

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

WEDNESDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER 1910

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QUESTIONS.

WAGES OF MOULDERS, IPSWICH RAILWAY WORKSHOPS.

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. What are the rates of wages paid to the brass moulders and iron moulders employed at the railway workshops, Ipswich.

- (a) First year of employment, per day;
- (b) Second year of employment, per day;
- (c) Third year of employment, per day;
- (d) Fourth year of employment, per day;

2. What increases will accrue to the above-mentioned employees, as provided for on this year's Estimates?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. W. T. Paget, *Mackay*) replied—

1. The rates prior to 1st July, 1910, were—

	s.	d.
1st year	7	0 per day
2nd year	8	0 „
3rd year	8	6 „
4th year	9	0 „
5th year	9	6 „

After 5th year 10 0 „

Moulders who have completed their apprenticeship in other than the workshops of the department have been paid wages as above, according to length of service as journeymen; for instance, a man whose papers showed that he had been a journeyman for five years would receive 10s. per day.

2. Provision is made in the Estimates for the adoption of the following scale from 1st July, 1910, in lieu of above:—

	s.	d.
1st year	7	0 per day
2nd year	8	0 „
3rd year	9	0 „
4th year	10	0 „

CASE OF MRS. PRICE.

Mr. MANN (*Cairns*) asked the Home Secretary—

1. Will he lay on the table of this House all papers and reports in connection with the widow of the late Constable Price, of Mackay?

2. Is he aware that one of the present members for Mackay, Mr. Paget, and also the late member, Mr. Fudge, agreed with the action taken by the late Home Secretary?

3. If he is not aware, will he cause extracts from the speeches of Messrs. Paget and Fudge, on pages 1638 and 1639 of *Hansard*, vol. xviii., year 1906, to be printed and tabled with the other papers and reports in the abovementioned case?

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

1. Yes.

2. No; but he is aware that both these members urged that the deceased constable's children should be provided for.

3. No.

LAUNDRY AND KITCHEN AT DUNWICH.

Mr. MULLAN (*Charters Towers*), in the absence of Mr. Nevitt, asked the Home Secretary—

(a) What was the contract price for building the laundry and kitchen at Dunwich?

(b) What date was same taken over from contractor?

(c) When was contract called for machinery and fitting up of same?

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

(a) £3,671.

(b) 24th December, 1909.

(c) Two water tube boilers, 19th November, 1909; washing machines and hydro extractor, 15th December, 1909; steam cooking plant, 4th February, 1910.

WEDNESDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER, 1910.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (W. D. Armstrong, Esq., *Lockyer*) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

PAPERS.

The following papers, laid on the table, were ordered to be printed:—

Report on the Jubilee Sanatorium, Dalby, for the year ended 30th June, 1910.

Report of the Director of Labour and Chief Inspector of Factories and Shops for the year ended 30th June, 1910.

[*Mr. Mann.*

ORDERS TO WHICH NO RETURNS YET MADE.

Mr. TOLMIE (*Drayton and Toowoomba*), without notice, asked the Home Secretary—

Can the hon. gentleman give any information as to when we are likely to get the information for which I moved on 24th and 31st August, regarding the emoluments of prison warders and the attendants in hospitals for mental diseases; police duties; and the number of inmates of insane hospitals and industrial and reformatory schools?

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

The information is being obtained at the present time. It is somewhat extensive, and will take a certain amount of time to get, but there will be no unnecessary delay.

TIMBER-CUTTING RIGHTS.

On the motion of Mr. RYLAND (*Gympie*), in the absence of Mr. Hardacre, it was formally resolved—

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

1. The total area over which exclusive timber-cutting rights have been sold or granted during the last five years.

2. To whom and over what number of acres, respectively, such timber-cutting rights have been sold or granted during that period.

SUPPLY.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT—RESUMPTION OF DEBATE IN COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. K. M. Grant, Rockhampton, in the chair.*)

Mr. COLLINS (*Burke*): Just as the Sessional Order came into operation last night I was making a statement that I did not agree with the views put forward by the Government supporters that the people of the country were in a prosperous condition. I also argued that if we wanted any further proof about the condition of the people of the country we could get it from the income tax returns, which, as I stated, show an increase this year of £31,602 14s. 2d. To my mind this shows conclusively that the wealth of the country is getting into fewer and fewer hands. As it was remarked during the last session of Parliament, there was only a little over 3 per cent. of the people of Queensland paying income tax, so according to my contention the position is somewhat like this: We have 97 per cent. of the population poor, and 3 per cent. of the population very wealthy. To my mind the position should be reversed. We should have 97 per cent. of the people in a prosperous condition. That is really what we want to see in this State of Queensland. (Hear, hear!) We do not want, on the one hand, enormous wealth getting into the hands of the few, which there is no doubt it is doing in Queensland. The income of the bulk of the people does not amount to £200 per annum, and I do not think that that means progress. Then, again, we must bear in mind that Queensland stands second per head of the population in wealth production, the only other State in the Commonwealth which beats Queensland being Western Australia, which has a far larger adult population in proportion to the total population. While we find that the average wealth production, according to Knibbs' statistics, was £38 19s. 2d. for the whole of the Commonwealth, we know full well that the average wealth production in this State is a little over £45 per head of the population; and, therefore, before anyone can claim that the country is prosperous, the posi-

tion of the workers should be superior to what it is at the present time. As I said before, the wealth of this State is getting into fewer and fewer hands, and that is not a good sign. It is not a good sign for the bulk of the people to be in an unprosperous condition. Of course, I know there are some people who will argue that the country is prosperous because a certain section of the community is getting 7s. or 8s. per day; but what is that compared with the men who are getting their £7,000 or £8,000 per year, and who practically do none of the dirty work of the world towards earning that wealth?

Mr. WHITE: Very few get that amount.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: The hon. member for Musgrave. (Laughter.)

Mr. WHITE: I wish I did.

Mr. COLLINS: Some of the remarks which fell from hon. gentlemen opposite put me in mind of a saying of Thomas Carlyle's. In one of his works he is making Plugson, the manufacturer, speak, and a somewhat similar position exists here in Queensland to-day. I will just quote Carlyle. Plugson is supposed to be speaking, and he is saying—

Noble spinners, this is the hundred thousand we have gained, wherein I mean to dwell and plant vineyards; the hundred thousand is mine, the three and sixpence daily was yours; adieu, noble spinners; drink my health with this groat each, which I give you over and above.

And I can imagine the squatocracy of Queensland—or I should say one of the squatters, calling his workmen together, and saying, "Workmen, we have produced on this station £200,000, which is mine. The £1 5s. per 100 that you get for the shearing of sheep is yours. Come up to the station and have a whisky with me, and all will be well." But I would like to say here that that condition of things cannot last in this State of Queensland. There is a certain amount of unrest, not only in Queensland but throughout the Commonwealth, and throughout the world, and that unrest is being caused by the workers awakening from their long sleep, and I predict that before long, just the same as in the Commonwealth we occupy the Treasury benches, so here in this State—and not only in this State but in every State throughout Australia—the working classes will occupy the Treasury benches here also.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Hasten the day!

Mr. COLLINS: Now, I am not making this statement without proof, and the proof is in the report of the Minister for Lands for 1909. I am going to quote from page 7—

The rents being received for the holdings at present used for the production of wool aggregate £105,187 per annum, estimated to be equal to 2½d. per sheep grazed per annum. For the grazing selections producing wool the Crown is receiving £120,482 per annum, equal to 4½d. per sheep grazed per annum. If, therefore, the pastoral lessees growing wool were paying a rate per sheep on an equality with that paid by the grazing selectors, the Crown would be receiving £84,150 per annum more for the holdings growing wool than it is receiving from the rents fixed for them by the courts. Under the Western Lands Act of 1901 of New South Wales the commissioners are empowered to determine, without appeal, the rents to be paid by the lessees of the pastoral holdings in the Western division of that State, at 7d. per sheep on the carrying capacity, estimated on a sheep basis determined by the commissioners.

Now, to my mind in the State of Queensland we are paying two-thirds towards the shearing of the sheep of the squatter, as compared with the grazing selector—or the small sheep selector. We are handing to the squatter, as

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it were, 16s. 8d. per 100 over and above what the grazing selector receives, because, as pointed out in the report which I have read, the squatter pays 2½d. per head per sheep in rent, while the grazing selector pays 4½d. per head. Now, do you mean to tell me that this state of conditions should exist in Queensland? I can quite understand hon. members opposite continually talking sheep, sheep. They talk about opening up a certain portion of Queensland, which will carry 20,000,000 sheep. Are they only to pay 2½d. per head for those 20,000,000 sheep? No wonder they can ride about Brisbane and in the Western parts of Queensland in their motor-cars. The people of Queensland are paying for their motor-cars. There is no doubt about that. Then, again, as compared with New South Wales, which pays 7d. per head for sheep in the Western parts—we are told by their own report that 7d. per head simply means that the New South Wales sheep-owner pays £1 15s. 6d. to the Crown for every hundred sheep over and above what the Queensland squatter pays. What does that mean? It means that we are paying for the shearing of the sheep in Queensland for the big squatter, as compared with New South Wales, and also handing them 10s. 6d. per hundred. To my mind that is entirely wrong. Not only that, but we hear much about the enormous wages that the shearers are getting at the present time. I hope that some of the gentlemen who will appear before the Commonwealth Arbitration Court in connection with the fixing of a rate for shearing in the future, will remember what I am now stating. Then, again, if the squatter was made to pay equal with the selector in Queensland, he would have to pay £84,150 more than he is paying at the present time. I was reading in the daily Press in Brisbane that the Government are thinking about doing something in connection with the hospitals. There is a method of financing your hospitals. Charge your squatter the same rate per head for his sheep as you are now charging the grazing selector. Is there anything wrong in that? It is not fair competition, because we are told in the same report that the land is somewhat alike for both the squatter and the selector—the selector has no advantage over the squatter in the quality of the land.

Mr. COYNE: He has a disadvantage very often.

Mr. COLLINS: Some of my friends, who know the Western country, say he has a disadvantage. Then, again, if the squatter in Queensland had to pay the same amount per head for his sheep as the squatter in the Western part of New South Wales, we would practically have near £200,000 more, and we could nationalise our hospitals to-morrow morning. I hope the Government will do something towards equalising the rents of the squatter on the one hand and the small selector on the other hand. I am not in favour of the squatter getting his sheep shorn at the expense of the people of Queensland. To my mind that is what we are doing at the present time. It is not fair competition, as the small selector has also to pay £1 5s. per 100 for the shearing of his sheep.

Mr. KEOGH: The squatter is not in it; it is the financial institutions.

Mr. COLLINS: It matters not to me whether it is the financial institutions or whether it is the individual squatter, my argument is sound.

Mr. COYNE: The land monopolist.

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Mr. COLLINS: The next question I come to is immigration and land settlement. Last night the senior member for Townsville made the remark that we cannot get labourers in connection with agriculture. I was not aware that it was the intention of the Government, in connection with their immigration policy, to bring out solely labourers. I always understood that their idea was to bring out people who would settle on the land. Of course, we know that the system of land settlement—the system of charging £2, £3, or £4 per acre for land—is not in favour of the man who arrives from over the sea being able to go on the land. You do not desire that.

Mr. GRAYSON: We want labourers.

Mr. COLLINS: The hon. member for Cunningham interjects, "We want labourers." I am well aware of that. That is what they really do want—they want cheap labour.

Mr. GRAYSON: No, no!

Mr. COLLINS: In connection with land settlement, if you charge a certain amount for the land you must force the men into the labour market to enable them to earn sufficient money before they can acquire a piece of land. That is what the hon. member wants. It is just the same as with the squatocracy—he wants to ride in his motor-car, or sit on his veranda with his arms folded, and see the poor labourer do the work. My idea of settlement is to build up a free and independent people, and let each man do his own share of the dirty work, not simply allowing one man to get hold of 640 acres of good agricultural country, as some have got in Queensland, and then get three or four labourers at 15s. a week, or less, to do all the work in connection with it.

Mr. GRAYSON: It is up to £1 10s. per week now.

Mr. COLLINS: To my mind there is no scarcity of labour in Queensland. If there was a scarcity of labour, wages would be considerably higher than they are at the present time. The Premier knows that full well. I was reading the reports in connection with your sugar industry, and there is practically no scarcity of labour, with only one exception. The senior member for Townsville stated last night that they could get any amount of men to cut cane, but they could not get them to chip between the rows of cane. I have both cut cane and chipped between the rows of cane, and I know full well they can get men to chip between the rows of cane when they are prepared to pay them a fair wage. When the season is in full swing, if a man can earn £2 to £3 a week cutting cane, he is not going to chip cane for £1 5s. per week. A few years ago we were told by some hon. members opposite that the white man could not cut cane. Now, they are crying out they cannot get them to chip between the rows. Anyone who knows anything about the matter knows that chipping between the rows is a long way easier than cutting cane. Then, again, I object to immigration in connection with our women folk—especially in connection with the young women folk who are being brought out here. When I was in the North, I had an opportunity of meeting two or three fine specimens of young women—I must admit they were fine specimens of young womanhood—and they object very strongly that when they landed in Queensland—they landed in Cairns—they were put to work alongside of aliens—Japanese, or some other aliens.

Mr. KEOGH: A pretty hot shop that.

Mr. COLLINS: They asked me to do my best to try and stop bringing out English or Scotch women, or the women of any other European country, until such time as we get rid of the alien in the kitchen. When the Licensing Bill comes on it

[4 p.m.] is more than likely that I will make a proposal to deal effectively with that phase of the question—to get rid of the alien in the kitchen. They were two intellectual women capable of holding their own with the best in the country; they could stand up and hold their own in argument; and they objected to being brought here and placed alongside a Japanese in connection with their work. Surely no one can defend that state of things, which exists in most of the coastal towns in the North—Japanese doing work in the kitchen and laundry. I am glad to say that with two exceptions in my electorate we have managed to drive the alien out.

The PREMIER: There is plenty of room for them in Queensland without being near the Japanese.

Mr. COLLINS: Can the Premier name a single hotel in Cairns that employs a white cook?

The PREMIER: Oh, Cairns! (Laughter.)

Mr. COLLINS: Again, before we bring people here we should try to settle our own people on the land. Before the Federal election I stood all the morning, for three or four hours, at the Gympie land court, which was crowded. There were 200 or 300 applicants for land. It puts me in mind of a gold rush.

The PREMIER: So it was a gold rush.

Mr. COLLINS: It was a rush for the Kin Kin lands. A lot of native-born young men were there trying to get on a piece of land and carve out a home for themselves. Could they get that land? No. And the Minister for Lands knows they could not get land.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The difficulty is that there are too many applicants for the same piece.

Mr. COLLINS: A brother of mine has tried on two occasions to get land, and on the last occasion he spent a good deal of money in trying to get land. It was under the ballot system, and he had to take his chance. It seems to me that the system is a form of gambling. Members talk about settling people on the land. The fact is they cannot get land.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Any more than some candidates can get seats in Parliament—because there are too many applicants.

Several HONOURABLE MEMBERS interjecting,

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

Mr. COLLINS: The Secretary for Railways is giving his own case away when he says there are too many applicants. If you are going to bring people here, you should have the land ready to put them on.

The PREMIER: You cannot put them all on the same piece of land.

Mr. COLLINS: There is plenty of land in Queensland.

Several HONOURABLE MEMBERS interjecting,

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I must remind the Committee that the hon.

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member for Burke is making a speech, and his time is limited. I therefore hope that members will not continue interjecting.

Mr. COLLINS: Since I have been in the Chamber several references have been made to Canada as far as land settlement is concerned; but are the methods the same? I am now going to quote from an interview reported in the Brisbane *Courier* of 6th September, 1909—an interview with a member of one of the Chambers of Commerce. I believe a conference of Chambers of Commerce sat in Brisbane at that time, and this is what was said by Mr. Ames, who, I believe was a member of one of the State Parliaments in Canada—

Going on to refer to the land policy of the Dominion, Mr. Ames mentioned that the Government had a belt of country 850 miles long and 350 miles wide, marked out into 160-acre sections. Intending settlers were provided with guides and horses, and allowed to inspect any number of blocks, and choose what they required.

That is the immigration policy of Canada. Can any member of the Government point out to me where they have a block of country 850 miles long by 300 miles wide marked out in 160-acre sections waiting for the people that are being brought here? I understand that the immigration agents in the old country are pointing out to the people there that Queensland is a splendid country for them to settle in, and asking them to settle on our lands and help to increase the production of our wealth—not to work for a miserable wage, as the hon. member for Cunningham would want them to do. We want to build up a free and independent class of men, and not a lot of wage slaves. That is my view of the matter. There is one thing I am going to refer to in this House until such time as I see it remedied, if I am here long enough. In the Treasurer's Statement I notice this paragraph—

The position held for years by the sugar industry as the leading agricultural industry of the State is rapidly being approached by the dairying industry, the output of which for last year exceeded £1,500,000 sterling in value, a sum that for the present year will be much increased. The butter produced in 1909 was 24,592,711 lb., but in addition to this the cheese industry is becoming an important factor, and the initiation of an export trade has met with a fair measure of success, which promises to increase. New factories are being established in various districts, and there is every indication of a greater vitality in this industry than in other branches of agriculture. The capital employed in butter factories amounts to £135,901, and there are 11,529 males and 11,419 females occupied in the different branches of dairying, as against 33,459 persons engaged in general agriculture.

I notice in connection with most of the industries in the Commonwealth, especially manufacturing industries and the dairying industry, that it is somewhat wonderful to see the number of females that are employed.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Don't you think sometimes these figures get duplicated in connection with returns?

Mr. COLLINS: I am quoting from the Financial Statement. It seems to me that, not only in Queensland but throughout the Commonwealth, a large number of our women are having to work in these industries to enable them to obtain a livelihood; and to my mind that is wrong. The reason I refer to the dairying industry, especially in connection with the butter question, is this: Until I get satisfaction from the

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Government, or until I can shame some of the large sugar plantations to give their workmen butter, I am going to mention it in the House on every opportunity I get. It is no use telling me that the country has produced 24,592,711 lb. of butter. I want to know about our own people not getting butter. (Hear, hear!) I am not worrying about producing butter to feed John Bull, or the Frenchman, or the German, or the Philippine Islanders; I am not worrying about that in the least. What I am worrying about is this: That the Treasurer states that the country is in a prosperous condition. Member after member on that side of the House got up and told us that the country was in a prosperous condition, and I am trying to prove that it is not as prosperous as they would have us believe. The prosperity of a country ought to be judged by its standard of comfort. Do you mean to tell me that your standard of comfort is very high when your people cannot get either jam or butter? (Laughter.) The Minister for Railways represents a sugar district, and he knows what I am stating is perfectly true. I do not say that all sugar-mills are alike, but I know a good many sugar-mills where the owners do not give their employees any butter at all.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Nor jam either.

Mr. COLLINS: The Minister for Education is also interested in the butter industry, and I can tell him he has a good market there. Why does he not pass a law to raise the standard of comfort in connection with the sugar-mills in Queensland, and compel the owners of those sugar-mills to give their employees butter?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I think I will have to engage you. (Laughter.)

Mr. COLLINS: Tell the employers at these sugar-mills that their first duty is to their own State, and they must first raise the standard of comfort of the people they employ, and they can commence by giving them butter. You have in Queensland a monopoly which is the most powerful monopoly in the Commonwealth—namely, the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, and yet that company do not give butter to their employees. It is no use making a statement about the wonderful production of butter, which is stated to be nearly equal to the sugar industry, when your own people cannot get it to eat. There is a market for butter in Queensland in the 4,000 persons employed in the sugar-mills.

Mr. LESINA: We are subsidising the exporter.

Mr. COLLINS: That is quite true. We are told about the prosperous condition of the country. What do we mean by prosperous? I should call a country prosperous where the people work as few hours as are necessary to produce the necessaries of life. What do we find when we go into our sugar-mills? The senior member for Townsville made a remark last night about the hon. member for Bowen, but the hon. member for Bowen is well able to take care of himself without me taking his part. But the hon. member for Bowen told us about the hours they worked in the sugar-mills. What are the conditions in the sugar-mills?

Mr. RYLAND: The Treasurer won't give them a light at Mount Bauple Mill.

Mr. COLLINS: We know that in the sugar-mills the employees work for twenty-four hours. They work all round right through

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the twenty-four hours, and they have only two shifts. The argument is advanced that they must work two shifts of twelve hours each. Of course, the senior member for Townsville said last night that out of that time they had an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner, but I know something about the conditions under which they have to work at these sugar-mills.

The TREASURER: They work ninety-six hours a fortnight.

Mr. COLLINS: I will later on deal with the ninety-six hours a fortnight in the mills under the Government control. I am talking about mills in general now, where they have to work twelve-hour shifts, and we must remember that if a man leaves off work for one hour to get his dinner the other men have to do his work while he is eating his dinner. That is how they work it in most of the sugar-mills in Queensland. Why do not the Government bring down a short measure—a Bill of about two clauses would be all that is necessary—fixing the hours of labour in connection with the sugar-mills at eight hours per day? If the State Government are not prepared to do this for us, then we may have to appeal to the Federal Government to come to the rescue.

Mr. LESINA: I think that is your only hope.

Mr. COLLINS: What is the use of telling people 12,000 miles away what a wonderful country you have here when you are working your people here for twelve hours a day?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: Have you not found it to be a wonderful country?

Mr. COLLINS: It is a wonderful country. But, if it were not for our wonderful natural resources, the country would be in a worse plight than what they are in the older countries of the world. It is all owing to the wonderful productiveness of Nature, and not owing to the Government sitting over there at all, and also owing to climatic conditions.

Mr. LESINA: Governments have very little to do with these things.

Mr. COLLINS: If the Government are going to assist us to fix the hours of labour in the sugar-mills, look what an advertisement it will be for the State! If the Government are going to continue their policy of immigration, which I do not believe in, look what an advertisement it would be if you could tell people that if they came to Queensland they would only have to work eight hours a day in connection with the sugar-mills. That is quite long enough for anyone to work. Just imagine a man trying to develop his intellectual faculties after working for twelve hours in a sugar-mill! Why, after putting in twelve hours in a mill a man would be physically exhausted. Not so long ago I was paying a visit to the Pioneer Mill, in the Brandon district. I noticed a small reading-room there, and on the table was a box, and on the box was pasted the word "Suggestions." Just fancy asking a man to give suggestions for the improvement of his mind after he has worked for twelve hours! A man has to do his twelve hours in the sugar-mill, and then he is supposed to suggest something in connection with the library.

Mr. RYLAND: The best suggestion that he can make is that he should have some sleep. (Laughter.)

Mr. COLLINS: We are told that the Government have purchased Inkerman Estate, and the next best thing to do is to see that

we have a State-owned sugar-mill in that locality. (Hear, hear!) I do not see why the people in that locality should have to depend on Drysdale Brothers. Why do we do away with one form of tyranny and substitute another in its place? No one can ever tell me that sugar-growers are free to express their opinions in a district controlled by private enterprise. That is not my experience at any rate. Why not have a State-owned mill there, as you could make a huge success of it. Talking in connection with immigration, I notice that our marriage rate is not very high.

Mr. LESINA: It is the highest in Australia.

Mr. COLLINS: No, it is not; and even supposing it was the highest in Australia, that does not prove anything. It should be a lot higher than it is, and you would have a higher marriage rate if you had better conditions than what you have in Queensland at the present time. Something should also be done to check the high death rate we have. We have got the old-age pensions now, but something should be done to introduce a children's pension, so that their mothers can get proper conditions to rear their children.

Mr. LESINA: The same as they do in Germany.

Mr. COLLINS: And we should do away with all this cry of immigration. I notice on looking through the Estimates that we are going to increase the salaries of most of the Under Secretaries. I am going to oppose those increases for all I am worth. (Hear, hear!) I think that £700 a year is a fair salary for most Under Secretaries. It is all very well to argue that they are good and useful men, but they are the creatures of environment, just the same as we all are, and their usefulness would disappear if they ceased to be Under Secretaries. It is proposed in one or two cases to put on an increase of £100 over and above the £700 they are getting at the present time. What is the average earnings of the average employee in the Queensland factories to-day. It amounts to £75.7 per annum. Fancy the people working in our factories earning on an average £75 a year!

Hon. R. PHILP: They are mostly boys and girls.

Mr. COLLINS: If that is the case, I am ashamed of Queensland. The sum of £75 a year is a very small amount for a man to keep a wife and rear a family on. From what I can learn, in the city of Brisbane one-fourth of a worker's income goes in rent. Deduct that one-fourth from the average earning of £75 a year, and see what must be the earnings of the bulk of those factory operatives.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: You forget that young people are included in that average.

Mr. COLLINS: I am very sorry if boys and girls are working in our factories. But even supposing that boys and girls are employed, the average earnings of the workers is very low—it is lower than the average for the whole of the Commonwealth. The average for the whole of the Commonwealth is £77.22 per annum, while our average is only £75. I do not blame Under Secretaries for trying to get an increase of £100 or £500 a year. Personally I do not admire any man or woman who is satisfied with his or her position in life. I am always on the side of

dissatisfaction, because dissatisfaction means progress. The unfortunate thing in connection with our workers, not only in our factories but in all our industries, is that they are satisfied with so little.

Hon. R. PHILP: You don't believe in peace and contentment, then?

Mr. COLLINS: As the representative of a very important mining centre, which may in the future be the most important mining centre in Queensland, I am sorry to notice that so little has been placed on the Estimates for the mining industry. Last session I stated that the whole of the amount placed on the Estimates for the year just closed could be well spent in my electorate. I know that some persons doubted that. We want to make a district like the Etheridge prosperous; and, notwithstanding that there is a railway there, we must have good roads and bridges. I do not recollect having seen during my travels through the Burke electorate a single bridge, outside railway bridges, and yet there is only a small amount placed on the Estimates for roads and bridges. At present they are carting ore from Mount Turner to Charleston, a distance of 25 miles, over very rough roads, at a cost of £1 5s. per ton landed on the railway trucks. Then it has to be taken from Etheridge on the railway to Chillagoe, a distance of nearly 160 miles. If we had better roads than we have in that part of Queensland teamsters would be able to take bigger loads than they do at the present time. I hope that when the Minister for Mines is allotting the vote for roads and bridges he will take into consideration the importance of the Etheridge Goldfield. Another thing that I must lodge an objection against is the number of exemptions granted by the Mines Department to the Chillagoe Company on the Etheridge Goldfield. The Chillagoe Company own about eighteen leases, comprising altogether 500 acres, on which they have spent a little over £13,000. That does not appear to me a large amount to spend in developing eighteen leases. On Gympie one company has spent nearly £50,000 on a 50-acre lease, without getting a single penny of profit from their investment; and yet in the case of the Chillagoe Company's leases on the Etheridge—and the Chillagoe Company is one of the most powerful companies in Queensland or Australia—after spending £13,000 on 500 acres they have been granted six months' exemption. Can the Etheridge prosper under those conditions? A large number of men have been thrown out of employment by the Minister granting those exemptions to the Chillagoe Company. We were told that when the Etheridge railway was built, the Chillagoe Company were going to develop that district. I do not know how they are going to develop it by getting six months' exemption. The senior member for Townsville suggested last night that the mining members should meet together and agree upon some suggestions to make to the Minister. We have offered suggestions to the Minister from time to time, but he does not seem to take any notice of our suggestions. We have suggested the adoption of the State battery system. While we are not opposed to grants in aid of deep sinking, we hold that there are a number of places where there is no necessity for deep sinking if the Government will only give assistance to miners by erecting State batteries. There is no better example of how beneficial a State battery would be than the Oaks Goldfield.

Mr. Collins.]

I was no sooner returned as a member of this House than I got up a deputation to the Minister for Mines to ask him to erect a State battery on the Oaks Goldfield. Had the hon. gentleman acted upon the suggestion of that deputation, the battery would have been a huge success. But the men who go pioneering get very little assistance in the shape of crushing plant on new goldfields.

Hon. R. PHILP: I put four plants up, and they are abandoned now.

Mr. COLLINS: That proves nothing. In the case I have mentioned—that is, the Oaks Goldfield, which I believe is going to be a permanent goldfield—a State battery would have been a big success. I wish to point out the reason why we want State batteries. We all know that the owner of a private battery makes 5s. per ton—and they have made a great deal more than that—on crushing stone for miners. Then there is a profit of, say, 5s. per ton for cyaniding, [4.30 p.m.] which makes a total of 10s. per ton. If that 10s. per ton went into the pockets of the miners, they would work lower-grade ore than they are working at the present time. To show what Western Australia is doing in this connection, I shall quote an extract from the report of the Western Australian Department of Mines for 1908—

The number of State batteries has increased from twenty-nine in 1908 to thirty-two in 1909, the new plants being 5-head mills at Youanme and Messenger's Patch, and a 2-head mill at Desdemona. The number of cyanide plants in operation is twenty-four, an increase of two on the previous year's figures, and in addition there are slime plants at Mulline, Niagara, Norseman, Menzies, and Leonora, the two latter being erected during the year. There are two tin dressing plants at Greenbushes.

From the inception of the battery system to the end of 1909 gold and tin to the value of £3,120,794 have been recovered at the State plants; 695,128 tons of gold ore were treated and produced—£2,658,966 worth of gold by amalgamation, £359,881 worth by cyanidation, and £42,192 worth from slimes; and 41,723 tons of tin ore produced tin to the value of £59,755. During the year the gold ore treated was £94,219 tons for 83,127 fine oz., and in the preceding year 95,623 tons for 89,875 fine oz.

The scale of charges in existence at State batteries during 1908 was altered as from 1st February, 1909, the scale introduced ranging from 8s. to 15s. per ton, with rebates under certain conditions; this scale was subsequently changed, from 1st November, to a differential scale.

The working expenditure for all plants for the year totalled £81,939 7s. 3d., and the revenue £80,776 16s. 9d., which, after including £502 16s. 10d. for additions, etc., paid from revenue, shows a loss of £1,965 7s. 4d. on the year's operations.

The capital expenditure on erection of State batteries from the inception of the scheme to the end of 1909 was £275,319 13s. 5d., £91,981 1s. 8d. being paid from revenue, and £183,338 11s. 9d. from loan.

The working expenditure exceeds receipts by £19,015 9s. 5d. The cost of administration for the year was £4,247 11s. 5d., against £4,370 16s. 1d. for 1908.

The plants that were well supplied with stone show fairly low costs. Those especially worth mentioning are—Menzies, 10,187 tons milling costing 6s. 7.8d. per ton; Black Range, 8,139 tons milling costing 6s. 10.9d. per ton; Burtville, 2,969 tons costing 7s. 3.9d. per ton; Youanme, 2,153 tons milling costing 8s. 2.29d. per ton. Each of these mills shows a profit on milling and cyaniding.

During the year sands and slimes have been purchased, for which the customers have received in cash £38,608. 61,032 tons of sands have been treated at a cost of £19,786 15s. 3d. The revenue from the treatment amounts to £26,883 1s. 5d.

I would like to point out to the Secretary for

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Mines that in Western Australia they not only have crushing batteries but they have also slime and sand plants and tin plants under the control of the Government. If the mining industry in Queensland is to prosper, especially in the far North, the sooner the Government embark on something similar the better for the industry. There has been a lot said about railway construction. I believe that for over thirty years the people of Georgetown have been promised a railway. I understand the Government are carrying out a survey from Charleston to Georgetown, and I hope they will place the money on the Estimates that is necessary to construct the line. It is only a distance of 24 miles, and I believe that, according to Mr. Frew's estimate, the cost will be less than £50,000. I hope the Government will consider the advisability of opening up that part of Queensland, and of doing something to assist the mining industry there.

