

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 27 OCTOBER 1910**

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.**

THURSDAY, 27 OCTOBER, 1910.

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

PAPER.

The following paper, laid on the table, was ordered to be printed:—Twenty-fifth report of the Registrar of Friendly Societies, Building Societies, and Trade Unions.

QUESTIONS.

HOURS WORKED BY ENGINE-DRIVER AND  
FIREMAN.

Mr COYNE (*Warrego*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

What was the number of hours worked by the engine-driver and fireman of the pilot engine between Grandchester and Laidley each week during the month of September ultimo?

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

—	Days.	Hours.	Minutes.
1st to 3rd September ...	5	7	34
5th to 10th September ...	13	6	18
12th to 17th September ...	14	4	20
19th to 24th September ...	13	1	43
26th to 30th September ...	11	7	38
	59	3	33

On account of the hours being long the men are changed every few days; in fact, ten sets of men were engaged on this engine during the month of September.

APPOINTMENT OF SCHOOL TEACHERS AS "AREA OFFICERS."

-Mr. ALLEN (*Bulloo*) asked the Secretary for Public Instruction—

1. Is it a fact that a number of teachers in the employ of his department have been appointed "area officers" in the Commonwealth Defence Force?

2. Have these officers received the approval of his department in accepting those positions?

3. Is it not reasonable to presume that the duties of "area officer," if carried out in conjunction with the duties of teacher, will seriously interfere with the latter?

4. Such being the case, how is it proposed to carry on their school work during their absence on military duty?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Bulimba*) replied—

1. I have received no official advice on the subject. I have only seen the newspaper reports.

2. No.

3 and 4. I have already directed that full inquiries be made as to the duties of "area officers" with a view to ascertain the extent to which such duties would interfere with a teacher's school work.

DWELLING AND LOCKUP AT SELWYN AND FRIEZLAND.

Mr. MAY (*Flinders*) asked the Home Secretary—

1. Is it the intention of the department to recommend a dwelling and lockup for the constable stationed at Selwyn, as at present the constable is living in a tent?

2. Is it the intention of the department to recommend the erection of a lockup and courthouse at Friezland, as at present prisoners are chained up to either a log or a tree?

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

1. No; a police station has already been erected there.

2. Yes; when a suitable site has been obtained.

COMPENSATION—MACALISTER ACCIDENT.

Mr. COYNE asked the Secretary for Railways—

1. What was the total amount of compensation paid by his department in connection with the Macalister accident?

2. To whom was it paid, and the amount to each?

3. By what method did the department arrive at the amounts paid to each?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS replied—

1. £14,086 12s. 9d.

2. In the interests of the recipients it is not considered advisable to make public the amount paid to each individual, but any hon. member who is interested may see the complete list at the railway offices.

3. All the circumstances surrounding the several claims were carefully considered, and each one was decided on its own merits, having due regard to justice and equity.

CLOSURE OF ROADS—CLEVELAND SHIRE COUNCIL.

Mr. FERRICKS (*Bowen*) asked the Secretary for Public Lands—

1. How many roads within the Shire of Cleveland have been closed since the constitution of the shire?

2. Which are they?

3. On whose initiative were these roads closed?

4. Were any of the then councillors of the Shire of Cleveland personally benefited by such closures?

5. If so, what is or are the name or names of such councillor or councillors?

5. Have any protests been made against such closures?

7. Has any further application been made for closing of roads in this shire?

8. If so, by whom has such application been made?

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

To furnish answers to such questions would involve considerable research, and the departmental staff is already under heavy pressure with work of a more important nature. If the particular case the hon. member has in view is that of Coburg street, Cleveland, a part of which was closed on the application of Messrs. Lewis and Fox and against the objections of Messrs. Cross, Dabee Singh, and others, he will find it already referred to in the records of the House for the 21st July.

REPORT OF SCOTCH COMMISSIONERS' TOUR.

Mr. MURPHY (*Croydon*), in the absence of Mr. Lesina, asked the Chief Secretary—

1. Is it the intention of the Government to have the illustrated supplement depicting the recent tour through the State of the Scotch Commissioners prepared, printed, and published at the Government Printing Office, thereby thus advertising abroad the excellence and up-to-date character of the work turned out at the State printery?

2. How is it proposed to distribute, throughout Great Britain, the illustrated supplement?

3. What is the estimated cost of its production?

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

I will take an early opportunity of fully explaining to the House what has been done in connection with this matter.

COST OF PRINTING "OUR FIRST HALF-CENTURY."

Mr. MURPHY, in the absence of Mr. Lesina, asked the Chief Secretary—

1. Does the statement at page 89 of the Auditor-General's report, *re* the cost of printing "Our First Half-Century"—viz., £2,300—correctly represent the total cost of the volume?

2. What was the cost of preparation—*i.e.*, the literary work, etc.?

3. Who were the persons employed, and what amount, if any, were they paid for their labours?

The PREMIER replied—

1. Yes, at that date; but as more copies may be required from time to time the cost may, of course, be increased.

2 and 3. The questions were answered in this House on 9th August last.

COST OF ADDITIONS, ETC., TO TEMPORARY GOVERNMENT HOUSE.

Mr. MURPHY, in the absence of Mr. Lesina, asked the Chief Secretary—

1. What is the total cost to date of additions, alterations, repairs, and painting at Fernberg temporary Government House?

2. The total cost of metalling, gravelling, and rolling roadways?

3. Cost of fencing?

4. Cost of the secondary battery?

5. Cost of installing the electric light?

6. Cost of constructing tennis court?

7. Cost of new carpet and linoleum?

8. Cost of removing furniture from old Government House?

9. Cost of three supplies of linen recently purchased, and quantity of electro-plate?

The PREMIER replied—

I refer the hon. gentleman to my reply to Mr. May on 13th July last.

CITY OF SOUTH BRISBANE LOAN  
ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

On the motion of the TREASURER (Hon. A. G. C. Hawthorn, *Enoggera*), this Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council, by message in the usual form.

TOWNSVILLE HARBOUR BOARD ACTS  
AMENDMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

On the motion of the TREASURER, this Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council, by message in the usual form.

SUPPLY.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

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

DUNWICH BENEVOLENT ASYLUM.

Question—That £30,584 be granted, Dunwich Benevolent Asylum—stated.

The HOME SECRETARY: When the Committee adjourned on the last Thursday he was proceeding to give an explanation of the increases in connection with this vote, and for the information of hon. members he would begin again. There was an increase of £50 in the salary of the medical superintendent. Further duties had been placed upon that officer in connection with the inebriate institution, and it was considered a fair thing that he should receive an increase from £550 to £600. There was also an increase in the salary of the storekeeper of £20, an increase to the clerk and postmaster of £10, and new provision for a clerk at £100. The dispenser received an increase of £10, and the head attendant an increase of £20. Two wardsmen had resigned and two appointed, which resulted in a saving of £80. The matron, Mrs. Cardew, received an increase of £20; the assistant cook £20, the boatman £3, and the milkman £5. There was a decrease in the indigence allowance of £1,000, owing to the operations of the Old-age Pensions Act—(hear, hear!)—and there was also a decrease in the amount for provisions of £300. For the information of hon. members, he might state that the total number of inmates was 1,040—892 males and 148 females. Two new wards were now approaching completion, each of which would contain eighty beds. The wards had been built on the most approved pattern, a window having been provided for each bed. In the former wards one window—a large one, certainly—was provided for each set of two beds, but occasionally the occupant of one bed wanted the window shut and the occupant of the other bed wanted it open; and it was considered advisable under those circumstances to provide a window for each inmate. The women's quarters had also been improved. A wire fence had been erected around their quarters, so that the women would be unable to stray into the male quarters when the gates were shut.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: We thought it was the other way about.

The HOME SECRETARY: He was afraid there was a kind of mutuality about the matter. (Laughter.) A ward had also been

constructed for the placing of some of the younger female inmates in seclusion. There were a small number of female inmates who were not in that condition which would justify placing them in the asylum for insane, but who should not be allowed to be at large, as occasionally they caused trouble and annoyance to the older inmates. Provision had been made by which, when the necessity arose, they could be isolated for their own benefit and the benefit of the elder inmates. Provision was made for a new water supply, which, when completed, would give an adequate supply for the requirements of the asylum at Dunwich. Quarters for the attendants were also being erected. He thought that those members who took the trouble to inspect the institution would find that every provision had been made for the comfort of the inmates.

Mr. COYNE: Some new buildings were erected a short time ago, and he understood that after the buildings were erected it was found necessary to pull down, or partially pull down, the buildings in order to instal some machinery in them.

Mr. D. HUNTER: It is quite true.

Mr. COYNE: He wished to know if it was true, and, if true, who was to blame for that state of things, because if the Government Architect was responsible for it he should be censured for his apathy or incapacity.

The HOME SECRETARY confessed that he was unaware of such a circumstance as that mentioned by the hon. member for Warrego. The construction of the buildings was in the hands of the Works Department, but he felt certain that if any alteration had to be made it must have been a very small one indeed.

Mr. D. HUNTER: Oh, no; it wasn't.

The HOME SECRETARY: He quite admitted that some pipes had to be carried from one chamber to another, and that small openings had to be made in the dividing walls for the purpose of carrying the pipes through.

Mr. COYNE: That is only a trifle.

The HOME SECRETARY: He was not aware of the circumstance mentioned by the hon. member, and from what he saw last Monday he confessed that there was no sign in the new buildings of anything of the kind having been done.

Mr. NEVITT: In previous years he had mentioned the necessity of appointing a lay superintendent, who might do a great portion of the work now done by the medical superintendent. The medical superintendent was far too expensive an officer to be employed in the ordinary administration of the institution, and a lay superintendent, at £160 or £200 per annum, could relieve him of a great deal of that work. With reference to the matter mentioned by the hon. member for Warrego, he asked two or three questions on it some little time ago. The questions, with the answers, were as follow:—

What was the contract price for building the laundry and kitchen at Dunwich? £3,671.

What date was same taken over from contractor? 24th September, 1909.

When was contract called for machinery and fitting up of same? 19th November, 1909.

In other words, the contract for the machinery was let just about a month before the building was completed. There was nearly £4,000 invested in those buildings, and they had been practically lying dormant for eight or nine months. It was only during the last month

*Mr. Nevitt.]*

or six weeks that anything had been done in the way of fitting up the buildings. There was only a window of about 2 feet 6 inches in width in the laundry, and in order to get the machinery into the building it was necessary to cut a double door opening. Those were some of the matters which might be rectified by a lay superintendent.

Mr. D. HUNTER: The superintendent had nothing to do with that. It's in the Works Department.

Mr. NEVITT: The whole responsibility lay with the Works Department, he supposed; but whoever was responsible for it had committed a very grave mistake, which had cost the department a considerable sum of money. On looking over the salaries paid to the different officers of the institution it struck him that there was no method adopted in fixing salaries. The storekeeper was paid £240 a year, and the dispenser £150. The dispenser was a qualified chemist, and it appeared to him that there was no comparison between the responsibilities of the dispenser in an institution containing 1,200 or 1,300 inmates and the responsibilities of the storekeeper.

The HOME SECRETARY: The chemist has quarters and a ration allowance for himself and his wife.

Mr. NEVITT: He presumed the storekeeper had the same allowances.

The HOME SECRETARY: The storekeeper is to a great extent the manager of the institution. He has the whole management of accounts and supplies, and everything else.

Mr. NEVITT: He took it that the storekeeper had to receive and disburse supplies.

The HOME SECRETARY: Quite so.

Mr. NEVITT: There was nothing near the responsibility resting on the storekeeper that rested on the chemist, who had to attend to the sick and afflicted when the superintendent was absent. Another matter he wished to mention was the arrangements made for the reception of patients coming to Dunwich from places outside the metropolis. At present when patients arrived they were sent to the Salvation Army Metropole, which was not a fit and proper place for them. A short time ago a patient came from Croydon, and didn't know where to go. He (Mr. Nevitt) happened to be at the wharf when the steamer came in, and he immediately went to the Home Office about the case. A messenger there made arrangements for the man to go to the Salvation Army Metropole. Two days afterwards he saw the man, who said to him, "If I am not removed from this place in twenty-four hours I will chuck myself into the river." He (Mr. Nevitt) went to the Home Department, and was pleased to say that the man was removed the same day to Dunwich; but what he wished to impress upon the Minister was that some better arrangements should be made for patients coming from the Northern districts, and that they should be sent to some more suitable place, such as the Immigration Depot, which was used for that purpose in the old days, while waiting to be taken to Dunwich.

Mr. MAY: On several previous occasions reference had been made to the desirability of allowing married couples at Dunwich to live together. He thought a separate ward should be erected for married people, so that men and women who had lived together all their lives should not be separated when they entered that institution. He would not occupy further time.

[Mr. Nevitt.

Mr. MURPHY (*Croydon*) desired to bring under notice the fact that complaints were made from time to time concern-

[4 p.m.] ing the food supplied to the inmates. He believed the matter had only to be brought before the Home Secretary to induce him to make inquiries and see if there was anything in the complaints. He thought that fruit might be supplied to the inmates during the season—it would not cost the department much. On one occasion he visited Dunwich and found from actual experience that the tobacco supplied was of a wretched quality. That was a matter that might be looked into also. Perhaps those who supplied the tobacco did not supply according to sample. He did not suppose the department could afford to supply the best tobacco, but there was no reason why they should not supply tobacco of good quality. He wished to know how the State stood in regard to the old-age pensions of those who went to Dunwich. He supposed the department deducted the cost of their keep.

The HOME SECRETARY: We do not get it—it is stopped.

Mr. MURPHY: It should not be stopped. The Commonwealth had decreed that every old man and every old woman was entitled to 10s. a week; and if it became necessary for them to go to Dunwich, there was no reason why their pensions should cease. He thought it cost about 5s. a week to keep an inmate in Dunwich; and the State would be justified in deducting that amount from the 10s., and giving the old people the balance. He felt sure it was only necessary to bring the matter under the notice of the Federal Labour Government to have it remedied at once. He had to thank the Home Secretary and the officials of the department for many courtesies extended to people in his district.

The HOME SECRETARY: It might be well in connection with the food supply to give the scale of rations. Males received a daily allowance of 16 ounces bread and 12 ounces meat. He might say the department were endeavouring to get the best meat. There was a considerable amount of difficulty owing to the fact that it had to be received in Brisbane, and carried by steamer to the institution. That applied more particularly to the summer months. As far as possible he endeavoured to make a personal inspection of all the institutions in his department; but, owing to the amount of work to be got through, he was not able to make those inspections as frequently as he would like. He noticed last Monday, when making an inspection of this institution, that the meat, though hanging under an awning in the air, there was a risk of it being fly-blown, and he gave instructions for a proper structure to be fixed up under the awning with perforated zinc or wire-netting. Furthermore, to secure a supply of fresh meat during the summer months, he made arrangements for a regular supply of sheep to be taken to Dunwich, where they would be slaughtered as required. (Hear, hear!) It was intended that a refrigerator should be supplied in connection with the new kitchen and laundry, and that would be of service in keeping the meat in good condition. To continue the ration scale: They received 2 ounces of maize meal or oatmeal,  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounce of tea,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  ounce of sugar. Last Monday some of the inmates desired to be supplied with a little extra amount of sugar, so that they could put sugar on their porridge, and he gave the necessary instructions. They received 1 ounce treacle, 16 ounces

vegetables, 1 ounce butter. The department endeavoured to keep the institution supplied with fresh vegetables; and cabbages, carrots, and swede turnips were supplied when obtainable.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Why not grow them down there?

The HOME SECRETARY: The attempt had been made, but it had failed. A certain amount of the supply came from St. Helena. The females received daily 14 ounces bread, 10 ounces meat, 1½ ounces oatmeal or maize-meal, ½ ounce tea, 1½ ounces sugar, 1 ounce treacle, 1½ ounces vegetables, 1 ounce butter. Some of the old ladies brought under his notice that they would like a jam ration, and he gave instructions that it should be supplied. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. MURPHY: Could not fruit be sent there?

The HOME SECRETARY: A certain amount of fruit was sent. Two ounces of tobacco was supplied weekly to the male inmates; and if he found, on trying a sample which he had obtained, that the quality was not good enough, he would see that a better quality was supplied.

Mr. ALLEN: What is the tea like?

The HOME SECRETARY: An improved quality was now being supplied. One ounce of tobacco was supplied weekly to the female inmates who were smokers; and each smoker received a box of matches per week. Fresh milk was given according to supply, preference being given to invalids, and condensed milk was supplied to all inmates who did not get fresh milk. Suitable extras were given by the medical superintendent when necessary on account of ill-health. He had inspected the food when it was put on the table, and no objection could be made to the way in which it was cooked and served. And with the completion of the new kitchen, there was no doubt that even the preparation of the food would be improved. The department did all that could be done to cater for the comfort of the people in Dunwich—many of them old pioneers who found themselves in that institution through no fault of their own. He would be pleased to have the company of members on both sides when making an inspection of the institution.

Mr. COYNE: Has the medical superintendent reported as to the quality of the meat?

