in connection with the matter. After going into the matter, the hon. gentleman distinctly refused to grant free passes, and he was perfectly justified in the attitude he took up. But later on, by some manoeuvre or other—I would not like to say it was a Minister who was responsible for it, but I am very much afraid some Ministers had something to do with it—an application was made for a gold pass for the mayor of the city of Brisbane. The application was refused by the hon. member for Barcoo. But see the power the Commissioner has! The very moment the hon. gentleman went out of office a cardboard pass was issued to the mayor. I have not the slightest objection to His Worship, but I do object to this being done the very moment the late Minister went out of office.

The TREASURER: No; it was granted before he went out of office.

Mr. WOODS: That statement is not correct. The hon. member for Barcoo point-blank refused the pass.

The TREASURER: I think it was issued before he left office, but he might not know about it.

Mr. WOODS: I am surprised at the Treasurer making that interjection, because he knows that no gold pass can be issued without the concurrence of the Minister. The Commissioner has power to give

[11 p.m.] a cardboard pass. After the hon. member for Barcoo refused the gold pass, the cardboard pass was renewed. What I object to is this: The mayor of Brisbane lives in the suburbs, and travels to and from the city by train every day, and is it fair that he should be given a gold pass, while the mayor of South Brisbane has to pay his fare. The mayor of every town in Queensland is surely entitled to the same condition. No Government has the right to use the public funds by giving the mayor a pass over the whole of our State railways. He can go to Longreach or Charleville if he likes, and has the same privilege as a member of Parliament.

Mr. KERR: For services rendered.

Mr. WOODS: I would not like to say it is for services rendered, but it has a suspicious appearance. I do not know of an instance where such a thing has been done in Queensland before. I will not deal fully with mining matters, because I know that hon. members wish to get away. The Home Secretary is not at present in the Chamber, but I hope that next session an amendment of the Old-age Pensions Act will be brought down, by which the age will be reduced from sixty-five to sixty years. I am satisfied that, if we made a move in this direction, the Federal Parliament would agree to it. Another thing, I think it is unfair to ask old people on mining fields or in the bush to travel to a police station, which may be miles away, for the purpose of receiving the pension, and it is only fair that the Government should send it to them in the form of a post office order, or some other way. I am glad the Minister for Railways is in his place, as I want to say something about the wages question. The present Railway Act should be amended in order to give the Minister more power. When the Etheridge Railway Bill was going through the Chamber, a clause was inserted providing that the ruling rate in the district should be paid, and the same promise was made when the other railways were going through. But, instead of the ruling rates, the following rates are being

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paid on Government lines:—On the Atherton to Evelyn, and Tolga to Johnstone River, they are as follows: Pick and shovel men, 8s. a day of eight hours; hammer and drill men, 8s. 6d. a day. If some reasonable attempt is not made to pay the men on these railways the ruling rate in the district, the railway works of the State will have to stop. The average rate in the Walsh and Tinaroo district, where this railway is being built, are—Shift bosses and overmen, 11s. 5d. a day, 8s. 5d. on the Government job; bracers and banksmen, 9s. 4d. a day, 8s. on the Government job; timber men, 10s. 9d. a day, Government rate 8s. a day; engine-drivers, 11s 6d., and 9s. on the Evelyn-Atherton Railway; machine men, 11s. 3d., Government rate 8s. 6d.; handmen, 10s., and 8s. 6d. on Government line; truckers, ruling rate in the district, 8s. 10d., on the Government railway job 8s. a day. I do not intend to touch on any other matters to-night. I sincerely hope that the leader of the Opposition will to-morrow, or before the session closes, introduce a motion for the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the working of the Railway Department. Notwithstanding the exposure made in this Chamber last year, and the year before, and the inquiry which was held into the management of the Stores Department, I contend that the Brisbane branch of the railway stores is worse to-day than it ever was before; and I think it is about time that this House took action, and insisted upon the biggest spending department in the State being placed on a sound financial basis.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Low rates and high wages. Is that a sound financial basis?

Mr. WOODS: Honesty of administration is what I advocate. (Hear, hear!) I defended the appointment of the present Deputy Railway Commissioner on the assurance of the Premier, given while I was speaking, that that appointment was made with the one object of his taking over the management of the financial department of the service, and putting it straight. But to-day the financial management is worse than ever it was. I hope the Minister for Railways will direct his attention to this matter, and put up a record, so that members may say that he was the best, the gamest, and pluckiest Minister who ever presided over that department. I hope also that what I have said will induce the leader of the Opposition to carry out the suggestion made during the recess, not only by members on this side of the House, but also by members on the Government side, to appoint a Royal Commission to investigate the whole railway administration. I was glad to hear the late Minister for Railways say what he knew was wanted in the Railway Department. There is no man in this Chamber, no matter what his ability may be, who can do justice to the Railway Department if he has at the same time to discharge the duties of Minister for Agriculture. The man who occupies the position of Minister for Railways should be able to devote his whole time to the duties of that office, and any officer who is proved unfit for the position he holds should be hunted, and if the Minister allows men to remain who ought to go he too should be ousted.