The TREASURER: You don't object to spending loan money, then.

Mr. COLLINS: I am not saying anything about spending loan money or not spending loan money. I want to see a railway built to a place where the people have been promised a line for a number of years. When speaking about roads and bridges, I pointed out that it is impossible to develop mines unless we have good roads; and there can be no doubt that, if we get a railway to Georgetown, there is any amount of mineral land about Mount Turner and elsewhere that could be developed. I received a promise from the Secretary for Lands, and I hope he will do all he can to hurry up the opening of land for settlement in the Burke electorate. The people there are desirous of getting upon the land, as the Minister knows full well. I have shown him copies of letters received by myself, asking that land be thrown open for selection. We have a fair amount of good land in the Burke district which is suitable for close settlement—at least the people who live there tell me so, and they are the best judges. I hope that something will be done towards throwing open this land in the vicinity of Einasleigh and Mount Surprise, and even on the Newcastle Range, where I believe we have one of the finest pieces of country there is in Queensland suitable for settlement—an area of about 30 square miles on the top of the Newcastle Range, 2,500 feet above sea-level.

Mr. HODGE: What about the timber possibilities?

Mr. COLLINS: The timber is not bad on the Newcastle Range. I think I have said all I have to say in connection with the Financial Statement, and I think I have kept well within bounds.

Mr. WIENHOLT (*Fassifern*): I have followed this debate very carefully, and it seems to me that the criticism of the financial policy of the Government takes two sides. One set of members complain that the Government are not spending enough money, and say they should launch out in the way of building sugar-mills, State batteries, and so on. Other members complain that the Government are extravagant in their expenditure, and say that they are not saving up and making provision for a rainy day—or, rather, for a rainless day. I have had some experience as an arbitrator, and if both parties are dissatisfied with the decision of the arbitrator—one taking the view that the award is too high and the other holding

equally strongly that it is too low—then one can generally console himself with the feeling that perhaps he has given a fairly just decision. In the same way, I think the financial policy of the Government can be proved to be very fair and sound, as it does not seem to please either extreme. I hope that the financial policy, as shown in the Financial Statement, will be carried out, and that it will continue on very similar lines, because I believe that a great deal of work, such as railway construction, can be carried out very much better when times are good than when times are bad. I also believe that the railways they are pushing ahead with now are going to be of tremendous value to us when a bad time does come. The transcontinental line will be a tremendous advantage, not only to those actually alongside it when the next drought comes, but it is going to be a tremendous help to the farmers inside. I think it is going to open up possibilities for a very big new market for them.

Mr. HAMILTON: Why, we cannot supply our own market now.

Mr. WIENHOLT: If that connection is made, in the next drought the farmers inside may have a good season, as very often happens, and they will then have a big outlet for lucerne and other feed. At the same time I hold—and I know other farming representatives will agree with me—that there should be no cessation of the policy of building railways into farming districts. I would not support the transcontinental line, much as I believe in it myself, if I thought it was going to affect adversely the chance of these other lines.

Mr. FERRICKS: Which would you give the preference to?

Mr. WIENHOLT: I think they can both be carried out. Then there is another question which makes me rather anxious, and that is the question of our markets. It is no good our producing double or treble as much as we do if we can only get half the price for it. Some time ago, I remember, the Government then in power had a commissioner in the East, who was looking out for trade, and generally finding out what new openings there were. I think that was a very good idea.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: It did a lot of good.

Mr. WIENHOLT: I was not in the House at the time, but I thought it was an excellent step to try and open up markets in Singapore and other places in the East, and I would like the Government to take steps to see that the different produce we can raise here should be suitably advertised and brought before the people of these countries. I am not one of those people who think that because they are members of Parliament they know everything, about everything. I have heard a great deal of talk on the other side about the mining industry. I am quite willing to admit that I know very little about it, and that there are hon. members on the opposite side who know a great deal about it from practical experience. Therefore, I always listen to these representatives of mining districts with considerable attention, especially as I realise my own ignorance on this subject. I hear them advocate, amongst other things, State batteries, and so on. Still, I cannot help wondering whether the depression in the mining industry at present may not happen to have a greater cause than some hon. members opposite seem to suggest. I am wondering whether the

matter is not a lack of confidence in mining investments—if there is not some hesitation on the part of mining investors to put their capital in mining investments.

Mr. MULLAN: What would be the cause of that?

Mr. WIENHOLT: Well, the uneasiness on the part of these investors I put down to a doubt on their part as to whether they will reap a reasonable reward for the money they have invested. I should not wonder if there is not something in it.

Mr. FERRICKS: How is it that that does not apply to pastoral investments?

Mr. WIENHOLT: Now, we have passed through this House a Mining or Private Property Bill. I know that hon. members on the other side were very keen, and said that if this Bill became law it would open up a lot of mining, and cause the finding of fresh fields. I am wondering if there has really been any result already through the Bill having been passed.

Mr. MULLAN: It is only the other day it came into operation—the 1st September.

Mr. WIENHOLT: However, that remains to be proved. Then, as regards the question of State batteries, I, for one, would not oppose that simply because I have no mining industry in the electorate I have the honour to represent—not like the hon. member who has just spoken, who speaks for perhaps a quarter of an hour running down the butter industry.

Mr. COLLINS: No; making it more useful.

Mr. WIENHOLT: But I cannot help thinking of the amount of machinery which is at present lying idle. Then there is another matter which hon. members have touched upon—and especially the leader of the Opposition—and that is in regard to the difference in rents paid by the station lessees and the grazing farmers. I am quite willing to admit that there is a very great difference—perhaps not quite as big a difference as the hon. member himself thinks, but still a great difference.

Mr. BOWMAN: I simply gave you the report of the Under Secretary for Lands—he ought to know.

Mr. WIENHOLT: But there is this consideration: Hon. members opposite, I think, have taken the stand that the lessees are not paying sufficient. I rather looked on it the other way. I think it is the grazing farmers who are paying too much, and I think although things are very good now—and perhaps to a business man like the present Minister it naturally appeals to make the best he can out of his department—I still think that a great many of the grazing farmers in the West are paying too high a rent. My idea is that it is far better to make the grazing farmer, or the station lessee, pay a fair rent, and make him pay that in good or bad seasons, rather than make him pay a high rent while things are good, and then in a bad time come to the Government and try for a reduction of his rent.

Mr. LESINA: They are largely responsible for it themselves.

Mr. WIENHOLT: I would far rather see an equitable rent which the lessee could afford to pay in good or bad seasons. There is just one other matter that I wish to touch upon, and that is in connection with the Stock Department. Now, I am not going to blame the Stock Department, nor am I, so to speak,

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going to "sool" the department on to spend more money, but I think that there should be a big change made in connection with our stock inspectors. I have nothing to say against our stock inspectors. I know a great many of them, and I think they are an exceptionally able and conscientious lot of men—and what is more, I do not think they are paid sufficiently. But in the inside districts there is a big change going on. The country is getting more closely settled, and stock are becoming far more valuable than they were, and I want to see the stock inspectors—at any rate in the inside districts—worked into veterinary inspectors, or something of that sort, rather than purely stock inspectors. I know that that takes time, but I think some start can be made in that way, and, now that we are getting a University, I would very much like to see some chair introduced into it where our young Queenslanders who are growing up could get a valuable practical training in veterinary work. (Hear, hear!) Then, I would like to see these young men gradually drafted into closely settled districts to take the place of the present stock inspectors when their time falls in. I do not wish any drastic or unfair steps to be taken, but I think that the stock inspector of the future, in the inside districts, should be, above all things, a veterinary surgeon. (Hear, hear!) I think the thing could be made to a great extent self-supporting. I would like to see the veterinary inspector in a position similar to the position of a doctor of the hospital, who has the right to outside practice. I should like to see him do his Government work as inspector.

Mr. MANN: Weren't you an inspector lately for the Government of some lands in the Burnett district?

Mr. WIENHOLT: That is quite true. I have been doing so. How it actually affects the question of veterinary inspectors I do not quite know. As I was saying, these inspectors might get a position similar to that of a doctor in the hospital who has the right of private practice. He would do the Government work as inspector, and he should also be able to attend any place where he was needed amongst the farmers in the district, and charge, perhaps, a little fee, which should be restricted. I think the fact of his doing it would give an additional zest to his work, which would be most desirable. A man may have a cow, or a draught mare, worth a great deal of money—horses are very dear—and instead of sending to Brisbane, and getting a veterinary surgeon, to whom, perhaps, he would have to pay 6 or 7 guineas, he would be able to get the Government inspector, who would be comparatively handy, and get his beast attended to with, perhaps, a charge of only 10s. 6d. or a guinea. All these would help to pay the stock inspector, so that we could get the right class of man, and altogether I think there is a big opening for changes on those lines. The hon. member for Herbert when speaking yesterday—I think he was a little bit out of his ground—said the Government ought to restrict mares going out of the country. I think if the hon. member went round buying horses he would find it very difficult to get an offer of any mares. I do not know anybody myself offering good mares—if he did he would very soon be in the insolvency court or in the lunatic asylum. The only man who is likely to sell mares for export is the man who is desperately hard up, and, in that case, I do not think he wants

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any restrictions placed on him. It is just one of those small petty restrictions which we have quite enough of already, and which I will oppose most strongly. Just while speaking on horse-breeding, I note there is £300 on the Estimates for the Government horse-breeding station at Consuelo. I believe this will prove to be a fairly good investment. Of course, the Government do not expect to get any return for at least five or six years. It seems to me to have been the right thing to have done, because they will have the advantage of being able to use any of the good mares which they may have in the Police Department. I do not think they really have a great many—I have been keeping my eyes open, and I think the police horses are mostly geldings. I have no wish to take up the time of the House any longer. I only wish to state I have thorough confidence in the financial policy of the Government, and hope they will be able to go ahead for some time. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Charters Towers*): I have no intention of taking up the time of the House at any great length, but I would like to make a few brief comments on the Financial Statement before it goes through. I listened very carefully to the Treasurer when he delivered the Financial Statement, and I have listened to most of what has been said since that Statement was delivered. In that Statement the Treasurer makes what he calls an estimate of the revenue and expenditure for the year, and it seems to me that, instead of being an estimate it is rather a guess, when the Treasurer is practically £281,000 out in his estimate. It may be called an estimate, but it seems to me to be a guess, and a rather rash guess at that, when the revenue and expenditure is so far apart from what it actually turns out to be at the end of the year. We find, too, that the Treasurer states, in connection with the recent loan, that £55,261 has been taken out of revenue and placed to an account to make up half the depreciation in that loan. When that Loan Bill was before the House we were told that the Government were not anxious to go on the money market, but they wanted to be in a position so that when the market was favourable they could take advantage of it and get money cheaper. Evidently they did not succeed in doing that, as we find now that the loan practically cost over £100,000, and if there is any advantage, I think the Treasurer might have pointed it out. It seems to me like taking money out of one pocket and putting it in another. While he says he has made provision for the depreciation in this respect, there seems to have been no provision made, nor does it appear there is any intention on his part to make any provision for the loans falling due in the next few years. During the next few years we will be expected to repay loans to the extent of £13,000,000 or £14,000,000.

The TREASURER: We have five years to do that.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Scarcely five years. In 1913 there are £13,000,000 due. How that is going to be met only the Treasurer knows—even if he knows. I think this House should have been informed what steps they are taking, or what provision has been made, to meet these loans when they fall due. If we strike the money market in no better position than when we floated our last loan, then we will find ourselves in a rather unfortunate position when these loans have to be met. Then, too, there seems to be an everlasting

desire on the part of the present Government to have a dig at the Commonwealth. The Treasurer states in the Financial Statement that we are going to lose a good deal of revenue during the ensuing year, without any compensation whatsoever, by not having the agreement in the Constitution. If there would have been any advantage in having that financial agreement placed in the Constitution, I think the Treasurer might have pointed it out. I fail to see, if they are going to get the return for ten years, or even more than ten years, that they are in any worse position than they would have been even if the agreement were placed in the Constitution.

The TREASURER: Parliament can alter it at any time.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Yes; and it could have been altered at any time if it were placed in the Constitution.

The TREASURER: By the people.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Yes.

The TREASURER: We would sooner trust the people than the Federal Parliament.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: At any rate, there is no difference in the amount the Treasurer would have received under the agreement if placed in the Constitution and the amount he will receive under the present scheme. It seems to me they are anxious to shoulder the blame on to someone else after having advocated the scheme. I fail to see that any compensation, or any advantage, could have accrued by having the agreement placed in the Constitution. If there would have been any advantage, then the Treasurer might have shown that that was the case.

The TREASURER: That is the whole thing—we prefer trusting the people to trusting the Federal Parliament.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: The Treasurer also points out that we are not likely to have to go to the money market this year. I do not think they ought to go to the London money market just yet, when only the other day they borrowed £2,000,000; and, seeing they did not get it at a cheap rate, I think it is just as well he does not look forward to going on the money market at the present time. While most of the appropriations that we made for the various departments last year were exceeded, and some of them exceeded considerably, in reference to the mining appropriation he managed to save £7,651. Mean and parsimonious as the Government have been, even in relation to the appropriation for the mining industry, they have been too mean even to spend what was placed on the Estimates. They have tried, as far as they possibly could, to keep the money in their coffers, even after it was passed by Parliament, and it might very well have been spent. The Treasurer says, in reference to mining—

In the abounding prosperity generally manifest, mining alone of the greater industries does not participate, and Queensland, in common with every State of the Commonwealth, shows declining production. In the older goldfields the rich, easily won, and easily treated deposits are becoming exhausted, and the extraction of the ores of the deeper ground is becoming more difficult and costly.

If other industries in Queensland had been treated on similar lines to the way the mining industry has been treated for years past by the present Government, they too, in-

stead of showing progress and prosperity, would have been showing just the reverse. The Treasurer goes on to say—

No doubt the constant advance in mining practice and in metallurgical processes largely compensates for the fall in grade, and helps to make available much that would formerly have been rejected.

About that there is not the slightest doubt, and I think something might have been done in this direction in reference to not only State batteries but also in relation to smelting works, and also in relation to experimental works in this direction. I believe I am safe in saying that an engi-

[5 p.m.] neering plant and a metallurgical plant were promised to the School of Mines, Charters Towers. People were led to believe that something in this direction would be done—but, like a great many other promises, this has gone to the ground. We know that the mining industry has been suffering from the low price of metals—copper, for instance—but the fields are by no means worked out. There are examples on Charters Towers at present where mines were worked twenty and thirty years ago and were practically abandoned, and within a few feet of those mines splendid reefs have been picked up. I know one that was worked thirty years ago and left, and a man sank a shaft within a few feet and got the reef at a reasonable depth; and at present that mine is turning out stuff worth £8 a ton. Evidence like this goes to show that fields are by no means worked out; and help ought to be given by the Government in regard to State batteries, smelting works, and such assistance as will lead men to prospect more vigorously. While the mining fields as a whole have very little to thank the Government for—I admit they have got something from the Government—I feel sure that the mining people themselves will show that the fields are by no means worked out, and we will again see prosperous and progressive times on the various mining fields of Queensland. In reference to public expenditure, there is no doubt that money has been spent rather freely. Years ago we used to be told that if we increased our population it would reduce our indebtedness per head and also our expenditure per head—that with the increased population practically the same services would be rendered, and an increased revenue would accrue without a corresponding increase in expenditure. Yet we find that in the last five years the expenditure has increased from £8 3s. 2d. to £10 5s. per head of the population. We also find that, while there is not a railway proposition brought forward that is not going to pay from its inception, the returns from our railways have decreased during the last four years from £3 14s. 8d. per cent. to £3 5s. 9d. per cent. on the capital invested. So, notwithstanding the fact that our population is increasing, it is making very little difference in that direction. In the Statement of the Treasurer we find he preens his wings with a good deal of pride by reason of the fact that as the Treasury notes become due he will be able to meet them with gold. He says—

We shall have to redeem, within six months after the passing of the Act, the whole amount of the Treasury notes issued, which amount to about £1,600,000. Fortunately our position is such that we shall be able to do this without undue pressure on our resources, and arrangements will be made whereby from the date of the passing of the Act gold will be available at the Treasury for the redemption of every note Queensland has issued.

It would be nothing less than a disgrace if it

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was not so. It would mean that the Treasurer had spent the money on some thing he had no right to spend it on, or that he had invested it in some security by which it was made not available when required; and he would thus be open to condemnation. It is simply returning what was handed to him—to return gold for Treasury notes as they become due. A good deal has been said in reference to railway construction, and I want to make one or two comments. Some members have said the Government were not spending sufficient money on railway construction, while other members have said they spent too much. With this party it is not so much a question of the amount they are spending as of the kind of investment. I do not think the party has any objection to the expenditure of loan money, or to loan money being obtained when necessity arises; but we want loans to be obtained at a reasonable rate of interest and when the money market is in a fair condition for borrowing; and after the money is borrowed we want it invested in such a manner as to make something like a decent return. We have been told over and over again, in reference to railway proposals submitted to us, that they would be splendid paying concerns; but we have found that such is not the case. It has also been pointed out that railway propositions are not party questions, and never should be made party questions, but it is practically impossible for the majority of members to have a personal knowledge of the country through which every railway goes, and they have to vote to some extent on the evidence given by other members and on the evidence obtained by the Select Committee, and the Commissioner's statement.

The TREASURER: You do not expect a railway to pay from the turning of the first sod.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Not for a time after they commence working; but there is a great deal of difference between the reality and the ideal set before the House when the railway is proposed. I only hope they will all pay; but it is doubtful whether some of the railways in course of construction during recent years will anything like come up to anticipations. That is the crux of the question—not as to how much money is spent, but how the money is spent, and whether it is spent on legitimate railways or not. What this party has objected to has been that money has been spent by the Government in times gone by, and the benefits have not accrued to the Government but to private landowners. The Government has spent hundreds of thousands of pounds—in some instances millions—and the private individual has reaped practically the whole of the advantage of railway construction. And while the Government ridiculed these arguments at the time, they have come to see that it was an unwise policy. And to some extent they have recognised that fact during recent years by making their railways through Crown lands, and by that means getting some advantage by the railway construction out of the increased prices received for the lands when they were sold. We believe that that is the correct policy, and we want to see that policy pursued. As a matter of fact, the cutting up of our lands has not always meant closer settlement. In a great many instances it has meant increased values accruing on the lands, and the owners of the land have reaped the increased values which the people who wanted the land had to pay. In spite of all that may be said to the contrary, there is very little land available

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that is suitable for agricultural purposes that is not miles away from a railway. It is just as well to know that, when men are handicapped with such conditions as this, it is practically impossible for them to make a living on the land when they get it. We have heard over and over again that the labour is not available—that the men cannot be got for the work that is wanted to be done. I will give a concrete case about the wages that exist in Brisbane at the present time. I was having a look round one day last week at a place where men were doing work—not like the work that is done on a dairy farm or any other farm, but work which was more like horses' work than a man's work. They were working in a brickyard, and the men were wheeling 12,000 bricks a day away from the machine and setting them in the kiln. It was not exactly unskilled work either, because it was work that they had to get accustomed to, and they had to learn how to handle the bricks. These men had to work for eight and a-half hours a day, and they received the magnificent wage of 6s. 6d. per day. If that is the wage that men are expected to work for when they come here from the old country, how can they be expected to keep a home and pay house rent and rear a family on a wage like that, and when will they ever get an opportunity to start for themselves? It is impossible for a man to maintain a decent standard of living for himself and his family under conditions like that. It is to some extent skilled labour, and that is the wage they receive. I say that the men who are brought to this country are in a great many instances brought out under false pretences, and statements are made that cannot be verified when they arrive here. We are also told that it is the duty of the Government—as we have been told over and over again—to provide labour for the employers. This argument can be made to cut both ways. If the Government are under the obligation to provide labour for the employers, then they are also under the obligation to provide work for the men who want it. (Hear, hear!) Notwithstanding all that has been said about the prosperity of Queensland and the good prices that are prevailing here to-day, there are hundreds and thousands in Queensland to-day who find it a difficult task to make ends meet. They work for three or four months, and then they are out of work for two or three months, and the result is that they have a great deal of difficulty in maintaining themselves in anything like decent comfort at all. We have heard a great deal about railway construction, and there seems to be a hankering in the minds of the Government after the old contract system again. They frankly admit that the day labour has been a success, and that they get full value for their money, and yet they do not seem to be satisfied with things as they are.

Mr. BOWMAN: Their own officers admit it, too.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Yes; their own officers in the Railway Department know that the day-labour system is the best. It seems as if the Government want to have another try at the old contract system as we knew it fifteen or twenty years ago. I have not the slightest doubt that if tenders were called for any railway, certain prices would be given which would be given for the express purpose of showing that the Government were throwing away money in constructing their railways by day labour. There is no doubt about it that the wages men would be affected by it,

because we know that the contractors would beat them down to the last penny. The Government does not treat them too liberally, but the men have done better work under the Government, and they get better wages and, in many instances, better conditions under the day-labour system than they would get under the contract system.

The TREASURER: Don't you know that all Government contracts have a clause in them which states that the current rate of wages of the district has to be paid?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Yes; but that clause is "more honoured in the breach than in the observance." It is one thing to put a clause there, and it is another to see it carried out. In the majority of cases the Government put the clause there, and, so far as the Government are concerned, that is the end of it.

The TREASURER: You are wrong.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: If the contractor chooses to pay the wages current in the district he can do so, but if he does not choose to do so, he does not pay it. That is my own experience of the contractor, at any rate. He cuts down prices, and then if he can manage to slum the work he will do so. There have been instances, not only on Government contracts but on others, where the man who is supposed to see that good work is done has been "got at," and the Government have had to suffer.

Mr. MANN: Look at the line from Gladstone to Rockhampton! The Government men had to finish that line and put it right after the contractor handed it over.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Where the men are employed on day labour it always means good work. The quality is the test of cheapness, and, if the Government depart from their present system, they will find out that they will make a sad mistake. There have been instances where men have downed tools even under the present system in order to get a fair thing. The argument has been put forth that the railways can be sold to-day for what they cost. I have no doubt about that whatever. I suppose other members, like myself, have had a statement placed in their hands in order to prove that the State-owned railways are a rank failure as compared with the privately-owned railways of Canada, Argentina, and Sweden. From the point of view of the syndicates that is quite correct. But everybody knows that the workers in these countries have to pay for it. While, therefore, a syndicate could be formed to buy up the whole of the Queensland railways, they would take precious good care that they did not lose by the transaction, for the simple reason that the country would be in the grip of the syndicate, and the people would have to pay, as they do now, 50 per cent. over and above the rates charged on the State-owned lines. I think it would be a sad mistake to ever let the railways of Queensland get into the hands of private individuals.

The TREASURER: That was merely put forward to show that the money was not badly invested.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: On the whole the money was not badly invested, but there are cases which the Treasurer himself knows where the money was badly spent—where it was not spent as a financial investment, but for other reasons. (Hear, hear!) And this is a fact which cannot be disputed—that this party is opposed to railways being made in the interests of individuals or factions. Rail-

ways should be made where they will serve the best purposes of the people themselves and the country as a whole. Since the Guarantee Act has been in force it has been a redeeming feature and has secured the Government in the shape of interest, and it has been a good thing in other directions as well. There has also been something said about the railway men, and about the eight-hour system that the Government have been talking about ever since they brought it into force. They never miss an opportunity of reminding this House, and the country as a whole, that they placed the railway men under what they term the eight-hour system. But it is more apparent than real. It is not what it seems to be, and I am inclined to think that it is not what it is expected to be. These men are supposed to work only ninety-six hours a fortnight, but the system does not work out as it ought to do, nor as it was expected it would work. As a matter of fact, the men often work three, four, and five hours overtime in the course of a week, and they are often knocked off for half a day or a day immediately after they have been paid, and then they have to work overtime during the whole of a week or a fortnight to make up their ordinary service. In many instances they do not get their ordinary service, as temporary hands are put on to do the work they ought to do. It is common practice in the Railway Department for men who are paid low wages to work overtime, while the higher-paid men do not get full time at work. In this respect the eight-hour system is not what it ought to be, and the railway men have good ground for complaint. They have complained over and over again, and yet their grievance has not been remedied. If a man does not know when he has to work and when he can stay at home, he is in almost as bad a position as he would be if he was at work all the time. These men are liable to be called upon at any hour of the day or night. Lengthsmen, when they have finished their fortnight's work on the Saturday, are not at liberty till the following Monday morning, but are expected to remain in camp in case they should be called upon to go to work. They do not know either the day or the hour when they will be called upon to go on duty. In this respect also the eight-hour system has not been a success. With reference to the Northern Railway, I find that it is still the best paying line in the State, returning £4 3s. 11d. per cent. on the capital invested. But I have no hesitation in saying that that line is not looked after as it should be, either in regard to station accommodation or passenger accommodation. There is such a thing as saving a shilling and losing a pound, and I am afraid that is the policy the Railway Department have pursued in some instances. They are afraid to spend a shilling or two where the expenditure is really needed, and the consequence is that they lose in other directions. When a railway is paying as the Northern line is paying, I think we are entitled to expect that the department should provide better accommodation, both as regards stations and rolling-stock. There are about twenty-five level crossings on the line between Townsville and Charters Towers, and those crossings have no gates. Some day the Government will drop in for damages to a far greater amount than it would cost them to make those level crossings secure, and also relieve the men on the road

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of the responsibility of looking after the crossings. Now, just a word or two with reference to immigration. I must repeat what has been said over and over again, and what we shall continue to say until the present conditions are altered—that we on this side of the House are not opposed to men being brought to Queensland, if the right sort of men are introduced, and there is work for them when they arrive. We have been told that there is ample opening for immigrants in the primary industries of the State. But we know that such is not the case, and we also know that the conditions under which people are brought here are not what they ought to be. The Government admit that, and yet they do not seem able to find a remedy. In the old country at the present time, and for years past, the population of the rural districts has been drifting into the cities at the rate of 10,000 per annum. I feel confident that, if we had a proper system in connection with our immigration, we should get a fairly large number of those agricultural labourers who are drifting from the country into the cities to come to Queensland, especially if they were assured that conditions here were favourable. Mr. Mahon, Principal of the Gatton College, recently paid a visit to the old country to buy stock, and in his report of his trip he says that the United Kingdom carries more cattle and horses than Australia, and that the New South Wales flock of 45,000,000 spread over 310,000 square miles is a little thing to boast of when compared with the British flock of 30,000,000 heavy-bodied sheep on one-third of the area.

The TREASURER: What about the difference in climate?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Difference in climate is not everything.

The TREASURER: It is a big factor.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Something was said the other night about the carrying capacity of our Western country when the trans-continental railway was built. The Secretary for Lands talked about the quantity of sheep it would carry. My point is: How many men and women will it carry? The land taken up in Queensland is not cultivated as it ought to be cultivated; it is not being used as it ought to be used, and there is a tendency on the part of members opposite to reckon everything by its value in pounds, shillings, and pence. But there is another aspect of the matter besides the commercial aspect, and it is an aspect which I am afraid hon. members opposite do not see, or, if they do see it, do not attach that importance to it that they should. That aspect is, how it affects the manhood and womanhood of the country. We hear a great deal of what people in the old country are told about the wages that are offered to men who are willing to work. But I say the conditions of the work are not what they ought to be. There is too much attention paid to the pounds, shillings, and pence aspect of the matter, and too little attention to the humanitarian aspect of it.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay.

This party has always advocated that the conditions of the men and women who are here and of those who are brought here should be such as will enable them to live an honest, upright, and intellectual life.

The TREASURER: Your party are not the only party who desire that.

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Mr. WINSTANLEY: I hold that we should not regard work and settlement only from the point of what can be made out of it in the shape of dividends, but that we should consider the welfare of the workman. Ever since its inception the Labour party have done what they could to see that men and women work under fair and just conditions; that they should not merely exist, but that they should also develop the best that is in them. In view of the prosperity we are enjoying, and in view of the wonderful resources of the country we live in, I am strongly of opinion that the worker does not get his fair and just share of what is being produced. Only in so far as the conditions are made better and the wages are such as will enable men to keep their wives and families decently and respectably, can we say that a country is prosperous. The prosperity of a country does not depend upon public buildings, or upon the value of its productions, so much as upon the number of well-fed, well-clothed, and contented citizens it possesses. If a community goes down in that respect, it will certainly go down in other respects. I trust that what has been said during this debate, and what

will be said on the Estimates, [5.30 p.m.] will have some effect in bringing about a better condition of things in Queensland, and that there will be such inducements offering that people will come here voluntarily instead of being led here under false pretences. I trust they will come here without statements being made to them, and without promises being given to them, that cannot be justified when they arrive in this State.

Mr. NEVITT (*Carpentaria*): The first paragraph in the Financial Statement contains these words—

Revenue has increased in a most satisfactory manner and expenditure seems to have been allowed to keep pace with the great increase in revenue.

I should like to call attention to the fact that from the year 1903-4 to the end of the last financial year the revenue has increased by over £1,500,000. At the first glance it would appear as if that was pretty good, and as if we were on the safe side of the ledger; but, when you come to analyse it, it is not so satisfactory as it appears at first. I find that the revenue from our railways increased, during that short period, by no less than £1,039,760—that is, 67 per cent. of the increase is due to the railways.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We had to spend a lot of money to earn it.

Mr. NEVITT: I am coming to that. Despite those figures, the fact remains that we have to put our hand into the consolidated revenue to the extent of £108,255 last year to keep the railways going. We often hear on the floor of this Chamber that we are proud of our railway system. I agree with that sentiment; but I would very much like to see some better system of management of those railways than we have to-day. I find, on looking at the "A.B.C. of Queensland Statistics," that our railway system is worse managed than that of any of the States of the Commonwealth with the exception of Tasmania. That is not a creditable position to be in. All the States except Queensland and Tasmania get from their railways a considerable sum of money which goes towards keeping down taxation—in other words, that surplus railway revenue can be utilised in making further extensions. I would like to see the same thing in connection with our railway system. There

seems to be something radically wrong, either in the management of our railways or else with the Government for constructing railways into districts where they are not remunerative. The leader of this party said yesterday that it would be advisable to appoint a public works commission.

The TREASURER: Do you suggest higher freights?

Mr. NEVITT: I would go so far as to say "Yes," if I considered it was necessary. But I think that, if we had a little more careful management and a little more foresight on the part of the Government in constructing railways into districts where they will return a fair interest on the money invested, we would have a different result. After five or six of the finest seasons we have ever had, we have to dip our hand into the consolidated revenue to the extent of £108,000 a year to make up the deficit on our railways, and I say that is not creditable either to the Commissioner or to the Government.

Mr. D. HUNTER: Was last season a good one?

Mr. NEVITT: Yes.

Mr. D. HUNTER: It was under the average for the last twenty years.

Mr. NEVITT: We have had five or six of the finest seasons Queensland has ever experienced.

The TREASURER: And we have made greater extensions than any other State in Australia.

Mr. NEVITT: That is not creditable. I am in favour of the extension of railways. I know there are places in Queensland which are languishing for want of railways, and where it would repay the Government or anybody else to build railways. But we have such lines as the Port Alma Railway, and the Tara Railway, of which we heard something yesterday, and others which could be mentioned if I had time. You have only to go to the Commissioner's report to find that there are about 700 miles of non-paying railways in the South. In the past the Government have not been so careful in the expenditure of loan money and the places where they have built railways, or that would not be the case.