The HOME SECRETARY: There had been complaints. Out of about 150 pounds of corned meat there might be 10 or 12 pounds which was not up to the required quality. But they had full power to reject any meat that they did not consider up to the proper quality, and the contractor must supply in its place meat up to the contract. He proposed to make the next tenders still more stringent as to the quality of the meat to be supplied. It was unfortunate, perhaps, that it was not possible to obtain a supply on the island itself.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: They used to.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes; but the contractor was not able to carry on. The herbage and pasturage there was not sufficiently good to provide a well-fatted beast for killing purposes. He could give the assurance that it was the intention of the Government to see, as far as they possibly could, that everything was of the very best quality in connection with the rations supplied to the inmates of the institution.

Mr. D. HUNTER (*Woolloongabba*): They must all be satisfied that the present Minister

was trying to do as much as he could for our aged poor. He thought that no previous Minister had tried to administer the institution more sympathetically than he was doing. He was very glad the Minister had found some way of putting the young girls down there under better control, but he would also like to remind him that the nurse, who was getting £60 a year, had sometimes a very hard task in front of her. Sometimes she had to fight with some of these girls. The fact that they were putting up a room for their detention showed that they were putting them under control. He hoped that when the Government were thinking of the wages next year they would not forget that this nurse had sometimes to act the part of a female warder in a prison. What he wanted to call attention to particularly was that we had put up a very elaborate laundry for the department, and they would be able now to supply hot-water baths for the men; but the laundry was so far removed from the women's quarters that there was no hot water supply for them from the laundry. The only way it could be got was from the kitchen, but there was not too much water there. In the Diamantina Orphanage they had a good system—he was not advertising any kind of heater, but they had a heater called “the ideal heater.” It cost £180, and it supplied eleven baths, four sinks, and nine wash-basins, at a cost of 2s. for twenty-four hours; and they had hot water at any hour of the day and night. Could not something be done to establish such a system as that in the women's quarters in Dunwich, so that it would relieve the nurse of a good deal of work, and contribute to the comfort of the women? The institution at Dunwich was a credit to the department. He had had the opportunity recently of taking some visitors down from the Southern States, and they had gone away loud in their praises of the establishment, both as regards the site and the way in which it was administered. It might be true, as the hon. member for Carpentaria had said, that it would be much better if we had a lay superintendent. He thought it would be, because Dr. Row had far too much work to do in looking after the health of the patients and those in the inebriate home and the lazaret. He was doing an immense amount of work in the lazaret, and trying to find out a cure for that horrible disease, and his attention was distracted from that by the duties of superintendence of the institution. He hoped the Minister would seriously consider the matter of appointing a lay superintendent, so as to relieve Dr. Row. The hon. member for Croydon had suggested that we should ask the Federal Government to pay the old-age pension to the inmates.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Everyone who is sick is allowed it.

Mr. D. HUNTER: If they were invalids they would naturally come under the Act.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: You are anticipating that.

Mr. D. HUNTER: No; he was taking Mr. Fisher at his word. Mr. Fisher, in his Budget Speech, said it was to be paid in advance on the 15th December. If that was to be done, they ought to go a little further, and, if we supplied these old people with a home at Dunwich, give them the money, and let us collect the 6s. 8½d. per head which it cost, and leave the balance of 3s. 3½d. for themselves.

Mr. MULLAN (*Charters Towers*): When the Estimates were before the House last year he

*Mr. Mullan.]*

had ventilated the matter which the hon. member had referred to—that the Home Department should negotiate with the Federal Government with a view to obtain pensions for the inmates of Dunwich who were entitled to them, and then deduct the cost of their keep, and give them the balance. He was quite sure the Federal Government would not have the slightest objection to grant it. The balance would come in handy to provide inmates with nourishments which they could not obtain under the present system. There was another matter to which he had repeatedly drawn the attention of the Home Secretary, and that was the inadequate amount paid in indigence allowance. Five shillings a week was a most unreasonable amount to expect any old man or woman to live upon. The Commonwealth Parliament considered 10s. a week the minimum upon which a man could live, and it was just as difficult for those who received the indigence allowance as for those who received the old-age pension. Last year the allowance paid in lieu of entering Dunwich was £12,500, and this year it was £11,500. The Government made a saving of £1,000 on that vote, and there would be a greater relief when the invalid pension came in at the end of the year; so, in view of the big reduction which would take place in that direction, the Government might give a substantial increase in the indigence allowance. If they did not, the State was bound to lose, for the reason that these people would be forced to go into Dunwich where it would cost 7s. a week to keep them. If it cost 7s. a week to keep them where they had the advantage of the capital invested in buildings and other things, if we added the cost of the buildings it would be fully 10s. per week; and yet we only paid 5s. a week to these old people outside. The cost of living had gone up 15 or 20 per cent. during the last two years, and yet we were still only paying the sum of 5s. a week. Even if it was sufficient for Brisbane, it was entirely inadequate in the North, where the cost of living was 20 per cent. higher than it was down here. He did not believe in discriminating between different parts of the State, but, seeing that we discriminated in respect of the salaries of Government officials, and allowed a living allowance of £10 extra in North Queensland, he did not understand why we did not give some consideration to the recipients of the indigence allowance in North Queensland. He was not so keen on that matter as about seeing an all-round increase. In view of the great increase in the cost of living, and the fact that it cost more to keep these people in charitable institutions, and the additional fact that the Government had been very much relieved from the expenses in this connection, on account of the old-age pension, and the relief which would come from invalid pensions—

The HOME SECRETARY: Very little.

Mr. MULLAN: There was £1,000 this year and there would be more next year. The Minister should take this matter into consideration. He realised that he was doing all he could for the old people in Dunwich, and he believed he would be able to see his way clear to give some further assistance to the recipients of indigence allowance, as 5s. a week was quite inadequate to keep them. Many of them were invalids who ought to be receiving special nourishment, but he was at a loss to understand how they could get nourishments out of this 5s. a week. He hoped the Minister would promise that he would at least inquire into the matter.

[Mr. Mullan.

Mr. FORSYTH (*Moreton*) thought every member would own that the Home Secretary and the Government were very sympathetic in connection with this institution.

Mr. LESINA: "Sympathy without relief is like mustard without beef."

Mr. FORSYTH: Taking it all round, the institution was well handled, and the Government had been very sympathetic with regard to any complaints that had been made. There was one thing he was very much disappointed in. He certainly thought when the old-age pensions were paid, that the amount of money the Government would have to pay in connection with carrying on the Dunwich Asylum would show an enormous decrease, but as a matter of fact the decrease was very small indeed.

[4.30 p.m.] They were told that the vote was reduced by £1,000, but if any hon. members looked at the Auditor-General's report they would see that £33,000 was spent on that institution last year, while the amount appropriated was £31,706, so that really the Government spent nearly £2,000 more than was appropriated—instead of the amount being reduced, it had increased. There was certainly a few people less in that institution now than there was a few years ago, but that was not so much due to the old-age pensions as to the fact that times were better. The actual cost of living at the present time, as regards food, was just about the same as some years ago, although no doubt house rent had increased. With regard to the indigence allowance, he felt somewhat inclined to go on the same lines as the hon. member for Charters Towers. At the same time, the Government had to be very careful in the matter. If there was to be an invalid pension, that would have to be done, because there could be no restriction with regard to age or any of the conditions which prevailed in regard to the old-age pensions. He understood the invalid pension would be given on the merits of the case, no matter what the age might be.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is so.

Mr. FORSYTH: That was the right thing to do. He knew of a case a short time ago where a man died, and his widow, who was very delicate, was left practically with nothing; but she struggled on, and tried to get a living by taking a little shop, but she could not do very much, and she got an allowance. Some people depended on the State altogether for a living, but others could do a little for themselves, and with the assistance they received from the Government they were able to struggle along.

Mr. NEVITT: We believe in a pension to widows and orphans of that kind.

Mr. FORSYTH: Of course, an invalid pension would apply. He hoped the discussion that had taken place with regard to the people in Dunwich who possessed all the qualifications with regard to getting the old-age pension would lead to the pension being paid. The people in Dunwich were just as much entitled to receive the pension as those outside Dunwich, and it would be a good thing, and a just thing, for the Federal Government to give the people there the 10s., and if they stayed in Dunwich give them the difference between the cost of their keep and the 10s., and let them do as they liked with it. He hoped hon. members opposite would write to their friends in the Federal Parliament, and try and assist the Government here

in getting that allowance. He understood the Home Secretary had approached the Federal Government.

THE HOME SECRETARY: Only in an informal way.

Mr. FORSYTH: So far no reply had been received, but he hoped when a reply did come to hand it would be a favourable one. If they could save £6,000 or £8,000 a year because the Federal Government allowed that pension to the people who were entitled to it, then the Government could assist people getting the indigence allowance a little more than was done now, because they would have a little more money with which to do it; and he, for one, would be only too glad to support anything of that kind. Some years ago, when the same question cropped up, the idea was to raise the allowance to 7s., and if the question came before the House again, he would give it his hearty support, because he knew that in many cases the 5s. a week was not enough. Taking it all round, he thought the Government were to be congratulated on the way they managed the Dunwich Benevolent Asylum.

Mr. McLACHLAN (*Fortitude Valley*) would like to express his appreciation of the humanitarian way in which the Home Secretary was endeavouring to administer this department. He understood that the hon. gentleman was doing his best to accede to any request brought to his notice in connection with the inmates of Dunwich, and that he was endeavouring to satisfy their wants, and he understood it was the intention of the Home Secretary to still further assist in giving greater comforts to the inmates of that institution. Some people, owing to circumstances over which they had no control, were compelled to go into an institution of that kind, and whatever kindness could be extended to them should be given. At different times in the House reference had been made to the desirability of increasing the amount of 5s. a week given to those people who received the indigence allowance, and it was put down on the Estimates as "Allowances in lieu of entering Dunwich," and the total amount was £11,500. It was admitted to be an allowance in lieu of persons entering Dunwich, and if persons elected to stay out of Dunwich, and could show reasons why they should get assistance from the Government, the Government were prepared to give them an allowance of 5s. a week, while it cost the Government 7s. a week to keep them in Dunwich. He knew several people who were receiving the indigence allowance, and the Home Secretary and every member of the House would readily admit that no member of the community would elect to take an indigence allowance of 5s. a week from the Government if they could do without it, so that the persons who applied for that indigence allowance were really in need of assistance. He knew a number of cases where the old people had to pay 8s. a week for a room, and how they managed to subsist on the other 2s. a week he did not know. They might get assistance from benevolent institutions or monetary assistance from friends, but that was actually the position. The Government should recognise that they had a duty to perform towards those people, and they should pay them the amount it would cost the Government if they went to Dunwich, if not a little more. He hoped the Home Secretary, as a result of the discussion, would see his way clear to make an alteration in regard to the amount. Re-

ference had been made to the fact that the old-age pension ceased immediately a person went to Dunwich. A case came under his notice that day of an old gentleman who had been receiving the old-age pension for some time, but he was getting too old to live alone, and he had gone to Dunwich. He went to Dunwich on Wednesday last, and his pension fell due on Thursday, and as a matter of fact the fortnight's pension which was almost due could not be paid to him under clause 45 of the Old-age Pensions Act, which provided that if a pensioner went to a benevolent institution or hospital his pension was immediately suspended, and under the interpretation of the clause by the Federal authorities, no part of the fortnight's pension could be paid. In the case referred to, if that man had gone to Dunwich on the Friday, he would have got his pension, but simply because he went on the Wednesday, he could not get his pension for the whole fortnight. It mattered not whether a man was in Dunwich or not, if he was entitled to the pension the fact of his going to Dunwich should not prevent the pension continuing. While the State was keeping him at Dunwich, the actual cost of keeping that individual should be deducted from his pension and the balance paid over to him. If the Home Secretary would get into communication with the authorities in Melbourne in connection with that matter and point out the injustice being done to those persons, he had no doubt the matter would be rectified. He trusted as a result of the discussion an increase would be given in the indigence allowance to those persons who were forced by circumstances to have recourse to the Government for assistance.

Mr. MAY would like to know if the Minister could give the Committee any information as to whether it was proposed to adopt the suggestion made by several members, that separate quarters should be provided for married couples?

Mr. NEVITT wished to remind the Minister that he had not replied to his question as to the cause of the delay in installing machinery in the new laundry and kitchen. The contract for the erection of the buildings was completed on the 24th December, 1909; the contract for water-tube boilers was let on the 19th November, 1909, that for the washing machines on 15th December, 1909, and that for the cooking plant on the 14th February, 1910—two months after the building had been taken over from the contractor.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: There were one or two small matters in connection with the institution to which he should like to refer. Several persons had been in receipt of indigence allowance from the department and it was stipulated that the allowance should be for six months only, but the recipients thought that it was to be continued. It would be as well for the department to let people who received the allowance understand distinctly that it would be paid for six months only. With regard to the suggestion of the hon. member for Flinders respecting the establishment of separate quarters for married couples, he thought it should be acted upon. There were countries in which separate provision was made for married couples, notably in Belgium, where men and women who could not live by themselves without some supervision were provided with suitable cottages, under the control of the local authorities. The Government of Queensland might very well

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adopt that humane principle. It was very hard on people who had lived all their lives in the Northern part of the State, where climatic conditions were very different from those which prevailed in the South to have to come to Brisbane in order to obtain the benefit of such an institution as that of Dunwich. He thought the Government should establish a similar institution in the North, so that people who were in straitened circumstances could become inmates of the institution without leaving their friends for ever, as they had to do now when they come to Brisbane. With regard to the indigence allowance, he thought it should be increased, at any rate up to the sum which it cost to keep an inmate in Dunwich. He knew persons who would not accept the indigence allowance under any circumstances simply because of the name "indigence," and they preferred to undergo hardship because of their sentimental idea regarding the name. This sentiment was to be found in every country in the world. Men and women in the old country had lived in great poverty simply because of their great dislike to go into a workhouse or accept pauper relief. So, in this country, men and women thought their manhood and womanhood was disgraced by accepting an indigence allowance, though they would not hesitate to accept an old-age pension, and rightly so, because it was given to them as a right. He thought the indigence allowance should be increased to 7s. per week—(Hear, hear!)—anyway, that it should be increased to whatever it cost the Government to keep an inmate in Dunwich.

Mr. LESINA was glad we had passed the day when it was considered necessary to save public money by cutting down supplies to Dunwich. At one time it was a customary thing with Governments adopting a cheese-paring policy to cut down the expenditure on institutions like Dunwich if they could save a  $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 1d., or 2d. per head on this charitable vote. Hon. members had practically to immolate one Home Secretary in the House and crucify him in the country for his cold-blooded administration of this instance—for his pinching the bread and meat of the wretched dervic in Dunwich. And, thank God, they did crucify him, and they drove him out of public life. Now they had a more generous administrator and a more generous and warm-hearted Treasurer than the gentleman who previously occupied that position, and who hailed from the north of the Tweed where men are remarkable for the death-like grip they keep on the dollars. The present Home Secretary could therefore get more money for the institution than when the Premier was Treasurer, and it was now more liberally provided for. Still, there was room for further improvements. He had not time to enumerate those improvements, but if the Minister was a reader of the daily Press he would know that many complaints had been made with respect to the internal administration. Dr. Row was doing his best to bring about reform in the institution, and perhaps the old people complained about matters which ordinary men and women in middle life would not dream of touching upon. With respect to the indigence allowance, the hon. member for Kennedy had struck a note which would find a responsive chord in the hearts of people outside, and that was that the allowance was really a pauper dole. There was provision in another part of the Estimates for the burial of paupers; but, no doubt, the present Government, being a humanitarian

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and up-to-date Government, would knock out the objectionable term pauper. The indigence allowance was, as he had said, a pauper dole, and the fact that the amount had been retained at its present low figure should be a lesson to members on that side of the Chamber that a great deal of good could not be done by passing resolutions on Thursday afternoon. On one occasion the House passed a resolution, in the teeth of opposition from the present Premier, declaring that regulation 18 in connection with the Railway Department should be abolished, but it had not been abolished yet. On another occasion the House carried a resolution, on the motion of the late member for Kennedy, Mr. Jackson, urging the Government to increase the indigence allowance from 5s. to 7s. per week. At that time—that was seven years ago—the Premier said the condition of the finances would not permit the proposed increase. Would the condition of the finances not permit it now, when they could give an Under Secretary an increase of £100 a year? The Government could save £100 a year for an increase to an Under Secretary, but they could not spare another 2s. per week to the unfortunate men and women in Dunwich. They could spend thousands of pounds in making and rolling side walks and tennis courts for Governor MacGregor, but they could not provide an additional 2s. per week for the old pioneers who had made this country fit for people like the Premier to live in.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Can't the Government erect a monument to the old pioneers?

Mr. LESINA: Yes; let the Government erect a statue of liberty, freedom, and prosperity to the memory of the old pioneers; let them put up a pauper dole of 5s. on the top of the statue, and let the Premier have his name inscribed on the monument as the perpetuator of the system of allowing an indigence payment of 5s. per week to the old men and women of this State. Why was not better provision made for those old people? The fact of the matter was that the men and women in Dunwich had no vote—their good opinion was not worth cultivating.

The PREMIER: It is evident that they have a great many friends outside who have votes.

Mr. LESINA: If they had had votes, most members on the Government side would have demanded that they should get an increased allowance, and members of the Opposition would have had no chance of putting in a word edgeways.

Mr. D. HUNTER: Is that why you advocate it?