Mr. RYLAND (*Gympie*): As a representative of a mining constituency I feel a good deal disappointed at the amount placed on the Estimates for the mining industry. A deputation waited on the Premier at the beginning of this year, and we were then given to understand, though it was not said in so many

words, that the sum of £50,000 would be placed on the Estimates for the assistance of the industry. I regret to say that that has not been done, and that the Government have not shown any disposition to assist the industry to the extent that it deserves. A distinct promise was given by the hon. member for Oxley, when he was Minister for Railways, that one of the first railway works undertaken would be the erection of a new station at Gympie. That promise has not been fulfilled, and no provision is made for the work on the Estimates. With regard to the vote for immigration, I do not propose to discuss that, except to say that I do not think we shall get the great benefits from it which some hon. members claim. I have no objection to a cheap steamship service, but I would ask what benefit is that going to be to the men who work in the cane-field or in the timber districts along the coast? That service will probably bring out more people to compete with the workers already here. The members of the community who will benefit by this cheap service are the owners of large areas of dairying, agricultural, and sugar lands, and as they will reap the benefit it confers they ought to pay the cost of the service. With regard to floating a new loan, I am not opposed to borrowing money for railways and other reproductive works, if the money is used judiciously, but I am opposed to extensive borrowing. We have been carrying out a good many works with money obtained from revenue.

**THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS:** There was £2,000,000 of loan money in the Treasury.

**MR. RYLAND:** I am aware of that, but a good many works have been carried out with money appropriated from revenue, not only in Queensland, but also by the Federal Government, throughout Australia. Last year the Federal Government spent nearly £1,000,000 out of revenue on new works. Of course, that is no reason why we should not raise money—a limited amount of money—by loan for reproductive works, and expend it in such a way that those who reap the benefit from its expenditure will pay the interest bill. In the opening paragraph of the Financial Statement reference is made to the disturbing influence of the Commonwealth on our finances. I do not think that is justified. It was contained in last year's Statement, and it is a misrepresentation of the Federal Government as regards their finance. Last year we practically got from the Federal Government £88,000 over the estimate.

**THE TREASURER:** How much below our three-fourths?

**MR. RYLAND:** Last year we got £61,000 more than the previous year; and for the first five months of this financial year we received £55,000 more than we received for the first five months of last year. The amounts have been increasing all along the line from the time the Morgan Government took office. From the inception of federation the States have received £6,058,000 more than the three-fourths provided for by the Braddon blot, and Queensland has received £17,392 more than her three-fourths. We have only been told about Queensland being in the unfortunate position of not getting back the whole of the three-fourths, but, though Queensland last year received £44,000 less than the three-fourths, Tasmania also suffered to the extent of £19,685. Though some members opposite condemn unification, yet they want unification in regard to making all the States pay when it suits.

**THE SECRETARY FOR MINES:** Do you believe in unification?

**MR. RYLAND:** The hon. member believes that the postal service throughout the States should be paid for on a population basis, and that would be unification as regards the Post Office. His party also advocate that the Federal Government should take over the State debts, knowing that some States have debts to the extent of £80 per head, while Victoria's debt amounts to only £44 per head. That is the sort of unification some people would like; but I do not think it is just, or in accordance with the spirit of the Constitution. Prior to federation a great deal of loan money was spent on our post and telegraph services; but since federation they have been maintained without a single penny of loan expenditure. Another point is that the High Court has decided that the three-fourths refers to the States as a whole, and not to the individual States. And Queensland is not the Cinderella of the Federation. We are practically the only State that has enjoyed a reduction of taxation since federation. The question of the sugar bounty is an important one, and last year the Federal Government paid £568,000 as a bonus to white-grown sugar; and also the old-age pensions, which is to be paid out of the one-fourth, although