Mr. D. HUNTER: Only one of your Northern railways pays.

Mr. NEVITT: The next sentence in the Financial Statement which strikes me is this—

It is considered that two things are absolutely essential to the progress of the State—one is extension of railway facilities and the other is immigration.

In both those respects the Government should be very careful, and consider well before they enter into contracts. I have already said that, as far as railways are concerned, the Government, in my opinion, have been very lax. It has been said times out of number by members on the other side that members on this side are opposed to immigration; and times out of number we have given the statement an emphatic denial. I want again to give it an emphatic denial. The present system of immigration is a system of spoon-feeding the British-India Company. If you made the conditions of life in this country what they ought to be, and what we have facilities for making them, you would have no occasion to pay £14 or £15 a head to get people here. They would come by droves. If we spent the £80,000 that we are now spending in immigration in one shape or another in assisting the mining industry and the farming industry—if we spent it in providing deep sinking, State batteries, State smelters, and in pros-

pecting, I venture to say that we would have a condition of things in this country that would entice large numbers of people from Europe and from the British possessions to come here without having to pay their passages. One method by which the Government could assist farmers and agricultural labourers and the people with capital who are coming from the old country to settle on our lands, would be by having farms where they could go to learn the altered conditions of farming. It is well known that the conditions are totally different from those to which they are accustomed in Great Britain; and if the Government would spend some of this £80,000 in establishing farms where those people could go for six or twelve months to learn the conditions prevailing here, and by the end of that period have land ready for them to settle upon, we would have far better results from our immigration policy than we have to-day.

The TREASURER: A large number of them do it now, and get paid for it.

Mr. NEVITT: I am not saying you should give these facilities for nothing. Their labour would be sufficient recompense for any money the Government might have to expend.

The TREASURER: There are plenty of men who have worked for twelve or eighteen months on the land before they have taken up land for themselves.

Mr. NEVITT: Quite right, and they would be better citizens than by going on the land as soon as they arrived. A great many of them would be failures if they went on when they first came out. The next item that struck me in the Statement is—

The Federal Government have also introduced a Bill to provide for an Australian note issue, and this will have the effect of rendering our Treasury note issue valueless, and the result will be to cause Queensland to lose about £25,000 per annum.

That was well known, and it has been dilated upon by other members who preceded me; therefore I shall not go into details in connection with it. It was hardly necessary for the Treasurer to make such a wail when he read that portion of the Statement, because it was well known when we went into federation that the Federal Government had the power of taking over the currency and issue.

The TREASURER: I suppose you see no harm in dropping £25,000 a year?

Mr. NEVITT: I do not say that we are going to drop £25,000 a year, because it is only putting it out of one pocket into the other. Remember, we are the citizens of the Commonwealth just as we are of Queensland, and it is the duty of every right-thinking man to see that his country is safe from invasion or any other thing. (Hear, hear!) There is far too much of this parochial spirit going on, and we find it to-day in this House—every individual member fighting for his own district at the expense of the country.

The TREASURER: You do not believe in protecting the Queensland finances?

Mr. NEVITT: I believe in protecting your rights, and what you are entitled to. You have no more right to that money than I have. That is the point I wish to make. You do not hear the Treasurer in any portion of his Statement being jubilant over the fact that he got from the Federal Treasurer £122,000 more than he expected, but he wails over the other thing that he is no more entitled to than I am.

The TREASURER: Yet they kept back £37,000.

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Mr. NEVITT: Then he goes on to say—

Fortunately our position is such that we shall be able to do this without undue pressure on our resources, and arrangements will be made whereby from the date of the passing of the Act gold will be available at the Treasury for the redemption of every note Queensland has issued.

The hon. member for Charters Towers, who preceded me, dealt with that, therefore I will not go any further with that matter. But I wish to call the attention of the House to this fact: They had a very different tale to tell when they were on the hustings during the Federal election.

Mr. HARDACRE: Hear, hear!

Mr. NEVITT: I am going to compare the statement of the present Home Secretary, when in Cairns, with the statement of the Treasurer to-day. This is a quotation from the *Courier* of 29th March last—

At Cairns last week the town council asked Mr. Appel, the Home Secretary, for a reply to a request for a loan for sanitary work. Mr. Appel said, "The possible cause why no reply was received from the Treasurer was the present unsettled state of financial conditions, which would remain so until the financial agreement with the Commonwealth had been settled."

* * * * *
Mr. Appel added: "Should the financial agreement be unassented to the finances of the State would be in an absolutely disorganised condition.

Are they in a disorganised condition?

The TREASURER: There is every possibility of their being so.

Mr. NEVITT: Every possibility! When the Treasurer makes an interjection of that kind, it shows that he evidently did not know the possibilities and conditions of Queensland at that time, and this was at the beginning of April, and only three months before his Financial Statement. Further, he said—

The matter at the present time was one of the keenest anxiety to the Government as to what the future would bring forth. I tell you candidly that if the agreement is not carried into effect it will mean that the Government will have to impose additional taxation. That is the position.

The TREASURER: We have been fortunate enough not to have to do it.

Mr. NEVITT: Why have you been fortunate? There was never any necessity to make use of that statement—there was never anything to warrant a statement of that kind by a responsible member of the Government—

People in Queensland must understand and realise that upon the ratification of the financial agreement depends the very solvency of the States.

I must refer to the question of immigration, because there is one phase of that question which has not been mentioned. I find, from Table 6 of the Treasurer's tables, that we spent about £3,464,131 on immigration since we have had responsible government. The Minister for Lands, when speaking the other night, said that the average cost was £13 or £14 per head. In running that out, I find that that represents the passages of 266,471 people; or, in other words, practically the passages of half the population of Queensland to-day have been paid by the Government of Queensland.

Mr. CORSER: That is not the price of the past; it is the price of the present.

Mr. NEVITT: I am taking the words of the Minister for Lands. I expect the Minister to be more conversant with the details of expenditure than a single member sitting behind him, and that is the result I have arrived at after going through the figures very carefully. A good part of the money spent on im-

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migration is in a way not altogether stated in the broad light of day. For instance, there has been a considerable increase in the Chief Secretary's office. I am informed that a large part of that expenditure is supposed to arise owing to the work of immigration. Then, in the Agent-General's office the expenditure has been increased to a large extent, and I am told for the same reason, but I intend to go into that a little later on. Coming to the question of land settlement the Statement says—

During the past year the growing demand has been met so satisfactorily that the area selected aggregated nearly 6,000,000 acres, and exceeded by 1,000,000 acres the high record of the preceding financial year.

Although during the past two years the Government have allowed practically to go out of their hands 11,000,000 acres of land, what do we find is the condition of the agricultural industry to-day? We find that we produced less wheat last year by 120,000 bushels than we did nine years ago. We find that we produced 316,000 bushels less barley than in 1903.

The TREASURER: How much more butter?

Mr. NEVITT: I find we produced 60,000 bushels maize less than we did in 1901.

Mr. CORSER: That is wrong.

Mr. NEVITT: They won't accept the figures of the officers of their own department. We find that this last year we produced 11,638 tons less of potatoes than we did ten years ago. We find there was 16,522 tons less of sugar grown than in 1901. We find, as far as hay is concerned, that 25,185 tons less were produced than five years ago.

The TREASURER: Last year was a bad sugar season.

Mr. NEVITT: I say you have had the finest seasons, taking them all through.

The TREASURER: Not with regard to sugar.

Mr. NEVITT: I have enumerated five or six items—the necessities of life—which this country is better able to produce than almost any other country in the world.

The TREASURER: Give us the butter figures.

Mr. NEVITT: I thought the hon. member for Burke had given you quite enough about butter, when we find the people of this country are earning and producing these things—and you are not prepared to give them a little bit of jam and butter on their tables. You are too busy chasing the almighty dollar to see that the people are fed as they should be.

The TREASURER: We have had that gag before this afternoon. Give us the figures for butter.

Mr. NEVITT: You asked for it and you will get enough of it yet. I find there has been a large decrease in the quantity of jam manufactured. I ask you if there is any item that this country is better able to produce than any State in the Commonwealth than jam? We produce the raw material, sugar, which is practically half the contents of jam. It is grown on our own grounds, and a large percentage of our fruits are grown here, and we are in a far better position to produce these things than they are in the Southern States; and yet we find the production of these items has gone down almost a million pounds in weight during the last five years. And that is the condition we find ourselves in after the most prosperous seasons and after a large increase in the alienation of our lands!

The TREASURER: You do not give the figures on either butter or wool.

Mr. NEVITT: To satisfy the Treasurer, and one or two of those who sit behind him, I find there has been a considerable increase in a few items, particularly butter, cheese, hams, bacon, and one or two other items. But with regard to the other lines I have stated, I say it is not creditable that the State of Queensland should have gone back to the extent I have stated. There are many ways by which the sugar industry could be assisted, as has been pointed out by the hon. member for Herbert, by the hon. member for Bundaberg, and by the hon. member for Bowen; and, as I have had very little experience in regard to the sugar industry, I will leave that for other hon. members to deal with. Now I come to the pastoral industry. It is very gratifying to be able to say the pastoral industry has had a very successful time during the past few years, and all the harm I wish the pastoral industry is that they may continue to have a run of excellent seasons. I find a paragraph in the Treasurer's Statement alluding to the fact—which I think is very pleasing and very gratifying—that two shipments of chilled meat have been sent from Queensland, and arrived in a fairly good condition in England; and I say all credit to those men—those enterprising men—I understand there is only one firm in Brisbane which has gone to the trouble and expense of putting these trial shipments on the European market, and I say they are entitled to all praise.

The PREMIER: Two firms. And only one Government to assist them. (Laughter.)

Mr. NEVITT: The same old story of greasing the fatted pig. (Government laughter.) I do not contend but that these people are entitled to a certain amount of assistance from the Government in enterprises of that nature, but what I do say is this: The Government have neglected those who are not able to look after themselves. That is the position. What is the result to-day? Although our flocks and herds have increased, what is the present price of these articles—the principal articles of diet for a very large section of our people? I do not think you can mention a place in Queensland—I have gone through a fair percentage of the towns of Queensland and I hear the same story on every hand—where the cost of living is not increasing by leaps and bounds, particularly in the things they produce on their own ground.

Mr. MORGAN: Wages have gone up.

Mr. NEVITT: I called for a return the other day of the number of aborigines employed on the stations in my part of the country, and I say it is not the pastoralists of Queensland who are making the price of meat go up, but it is the butchers' ring in Queensland that is causing these high prices. And make no mistake, we shall have to pass legislation of a different class, a class of legislation that up to the present has been very little mentioned, and that is people will be compelled to sell at a fair and reasonable profit. The same thing will apply in the city of Brisbane. A gentleman was telling me only on Sunday last—he has had a lengthy experience of commercial life in Brisbane, and he told me of a case where a gentleman who had a house, raised the rent 100 per cent. during the present year.

The PREMIER: We will have to have a parliamentary committee to fix prices.

Mr. NEVITT: The time will come, whatever you may think—whether that is a jocular statement of yours or otherwise—the time will come when nobody will be allowed to charge a greater rate of interest than a certain amount, so that people will be able to live in a place of decency and comfort. There is another view in connection with this land matter. The rent in the pastoral country is not arrived at on a fair and equitable basis. I know land for which a man is paying 5s. per mile—I grant it is a lease—and other men are paying £1 5s. to £1 6s. for land within, figuratively speaking, a stone's throw, and in some cases it is inferior country. I say a system of land management which allows these things should never have existed. I think within the last two or three months the Lands Department have sent round notices of an increase in regard to occupation licenses of 50 per cent. I know of two cases that came under my own observation where they have increased rents from 5s. to 7s. 6d. per square mile. I venture to say there is no worse land in Queensland than this, classified as pastoral land, and yet, simply because it is held under occupation license by small men, the rents are put up 50 per cent. I say it is a crying shame that such things should be allowed to exist when you have land within a stone's throw of it only paying 5s. a mile, which would carry four and five times the number of cattle per mile. Now I come to mining. I just want to mention one or two salient points in connection with that industry. The Treasurer states—

Our mineral fields are confronted by the low price of most of the industrial metals, and expansion has been retarded by the prohibitive cost of transport.

That is a matter I wish to bring under the notice of the present Premier—the prohibitive cost of transport. I ask him has he assisted in that direction? He ran a railway from Richmond to Cloncurry, which caused the people in that district to carry their products over 500 miles of railway, when he had the opportunity of building a railway to assist that industry that would have been only half the distance to a port. I ask him if that is what he calls assisting the mining industry? These are facts that cannot be denied. Then we come to the coal industry. I find that even in connection with that industry the Government have done very little, and to-day we are importing no less than £81,000 worth of coal and coke. I say any Government who had the welfare of the country at heart, and considered the requirements of the people, would long before now have devised some means of assisting that industry so that it would not have been necessary to import £81,000 worth of coal and coke when Nature has endowed us with an unlimited supply.

The PREMIER: How much did we send out?

Mr. NEVITT: I have not the exports. I will leave them to you. I now intend to deal with the Treasurer's Estimates of [7 p.m.] revenue for the year. The first item is £685,057 from the Commonwealth. I do not know whether that is the Treasurer's own estimate, or whether it came from the Federal authorities in Melbourne; but if we take the population of the State on the 31st December as the basis, 578,548 people at £1 5s. per capita would give £723,185. Against that we have the West Australian increased amount of £250,000, also our share of the deficit of £445,000—in round numbers £500,000; and on that estimate the Treasurer would receive £630,000 in place of £685,057. On the other hand, taking the

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population on the 30th June as 590,000, the amount at £1 5s. per capita would be £737,500; and deducting our share of the West Australian contribution and our proportion of the deficit, which would amount in round numbers to £100,000, that would leave £637,000 or £640,000 to be received from the Commonwealth. So I conclude that the Treasurer has over-estimated the amount he is likely to receive.

The TREASURER: I took Mr. Fisher's own figures. He wired them to me.

Mr. NEVITT: Then I come to the estimated revenue from income tax. The Treasurer estimates an increase of £15,000; and considering that he received an increase of £31,000 the year before, I think he has underestimated the amount. The same argument applies to the stamp duty, only with greater effect. He only allows for an increase of £5,000, whereas the year before there was an increase of £17,000. If we take the two months' returns supplied to us the other day, we find that he has considerably underestimated the revenue from this source.

The PREMIER: You require to take into consideration a great many more figures than those before forming an estimate.

Mr. NEVITT: That may be; but, considering that there was an increase of over £9,000 for the first two months of the year, I think he has very much underestimated the amount when he expects an increase of only £5,000 for the whole of the year.

The TREASURER: The first two months give no indication of what will be coming in during the rest of the year.

Mr. NEVITT: Unfortunately we all have to die; and sometimes a large amount of money comes in as probate duty during the first part of the year; but taking the figures for the past few years, I say that £5,000 is an under-estimate. And I think the same remark applies to the estimate of land revenue. The Treasurer only allows for an increase of £42,000, when last year there was an increase of £78,000. Considering the large amount of land they boast of putting under selection and occupation—6,000,000 acres during last year—I think the estimate is considerably below the mark.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Those are the figures furnished by the department and based on all the data in the department.

Mr. NEVITT: I think it is a good policy to err on the side of under-estimating rather than over-estimating; at the same time I think a nearer estimate could have been made as to the probable revenue during the current year. I come now to the one Cinderella of the service—that is, the mining estimate. The Treasurer allows for an increase of £105 for the year; so they do not expect much from the great mining industry, which has saved this State times out of number, and would have saved or assisted the State to a very material extent provided it only got justice from the Government. Then I come to the railways. The increase put down is only £231,378; but if the rate of increase of the first two months of the year continues it will be considerably over £400,000.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Those two are the busiest months.

Mr. NEVITT: I admit that; but there is a number of railways recently taken over, and I understand there are others likely to be

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taken over before the end of the year; and the revenue derived from them must inflate the general revenue to a very large extent.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is all taken into consideration.

Mr. NEVITT: I am satisfied that the estimate of revenue from railways is an under-estimate, provided we get a reasonable season for grain and other produce. Taking the Estimates as a whole, I am satisfied they will be realised; in fact, I am rather inclined to think the amount realised will be from £100,000 to £150,000 above the estimate. Possibly double that amount will be realised; and I sincerely hope it will be.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We have to spend a portion to earn it.

Mr. NEVITT: If the railway revenue increases the expenses must increase, but not in the same proportion as in the past. That is where I say the Government have not been as careful in their administration of the Railway Department as they should be, because practically they are costing as much per train mile to-day as when we had not half our present mileage—showing that there is something radically wrong in the administration. There are many items where it is shown that they have increased the expenditure to a far greater extent than has been warranted, and in some cases they have not spent as much money as they should have done, and later on I intend to point them out, the hospitals in particular. There are several items which come under the Chief Secretary's Department. It is a well recognised fact that no Government can control the revenue, but you can always control the expenditure; and I am afraid that the present Government, and particularly the Chief Secretary, has lost control of the expenditure of this particular department. What do we find? When the present Premier was first appointed to Sir Arthur Morgan's Government we find that it only cost £21,707 to administer the Chief Secretary's Department. That was in 1903-4.

Mr. HAMILTON: There was no Under Secretary then.

Mr. NEVITT: If the Under Secretary is going to make a difference in the cost between those years, then I am very sorry for it. In 1909-10 the cost of administering the Chief Secretary's Department was £169,042. That is an increase of practically £150,000 in the cost of administration of that department.

The TREASURER: What are you allowing for? Are you allowing for immigration?

Mr. NEVITT: We find from the Estimates of 1903-4 that the cost of administration for the chief office in the Chief Secretary's Department, when, as I am reminded, there was no Under Secretary, was £1,226, but to-day it costs £7,374. I ask: What in the name of reason is the cause of such an increased cost as £6,000 for the administration of the chief office of that department? There are very few more men in that office to-day. Even at an earlier period than 1903 they had more departments to administer in connection with the Chief Secretary's office than they have got to-day, and yet that was managed at considerably less cost than it is managed to-day. The chief office of that department cost £5,000 more to run last year than it did in 1900, when they had to administer the marine force, the defence force, meteorology, and the South African contingents, and the amount for the South African contingents alone ran into a

sum of £154,000. In spite of having all those extra departments to look after, the chief office was run at a cost of £5,000 less than it is to-day. I think that that is positive proof of bad financing on the part of the Government, bad business management, and it proves that they have lost control of the expenditure. The cost of administering the chief office is £6,000 more than it was in 1903. Then we find that "Miscellaneous Items" in that department has jumped from £4,000 to £61,000. I think that this House is entitled to something more than the bald statement that miscellaneous items have jumped from £4,000 to £61,000 in one year. We find that in that year the cost of administering the Agent-General's office in London has increased since 1903 by £15,000.

The TREASURER: We had no immigration in that year.

Mr. NEVITT: Yes; you had some.

The TREASURER: How much?

Mr. NEVITT: If you look up the report you will find that you spent a fair amount on immigration.

The TREASURER: We spent £32,000 on immigration last year.

Mr. NEVITT: That is not included in the increased cost of administering the Agent-General's office. You have £62,000 independently of that. It shows that you have lost control of the expenditure when one department increases to that extent in one year. There is not so much money being spent by that department, and not so many departments to supervise, and yet it costs more to manage it.

The TREASURER: We are spending more loan money, and we are importing rails and all sorts of things, and we are spending money on immigration particularly.

Mr. FORSYTH: Not a shilling was spent on immigration in those years.

Mr. NEVITT: Then we find the following paragraph in the Financial Statement:—

The policy of the Government for the last few years in respect to buildings has enabled the more pressing needs in that direction to be carried out, and in view of this and of the very high rates now demanded for material and labour it will be well to moderate expenditure for the present.

The reason they give for not erecting these buildings is that they are not wanted. There is just as great a demand for these buildings to-day as there was twelve months ago.

The TREASURER: We have overcome the present necessity for them.

Mr. NEVITT: And the only reason they can offer for cutting down this particular item is the increased price of labour and material. I say that that is a very poor and a very lame excuse for any Government to give to the country.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You would not say so if you were building.

Mr. FERRICKS: It is because of the timber ring.

Mr. NEVITT: If I wanted to build and I had the money I would certainly build, and it is the duty of the Government, who have the money and who know that the buildings are required, to go on with the erection of those buildings.

The TREASURER: Look at what we have been spending in that direction. We have overcome the present necessities.

Mr. NEVITT: I will come to that later. The Government have cut down the Esti-

mates in this department by £90,892—roughly speaking, £100,000. Well, seeing that the expenditure from that department has been cut down by that amount you would think it would not cost so much to administer that department, but, as a matter of fact, we find that the administration of the Works Department has increased by £1,607. I ask whether that is good financing or business management? You are spending less money and have less to supervise, and the cost of administration is increasing.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: What about the erection of the University, Government House, and technical college?

Mr. NEVITT: But you are spending £100,000 less this year, and it costs you £1,600 more to supervise the department. That is not good financing.

The TREASURER: You do not account for £70,000 for the University, do you?

Mr. NEVITT: There is another little matter I wish to refer to, and that is the question of hospitals. We are told by the Government that we are having prosperous seasons and good seasons everywhere, and a little while back they sent a bellman all over the country, asking all those who had accounts against the Government to bring them forward before the end of the year, and they would be paid.

The TREASURER: Was it not right to pay our accounts?

Mr. NEVITT: I will show whether it was right or not. The first duty of any Government is to look after its sick and needy in a careful and proper manner, but the hospitals of Queensland at the present time are being starved. Take a turn round any country district, and the hospital committees everywhere will tell you the same story. They are short of funds, the patients are being deprived of the necessary comforts, and surgical instruments are required and they cannot buy them.

The PREMIER: Because of unchristian people who will not support them.

Mr. NEVITT: Because of the cheeseparating policy of the hon. gentleman who has just spoken. At one time they used to give £2 for every £1 raised by the hospitals, then it was reduced to £1 10s., and afterwards to £1 8s. 6d. for every £1 raised by the hospitals.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: And you supported it.

Mr. NEVITT: I never supported it. As a matter of fact I have always been in favour of nationalising the hospitals, and let the Government take over the whole and sole control of them, because I hold that a Government's first duty is to look after its sick and needy in a proper manner.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: You sat behind a Government that did it.

Mr. NEVITT: I did not sit behind a Government that did it, because I was always an advocate of fair and reasonable treatment for our hospitals, and I advocate that still. We find that the amount placed on the Estimates for the incoming year is the same as was voted for hospitals last year. Because the work of Under Secretaries has increased slightly those officers are going to get an increase of £100 a year in their salaries. The demands made upon the hospitals will naturally increase with the increase in population, but the Government have made no provision

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for the number of sick that will probably have to be treated this year. They say, "No, we will not give any increased subsidy to hospitals; you will have to be content with the amount voted last year," which will probably cut down the subsidy to £1 4s. or £1 5s. in the £1. It is a scandalous shame that the Government should act in that way. Only the other day I got a letter from the Normanton Hospital Committee, stating that they were getting £40 short of what they should get for last quarter. I went to the office of the Home Secretary, and I was there told the reason why the committee were being paid £40 short of the subsidy they expected. The explanation was that the £77,000 on the Estimates was expected to pan out at £1 8s. 6d. in the £1, but that it only panned out at £1 6s. 3d. in the £1. The result was that the Normanton Hospital Committee got £40 less than they were expected to get, and I believe the same thing has happened to every hospital in Queensland. Now, the Government say they are going to do—what? They are going to give the hospitals the few sprats left over from the totalisator after paying "divies"—not the whole of the income they derive from the totalisator, but the fractions left over after paying "divies."

Mr. BOWMAN: The crumbs that fall from the rich man's table.

Mr. NEVITT: Yes; the crumbs that fall from the public who invest their money in that particular way. This is the generosity of the Government to the hospitals. They are going to give the hospitals some crumbs, instead of nationalising those institutions, and running them on the same lines as that noble institution the Diamantina Hospital. I hope the day is not far distant when every hospital in Queensland will be as well managed, as well looked after, and have as little trouble in getting money as the Diamantina Hospital. I find that my time is getting short, so I shall only glance at one or two of the other items I wish to bring under the notice of the House. With regard to the question of selling land, I find that we have sold something like 22,000,000 acres, which have realised about £9,000,000; and that we have repurchased 490,000 acres. We sold those 490,000 acres at an average price of 8s. per acre, and we repurchased them at an average price of £3 per acre. That means that since the institution of responsible government in Queensland fifty years ago the unearned increment has increased by 650 per cent. What a fine thing it would have been for Queensland if we had not sold any land. Had we followed that course we should to-day have had that unearned increment, we should have been able to get a fair and reasonable rent for our lands, we should have been able to remit some of the pettifogging taxes that are now imposed upon the people, and we should have been able to place our hospitals on a sound footing. What created the increased value of that land? Nothing but the expenditure of that £40,000,000 that we owe John Bull to-day. It is the expenditure of that money on railways, schools, and other public works that has given the unearned increment value to those lands. Mr. Deakin, when speaking on the Address in Reply in the Federal Parliament, said he was amazed that the State Governments had not dealt with the question of a land tax, and that it was in consequence of their neglect in this respect that the verdict of the people was that the Commonwealth Parliament should legislate in the matter. Would it not have been better if this

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State had legislated in the matter? Had we done so we should not now be howling about the Commonwealth reducing the amount of revenue they are paying back to the States, and we should have been able to have instituted a number of social reforms. We should have been able to provide pensions for widows and orphans. I think widows and orphans are even more entitled to pensions than the soldiers of industry. We have made provision for pensioning the soldiers of industry who have borne the heat and burden of the day, and I say it is even more needful to make provision for those who have lost their bread-winner and are not able to earn a livelihood for themselves. Now I come to the question of railways. The Premier stated the other night that it was necessary to let one contract for railway construction in order that we might compare the result with the result of building railways by day labour. We have built something over 2,000 miles of railway on the contract system, and surely that is sufficient to enable us to make a comparison between the two systems. The hon. member for Townsville, Mr. Philp, said last night that the contract system is cheaper than the day-labour system. While I have every respect for the hon. member for Townsville, I place far greater confidence in the opinion of the Chief Engineer for Railways, Mr. Pagan, in a matter of this kind, and he tells us that we have saved many thousands by the day-labour system as compared with the contract system. Under the day-labour system we have better provision made for the workmen, we get better work done, and the engineers can make any deviation which is found necessary without fear of having to incur the expense of an arbitration case, like the Robb case, which cost the country many thousands of pounds. In conclusion, I would ask what is our position to-day, even though we have sold 11,000,000 acres of land in two years? The cultivation of the necessaries of life, such as wheat, barley, maize, potatoes, and sugar-cane, has decreased during the past five years. Last year we manufactured nearly 1,000,000 lb. of jam less than we did the year before. We are paying a larger amount of interest per head than any State in the Commonwealth. We are paying a higher rate of interest than any State in the Commonwealth.

Mr. FORSYTH: Absolutely wrong.

Mr. NEVITT: I am taking Mr. Knibbs's figures in the "Commonwealth Year Book."

Mr. FORSYTH: Show us them; let us see them.

Mr. NEVITT: The hon. member will find them at page 840 of the "Year Book" for the present year. We are paying a higher rate of interest for the loan money we have expended than any State in the Commonwealth.

Mr. FORSYTH: We are doing nothing of the sort.

Mr. NEVITT: Western Australia has a greater indebtedness per head—£1 15s. 3d. per head—than we have in Queensland, and they are getting their money at a lower rate of interest than we are paying. We pay 2s. 9d. per head more interest than they pay in Western Australia. Is that a position to be proud of? Is that good business management? If that is what the present Government call good business management, I sincerely hope the day is not far distant when somebody else will occupy the Treasury benches who will alter those conditions.

* Mr. MORGAN (*Murrilla*): I wish to congratulate the Treasurer on his Budget Speech,

and, as a member of this Chamber and as a taxpayer, I congratulate the State [7.30 p.m.] on its sound financial position. A lot has been said by members on the opposite benches in connection with the immigration policy of the Government. The Government went to the country with immigration as one of the main planks in their platform. The people of the country accepted that platform, and returned the Government with a big majority to support a vigorous immigration policy. I am sorry that the Government have not taken more advantage of the power placed in their hands in that direction by the people. I feel that in that respect the Cabinet has not accepted the full responsibility placed on them. I feel sure that the people expected them to bring in at least double as many immigrants as they are doing. Although every individual brought to Queensland may not be of a desirable class, yet, taking them as a whole, I am sure they are equal to any that came to Queensland previously or that have gone to any other country. I am confident that the percentage of undesirables is very small; and, if it could be ascertained, we would find that the Opposition are wrong in their statements when they class them as an undesirable lot.

Several OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Who said that?

Mr. LENNON: An absolute misstatement.

Mr. BOWMAN: That is your own imagination.

Mr. MORGAN: If you take any number of people, you will always find a few undesirables, and that will be the case, no matter how well conducted the immigration depot in England may be. The Tara railway line has come in for a fair amount of criticism from members on the other side. I had the opportunity of visiting the Tara district seven or eight months ago, in the company of the Speaker, Mr. Bell. At the Tara Lagoon we had the opportunity of seeing 187 people assembled, all of whom had come to the district purely and simply owing to the construction, or the proposed construction, of the line from Dalby to Tara. Prior to that visit, I was of the same opinion as many members on the other side. I thought a mistake had been made in constructing the railway; but it has been demonstrated that the policy of the Government in constructing railways in advance of settlement should be more vigorously pursued. The Tara line alone is proof that, if railways are constructed into the country, people will follow. At the present time there are over 200 settlers in and around Tara—that is, within a radius of 20 miles of the proposed terminus. If that line is continued in a westerly direction towards St. George or Surat, it will take in two more big groups of settlers, numbering altogether something like 350. I might also mention that at the gathering at Tara Lagoon, where we had 187 people present, they were all Victorians or New South Welshmen, with one exception. Only one Queenslander was present. That goes to show that the Tara line, at any rate, has practically justified its construction. I do not intend to say that the line will pay from the jump. I know perfectly well that it will not pay for perhaps a year or two, but, all the same, I am satisfied that all that country would never have been settled had it not been for the policy of the Government in building the railway. Perhaps a better place than Dalby could have been selected as a starting point—

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I do not intend to argue on that point; but I do say that the Government have proved their wisdom, not only in this connection, but in connection with every railway that has been constructed in Queensland so far.

Mr. RYAN: Including Port Alma?

Mr. MORGAN: So far as I know, not one railway has had to be pulled up in Queensland, as has had to be done in Victoria and in some other places. Every railway has proved beneficial to the State, and is likely to prove more beneficial as time goes on; and it is my intention to vote for every railway that is likely to be brought forward by the Government during this or any other session. I am of opinion that we cannot build too many railways. The Secretary for Railways often states that the Government railway policy is more vigorous than that of any other Government in Australia. I think it is no credit to Queensland to have merely a more vigorous railway policy than any other State in Australia. We have in Queensland a territory over seven times as large as Victoria, whilst our railway mileage is only a few miles more.

Mr. KEOGH: Look at the population of Victoria.

Mr. MORGAN: I quite admit our population is much smaller than that of Victoria, but we have the area; and, if that area is only opened up by railways, we shall have the people following the railways and taking up the country, as they have done on the Tara line. Last session the Premier mentioned that it was the intention of the Government to call for tenders for one section of railway. I am sorry that the hon. gentleman has not fulfilled that promise; and I only hope that during this session, when the railways are tabled, he will decide to call for tenders in order that the price may be compared with the price of construction under the existing system.

Mr. COLLINS: Is that not a reflection on the Government engineers?