Mr. LESINA: No; they never had any vote to give him. He advocated it because some day he might be an inmate of Dunwich himself—a very excellent reason. There were men there who were a great deal better than he was, and just as good as any member of the House. There were also very good women in Dunwich. There were many people in the State who, because of that independence to which Burns referred, and which Providence had implanted in their breasts, declined to accept this pauper dole of an indigence allowance. People called it a pauper dole, but, characterise it by any name they wished, 5s. was all the Government could spare for old men and women who had spent the best years of their lives serving the country. A man might not be qualified under the Old-age Pension Act to get 10s. a week, and he had therefore to be content with five "bob" a week indigence allow-

ance. Another aspect of this question was deserving of some consideration. Men who went from the North, or from the dry districts of the West and Centre of the State, were brought down to Dunwich where there was a moist climate, and where they developed chest complaints. Why should they be taken away to a place where the conditions were entirely different from those to which they had been accustomed all their lives? Surely to heaven the Government were not going to kill old men to save the cost of their support! When they would not

[5 p.m.] establish places in Central and Northern Queensland, but sent those old people to the coast, they made it possible for them to contract pneumonia and other chest complaints to which they became victims. He hoped provision would be made in the Central district and the North, so that the old people who had "borne the heat and burden of the day" might share in a little of the prosperity that had come to Queensland. The land might be flowing with milk and honey, but none of the good things came to the poor people getting only 5s. a week. Mr. Foxton was a very humane administrator; so was Sir Horace Tozer; and he thought the present Government should endeavour to earn a reputation for humane administration. He trusted that they would increase the allowance from 5s. to 10s. a week.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN indicated that the hon. member's time had expired.

Mr. FOLEY (*Townsville*) wished to bring under the notice of the Minister the case of an old man in North Queensland, who formerly was in receipt of the indigence allowance. He made application for the Commonwealth old-age pension, but was refused because he was the son of a full-blooded South African negro and half-caste mother born in Capetown; and immediately afterwards his indigence allowance was knocked off. He wished to know whether the Act providing for indigence allowance warranted the department in taking away the allowance because the man happened to be a South African aboriginal.

The HOME SECRETARY: If the hon. gentleman will give me the particulars of the case I will make full inquiries.

Mr. FOLEY: He noticed, on looking at the report of the Medical Superintendent, that there were in the institution fourteen natives of North America, sixteen from China, three from the South Sea Islands, one from Japan, one from New Caledonia, one from Batavia, and one from the Philippine Islands. The name of the man to whom he referred was Jephtha America. He was seventy-six years of age, and had been in Australia fifty-six years. Without trying to draw the long bow, he might say that he was one of the most respectable old men he had met. Though a black man, he was well educated, and most respectable in appearance. It might be said that he should go to Dunwich, but he was one who would think himself too respectable to go to that institution—he would rather be allowed to remain outside, and live on a small allowance from the Government, and what he could get by doing a little work. It was one of the hardest cases he had known, and he hoped that the pension would be allowed, or that the indigence allowance would be restored. He knew many cases where people were put to the greatest straits to live on the indigence

allowance of 5s. a week, and it was only with the assistance they received from other people that they were able to live at all. He trusted that the Minister would see his way to bring the amount up to 7s. a week at least.

Mr. MANN thought the Premier, instead of leaving the Chamber, would have got up and defended a one-time friend from the attack that had been made upon him. Though the present Minister had been a good administrator, he had never been stinted in regard to money as Mr. Airey was. Mr. Airey was a man who tried to do his duty by his colleagues and by the country; and though they had since quarrelled, in common justice the Premier should have defended him from the attack made on him by the hon. member for Clermont.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I allowed the hon. member to make a reply to the hon. member for Clermont's reference to Mr. Airey. That hon. member did not make the matter the subject of his speech; and I cannot allow the hon. member for Cairns to devote the whole of his speech to the matter.

Mr. MANN: He would allow no member to traduce any of his friends without defending them. As far as he could see, the scale of rations at Dunwich was no better now than before, with the exception of the 1 oz. of butter, which he thought might be made 2 oz. He agreed with members who spoke in favour of increasing the indigence allowance, which should be raised, if possible, to 7s. 6d. a week.

Mr. ALLEN: Ten shillings.

Mr. MANN: If they did that, they might not be able to keep it at that amount, but they should at least give 7s. 6d. a week.

Mr. D. HUNTER: As much as it costs to keep them in Dunwich.

Mr. MANN: Yes; as much as it costs to keep them in Dunwich. Something should be done to brighten the lives of those unfortunate people; and he trusted that the Minister would go into the matter with his colleagues, and see what could be done.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER thought the Minister should comply with the request to give the same amount to those people as it would cost the Government to keep them if they were in Dunwich. Perhaps the best thing would be to wait on the Minister and have the matter definitely settled. If the Minister had given a promise to raise the allowance to the amount suggested, the discussion on the vote would have been over in fifteen minutes.

Mr. D. HUNTER wished to call the attention of hon. members on the other side to the Federal Old-age Pensions Act. Now that both sides had agreed that it should be paid to these people at Dunwich, they should ask their friends in the Federal Parliament to amend the Act as soon as possible, so that it could be done.

Mr. ALLEN: Why didn't you ask them?

Mr. D. HUNTER: Hon. members on the other side had more power over the Federal Parliament. This was what the Federal Act said on the matter—

If a successful claimant of a pension is an inmate of a benevolent asylum or other charitable institution, the pension shall become payable as from a date not more than twenty-eight days prior to the pensioner being discharged from or leaving

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the asylum or institution, but no payment on account of pension shall be made to him so long as he is an inmate of the asylum or institution.

He did not mean to get at his friends on the other side; he believed it ought to be done, and they had more power over the Federal Parliament than this side.

Mr. ALLEN: It is a pity that you did not try that twelve months ago.

Mr. D. HUNTER: They were not able to do it with their friends, but members on the opposite side might be able to do it. Mr. Fisher was asked a question in the Federal Parliament as follows—

PAYMENT TO HOSPITALS.

Mr. CHANTER asked the Prime Minister, upon notice—

1. Is it a fact, as stated in the Press, that when old-age pensioners are received into the benevolent asylum the authorities receive from the Government 8s. per week in respect of each pensioner so received?

2. Is it also correct that when pensioners are received into the Salvation Army homes they receive the full amount of 10s. per week?

3. If so, will he for the future make similar payments to the various district hospitals who receive and care for these aged and infirm pensioners?

Mr. FISHER: The answers to the hon. member's question are—

1. Payment is made to benevolent asylums only when a claimant has been admitted to an asylum under section 31 (2) of the Invalid and Old-age Pensions Act.

2 and 3. Salvation Army homes are not benevolent asylums under the Act. Pensioners who enter them are accordingly not deprived of their pensions. No payment is made to the homes.

Subsection (2) of section 31 of the Act read as follows:—

If it appears to the magistrate that the claimant, although otherwise qualified for, is unfit to be intrusted with, a pension, he may recommend that the claimant, instead of being granted a pension, be sent to a benevolent asylum or charitable institution; and the registrar shall at once notify the deputy commissioner, who may thereupon cause steps to be taken for the admission of the claimant into a benevolent asylum or any prescribed public or private charitable institution.

He had mentioned this because the people in Dunwich were suffering an injustice, and they should all unite to bring about an improvement.

Mr. COYNE was very glad to know that the hon. member for Woollongabba acknowledged that the Federal Government as at present constituted was a humanitarian Government. The last Government was not, or they would have done what the hon. gentleman referred to. The party on this side had no doubt at all as to what the Federal Government would do in this matter—they would deal fairly and justly with these old people, and they were going to give actual effect to their proposition on the 15th December. The Federal Labour party were similar to the members of the Labour party in this House: they would not allow themselves to be dictated to by any section of the community outside themselves, and for that reason it would be impertinence for this party to say what they should do. They would be simply acknowledging their ignorance if they tried to use any pressure or force.

Mr. D. HUNTER: You surely could suggest.

Mr. COYNE: As a result of the suggestion that they had made in the past, the invalid pension would be granted from 15th

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December next. It was an ingenious move on the part of the hon. member for Woollongabba to get the Opposition to make a suggestion, which, if not carried out, would be something on which to found a charge against the Federal Labour party; but he (Mr. Coyne) was not going to take his advice. He was perfectly satisfied that the Federal Government would treat the inmates of Dunwich and other benevolent institutions in a fair and humanitarian manner.

Mr. COLLINS (*Burke*) could not understand why we should not give, in connection with the indigence allowance, the same amount as the Commonwealth old-age pension. If it was wise to give a man 10s. a week when he was sixty-five, surely it was greater wisdom to give it to a person at twenty-five, thirty-five, or fifty-five, who, through no fault of his own, was compelled to look for an indigence allowance. They all had to live. In some cases a man was drawing the pension, while his wife was drawing the indigence allowance, and 5s. was not sufficient. He was not going to advocate that we should pay a person outside the same amount that it cost to support them in Dunwich, because Dunwich was to some extent a socialistic institution, and from a collective or socialistic standpoint it did not cost so much per head to keep a number of people as when they were kept on individual lines. The argument ought to be that we should increase the allowance to the people who wished to stay outside Dunwich. It was very likely that, under the industrial conditions of Queensland to-day, where men were considered old when they were fifty, the indigence allowance, instead of decreasing, would increase. The amount should not be less than was given to the old people by the Commonwealth at the present time.

Mr. LENNON (*Herbert*) heartily concurred with the admissions made by members on this side with regard to the sympathetic administration of this institution by the Home Secretary. He did not join with the hon. member for Clermont in the eulogies he had indulged in, but he would enter his protest against the supineness and indifference of the Government in failing to provide the machinery necessary in the costly buildings erected at Dunwich, and which had remained about ten months without anything having been done in the matter. He also protested that the Government had evaded obligations previously made to establish a branch of the institution in North Queensland. They had been approached by deputation after deputation, to his own knowledge, and asked to establish an institution in Townsville. There was a quarantine depot there which would have met the purpose admirably, but that building had been lying idle for ten years or more, and was being ruined by white ants and in other ways. He endorsed the suggestion of the hon. member for Carpentaria that a lay superintendent of Dunwich should be appointed. He did not see why some of the inmates might not be employed in cultivating vegetables, and if that could be done there, it might be done at St. Helena. Sometimes these things were very dear, and there would be a considerable saving in that regard and a better article provided.

Hon. R. PHILP: You could not very well send Dunwich people to St. Helena.

Mr. LENNON: No; but you could send vegetables grown at St. Helena to Dunwich, and in that way do away almost entirely with the necessity of purchasing vegetables in Brisbane. He considered, with other hon. members on that side, that the indigence allowance should be increased; and, seeing the Government was economising to the extent of £1,000 by the reduction of the allowance made to old people in lieu of entering Dunwich, and a reduction of £300 in connection with medical comforts; in view also of the fact that the cost of living had increased, and considering the prosperity which we had enjoyed for the last five years, it was a mean thing on the part of the Government to resist the advice of members which had been tendered over and over again from that side to increase the allowance. He endorsed the remarks of the hon. member for Charters Towers, that the difference between the old-age pension and the cost of maintenance in Dunwich should be handed to the inmates. With regard to the question of increases, he saw that the dispenser got a lower salary than the store-keeper, and he thought it was inadequate remuneration. As a protest of that party against the indifference of the Government to the Northern parts of the State, in failing to establish a Northern branch of the institution, as promised to deputations, and for reasons set forth by various members, particularly in regard to the failure to provide machinery in the kitchen which had been erected and the miserable pittance of 5s. as indigence allowance compared with the old-age pension of 10s., he proposed that this vote be reduced by £1.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is £1 too much.

Mr. LENNON: He did not care whether hon. gentlemen opposite approved of his method or not; it was the method of protest he was adopting, as he told the House a few weeks ago. He had abstained from speaking so that he might come in last, not with the view of prolonging the discussion, as he moved it with the hope that it would be put to the vote without any further discussion.

The HOME SECRETARY: In reply to the inquiry of the hon. member for Carpentaria, in connection with the erection of machinery in the new kitchen and laundry, it had been the policy of the present Administration to have all work which was required manufactured, if possible, in the State, and they endeavoured to ascertain in the first instance whether it was possible to have the whole or a portion of this plant manufactured in the State. As a matter of fact, it was found impossible to have more than the steam cooking plant manufactured here, and one of the engineering firms in the metropolis put in a tender for the manufacture of the plant locally. That was the first occasion upon which such an attempt had been [5.30 p.m.] made, and consequently there was a lack of necessary skilled labour in connection with its manufacture, and certain delays had arisen. As hon. members knew, there had been a strike in the ironworkers' trade, and that had somewhat delayed the completion of the contract. However, he could give the Committee the assurance that it was anticipated that the whole of the plant would be completed within a week or two. So far as the boilers were concerned, it was decided to

procure Babcock boilers and they had to be imported from Great Britain. They were now all in place and in order, and the delay was caused principally by the steam cooking plant, which was manufactured locally. That, of course, might be a reason for condemnation on the part of hon. members on the other side.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: All moonshine.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: That's all nonsense.

The HOME SECRETARY: The Government were quite prepared to accept the responsibility. The hon. member for Maranoa said, "That is all nonsense." Then why did hon. members opposite condemn the Government for carrying out that policy because it happened to cause a little delay in connection with the completion of the work at that new kitchen and steam laundry?

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: The excuse is nonsense.

The HOME SECRETARY: The excuse was not nonsense—the excuse was the facts. The Department of Works was endeavouring to have the contract completed as soon as possible. He was simply giving hon. members the bare facts of the case. However, he was very pleased to say that, so far as the local work was concerned, it was of excellent quality, and would be for the benefit of the inmates of that institution; and a commencement having been made in that kind of work, he had not the least doubt that many other plants would be so manufactured, which undoubtedly would be for the benefit of those engaged in the iron industry and workers generally in the State. So far as the other matters were concerned, every consideration would be given to the representations which had fallen from hon. members in connection with the indigence allowance when the next Estimates were being framed.

Mr. NEVITT: The excuse given by the Home Secretary was certainly a very lame one, and it was not altogether a true one.

The HOME SECRETARY: Does the hon. member accuse me of telling an untruth?

Mr. NEVITT: Not altogether. The excuse was not altogether a correct excuse.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is the actual facts, as furnished to me by the Works Department.

Mr. NEVITT: It was very nearly two years since tenders were first called for the construction of those buildings. You took over from the contractor those buildings on the 24th December last year, and did not call tenders for the cooking plant until the 4th February of the present year.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order, order! Will the hon. member kindly address the Chair?

Mr. NEVITT. He was addressing the Chair.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: The hon. member cannot be addressing the Chair when he looks at the Home Secretary and addresses him as "you."

Mr. NEVITT: The Government might have called for tenders at least twelve months earlier for the cooking plant, so that it would have been ready to be installed on the completion of the buildings. The Home Secretary said the Government took the responsibility of calling for tenders locally for that work.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is so.

*Mr. Nevitt.]*

Mr. NEVITT: He gave the Government every credit for that kind of thing, because members of the Labour party had always advocated that when work could be done locally, it should be done locally, and the excuse given by the Home Secretary did not meet the case at all. As far as the Babcock boilers were concerned, why were tenders not called for those boilers at the same time as tenders were called for the building, so that they would have been ready, and then structural alterations would not have been found necessary? If the machinery had been on the ground, the contractors would have seen the size of the boilers and the doorways would have been made big enough for them to be taken in. The Home Secretary said the strike had something to do with the delay. The strike had only been going on for fourteen weeks, and if tenders had been called sooner the Government would have got the material at a less price. He believed in giving credit where credit was due, and he must say that the dietary scale at Dunwich was a very fair and reasonable dietary scale, although there were one or two items that might be improved upon.

Question—That £30,585 only be granted (*Mr. Lennon's amendment to reduce vote by £1*)—put; and the Committee divided:—

## AYES, 24.

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

Tellers: Mr. Mann and Mr. Theodore.

## NOES, 29.

Mr. Allan	Mr. Hunter, D.
" Appel	" Kidston
" Barnes, W. H.	" Mackintosh
" Booker	" Morgan
" Bouchard	" Paget
" Brennan	" Petrie
" Bridges	" Philp
" Corser	" Rankin
" Cottell	" Stodart
" Cribb	" Swayne
" Denham	" Tolmie
" Fox	" Walker
" Gunn	" White
" Hawthorn	" Wienholt
" Hodge	

Tellers: Mr. Gunn and Mr. White.

## PAIR:

Aye—Mr. Douglas. No—Mr. G. P. Barnes.

Resolved in the negative.

Original question stated.

Mr. LESINA noticed the nurse at Dunwich got £60 a year. So did the boy who cleaned the captain's boots on the "Lucinda" get £60 a year. He wanted to know if the Home Secretary could explain that extraordinary similarity in payment. Was there any sense or sanity in such an arrangement? They could not perform work of equal value to the State, and there was no reason in paying salaries on such a basis. The matron was worth all she got—£120 a year. The nurse got only £60 a year; she must do at least half the work the matron did, though she had not the same responsibility, and was worth at least £2 a week. He did not know the nurse from a crow, but he certainly thought she was entitled to more than £60 per annum, seeing

[*Mr. Nevitt.*

that she had to perform the responsible duty of attending to the sick and dying, and might be called up at midnight for that purpose. If a boy who cleaned the boots of the captain of the "Lucinda" and carried whiskies round to guests on board was worth £60 a year, then a nurse at Dunwich should receive a larger salary than that. There was a necessity in all the departments for the appointment of a body of experts to arrange for the fixing of salaries on some reasonable system.