at the Premiers' Conference in [11.30 p.m.] Melbourne, at which the Premier

was not able to remain until the close, there was a resolution tabled stating that they were agreeable that more than the one-fourth should be held by the Commonwealth if they took over the responsibility of the old-age pensions. In fact, the local Press supporting the Government have advocated that the Federal Government should be allowed, if they took over the responsibility of the old-age pensions—instead of keeping one-fourth, they would be justified in keeping two-fifths, that is about 8s. in the £1 instead of 5s. in the £1. It has been stated here that the States could carry on the old-age pensions better than the Commonwealth Parliament. The Premier has not always been of that opinion. I have heard him say that the Federal Parliament were the best ones to carry out an old-age pensions scheme. He also said that at more than one conference, and I am quite satisfied that the Federal Parliament is the best Parliament to carry out an old-age pensions scheme. Although in Queensland and Victoria they have old-age pensions, we must remember that three of the States of the Commonwealth have no old-age pensions, and will not have them until it is administered by the Federal Parliament. It is a question whether we would have had old-age pensions in force in Queensland if it were not for the fact that the Federal Parliament meant business in the matter, and the Queensland Government was simply anxious to be first with the proposal. However, it does not matter much. I am very pleased to see the old people provided for, and that Queensland has not been behind in providing for them. This legislation enabled the Premier when he went home to tell the people that no one in Queensland should dread old age, as they were provided for in their old age. As regards this Surplus Revenue Act, it is the first time the Federal Parliament have ever worked under the provisions of the Braddon blot, because it is the first time they have ever kept the full amount of their one-fourth. The Premier, when he was returning from the old country, proclaimed war against the Federal Parliament, and especially against Federal Labour members. And, speaking here the other night, he said when he returned to Queensland he found there were two proposals. One apparently would only give

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us—that is, the perpetuation of the Braddon clause that proposed to give us only £6,000,000 a year instead of £8,500,000, as he said we got last year; and, in the other proposal, it was proposed to give us £5,000,000. As regards these two proposals, the one that would only give us £5,000,000 was the Labour party's proposal. If the Premier reads the proposal drawn up at the Labour Conference held in Brisbane, he will see it will give us a good deal more than £5,000,000. The average receipts from the States for the last seven years was £7,740,000. According to the Labour party's proposal—taking the average for five years, which I think will be a fair thing—allowing for old-age pensions—the amount would be about £7,000,000. We must remember that two years before 1910 the Federal Government will take over the old-age pensions, which will be deducted from the amount, according to the Labour party's proposal. So if we put down the average at £7,000,000, and allow £1,000,000 for new works, that means that there will be returned to the States £6,000,000. That £6,000,000 is divided on a population basis. The average population of Australia for the last five years was about 4,000,000. If we divide the 4,000,000 people into the £6,000,000, it will mean £1 10s. per head. That is the Labour party's proposal—that the inhabitants of Queensland will get returned to them £1 10s. per head, and the total would increase as the population increases. So that Queensland, with an average population of 530,000, would get returned £735,000 a year. That is not a large reduction on what we have been getting in the past. The last seven years the average was £977,000, and we must remember that we will be relieved of our liability of £135,000 a year for old-age pensions; so that we would be £53,000 a year to the good under that proposal. It also proposes that we will get an increased amount with an increased population. I do not know to what extent that will be carried out. It would run into large figures if our population increased largely. I might say in connection with this matter that there is no definite proposition for any reduction of the £1 10s. per head as our population increased, as is done in Canada, but I suppose that will be dealt with at the Premier's Conference. It is always assumed that our Customs and Excise revenue is going to increase, but I do not think that they are going to increase. We are supposed to have a protective tariff in Australia, and the Customs revenue will not increase under a protective tariff. The tendency will be towards a reduction rather than to an increase. The trend of public opinion shows that we will be following the example of New Zealand and New South Wales, and that, before long, there will be less liquor imported. Probably there will be none imported at all, and there will be a reduction of the duties from that source. I will be glad to see the time come, and it is coming, when the whole of the liquor trade will be wiped out altogether. What did the Federal Parliament do the other day with a stroke of the pen? They wiped out the importation of opium altogether. So there was a big reduction in the revenue from opium. As the population increases, the Federal Labour party's proposal will be found to be of great advantage. The Premier, in speaking the other night, said that the evil of the thing was that the States had no power to raise or lower the Customs and Excise duties. That was understood when the States entered the federation. If the Premier wants to get back the power to levy Customs duties, he must do

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away with the federation first. Sir William Lyne's proposal also includes taking over the State debts gradually, and in thirty-five years relieving the States of all liability respecting the debts. That means that in thirty-five years the whole £250,000,000 of the State debts would be taken over by the Federal Parliament. Then, by borrowing at a cheaper rate, and providing for a sinking fund, it is proposed to wipe out the whole of the debts in eighty-three years. That is Sir William Lyne's scheme. There will be no satisfaction until the finances of the States and Commonwealth are clear of one another. The prices of all commodities have gone up, but I am sorry that wages have not gone up in proportion. There is no reason why they should not, as there is general prosperity in the State at the present time.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported progress, and the Committee obtained leave to sit again to-morrow.

#### WARWICK TO MARYVALE RAILWAY.

##### WITHDRAWAL OF PLANS, ETC., FOR RECTIFICATION.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I tabled plans of the proposed Maryvale Railway to-day, and I find, since they have been laid on the table, that there is a slight error in them. I, therefore, beg, by leave of the House, to withdraw the plan, section, and book of reference of the proposed railway from Maryvale, together with the Commissioner's report thereon; and to move that the order for printing that report be rescinded. The plans will be tabled again on Tuesday next, when they have been rectified.

Question put and passed.

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