Mr. MORGAN: It is quite possible that the engineers may be wrong in their estimates. It is quite possible also that they may be a little out of date so far as railway construction is concerned. It is likely, therefore, that they may be making mistakes, which could be verified if tenders were called for one section.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is the Chief Engineer himself who wishes to have his figures verified.

Mr. MORGAN: There is one matter to which I wish to draw the attention of the Secretary for Railways, and that is what I consider the exorbitant freights charged upon some goods that are carried over our railways.

Mr. COLLINS: You ought to have the Etheridge line or the Chillagoe line.

Mr. MORGAN: At the present time people living 200 or 300 miles from Brisbane are charged exorbitant freights on what are known as high-class goods. The average for 300 miles in all the other States in Australia for this particular class of goods is 147.7d. per ton. In Queensland the average is 191.8d., or 56.3d. per ton more than in any other State in Australia.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: You want to go on the border line to find out the rates.

Mr. MORGAN: I have taken the figures from Knibbs' Year Book. If they are not correct, it is the duty of the Minister for Railways to see that correct figures appear

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in that book. There is one matter in connection with land settlement that I would like to touch upon, as in my particular district some inconvenience is being suffered through this policy not being carried into effect. When land is made available for settlement, certain valuations are placed upon particular blocks. It is well known to the Lands Department that it is necessary for roads to be made in that locality, and in many instances it is necessary for provision to be made for water conservation. If these things were provided for when the price was being put upon the land, there would be no trouble whatever. For instance, if a block of land was thrown open, as it is at the present time, at a valuation of 5s., if the Minister fixed the valuation on that block at 6s., in order to provide for water conservation and roads, it would not stop one settler from taking up land, as the difference of one shilling would not influence the settler in any way. But when you come to put the extra shilling on after people have taken up the land, it is a horse of another colour altogether. A certain number then object to it, simply because they are fortunate in having water, or they have a block where the timber is not particularly heavy, and they can get to market without much trouble. But what about the people who take up dense scrub—brigalow or belah country—where it is impossible to travel except on horseback? These people need some consideration, and the shire councils in these particular localities are not in a position to construct these roads out of the revenue they receive, simply because they would receive no benefit from the expenditure for at least twelve months. None of the shire councils out West have sufficient money lying dormant to expend upon these lands until they get that amount of money in rates from the people themselves. I hope that the Minister will see that, especially in country districts, sufficient money is placed upon the land, so that the roads may be constructed and the water conserved, without having to go to the people, as they have done in the Tara district, to ask them to consent to the increase being placed upon their land, and, if necessary, to have a special Bill brought before the House in order to compel those who will not consent to contribute to do so. There is another matter in connection with the cultivation of the land. This matter was touched upon by the hon. senior member for Townsville, and it is referred to in the Financial Statement in this way—

The State has not yet supplied the local demand for this grain, and it is still necessary to import more food-stuffs than we produce. It is difficult to understand why the production of wheat is not more largely engaged in, seeing that Queensland is so rich in agricultural land.

There is more than one reason why the land has not been cultivated to the extent it should be. Certainly, the scarcity of labour has something to do with it, but that is not the only reason, especially in the districts which are known as prickly pear areas. If a man takes up a prickly pear selection, it is necessary, first of all, to build his home and fence his land; he then has to straight-away pay all the time and attention he can to kill the pear, in order to fulfil the conditions, and, while he is engaged in destroying the pear, he cannot be clearing the land and getting it ready for cultivation. I contend that the conditions, as far as prickly pear country is concerned, need some

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alteration. In order to encourage cultivation, I would stipulate that, providing a man cleared 20 or 30 acres of land, and placed it under cultivation, it should be tantamount to fulfilling the prickly pear conditions for that year, at any rate. I contend that it is not altogether necessary for the pear to be killed in one, three, or five years, as the case may be, and if a man gets a prickly pear block of 1,280 or 2,000 acres, and spends money in fencing it, and in building a home and erecting yards, and he is willing to spend from £1 to £1 10s. an acre to clear it for cultivation, he is a genuine settler, and proves that he is deserving of some consideration. But if he is forced continually for five or ten years to put the whole of his time into clearing the pear, what can he do? He can graze a few cattle and milk a few cows, and the result is that the land is not cultivated as it should be. I, as a farmer myself, claim that 20 acres placed under cultivation is far better than 150 or 200 acres being used for grazing purposes. The farmer should be encouraged to put his time and labour into the cultivation of the land, instead of being continually forced to devote the whole of his time and attention to clearing the pear. While I recognise that it is necessary for the pear to be cleared, the whole of the responsibility should not be placed upon the settler. The Government have criminally neglected their responsibility for years.

Mr. FERRICKS: Be careful what you say.

Mr. MORGAN: Now, the whole responsibility of clearing the pear is being placed upon the unfortunate settler. Hundreds of them have never had any experience of the pear, and have found that they have tackled something the difficulty of which they never anticipated. I contend that it is the duty of the Government to assist these people as much as possible, and not try to harass them and force them to do something which is absolutely impossible so far as the conditions are concerned in many cases.

Mr. RYAN: Do you think that they are harassing them?

Mr. MORGAN: You will find columns of advertisements in the papers calling upon settlers to show cause why they should not be turned off the land for not fulfilling the conditions. I quite admit that when they go before the Land Court they are treated with consideration, but it is harassing them to a certain extent to bring them before these courts at a loss of time and money.

Mr. BOWMAN: You had better change your seat.

Mr. MORGAN: I admit that to a certain extent they are treating them leniently when they find the case is a deserving one, but there are many deserving men at the present time who are being harassed in order to fulfil the conditions. There is another matter in connection with encouraging the people to cultivate land for wheat-growing purposes, and also to improve the holdings, and that is the introduction of artificial manures into Queensland. At the present time there is practically none, or very little artificial manure—superphosphates—being used in Queensland in the production of wheat. The reason no doubt is simply because the Agricultural Department, not being a live department, has done nothing to prove to the people what can be done by using fertilisers. I am not here to say that the Agricultural

Department is a live department—I say the Agricultural Department is a starved department—it is the worst Agricultural Department that exists in any State in the Commonwealth. There is no doubt about that. I am here to state what I think is right, and I hope the Government will rectify it so that the people will at least get the benefit of the money expended in the upkeep of this particular department. I listened with very great attention to the hon. member for Carpentaria and the remarks made by him in connection with wages. There is a paragraph which struck my attention which appeared recently in one of the Brisbane papers; it was a telegram from Sydney, and reads as follows:—

As a result of the recent Federal Arbitration Court award, it is officially announced that the price of all classes of footwear will be advanced from 1st September.

I think that is sufficient proof to show that when wages increase so does the cost of the goods those people are employed in producing. I think it is admitted that while wages have gone up, the cost of living has also gone up, and the workman is in no better position to-day than he was twenty years ago.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MORGAN: That, I think, is absolutely correct, and it shows that the system is wrong. It shows that something is very much wrong when wages have risen 10 per cent., the cost of living rises perhaps 15 per cent. It shows that so far as the working men are concerned, they have not reaped any benefit by placing the present Opposition so strong in this Chamber. (Loud Opposition laughter.) There is another little matter—it is only a small item, but it affects the settlers—and that is in connection with the issuing of permits for travelling stock or stock that is being consigned by rail. At the present time in my district it is necessary for people trucking stock at Jackson or Dulacca, or some other railway station on that line, to send to Chinchilla in order to get a permit from the stock inspector, who never sees the stock. He issues the permit upon the application received from the person trucking, and I claim there is no necessity for the people being put to all that trouble. If the policemen in the particular district or town were allowed to issue those permits, it would save all the trouble, and it would be a much safer and a much surer way of stopping any illicit trafficking that might be going on in cattle. I hope that little point will be taken note of by the Minister for Agriculture and that the policemen in those districts will be given the power to issue permits, so that people will not be put to all the trouble they have to go to at the present time. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. THEODORE (*Woothakata*): I must congratulate the hon. members on this side who have discussed the Statement so far. I have listened very interestedly to the dissertations of members on this side. The leader of the Opposition delivered a very interesting speech in criticism of the Financial Statement. The hon. member for Herbert also delivered a very informative speech, which I listened to with very great interest. We had very able speeches from the hon. member for Cairns and the hon. member for Carpentaria, who dealt very ably with the facts in their possession. I think they used their figures to very great advantage, and while the hon. member for Carpentaria was making one very important statement he was indignantly contradicted by the Treasurer. He claimed that Queensland,

unfortunately, was paying a greater rate of interest on loan indebtedness than any other State of the Commonwealth. The Treasurer denied that, and the hon. member for Moreton also indignantly contradicted it.

The TREASURER: I think he said our loans cost us more than the other States paid.

Mr. THEODORE: There is no gainsaying what the intention was. The hon. member for Carpentaria was quite clear on the point—he said the average rate of interest was higher in Queensland than in any State in the Commonwealth. Knibbs shows very conclusively that the average rate of interest paid by Queensland is considerably higher than that paid by any other State in the Commonwealth. He points out that in Queensland—this is the latest issue, No. 3 volume—the average rate of interest is £3 13s. 10d. per cent.; in New South Wales, it is £3 10s. 4d. per cent.; in Victoria, it is £3 11s. 3d. per cent.; in South Australia, £3 13s. 3d. per cent.; in Western Australia, £3 8s. 11d. per cent.; and in Tasmania, £3 13s. per cent. He also points out in his tables that on more than half the total sum of the loans issued in Queensland interest is being paid at the rate of 4 per cent.—that is, on over £22,500,000.

The TREASURER: This Government is not to blame for that.

Mr. THEODORE: The hon. member was pointing out the unfortunate position, and he was contradicted by the Treasurer and also by the hon. member for Moreton. I only wish to put the hon. gentleman on the right track. If an hon. member on this side makes a statement and it is contradicted by hon. members opposite, those who read *Hansard* might come to the conclusion that hon. members on that side are correct.

The TREASURER: We never borrow money at 4 per cent.

Mr. THEODORE: That rate of interest is being paid. As Knibbs points out, the average rate of interest is £3 13s. 10d., and on over £22,500,000 Queensland is paying 4 per cent. per annum. When we were discussing the Sessional Orders some time ago it was pointed out that we would encroach upon the time that would be necessary to discuss the Financial Statement by bringing in matters that would be better left to a discussion on the Estimates, but having curtailed the discussion on the Estimates by limiting the time for speeches, it may be necessary to encroach on the time we should devote to a criticism of the Financial Statement. I warned the Treasurer that this would happen and the warning was justified. My speech will deal more particularly with things that, perhaps, would be better dealt with on the Estimates, if we had time to discuss these things in a proper way. We know we will not get that time—ten consecutive minutes is not sufficient to ventilate a complicated grievance. I congratulate the Treasurer on the financial position of the railways. Queensland is in a very fortunate position in regard to the whole of her railway system. It is not so much the genius of the Government that is responsible for the good position of our railways. Nevertheless, despite the increased extension of railways into unpopulated districts, the railways have been earning a fair interest on the cost of construction. I think there is one thing that should be taken into consideration—I do not think it is taken into consideration by the present Government when adjusting freights and fares on the railways—I think consideration should be given not only to those who have the use of the railways for the purposes of transport and

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transit, but also to the conditions of the employees in the service, and the interests of the general taxpayer, who has to make up any deficit, should be carefully guarded. I know there has been a clamour from some sections, particularly from the

[8 p.m.] farmers in some portions of the State, that they should have reduced freights; and there is a good deal that can be said in favour of it; but I think the Minister responsible should not give way to those clamours without taking into consideration other things that should weigh with him. He should not allow manures to be carried free of cost, for instance, as has been proposed before now. He should not allow concessions for the benefit of a particular industry or district at the expense of the general taxpayer and the efficiency of the service. The whole of our railway system, even with the present freights and fares, could be made a remunerative concern; and if it were worked by private enterprise could be made to pay enormous dividends; but we would not have it so. (Hear, hear!) On the other hand, we should not run our railways so as to benefit those only who use them at the expense of the general taxpayer. Proper consideration should be given to the employees, not only in the permanent service, but also to those engaged in connection with construction. I know that lately the Government recognised the necessity of increasing the wages of the men employed on construction works; but I think the statements made with respect to the increases were to a certain extent deceiving. The Premier made the statement—which was published in the *Courier* of the 9th July—that the men on construction works would receive increases which would bring the wages of the men in the South to 8s. a day, those in the Central district to 8s. 6d. a day, and those in the North to 9s. a day. I know the men are not getting those wages; and no doubt members on the other side will be surprised to hear of this in view of the statement made by the Premier. I waited on the officials at the Commissioner's office a week or two ago and asked them if that was so, and they could not exactly tell me. They said that perhaps the thing had not got into proper working order, that there had been only one set of paysheets received since the increase had been granted, and they had not been able to discover whether 8s. was being recognised as the standard, but they expected it would be, and they promised me a return later on. I know from investigation and interviews with the men that there are men getting less than 8s. a day in the Southern districts, and I hope the Minister will see that it is rectified. The Government can help the men engaged on construction works very considerably apart from increasing wages. It is a truism that as wages increase so does the cost of living; and in the case of these men that matter can be regulated to a great extent by the Government. If the Government wished them to get the full benefit of increases in wages they should endeavour to so regulate the cost of living that the men may receive the full advantage. They could establish supply stores on the railway, and supply the men with provisions. One of the schemes placed before the Premier during a visit to North Queensland by the men on the Atherton-Evelyn Railway was that the Government should establish stores and supply the men working on the line with provisions at such a price as would not involve the Government in any loss. At present the storekeepers charge 50 per cent. above ordinary prices for goods supplied to the men; and

there is a pernicious system in vogue amongst the storekeepers on construction works of compelling the men to sign orders. These are collected by Government officers at a charge of 5 per cent., which goes on to the account between the storekeeper and the men.

The TREASURER: It suits both parties, apparently.

Mr. THEODORE: It does not, and the men complain bitterly. It is some protection to the storekeeper, who says that some of the men working on railway construction cannot be relied on to pay their accounts; but it is also a reduction of the wages of those who are honest and endeavour to pay their way. Even if we admit that the storekeeper will suffer loss supposing the order system is abolished, that is an argument in favour of the establishment of Government stores. There must be a credit system, because many of the men who go to work on lines under construction have not a penny to begin with. This applies very often in the case of immigrants brought out by the Government. I think some protection should be given to the honest men, and the Government should assist them by the establishment of supply stores at which they could get supplies at a reasonable cost, and thus get the full benefit of their wages and of any increase given to them. And the Government should assist them in the matter of establishing co-operative boarding-houses. At present they stay in boarding-houses many of which are also grog-shops; and that does not raise the moral tone of the works or conduce to the interests of the men. If the Government would supply tarpaulins, and shift the boarding-houses when the camp is shifted, it would be a great benefit to the men; and they would then perhaps get the full benefit of any increase in their wages. The amount charged by the department for collecting accounts on behalf of the storekeepers is certainly too high. The Government could afford immediate relief by reducing it to 2½ per cent. I think that 6d. in the £1 is a fair thing for collecting the accounts. The Government should not allow its officers on the railway construction works to assume the position of account collectors from the men. I know that on some works the officers are most officious in this matter. If a man says that a certain account is not correct, or that it is too high, or that he did not sign the order permitting the amount to be stopped from his wages, and asks to see the bill, he is told that he will have to take it or leave, and, as the officer has some influence with the engineer, this man is practically placed in the position that he has to submit to any deductions from his pay without knowing what the deductions are for. I claim that this is a matter into which an investigation by the Minister who is responsible should be made. I can assure the Minister that such is the case, and it is an absolute hardship on the men who are engaged on the construction works. Another matter connected with another department I must touch upon. It is a very serious matter from my standpoint and from the standpoint of the mining members or anyone interested in the mining business. We have claimed from time to time that the Government should give more assistance to the mining industry than they are doing at present. The Government have absolutely no sympathy whatever with the mining industry. In the Financial Statement of last year the Treasurer sounded a most pessimistic note, and rather threw cold water on the industry. He made some reference to the expenditure in deep sinking, and stated that there was very

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little return from that expenditure, as though he expected to be compensated very largely by refunds. If any good had accrued as a result of that expenditure on deep sinking it would have come through other channels, and the hon. gentleman should not have expected a return from it directly. In the statement now before us the hon. gentleman has adopted a very different tone. He has evidently profited by the advice given to him by members on this side of the House. This is what he says—

Our mineral fields are confronted by the low price of most of the industrial metals, and expansion has been retarded by the prohibitive cost of transport.

The prohibitive cost of transport is one of the causes of retarding the mining industry.

The TREASURER: And low prices of metal?

Mr. THEODORE: Yes; and low prices of metal. There is yet another cause, and that is the poor facilities which are provided for crushing the ore. The senior member for Townsville hinted to us this afternoon by interjection that he had lost a considerable amount of money in assisting to provide crushing power on the different fields. I claim that it is not through private enterprise that this difficulty is to be overcome. If it is going to be of any benefit to the industry at all, it will be by the Government taking a hand in it. On some of the fields there is a suspicion in the minds of the men engaged in mining that they do not get a fair return for the ore they send to the private enterprise crushing plants. They do not get what they are entitled to out of it. There has been a rumour going about in my district for a long time—that is, in the Herberton and the Walsh and Tinaroo districts—that many of the millowners there are dishonest.

Hon. R. PHILP: You have one of the most honest men in your district—Mr. Moffatt.

Mr. THEODORE: Yes; we have some honest men in my district, but as regards some of the mills the men will not send their ore there to be crushed at all. They would rather send it by some mills to another place altogether, and pay cartage over a rough mountainous country, and pay £1 per ton more to do it. It is not because they are prejudiced or are faddists. If it was prejudice on the part of one man who refused to have his ore crushed at a particular plant, then we might be inclined to think he was labouring under a delusion; but it so happens that many men refuse to crush at particular plants.

Hon. R. PHILP: Name the mill.

Mr. THEODORE: I will name the mill, and I will give the names of the companies so that the facts can be investigated by the department. It is a serious charge, and I recognise the seriousness of it.

Hon. R. PHILP: You would not make it outside.

Mr. THEODORE: I court every inquiry into it. The hon. gentleman said I would not make this charge outside. It has been published in a paper. It was published in the *Trinity Times*. They did not publish the details, but the name of the mill was given, and the pernicious practice of the whole system was exposed as far as possible, and nothing happened. It is a most serious charge to make against any industry, and if the Minister is interested in the welfare of the industry he should have an inquiry made into it.

Hon. R. PHILP: You have not given the name of the mill yet.

Mr. THEODORE: I will name the mill and I will give a concrete case of crushings that

took place. I will name the men who put the crushings through. If the Minister will make an investigation I will assist him in every way, and so also will others, and if he is satisfied with the evidence that will be brought before him it should be sufficient inducement for him to erect a State battery there. I will read a letter which I received from a man who was employed as a jiggerman in the Great Northern Mill at Herberton. He worked there for a couple of years and knew all about the crushings that took place at that mill. The jiggerman is the man who knows all about the crushing, and he can give estimates of what the crushing should produce. I have evidence for an inquiry, anyhow. This letter is dated Herberton, 8th June, and reads as follows:—

Herberton, 8th June, 1910.

Sir,—I started work at the Herberton Mill in May, 1906, as a trucker. When I had been working in the yard about three months Leidiman, who was manager of the mill, had a row with a jiggerman named Hoskins. This man threw the work up and left. That night when I was going home Leidiman called me back and asked me if I would come into the mill as jiggerman. I told him I knew nothing about the work. He said, "That does not matter; I will show you." I said, "All right." I started work next morning, although I knew nothing whatever about tin. I found out afterwards that if I had known anything about tin, I should not have been asked to take the job.

Eventually I noticed that whenever public crushings were going through the mill Leidiman would come to me and tell me to take the concentrates out of vanner-boxes, as it was only iron pyrites and no good, and to put it on the pyrites heap. Leidiman also told me that any chokes that went on the floor were to be put on pyrites heap, as it was only iron and no good.

Leidiman told me that it was the dirty mineral in the stone that caused the pipes to choke; at the time I believed that, too, but when I got into the run of the thing I found out that whenever the Great Northern was short of tin, this iron pyrites as Leidiman called it, was taken on to the floor, where the tin sumps are. It was then put through a sieve to get all the dirt and bits of wood and rubbish out of it; it would then be put through the far drier. When it was dried and cool, it would be put through stone breaker with mine stone, and would then become tin. This struck me as rather curious, as I knew he could not turn iron into tin. When I found out it was tin that was being taken from the public crushings and not iron, I spoke to Evans, the other jiggerman, about it. This man had been working at the mill as jiggerman for about eighteen months, and he is still working at the mill. When I spoke to Evans about it, he said: "If you want to keep your work you must mind your own business; you must know nothing, see nothing, and hear nothing." I made no reply. I spoke to the two engine-drivers about it. They said it was tin right enough, and it had been going on before my time. I was very much surprised at that, but I suddenly remembered that about half hour after I started work in the yard at the mill I was sent to help another man to haul oil drums of black stuff. I asked this man what it was. He told me it was tin. There was about a ton of it. We hauled it up into the big hopper, and another man landed it, mixed it with the Northern stone. This stuff must have been taken out of some public crushing or crushings.

When I found out that I was being made a party to robbing the public, I was going to throw the work up; but after giving it careful thought I came to the conclusion that it would not alter things, as after making inquiries quietly of different men in the street, I was told that they were quite sure that tin was stolen at all the mills where public stone was treated, although they did not know how they were robbed. So I decided to keep on working and try and keep records of all tin that was stolen out of public crushings—that is, tin that I handled myself—so that I could speak with certainty. I thought if I can do this, when the time comes to make it public, as long as I can give each one on or about the amount of tin that had been stolen out of their

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crushings, they could claim for the money value of that amount from the Great Northern Mine. So when I decided to keep a record of all tin stolen, I started to watch Leidiman carefully. I obeyed his orders and made no comments. I started to work for a purpose. Altogether I worked for the mill three years and four months. I left three times altogether. I wish to point out that I left the mill on my own account. I was not discharged. I can swear on oath that I left voluntarily, and when I was leaving the mill Leidiman came and asked me to stay on. I told him I would not stay any longer.

JAMES STONE.

P.S.—I wish to mention this: Leidiman told me that it took 3 tons of tin a fortnight to clear expenses for mill and mine. So if we were getting enough tin out of mine stone to clear expenses, the tin that had been stolen out of public crushings was kept back till it was wanted to help the Northern stone along. And another thing, too, all the losses I have given to you I have handled myself. I do not know what the other jiggerman, Herbert Evans, shifted except five kerosene tins belonging to Jack Ferris and party in April, 1907. In April, 1908, when Bradlaugh Company had a crushing going through the mill, this man was night shift. When I relieved him on the second morning I found that he had filled the seconds sump on lower floor with tin belonging to Bradlaugh Company. This is the man who proposed to Cocking and I that we should see Leidiman about getting commission on the tin that was stolen out of public crushings.

JAMES STONE.

This man, whose name is James Stone, kept records of what happened, and those records should be valuable evidence if the Minister for Mines institutes an inquiry into the matter. It is not a light charge that the man makes, and the man, being aware of that fact, was most careful in what he did. Attached to his letter is a communication received from one of his mates, who is also willing to give evidence in the matter. That letter is as follows:—

Black Jack,
24th April, 1910.

Dear Jim.—I received your letter last week. We only get the mail out here once a week. I am just writing to say, Jim, that I can't tell you any more about the battery business than I told you when I was up there. All you say in your letter is quite true: I can swear to that and more also. I can back you up in all that you say. I should like to see it come to a case; you have plenty of evidence and plenty to stand by you, but of course you are the principal, as you have all the dates and amounts in black and white. So, old chap, you can depend on me if it comes to a head. Have you had the general meeting yet? I'll bet some of the fellows who had crushings through the mill will be going off "pop" when they hear of their losses. Of course you will let me know how things are going along if it is likely to come to a case. I suppose those men who have been robbed will have to start the ball rolling. How does old Leidiman take it; did you tell him what you were going to do? I'll bet he feels a bit uneasy about it, although he might try to look composed.

W. D. COCKING.

He evidently thought that an inquiry would be made into the matter by the Minister.

Hon. R. PHILP: That man was three years doing that sort of thing.

Mr. THEODORE: Yes; it is a most difficult thing to handle. It is very difficult to judge how much tin there is in the stone. A man can, of course, get an assay, but in the Northern district, unfortunately, the buyer is the assayer of the stone which is purchased. Sometimes no assay is made, and the buyer merely makes an estimate of the quantity in the stone, and when it is crushed he may be disappointed with the amount of tin which it produces. One mine is taking stone from Herberton to Watsonville, and although it costs them £1 a ton more for cartage, they are getting better results than they did formerly. They did not know then

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that they had such a benefactor as they have in the person of James Stone. Probably some inquiry will now be made by the department into this matter, and if these charges are proved, the Government may help the people concerned by establishing a state battery in the district.

Hon. R. PHILP: The man was three years getting evidence.

Mr. THEODORE: Yes; he was three years collecting evidence. As the hon. gentleman knows, this is a very serious matter, and it would have been no use the man staying there for three months only, if he wished to get comprehensive and satisfactory evidence that tin was stolen. The record which he kept is most valuable, as the entries in it were made at the exact time that the things to which they relate occurred. There are a good many crushings mentioned in the book, but I shall quote only a few—

March, 1907.—Claim: Good Friday. Owners: George Lafond and Trembath. Twenty-seven kerosene tins of concentrates were taken out of this crushing; they were good clean concentrates. I estimate a bag to the tin; total 27 bags. Concentrates were put on pyrites heap; had loss at battery tank and drier.

Sometimes an accident happens and causes a hole to appear in the drier, through which the tin trickles. The manager may be unconscious of what has happened, but still, every loss which occurs in that way is a benefit to the battery-owner. It cannot, of course, be said that such loss to the owner of the stone, which means a benefit to the battery, is intentional. Here is another entry—

June, 1907.—Good Friday: I estimate 3 tons of tin were taken out of this crushing; was put on pyrites heap.

August, 1907.—Good Friday: Two and a-half tons of tin were taken out of this crushing; some were put on pyrites heap, and some were buried in sumps.

April, 1908.—Good Friday: Thirty-one kerosene tins were taken out of this crushing; I estimate 31 bags; put on pyrites heap.

Last crushing, Good Friday: I estimate half ton of tin was buried in big sump on lower floor. A few days after Good Friday crushing was finished Leidiman came to me and told me that he was going to put that iron pyrites through the plant. Leidiman emptied the water off the big sump. Leidiman then put this tin through a sieve into a tub; it was then emptied into kerosene tins by Leidiman. Leidiman then told me to put that rubbish through the plant. I drew the engine-driver's (W. D. Cocking) attention to what Leidiman was doing, and I told Cocking whose tin it was. All these losses are independent of battery tank and tin drier. Loss, 8 tons 17 cwt.

After Good Friday crushing in June, 1907, we had a clean up about 6th July, 1907. About eleven days after Good Friday crushing we crushed about 10 tons of mullock; I guessed it was 10 tons by the time the stamps were running on it. We got 55 or 57 bags of tin out of this mullock; these bags were branded L. We did not run down, as Leidiman put more mine stone, carrying poor tin, behind stamps. We started plant about 7 o'clock next morning, and Leidiman put mine stone behind stamps as soon as stamps were dropped, as we could not regulate plant. I was early morning shift that week. There were other concentrates on pyrites heap before Good Friday's concentrates were put there; the ashes were put through breaker as well. Leidiman was growling at Tiny Evans while this crushing was going through. Tiny told me that if Leidiman forced him to leave he would expose the tin-stealing.

April, 1908.—Claim: Bradlaugh. Manager: Mr. Trevenen. In April, 1908, a crushing came to the mill. From inquiries I found it was supposed to be 200 tons of stone. It was divided into three crushings; the first crushing was supposed to weigh 96 tons of stone. After careful thought I

came to the conclusion that at the least 6 tons of tin were stolen out of this crushing. All the chokes were cleaned up and buried under water in the sumps and on the pyrites heap. Leidiman gave me orders to empty vanner boxes, as it was all iron, and to keep them down. He told me to be careful, as old Trevenen was very cute, so they were emptied out. The contents of top vanner were put on pyrites heap, and the contents of bottom vanner were emptied into sumps. They were emptied while Trevenen was at dinner. I told Cooking, the engine-driver, and Cooking used to keep a look-out for me and let me know when Trevenen was coming. I knew this: That if I was caught, Leidiman would sacrifice me to save himself, and all my work and scheming would have gone for nothing. After this crushing of 96 tons was finished we started crushing mine stone. Then the tin that was buried in sumps was put through the grinding pan and first pump, and so run through the plant with the Northern stone.

A few days before we started on the second Bradlaugh crushing, Leidiman sent Steve Johns, engine-driver, and myself to shovel tailings down the river. I was working some distance from Steve Johns when Leidiman came down the river to me and said, "I am going to start on the Bradlaugh again next week, and I am going to put you night shift." He said, "Trevenen was quite satisfied with his last crushing; he expected 20 per cent., and he got 21 per cent. He then told me that Trevenen expected 18 per cent. from his next crushing, and he said the stone was rich, and it must be kept down to 18 per cent. or under, because if it went 20 per cent. or over it would raise a terrible row, as the first crushing was very rich—better stone than the stone about to go through.

A man cannot accurately estimate the percentage of tin in the stone. It often happens that the very best expert will estimate it at less than it actually yields. The hon. member knows that.

Hon. R. PHILIP: Yes; but I do not believe a word of this story.

Mr. THEODORE: Probably the Secretary for Mines will not believe it either, but let him grant an inquiry, and I shall be only too glad to help him.

Hon. R. PHILIP: You don't want any more inquiries—I know that.

Mr. THEODORE: Yes; I shall give all the assistance I can, and shall court inquiry into every matter with which I am concerned.

Hon. R. PHILIP: The owners of the stone should make inquiries.

Mr. THEODORE: They did not know I was going to bring this up.

The TREASURER: They were apparently satisfied they had not sufficient evidence, or they would have gone for the Great Northern themselves.

Mr. THEODORE: Yes; they are satisfied that they could not prove their case in an action against the owners. They [8.30 p.m.] could not claim for 25 tons or twenty-five bags of tin; but, if there is an inquiry, I am satisfied the Minister will find that these practices have been going on.

The TREASURER: Presumably they have got all this evidence.

Mr. THEODORE: They have this evidence; but does the hon. gentleman think it will be sufficient to enable them to make a claim which would entitle them to restitution?

The TREASURER: I think not.

Hon. R. PHILIP: If those statements are true, they would get seven years in gaol.

Mr. THEODORE: Here is an extract from the *Trinity Times* of 8th January, 1910, which

gives exactly the same exposition, although not exactly in the same words, nor does it give the details—

There are many other things I should like to talk about connected with Herberston and its neighbourhood, but space considerations forbid all but a short finishing-up article in this issue.

The chief matter that calls aloud for mention and which should be shouted from the house-tops with never-ending insistence by the member for the district, the local bodies of the district, and the Press of the district, is the want of a proper mill to treat the public stone, and then a stop put to all exemption of mining claims except for undoubted cases.

It is true that they have got a mill in Herberston already; and a first-class up-to-date plant, too, capable, it is said, of saving up to the last 1 per cent. of tin. But—

Well, it is quite evident that there is a first-class case for libel sticking out here. If I was to repeat without reservation what is alleged about the working of that mill by the man in the street and the working miner you meet having a drink on Christmas Eve, there would probably be more work for the lawyers. There may be as it is, for I simply can't keep silent when a glaring scandal stalks naked and unashamed round the country, and everybody knows it but is afraid to scotch the thing. Some journalists may be content to see an evil and not expose it, but—unfortunately for myself, perhaps—I'm not built that way.