Question put and passed.

## ELECTORAL REGISTRATION.

The HOME SECRETARY moved—That £3,930 be granted for "Electoral Registration." There was a decrease of £6,270 in this vote. The increase last year was caused by the expense of the general election. There were, however, certain increases in salaries in the amount asked for this year. The Principal Electoral Registrar received an increase of £10, the electoral registrar of Brisbane North an increase of £10, and the electoral registrar of Brisbane South an increase of £10. The amount for railway fares, freights, printing, and stationery was increased by £700. It was found that the amount voted last year was insufficient.

Mr. WINSTANLEY thought some change was necessary in the method in which electoral rolls were compiled, especially in the method of dealing with the names of persons who had moved from one electorate to another. At the last general election seven or eight men at Charters Towers, when they went to record their votes, were told that their names had been struck off the roll by the local registrar because they had made application to have them placed on the roll for another electoral district. Four or five of those men had never been out of town; they had lived there for years, and yet they were deprived of their votes. The registrar told them that he had received instructions from the head office that, as they had applied to have their names put on another roll, he must strike them off the Charters Towers roll. In one instance a man had applied to have his name placed on another roll, but his name was not on the Charters Towers roll, although he lived at Charters Towers. But in the other cases to which he referred the men were enrolled at Charters Towers, and had never left the place. He thought that, under such circumstances, if a man could prove by independent witnesses that he had never been away from the place and that he was the person whose name appeared on the roll, he should be allowed to vote.

\* Mr. BARBER: At the two last general elections two cases similar in character to those mentioned by the hon. member for Charters Towers occurred at Bundaberg. One was that of a man named James Burton, who had been on the Bundaberg roll for some considerable time, and who was on the roll at the time of the election. Another man of the same name living at Mackay had made application to have his name placed on the Mackay roll, and, when he was asked what roll he was on previously, said he believed he was on the Bundaberg roll. The result was that his name was put on the Mackay roll, and a red line was drawn through the name of James Burton on the Bundaberg roll. When James Burton, of Bundaberg, appeared at the polling-booth to record his vote he was told that he could not vote. He had witnesses to prove that he had never been away from the town, but still he was not allowed to vote.

The PREMIER: Was his name struck off the Bundaberg roll?

Mr. BARBER: No; but, owing to the fact that the other James Burton had applied to have his name placed on the Mackay roll, a red line was drawn through the name of the man who was really entitled to the vote.

The PREMIER: Was his name on the roll?

Mr. BARBER: Yes. The Bundaberg registrar having been notified from Mackay that a man named James Burton had applied to have his name entered on the Mackay roll, the registrar, in accordance with the regulations, ran a red line through the name on the Bundaberg roll. He thought that, when a man could prove that he had never left the town, he should be allowed to vote, notwithstanding that a mistake had occurred in running a red line through the name.

The PREMIER: Certainly, if his name was on the roll.

Mr. BARBER: It was on the roll, but a red line was run through it.

The PREMIER: Nobody can strike a name off the roll except the registration court.

Mr. BARBER: There was another case at the election of 1908 in which there were two persons on the Bundaberg roll named Thomas Johnson. One was a butcher and the other a teamster. The teamster was removed to Caboolture, and got his name on the roll for that electorate, telling the registrar of that district that his name was on the Bundaberg roll. By some mistake a red line was run through the name of Thomas Johnson, butcher, and when that elector went to record his vote he was told that he could not do so. He thought that, where mistakes of that kind were made, men should be allowed to record their votes, provided they could prove their identity.

Mr. PAYNE: At the last general election some men at Longreach who had never left the town were deprived of their votes because a red mark was struck through their names on the electoral roll. Similar cases had occurred at previous elections, and he thought it was very unfair that men should be deprived of their votes through the mistake of someone else.

Mr. THEODORE: It was obvious that cases similar to those mentioned by members who had previously spoken had occurred in almost every electorate in Queensland. He had in his mind the specific case of a man at Irvinebank, named Dan Leahy, who had been in the district for several years and was still residing there, and who at the last election had been prevented from voting because a red line had been struck through his name on the electoral roll. The presiding officer at the polling-booth knew that the man had not been away from the place, but said he could not allow him to vote because he had received definite instructions that any person whose name was marked in the manner mentioned was not entitled to vote. The line was run through these names without any notification being given to the men, who were thus deprived of their votes, and that was not fair. Under the ordinary method of dealing with such matters an elector had ample opportunity of objecting to his name being struck off the roll, but that was not the case in the instance he had referred to. He thought that if the instruction to which

[7 p.m.] he had referred were cancelled it would permit every person on the roll to exercise his vote. Another thing, the process of getting a man's name on the roll

wanted to be made simpler. Too much time was occupied between making an application and being put on the roll.

The HOME SECRETARY: It would be practically impossible under any legislative enactment to prevent cases of the kind referred to happening—cases which were practically caused through fraud on the part of an elector representing himself to be another elector. The difficulty arose from a defect in the law, which required notice that an elector had been struck off one roll to be sent to the new address which he had given in order that he might be put on another roll. It would be a safeguard to amend the Act so as to require the notice to be sent to the old address. The man would then be able to take the necessary action to see that his name was not erased. He might say that an amendment had been prepared by the Electoral Branch of the department dealing with the matter, and he trusted that time would be afforded to take the necessary legislative action. So far as returning officers were concerned, they acted strictly in accordance with the law and not under instructions from the head office. But they had been advised that where they were satisfied that an elector was what he represented himself to be, his name should be replaced on the roll. The unfortunate part of it was that these matters occurred during an election, when there was no time to place them on the roll, so as to enable them to vote.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: The people to whom he referred were never notified, and they never changed their address.

The HOME SECRETARY: He understood that the cases complained of were like this: An elector representing himself as being John Smith, of Gill street, Charters Towers, made an application to have his name put on another roll, whereas the John Smith whom he represented himself to be was still residing in Gill street, Charters Towers. Under the provisions of the existing Act the notification that his name had been removed from the Charters Towers roll in order that it might be placed on the other roll was sent to the new address and not to the old address. If it was provided that the notification should be sent to the old address, then the John Smith who was represented by the other man would get the notification, and be able to take the necessary action.

Mr. FOLEY wished to know if the existing law would be so amended as to prevent the recurrence of what happened in Townsville during the last election. He referred to the case of votes that came from Ayr, but were not, according to the returning officer, strictly in accordance with the Act. The presiding officer had run out of ballot-papers and envelopes, and, in order that the men should not be deprived of their votes, he wrote the instructions and the declarations on the face of the envelope, but omitted to write the instructions to the voter on the inside sheet of paper. The consequence was that nineteen votes were rejected by the returning officer in Townsville, though similar votes made in the same way were accepted by the returning officers in Charters Towers and Ingham. He hoped provision would be made to prevent anything like that happening in future.

Mr. COLLINS hoped that every precaution would be taken to prevent the names of electors from being improperly struck off the roll. A man living at Gilberton might leave that portion of the electorate and go to Truxillo, over 100 miles away. Then a letter would

*Mr. Collins.]*

be addressed to him at Gilberton stating that he was struck off the roll, but he would not get the letter, because he was at Truxillo. He believed a lot of people in his electorate were struck off the roll, and would not find it out until they went to vote. He hoped every care would be taken by the electoral registrars and the police to retain on the roll men who had to travel about from place to place by reason of their occupation.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: The assurance given by the Home Secretary was all right as far as it went, but it did not meet his point. His contention was that, when a man's name was on the roll, he should be allowed to vote. On two or three occasions that came under his notice there was only one man of a certain name on the roll, and the man who wanted to vote could prove that he was the man; but he was not allowed to vote. Where there were three or four men of the same name on the roll, particularly if they lived in the same street, it was different. Another thing, it took a man far too long to have his name put on the roll. He failed to see any necessity for a second court. A man could get on the Federal roll within a month and exercise his vote; but here it took four months from the time application was made to the time he could get on the roll. He thought better facilities should be given for qualified electors getting their names on the roll.

Mr. MULLAN thought the Home Secretary might give the Committee an assurance in regard to this matter. The hon. gentleman had promised to alter a defect in the Act, but it might be some time before the alteration took place. An assurance might be given that where a man could prove he had not left the district, and was prepared to take an oath to that effect, the returning officer would not have the power to disallow the vote or prevent him from voting. If a man was allowed to do that in the case of half a dozen votes, one political party could arrange to give notice of transfer to another electorate, and have the whole of the men disfranchised. All he wanted was an assurance from the Home Secretary that, pending the amendment which he had recognised as necessary, in future returning officers would be instructed not to prevent men from recording their votes. There were men on both sides in Charters Towers affected by this, and it was not a matter of party politics.

The PREMIER: In his opinion no returning officer had any right, or any legal power, to prevent any man whose name was on the roll from voting. There was a provision in the Act by which, if a man whose name was on the roll, came up to the table and demanded a ballot-paper, and the returning officer was doubtful whether his name was on the roll, or whether he was entitled to a vote his name being on the roll, he could compel him to make a declaration; but, if the man filled up the declaration properly, the returning officer had no right to prevent him from voting. And it would be a very good thing if some man prevented from voting in that way went for the returning officer. (Hear, hear!) Whatever the reason was, if the man's name was not on the roll he was debarred.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Are you going to hold that a man whose name is on the roll, but rubbed out in red, is off the roll.

The PREMIER: Oh, no! The annual roll printed at the beginning of the year on which his name appeared could not be altered to prevent a man from voting except by the

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November court, and no registrar had any power to interfere with a man voting whose name was on the annual roll or the supplementary roll.

Mr. NEVITT: It is done in many cases.

The PREMIER: It should not be done. He did not know that it had been done, and he would take care that the matter was made quite clear to returning officers.

Mr. NEVITT: In their instructions.

The PREMIER: It was not their business to instruct them what to do, but to make clear what the law was.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: It was often the case that the notice to the person whose name had been struck off the roll was sent to the last address. It would meet the case if directions were put on the envelope that it was to be sent to wherever the person might be. Previous to the last election a lot of persons were struck off the roll, and the postcards were lying at the local post office, as the persons were not at the address indicated, and there were no instructions on the envelope to send it on to wherever the person might be.

Mr. WINSTANLEY asked the Home Secretary whether what he had stated was not done at the last election? He could easily find out whether instructions were not issued from the head office in Brisbane, in connection with certain individuals who had made application in other electorates than those in which they had previously resided, to the returning officers in those districts to put a red line through their names and disallow their vote.

The PREMIER: The Act tells them to do that, but that does not affect the vote at all.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: That was what it did do, and the returning officer would not accept declarations from them, but simply said he had instructions from the head office that they had made application in another electorate to have their names on the roll.

The PREMIER: Section 30 of the Act instructed the registrar, that when a man who was on his roll had been put on the roll of some other electorate, and word to that effect came back to him, to strike out the name. And, as a matter of convenience, he marked a roll for the returning officer showing the names that had been so erased, but that did not strike that man's name off the roll. His name could not come off the roll except by the action of the court in November.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: That is our point.

The PREMIER: As a general rule, it was a guide to the returning officer, but it did not authorise him to prevent a man from voting.

Mr. MANN: What the Premier said was all right, but there had been cases where the pencil had been run through the names by the returning officer, and sent out to the presiding officer, who refused to allow the man to vote. In order to put a stop to that practice it might be as well if some glaring case was taken and the returning officer called to account, so that the returning officers would know that as long as a man's name was on the roll, and he took the oath that he had been in the district for one month out of the last seven he must be allowed to vote, and if he voted, he took the risk. He claimed that no returning officer could prevent any man or woman whose name was on the roll from voting.

The PREMIER: If he makes a declaration.

Mr. MANN: The Home Secretary should make it clear to the returning officers that they had no right to strike any man's name off the roll, but that running the lead pencil through the names was a warning to insist upon a man making an affirmation that he was the person on the roll, and living in the district. The Government should be very careful on that point. He had always known the returning officer in Cairns to be most conscientious and impartial, but in other cases they had been known to show a decided partiality, and they should insist upon them being either State or Federal servants.

Mr. CORSER did not think it was through any intentional dereliction of duty that these mistakes were made, but from a misunderstanding of the instructions received. At the last election two persons who had been living in his electorate for fifteen years had been struck off the roll, and when they applied to vote were told that they could not do so. He went with them to the chief returning officer, who said he could not interfere, and they did not get their votes. Their names were on the roll, but marked off with red pencil. It had been done on both sides, and unintentionally.

Mr. PAYNE was glad to hear the Premier say that a man whose name was on the roll, and who was prepared to take an oath, was entitled to vote. It had come under his notice on more than one occasion that where this red line had been drawn through a man's name he was prepared to take the usual oath, but the returning officer said, "This is the roll I have to go by, and under no consideration can you vote." He hoped the Home Secretary would make it very clear that if a man was entitled to a vote he would be allowed to vote.

The HOME SECRETARY could give the Committee the assurance that the instructions to returning officers would be revised, and all the points mentioned specially inquired into, and wherever there had been any infringement of the law by returning officers it would be made abundantly clear in the instructions. But he wanted to impress on hon. members that the Home Department could not give any directions to the returning officer as to how he should act during an election.

Mr. ALLEN: But you did.

The HOME SECRETARY: He had never done so, and the Home Department had never done so.

Mr. ALLEN: They did.

The HOME SECRETARY: He did not know to what instance the hon. member for Bulloo was referring. He could only say that while he had administered the department no direction had ever been given to any returning officer as to how he should act during an election. The returning officer had certainly been told on inquiry, "This is the law. You are the one who has to judge whether it has been carried out or not."

Mr. O'SULLIVAN wanted to inform the Home Secretary's Department that in his electorate there had been a spurt in mining at a place called Dreghorn. Two or three [7.30 p.m.] years ago the polling-booth was closed because there were only two or three voters, but there had been a revival of mining and a township was springing up, and he hoped it would be reinstated as a polling-place. There was another place called Soda Water in a similar position, where forty or fifty men were working. He wished to bring those matters

under the notice of the Home Secretary, so that those people would not be deprived of the facility of recording their votes at any future elections.

Mr. COYNE would like to know what was the reason for the big reduction in this vote.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: There is no election this year.

Mr. COYNE wished to know if the electoral courts were to be continued. Were they going to have a registration court in December, a revision court in February, April, June, and so on?

The PREMIER: Certainly. The law has to be carried out.

Mr. COYNE could not understand why the country should be put to all this expense, seeing that Parliament had passed a Bill which upset all the old electoral districts until it was decided by the commissioners what the boundaries of the new electorates would be. Registration should be made quite simple, and the courts should be done away with until they saw what was done.

Mr. MULLAN: A short Bill could be passed.

Mr. COYNE: It was an expensive matter to hold those courts, and under present conditions they should be abolished and a simple method of registering electors adopted. Referring to the remarks of the hon. member for Charters Towers and the hon. member for Bundaberg regarding returning officers at the last election in refusing to allow persons to vote because there was a red line through their names, was it not a fair thing that those returning officers should be pulled over the coals and asked to explain their conduct in that connection? Were those men capable of carrying out the duties of returning officers? The greatest sinners against the electoral laws were the officers who were appointed to carry out those laws. Last year he referred to a certain action taken by a presiding officer in his electorate during the last election. The outcome was that the Home Secretary asked for a report from the returning officer, and a report was sent in, which was a lying report in the first place. He (Mr. Coyne) claimed that any man who would act in that fashion was not fit to occupy that position again, and all he had asked last year was, for the sake of the good conduct of elections, and for the sake of cleanliness in the conduct of elections, a man of that description should not be allowed to occupy the position of presiding officer. In his report he pretended to reply to the different indictments made against him by him (Mr. Coyne) in Parliament. He took it on himself to make a new law for presiding and returning officers in connection with his tinpot polling-booth. He said—

I opened the booth at 8 a.m., and a few minutes afterwards a man, Jim Wright by name, presented to me his appointment to act as scrutineer on Mr. Coyne's behalf, signed "J. H. Coyne." The appointment was a palpable forgery—

That man never saw his (Mr. Coyne's) signature in his life, and yet he said it was a palpable forgery—

and I told Wright I would not recognise it, and refused to allow him to make the declaration as required by the sixty-second section of the Act, but told him he might be present at the polling and satisfy himself all was in order, but it must be in an unofficial capacity.

What did they think of a man who twisted the law in that fashion? What right had he to refuse his (Mr. Coyne's) authority? What right had he to allow anybody to remain in the booth who was not entitled to be there? He (Mr. Coyne) wished to know why these things were

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allowed? And all he asked last year was that instructions should be given to the returning officer in the Warrego that that man should not be appointed again.

The PREMIER: Was that all you asked?

Mr. COYNE: That was all he asked, and he thought it was a reasonable and fair demand to make. Under the circumstances he was exceedingly modest. He (Mr. Coyne) accused the presiding officer of shutting up the booth at 4 o'clock and going out to a race meeting, which he did. He threw the ballot-box into an old rubbish room and left it there, and he assumed in his report that no voters turned up after the booth was closed. All the local voters had recorded their votes, and he knew all about it, and knew who would and who would not turn up.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is a wonder he did not take the ballot-box down to the course. (Laughter.)

Mr. COYNE: It was a very serious matter, and a big reflection on the conduct of the electoral officer.

The HOME SECRETARY: We have nothing to do with the appointment of the presiding officer; the returning officer does that.

Mr. COYNE: That man was not a fit and proper person to act as a presiding officer in future, and instructions should be given to that effect.

The HOME SECRETARY: How does the hon. gentleman know that that has not been done?

Mr. COYNE: He was sure it had not been done, as otherwise it would have been attached to the report. The report further said—

The paper appointing Wright as scrutineer and signed J. H. Coyne—

which it was not—it was signed "J. Harry Coyne—

The HOME SECRETARY: Probably that is why he thought it was a forgery.

Mr. COYNE: To show what a liar that fellow was, he had the exact document with him. The report continued—

The paper appointing Wright as scrutineer and signed J. H. Coyne was apparently written by some illiterate person—

that was his method of abusing him (Mr. Coyne)—

on a dirty scrap of paper enclosed in an envelope on which no stamp was or had been affixed, and addressed to J. Wright.

That note was enclosed in another envelope with a stamp on and sent to Wright, who knew what was in the envelope, and kept it. Here (holding up the paper) was the original document. It was slightly torn, but he would lay it on the table of the House and allow hon. members to judge whether it was a dirty scrap of paper or not, or whether it was written by an illiterate person. What was going to happen if presiding officers—nincompoops of that description—were allowed to override the law in any way they liked? No one at all was sure of his vote when ballot-boxes were thrown into a room at 4 o'clock and left there at the mercy of the world while the presiding officer went out horse-racing.

The HOME SECRETARY: Do away with horse-racing.

Mr. COYNE: Do away with that class of presiding officer. Surely they could get a number of honest, intelligent, and fair-minded men who would carry out the duties of presiding officers fairly and impartially at elections. That was all he asked. If that man was appointed again and anything happened from his appointment, then

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he (Mr. Coyne) would be justified in publicly demanding that that man be impeached from the floor of the House in a far more harsh manner than he was doing at the present time.

Mr. ALLEN held it was the duty of the Home Secretary's Department, when a returning officer asked for instructions with regard to the law so that he would be able to administer the law properly—he should be given the fullest instructions. Although a returning officer asked for that information, draught horses could not draw it out of the Home Secretary's office. He was referred to a section of the Act.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is right. He is not going to get any advice from me.

Mr. ALLEN said they paid for the upkeep of the Crown Solicitor's office. There was a local dispute as to the interpretation of the Act, and it would come up on election day. The returning officer wired down to Brisbane asking for instructions, and was referred to section 50 of the Act; and what took place six months later? On polling-day two absentee votes were recorded which were informal. On one of those envelopes the question, "Have you resided in the electorate one month during the last seven," was not answered at all—neither "yes" nor "no" was on it. How could that vote be valid? His scrutineer objected to it, and the returning officer put it on one side for further consideration.

The PREMIER: Was this a residence qualification or freehold qualification?

Mr. ALLEN: A residence qualification. In the other case the presiding officer at the polling-booth in Brisbane had not witnessed the signature. There was no doubt about the vote being informal. He objected to it and it was placed on one side, but the other candidate wired down to the Home Secretary's office and instructions were sent back to allow the vote. If that was not interference he did not know what was. He did not bother much about it, but there was certainly interference from the Home Secretary's Department. In one instance they would not help the returning officer by giving him a true interpretation of the law, but six months later they went about meddling in his work.

The PREMIER: Not meddling. They were asked what to do.

Mr. ALLEN: He did not ask them. The other candidate asked the Home Secretary's office, but of course it was a Government candidate, and they are all there to assist their own supporters every time. The other point on which he desired some information was in connection with that section of the Act which provided that no aboriginal native of Asia, Africa, America, or Australia should be entitled to have his name placed on an electoral roll. At the time to which he referred there were two Chinese on the roll in his electorate, and he asked the question as to whether they were legally on the roll, with the result that at the last revision court their names were struck off.

The PREMIER: You were purging the roll.

Mr. ALLEN: If he was purging the roll—(laughter)—he was perfectly justified in doing so, and the Home Secretary was the instrument he used. He wished to draw attention to another case in which an Assyrian appeared on the electoral roll. That was in the Warwick electorate. Objection was made to that name appearing on the roll, but the bench did not uphold the objection. He would like to know if the department had taken action to rectify that matter?

The HOME SECRETARY: Did you give notice of it to the department?

Mr. ALLEN: It was not his duty to the country to administer departments, but if the Home Secretary would give him £1,000 a year he would be only too willing to take on the job.

The HOME SECRETARY: Action has already been taken in that matter.

Mr. ALLEN: He would like to know what action had been taken.

The HOME SECRETARY: The necessary action to have the name removed.

Mr. ALLEN: That reply was no good to him, because action should have been taken six or twelve months ago.

The HOME SECRETARY: It should have been taken before the name was put on.

Mr. ALLEN: Of course it should. (Loud laughter.) He would show why action should have been taken before the name was put on the roll. When the new Act came into force the whole of the rolls had to be wiped [8 p.m.] out and new ones compiled, and that was the time when action should have been taken. The names should never have appeared on the roll. Last November action was taken, and the bench acted—he would not say against the law but against the interpretation the Crown had placed on the law.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN indicated that the hon. member's time had expired.

Mr. MAY wished to make a few remarks with reference to the indiscriminate way in which lists of electors who were dead, left, or disqualified were compiled. He had received a letter from one of his constituents at Hampden, which read as follows:—

I wish to draw your attention to the August electoral list. They are striking names off wholesale; they have struck my wife off as left. My wife has never been away from home this four years; and dozens of others besides are struck off as left; all your votes, too. Why don't you see into it? I have several other matters I want to draw your attention to when I have time; very busy now.

That man sent word to the registrar that his wife was not dead, that she had not left the district, and that she was not disqualified. But a great number of persons in those far-back districts had their letters addressed to the post office in town, and they might not receive notice of disqualification in time to allow them to make such representation as would prevent their names being struck off the roll.

Mr. ALLEN: He would like to know what action the department had taken with regard to the Assyrian whose name was on the Warwick electoral roll. The department was altogether too slow in dealing with its matters.

The HOME SECRETARY: Other members say we are too sudden—too quick.

Mr. MAY: I say you are too sudden.

Mr. ALLEN: The department was not too sudden when there was a chance of their losing the vote.

The HOME SECRETARY: You say we are too slow, and other members say we are too quick.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I trust the Home Secretary will refrain from these interjections; he ought to set an example to hon. members.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear! and laughter.

Mr. ALLEN: There had always been a close fight in the Warwick election. Supposing an election there had to be decided by one vote and that vote was the vote of the Assyrian whom he

had mentioned, see what expense candidates would be put to in getting the disputed election settled. There was no excuse for the department allowing the matter to hang fire so long, and he should like to hear some explanation of it from the Home Secretary; also some explanation of the instructions he issued to the returning officer in the Bulloo electorate regarding the two informal votes he had mentioned.

Mr. GRAYSON: He had never had any trouble with the returning officer of the electorate he represented, and was surprised to hear the complaints made by some hon. members opposite. With regard to the Assyrian whose name the hon. member for Bulloo said was on the Warwick electoral roll, he could tell the hon. member that the name of that man was not on the roll to-day. That Assyrian was an intelligent man, who owned thousands of pounds' worth of freehold property in the town of Warwick, and yet the law prohibited him from getting his name on the electoral roll. He had heard a number of complaints about names being omitted from electoral rolls, and that kind of thing occurred very frequently. About six weeks before the last Federal election he happened to be doing some business at the Warwick Post Office, and the thought occurred to him that he would have a look at the Darling Downs electoral roll to see if his name was on the roll. To his great astonishment he found that his name was omitted from the roll, though he had been a resident of the Darling Downs and of the Warwick district for about forty-five years. There were several names the same as his own on that roll, and he believed that one Francis Grayson had left the Killarney district, and that the registrar had mistaken that name for his.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Wasn't it the Labour organisation did it?

Mr. GRAYSON: No; the Labour organisation had nothing to do with it.

The PREMIER: Perhaps the hon. member for Bulloo was at his usual work of purging the roll. (Laughter.)

Mr. GRAYSON: He did not accuse the hon. member of Bulloo of that, because he was very busy at that particular time looking after his own electoral roll. However, he might say that he was just in time to make application and get his name on the roll. He wished to give the police of the Darling Downs a word of praise for the excellent way in which they were collecting the names of electors and placing them on the different rolls. In the absence of the hon. member for Warwick he thought he was justified in informing the hon. member for Bulloo that the name of the Assyrian to whom the hon. member referred was not on the Warwick electoral roll. The hon. member for Bulloo might possibly have some idea of contesting the seat for that constituency, but he could tell the hon. member that if he was a candidate for Warwick at the next election—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I think the hon. member is now departing from the question before the Committee. There have been a good many interjections of a flippant nature by hon. members in the course of this discussion. I hope hon. members will refrain from making such interjections, and assist me in maintaining order. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. GRAYSON: The police had done excellent work on the Darling Downs by way of putting names on the rolls; and in the electorate he represented hundreds of voters would have been disfranchised but for the

*Mr. Grayson.]*

energetic manner in which the police collected the names. Everything was done fairly and squarely in his district, and good work was being done in purifying the rolls.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN indicated that the hon. member's time had expired.

Mr. ALLEN: After hearing the statement of the Home Secretary and that of the hon. member for Cunningham, he got the Warwick roll to see if that Assyrian's name was there, and he found that No. 1 on the roll was "Chaker Abood." When he saw an electoral wrong in any district, he was prepared to attack it, and the hon. gentleman need not get into such excitement about him going to Warwick. He would be more likely to go to Cunningham. The police objected to this name twelve months ago, but the local bench decided apparently wrongly on the question. Why was not that decision appealed against? The Home Secretary ought to know that there was a bit of a quibble about this clause; and the sooner the exact interpretation of it was made known far and wide the better.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member seemed to be of opinion that the Home Secretary should be invested with power, on a complaint of that nature, to immediately strike a name off the roll.

Several HONOURABLE MEMBERS interjecting and conversing,

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! Hon. members must keep quiet. If they do not regard my ruling, I shall have to take some other course. (Hear, hear!)

The HOME SECRETARY: It would be a most invidious position for the Home Secretary, and would give him power to inflict serious injury—if he was unscrupulous enough to do so—on anyone opposed to him or his party. When the Home Secretary's attention was drawn to any proceeding which he thought was not in accordance with the law, it was his duty to draw the attention of the proper court to the fact. He had no right to interfere with the judicial functions of any registration court. In connection with the instance quoted by the hon. member for Bulloo, the attention of the Electoral Registrar was drawn to the matter. He took the necessary action, and drew the attention of the Electoral Court to the fact that, in his opinion, they had acted illegally in placing this man on the roll. Action had in consequence been taken by the registration court, and this particular name had already been advertised as being disqualified; and in due course at the court to be held in a few days, it would be removed from the roll. So far as the Home Department was concerned, and so far as the Electoral Registrar was concerned, they had done their duty.

Mr. HAMILTON thought the Home Secretary would have answered the charge made by the hon. member for Warrego against a man who held a position as a public officer during the late election. He was sorry that the Premier and the Home Secretary took the remarks of the hon. member for Warrego lightly, because it was a serious matter. If it had taken place in his electorate, he would have kicked up a pretty good row, and wanted to know why the man was not dealt with. He thought the Home Secretary should take some action as a warning to others. This was a matter which affected members on both sides. It was a breach of the Act, because the Act

stated that an officer in that position should recognise any scrutineers for any of the candidates. He did not think the matter should be allowed to rest where it was. The hon. member for Cunningham talked about the good work done by the police in collecting names for the electoral rolls. There were very few police in the Gregory electorate, and it was impossible for them to carry out the duty of collecting names. He believed the census was to be taken in April; and, as there was to be a redistribution of seats, he thought advantage might be taken of the census returns to get up-to-date information as to those who were qualified to be on the rolls.

Mr. RYLAND asked the Home Secretary if he was likely to take any action with regard to the unification of the Federal and State electoral rolls? The Federal Parliament had passed the necessary legislation to allow that to be done, and it was already done in Tasmania. The form of the Federal rolls was far better than that of the State rolls, and it was only about half the cost.

Mr. MURPHY: The last Federal Government called tenders for the printing of their rolls.

Mr. RYLAND: The printing of the Federal roll was far cheaper than in connection with the State roll, and better done. Was it the intention of the Home Secretary, as soon as the redistribution of seats came along, to have one roll for Federal and State elections? He thought the necessity for a revision court in connection with our State franchise was entirely unnecessary now. The object of that provision was to give an opportunity to inquire into the property qualification, but that had now disappeared. He also thought that, in case of an election coming on, there should be a special court to register all claims up to a certain date previous to the election.

The HOME SECRETARY: In connection with the selection of names for the electoral roll, instructions had been issued to the Commissioner of Police that it was the desire of the Government that every person entitled should be on the roll, and so far the efforts made had been very successful. He had an estimate of the number of names marked as "Dead," "Left," and "Disqualified" on the old roll, which came to 27,859. The names which had now been collected in all the electorates amounted to 33,261, or nearly 6,000 names more than appeared on the old roll. He quite agreed with the hon. member for Gregory that the statement made by the hon. member for Warrego was a very serious one. He had already pointed out that all the matters brought up this evening would be inquired into and the necessary instructions given to returning officers. But, as he had said before, the Home Department was not responsible for the appointment of presiding officers; it was only responsible for the appointment of returning officers, and on every occasion had endeavoured to procure the best men.

Mr. HAMILTON: He evidently did not do his duty.

The HOME SECRETARY: Undoubtedly, but it was a very difficult thing in large electorates for a returning officer to be absolutely certain that every presiding officer that he appointed would turn out a suitable man.

Mr. HAMILTON: When he accepts the position he accepts the responsibility. I suppose he gets paid.

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The HOME SECRETARY: He made a claim on the returning officer for his fee, which was paid. In reference to this particular case, the attention of the returning officer would be drawn to the action of that presiding officer, and it would not occur again in the Warrego electorate, nor, he trusted, in any other electorate. In connection with the matter brought up by the hon. member for Bulloo in respect to certain advice given with regard to absentee informal votes, he understood, from the officer of the department, that a question was asked as to whether, if the questions as to residence were not filled up—and in this particular case they were resident electors—their votes were formal or not; and the reply was that the whole of the inquiries must be filled up, and, if they were not filled up, any voters who voted as absentees, then their votes were informal.

Mr. ALLEN: That was not the information the returning officer got.

The HOME SECRETARY: He was only giving hon. members the information as supplied to him. The hon. member must be aware that there were many inquiries made of the electoral officer that never came before the Home Secretary; and, if all those matters had to be referred to the administrative head of the department, great delay would arise. He had dealt practically with all the matters brought up by hon. members, and he could only repeat that full instructions would be issued to all returning officers in connection with those and all other matters. It was desirable that every elector should be given the opportunity to exercise this franchise, and that was the policy of the present Administration.

Mr. LESINA considered that the Principal Electoral Registrar was not getting a decent salary, and it should certainly be increased to £300 a year. He was going to pursue the line of argument on every section of the Estimates that there was a lack of coherent policy in the payment of salaries—a lackadaisical, happy-go-lucky, Tattersall's sweep sort of arrangement. They should fix a specified salary, and then get a man to fill the office, but here they got a good man to fill the office, and then his wages went up and down in concertina fashion. (Laughter.) If the salary was first fixed, hon. members would recognise the position; and if the man was a good man, they could promote him to some other position. Any man holding a responsible office like this was worth £6 a week. He believed the machinery of the electoral law was well administered. He had never seen the faintest evidence since he came into the Chamber of anything wrong being done. Only on one occasion was there any suspicion, and that was in connection with the Cambooya electorate, but the court decided that it was not wrongly done. The department was well administered and honestly conducted, and in charge of a conscientious officer. If there was anything wrong with the Act, they should ask the Government to pass an amending measure. They could not blame the officer for carrying out the law as it is. With that single exception he thought the vote was a good

[8.30 p.m.] one and well worth the money expended on it. Sometimes the amount required was larger than at other times, and the work of the office increased accordingly. On such occasions the officers were very much overworked, and the Government should come to their assistance more cheerfully than had been done in the past. The

preparation of the rolls was a responsible and onerous task, and the principal officer should receive a salary of at least £300.

Mr. LAND would like a little information on one or two points in connection with the "dead," "left," and "disqualified" lists. He had always held the opinion that it was not legal to mark a man or woman "left" without being satisfied that they had left. In many instances when those lists appeared it was found a very great number were marked "left" who had not left the district at all, and in many cases those persons did not get their notices, and consequently were disqualified. They were struck off the roll in November. He would like the Home Secretary to make it clear whether the officers collecting the names were acting legally in marking persons "left" when they had no information that they had left. Another point he would like the Home Secretary to make clear was this: Supposing a man lived in a district with his wife and family; his home was there, and he had occasion to go out of the district to follow his usual occupation, and on election day he had not resided at his home one month during the preceding seven—was that man disqualified from voting? He was given to understand at the last election that a person removed from one district to another, and afterwards became returning officer in his particular district. His name was scratched off the roll in the district he had left, and had not been admitted on the roll in the district for which he was appointed returning officer. Could he legally hold that position?