Now, as I said, it is true that there is a mill at Herberston. It is likewise true that it will crush for the public (at £1 ls. per ton, including drying and bagging). But it is also true that the public won't take their stone to it if they can possibly help doing so. Last year only 150 tons of public stone was crushed at this up-to-date battery.

The natural conclusion to come to upon reading this statement is that there is no stone round Herberston to crush. That is what the average reader would deduce; but the average reader would be wrong.

Incredible as it may seem, working miners, tributaries, and others actually send their stone right past the hoppers of the Great Northern Battery 8 miles further on over a range to Watsonville, there to be dressed by the poor little antediluvian Bischoff Mill which is run there by water-power.

Now, miners are not, as a rule, faddists or eccentrics that they would pay another 15s. per ton carriage on their ore simply for fun or because they do not like some company or individual. There must be some good and sufficient reason for their action. In other words, it must pay or they would not do it.

While I was in Herberston a crushing of 20 tons of stone went out of the town right over to the Bischoff Mill at Watsonville. The Great Northern Battery was silent when I arrived in the town, and only worked one shift for a few days while I was there. It was not so rushed with business that it could not have dealt with this crushing.

I naturally inquired why such an anomaly should exist as stone raised locally being packed or carted over the range to the next town. I was informed—not by one man but by a dozen—that it was quite a usual thing to see stone being carted out of Herberston over to the neighbouring town's battery. The reason given is simple and can be stated in a half a dozen words. The miners get a better return from the Bischoff Mill than they do from the Great Northern.

Not a few isolated cases, but a round dozen were given to me of ore which went, say, 15 per cent. at Herberston going 30 per cent. at Watsonville. Not the same ore, of course, but ore like it, from the same lode, and to the ordinary miner's eye and simple tests of exactly the same character.

One party's experience (Hobson and Cusack, to give their names) was that while they were crushing at the Great Northern they could never get more than 12½ per cent. They decided to try Watsonville, and their last return went 32½ per cent. The Great Northern people will probably say that it was different stone, but the miners would not allow me to hint as much. To give another instance, a crushing from the Archer passed within 20 yards of the Great Northern's weighbridge on its road

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to Watsonville. It went exactly double the percentage previously got when that weighbridge was not passed.

Now, all these things are facts which cannot be disputed. Herberton is a far larger place than Watsonville. The battery at Herberton is valued at £8,800. It has two 50-h.p. engines, ten stampers of over 1,100 lb. weight, six pumping dredges, eight jiggers and Wilfley tables, seven vanners, two concentrating tables, five slime tables, one grinding pan, one classifier, ten settling tanks, one tossing tub, elevator, rock-breaker, etc., all complete, and it saves practically the whole of the metal contents of the stone it treats. The Bischoff Mill is a little concern, costing only £2,000. Yet the one keeps going as long as it can get water to drive its Pelton wheel, while the other is more than half its time hung up.

Although the thing is not so definitely stated as in the other quotations I have made, it is clearly hinted at; and, if the Great Northern people resented it, why did they not institute a prosecution for libel, because it is libellous if it is not true?

Hon. R. PHILP: Somebody else got a verdict against the *Trinity Times*, but he could not get anything out of the paper.

Mr. THEODORE: Well, they could seize the plant. It would pay them to close the paper up if it makes such damaging statements as this. It is not stated that the directors are aware that this practice is going on, nor that the shareholders or even the manager are aware of it, though it seems hard to believe that they are not aware that it is going on. It seems hard to think that the manager of the mill, acting in collusion with the manager of the mine, should rob public crushings in order to give the Great Northern stone a help along.

Hon. R. PHILP: It is not likely.

Mr. THEODORE: No, it is not likely. I will read a couple more cases which should prove interesting to the poor fellows concerned—

Bradlaugh, third crushing: Three tons of tin were stolen out of this crushing. It was buried in sumps and on pyrites heap. Had loss at battery tank and tin drier. Total loss, 14 tons tin.

June, 1908.—Bradlaugh: Mr. Trevenen, manager. Two and a-half tons were stolen out of this crushing. It was buried under water in sumps on lower floor. Had loss at battery tank and tin drier.

Bradlaugh, 1909.—Four kerosene tins. I estimate three bags of tin; the concentrates were a bit dirty.

I will now take another claim—

February, 1908.—Easter Monday. Owners: Gardiner and Loveridge. Two and a-half tons of tin were taken out of this crushing. It was buried in sumps and on pyrites heap. When we commenced to run down, Gardiner and Loveridge were in the mill, supposed to be looking after their crushing. As soon as stamps were hung up, Leidiman came to me and told me that he wanted to stop plant in about three hours' time. I told him we could not run down in that short time, as there was a lot of concentrates in both boxes. He then gave me orders to send all tin over slime tables, and to alter the first and second pipes on the slime tables. By altering these two pipes the tin that came over slime tables would go to two sumps and lie there under water, instead of being pumped up and dressed on lurig vanners, as it should have been. Leidiman told me to put Loveridge at the top vanner-box, and tell him to take tin out of vanner-box and feed it on the classifier, and show him how to do it. The other man, George Gardiner, was set to clean the lower vanner-box out and put it in the No. 1 on the first slime table. Leidiman stayed with this man so that he could not wander about the plant and perhaps find things out. The 2½ tons were buried in sumps, and some on pyrites heap. A few days after this crushing was finished Leidiman came to me and gave me orders to put the iron pyrites through the plant. This was Gardiner and Loveridge's tin. This was in the

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afternoon. While I was putting it through the plant, Mr. Bonar, the general manager, came down to the mill, and he stood at the No. 3 slime table. Leidiman went to Bonar. I watched them both from behind some wooden steps. Leidiman was laughing and pointing to the slime tables. I judged by his actions and gestures that he was telling Bonar whose tin it was and how some of it was stolen. I saw a smile flicker across Bonar's face. The tables were showing about 20 per cent. for tin, whereas before tin was put through plant the tables were only showing about 2 per cent. I forgot to mention that Leidiman gave me orders to keep the vanner-boxes down, so that they used to be emptied every night.

I will quote another case now the Minister for Mines is here. He will be very much interested in the practices that are alleged to be going on at Herberton. I think the hon. gentleman will sympathise with the miners who have been robbed in this manner when he hears the circumstances. I would like him to pay particular attention to the subject. It is a matter of tin that is alleged to be stolen from public crushings that have been going through the Great Northern Mill at Herberton. I have quoted cases showing the estimated weight of tin that has been stolen from the crushings. I will give the quotation again for the hon. gentleman's benefit—

A few days before we started on the second Bradlaugh crushing, Leidiman said to me, "Trevenen was quite satisfied with his last crushing: he expected 20 per cent. and he got 21 per cent." He then told me that Trevenen expected 18 per cent. from his next crushing, and he said the stone was rich, and it must be kept down to 18 per cent. or under.

I asked him how he was going to reduce it. He said he did not know yet, but he thought by the seconds pump. He said he would let me know later on.

Eventually we started on second crushing. I went on shift at 6 p.m. till 6 a.m. next morning. When I had been on shift about one hour Leidiman came to me and gave me orders to start seconds pump about 11 o'clock that night, or when I thought it was safe. He gave me orders to empty vanner-boxes during the night and put the concentrates from these boxes through the seconds pump. About 2 tons of concentrates were pumped up during the night. The following night I went on shift again, and when I had been on shift about one hour I was stood on the pump floor, when Leidiman came to me and gave me orders to pump up another box of concentrates, and he told me there was too much tin going to the tin-box. He then gave me orders to take some tin out of tin-box and empty it into far tin drier. I asked him how much. He said, "Half ton." I said, "Ten kerosene tins?" He said, "Yes." He then told me that he had already thrown some concentrates into bottom of drier so that it would prevent the tin from falling down into tray or cooler. W. D. Cocking was engine-driver on the same shift as I was on. I told him about tin being put into drier, and he saw seconds pump working both nights. After giving the crushing careful thought, I came to the conclusion that 4 tons of tin was stolen between seconds pump and the tin that was taken out of tin-box. This is without counting loss at drier and battery tank. Second crushing, 18 per cent.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: What is the hon. member quoting from?

Mr. THEODORE: I am quoting from notes that were made by an employee of the Great Northern Mill, James Stone. He started there in 1906, and he came to the conclusion that tin was being systematically stolen from public crushings. He came to the conclusion that if he could collect data enough to support him in an inquiry that it would assist the small mineowners in his district, and this is the evidence he has collected. I have read a long letter to-night from the man, who gave particulars of his method of collecting this data. He states in no uncertain terms that there is a pernicious practice going on at the Herberton Mill of stealing tin out of public crushings. The tin he claims is being put through

with the mine stone—the stone coming from the mine that belongs to the same company who own the mill. If the hon. gentleman is satisfied that this is worthy of inquiry—and they are most serious charges to make that tin is being stolen—I hope he will allow an inquiry to be made under the auspices of the Mines Department. I can assure him that every assistance will be given him by myself and others who are interested in this matter, and if he is satisfied that these practices are going on—that men are being robbed—and if he wishes to see the mining industry prosperous in that district he will do something to relieve it by establishing a battery at Herberton.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. member will know that if the evidence is complete that the men who are being robbed have got their immediate remedy.

Mr. THEODORE: Unfortunately, that is not the case. We know very well that while we have any amount of evidence that certain practices are being carried on, redress is not immediately available. If these statements are true—and their accuracy can be verified by an inquiry—we can be perfectly assured that men are being robbed, but still it is quite a different thing to sue the company for a return of the tin that has been lost. We may not be successful in that, but we may be successful in assuring the hon. gentleman that these practices are going on. That should be all that is sufficient for him to come to the conclusion that it is best to establish a battery. The ore which is produced in the locality is quite sufficient to keep an additional battery going. There are more claims being opened up every day, and there is no doubt that the suspicion that the men are not getting a fair return from the stone has hindered the development of the industry in that place, and is one of the causes why the industry is in such a bad condition to-day. There are other mills that we can trust perfectly well; the miners themselves place implicit confidence in them. I have given these concrete cases, and I now ask for an inquiry. If the Minister thinks this is of sufficient importance to make investigations, I ask him to have an inquiry made into the matter.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Will the hon. member indicate by what method I can do it?

Mr. THEODORE: He can appoint the warden at Herberton or the Under Secretary for Mines or some other official to go thoroughly into the matter—to go up to Herberton, and get these men to come before him with their statements; get the claimholders to give their experiences. Let him make a thorough investigation on the spot, and come to a decision as to whether he thinks there are any grounds whatever for the suspicions and the charges that have been made, and if his decision is against the company—if he says that there is grave suspicion that these practices have been going on—that should be sufficient for the department to take further steps.

Hon. R. PHILP interjected.

Mr. THEODORE: What could the owners of the stone do? The owners of the stone do not expect to get anything out of it now—all they expect to get out of it is an alteration of the system. They expect to get a better means of treating their stone. They are not satisfied with the Great Northern Battery, and they want another battery from which they can expect fair returns from the stone. They are satisfied that they have been robbed,

and that their tin has been stolen. All they want now is that in future no more stone will be stolen, and surely that is reasonable. The hon. member for Townsville smiles incredulously.

Hon. R. PHILP: I do not know who they are.

Mr. THEODORE: These miners are quite philosophical. If the tin is not stolen at the battery, their proceeds may be stolen somewhere else. They may look at it in that philosophical way. It is a most serious charge to make, and it is the first time the charge has been made. It is quite a common rumour in the North, and I thought it my duty to ventilate it here. I would not have mentioned it on the Financial Statement at all, because I do not think this is the time to mention it. I warned the Treasurer when we were discussing the Sessional Orders that he could expect this sort of thing. This is purely a departmental matter, and perhaps it should have been mentioned on the Estimates, but no one can properly ventilate these matters in ten minutes. I hope when the Estimates are going through the Secretary for Mines will give us an assurance that an investigation will be made.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I have endeavoured to obtain the information from the hon. member by what machinery—under what machinery—can the department hold such an inquiry?

Mr. THEODORE: I think the Minister could instruct one of his responsible officers to go to Herberton and set up an inquiry, assisted by the mining inspector and warden, and call these men, who are perfectly willing, to come and give evidence before him. No doubt the Herberton Mill people, seeing it is a charge against their management and honesty, will probably come and defend themselves, and that officer, whoever he may be—some impartial officer who has sufficient knowledge to come to a decision on the matter—will be able to collect sufficient evidence to come to a decision, and he will be able to advise the Minister whether the statements I have made are facts or otherwise.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: I can assure the hon. member there is no legal machinery under which an inquiry could be held.

Mr. THEODORE: I admit there is no legal machinery. Under the system we have there can be no redress unless they see tin being stolen from them—unless they see tin being taken off the accumulated concentrates of the crushing, they would have no case whatever—there is not sufficient evidence to enable them to sue for compensation or damages. I am quite well aware of that, but I would like to see an investigation—an informal investigation if you like—certainly not a legal investigation—just a departmental inquiry into the matter for the sake of the industry, not for the sake of any particular individual. I claim that this is one of the causes that has left the industry in such a state. If the men could get a proper return from the stone, no doubt it would lead to further development.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: Have parcels of stone been sent to the mills for assay?

Mr. THEODORE: The unfortunate part about it is this: The question of assays was brought up by my predecessor, Mr. Woods, who sought to have a Government

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assay office established, so that the men could get an unbiased assay without any waste of time.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: The hon. member is aware that I made it possible for every mining district to have parcels of stone assayed.

Mr. THEODORE: Yes; but it is very inconvenient getting together a parcel of stone and sending it to Charters Towers for assay.

The SECRETARY FOR MINES: It is delivered to the warden.

Mr. THEODORE: Yes; but the warden does not do the assaying—he has to send the stone to Charters Towers, which causes delay.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order, order! Under Sessional Order, I call upon the hon. member to resume his seat.

Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*): I regret very much that the operation of the Standing Order, about which we heard so much during the last week or two, has had the effect of cutting short our eloquence on a subject such as this, which is entrancingly interesting. I listened spell-bound to the revelations made by the hon. member in regard to the matter referred to, and probably the man who collected the data which the hon. member used will be looked upon by some of those persons as a public benefactor. We have different ideas as to what a public benefactor is, and I must confess that my conception of a public benefactor is not a man who for three years has acted the part of a thief in a battery for the purpose of getting certain information. I do not think the moral sense of the community will be flattered by the fact that we have in our midst men who are prepared to do that kind of thing—men who are prepared to act the part of informer. Possibly if the matter were inquired into, it would be a mere departmental inquiry—possibly it would not go beyond that stage, as we generally find that the evidence taken at inquiries is carefully shelved. Six months or a year afterwards we find 3 or 4 inches of dust on them, and after twenty years or so they are taken out and burnt. I do not think this is the way to expose a matter of that kind—I do not think that is the proper method to adopt. I think better methods are open to those who care to take them for the purpose of preventing dishonesty on the part of any particular person, and in this particular case I do not think the right action has been taken. Certainly the hon. member has pointed out the mine—he has taken the responsibility of publishing the name of the battery, and certain other matters. I dare say if a newspaper published information of that kind the men concerned would take action. But a newspaper may libel a man, and he may have no possible chance, even if he vindicates his own character, of getting any satisfaction. He may be merely a man of straw, and his printing press may be some hand-shaky piece of machinery not worth taking away. That is an aspect of the question that has to be taken into consideration. I think the proper way is to take these complaints to the department. I do not think there is any need for them to be published in this Chamber at all. You have a fair man in charge of the department. You can go to the Minister and lay the evidence before him, and, if he refuses to act, you can impeach him on the floor of

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the House. I think that is the way to do it. If the fossickers in the Clermont district were ill-treated, I would go to the department immediately about it, and, if I could get no satisfaction there, I would ventilate it on the floor of this House, and, if I could get someone to assist me to make the case stronger, all the better. However, I do not desire to waste my time on a matter that is entirely foreign to a discussion on the Financial Statement. The Treasurer, in moving the vote—during recent years it has been customary for the Treasurer, in making the Financial Statement, to move that there be granted towards the services of His Majesty for the year 1910-11 a sum not exceeding £300, to defray the salary of the aide-de-camp to His Excellency the Governor. That is the first item we have to pass; and I think

that in the discussion of the [9 p.m.] finances a little more attention should be given to the gubernatorial establishment. Personally, I am opposed to it, and would vote for its abolition if opportunity offered. The promise was made in pre-federation days that we were to have the abolition of the gubernatorial office, the cutting down of the strength of State Parliaments, and the reduction of State expenditure in half a dozen directions.

Mr. RYLAND: The abolition of the Upper House.

Mr. LESINA: And the abolition of the Upper House. That was one of the reasons why a great many people voted in favour of federation; but none of those promises have been honoured. I voted against federation because I believed it would lead to further expenditure and heavier taxation; but, if the promises then made had been carried out, my opinions would have had to undergo a change. Instead of expenditure decreasing, it has been increasing; and instead of having one National Parliament we have seven Parliaments with seven sets of Legislatures. I think the time is ripe for members of State Parliaments to seriously consider the advisability of cutting down expenditure in connection with their establishments. In Table C I find that during the last ten years the gubernatorial establishment has cost Queensland £50,000—which would have built a decent railway into an agricultural district. And what have we got for it? I find that there is £30,000 down this year for a new Government House; and I notice under the heading "Executive and Legislative" the expenditure in connection with the Governor's household is increasing every year. I think that members who believe in the principle of economy should make an effort to reduce the expenses of these establishments. I am prepared to take that stand and give my vote in that direction. I am inclined to think that a good deal of the hostility to the Federal Government and to the Federal system as a whole is due to the irritation consequent on the fact that the expenses, instead of being reduced, are being increased. Our national expenditure is rapidly mounting up, and we are making no provision for the time when, of necessity, we shall have a smaller revenue and perhaps larger demands up it. I think also that before federation we were assured that our Agent-General would be dispensed with. The cost of the Agent-General's establishment is going up every year, and an attempt is being made to fasten for all time on the people of the State an expensive system of government which will continue until the crack of doom. The Agent-General's Department is down this year for £13,374, which is

an increase on the amount voted last year, which was an increase on the vote of the year before.

The TREASURER: £5,000 of that is in connection with immigration—advertising.

Mr. LESINA: That might be very well undertaken in connection with the High Commissioner's Office. We have now a High Commissioner, who represents the whole of Australia, and it appears to me that we could get rid of these Agents-General and save considerable sums of money. As it is, there is a strong feeling growing up in favour of maintaining the supremacy of the various States; and there is a tendency to build up Governments which, if not entirely hostile to the Federal Government, are prepared to stick out for rights which belong to the National Government. At the recent Federal elections their wings were clipped to some extent. I take the Australian view that the Federal Parliament is the National Parliament, and that its powers should be extended until by and by every little Queenslander, Victorian, and all the rest of them will recognise the Federal Government as his Government. That is why I believe an attempt should be made to cut down the expense of all the State Governments. I think the army of highly-paid State Governors, Agents-General, Ministers, and other high-salaried functionaries of the State should be got rid of, and that as soon as possible. And, if necessary, an attempt should be made to take the opinion of the people on the matter, by means of a national referendum, as to whether they are prepared to dispense with those expensive State functionaries. While we have expenses growing in the Federal arena, the expenses are growing likewise in our State arena. The expenses are growing at both ends, and the time is rapidly approaching when the Australian citizen will be the most highly taxed in the civilised world. I say that an attempt should be made to curb that tendency before it becomes too strong. Some time ago a table was published setting forth the salaries paid to Ministers in South Africa, where they pay the Prime Minister £4,000; and it is just as well to know the facts in connection with the salaries of Australian Federal Ministers, who are paid £12,000 a year. This is in addition to their pay as members of Parliament. For instance, a Minister with a portfolio gets £400 a year in addition to his salary as a Minister, while a Minister without a portfolio receives £600 a year. The Federal Prime Minister, Mr. Fisher, receives £2,400 a year. Then there are six other Ministers who draw £1,700, three honorary Ministers who draw £1,200 each, and the balance of £700 goes to the "Whips" of the party. (Laughter.) There are also allowances paid to these members. There is now a demand for allowances for current expenditure, and even last year a further demand arose for travelling and incidental allowances. I point out that whilst this expenditure is growing in connection with the Federal salaries, a similar growth is noticeable in connection with our State function. That is why I believe that a halt should be called before it grows too big to bear. I do not know whether the Treasurer has made a note of the fact, but it was thoroughly understood that when we federated that a free and unrestricted trade was to exist within the boundaries of the Commonwealth, that the State debts were to be taken over by the Commonwealth, the interest bill reduced, and the State Legislatures reduced to what they

should be, purely local governing bodies, to legislate for local requirements of a purely provincial character. But so far as interstate freetrade is concerned, that has not been realised by any means yet. Differential wharfage rates and dual control of quarantine practically prevents interstate freetrade from being practised with most beneficial results throughout the Commonwealth to-day. Yet Mr. Knibbs, the Commonwealth Statistician, who deals with this matter very exhaustively in all the volumes which he has published, states that the expenditure of the State Governments has increased since federation by nearly £5,000,000 per year, whilst the increased cost of running the State Parliaments alone has increased by £27,000 per year more than it was before the establishment of the Commonwealth. All this has taken place, mark you, although the Commonwealth has taken over three departments which used to be run by the States before at a cost of £3,000,000 a year. By the financial tables we find that the Government of Queensland are pursuing the same dangerous path. Instead of curtailing their expenditure, as they have been warned to do by Mr. Knibbs in the volumes he has published, the expenditure has been piling up, and we are going headlong for destruction on precisely the same track. We are making no attempt whatever to turn aside and stem the torrent of expenditure that is going on, but the time must come, sooner or later, when we will have to cry "Halt!" Perhaps the failure of a season will be the first indication, and the cry will be to "Stand from under!" If not, then this expenditure will increase until the burden will become too great for the backs of the people who live in this sparsely-populated State, and they will be unable to bear it. We find from Knibbs that not only has the expenditure increased, but it has increased to a much greater extent than the increase in population. Now, there is one thing we should be careful to guard against, and that is to see that our expenditure does not grow faster than our population. What has been done to check this expenditure? Absolutely nothing has been done for the last four or five years. In response to the clamant demands made from all sides of the House—members belonging to all sides of the House are included, and none are exempted—the Government has rashly expended in many directions money which might well have been conserved for other purposes which will later on need it. I have no objection to the expenditure in connection with our railways. I believe that the Government deserve every credit for the vigorous expenditure which characterises their occupancy of office in the matter of railway extension. That has been necessary, and is yet necessary, and will probably become more necessary as time passes and population increases. What they need to do in that connection is to extend their railways beyond the boundaries of settlement—to go ahead of settlement, and not wait until settlement takes place and then construct the railways in a tardy and indolent kind of fashion, after many battles have been fought by the settlers against surrounding difficulties. I understand that only two out of the whole of the States have reduced the cost of their Agent-General's establishment in London. In spite of that, we find that the increase in the cost of the Agents-General's offices in London since federation amounts to over £10,000. Has the promise that was made to the people before federation been realised in that connection? We were told in the pre-federation

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days that, as soon as federation was consummated, these little functionaries in London would be got rid of. I know I heard the argument frequently used that it was an absurdity that there should be six Agents-General, with their six little offices in London, and it was looked upon as a crowning stupidity on the system of provincial government as practised in the Commonwealth of Australia. The people were asked to arise as patriotic Australians and wipe out these six anomalies. Has it been done? The six little Agents-General are still there representing their six little States, and a Commonwealth High Commissioner has been appointed on top of them, and we are told by Knibbs that the cost of the States' Agents-General has increased by £10,000 a year since federation. To that extent the promises made to the people of Australia have been broken. Is there any prospect of it being realised at all? Is there any prospect of this House rising patriotically and doing its duty in this regard, and setting an example to the other States? I do not suppose we will ever find the six little Premiers, with their six little Ministries and their six little Parliaments—(laughter)—giving up their sovereign rights as States, and allowing us to have one grand Commonwealth Government, with one prominent Australian sentiment throughout the whole of this great continent. That is what I believe we should have.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LESINA: Then, again, we have, under our present Constitution, six sovereign States, each differing from the other, and we have got superimposed and ornamented on them a Governor, with two Houses of Legislature, and all the pomp and frippery of obsolete parliamentary customs. All this, again, is superimposed upon by a Governor-General, a Federal Ministry, a Senate, a House of Representatives, and a Federal High Court, which has power over the decrees of the Federal Parliament if any legislation submitted to it is found to conflict with the Federal Constitution in any particular. I would like to know if there is any country on God's earth, with only a population of 5,000,000 people, who would—for very long, anyhow—continue under such a system of government? Can we long endure it? The time must come when it must stop, and that time is rapidly ripening now. Although it is rapidly ripening, we are dozing, but the Australian people will some day say that they will no longer suffer these things. We have six separate States, each with separate systems of taxation. We have six separate systems of administration, and six separate railway systems.

Mr. FERRICKS: And six different gauges.

Mr. LESINA: And six different gauges, whereas we should have one national railway policy for the whole of Australia.

Mr. FORSYTH: That is the fault of the Labour party.

Mr. LESINA: It is not the fault of the Queensland Labour party, as they have differed from the other States in that respect. While some members of the Labour party in the other States were inclined to favour the provincial Parliaments, yet the Queensland Labour party believe, as I do, that the ultimate destiny of Australia is to be represented by one Parliament, which will represent the whole of the people, and the State Parlia-

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ments will exist merely as local governing bodies, with local provincial work to carry out—

Mr. FERRICKS: That is what their Standing Orders aim at.

Mr. LESINA: Yes; and that is why I voted for those Standing Orders. (Laughter.) I did it because I want to bring nearer the time when our State Parliaments will be reduced to provincial bodies, exercising grandiose municipal functions. Sir George Dibbs made a remarkable prophecy some years before federation. He did not know what we know to-day, that the powers of the States and Federal High Court overlap and circumscribe the powers of the Commonwealth, which should be supreme. Sir George Dibbs, the New South Wales Premier, in 1894, prophesied that, under the proposed Federal Constitution, the New South Wales Legislative Council and Assembly would be more numerous bodies than the Senate and House of Representatives of all Australia, and whilst the best men would certainly aim at obtaining seats in the Federal Parliament, the State Parliaments would be handed over to men of inferior ability, who, in such numbers, and with such powers as are reserved to the States, would always be giving trouble. This prophecy is being abundantly fulfilled. The members of the Lower Houses of the Australian Parliaments are more numerous than the members of the Federal Parliament sitting in Melbourne, and the Houses are filled with men of inferior ability, exercising powers which only tend to irritate Australians having national aspirations. Even the Labour party in New South Wales are aiming at belittling the great Australian Parliament.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: The Labour party here are not doing that.

Mr. LESINA: No; the Labour party here have taken a broader and more national view of the matter; they have been so ill-treated in this Parliament that they look with hopefulness to the Federal Parliament, as the representative of the whole of Australia, doing its utmost to advance the interests of Australia. But, as I say, that prophecy of Sir George Dibbs has been abundantly fulfilled, not only in New South Wales but in many other Australian States. Some mention has been made of the borrowing of money by the States. What control have the Commonwealth of Australia over the expenditure of loan money by the Australian States? Absolutely none. The States can borrow and spend as they choose, and the Commonwealth cannot interfere, but the time is rapidly ripening when the Australian Parliament, on behalf of the Australian people, will have to exercise a rational and seasonable control over the expenditure of borrowed money by State Governments. Our public debts still continue to grow, and our interest bill continues to accumulate. We pay a larger sum per head of population for interest than any other State in Australia.

Hon. R. PHILP: The money has been spent on reproductive works.

Mr. LESINA: Certainly much of our borrowed money has been spent on reproductive works. About 67 per cent. has been spent on railways, which, although they do not pay on a bookkeeping system, yet pay the State by increasing the revenue that we derive from our lands and our mines. *Par*

se, the railways have lost millions of pounds to the State, though during the last few years they have shown on paper a small profit every year. We have to pay from the consolidated revenue every year a large sum of money to make our railways solvent. With regard to our borrowing, you have only to refer to Knibbs, and you will find that the national debts of the Australian States are increasing very rapidly.

Hon. R. PHILP: You got a railway out of it. What have you got to complain about? (Laughter.)

Mr. LESINA: At page 838 Knibbs says— During the eight years between 30th June, 1901, and 30th June, 1909, the public debt of the States increased by £48,255,258, or at the rate of £6,000,000 per annum. The amount of debentures comprised in the total debt diminished by £12,842,091 during the period, while the amount held as inscribed stock increased by £52,499,781, and as Treasury bills by £8,597,558.

Hon. R. PHILP: All for public works.

Mr. LESINA: Mostly for public works. I do not grow so much about that, but I contend that there is a necessity for extending the functions of the Federal Parliament, so that they can exercise control over the loan-mongering policy of the States. At present we are going rapidly ahead with our loan expenditure. During the last few years I believe New South Wales has added £10,000,000 to her loan indebtedness. Then there is no Federal control over the railway system.

Mr. FORSYTH: Why should there be?

Mr. LESINA: I want to point out one or two reasons why they should be under Federal control. At present a harmful and severe competition takes place between the railway systems of neighbouring States.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That does not exist.

Mr. LESINA: It does exist.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: There is no competition between States.

Mr. LESINA: There is a divided system of control, anyhow. I should like to see the whole of our railways under the control of the Federal Parliament.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I hope they never will be under Federal control.

Mr. LESINA: The hon. gentleman places his faith with that parochial timidity that is characteristic of the shopkeeping class in the legislation of the local Parliament. Sir George Dibbs estimated in 1894 that £1,500,000 would be saved Victoria and New South Wales on two items alone by unification of the States. These items being the proper adjustment of rates in respect of the border railway traffic, the re-establishment of the stock traffic, and the saving in interest by combining the debts, we are justified in assuming that a readjustment of railway rates for all the States would effect a much greater saving. The debts in connection with our railways should be combined and federalised. If that were done, the saving in interest might wipe out one of our deficits, and produce a decent surplus. I know that the Commonwealth Parliament have power to deal with State debts, but whether railway debts will come under that head, I do not know.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: All debts.

Mr. LESINA: If we do federalise the railway debts, that will mean a unification of our railway systems, and I do not think any State will suffer by the railways being

placed under the control of the Federal Government. Queensland railways are run at a considerable annual loss, and under those circumstances we should be very glad to hand over our railways to the Federal Parliament. We have to make up out of revenue every year some thousands of pounds' deficiency in the earnings of our railways.

Mr. RYLAND: £108,000.

Mr. LESINA: In some years it has been more than £108,000. Only during the last few years have we had an actual surplus after all charges have been met. Yet Sir William MacGregor pointed out—

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That was an error.

Mr. LESINA: If it was an error, it should be corrected, because that error will be credited in the old country.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Instead of £900,000 being earned for interest, Sir William MacGregor said interest, expenses, and £900,000.

Mr. LESINA: Every year the railways show a small profit of £30,000, £90,000, or £100,000.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: As a matter of fact, Sir William MacGregor said £900,000.