The HOME SECRETARY: In connection with the question of the hon. member in respect to inquiries which were made concerning electors who had left their district, special instructions were issued that every care should be taken in that connection; and, furthermore, those instructions required that inquiry should be made as to whether the absence was temporary or not; and, if it was only temporary, the elector was not to be returned as having left the district. Those were distinct instructions, and he felt satisfied that the police, who made those inquiries, took every possible care to ascertain whether an elector had *bonâ fide* left the district or not. It was necessary for an elector to have resided at least one month out of seven in his electorate to save himself from being disqualified as an elector for that electorate.

Mr. LAND: The fact of his keeping his wife and family in that electorate the whole time is not sufficient?

The HOME SECRETARY: Provided his absence was only temporary. If his absence was for seven months, and during that seven months he had not resided at least one month—

Mr. MULLAN: His home is there.

The HOME SECRETARY: He must have been at least one month out of the seven in his electorate before he was entitled to vote. That was the law, and the electoral officers were bound to carry out the law. If the House thought it was a bad law, and ought to be altered, then alter the law. In connection with the third inquiry of the hon. member, that if an elector left his district and went into another district, and before his name was entered upon the roll of the new district, was he entitled to act as a

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returning officer? Certainly he was, because his name was not removed from the old roll until it was entered on the new roll.

Mr. MULLAN: What about his casting vote?

The HOME SECRETARY: He would not be the returning officer; he would be the presiding officer. Did the hon. member suggest that the returning officer, who was the principal officer in the electorate, was appointed to that position although his name was not on the roll for that particular electorate?

Mr. MULLAN: That has happened.

The HOME SECRETARY: He would be very glad if the hon. member would give him full information in connection with the matter. The name of an elector was not taken from the old roll until it was entered on the new roll.

Mr. COYNE: In the event of a married man who had a wife and family residing in a township that might be near the boundaries of two other electorates, and the man was engaged at droving, and was away around the three different electorates within the three months previous to an election—he might not have resided for one whole month at one time in his electorate, because he resided in the corner of it—would that man be disfranchised?

The PREMIER: The Home Secretary does not interpret the law.

Mr. COYNE: He should interpret the law. He hoped the Home Secretary would reply to the question.

The HOME SECRETARY: Provided an elector during the period of seven months had, in the aggregate, resided a month within the electorate, he was entitled to a vote. It might be made up of one day at a time, two days at a time, or one week at a time; but so long as, during the whole period, he had been in the electorate for one month, he was entitled to a vote.

Mr. COYNE: If he has not spent that one month, even if his wife and family are there, and that is his home, he is disfranchised?

The HOME SECRETARY: That was the law. There was another matter he would like the Committee to be clear upon. Section 44 of the Electoral Act provided—

That the Governor in Council may appoint by commission under his hand and seal a fit person to be returning officer for each electoral district.

There was a footnote to that section which read—

The words "requiring the returning officer to be an elector" are repealed.

So that it was not necessary that the returning officer should be an elector for the particular electorate for which he acted as returning officer.

Question put and passed.

#### HEALTH.

The HOME SECRETARY moved that £7,881 be granted for "Health." There was an increase of £1,129 on the amount granted last year. The principal increase was caused by the salary which had been provided for a microbiologist. For a considerable time the Agricultural Department had a Bacteriological Institute. They had now removed that institute to the Pathological Institute at Yeerongpilly, and it was considered highly necessary that a microbiologist should be appointed, and provision had been made for

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the appointment of such an officer at a salary of £500 per year. The secretary had received an increase of £20, the typist £10, the clerk £10, and provision was made for a cadet clerk. There was also an increase in connection with railway fares and printing to the extent of £50, and £500 was required for replacing the equipment of the Bacteriological Institute, a large proportion of the equipment having been removed by the Agricultural Department to their experiment station at Yeerongpilly. The medical profession were very emphatic upon the necessity of appointing an officer who would be able to give them tests for which there would be a return, because it was intended that where services were performed for private medical practitioners there would be a charge.

Mr. NEVITT: This was one of the votes which he thought was entitled to more consideration than it received. The Commissioner of Public Health, in his annual report, referring to food inspection and adulteration, used the following words—

The tables given in Appendices H, J, and M, and the report of the Government Analyst will illustrate the work of the department in enforcing food-purity, so far as its legal and financial circumstances have admitted.

There the Commissioner practically stated that he was not provided with sufficient money to carry out the duties of his office, and he also complained that he had not got sufficient legal power. The Home Secretary stated at the beginning of the session that the Government intended to introduce a Pure Food and Drugs Bill.

Mr. MULLAN: We are not likely to get a Pure Food Bill while the present Government have to depend upon middlemen for existence.

Mr. NEVITT: He sincerely hoped that the new measure would give the Commissioner all the legal power he required to discharge the functions of his office, and that the Government would provide him with sufficient money, because there was no department of the State in which money could be spent to better advantage than by the Health Department. The present occupant of the office of Health Commissioner was the right man in the right place, and he was doing excellent work for the State, particularly in his recommendation to the Education Department that there should be a regular medical inspection of school children. At page 5 of his report the Commissioner said—

If a milkman has a round of 100 quarts a day average, retailed at 4d. per quart, and adulterates to the average of adulterated milk for the year under review (8.3 per cent. of water), he will, during the year, sell 757 gallons of water for £50 9s. 10d. He can thus well afford an occasional £5 fine. On the figures shown by analysis, the people of the metropolitan area of Brisbane appear to be paying some £2,500 a year for water retailed at 4d. per quart under the guise of milk. The fines and costs recorded against offenders during the year under review totalled £96 11s. 2d.

That showed that there was a necessity for the appointment of additional inspectors in order that more analyses might be made of the milk that was being dispensed to the public of Brisbane. The other night, when the hon. member for Burke referred to the great percentage of infantile mortality in Brisbane, the Premier interjected, "Show me a place where there is less infantile mortality than there is in Brisbane." At page 1093 of Knibb's, the Commonwealth

Statistician, figures were supplied showing that there was greater infantile mortality in Brisbane than in any other capital city of the Commonwealth.

Mr. D. HUNTER: For that year, wasn't it?

Mr. NEVITT: He was quoting the latest figures and was answering a statement made by the Premier. Those figures showed that while the infantile mortality in Queensland was less than that of any other State of the Commonwealth, with one exception, yet the infantile mortality of Brisbane was greater than that of any other capital city of the Commonwealth. If the Commissioner for Public Health had a few more inspectors, we should probably have a considerably lower infantile mortality in Brisbane than we have at the present time. Apparently the officers of the department had been fairly busy during the year, for he found that no less than 146 tons 14 cwt. 2 qr. 9 lb. of foodstuffs that were on the market had been destroyed as unfit for human consumption. In one of the States of the Commonwealth the law was such that if a man was fined twice for selling adulterated food a notice was printed on the outside of the shop front to the effect that a certain food sold at that place was adulterated. He hoped that the Bill introduced by the Minister would contain a similar provision, because he could not find language sufficiently strong to condemn men who were guilty of an action of that kind. It was also stated that 14,005 tins of condensed milk had been destroyed during the year. He mentioned, on the Address in Reply, that children who had been deprived of their natural food were in many instances unable to get fresh cow's milk and had to depend upon condensed milk. It was not possible to find out what quantity of adulterated condensed milk had been consumed, but no doubt this milk was responsible for a good deal of the mortality that existed among infants in Brisbane, because the climate here was one of the finest in the world. On page 10 of the report there was a statement from the Government Analyst from which it appeared that—

The number of fresh milk samples tested during the year was 154; seventy-eight of these were legal samples taken by the inspectors of the Health Department under the provisions of the Health Act of 1900; nineteen of these samples came below the minimum standard of 8.5 solids not fat; and in fifteen cases prosecutions were instituted, resulting in a total of fines and costs of £96 being recovered.

That showed that more inspectors were required in order to compel those people to observe the law. It was further stated that out of thirty-six samples of beverages and cordials tested, only fifteen were passed as fit for human consumption. That was further evidence of the need for the appointment of additional inspectors. Indeed, almost every article of food on the market to-day was adulterated in some shape or form, and he thought the Health Department should be given sufficient officers and sufficient power to put down such stuff.

The HOME SECRETARY: For the information of hon. members, he might say that a Pure Food and Drugs Bill had been prepared, and was ready to submit to the House when a conference of all the health authorities of the different States of the Commonwealth was held in Sydney for the purpose of deciding upon some uniform action in the matter. At that conference

a common basis for legislation in connection with the matter was decided upon. That differed very materially from the measure which had been prepared for presentation to the House. The resolutions adopted by the conference were much more stringent than the provisions of the measure which had been drafted for submission to the Queensland Parliament. It was therefore necessary, in order to carry out the resolutions of the conference, to prepare a new measure, and he understood that the Commissioner for Public Health had now agreed with the Parliamentary Draftsman as to the form in which the Bill should be drafted, and that the measure was practically completed. He therefore hoped that, with the assistance of the House—and this should not be a contentious measure—it would still be possible to introduce it and pass it into law during the present session. He quite agreed with the hon. member for Carpentaria that this was a most important matter, and he regretted to hear the interjection that fell from the hon. member for Charters Towers, Mr. Mullan, to the effect that middlemen would not like a stringent measure. So far as the Health Commissioner was concerned, and so far as the present Administration were concerned, the question of middlemen would not enter into the matter, but the Bill would be shaped in accordance with the resolutions arrived at by the conference, whatever its effect might be upon middlemen or any other men. (Hear, hear!) With regard to the expenditure on the Health Department, as hon. members would observe, provision was made for an increase of £1,129 in connection with the appointment of a microbiologist. He would also remind hon. members that the report of the Health Commissioner was only presented to him as administrator of the Home Department a few days prior to his placing it on the table of the House. The recommendations of the Commissioner would be dealt with by himself, as administrator of the department; and he might say that action was already being taken to carry out the wish of the Commissioner in regard to the appointment of additional inspectors. (Hear, hear!) The number of samples mentioned in the report did not represent the whole of the samples, because certain noted brands of goods, which had already been analysed, were not submitted to any further analysis. The samples mentioned in the report were samples of new brands which were submitted for analysis, and when once an article was condemned, no further importations of it were made into the State. He thought hon. members would admit, after perusing the Health Commissioner's report, that we were fortunate in having an officer such as Dr. Elkington, who was carrying out his duties efficiently, and for the benefit of the people of the State.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. D. HUNTER agreed with the Minister that they were fortunate in having

[9 p.m.] a very good Health Commissioner. On page 6 of his report, speaking of phthisis, he said—

An average fatal case may, on a very low estimate, be taken as representing at least £25 of direct expenditure, whether this be personal outlay or cost of sanatorium or hospital treatment at the public expense.

The deaths for 1909 hence represent over £8,000 of public or private expenditure on account of this one preventable disease. The remedy lies less in the direction of extensive curative provision by sanatoria than

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in that of protective segregation of advanced indigent cases, the systematic dissemination of information regarding simple methods of preventing infection from sufferers, the suppression of the filthy practice of spitting about, and the destruction of infection by appropriate means after the death or removal of sufferers.

He was at one with the Commissioner in all that, but he might have added that a proper diagnosis should be made by the medical faculty in the early stages of the disease. It had become notorious that a great many people went to a doctor—and nobody had a higher regard for the medical profession than he had—a little bit run down, with symptoms of that fell disease. The doctor did not examine them at all. They received a bottle, and in a week or two they received another bottle, and eventually the doctor put them through an examination and found them to be suffering from phthisis. He then reported the case to the Health Commissioner, which he was supposed to do within forty-eight hours, but it had perhaps reached the stage when it was incurable. He spoke from personal knowledge. He once went to be examined on changing from one friendly society's branch to another, and the way he was examined was the way in which some of our doctors were looking after the health of the people. There was a form on which he filled in the name and date, and wrote his signature, and when it was finished it read something in this fashion—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! Will the hon. member connect his remarks with the question before the Committee?

Mr. D. HUNTER: He was going to connect it by showing that the doctors and the Health Department should insist on something to which he would come shortly. The certificate was to this effect—

I hereby certify that I have examined bearer, and find him to be free from constitutional disease likely to shorten life.

What he suggested was that when a doctor examined a person he should be able to certify to the Health Department whether that person was in the first stage of consumption or not. If it was the first stage it was curable. If it was in the second stage, he should also be required to tell the name of the doctor who saw the patient before; and the Health Department should call upon that doctor to report as to whether he was at that time suffering from the disease or not. He would now quote from the speech delivered by Dr. Stewart before the British Medical Society—

The question naturally arises, Why does such a trifling number get a chance to recover? And, what is even more extraordinary, Why do so very few know what is really wrong with them? The answer to both of these queries lies in the hands of the general practitioner. Carelessness in the examination of chronic chest cases is the besetting sin of many doctors, and with others, who in their own minds are satisfied with their diagnosis, mistaken kindness is responsible for the rest. It is often stated that many sufferers do not consult a doctor soon enough, and this is sometimes true, but for such a common disease the numbers are really small. It is a matter of everyday experience that the majority of established cases have been under treatment for months before the actual state of their lungs has been revealed to them. Therefore we cannot evade facing the fact that a great proportion of our profession cannot or will not diagnose incipient phthisis. To those the frank question is often asked by their patients or their friends as to the actual state of the lungs, when evasive answers are given to this important matter, by such expressions as "weak lungs," "only run down," etc., *ad nauseam*.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! I think the hon. member's ten minutes will be up before he can connect this with the question before the Committee.

Mr. D. HUNTER: The vote under consideration was for the Health Department, and the

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Health Commissioner in his report dealt with phthisis, and that was the subject with which he was dealing. He had a serious interest in this important subject; and he thought he might be allowed to finish reading the quotation—

In the majority of cases these unfortunate sufferers have to be told eventually, so that a great deal of discredit and bitter reflections are heaped on the practitioner for his pusillanimous attitude in the first instance. In my experience, patients, if told in a kindly and straightforward manner, receive the verdict gratefully and with fortitude.

He looked upon this disease as the "white man's plague," and he thought members would not think it waste of time if he dealt with it for ten minutes. (Hear, hear!) They should insist that the doctors, when there was any suspicion of a case, should communicate at once with the Health Department. There were regulations to that effect; but what was the use if they communicated with the department and then said the patient was beyond hope of recovery? If by any means they could assist the man in charge of the Health Department and compel doctors to certify what stage of the disease a patient was in, and, if in the second stage, find out the doctor who examined him in the first place and deal with him, that would be a good thing.

Mr. MURPHY: How are you to do that?

Mr. D. HUNTER: By calling upon him to state why he did not examine the patient properly in the first instance. He was confident that it would have a very salutary effect in regard to these examinations. He thought he had said enough to draw attention to this disease. It was expected that the people should be treated by the open-air system, but they were not all in a position to do that. He knew of a patient who was living in a small house with a great many people in it, and very little ventilation. She was living under impure conditions, and when he spoke about sleeping on the veranda he was asked what else she could do. She had not the necessary blankets to keep herself comfortable in cold weather.

Mr. MURPHY: Yet you said the other night there was no poverty in Queensland.

Mr. D. HUNTER: If that was the position, it would pay the country to supply the indigent poor suffering from this disease with the necessary blankets.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN indicated that the hon. member's time had expired.

Mr. MAY (*Flinders*) said he wished to bring forward a matter pertaining to the far western portion of his electorate—a place formerly called Mount Elliott but now known as Selwyn. He had received a letter in which this passage appeared—

This town is in a frightful dirty state. The Mackinlay Shire appointed an inspector of nuisances here, and they offered him the enormous sum of £15 per annum. Of course he would not accept it, so we are without an inspector of nuisances yet. People here are getting fever every day, and if only one inch of rain falls, half the town will be down. You would not believe how the town is unless you saw it.

On the strength of this extract, he had interviewed the Health Commissioner to-day, and it was his intention to ask a question on the subject in the House next week. The Commissioner showed him a communication corroborating what he had just quoted. In this town, a few years ago, there were very few inhabitants, but they had now increased to between 1,100 and 1,200. The sanitary arrangements when he was there were in a very primitive state, and they were no better now. There should be more inspection in those Northern mining towns. They had only

to refer back to the last scare, through the insanitary conditions, at the Oaks Rush, at a place called Kidston—that might have brought it on. (Laughter.) There was every indication of an epidemic in the town he was speaking of. The schoolmaster had been advised to be removed to the hospital at Hampden, as he was stricken with typhoid fever.

The HOME SECRETARY: He was very glad that the hon. member had given him the chance to show once more how prompt the Home Department were. In connection with this matter, action had been taken by the Health Department, of which action he had approved. For the information of the Committee he would read one or two letters in connection with this matter, which would show the horrible filth which existed in the hon. member's electorate. This was a letter from the gentleman who occupied the position of health officer to the Mackinlay Shire Council, to the Commissioner for Public Health, Brisbane, in which he said—

Dear Sir,—I beg to enclose for your information a copy of a second report to the shire council of Mackinlay.

This town has now a population of over 1,200 people, and after six months' residence I have come to the conclusion it is futile serving any longer as medical officer of health. I am, therefore, resigning as a protest against the total and absolute neglect of all sanitation, and may say, as well, in passing, the salary of £15 is most absurd in a country where miners get 13s. 6d. per day and cooks £2 to £3 per week.

Recently the shire council proposed to get an inspector of nuisances appointed, and approached one Mr. R. Stapleton on the matter, offering him the princely salary of £15 a year for the post. To his credit, be it said, he rejected the post, it is said, with some contumely. Now, this man was carefully chosen, for not only is his living dependent on the "bungs," the most notorious offenders against sanitation, but, in addition, he was blind of one eye, and no doubt that eye was to be turned on the hotels, which are the greatest menace to the health of the town.

These two Peek cases—mother and child—are, I believe, typhoid carriers, one or other of them. Now, this business of approaching Stapleton is only typical of their (the shire council's) methods, and as I foresee a grave epidemic in January I am raising my small, though it may be futile, protest at the action and ways of what I am told is a wealthy shire council.

I think it is time that medical men bestirred themselves to protest against a rich council estimating the total sanitary service of a town of 1,200 people at an expenditure of £30 per annum, and when a one-eyed mineral-water seller refuses with scorn and contumely to serve for £15 a year, it is up to a medical man to appraise his services at a higher rate. If the work is done at all there is a good deal of thankless work here for a medical officer of health, but, in face of actions such as this last one of the shire council, I think it is time to protest against the views they take of their duties.

Trusting my action meets with your approval, and hoping it may do some good in mitigating the approaching epidemic.

I am sincerely yours,

PATRICK C. HIGGINS.

The notification for the shire council was as follows:—

To the Shire Clerk and Shire Council of Mackinlay.

Dear Sirs,—In further continuation of my reports on the lack of all sanitary precautions in this town of Selwyn, I have to report to you the occurrence of four (4) more cases of enteric fever, viz.:—

Leslie Hicks, a child living near the mine. This child is adequately isolated and looked after by its mother. It attends the local school, which is contiguous to the house or tent where Mrs. Peek and Leslie Peek were laid up with enteric fever in April, May, and June. All the cases in the town so far may be traced to these two Peek cases. I told the

Peeks to dig and put up a latrine, but I understand since that typhoid dejecta were simply emptied on a screened space at the back of their tent.

The schoolmaster, Stinson, has since contracted the disease, and I have had him removed to Hampden Hospital. The school-house, where he was living, should now be disinfected. Is it any use asking you to do so?

Mrs. Cummings, the only adult typhoid now in the town, is adequately isolated and her dejecta properly rendered innocuous.

As regards the man Martin, whom I reported to you as suffering from enteric, I may state that I have had him removed to Hampden Hospital. He lived in Johnson's hotel.

Mr. P. M. Johnson has now reduced his overcrowding somewhat, but there are still beds on the verandas, and the hotel floor is very dirty and never washed. The back yard is also full of refuse and dirt. In addition, he has put in a very deep closet—it might well be called a mine for faeces, from the depth, length, and breadth of the trench—barely 10 yards from the back houses where the bulk of his lodgers live and sleep. After any rain this closet will send its bouquet all over the town, and, owing to its proximity to the station, will greet new arrivals long before any fumes of sulphur; indeed, already the bouquet is more potent than sulphur. The whole thing is a nuisance, and likely to become worse as soon as rain falls. The measurements of the trench designed by the fertile brain of Mr. Johnson himself are, as I remember, 35 feet deep by 20 feet long by 4 feet across.

Now Mr. Johnson has a child of his own ill with enteric. They will not isolate the child, letting it play and run with other children; and they even allow it to sit up and walk about, and to use the same cup and glass and plate as all the other children (some nine or ten), or, for that matter, the lodgers, of whom Johnson now says he has only forty. No amount of talk and entreaty or expostulation seems to have any effect on the actions of Mr. or Mrs. Johnson, as they think the matter is not serious. This morning I found the child, with a temperature of 101 degrees, sitting up in bed playing with the other children. It will be a miracle if the other children are not infected. Either you ought to insist on the hotel being closed or the child removed to Cloncurry Hospital.

Hogan's hotel is just as insanitary. The back yards of these hotels (Johnson's and Hogan's) are full of oily matter and refuse; and, in addition, Hogan has a stagnant pool permanently in his back yard. But at the latter place there is no overcrowding, and the bedrooms, on the whole, are clean.

Stanley's hotel is the only one where decent sanitary conditions exist. Moreover, it is the only hotel where closets are sufficiently distant from bedrooms to be tolerable without the double-pane system. But the lodging-house known as Riley's Ranch is the worst offender. It is referred to below.

And so it went on. But just to show hon. members that the Home Department and the Health Department were alive in connection with these matters, immediately upon receipt of this letter from the doctor, the Health Commissioner wrote the following memorandum to the Home Department—

*Re Sanitary Conditions at Selwyn, Mount Elliott.*

MEMORANDUM.—The Under Secretary, Home Secretary's Department.

The circumstances detailed in Dr. Higgins' reports and letter (attached) necessitate an inquiry under sections 12 and 14 of the Health Act of 1900. I propose to despatch Chief Inspector Simpson for the purpose.

An order on the local authority for the cost of such inquiry will be submitted, on completion of the inquiry, for confirmation under section 13. It would also appear from the facts submitted that an order may be required under section 19.

I shall be glad to learn whether the administrative procedure contemplated, in the event of verification of statements submitted, meets with Ministerial approval, as the cost may be relatively considerable. So far as can be ascertained, the Mackinlay Shire Council is in a good financial position. The matter is urgent.

Hon. members would see that neither the

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Health Department nor the Ministerial head lost a moment in taking the necessary action to deal with this very serious state of affairs.

Mr. MAY was very glad that he brought this matter forward in the House. He had this morning not read what the Home Secretary had been kind enough to give them, but he saw a slight extract, although he was not making any use of it himself. He could say that it was entirely the fault of the Mackinlay Shire Council for treating that portion of their council men in such a meagre and stingy manner. When anything was required in that outlying portion of the shire there was nothing done. One member—he believed Mr. Stanley—had some 65 miles to ride into Mackinlay to attend the meetings, and, naturally, he could not attend as often as he wished to do. He wished to impress upon the Home Secretary that the Mackinlay Shire Council was to blame for the delay. They would not even spend money for the benefit of the ratepayers in that district to procure good water. He was very glad that the statement he had made was so fully corroborated by the Home Secretary, and that action had been taken so quickly.

Mr. COLLINS: When the hon. member for Flinders was speaking a few minutes ago he stated that the epidemic at Kidston was owing to the insanitary conditions that existed there. But he wanted to point out that while the conditions from a sanitary standpoint at Kidston at that particular point were not ideal, the Health Commissioner's report went to prove that it was not owing to the insanitary condition of Kidston, but to the outbreak. The outbreak at Kidston was caused by malaria, and he would read what the Commissioner said—

An outbreak of severe sub-tertian malaria occurred at Kidston (Oaks Rush), and necessitated the despatch of Dr. Baxter Tyrie (Government Health Officer) from Cairns. His investigation showed that the disease had probably been introduced by infected European miners from New Guinea. Amongst a population of approximately 400, 120 persons were affected, and at least twenty-five died. The measures taken by Dr. Tyrie were successful in stopping the outbreak.

The establishment of severe forms of malaria in tropical Queensland require to be carefully guarded against, as the economic results of this disease are very serious.

He (Mr. Collins) was in the midst of that trouble, and had to assist in the burial of one or two bodies while he was there, [9.30 p.m.] and, therefore, he knew something about it. Before the arrival of Dr. Tyrie the disease had already been declared to be malarial. The people complained at that time that the Health Department was not as active as they might have been in despatching Dr. Tyrie. From the time the information was sent to the Health Department to the time Dr. Tyrie arrived on the field was fourteen days. Had Dr. Tyrie arrived earlier, he might have saved one or two lives. Although they had Dr. Keely, Dr. Tyrie said, in his report, that Dr. Keely was seldom sober, and he was not a fit and proper person to look after the sick. There was only a population of 400 at that place, and they had to spend out of their own pockets in connection with sickness a sum of £129 6s. 9d.—they established a temporary hospital. It had been pointed out by Dr. Tyrie that the malaria was brought over from New Guinea. There were no less than twenty-five deaths out of a total of 120 persons affected with the complaint. That showed in the far North the great disadvantages they laboured under as compared with places like Brisbane. The

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evidence showed that Dr. Tyrie, on his arrival, did all that was possible to stamp out the disease, and he was practically successful in stamping it out, and that showed that the Government in appointing that microbiologist were taking a step in the right direction, because they all knew that malarial fever was caused by a microbe.

At twenty-five minutes to 10 o'clock,

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Under Standing Order 171, I call upon the hon. member for Croydon to take the chair.

Mr. MURPHY thereupon took the chair.

The HOME SECRETARY said: Immediately a communication reached the Health Department in connection with the urgency of the matter referred to by the hon. member for Burke, action was taken. Whatever the functions of the Health Department were, it was not their duty to appoint a medical man to deal with an epidemic. That duty was cast upon the local authority. However, in the case referred to he considered the urgency was such as to warrant the department in sending a medical man to deal with that particular epidemic, and a telegram was immediately despatched to Dr. Tyrie, as he (Mr. Appel) was of opinion it was necessary to appoint a man who had a knowledge of matters of that kind, and who had sufficient backbone to deal with the local authority which was not prepared to carry out their duties. Unfortunately, it happened that Dr. Tyrie was away with the naval men who were undergoing practice in the gunboats, and a day or two was lost before he left Cairns for the Oaks. However, that delay was probably better than another medical man going who had not Dr. Tyrie's experience, energy, and ability to cope with such a matter. As soon as Dr. Tyrie arrived there he took the necessary action to cope with the disease, with the result that he had overcome the epidemic, and gave the necessary instructions how to avoid a recurrence. A certain amount of expense devolved upon the Health Department, because the whole of the amount could not be recovered from the local authority, but he was pleased to say the local authority had expressed their willingness to co-operate, and it was greatly through a want of knowledge on their part and the inability to obtain the services of a medical man who could be entrusted with the work, that they had failed to take the necessary action.

Mr. GUNN wished to say a few words in connection with phthisis, or what was commonly known as consumption. Unfortunately, he had been intimately connected with that fell disease and knew far too much about its effects. It was a very serious thing, and a great number of people all over the world were dying from consumption; and the worst of it was that in a great number of cases it could be prevented. It was now discovered that that fell disease was communicated from one to another. If a person happened to sleep in a bed that had been occupied, perhaps the night before, by a person suffering from the disease they were likely to catch it; and, having contracted it, if he was not taken proper care of he would infect other people, and the disease was spread all over the place. Unfortunately, it was not only the old and weakly that were affected by consumption, but it mostly affected those between the ages of sixteen years and thirty years of age. Those were the most valuable people to the country. In New South Wales there was now a movement on foot to do something, and he hoped the Home Secretary would look into the

matter. Stanthorpe district was a favourite resort for those suffering from consumption. There was no public sanatorium there, and the people lived in tents; and it was quite likely they conveyed the disease to healthy people in the district. He would very much like to see a sanatorium established in the mountains there and another one in the highlands of the Northern districts. It was very necessary that it should be away from the coast, in the highlands. At one time it was considered that a hot climate was good for consumption, but now it was discovered that the highlands in the cold districts was better. Cold was one of the greatest disinfectants they had, and he sincerely hoped something would be done before long to prevent people suffering from that disease infecting others in their neighbourhood.

Mr. LESINA: This was one of the votes which the Committee were prepared to cheerfully endorse. It was a department doing an enormous amount of excellent work for Queensland, and it was one of those departments which should never, under any circumstances whatever, be in any way starved. It was an institution which was gradually growing in Queensland, and he hoped the Government would never stint the good work of that institution by curtailing the finances. He did not know the officers of the department, but he did know that they were an excellent body of men engaged in splendid work for Queensland. The matter mentioned by the hon. member for Carnarvon—consumption—was a matter about which excellent work yet remained to be done. From the report of the Health Commissioner it would be seen that consumption was by no means the most dangerous disease they had to deal with. There were the filth diseases, such as typhoid and diphtheria. Those were infectious diseases, and must be notified to the department. Last year there were 552 cases of diphtheria and 760 cases of typhoid, which showed the seriousness of those two infectious diseases. A great deal more attention should be paid to those matters, and that was where the real work of the department should come in; and they should see that the yards and premises in the metropolitan area were kept clean. Some people never cleaned their premises at all until they knew the inspector was hunting round the neighbourhood, and then there was a spasmodic clean-up. As a matter of fact the inspector did good in a neighbourhood by inducing a general clean-up, but it would be much better if the officers first instilled the idea of cleanliness in the school days. How much better to teach the children hygienics than theology about Noah's ark?

The HOME SECRETARY: Lessons are being prepared at the present time by the health officers for use in the schools.

Mr. LESINA: That was a very good thing. The more instruction there was given to children of school age in the fundamental principles of cleanliness the better it would be for adults later on. But what was the use of preparing such lessons for the children, when in a few months' time probably one-fifth of their school time would be taken up in the discussion of dry-as-dust theology? The report of the Government Analyst showed that almost everything consumed by the public, with the exception of certain liquors—that almost everything tested turned out to be unfit for human consumption. The analyst said—

Seven samples of gin, 11 samples of rum, 20 samples of whisky, 13 samples of wine, and 2 samples of beer were all found fit for human consumption.

He commended that fact to the hon. member

for Gympie—that the only things tested which were fit for human consumption were alcoholic liquors. The analyst further said—

Of 36 samples of beverages and cordials tested, 15 samples were passed as fit for human consumption; 8 samples contained salicylic acid; 12 samples contained from 6.4 to 10.1 grains of salicylic acid per pint with saccharine also present; 1 sample contained 9.7 grains of salicylic acid and 3.3 grains of saccharine per pint.

In another part of his report he gave a large number of figures which showed that bread was sold short weight. Adulteration of beer was an offence against the poor man, but adulteration of bread was a mean kind of theft, as it struck at the homes of all kinds of people, especially at the homes of the poor, in which bread was the staple commodity. But it was shown that not only were bread and flour adulterated, but that a great deal of the bread sold was short weight. He thought that if an inspector went about with a dogcart and scales and pulled up a baker here and there many more cases of selling short-weight bread would be discovered. He regretted very much that the adulteration of food was so widespread in Brisbane as the report indicated. It was a great pity that such was the case, because honesty was the underlying principle of British commerce the wide world over, and it got no vindication in this report, and the reason probably was that our legislation was not sufficiently drastic to bring those people to book.

Mr. MULLAN: The Home Secretary took exception to his interjection that there would not be much of a Pure Foods Act if the Government depended for its existence on the support of middlemen. If any evidence of that was wanted it was to be found in the report of the Commissioner of Public Health. If the Government were as anxious to protect the lives of little children as they professed to be, they would not hesitate twenty-four hours about issuing an edict which would at once and for ever put down the dastardly trade in adulterated foods which was carried on by middlemen and others to the detriment of the public health; but, apparently, as the hon. member for Clermont remarked, pure theology was considered of more value by the Government than pure milk. The Government Analyst said—

It is very unfortunate that the milk supply, on which depends to a very large extent our infant mortality, should be in such a very unhealthy condition. The purity of the milk supply is of very much greater importance from a health point of view than the purity of any other article of food, and yet it is the most adulterated and most contaminated food material in use at the present time.

Referring to that paragraph, the Commissioner of Public Health said—

The remarks of the Government Analyst in respect of milk adulteration illustrate the urgent necessity for a Pure Foods Act framed and administered on modern lines, which will alone enable this form of roguery to be suppressed. The adulterating milk vendor is more than a mere swindler, for he defrauds the helpless infant and invalid of that very nourishment upon whose integrity and purity their lives may depend.

Those were very strong utterances coming from the Commissioner of Public Health, and they showed the courage and outspokenness of the man. He had every confidence that Dr. Elkington would do the right thing if he was supported by the Government.

The HOME SECRETARY: He is.

Mr. MULLAN: The public of Brisbane were paying £2,500 per annum for water, instead of milk, and the Government should appoint additional inspectors without delay. If four or five more inspectors were appointed it would mean a saving to the public who had to pay that £2,500 annually. A great deal was said about bringing

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people here to populate the country, and the Government paid £12 a head or more for bringing immigrants to Queensland, and yet they stood by and allowed little children born in the country to be done to death.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is not correct. That report shows that the Government are active.

Mr. MULLAN: The Government should be more active than they were, and should not allow the milkmen of Brisbane to poison scores of little children annually. The whole trouble in this respect was seated in Brisbane, and they knew that those men were backed up by the middlemen of the city, who brought pressure on the Government to prevent them taking the drastic action they should take to stop this evil.

The HOME SECRETARY: That report does not show it.

Mr. MULLAN: Over 30 per cent. of the infant mortality in Queensland was to be found in the metropolitan area. Statistics showed that 90·23 per 1,000 of the children born in the metropolitan area died in infancy, while only 65·54 per 1,000 of those born in the rest of Queensland died in infancy. That was a strong indictment against the milkmen of the metropolis. Probably that large mortality was not attributable to one cause only, but no doubt a considerable percentage could be brought to the door of the milk vendor. About the meanest and most contemptible act a man could be guilty of was to adulterate milk which was to be used by a dying invalid or a poor child lying between life and death, and the Government could do more than they were doing to prevent that sort of thing, even without an amendment of the Health Act. They could put on additional inspectors.

The HOME SECRETARY: The Health Commissioner can get all the inspectors he wants for that purpose.