Mr. LESINA: I think there would be a great reduction in interest by the consolidation of the railway debts of the States. According to figures published by the Commonwealth Statistician, the public indebtedness of the six federated States is about £250,000,000, an increase of about £48,000,000, since federation. The total amount is steadily increasing, and more than one [9.30 p.m.] half the public debts of Australia fall due within the next fifteen years. The consolidation of the debts would enable the Commonwealth to borrow at a reduced rate—though borrowing at all is unnecessary—and it has been estimated by financial authorities that in this and other respects the savings by Australian unity would be fully £6,000,000 a year, or enough in thirty-six years to blot out the national debt of Australia. That is well worth working for, and, if it can be achieved through the national Parliament, I am prepared to support a movement in that direction. That it can be achieved through the State Parliament I am positively certain is impossible. There is no hope of it. Another point that I would like to make to buttress my argument is this: With a unified Commonwealth all national heads of income and expenditure would be transferred to the Commonwealth Government, and the powers of provincial administrations, that would take the place of State Governments, would be consequently restricted to purely local affairs, such as maintenance of inferior courts of justice, control of municipal, shire, or county councils, local administration of police, education, hospitals, charities, mining and agriculture, roads and bridges, whilst they would retain the benefits of existing public works, the capital cost of which would be taken over by the Commonwealth. That appears to me to be the ultimate outcome. I believe that small provincial Parliaments exercising inferior powers, leaving high questions to the Commonwealth Parliament, would have the effect of developing a generation of municipal statesmen in Australia, who would initiate municipal legislation as far-reaching in its beneficial results as

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what they have in operation in some parts of England and Scotland. At present we are cursed by unnecessary Legislatures. If we retain the present babel of Legislatures, then the various State Parliaments will continue to enact a multitude of laws to justify their existence. I shall give some figures to show the difference between the Commonwealth and State Parliaments. The Commonwealth has 1 Governor, 9 Ministers, 36 senators, 75 representatives, and 1 High Commissioner. The States have 6 Governors, 45 Ministers, 197 Legislative Councillors, 354 representatives, and 6 Agents-General. The cost of the Commonwealth Parliament is £190,000 per annum, and the cost of the State Parliaments is £326,477 per annum. The High Commissioner gets, I think, £3,000 a year.

Hon. R. PHILP: £5,000.

Mr. LESINA: The State Agents-General get £36,000 per annum, and the State Governors get, in round figures, about £30,000 a year. Now, how long is this farce going to be maintained by the people of Australia once they begin to talk about it? I venture to say that these figures, taken from official sources, when put before democratic audiences will, in the next four or five years, rouse such a demand for a reduction in the State Parliaments and gubernatorial and Agents-General expenditure as will compel the Legislatures of the various States to recognise and accede to the urgent demand of the people. Fancy spending nearly £327,000 per annum on these little tinpot State Parliaments, while the great National Parliament of Australia only costs £190,000 per annum!

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: And six little Premiers.

Mr. LESINA: Yes; six little Premiers; and the six little Ministries who gravitate round them; and the six little tinpot Agents-General, with their little courts and officers! Hon. members who have been speaking for the last few hours have proved to the hilt there is unnecessary expenditure. No wonder we are about the heaviest taxed people in Australia, that our national debt is the highest per head, with the exception of Western Australia, that our interest bill is the highest, and that we pay the lowest wages to workers in Australia. The Government put forward a glittering prospectus in the shape of this Financial Statement, but they cannot get away from the fact that the earnings of the men and the women employed in shops and factories are about the lowest paid in Australia.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Our security is the best.

Mr. LESINA: Every man who borrows claims that his security is good. I do not belong to the "stinking fish party." I do not believe in decrying Australia. I only wish to cry down these petitfogging mercantile politicians, who look at the affairs of the nation from precisely the same point of view as they look at their shops. The figures which I have quoted are exclusive of several thousands of pounds spent in gubernatorial expenses. If hon. members look at the Estimates this year, they will find that we are spending on the gubernatorial establishment about as much as we spent under the Dickson régime in pre-federation days. We got it down to £1,400, and now it is up to £1,800 again.

Mr. FERRICKS: Yes, Philp is in power again.

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Mr. LESINA: It may be due to the fact that the senior member for Townsville is practically in power again, though I do not know that it is fair to lay the whole blame on the hon. member's shoulders. But it is a significant fact that, despite the years we have had federation and the saving we should have effected in that time, this State is on the broad road to uncontrolled expenditure; and the first rainless season we have there will be a cutting down of expenditure to the bone in every direction and in the number of men employed, and there will be another "Black Wednesday" for the public servants. I certainly believe a great deal of work still remains before the time is ripe for a change in the State Parliaments, but we must prepare the way for that change. We must not look at the matter in a little, selfish way. We must not say to each other, "We do not care to apply the guillotine to ourselves. We do not desire to commit political *felo de se*. We do not want to wipe out this Parliament." I would not care to do it; but I ask hon. members to prepare for the time when the electors will decide only to return candidates who will vote for the abolition of the State Parliaments as they are to-day. As the powers of the Commonwealth Parliament increase, as they must, the powers of the State Parliaments will diminish until we are reduced to the exercise of purely municipal functions. In the performance of those functions we can do a great deal of good for Australia. I have indicated some directions in which we can do good work. One of the directions in which we ought to be able to do some good is in strengthening the hands of the Federal Parliament so as to make the will of the people paramount over all influences, whether it is the influence originating in a hostile provincial Legislature led by a Wade or a Kidston, or whether it originates in any other institution under the ægis of the State. The Federal High Court, for instance, has repeatedly during the last three or four years shown itself hostile to democratic legislation. It is doing in Australia what the Supreme Court has been doing for many years in the United States—it is practically paralysing the efforts of democracy to help itself.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: There is no Labour party in America to clip them as we are going to do.

Mr. LESINA: I am not referring now to something entirely new. On page 294 of *Hansard* for 1899, speaking on the Australian Federation Enabling Bill, I pointed out some of the objections I had to the Federal Constitution at that time, and in regard to my thirteenth objection I used these words—

I am opposed to the Bill because it makes a non-elective, irresponsible, irremovable Supreme Court the master of the Constitution, the Parliament, the people, Australian liberties, and Australian destinies, and renders possible the odious American system of "government by injunction."

Then I went on to explain what I meant, and to give some illustrations. Now, here are four things that the High Court has done during the past few years to justify the warning I gave ten years ago: First, an attempt was made by the Labour party in the Federal Parliament to give a legal status to the union label. The High Court declared it unconstitutional. Then, again, certain anti-trust legislation passed by the Federal Parliament was thrown out by the High Court. Then an attempt was made to apply the Arbitration Act to State public servants, and we had very excellent reasons to suppose that such an Act

would have applied very beneficially to public servants, when we had the case of the railway strike in Victoria under the Irvine Government, and the way they were treated by that Government. That was found to be worthless under the decision given by the High Court. Again, the Labour party in the Federal Parliament determined to give to the employees engaged in the protected industries some share of the benefits of the new protection. That was declared to be unconstitutional.

Mr. RYLAND: The same applies to the sugar industry.

Mr. LESINA: That is another point made by the hon. member for Gympie. These are five points in which the Federal High Court has proved itself to be somewhat in the position of the Supreme Court of America. Every time some piece of democratic legislation is brought to the test, they always discover some rusty, musty, forgotten clause in the Constitution, under which they have declared this particular piece of legislation unconstitutional.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Or *ultra vires*.

Mr. LESINA: Or *ultra vires*, or invalid. These are points which indicate that the people of Australia, who depend upon the Federal Parliament for the passage of those large reforms which are now demanded, and which eventually they will get through that Parliament, must not be laid aside from the consideration of those important matters by the, comparatively speaking, small troubles which occupy the attention of provincial Legislatures.

Mr. RYLAND interjected.

Mr. LESINA: That is the difficulty in connection with the written Constitution. The written Constitution becomes an idol. They fall down and worship it, and venerate it.

Mr. RYLAND: They can amend it.

Mr. LESINA: That is the danger in connection with a written Constitution. The interpretation of it is left to a number of legal gentlemen who are above the Parliament. Practically the Federal High Court is above the Crown—above the King, above the Governor-General, above the Cabinet, and above the Senate. It is above the House of Representatives, it is above the people of Australia, and it is distinctly undemocratic. I objected to its constitution from the very first. It may be democratic in a sense; certainly a democratic Government can give it a democratic complexion if they care to do so—that is an important thing. If the High Court wrests the meaning of the Constitution, and declares invalid and unconstitutional legislation intended for the benefit of the workers, then it appears to me that the duty of Australia is to call upon the Government to take action to democratise it as much as possible, and then that opens the door to political preference and favouritism, and the whole system breaks down eventually. I do not know how the difficulty is to be got at, but that such a difficulty exists is apparent to the mind of every man. I do not desire to occupy any more time in connection with the Financial Statement. Personally, it is gratifying to me, as I dare say it is to most members of this House, to affirm that the seasons have been prosperous, that the wealth production has gone on amazingly, that the wealth per head of the community is increased, that population has increased, that our death rate has fallen, and our birth rate has risen—all these indicate solid progress of the community. All I am prepared to ask for, so far

as I am personally concerned, is a larger measure of this abundant prosperity for the people who have worked for it, and it appears to me that even these provincial Legislatures can do that if they go the right way about it. Wages boards have been tried, and have done some good in a limited number of cases, but only in the case of organised workers, just as, under arbitration, the decisions of the Federal courts have benefited the aristocracy of labour, the best organised and wealthiest unions in the Commonwealth. But the great mass of unorganised workers look for consideration to be given to their claims, and their claims should be considered fairly by members of the Chamber. We find that rents have gone up amazingly, the cost of work is very much higher than for many years past, and everywhere we go we hear complaints about it. We hear the same complaints in New South Wales. How many minutes have I got?

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: The hon. member has got ten minutes.

Mr. LESINA: I want to point out that these complaints I hear about Brisbane, about the increase in rents and prices and the cost of living generally, are parallel in New South Wales. It is the same in New Zealand. I have noticed that from communications I have got from Mr. Tregear, and the same thing is apparent right throughout Australia. This is a prepared statement presented to the Unskilled Labourers' Board sitting in Sydney. Alderman W. P. Fitzgerald, of the City Council, prepared this statement. He is a man of considerable experience in the retail grocery trade, and he points out that the fortnightly bill for groceries for an average family of five persons has increased fully 25 per cent. during the past five years. The following are the principal items of every-day general use contained in Alderman Fitzgerald's statement, showing the difference in prices in the years 1905 and 1910—

	1905.	1910.
	<i>s. d.</i>	<i>s. d.</i>
25 lb. flour	2 3	3 0
4 lb. rice	0 8	0 10
2 lb. sago	0 3	0 4
2 lb. tapioca	0 3	0 5
Packet cornflour	0 4	0 5
1 lb. mustard	0 9½	0 10½
2 lb. currants	0 8	1 1
2 lb. dates	0 5	0 7
½ lb. cocoa	0 3½	0 4
Bottle Holbrook's sauce	0 8½	0 9½
1 pint vinegar	0 4½	0 6
7 lb. salt	0 3	0 3½
2 dozen vests	0 7	0 8
4 lb. salt salmon	1 8	2 0
1 tin salmon	0 8½	0 10½
1 tin herrings and tomato sauce	0 6½	0 7½
1 bottle pickles	0 7	0 9½
1 tin jam	0 6	0 7
Brooms	1 2	1 5
1 packet starch	0 4	0 5
1 tin milk	0 6	0 6½
1 lb. lemon peel	0 6½	0 8½
1 tin fresh herrings	0 4½	0 5½
1 lb. bacon	7d. to 9d.	0 10½
1 packet arrowroot	0 4	0 7½
1 tin golden syrup	0 5	0 5½

On Alderman Fitzgerald's statement, the fortnightly account of the average working man's family works out at nearly 25 per cent. increase, as compared with the prices for the same quality goods in 1905, and I venture to say that a similar statement might be made here just as truly with regard to the working man's fortnightly or weekly needs in Brisbane.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: In fact, more so.

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Mr. LESINA: In fact, more so. Any workman will say, "I cannot live as well now as I did a few years ago. I am paying 4s. a week increase in groceries alone; rents have gone up, and I am worse off than I was before." I spoke to the grocer's man. I said, "How is it you fellows have put up the prices?" He said they were not only not making any more profit, but that they were not making as much as they used to make. Somebody is lying. The profit is going somewhere. There must be a third man in the game. In this game the third man is going to rise the winner every time. He is the ground landlord. (Hear, hear!) He is going to come in and scoop both the employer and the employee, and this third person in the game is going to rise with the profit all the time.

Mr. RYLAND: He plays the double-headed penny.

Mr. LESINA: Plays the double-headed penny, as the hon. member for Gympie says, every time, and the hon. member has had long experience in that. (Laughter.) A precisely similar state of things exists in New Zealand, according to a communication I have here from Mr. Tregear. I have not time to read it, but if any hon. member wants to read it, it is worth reading. It deals with the high cost of living in New Zealand. He gave me a copy of it when I was coming away, and it contains a statement of the facts as they have occurred to me in a long experience in dealing with the labour departments in Australia. Despite the fact that they passed a heap of Labour legislation which benefits the worker, raises their wages, and improves their conditions in many regards, the prices have increased to such an extent that they are practically unable to live as well as they did prior to this class legislation. He said in Wellington alone one-third of a man's wages goes in rent—a man getting £250 a year cannot get a decent cottage to live in under £1 10s. a week. These are significant facts. It is an indication to people engaged in reform legislation—upon which we differ amongst ourselves slightly at times—our work is largely indicated by the position of a man attempting to lift himself over a fence by pulling on his own boot straps. That is the only illustration that comes to my mind. You raise wages and the prices immediately go up, and rent goes up in addition, and the worker is practically as he was before. I say, in conclusion, that these facts—hurriedly referred to—indicate the lines we should adopt in the future. Every person in this Chamber should take an active interest in the rates of wages and the condition of the workers generally, and I say no legislation for improving the condition of the workers will have any value while the ground man is left to exploit both labour and capital, as he does to-day.

Mr. FERRICKS (*Bowen*): I want to make a few remarks in relation to the agricultural industry, as I realise, under the Sessional Orders now existing, it is necessary for members on this side to specialise, in that members belonging to the mining constituencies must devote their limited time to mining matters, and members representing farming constituencies must apply themselves to the interests of the agricultural districts. Why I wish to say something regarding the agricultural industry is, that I realise that beyond the few speakers there will be on this question from this side of the House, the agricultural industry on this financial discussion is in for a very short shrift, in that those hon. members

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on the other side of the House who purport to be representing farming constituencies have so blindly submitted to the application of the "gag" that it will not be possible for them to ventilate those grievances of the country and farming districts; or, if they do so, they might follow on the lines of the hon. member for Murilla, who made a most excellent speech from the Opposition point of view, and thereby incurred the wrath, or at least the harsh glances, of some hon. members occupying the Treasury benches. I want to draw the attention of those hon. members on the other side of the House who have blossomed out as members of the Parliamentary Farmers' Union. I want to ask them what will be their attitude when the question of the huge increases to the Under Secretaries in the public service comes up for discussion? What attitude will they take in regard to the amount on the Estimates of £30,000 for the erection of a new Government House?

The TREASURER: Where is that on the Estimates?

Mr. FERRICKS: An amount is on the Estimates for that purpose. Will they have anything to say in regard to the amount of £4,000 which has been spent on temporary repairs to the present Government House? And in a dozen and one other ways, what attitude will those hon. members adopt? I contend if they do not ventilate the needs and interests of this great industry, they are by no means representatives, and in this connection I would like to corroborate in part a statement which has been made in this Chamber regarding the administration of that department; and in doing so, I want it understood that for the moment I will leave the Secretary for Agriculture, as Minister, out of the question. Whatever criticisms I have to make of him or his department will be made on the Estimates in detail. If there is one industry or one department that should not be bracketed with another in its Ministerial head, that department is the Agricultural Department. I do not agree with the opinion expressed by the senior member for Townsville, that we should have two more Ministers appointed—one for the Department of Agriculture and one for the Department of Stock—but I do contend that there should be another Minister appointed to this portfolio of Agriculture and Stock, or else the present Minister should be relieved of the other office which he now holds. I know the reason why that appointment has not been made—the House knows it and the country knows it. It is because there are too many aspirants for the position; and, if this state of affairs continues, I submit it might be possible for the Cabinet to rearrange it without definitely hurting themselves in the eyes of any one of those aspirants—that is to say, separate the Department of Agriculture from the Department of Railways. There are half a dozen other departments which could be bracketed together with infinite more advantage to the country and to the respective industries. It is a very unwise policy to have two such important departments as the railways and agriculture bracketed together. I want to make passing reference to the sugar industry. It is a very important branch of the great agricultural industry, but it occupies a very modest place in the Financial Statement, and might I suggest to the Treasurer that in making future reference to this question he might make his remarks in a little less

jumbled phraseology. As an instance of what I mean, I will quote half a dozen words. He says—

The deficiency in raw sugar amounted to 16 514 tons compared with the preceding year, and if this be calculated at the low rate of £10 a ton, the industry lost for that year £165,140, which went to foreign countries.

That is but ambiguously worded. It implies that the amount of money that went out of Queensland last year for the purchase of black-grown sugar was only £165,140, whereas that was the increased deficiency over the amount sent out the previous year; and, as a matter of fact, the amount sent out last year for the purchase of black-grown sugar was, in round figures, £1,000,000.

Mr. CORSER: A good deal of that was exported under bond.

Mr. FERRICKS: That is a thing we cannot get at. We can only get at the difference between the consumption and production, and that amounts, roughly, to £1,000,000. The question has also been raised about the unpatriotic attitude shown by the Government

[10 p.m.] in relation to the agitation for the establishment of more central mills; and I think it is time the Government changed its tactics, or its policy, in this direction. There is no gainsaying the fact that if there is to be any justice done to the North by the development of that splendid district, it is by the establishment of central mills; and while this short-sighted policy is pursued by the Government we cannot understand how they can be sincere in their desire to develop this country. If they continue on these lines, the only conclusion we can come to is that they have no desire to develop the North while doing everything they can to develop the South in order to further the interests of the Brisbane Ministry. Let me refer to an incident that occurred last night. While the senior member for Townsville was speaking I interjected, "Give us the opinion of Mr. Barlow," and the hon. gentleman asked what had the opinion of Mr. Barlow to do with it. I can only give what Mr. Barlow said to a deputation that waited on him when he was running the nine departments. It was a deputation that waited on him and asked for a railway in the Gulf country. The senior member for Townsville was present, and in support of his argument said the Government of the day had not given the North a square deal. Then Mr. Barlow, as reported in the *Courier*—the fusion Bible—replied, "Perhaps it is the fault of the North. They have not treated the Government very well." There is only one deduction to be drawn from that, but last night the senior member for Townsville waived it aside as if it had no application. I had no desire to put any application to it beyond the words of Mr. Barlow himself. He was then in the responsible position of being dictator of the Government. I know nothing about Cabinet secrets; but it is evident that he has dictated to such an extent that he has got a lift in Parliament House for his own convenience.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: You will be allowed to use it.

Mr. FERRICKS: I will not do so. When I am unable to go up half a dozen steps I will retire. The senior member for Townsville went out of his way to sermonise me for having, as he said, interjected impertinently and unreasonably. I have not waited for him to be absent while referring to this; but

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while I would have preferred him to be present, I am not going to consider his convenience while he is elsewhere. I resent the imputation and the presumption of the hon. member in sermonising me. I was not sent here by my constituents to be dictated to, or sermonised, by any discredited political derelict.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: There is no man so much respected in this House.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FERRICKS: He should show some respect to other members. I was sent here to raise my voice in ventilating the interests of the North, and I want no sermonising by the senior member for Townsville or any other member sitting on that side.

THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: He is certainly not a political derelict.

Mr. FERRICKS: Let him apply his powers as a sermoniser to his puppet, the Chief Secretary; or let him turn to his left, where he will find any amount of opportunity for sermonising some of his most abject followers on the back Government benches. I contend that his sermon was a reflection on the Chairman, because if I had interjected impertinently, or in any undue degree, you would have called me to order. That you did not do so is evidence that I did not transgress. If there is one man my constituents do not want me to kowtow to it is the senior member for Townsville—they did not send me here to ingratiate myself with him. If there is one district where the people have the best of reasons for understanding the evils of the Philp régime it is the district of Bowen. They sent me here with a free voice and vote; and I will use that voice and vote any time I see inhuman abuse. That question I will refer to again. It was the wages paid in privately-owned mills as compared with the wages paid in central mills. The Treasurer came forward with a tabulated statement showing the wages paid in the Proserpine Central Mill. I ask any member if during that discussion I made any reference to the wages paid in central mills. I did not, except to compare them with the wages paid in privately-owned mills. The reference I made was to the advantage of the Government mills. The Treasurer's statement showed that the lowest wages paid in the Proserpine Central Mill were £2 3s. 9d. a week; and I contended that the recompense in the privately-owned mills in the North totalled from £1 5s. in wages and about 9s. in keep. That is equal to £1 14s. a week; and if the privately-owned mills can only afford to pay £1 14s. a week, while the Government central mills can pay £2 3s. 9d. a week, or thereabouts, as a minimum, it is one of the best arguments in favour of State enterprise. I would also ask those people who take upon themselves to criticise us in this connection to remember that in the privately-owned mills in the North they employ coloured labour, and if they could do with only coloured labour they would not have a white man within 50 miles of their mills. It was a very proper question put by the Minister for Customs when he asked them why they did not show the genuineness of their inclination to practise the white Australia policy by dispensing with coloured labour. There was no answer to the question. While they employ all the colours of the rainbow in their mills, it is evident that they have no desire to subscribe to the policy of a white Australia.

Mr. Ferricks.]

There is another aspect of this question, and that is what do the wages paid in the privately-owned mills amount to? The hon. member for Musgrave took me to task for making references to a sugar-mill in the Musgrave district, but he was very careful to say nothing about the question of wages. The senior member for Townsville last night admitted that the rate was £1 5s. a week for a full shift, although he contended that it was a shift of ten hours, while I said that it was twelve hours. I contended that the mill was run for twenty-four hours with two shifts in that time, and if there is an easing off for the men to have their meals at any time the other men have to do their work, and when those who have their meals go on again they have to do the work of the others to make up. That is the case in the Northern districts, as it is admitted by the senior member for Townsville. What is the case in the South? We saw in the *Courier* the other day that there was a big strike in the Maryborough sugar factory, where the hours are similar to those worked in the North. The hours there are stated to be ten and a-half hours per day. As a matter of fact, they work five full shifts of twelve hours each, and they knock off at 4 o'clock on Saturday afternoon. They do not get rations at the Maryborough sugar factory, and these able-bodied men are paid the magnificent wage of 5s. 6d. per day. Accepting the contention that they only work shifts of ten and a-half hours each, that means that they get 6d. an hour each, without rations. I ask the Premier, when he is next talking about the prosperity of Queensland, to remember that they have men working in the Maryborough sugar factory for 6d. an hour, without food. Well, these men struck for better conditions. They asked for 7s. a day. What was done? The factory locked them out, and their places were given to other men, and the wages were increased to 6s. per day—a most miserable rate, you will agree with me. Although it is contended that the men only work ten and a-half hours, they are really occupied there for twelve hours a day, so that, when they get their 6d. an hour, they earn it. In some places I know they have to work for thirteen hours a day. In my own district, in the Burdekin, the men on the night shift have to come on again at 8 o'clock in the morning. I have worked in a shift in a sugar-mill, and I know what it is, but I have never been asked to come on again at 8 o'clock in the morning. I worked in the Government mill, and I was not asked to come on before 12 o'clock next day, but in a private-owned mill they had to come back at 8 o'clock next morning. When we consider that the sugar industry is worth £1,000,000 to the State, I say that these men are not getting a just deal. The Treasurer has a great deal to say about the central mill system. I believe in the central mill system myself, but I will not say that it has not got any abuses, and I venture to say that the Treasurer, before this session is over, will see that members on this side will find an opportunity for discussing the grievances we have in connection with the sugar industry. I have grievances to discuss, not only in connection with the Proserpine Mill in my own district, but also in connection with the Mount Bauple mill, in connection with which I have a most crushing indictment against the management and the accommodation supplied there. I will give these in detail later on, as we have not got an opportunity during this debate. I was

[*Mr. Ferricks.*

rather amused to see the olive branch held over to us by members on the other side of the House. A week ago we had the junior member for Brisbane North asking us to be reasonable, and come half-way in the transaction of public business. Then we had the senior member for Townsville last night preaching the spirit of "sweet reasonableness," saying that we were good fellows, and that those on the Government side were not such bad fellows after all. I might mention that this party is not likely to adopt any tone of "sweet reasonableness" as preached by those two sterling democrats, the junior member for Brisbane North and the senior member for Townsville. When the time comes for the Labour party to join hands with hon. gentlemen opposite, then will it be time for the shades of white labour in Queensland to look down on us with scorn, because we will earn it. When that time comes, which I am sure it never will, then every member on this side will be absent from the Labour party. I want to make a short reference to a matter which I will not be able to refer to on the Estimates, because time will not permit of it. Some time ago I made a few remarks with regard to the representation of the agricultural industry in this Chamber, and I was answered by the hon. member for Wide Bay the same night. I took no exception to his remarks, because we agree to disagree. But after that night there has been a great silence on the part of the people representing agricultural constituencies in this Chamber. The members representing farming constituencies have maintained an oyster-like silence, and the only two who got up to speak about the agricultural industry happened to be two middlemen. One of the assertions was made by one of these gentlemen was in regard to my comments on a question of land value taxation, when he said that the landowners of the country were already taxed by the shire council tax; that they were to be taxed by the Federal land tax, and we wanted to put on a State land tax as well. The hon. gentleman who made that assertion was Mr. Macartney, the hon. member for Brisbane North, and I ask him, or anyone else, if they think that the shire council tax is paid in like degree by the land monopolist and by the general user of the land. By no means. If Mr. Macartney had ever been out of Queen street, Brisbane, he would know that none of the land monopolists pay as much as the genuine users of the land. The genuine user of the land is rated at the minimum rate, while the land monopolist is valued in the aggregate, and he might have 100 small pieces of land aggregated in one area. That has been my experience, and I have found also that the land monopolist dominates the shire council. (Hear, hear!) He runs the shire council; he actually appoints the shire valuator; and in several districts I have seen the shire valuator, who is also the shire clerk and shire inspector, playing into the hands of the land monopolist. The big landowner does not bother about attending any meetings of the council. Whenever he wants anything done in his own locality in connection with the roads, he just gets the work done himself, and at the next meeting of the board his action is confirmed. He gets a benefit in the valuation, and he gets a preference over those who have the small areas.

Mr. CORSER: What districts are those?

Mr. FERRICKS: The Bowen, Proserpine, and Kennedy districts, and the district represented by the hon. member for Woothakata.

In all those districts I have seen differentiation between the valuation placed on land held by monopolists and land in small areas by genuine producers. For that reason, and others, we on this side advocate the imposition of land value taxation. Hon. members opposite who have been returned as representatives of farming districts are, I maintain, here under false pretences, when they oppose that principle. They advance no reason for opposing a land value tax, but simply say, "I am opposed to a land tax in any shape or form." I can only account for their presence in this Chamber by the fact that their constituents did not understand the virtues of land value taxation and the great benefit that such a tax would be to them. But the time is coming, indeed it came at the last Federal election, when the people realised the benefits that a land tax would be to them and to all small land-owners and users of the land. The time will also come when hon. members opposite who do not raise their voices in this Chamber in furtherance of the agricultural industry, or in support of the claims of country districts, will be called upon to explain why they are opposed to a land value tax. Those hon. members are the last remnants of a Scotch conservatism, a stodgy and obstinate conservatism, which has been annihilated in every other part of the Commonwealth. Those members will also have to explain why they sit behind and unblushingly, and blindly, and silently support a Government which is here in the interest of the middlemen and the merchants of Brisbane; why they submit to the dictation of a Government which is not concerned about the interests of Queensland as a whole; and why they quietly and tamely submit to centralisation measures being rammed down their throats. I refer to the Redistribution of Seats Bill and other measures in the interest of the metropolis and against the best interest of the producers of the State. I know it is realised in this House, as it is realised outside the House, that there is going to be a very great change in political affairs in Queensland in the near future. When that great change comes, the fusionists, or adhesionists, will not escape from the avalanche of outraged democracy, which will swoop down upon them and their followers. They are beginning to hedge now, but it is too late. The people know that the Government are being brought to book, and when members opposite go to the country at the next election they will find that there is a surprise in store for them, particularly in the metropolitan area, the suburban, and the farming districts in the south-east of Queensland. We hope to have an opportunity before the next election of putting our policy before the country, and I believe the people will compel the members of the recently created farmers' union to act up to its grandiloquent name. They have formed a union on the lines I enunciated in my speech on the Address in Reply, when I said they met in caucus and passed formal resolutions, got reports of their meetings telegraphed to country newspapers, so that their constituents, when they see that their representatives had attended a farmers' union caucus, would think they were all right. But what do those gentlemen do when they come into the House? In the report of the last meeting of the parliamentary farmers' union, which appeared in the *Courier*, it was stated that they had discussed several measures which had been brought forward by the Government, and that after considerable debate it was decided to take no action. It

was decided that they should blindly follow the Government, which is here in the interests of the middlemen of Brisbane. That is the way those hon. members serve the agricultural industry. That is going under false pretences, and deceiving their constituents who have sent them here for a specific purpose. When those members who now submit to the autocratic rule of the Premier again go before their constituents, they will hear more about these things than they have heard in the past, and when that time comes, I venture to say, it will be found that an avalanche is awaiting a few of them. I wish now to make a protest against the petty treatment that is meted out to North Queensland by the present Queen-street Ministry. We are told in the Financial Statement that they have a genuine desire to settle people on the land.

Mr. LENNON: All make-believe.

Mr. FERRICKS: I agree with the hon. member; it is all nonsense. I was never more convinced of that fact than I was within the last few weeks. Recently sixteen new settlers up our way went on the land, and those settlers cannot get even a railway siding to accommodate their traffic. In another part of the district the cane farmers are asked to cart their cane 8, 10, 12, and even 14 miles to a central sugar-mill, which is not working up to its full capacity. Fortunately it is now, owing to a change in the management, doing better than it did in the past, but the most the Government will do to encourage those farmers to put a larger area under sugar-cane is to promise that in the space of two or three years they may consider their requirements. Again, we have a greatly increasing trade at Bowen. We have a jetty there about three-quarters of a mile long, and we have sugar trains, coal trains, and meat trains running up [10.30 p.m.] and down that jetty; a number of workmen also have to go up and down the jetty in the course of their day's work. It is a bit dangerous for men to walk along it, as the jetty is not much wider than the actual train width. There is no guarantee of safety for their passage up and down the jetty.

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

The PREMIER said: I beg to move—

That, unless the House otherwise orders, Government business do take precedence of all other business at 3 o'clock p.m. on Thursday in each week.

Mr. COYNE: I rise to a point of order. You will remember, Sir, that earlier in the day, when you read out this notice of motion, there was no response from the Premier, and no permission was obtained from the House to refer it to a later hour of the day. I claim, therefore, that, in accordance with the practice of the House, fresh leave is necessary before the motion can come on.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Premier is quite in order in proceeding as he is doing. The Government have the absolute right, under the Standing Orders, to arrange their business as they think fit; and the first Order having been disposed of, the next Government business on the paper must then be called.

Mr. Coyne.]

The PREMIER: I just wish to explain to hon. members why I move this motion. We have been a long time in session now, and we have not done very much practical business, although we are working off the usual preliminaries.

Mr. RYLAND: Are you getting the machine ready?

The PREMIER: Yes; we are getting the machine ready. We are firing up. I am doing this for the convenience of hon. members on both sides. We have had a good deal of what we call Thursday afternoon discussion so far, and, instead of meeting four days a week, I think it will be better, while we are discussing the Estimates, to take Thursday afternoon for that purpose. By the time we get through with the Estimates we shall be able to see how the business is progressing; and, if there is a prospect, we may restore the Thursday afternoon for private business. In the meantime, I think it will be more convenient if we take the Estimates for two days a week while this discussion is on. Unless we take Thursday afternoon, we can only discuss the Financial Statement two days a week, and I have no intention of giving any half-days for nothing, as it were. If we are going to grant a certain number of days, we ought to take whole days for the Estimates; and I move this because I believe it will facilitate our getting to the real work of the session sooner. We have a lot of important work to do; and, although we may differ regarding details—regarding important details, it may be—still hon. members recognise that that business should be dealt with. It will be more convenient for hon. members to give the Government Thursday afternoon while the Estimates are under discussion than to meet four days a week. We shall need the extra time. I suppose that later on we shall have to meet four days a week, but in the meantime I move this, believing that it will be more convenient to members on both sides to take Government business for some little time for the whole three days a week. I hope the House will agree to the motion.

Mr. BOWMAN: I am opposed to this motion. It is just another effort on the part of the Premier to deprive members of a right that has been theirs for many years. I think the hon. gentleman has curtailed our rights too much already by the Sessional Orders he has passed. He has told us that his object is to give two days' discussion to the Estimates each week to facilitate business.

The PREMIER: I hope to be able to do that. Of course, we may not manage it, but that is the idea.

Mr. BOWMAN: Up to the present we have had three afternoons for private business. Now, no hon. member will dispute that last Thursday was profitably spent. There were two Bills passed through both the second reading and Committee stages—the Bill introduced by the junior member for Brisbane North, and that introduced by the hon. member for Mitchell. It is unusual for the Premier to move such a motion at such an early stage of the session. The hon. gentleman tells us that, if things go on as satisfactorily as he would like, he may restore it; but we have no definite assurance from him that he is going to restore it. I might remind the Premier that there have been some very good discussions and some very good Bills passed by private members on Thursday afternoons. There are some

[Hon. W. Kidston.

Very important questions on the business-paper at the present time. There is one in the name of the hon. member for Maranoa with reference to the better working of the Agricultural Bank, which should give rise to a very profitable discussion.

The PREMIER: Much better get the discussion on the Bill itself.

Mr. BOWMAN: But we have no assurance that there is a Bill. What I object to in the motion is that the Premier comes down a few weeks after the session commences, and seeks to deprive members of one of the few opportunities we have of bringing matters of private importance before the House. I am no more anxious than the hon. gentleman to meet four days a week; but, if he finds that his business is so pressing that it necessitates taking another day, then it is his duty to meet four days a week, and not deprive members of the opportunity to do the business they wish to bring before the House. I do not think there has been any prolonged discussion on any matter that has yet been before the House. On the Address in Reply, with few exceptions, the debate was not excessive—the average was less than an hour per man during the whole of that discussion. That is what we are allowed even under the new Sessional Orders. While some members have taken an hour on the Financial Statement—and two have exceeded the hour—one has been under the hour, so that no complaint can be urged by the Premier as to time being wasted. We have asked for some considerable time, and it was the intention of this party to bring forward a Bill in connection with Trades Disputes. I do not know whether the hon. gentleman got wind of it or not, but I am satisfied if this motion is carried—

The PREMIER: It would not have made any difference.

Mr. BOWMAN: I do not suppose it would, but we wanted to know whether the hon. gentleman is as sincere now as when he last contested the election, when he placed it in the Rockhampton programme. At a deputation that recently waited on him, he told us that the only cause was want of time—that he had too many measures to introduce, too great a programme for the session. We were anxious as an Opposition to have that Bill introduced as a private Bill—that was our only hope of testing the opinion of this House—and even the hon. member for Townsville, who up to last election had his party on a different programme to what the leader of the Government had, and the Labour party—the three parties were agreed that that Bill should be introduced. We are to be deprived of that opportunity, and for other business that is on the sheet at the present time, simply because the Premier thinks the business is not progressing as speedily as he would like. I, for one, object to our time being taken away, particularly at this stage of the session. Had it been the end of October, or the beginning of November, as has been the case when the Government asked for more time in the past, little objection would have been taken. But here we have the Premier, in the early part of September, seeking to deprive us of this right. I, for one, am going to object to it, and I hope that the objection will be given voice to by each man sitting behind me to-night.

The PREMIER: Is that an instruction?

Mr. BOWMAN: It is not an instruction. The hon. gentleman wants to wipe out many of the privileges which the Opposition has

got, and he has done that by forcing the new Sessional Orders through, and he still further seeks to deprive us of a right that we are entitled to—that he once enjoyed and once protected when he was sitting in Opposition. It evidently makes all the difference when a man is sitting on the front Treasury bench, but I do not think we should sit calmly by and allow him to take it without a fight being put up to resist it. Therefore, I am going to oppose the motion.

Mr. HAMILTON (*Gregory*): I do not know whether the Premier feels very strong on this, to use his own term, but I think he is rather hasty in coming forward at this early period of the session and seeking to do away with private members' day. I do not think there has ever been a Premier in Queensland who has done as much to stifle criticism of his administration as the present Chief Secretary. If we look back for the past five years, and see how the Estimates have been gagged and guillotined through, we see that all criticism has been stifled by the hon. gentleman, and he has gone further in the new Sessional Orders. As far as private members' day is concerned, the Opposition always have fought for that right. We know that many discussions have been initiated on private members' day which have had a beneficial result, and many Acts now on the statutes were initiated on private members' day. There are many important private motions down on the business-paper this session—one by the hon. member for Maranoa dealing with the Agricultural Bank, one by the hon. member for Cairns, and also one by the hon. member for Gympie. I am pretty sure that every hon. member on this side will oppose this motion. If hon. members on the other side think that private members' day should be done away with, it is not saying much for them, because even on the Government side there have been important private measures passed and discussions initiated on Thursday afternoons which have led to good results. Two Bills have been put through this session. If it were later in the session, and there was any substantial reason, I should have no objection to the motion, but at this early period of the session, if there is such a lot of work to get through, let us sit another day each week in order to get through it.

Mr. RYLAND (*Gympie*): I protest against the curtailment of private members' privileges in this House. I have a very important motion on the business-sheet, and I would like to have an opportunity of getting it through—that is as regards the amendment of the Workers' Compensation Act. I hope that the Government will give an opportunity of taking a vote on this question before deciding to do away with private members' day—get a vote in time so that the motion may be sent up to the other House, and a Bill may be based on the resolution. If it is allowed to hang over till the end of the session, there will be no time to act on the expressed wish of the House. There are other hon. members who have very important motions to bring forward. It is too early in the session altogether to deprive private members of their privileges. There has been good legislation passed here during the last two years on private members' day. About three sessions ago there were some very important Bills passed on Thursday afternoons, and in this session two Bills have been passed. The leader of the Labour party pointed out that he has a Bill which

he particularly wishes to see passed; and I, as a member of the party, also particularly wish to get it through this House; and there is no reason why that legislation should not be passed on Thursday afternoons. There is no waste of time on Thursday afternoons, when we can put through Bills, such as we have in the past. I notice that this is curtailing the rights of private members considerably, compared to what we have enjoyed for a long time. In 1899, when I first came into this House, private members' day was continued right up to the 12th December. It is now only the 7th September, and down comes the Premier with a motion to deprive private members of their rights. I remember that in that very session I passed a Bill through Parliament myself—a very important Bill—giving local authorities power to carry out work without contract. In 1900, under the Premiership of the hon. member for Townsville, who was considered at that time conservative, and not at all the leader of a democratic Government—in that year private members' day was continued up till the 15th November. I must say in that year we commenced sitting on Fridays on the 18th September, but I am not dealing with Friday sittings. In 1900, private members had their private members' day right up till the 15th November—more than two months later than it is now proposed to take that right away. In 1902, private members' day was continued right up to 4th December. In that year a most important piece of legislation was passed through this House at the instigation of the hon. member for Kennedy, with the good result that we have teachers going through Queensland at the present time in the outlying portions of the State, and giving instruction where State schools could not be erected. If we follow in the footsteps of private members who have set us these examples, good work will be done. In 1903, Thursday afternoons for private members were continued up till 11th November. The present Minister for Railways, on 31st October in that year, passed a Bill; and the hon. member for Brisbane North, after that date, also passed a Bill on private members' day. The hon. member for Mackay, Mr. Paget, on 31st October of that year, passed the Acclimatisation Society Bill. That is a very useful piece of legislation. On 23th October, the hon. member for Brisbane North also carried a piece of legislation through this House. That was in 1907. In the present year we are going to be shut down on the 7th September, so you see our privileges are being gradually taken from us. The Sessional Orders have taken away many of our privileges. On Thursday afternoon we can ventilate our grievances, and indicate in what direction we should like to see legislation passed, and give an expression of opinion. There is no saving at all by doing away with Thursday afternoons. As the leader of the Opposition has pointed out, he has a particular Bill he would like to see brought into this House. I also have another Bill. I have occupied a good bit of the time already on Thursday afternoons this session—I think with advantage to the Chamber, because the Workers' Compensation motion is a very important matter to the workers of Queensland. I have also another motion that I intended bringing in when I saw an opportunity of bringing it in; and, considering the amount of money to be spent on railways, it is one of the most important that could be brought before this House—that is an amendment of the Railway Act in the direction of

Mr. Ryland. }

paying the guarantee out of the enhanced value. If this guarantee business is to be a success, the Railway Act must be amended in that direction, otherwise we will have the man on the land paying a tax on a value that he does not get. We should have Thursday afternoons set apart to allow the Opposition—it is not confined to the Opposition, the Government supporters can also take advantage of Thursday afternoons—which they have done in the past, and members on the Government side have got the assistance of members on the Opposition side of the House in the passing of Bills, which was the correct thing to do, and I should like this mutual assistance from both sides of the House. Those are my reasons for not wishing to be deprived of Thursday afternoons. I just wish to impress upon the Premier that he should allow the Thursday afternoon to continue as private members' day, because I believe it has resulted in good in the past, and it will also result in good in the future. At least, he should allow us Thursday afternoons for another two months—we might have the advantage of another two months—and in that time we will get a vote on the motions already on the paper, and the leader of the Opposition can get his Bill passed, and I trust my amending Railway Bill will also be passed. I know the hon. member for Townsville will support me in that matter, because he voted for my amendment when the Bill was going through this House. It would be of great advantage to Queensland if that amending Bill were passed, and it would assist the Secretary for Railways in his work of administration. I intend to oppose this motion to do away with private members' business on Thursday afternoons.

Mr. NEVITT: It was rather amusing to hear the Premier say he was moving this motion for the convenience of members of this Chamber. It may be for the convenience of a portion of the members, but

[11 p.m.] it is not for the convenience of the members on this side.

Thursday is the only time we have for introducing legislation or motions as instructions to the Government, and I do not think in the history of Queensland has a Premier come down so early in the session to take away private members' day. What makes this all the more severe is the restriction under which we are now placed in connection with the new Sessional Orders. As far as private business has gone this session, the Government have occupied eighty-four columns of *Hansard*, and the Opposition sixty-four columns; so that the greater part of the time has been monopolised by Government supporters. During the five afternoons on which private members' business has been taken, two Bills have passed all their stages; a motion relating to the political and civil rights of public servants was discussed; there was the motion of the hon. member for Barcoo in reference to territorial separation; and on two afternoons we discussed the proposed amendment of the Workers' Compensation Act; so the time occupied has been very well spent, because we have done more business than the Government have done. I shall oppose the motion, and shall call for a division if nobody else does so.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER (*Marano*): I am opposed to the passing of this motion. I have a motion on the paper in which a large section of the people of Queensland are concerned; and had I been given the opportunity I hoped to have adduced sufficient proof to the

[*Mr. Ryland.*

House, if not to the Government, of the absolute necessity of doing something to make the Agricultural Bank Act a useful measure. One or two efforts have been made to do away with some of the anomalies that existed, but no serious effort has been made to extend its scope so as to make it serve the purpose for which it should have been intended. The other States of the Commonwealth have from time to time taken a great deal of interest in this matter, and have done a lot towards promoting their agricultural interests. I believe that but for the motion now before the House I would have been able to show that in New South Wales no less than £2,798—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is anticipating a motion that appears on the business-paper. He is in order in referring generally to that motion, but he will not be in order in discussing the details.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: That is the reason why I object to this motion. Had private members' time not been interfered with, I could have shown the vast difference between the operations of this class of bank in the other States as compared with this State. I will allow no opportunity to pass without agitating for some remedial measure so as to make this bank a useful institution for the development of agriculture in Queensland; and the resolution which I put on the paper would perhaps have been the means of exciting public opinion outside, and the Government would not go on year after year without bringing down a Bill to alter the existing Act. It is not sufficient to tell us that the Minister has a Bill in his box—it should be put on the table.

The PREMIER: How much further forward would you be? There are half a dozen Bills now before the House.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: If the Premier is in earnest, let him hand the Bill over to me, and I will introduce it on Thursday, and pass it through in one afternoon.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: That is the best possible use we can put Thursday afternoon to. Instead of this constant complaining from both sides of the House about the want of progress in our agricultural districts, and the lessening of cultivation throughout Queensland, we would, if that measure was permitted to be brought on to-morrow afternoon, find a big change taking place. We should have men of small means, assisted with capital, going on to their selections and carrying out their improvements, and that would mean considerable production in this State. I regret that the Premier has come down at this early stage determined to take Thursday afternoon away from us and prevent us from doing this private business that we are entitled to do.

Mr. MULLAN (*Charters Towers*): I do not intend to detain the House, but I cannot let this motion pass without offering my protest against it. In the ordinary course of events we only regarded the recent Sessional Orders as the beginning of an effort on the part of the Government to deprive this side of the House of their rights. If the Government really wanted to be fair in this matter, it would be more in accord with doing the right thing if they decided that the House should meet four days a week. We know the reason for that. It is not because of the convenience to hon.

members on this side of the House, but because the Government followers are not sufficiently under control to compel them to come here.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: I thought you told us the other day that they were well under the whip.

Mr. MULLAN: The Government followers are absolutely in rebellion against the Ministry for insisting on sitting four days a week. That is one of the reasons why they are penalising members on this side of the House. Another reason is that the hon. member for Barcoo, Mr. Ryan, has given notice of a motion in favour of the separation of Queensland into three divisions. Everybody knows that this motion was likely to seriously embarrass the Premier, and a division on it might have lost him his seat. (Government laughter.) That was one of the chief considerations that the Premier had in view in first inducing his Cabinet and then his followers to abide by it, and so avert the calamity of having to record a vote against this motion. Then, again, the hon. senior member for Ipswich, Mr. Maughan, gave notice of a motion in favour of giving full political rights to the public servants of this State. It has been considerably discussed, and it was on that afternoon that the senior member for Townsville made his memorable Thursday afternoon stonewalling speech—when he talked the motion out and hoped that it would not be resurrected again. If we had continued the Thursday afternoons, this motion would have come up again, and probably a vote would be taken on it. Although the Government were prepared to oppose it in an underhand way, they have not got the courage to let it go into *Hansard* that they were opposed to it, because they know that the public service is far too strong in Brisbane. Then the senior member for Gympie, Mr. Ryland, has a motion which seeks to amend the Workers' Compensation Act. That motion would also have been debated, and it might have resulted in a Bill which would probably go through this session. Again, the Government had not the courage to vote against this, but they got rid of it by depriving members of their solitary privilege of ventilating their grievances on Thursday afternoon. There are also other questions, such as the Trades Disputes Bill, to which the leader of the Opposition referred. It is well known that the leader of the Labour party intended to bring in a Bill dealing with that matter. And as the leader of the Government years ago, to his regret, promised he would introduce a Trades Disputes Bill, he knows that he would be in an awkward situation. Surrounded, as he is, by a conservative element, he would be in a very awkward position indeed in opposing a Bill of this kind, which he would have to do whether he liked it or not. These are the chief considerations which actuate the Government at the present time in depriving the Opposition of the Thursday afternoon, when they could discuss private members' business. A great deal of good can come out of allotting half a day a week to private members. We know that most of the Bills that have been passed in this House in the last fifteen years have invariably been initiated in the form of a propaganda discussion on Thursday afternoon. There is the Workers' Compensation Act, Electoral Reform Act, Shearers and Sugar Workers Accommodation Act, and others. These were all discussed on Thursday afternoon, and the public were educated up to the necessity of these Bills. We are now being deprived of a

privilege; the people of Queensland are being deprived of an educational medium, and, as a consequence, they will certainly be deprived of reforms for a much longer period than they might be if they were educated up to the necessity of bringing it in earlier. I think it is only right that I should make a protest against any further effort on the part of the Government to flch away any of the privileges of the Opposition. The Government are frightened of the debating powers of members on this side of the House, and they seek to limit us in every possible way. (Government laughter.) Members opposite can laugh, but that does not disprove my statement. Why do they not get up and disprove what I am saying, if they can do so? No; they have to sit mute whilst the motion is being intelligently discussed by hon. members on this side of the House. I hope that even now better counsels will prevail, and that the Government will see how unfair it is to further deprive us of our privileges, and withdraw this obnoxious motion.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN (*Kennedy*): I am rather concerned about this proposal to flch away Thursday afternoon from private members, because I am anxious to see the motion of the hon. member for Gympie, dealing with certain amendments in the Workers' Compensation Act, materialised into law this session. The proposal to so amend that Act as to protect workers in the case of the insolvency of an employer is a very important one, and other amendments suggested are desired by the workers of the State. I should also like to see the Agricultural Bank Act amended, so that earnest, struggling agriculturists may be able to take advantage of that institution and not be driven to seek assistance from private financial institutions. But if Thursday afternoon is to be taken away from members, we shall have very little opportunity of showing the necessity for such legislation, and therefore very little chance of getting the Government to introduce it. The matters discussed on Thursday afternoons are of a non-party character, but unfortunately we have not been able to make much progress with them, owing to the stonewall attitude taken up by members on the other side of the House. The senior member for Townsville has, I regret to say, been the greatest sinner in that respect. If the Government wish for an extra sitting day in order to get on with their business, I am sure there is not a member on this side of the House who will object to coming here another day a week, provided we are assured that we shall get the legislation the leader of the Opposition asks for—that is, a Trade Disputes Bill. When the Sessional Orders were going through the other day, a quarter of an hour was taken off each sitting in order to suit the convenience of a few members sitting behind the Government, and now we are to have Thursday afternoon flched from private members. I am strongly opposed to the motion.

Mr. COYNE: Some hon. member said last night that members on both sides of the House should show a certain amount of "sweet reasonableness" towards each other.

The TREASURER: The member for Bowen doesn't.

Mr. COYNE: That advice came from the Government side of the House, but there is not much "sweet reasonableness" in this proposition. The Opposition now have practically no rights at all, and the supporters of the Government have practically no rights at all. But if they are prepared to submit to the yoke placed upon them by the Premier, that is no reason why members on this side should submit to that

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yoke. I have heard the Premier state on many occasions that he was opposed to federation. Every chance he gets he is squealing about it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I fail to see how the hon. member is going to connect his remarks with the question before the House.

Mr. COYNE: If you will allow me I will show you. I will show that by filching away Thursday afternoon from hon. members the Premier is putting another nail into the coffin of the State Governments of Australia. The hon. gentleman has shown, by introducing his new Sessional Orders, that there is no necessity for discussion or deliberation in this Chamber. The next thing he proposes is to take away Thursday afternoon from us, which is the only time that members on this side of the House have an opportunity of introducing legislation in the interest of the people of the State. The next thing we shall hear will be that there is so much done by the Premier that there will be nothing left for the House to do, and that will be a very strong argument in favour of unification. It will be said that the hon. gentleman is a dictator, and therefore that there is no need for discussion or deliberation in this House. Every move the hon. gentleman has made has been in the direction of unification. If the hon. gentleman is to be a dictator in this House, then the affairs of Queensland might as well be carried on from Melbourne, or wherever the Federal capital is established, just as the business of the Post Office is carried on by the Commonwealth Government. During the past few days members have got up in this House to deal with important matters, but were not able to deal with them in the time at their disposal. The very first member who spoke after the new Sessional Orders came into operation, had to ask for an extension of time. Other members have had to do it since, and [11.30 p.m.] the Hon. the Premier himself went at such a "bat" in speaking that he could not reply to an interjection—a thing that he courts at other times. I am going to oppose the motion, and I hope there will be a sufficient number of members imbued with a spirit of freedom to defeat it, even if it has come from the dictator of the House.

Mr. FOLEY (*Townsville*): I feel bound to enter my protest against this proposition. During the short time I have been in the House I have recognised the benefit to private members of having at least one opportunity a week of introducing any measure that they think will be beneficial to the community. Last Thursday afternoon we succeeded in passing two Bills that may be of great importance to the people they concern, and it would have been a long time before they would have got them passed by the Government. I am sure the Government cannot urge as a reason for introducing this motion that the time of the session has been wasted so far. Speeches have been very modest in their length, and I am rather surprised at the Government bringing forward such a proposal so early in the session. This is only the 7th of September, and if we sit till Christmas Eve, as we did last year, we have nearly four months before us, which should give us plenty of time to transact the ordinary business of the session in a reasonable way. Besides there is no reason why we should not come back after Christmas. In depriving members of Thursday afternoon, we are simply shelving some very important questions. For instance, there is the motion of the hon. member for Barcoo for the division of Queensland into three States. That is a measure that we could not expect the Government to bring in, although, by their action, they are assisting the unificationists, who

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have that as one of the planks in their programme. There is also on the business-paper the motion standing in the name of the hon. member for Ipswich relative to giving public servants the same political and civil rights as other citizens. That is a very important motion. Then there is the motion moved by the hon. junior member for Gympie for the abolition of the sale of liquor in the parliamentary refreshment bar. That is a matter that many people think should be carried. If we carry this motion to-night, we simply stifle any further chance of bringing that motion forward this session, because we have no guarantee that the Premier will restore Thursday afternoon to private members later in the session. Another item on the business-paper, which also stands in the name of the hon. member for Gympie, is the one which proposes the amendment of the Workers' Compensation Act—a thing that the majority of the workers of Queensland are very much interested in. We are asked to-night to give up our opportunity to pass such measures for the benefit of the people of Queensland, and we have good reason to protest. It is not only from this side of Chamber that important measures have been brought forward. The junior member for Brisbane North put a Bill through last Thursday afternoon. There was very little discussion upon it, because members generally saw the justice of it. The leader of the Opposition mentioned a Bill that it was the intention of this party to introduce this session—a Trade Disputes Bill. That has been promised by the Premier for many years, and it is absolutely necessary to protect trades union funds against unscrupulous employers. What are we to look forward to if we relinquish the right that is enjoyed by all Parliaments throughout the world? There is no chance of the present Government bringing in a Trade Disputes Bill. If we relinquish this right, we shall simply have to take what the Government like to give us in the way of legislation, and the time will very soon arrive when there will be no Opposition at all in this Chamber. The Government will simply come down with their Bills and tell the House that they have to accept them, and all the protests of the Opposition will be without avail. I am not going to delay the House any longer, but to enter in the strongest language I can my protest against this proposition, and I hope that even hon. members on the other side will see the justice of this claim, and help us to defeat this motion.

Mr. MANN: I cannot remember seeing a motion like this brought forward so early in the session. I think it is unparalleled in the history of Queensland to see a motion brought down like this. See the Government followers sitting there like dumb driven cattle, and allowing the Premier to drive this through the House!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member should not use unparliamentary language.

Mr. MANN: I think on one occasion the Premier addressed this side of the House as dogs, and I had to call the Speaker's attention to the matter, and he said it was not out of order.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am not concerned with what a previous Speaker said. I am only concerned with my own ruling.

Mr. MANN: Of course, if you rule the expression out of order, I will withdraw it, and say that they are not dumb dogs.

Hon. R. PHILP: He does not know any better.

Mr. MANN: They are a set of speechless followers who tamely follow the Premier's lead wherever he may sit. They are like sheep following a shepherd—they are dumb. They are

like sheep brought before the shearer to be shorn—they open not their mouths. I ask myself what consideration they will receive from the passage of this motion. We heard this afternoon of one member going up to value two estates for the Government. I do not suggest he would receive any pecuniary consideration for that, but the circumstance is suspicious.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must confine himself to the motion before the House. I cannot allow him to wander as he is doing.

Hon. R. PHILP: He is a lost sheep.

Mr. MANN: I am asking the reason why the Government members are supporting the motion, and if Thursday afternoon had not been cut off from us, I was going to move for an inquiry into this suspicious circumstance of a Government member being sent up to value certain estates for the Government.

Mr. LESINA: You can move the adjournment of the House.

Mr. MANN: I could move the adjournment of the House if I could get five members to support me, and with the consent of the Speaker, only. The Speaker could rule that it was not a matter of urgent public business, and then I could only move that his ruling be disagreed with, and I could not discuss the question which I wished to bring before the House. For that reason I am protesting against the Government taking away Thursday afternoon, as I shall thereby be deprived from moving for an inquiry into the circumstances of a Government member being sent to value two estates in the Burnett. The Speaker may tell me I can ask questions, but, judging from the unsatisfactory reply of the Minister for Lands, I may not get a reply. I asked a question about the mangrove bark concession, and the Secretary for Lands told me that he himself had seen the matter in the *Brisbane Courier*.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: No.

Mr. MANN: If any hon. member cares to find *Hansard* for me I will turn it up.

Mr. RYLAND: How long ago?

Mr. MANN: It is not long ago. I want Thursday afternoons to discuss that matter, because it affects my constituents. The destruction of a lot of mangrove may cause a plague of fever to come up in my district. I may want to move for an inquiry to be made into that matter. I cannot get that information by asking questions. The Minister for Lands is always courteous, but the Premier has arrogated to himself the right to refuse to answer questions. He says it is within the right of the Government to refuse any information they please. I remember when the senior member for Townsville was leading the Opposition he entered the strongest possible protest against the Government taking Thursday afternoon, because there was so much important business on the paper for that afternoon. To show the strength of my argument, I will read the reply I got from the Minister for Lands. This is the question I asked—

Mr. MANN, pursuant to notice, asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

Has he made any inquiries as to who is responsible for the prospectus that appeared in a Brisbane newspaper relative to a supposed mangrove bark concession in North Queensland?

The answer was—

I have not made any inquiry, nor am I aware that any prospectus has been published.

I asked a question, without notice, as soon as I saw the paragraph in the paper, and the Secre-

tary for Lands will remember that he made an answer that he saw the same thing in the paper himself. What are we to believe?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: I have no knowledge of the matter.

Mr. MANN: The paragraph simply stated that the prospectus was in another part of the paper, and the hon. gentleman himself said he saw it, as I will prove later, when the hon. member for Gympie has found the answer. I think it was the duty of the Minister or the Attorney-General to find out who was guilty of issuing a prospectus which was likely to deceive the people of Australia. The question I asked and the answer thereto is on page 366 of *Hansard*—

ALLEGED MANGROVE CONCESSION.

Mr. MANN (*Cairns*) asked the Secretary for Public Lands, without notice—

Will the hon. gentleman supply the House with full particulars, at an early date, with regard to the company that has been formed to exploit the mangrove in North Queensland? I see by this evening's paper that a concession 200 miles by 10 miles has been granted.

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

I know nothing whatever of it. I saw the same thing.

I do not want to dwell on that matter any further. I just point out that there is something suspicious in the fact that a concession can be granted, a prospectus issued, and people who are prepared to put money into the venture may be taken down, and the person who should know all about it—the Secretary for Lands—is absolutely ignorant of the fact.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: There is no concession. It may be a license to cut.

Mr. MANN: That is a very different thing.

Mr. LENNON: He could not get a license to cut over 200 miles.

Mr. MANN: On the last occasion a concession was given—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member is arguing the matter at considerable length. I think the House must recognise this. He may deal with it as a matter of principle and briefly refer to it, but I cannot allow him to go into details at any great length.

Mr. MANN: I am pleased I was allowed so much latitude, as I recognise it is a matter of great public importance. I just wish to refer to the fact that one of the Bills before the House—the Redistribution of Seats Bill—was only brought forward owing to the strong advocacy it received on Thursday afternoons by the junior member for Brisbane North. As a matter of fact, through his advocacy he compelled the Government to bring forward that measure. Hon. members who have spoken have referred to the fact that the necessity for certain legislation was brought forward on Thursday afternoons, such as the Workers' Compensation Act and the Shearers and Sugar Workers Accommodation Act. These measures were brought forward on Thursday afternoons, and were seriously discussed, and the House began to realise what private members were urging was necessary, and in consequence many important measures have been placed on the statute-book. You will remember that when the Premier gave notice of his motion I said he was afraid to have the motion of the hon. member for Maranoa discussed. It is a well-known fact that the Agricultural Bank is a by-word amongst the farmers and settlers of Queensland. Every one of them says it is the most conservative institution in Queensland. Members of the House say so frankly, and the Secretary for Lands will say so

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frankly, and it is only members on this side who are keenly interested in agriculture who believe in assisting the farmer by the way of cheap money, who believe in liberalising this institution, and only by conducting it on the lines of the New Zealand institution will it be of real benefit to the struggling farmers of Queensland. The Government do not wish to do anything in the matter, because it would hurt their friends the financial institutions, who are in the habit of lending money to the farmers and getting a big interest. For that reason they will not allow the hon. member for Maranoa to bring forward his motion and discuss it, because if they did so every agricultural member sitting behind the Government would have to get up and say that the Agricultural Bank was rotten from A to Z; that the whole of the department wanted overhauling, and the Government would have to get up and apologise for not bringing in the necessary legislation. Last year a Bill was promised, and naturally we have been looking forward to it with interest. We were told it was in the box last year, but it is not forthcoming. Then, if I look at the business-paper again, I find the member for Leichhardt wishes to move a motion in regard to a return showing—

1. The total area over which exclusive timber-cutting rights have been sold or granted during the last five years.

2. To whom and over what number of acres, respectively, such timber-cutting rights have been sold or granted during that period.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: That is not a question for Thursday afternoons. It was passed as "Formal" to-day.

Mr. MANN: Then there is another motion I would like to deal with: That is the motion of the hon. member for Flinders—

That there be laid on the table of the House, prior to the discussion upon the Estimates, a tabulated scale of the increases recently made in the payment of the lower-paid employees (including those on construction works) in the Railway Department, showing the rate of pay given previously to the said increases, also the wages now given since the increases on the Southern, Central, and Northern systems.

That is a very necessary motion which will lead to a great deal of discussion. We would have thrashed out the whole question of increases from Alpha to Omega. But we cannot do it, as the Government are taking away Thursday afternoons, and the reason is quite evident—because the other day I proved the Treasurer to be making a misstatement when he claimed increases had been given to practically all the lower-paid public servants, and I turned up his own tables and showed that right throughout the Marine Department, with one or two exceptions, no increases had been given, and I looked forward anxiously to an opportunity of discussing this motion, inasmuch as it would have let the House and the country know what increases the lower-paid public servants will get. Of course the Premier rose in his place and gave a long list of increases to lower-paid men, but he took the figures for six or seven years. It is clearly shown, by looking through the Estimates, that most of the increases have been given to the Under Secretaries. For instance, he asks the boatmen in the North to live on £108 a year, and he gives an Under Secretary like Mr. McDermott, who does little or nothing for his money, an increase of £100 a year, and, if we do not make a protest, he will be coming down next year and giving these highly-paid public servants another £100 rise. However, I will now get on to the next motion, which is one of my own, and one of the most important motions on the business-paper, and you, Sir, might have noticed that the Premier called "Not formal" to my motion. I

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did not wish to have a discussion, because the matter is of so much importance that I thought it would be best in the interests of this House to let the thing go through without discussion, in order to show what is becoming of the people we are drawing to our shores every year. If the Premier had allowed this to go through as "Formal," we would have been able to show a

[12 p.m.] the old country giving full particulars as to what becomes of the immigrants that are brought to this country. But he did not do that; and now he wants to hurke discussion on the question by taking away from us Thursday afternoons. We would have been able to show that the bulk of the people brought to Queensland go to the towns and thus lower wages; but the Premier knows that he has his followers well under the whip—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! If the hon. member for Cairns continues to proceed in this manner I shall have to call upon him to resume his seat.