Mr. LESINA: He has *carte blanche*.

The HOME SECRETARY: No restriction.

Mr. MULLAN: The Commissioner stated in his report that 146 tons of foodstuffs were destroyed last year as unfit for human consumption. That was a very small percentage of the foodstuffs which could be condemned if we had stricter inspection. At present an inspector went into a town, and walked up to "A" or "B's" store, and proceeded to examine the goods on sale there. The man whose shop was visited was of course a martyr, but he telephoned to all the members of the Traders' Association in the town that the health inspector was there. Then all those storekeepers who got the news put their adulterated stuff in some underground place.

The HOME SECRETARY: Has the hon. member been in it himself? He seems to know all about it.

Mr. MULLAN: He knew for a positive fact that this thing was done in nearly every town in Queensland—that the adulterated stuff was put away until the inspector left the town, and then it was brought out again and sold in the first shop in which it had been condemned as unfit for human consumption.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is the hon. member's duty to give us that information, so that we may take action at once.

Mr. MULLAN: He would be only too happy to give the information he possessed to the department, but unfortunately those people knew too much to give him the information until it was too late to take action. What they did give him was information as to the method they adopted to swindle the public and euvre the inspector.

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Hon. E. B. FORREST: They are pulling your leg.

Mr. MULLAN: The hon. member might be soft enough to allow his leg to be pulled, and might think he was as soft as he was, but he could say that they were not pulling his leg. Last year he had occasion to ask the Home Secretary whether the Government would make inquiry into the prevalence of miner's phtthisis.

The HOME SECRETARY: That has been done, and I have a report showing that there is no such thing as miner's phtthisis.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Grant) resumed the chair.

Mr. MULLAN: The Minister promised that he would have inquiries made.

The HOME SECRETARY: I will lay the report of Dr. Elkington on the table to-morrow afternoon for the information of hon. members. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. HAMILTON thought the Health Commissioner, Dr. Elkington, deserved credit for the work he was doing. He also thought the late commissioner, Dr. Ham, did not get the assistance he should have received from the Government. As far as the adulteration of milk was concerned, the vendors could afford to pay the fines inflicted on them, because they could make it up in a week by watering the milk. His opinion was that they should be licensed; and when any of them was caught a second time selling adulterated milk, his license should be taken away. As far as food was concerned, many business people sold food that was adulterated, believing it to be the genuine article. He noticed that the Government were making real efforts to provide for patients afflicted with consumption at the Diamantina Hospital. Several times he had received applications to get persons into the Diamantina Hospital, and on many occasions they had beds made up on the veranda.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member cannot discuss the Diamantina Hospital on this vote.

Mr. LESINA wished to refer to a grievance many years old in connection with the drain going past Parliament House, and running into the river close to the ferry shed, and the drain near the ferry shed on the other side of the river. The drain on this side of the river was broken, and at low tide the smell cried aloud to heaven for disinfection. He believed the city council were responsible for keeping this drain in order. On page 7 of his report, the Commissioner of Health said—

The old defective sewers, of which so many exist in the metropolitan area, afford protection and safe harborage for an immense rat-population, and greatly increase the difficulties of the work. To this is added the neglect shown by many private individuals concerning the storage and disposal of edible garbage on their dwelling premises.

Some time ago he drew the attention of the department to this festering plague-spot, but nothing had been done. On the same page of the report there was a section under the heading of "Leprosy." There were eighty-four cases; and the report said—

Dr. Row considers that the principle endemic centres of leprosy in Queensland are Bundaberg, Cairns, Mackay, and the Johnstone River. Bundaberg he regards as the chief endemic centre, a large proportion of all cases admitted having at one time or other lived

at Bundaberg. He is also inclined to believe that leprosy is very prevalent amongst the aboriginals of Cape York Peninsula.

He thought that was a matter that should be inquired into—especially the fact that Bundaberg was regarded as the chief endemic centre, because Bundaberg was the head centre of the black labour traffic. With regard to the question of milk adulteration, he agreed with the hon. member for Gregory that the only remedy was to license the sellers of milk.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: In connection with the adulteration of food, it seemed to him that instead of chasing round hundreds of retailers, it would be better for the Health Commissioner to give his attention to the manufacturers.

The HOME SECRETARY: Most of these goods are imported.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: We were manufacturing the biggest part of our foodstuffs. He was glad the Health Commissioner was taking up this matter seriously, because it was a wicked thing to sell to people adulterated food which did not give the nourishment it was expected to give.

Question put and passed.

#### HOSPITALS AND CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS.

The HOME SECRETARY moved that £95,242 be granted for "Hospitals and Charitable Institutions." It would be noticed that "Hospitals generally" were put down for £77,000. When the Estimates were framed it was contemplated that the Government would introduce a Bill dealing with hospitals, and placing them in a sound financial position. They found it was impracticable to introduce the measure during the present session; but recognising the necessity of the hospitals was such that it was absolutely necessary for them to receive a larger amount, it had been decided to make provision whereby hospitals would receive this year the sum of £1 10s. for every £1 *bonâ fide* subscribed.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. HAMILTON: And will you make up the difference between the £1 6s. and the £1 10s.?

The HOME SECRETARY: They could not do that. He might mention further that for the past quarter the hospitals had received the full amount of £1 10s. on account of subscriptions. It was hoped that in the early part of next session a Bill would be laid on the table for the purpose of putting the hospitals on such a basis as the Government intended to place them if it had been possible to introduce the measure this session.

Mr. LESINA: Will it be a Bill to nationalise the hospitals?

The HOME SECRETARY: It would be a Bill to put the hospitals on a sound financial footing. The Government would take their own course as to the method of carrying it out. For the further information of hon. members, he desired to point out that in connection with this vote there was a small increase of £73. There was an increase in the salary of the visiting medical officer to the Dalby Sanatorium of £30.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: You have dropped that £50 for the Society for the Prevention of Consumption.

The HOME SECRETARY: Quite so, because that is not now carried out.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Are you substituting any other methods?

The HOME SECRETARY: Oh, yes; this was simply a society which met together for the purpose of reading papers in connection with the subject. The Government took action in establishing the Dalby Sanatorium, and the society in question waited upon him and asked that the matter should be discontinued, and stated that they were prepared to hand over the funds they had in hand, which amounted to something like £500, to assist in the erection of further buildings at the Diamantina Hospital for the accommodation of patients suffering from phthisis, and the necessary plans in connection with those buildings were now being prepared by the Works Department. The functions of the society were now being carried out by the Health Department. There was an appropriation of £40 for an extra nurse, an increase to the cook of £10, to the laundress of £13, and to the housemaids of £8 and £13 respectively. Provision was made for an extra labourer at £52, and the maintenance had been increased by £100. There was an increase in the railway fares of £10. As hon. members were aware, when a patient was admitted to the sanatorium, the railway fare was paid from the residence of the patient to the sanatorium. In connection with the Diamantina Hospital, there was an increase to the salary of the matron, Nurse Chatfield, of £20, and other small increases. The scale increases to nurses amounted to £30, and the maintenance had been increased by £200. There was an increase in the grant to the Brodribb Home, Toowoomba, of £50, and in connection with the Crèche and Kindergarten appropriation, an increase of £500. It was recognised that this was a useful work, which assisted poor women who had to go out to earn their living by giving them the opportunity of leaving their children in charge of a competent nurse. The Government had decided that there should be an extension of the operations of this society, and that centres should be established at Woolloongabba, West End (Brisbane), and Paddington; and the one at the Valley should receive further assistance. There was also an increase of £50 to the Dental Hospital. There was a decrease of £1,000 in respect to ophthalmia, the vote for which had been transferred to the Education Department, which had its administration. He hoped hon. members would pass this vote. It would be increased by a considerable sum in making the subsidy to hospitals the full £1 10s., which would enable them to carry out their functions and assist the sick poor of the State.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER was very pleased to see that the Government intended to extend the usefulness of the consumptive hospital at Dalby. Perhaps the greatest menace to the white race was consumption, and we should not be parsimonious in our expenditure to combat it. He did not think that Dalby was the best place for such an institution. The mountains in the neighbourhood of Stanthorpe perhaps offered better conditions. Dalby was, to his mind, too flat, and he would rather see money spent in some other place than in extensions there. He believed an ideal spot would be in the neighbourhood of the Consuelo country—that was on the dividing range between the electorates of Maranoa and Leichhardt. When the railway which was contemplated by the Government was built, the district would be within access. There was an elevation of 3,000 feet, with rarefied air, and in the valleys a colder climate could be got than Toowoomba, and he believed quite equal to the Blue Mountains in

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New South Wales. Diamantina was excellently managed and of great service, but it did not appear to be able to overtake the work which was necessary. He had several times complained at the Home Office of the delay in getting patients into the institution. On the last vote, he had referred to a case where for something like three months the Roma Hospital had two or three patients waiting for admission to Diamantina, because there was not sufficient accommodation, and it was too severe a tax on country hospitals. It would be better for the Home Secretary to make temporary provision for them in Brisbane, while they were waiting, where they could get proper treatment. He wished to refer to a case in his electorate, where a man named Michael O'Rourke was suffering from a swollen neck extending right over his shoulder, and the doctor declared him to be incurable. He remained in the Roma Hospital for over two months waiting for admission to the Diamantina, or for the Government to pay his fare to Victoria, where he had a brother to go to. He had made the matter known to the department, but no response was made except that the police were to make an inquiry. On the 13th July the man was still there, and when he inquired at the Home Office he was informed that they had not received the report from the police, but he happened to know that the police had forwarded their report three weeks before. Even up to now the man had not received admission into Diamantina.

The HOME SECRETARY: I wish the hon. member had mentioned the matter to me, and there would have been no delay.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: He had called two or three times on the Under Secretary in connection with the matter. The last he heard was that O'Rourke had left the hospital at Roma and gone into the bush at Jackson, and after wandering about there had found himself at Toowoomba. Where he was now, goodness knew! It was one of the most cruel cases that he had seen.

The HOME SECRETARY: I will make full inquiry into it.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: It was not the first time that the Diamantina had been unable to receive patients from Roma. The secretary of the hospital there had told him of two men who were declared to be utterly incurable lying on them there, and waiting for admission to Diamantina.

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member must remember that as a rule the Diamantina is overcrowded. We have made more accommodation, and it was still overcrowded.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: It was not right that there should be so much delay to sufferers who wanted treatment which country hospitals could not give.

The HOME SECRETARY: They will be able to do it better with the increased endowment.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: The Home Secretary should instruct the police, when incurable cases were reported to them, to send them to Brisbane so that some provision could be made for such cases.

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

[*Mr. J. M. Hunter.*]

### APPROPRIATION BILL NO. 3.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL.

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

### ROCKHAMPTON HARBOUR BOARD ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

#### THIRD READING.

The TREASURER: I beg to move that the Bill be now read a third time.

Mr. HARDACRE: I think it would be as well to enter my final protest against the third reading of this Bill, as it is not the wish of a large section of the Rockhampton Harbour Board, particularly the ratepayers' section. In regard to the solvency of the board, I said last night that it was the opinion of a large number of people in Rockhampton that this board is practically insolvent. I did not say it was insolvent myself—I said it was the assertion of a large number of people who took an active interest in this board. A statement was read which appeared to show that the board was in a perfectly solvent condition. As far as the balance-sheet goes, it does show that, but I understand the assertion that the board is in an insolvent condition does not refer to its current finances—the current expenditure as compared with its income—but refers more particularly to its assets; that a large number of its assets have now gone for ever—are now worthless—and the money has been expended in a way which does not give value for the work done. A large amount has been spent in dredging the river. In some cases holes had been dredged out and filled up again, and training-walls have been made which are now to be abandoned; and in other ways much of the money borrowed has been expended on works which are now worthless. That is what is referred to when it is stated in Rockhampton that the board is practically in an insolvent condition. However, whether that is so or not, I do not know. I have heard both sides of the case for many years, and the more I hear of it the less am I able to come to a conclusion which side is right and which side is wrong. As I said last night, it is a profound mystery, and a commission should be appointed to go into the whole concern. At any rate, it is against the wishes of a large number of ratepayers of Rockhampton to extend the borrowing powers of the board, and for that reason I wish to enter my personal protest against the passage of the Bill at the third-reading stage.

Mr. RYAN: I desire also to enter my protest against the third reading of this Bill on the grounds, firstly, that it has been passed before the franchise on which the board is elected has been extended. This money is advanced on the security, according to section 25 of the Rockhampton Harbour Board Act of 1895, of the

dues, rates, charges, rents, and other properties payable to or authorised to be received by or vested in the board.

The real payers of dues—as has been admitted by the leader of the Government on a former occasion, and must be admitted by every hon. member of the House—are those who produce the exports and consume the imports. As the Rockhampton Harbour Board is at present constituted the people who produce the exports and consume the imports have really no say in the election of that board, and consequently no say in the manner in which this borrowed money will be expended, although they

will be the people who will be called upon to foot the bill in case the harbour board have to pay up. For that reason—as representing an important constituency in the Central district—I think I am voicing the general opinion of people in the Central district that this Bill should not be passed until the franchise is extended. If we look at past experience we will find that when the borrowing powers of the Rockhampton Harbour Board were formerly extended by £100,000 great things were held out by the then harbour board as to what was to be done with the money. They were to have 20 feet at low water springs from Keppel Bay to the town wharf. What has the result been? Instead of 20 feet at low water springs, I do not think they have got 9 feet. As the strength of a chain is the strength of its weakest link, so also the depth of a river for navigation purposes is its depth at its shallowest part. Recently the board has found it necessary to increase the amount of dues payable by people living in the West, and I have noticed from reports in the Press that the shire councils in the West have protested against this increase in the dues by the harbour board. If the harbour board is in a sound financial position, why the necessity to increase those dues? And, above all, after the experience we have of extending the borrowing powers of the board, and after our knowledge of how they have failed to carry out what they proposed to do, why should we, in the face of these things, extend their borrowing powers by another £50,000 without first giving the people who have to foot the Bill a say in the matter? On those grounds I deem it my duty in this House to protest against this measure going through before that extension of franchise is made; and, furthermore, I think there was no necessity for it. The Government had ample opportunity, if they really were sincere and genuine in their desire to extend the franchise for the election of that board—there was ample opportunity for them to have done so before extending the borrowing powers. I think the least the Government could do would be to superintend the expenditure of this money and see that the Middle Channel is not interfered with, and I think that could be done by having whatever work they propose to do in the Fitzroy River subject to the approval of the Harbours and Rivers Department. Perhaps the Treasurer will be good enough to give us some assurance to that effect.

The TREASURER: All work has to be passed by the Governor-in-Council in every instance under section 90 of the Act.

Mr. RYAN: Do I understand any work will be subject to the approval of the Harbours and Rivers Department? If so, it will be very satisfactory.

Mr. MANN: I just rise to say a few words before this Bill goes through, and to sound a warning to the Treasurer. The tendency now is to have bigger ships, and there is no doubt that in the very near future most of the works in connection with harbours on the Queensland coast will become obsolete. We require this money very badly to dredge the Broadmount Harbour or Port Alma. I think, myself, it is a waste of money to spend it on the river. However, a majority of the House has agreed to it, and I suppose the money will be spent on the river. I personally called "Not formal" to this motion, as I wished to protest against the money being spent while the hospitals are being starved; but now that the Treasurer is going to find more money for the hospitals, I have not the same objection. But I

am satisfied that the money will be of very little use, and the money could be much better spent in dredging the harbour of Broadmount.

Mr. LESINA: I, like the hon. member for Cairns, wish to protest against the third reading of this Bill, and had it not been that the Government promised more assistance to the hospitals it may have been made more emphatic. The fact that we determined to make an emphatic protest has led the Government to promise to provide more generous assistance to the hospitals. I note, by the way, that no credit has been given in the Press, or anywhere else, to the hon. member for bringing up this question. Why does the daily Press generally agree in suppressing all matters like this?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order. The hon. member is not in order in discussing what the daily Press chooses to do or does not do. The question the hon. member must discuss is whether this is a good Bill to pass its third reading.

Mr. LESINA: I want to say this is not a good Bill, and I want to repeat that fact so that it will be recorded a second time in *Hansard*, so that the public will know that we object to it. Whenever the Government dips its hands right up to the hilt in the public Treasury you can rely upon the Press suppressing all reference to it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! If the hon. member pursues that line of debate, I shall call upon him to resume his seat.

Mr. LESINA: I want to emphasise again the facts I put forward last night in connection with this measure. I do not think the money should be granted until the franchise is extended—a matter I went into very fully last night; and for other reasons which I then emphasised, I am opposed to the passage of the third reading of this Bill.

Mr. RYLAND: I would like to know from the Treasurer if this money is to provide the guarantee for the Port Alma Railway?

The TREASURER: It is paid out of the income of the Board.

Mr. RYLAND: I must say I am entirely against any of this money being used to provide the guarantee for the Port Alma Railway.

The TREASURER: Perhaps I had better give a little further information.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member has spoken.

The TREASURER: Not on the third reading.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member moved the third reading.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Give him permission to speak.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that the Treasurer should address the House?

Cries of "Yes" and "No."

Mr. LESINA: It is our only chance of gagging him.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the TREASURER, the Bill was passed, and ordered to be transmitted to the Council, by message in the usual form.

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

*Hon. A. G. C. Hawthorn.]*