Mr. MANN: If you think I am not in order, I will resume my seat; but I think the Speaker should allow discussion as long as it is in order. I claim that you should give me every opportunity to discuss this motion so long as I couch my remarks in phraseology suitable to the occasion.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I have given the hon. member for Cairns the utmost liberty, as hon. members on both sides will allow. But I say—and I say it with the greatest regret—that the hon. member for Cairns does not reciprocate the consideration I have shown.

Mr. MANN: I must differ with you courteously. Perhaps you may think so.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. MANN: If you choose to make me resume my seat, I can only appeal to the country for fair and ample discussion in regard to the taking away of Thursday afternoon. I am arguing against the proposal, because I have on the business-paper a motion dealing with the question of immigration, on which depends the welfare of Queensland. Now I come to "General Business—Orders of the Day." The first is a motion by the hon. member for Barcoo, Mr. Ryan, for the separation of Queensland into three States; and I was looking forward to the debate on that motion as an opportunity of ventilating all the grievances of the North. I have been preparing for a week, and now the Premier has forestalled me.

Mr. RYLAND: He has taken away your one ewe lamb.

Mr. WHITE: North Queensland does not want separation.

Mr. MANN: It does; and if we had separation there would be a Labour Government there. I want to have the opportunity of pointing out the advantage of allowing us to develop our own resources, and of showing what would happen in a State with all the members sitting on one side of the House, and all consisting of Labour men and democrats.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member having occupied the time allowed him by the Sessional Order for the discussion of this motion, I ask him to resume his seat.

Mr. LESINA supported the motion. The last speaker had argued as a necessity for retaining Thursday afternoons that it would enable members to discuss the question of dividing Queensland into three States. That proposition horrified him, especially as he had already spoken that afternoon in favour of unification,

and for that reason alone he would vote for the motion. He suggested that the Government might take the Land Bill every Thursday afternoon, as it would be more profitable to members and to the House, and if they passed that Land Bill this year they would have done a most important work for Queensland. There was a lot of Government business on the business-paper, including the Land Bill, State Education Acts Amendment Bill, Mines Regulation Bill, Local Authorities Act Amendment Bill, Police Jurisdiction and Summary Offences Bill, Wages Boards Act Amendment Bill, Electoral Districts Bill, City of South Brisbane Loan Acts Amendment Bill, Rockhampton Harbour Board Acts Amendment Bill, Townsville Harbour Board Acts Amendment Bill, and Jury Bill, and they would be better occupied in discussing those matters than in talking on abstract motions on Thursday afternoon. Mr. McDonald, and afterwards Mr. Turley, introduced motions on Thursday to abolish contracts, but nothing ever came of them, and it was so with others. He was in favour of the amendment of the Agricultural Bank Act, and he believed the Government would introduce an amending Bill next session. There was nothing else in the private members' motions that justified the retention of the Thursday afternoons for private members. While he supported the motion, principally because its adoption would give members more time to discuss the Land Bill, he hoped that at the close or before the close of the session the Premier would give them an opportunity to take a vote on the motions standing in the names of private members.

Mr. THEODORE was opposed to the motion because it seemed to him that the Premier was taking every possible opportunity to use the power of the majority behind him to curtail the privileges of members of the Opposition. At one time the hon. member for Clermont when sitting behind the Premier, who was then a member of a coalition Government, frequently came into conflict with the hon. gentleman, and went to such an extent on one occasion that he threatened to kick the Hon. the Premier across the Chamber. Now the hon. member for Clermont was sitting on the Opposition side of the House, and was supporting the Premier. It was very difficult to reconcile the opposition of the hon. member in one case with his warm support of the Premier in the other. The Premier did not show much consideration for his supporters or his colleagues in introducing this motion at the present stage of the session, and the supporters of the Government showed absolutely no spirit in allowing the motion to go without protest.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I hope the hon. member will come to the question before the House.

Mr. THEODORE: He had only to say that he was strongly opposed to the motion, and that he hoped it would be defeated if it went to a division.

Mr. BARBER: It was hardly necessary to say that he was strongly opposed to the motion.

It was another indication of the [12.30 a.m.] tyranny and autocracy of the Premier, and a desire on his part to curtail the rights and privileges of hon. members. Ever since the advent of the Labour party they had taken advantage of the opportunity afforded by Thursday afternoon to do good educational work with regard to the Labour platform. Some of the most democratic legislation on the statute-book owed its origin to such discussions. Though defeated and talked out session after session, they had succeeded in educating public opinion to such a pitch that such measures such as old-age

pensions, the amelioration of the condition of the aged poor, and the Sugar Workers' Accommodation Act were passed. He was anxious to introduce an amendment this session of the latter measure so far as it had to deal with sugar-workers. He did not know whether the Premier had got an inkling that the Labour party intended to introduce a Trades Disputes Bill, and he was afraid, after the antagonism of members sitting behind him to the Bill which he had introduced some years back, that his party might be discredited in the country.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER.

At twenty-five minutes to 1 o'clock,

Mr. MULCAHY called attention to the state of the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am satisfied that there is a quorum within the precincts of the House.

Mr. MULCAHY: Where are they?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Mr Barber.

Mr. MULCAHY: I regret very much—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Does the hon. member rise to a point of order?

Mr. MULCAHY: Yes. If you rule that there is a quorum present, I beg to move that your ruling be disagreed with.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The question of whether there is a quorum present is entirely a matter for the Speaker to decide, in the light of his knowledge of the fact that members are in various rooms within the precincts of the House; and if he decides that there is a quorum so present, the business of the House proceeds.

Mr. MULCAHY: With all due deference to you, I beg to move that your ruling be disagreed with.

The PREMIER: There is no ruling at all.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Mr. Barber.

Mr. MULCAHY: I beg to move that your ruling be disagreed with.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the hon. member resume his seat. There is no question of a ruling, and there is no point of order. The question of whether there is a quorum present has been raised, and I have decided that there is a quorum within the precincts of the House, and I therefore allow the business to proceed.

Mr. MULCAHY: I disagree with you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MULCAHY: With all deference, I disagree with your ruling.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! Mr. Barber.

Mr. MULCAHY: I disagree with your ruling.

Mr. MULLAN: You are not going to have it all your own way.

Mr. MULCAHY remaining standing.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! Will the hon. member for Gympie resume his seat?

Mr. MULCAHY: No, decidedly not.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call upon the hon. member for Gympie to resume his seat.

Mr. MULCAHY: No.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the hon. member resume his seat?

Mr. MULCAHY: The hon. gentleman says there was a quorum, and I say he was wrong.

Mr. Mulcahy.]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Will the hon member resume his seat?

Mr. MULCAHY remaining standing.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER said: It is my unpleasant duty to name you, Mr. Mulcahy, member for Gympie, to the House for disobeying the order of the Chair.

Mr. MULLAN: He doesn't care a rap. Get your crew in now, and see what you can do. You are going to get them in now.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Will the hon. member for Gympie resume his seat?

Mr. MULCAHY: No, I am not thinking about it.

Mr. MULLAN: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: I beg to move that for this open and flagrant disobedience of the Chair, the hon. member for Gympie, Mr. Mulcahy, be suspended from the service of this House for one week.

Question put; and the House divided.

In division,

Amidst uproar amongst Opposition members, cries of "Shame, shame!" "What is it for?" "They don't know what they are voting for," and "Native Cat" were heard.

AYES, 31.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Hodge
" Barnes, G. P.	" Hunter, D.
" Barnes, W. H.	" Kidston
" Booker	" Mackintosh
" Bouchard	" Morgan
" Brennan	" Paget
" Bridges	" Petrie
" Corser	" Philp
" Cottell	" Rankin
" Cribb	" Roberts
" Denham	" Somerset
" Forsyth	" Stocart
" Grant	" Swayne
" Grayson	" White
" Gunn	" Wienholt
" Hawthorn	

Tellers: Mr. White and Mr. Stodart.

NOES, 22.

Mr. Barber	Mr. May
" Bowman	" Mulcahy
" Collins	" Mullan
" Coyne	" McLachlan
" Ferricks	" Newitt
" Foley	" O'Sullivan
" Hamilton	" Payne
" Hunter, J. M.	" Ryan
" Land	" Ryland
" Lennon	" Theodore
" Lesina	" Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. May and Mr. Foley.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Thorn and Mr. Walker.

Noes—Mr. Douglas and Mr. Allen.

Resolved in the affirmative.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. member for Gympie to withdraw from the precincts of the House.

Mr. MULCAHY, as he left the Chamber, said: "Good-bye, 'Cocky,' for a week—'Cocky' Armstrong." (Opposition laughter.)

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Mr. BARBER: He had intended to introduce a motion on a Thursday afternoon to secure an amendment of the Shearers and Sugar Workers Accommodation Act, providing for the appointment of inspectors, which he considered were necessary at the present time. As far back as two and a-half years ago a deputation of representatives of the sugar districts waited on the Minister for Agriculture, who promised that this matter would be looked into, and the arguments used on that occasion were very forcible at the present

[Mr. Mulcahy.

time. Another reason why he was opposed to this motion was because he considered that the resolution moved by the hon. member for Gympie, Mr. Ryland, dealing with the amendment of the Workers' Compensation Act, was one that should have received the very careful consideration of this House. Incorporated in that motion were two or three matters which required to be amended, especially the stamp duty of 5s. on the policy of the employee, which weighed heavily on a large number of the smaller employers. When the motion came to a division he would vote against it.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER.

Mr. FERRICKS said the country districts, under the present régime, were sufficiently handicapped without any curtailment of private members' Thursday afternoons, and the Premier had ulterior motives in moving the motion. He, as the head of the Government, was afraid of the criticisms which could be and which would be labelled out by members of the Opposition. He contended that the Premier was over-doing things. The Premier was the Czar of Queensland, and was growing passing fat on his ill-gotten gains from mining swindles.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. FERRICKS: I say he is growing passing fat, and he has a bank balance of something like £22,000, and he endeavours to increase that bank balance in the only way he can hope to do it, and that is by clinging for two or three years more to the position which he now occupies, and he does that by kowtowing first to the right and then to the left—first to Archdeacon Garland, and next to the Licensed Victuallers' Association.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to the question before the House.

Mr. FERRICKS: I am objecting to the action of the Chief Secretary in moving the motion before the House, and I say he is evidently willing by many divers methods—

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! That has nothing to do with the question as to whether Government business shall take precedence of all other business on Thursday. I must ask the hon. member to confine his remarks to the question before the House.

Mr. FERRICKS: I contend the Premier is introducing this motion has ulterior motives.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. member is entirely out of order in imputing motives at any time to any hon. member in this Chamber.

Mr. FERRICKS: I say he has introduced this motion to prevent discussion by members of the Opposition, and if hon. members of the Opposition have not the liberty to discuss matters brought forward in this Chamber, why are we here at all? I contend this is not government by Cabinet—it is not government by any clique—it is government by an autocrat, and I say the people of Queensland will not too long stand this condition of affairs. I say the Premier in his elevated arrogance seeks now, not to over-ride us but to crush us underneath, and I, for one, will not submit to it.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. FERRICKS: I charge him now as being a person who has been in the past guilty of mining swindles.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! I must ask the hon. member to withdraw those words. I hope the hon. member will see the propriety of withdrawing those words.

Mr. FERRICKS: The position is this—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Withdraw, withdraw!

Mr. MULLAN: No fear! Why should he withdraw?

Mr. FERRICKS: We are not going to be run by a Czar—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! The words are distinctly unparliamentary. The hon. member must see that, and I ask him to unconditionally withdraw them.

Mr. FERRICKS: I say they are unparliamentary and they are true.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order! Will the hon. member withdraw?

Mr. FERRICKS: No, I won't, as they are true.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is my regrettable duty to name the hon. member for wilful disobedience of the Chair. I therefore name you, Mr. Ferricks, member for Bowen, to the House.

Mr. FERRICKS: I move that your ruling be disagreed to.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear! and uproar.

The PREMIER: It would be foolish of me simply to move that the hon. member be suspended for a week. I move that the hon. member be suspended for a month.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Opposition cries of "Absurd!" "Shame, shame!" and uproar.

Mr. LENNON: It is without precedent in Australia.

The PREMIER: If the Speaker's authority is again defied, I will move suspension for the remainder of the session.

Continued uproar on the Opposition side.

Mr. FERRICKS: You're a mining swindler. You received bribes from the Electric Light Company.

Question—That the hon. member for Bowen be suspended from the services of the House for a period of one month—put; and the House divided.

In division,

Mr. LENNON: Suspend a member for a month! Shame! It is unprecedented in Australia. It is preposterous.

Mr. WHITE: The language is unprecedented.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Quite unprecedented.

Mr. FERRICKS: You are a mining swindler, and received bribes from the Electric Light Company. You have not a friend in your own party now.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LENNON: If you moved his suspension for the remainder of the sitting there would be something decent in it; but to suspend for a month—

Mr. CORSER: Why support such conduct?

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: You would support anything.

Mr. LENNON: The Czar has spoken—the Duma is dissolved.

Mr. MULLAN: If he had not touched the "Native Cat" he would have been all right. The "Native Cat" is the trouble.

[1 a.m.]

AYES, 31.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Hodges
" Barnes, G. P.	" Hunter, D.
" Barnes, W. H.	" Kidston
" Booker	" Mackintosh
" Bouchard	" Morgan
" Brennan	" Paget
" Bridges	" Petrie
" Corser	" Philp
" Cottell	" Rankin
" Cribb	" Roberts
" Denham	" Somerset
" Forsyth	" Stodart
" Grant	" Swayne
" Grayson	" White
" Gunn	" Wienholt
" Hawthorn	

Tellers: Mr. Bouchard and Mr. Swayne.

NOES, 23.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Lesina
" Bowman	" May
" Breslin	" Mullan
" Collins	" McLachlan
" Coyne	" Nevitt
" Ferricks	" O'Sullivan
" Foley	" Payne
" Hamilton	" Ryan
" Hardacre	" Ryland
" Hunter, J. M.	" Theodore
" Land	" Winstanley
" Lennon	

Tellers: Mr. Lesina and Mr. McLachlan.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Thorn and Mr. Walker.

Noes—Mr. Douglas and Mr. Allen.

Resolved in the affirmative.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call upon the hon. member for Bowen to withdraw from the precincts of the House.

Mr. FERRICKS thereupon withdrew, calling out, "Good night, Mr. Speaker."

ORDER OF BUSINESS.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Mr. McLACHLAN (*Fortitude Valley*) said that some of the most useful legislation on the statute-book had been initiated by the discussion of various motions brought forward by private members on Thursday afternoons, and to attempt, at this early stage of the session, to take away private members' day was a proceeding without precedent. There were many planks in the platform of the Labour party that might be profitably discussed, and the debates on those matters would be instructive not only to members opposite but to the people in the country. The only reason why the Premier moved this motion was because his supporters were prepared to support any motion which he liked to introduce. They were being denied a further discussion of the Workers' Compensation Act, which was on the business-paper. It was also the intention of the leader of the Labour party to move in the direction of introducing a Trades Disputes Bill, but he would be prevented from doing that, as the Premier had the majority behind him sufficient to carry anything. The members sitting on the Government side were not concerned whether they had any privileges or not, and if any privileges were to be retained to hon. members it would only be accomplished by the Opposition members fighting for them. He regretted that the Premier introduced the motion before they started to sit four days a week, although when they were near the close of the session they expected to have private members' day taken away. After the result of the two last divisions it would be futile for him to hope that the

Mr. McLachlan.]

motion would not be carried, because the Premier had a sufficient number of his followers behind him.

Mr. MAY (*Flinders*) protested against the action of the Hon. the Premier in taking away the Thursday afternoon that was given to private members. He was sure that hon. members would have liked to have a further discussion on Mr. J. M. Hunter's motion for the amendment of the Agricultural Bank Act. With regard to the motion he had on the business-paper, all he desired was to obtain information as to the manner in which increases were made to the lower-paid employees in the Railway Department, and he was very much surprised when the Minister for Railways called "Not formal" to the motion. If the present proposition to take away Thursday afternoons from private members was carried, he would have no opportunity of discussing that motion or getting a vote on it. It was a very drastic motion to make so early, in the session, and he did not think it necessary. If the Government required more time for their business, the House could meet an hour earlier each sitting day and sit four days a week. He believed that every member of the Opposition would be willing to do that, and would rather do it than lose Thursday afternoons. He also believed that every member on that side of the House was prepared to come back after the Christmas holidays to finish the business if it could not be got through before Christmas. Though a comparatively new member, he had summed up the situation in the House, and his conclusion was that in their debates one-fourth of the talk was common sense and three-fourths rot.

Mr. NEVITT: On which side of the House?

Mr. MAY: Chiefly on the Government benches. (Laughter.) On the Opposition side six spoke good sense, and on the Government side four spoke good sense, while for four who talked nonsense on the Opposition side there were six who did so on the Government side. He was very sorry for what had occurred [1.30 a.m.] earlier in the evening. There was no doubt that a good many members were "Jack Ketched," and there might be more of them "Jack Ketched," and he was very sorry to say, if he might be permitted to say so, that the Premier—

Mr. NEVITT: Will be sorry for it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MAY: He would be very sorry for it—that was the natural corollary of what had been done. He thought the Premier had been too severe in the punishment which he had inflicted on the hon. member for Bowen.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BRESLIN: He wanted to get rid of him.

Mr. LENNON and the PREMIER rising simultaneously.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Lennon.

The PREMIER: I move—That the question be now put.

Mr. BRESLIN: Gag, gag!

Mr. LENNON: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—You called on me first.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order!

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: He isn't game to put you out.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I called upon the hon. member for Herbert before the motion was put.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LENNON: Not having been in the House many years, he had intended to make some reference to a subject concerning which

[*Mr. May.*

the Speaker had called the hon. member for Flinders to desist speaking upon, and therefore he would refrain from making reference to it. What had just occurred had rendered him almost unfit to address himself coherently to the House, and he hardly knew where to begin. The Sessional Orders having been passed, the Premier now wished to deprive members of their one remaining vestige of liberty by bringing forward this proposal. Without any justification, private members were to be deprived of Thursday afternoon, in face of the fact that there were several important motions on the paper. The motion of the hon. member for Maranoa with reference to the amendment of the Agricultural Bank Act was highly important, as the Agricultural Bank was a most unsatisfactory institution. Either it should be placed on a business-like footing or it should be wiped out completely.

At twenty minutes to 2 o'clock,

The PREMIER said: I beg to move—That the question be now put.

Mr. LENNON: I crave your indulgence, Sir. I ask for your ruling. Before I resume my seat I have an amendment to move.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is—“That the question be now put.”

Mr. MULLAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MULLAN: I rise to a point of order. Has the question been sufficiently debated?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the hon. member resume his seat. The question—“That the question be now put”—has been put. Under the Standing Orders the Speaker, or the Chairman of Committees, if he considers that the question has been sufficiently debated, may put it. I find that there have been seventeen members debating this question. In my opinion there has been sufficient debate, and I have therefore to proceed.

Mr. MULLAN: There is an amendment put.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There was no amendment before the Chair.

Mr. MULLAN: But you knew he was going to move one.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There was no amendment before the Chair.

Mr. MULLAN: Yes, but he notified his intention.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I hope that the hon. member will see that the business of the House has to be carried out in its proper rotation. The Chief Secretary moved—“That the question be now put.” There was no amendment before the House, and I have decided that the question has been sufficiently debated. Therefore, I shall put the question.

Mr. LENNON: I would ask you, Mr. Speaker, to allow me to remind you that before you called upon me to sit down, I mentioned that I was about to move an amendment.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. LENNON: I would like also to say, with your permission, that I was relating the facts from my own experience, and I had not occupied more than four minutes of the time of this House. Therefore, it was a very unreasonable thing for the Chief Secretary to pull me up.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. LENNON: I was about to move an amendment when the hon. gentleman moved—“That the question be now put.” I think it was a most unreasonable act on his part.

Mr. RYLAND: This was a question—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The question is—"That the question be now put."

Mr. RYLAND: I say you are not treating this question fairly.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Most harshly.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: As many as are of that opinion will say "Aye."

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: "Aye."

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: On the contrary, "No."

OPPOSITION MEMBERS (shouting): "No."

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The "Ayes" have it.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Divide!

Mr. LENNON: How can we expect justice from the other side?

Mr. MULLAN: That is the dirtiest thing that has been done this session. It shows they are not fit.

Question—That the question be now put—put; and the House divided.

In division,

The DEPUTY SPEAKER called upon Mr. Gunn and Mr. Morgan as tellers for the Ayes, and Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Collins as tellers for the Noes.

Mr. HAMILTON: No, I am buggered if I will be a party to it.

Mr. COLLINS: I am buggered if I will, either.

Mr. MULLAN and OTHER OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear! Hear, hear! and uproar.

Mr. HAMILTON: It is a bloody scandalous proceeding. You can do what you like with me. I consider to-night's proceedings the most scandalous that have ever taken place in this House, especially by the Chief Secretary.

Mr. COLLINS: They won't get me to be a dirty tool, either.

Mr. LENNON: The Deputy Speaker would not take an amendment to have the question discussed before this Chamber for five minutes, and that was all the amendment I proposed to ask.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the hon. member for Gregory reconsider his decision, and act as teller?

Mr. HAMILTON: I absolutely decline to be a party to this scandalous proceeding. You can name me as much as you like.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call upon Mr. Hardacre and Mr. May.

Mr. HARDACRE: No; I won't, if the others won't.

Mr. MAY: You won't get me. If one man won't do it, I won't do it. (Laughter.)

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I call upon the Clerk at the table to take the division.

The Clerk thereupon took the "Noes."

Mr. BOWMAN: It is the only chance you have got on this side.

Mr. MULLAN (to the Premier): You have reduced Parliament to a farce by your ruffianism.

Mr. RYLAND: Mr. Deputy Speaker,—I ask your ruling. Under what Standing Order do you instruct the Clerk to take the names?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: We have no Standing Order on the point. I follow the practice which has been followed in the House of Commons on occasions where a similar difficulty has arisen.

AYES, 31.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Hodge
„ Barnes, G. P.	„ Hunter, D.
„ Barnes, W. H.	„ Kidston
„ Booker	„ Mackintosh
„ Bouchard	„ Morgan
„ Brennan	„ Paget
„ Bridges	„ Petrie
„ Corser	„ Philp
„ Cottell	„ Rankin
„ Cribb	„ Roberts
„ Denham	„ Somerset
„ Forsyth	„ Stodart
„ Grant	„ Swayne
„ Grayson	„ White
„ Gunn	„ Wienholt
„ Hawthorn	

Tellers: Mr. Gunn and Mr. Morgan.

NOES, 22.

Mr. Barber	Mr. Lesina
„ Bowman	„ May
„ Breslin	„ Mullan
„ Collins	„ McLachlan
„ Coyne	„ Nevitt
„ Foley	„ O'Sullivan
„ Hamilton	„ Payne
„ Hardacre	„ Ryan
„ Hunter, J. M.	„ Ryland
„ Land	„ Theodore
„ Lennou	„ Winstanley

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Thorn and Mr. Walker.

Noes—Mr. Douglas and Mr. Allen.

Resolved in the affirmative.

The announcement of the result of the division was received with loud derisive cheers and interjections by Opposition members.

Question—That, unless the House otherwise orders, Government business do take precedence of all other business at 3 o'clock p.m. on Thursday in each week—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 31.

Mr. Appel	Mr. Hodge
„ Barnes, G. P.	„ Hunter, D.
„ Barnes, W. H.	„ Kidston
„ Booker	„ Mackintosh
„ Bouchard	„ Morgan
„ Brennan	„ Paget
„ Bridges	„ Petrie
„ Corser	„ Philp
„ Cottell	„ Rankin
„ Cribb	„ Roberts
„ Denham	„ Somerset
„ Forsyth	„ Stodart
„ Grant	„ Swayne
„ Grayson	„ White
„ Gunn	„ Wienholt
„ Hawthorn	

Tellers: Mr. Cribb and Mr. Forsyth.

NOES 22

Mr. Barber	Mr. Lesina
„ Bowman	„ May
„ Breslin	„ Mullan
„ Collins	„ McLachlan
„ Coyne	„ Nevitt
„ Foley	„ O'Sullivan
„ Hamilton	„ Payne
„ Hardacre	„ Ryan
„ Hunter, J. M.	„ Ryland
„ Land	„ Theodore
„ Lennou	„ Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. Foley and Mr. Theodore.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Thorn and Mr. Walker.

Noes—Mr. Douglas and Mr. Allen.

Resolved in the affirmative.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER: I beg to move that the House do now adjourn. The first business to-morrow will be the resumption of the debate on the Financial Statement.

Mr. BOWMAN said they had had an example that night of one of the most biased records that the House had ever shown. The attitude taken up by the Chief Secretary was only indicative of his action for some years.

The PREMIER: This is entirely out of order.

Mr. BOWMAN: I will be called to order by the Deputy Speaker, not by a tyrant like you.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. BOWMAN: When anything was said which the Premier did not like he thought it was his privilege and right to dictate to members on the Opposition side. There was only one way the Premier could do that, and that was by the brute force which he had behind him, and which he had exercised in a manner that no other Premier had done since Queensland had a Parliament. He could not let the House adjourn without entering his protest at the action of the Premier, especially so as the hon. member for Bowen had made a statement which reflected on himself, and he (the Premier) then sentenced him to a month's suspension. It was a disgrace to the Premier and to the House that such a thing had been done.

Mr. LENNON pointed out the absurdity of adjourning at that hour as there was no accommodation for members and their trains had all gone, and if the House adjourned they would be turned out in the street. If such a thing happened in two or three months' time, after the Police Offences Bill was passed, they might all be run in for being out after hours. It was absurd to adjourn at 2 o'clock in the morning when there was important business to do. Why not go on with the second reading of the Land Bill? He would point out that that was the second time the Premier had put the gag into operation on him (Mr. Lennon). He seemed to take a special delight in signalling him (Mr. Lennon) out for that special distinction. He appealed to the Premier to go on with the business, as he was not prepared to walk three and a-half miles to his home as he had only shanks's pony to carry him. If the House adjourned he would be forced to camp on the benches till daylight.

Mr. RYLAND protested against the Premier's interference with the liberty of members, and the practical disfranchisement of their constituents. He had never seen such disgraceful conduct on the part of any Government.

Mr. LESINA explained that he voted against the Premier's motion as a protest against the hon. gentleman's action in suspending two members—one of them for a period unprecedented in that Chamber. The offence of that hon. member was making a charge against the Premier; and it would have been more in consonance with the hon. gentleman's dignity to have ignored the charge rather than allow the public to gather the impression that he was animated by personal spleen. Under the circumstances members should seriously consider whether it was not time to so amend the Standing Orders as to prevent any member who occupied the position of Premier from venting his spleen on a member and disfranchising his constituency for a month. He thought the Premier, when he came to consider the matter, would regret what he had done.

Mr. COLLINS said he belonged to a race of men who had shed their blood for the liberties we had to-day, and he regretted that it had been left to a man who climbed to position and place

by treachery to suspend an hon. member for a month. He would be less than a coward if he did not enter his protest against the action of the Premier, which was unprecedented in the history of Queensland. The charge made by the hon. member for Bowen was also made by a newspaper circulating in Brisbane.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I hope the hon. gentleman will confine his remarks to the question before the House, which is—"That the House do now adjourn."

Mr. COLLINS: Why did not the Premier go to the printing press, declare himself the Czar of Queensland, and abolish Parliament altogether? The Premier had climbed to place and power by treachery, and his action was the action of a tyrant. The electors of Queensland would resent his action, at any rate the electors of Burke would do so.

Mr. PAYNE (*Mitchell*) opposed the motion for adjournment as members would have to walk 5 miles to their homes. He regretted the unwise and unmanly action of the Premier. If the Opposition had a spark of manhood in them at all, they would naturally resent the curtailing of their liberties as had been done by the Premier. It was a regrettable thing that Queensland was governed by a man so small-minded as the Premier, and rather than take part in such proceedings he would sooner go out of the House altogether. When he saw the Government supporters sitting there as "mum" as could be, simply because they had the majority, without showing a spark of manhood, it made him feel as if he could get away from the place altogether. He admired his old friend, the hon. member for Gregory, for the stand he took, as in using the language he did he only acted on the natural impulse of a man. The Premier was responsible for the present temper of the House, and for keeping hon. members there till that early hour of the morning. As they had stayed so long, and had no opportunity of getting home except by walking, he thought they should work on till morning.

Mr. MAY suggested that as members had been kept sitting so long they should go on with the business on the paper, and thought they might very profitably occupy their time in discussing the Land Bill. While he was a believer in limitation of speeches, he was of opinion that the limitation imposed by the new Sessional Orders was too drastic. He also disapproved of the drastic sentence passed by the House on the hon. member for Bowen, which meant disfranchising an important constituency which was largely interested in pastoral, sugar-growing, farming, and dairying pursuits.

The PREMIER: I move—That the question be now put.

Question—That the question be now put—put; and the DEPUTY SPEAKER having declared that the "Ayes" had it,

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Divide!

The division bell having been rung, and the bar closed,

The DEPUTY SPEAKER, after again putting the question, called upon Mr. Cottell and

Mr. Wienholt to act as tellers for [2:30 a.m.] the "Ayes," and Mr. J. M. Hunter and Mr. McLachlan to act as tellers for the "Noes."

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: I decline.

Mr. McLACHLAN: I decline to tell.

Mr. BOWMAN: We all decline on this side.

[*Hon. W. Kidston.*]

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There being no tellers for the "Noes," I declare the question resolved in the affirmative.

Mr. MULLAN (addressing the Deputy Speaker): You were wrong before.

Mr. RYLAND: A biased Chairman.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The question is—"That this House do now adjourn."

The question being declared, on the voices, to be with the "Ayes,"

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Divide!

While the division bell was ringing,

Mr. NEVITT: The bars are down while the division bell is ringing. That is another "gag."

The messenger raised the bar, and when the bell ceased ringing, the bar was again ordered to be closed.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER, after again putting the question—That the House do now adjourn—called on Mr. Cottell and Mr. Wienholt to tell for the "Ayes," and Mr. Payne and Mr. Collins to tell for the "Noes."

Mr. PAYNE, rising, said: With all due respect, I decline to act.

Mr. COLLINS, also rising, said: I decline to act.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the hon. members be seated?

Mr. LENNON: We don't want to qualify as executioners.

Mr. BOWMAN: We are not going to act as tellers for you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There being no tellers for the "Noes," I declare the "Ayes" have it.

Mr. MULLAN: That is two different rulings on one subject to-night.

The House adjourned at twenty-six minutes to 3 o'clock, amid hooting from Opposition members.
