

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Council**

**TUESDAY, 25 JULY 1911**

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

TUESDAY, 25 JULY, 1911.

The PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir Arthur Morgan) took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

APPROPRIATION BILL No. 1.

ASSENT.

The PRESIDENT announced the receipt of a message from the Governor intimating that His Excellency had assented to this Bill as framed on behalf of His Majesty the King.

PAPERS.

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

Report of the Government Resident at Thursday Island.

Regulations under the Rights in Water and Water Conservation and Utilization Act of 1910.

Regulations under the Navigation Act of 1876.

Regulations under the Government Savings Bank Act of 1864, *re* interstate transfers.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORTS.

HON. A. H. BARLOW presented reports on the following matters:—

Sinking fund under the Government Loan Act of 1910.

Savings Bank securities.

Treasury bills and notes.

Public debt reduction fund.

Ordered to be printed.

POLICE JURISDICTION AND SUMMARY OFFENCES BILL.

FIRST READING.

On the motion of the HON. A. H. BARLOW, this Bill was read a first time.

The second reading was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

*Hon. A. H. Barlow.]*

## ADDRESS IN REPLY.

## RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

HON. A. NORTON: In the remarks I have to make this afternoon in connection with the Address in Reply, I do not propose to touch on many subjects. So far as the rejoicings with respect to the coronation of the King are concerned, I think that all of us heartily join in what has been said. With regard to the obituary notices, perhaps it is hardly worth while to say any more than has been said already. Those who feel most realise that it is impossible, in cases where our feelings are strong, to convey our full meaning with respect to the matter which we regret so much. I therefore propose to leave those matters untouched, and I hope that my silence will not disguise my feelings. What I want to refer to now are some remarks that fell from my hon. friend, Mr. Beirne, and some also that fell from the Hon. Mr. Murphy in connection with immigration and the settlement of people on the land. I go to a certain extent with what has fallen from both of those hon. members, but not altogether. With regard to what the Hon. Mr. Beirne told us about girls who were brought out to Queensland very shortly afterwards being found in Sydney under engagement there, that statement was made many years ago, and we all know that it was absolutely true. We know that immigrants brought out to Queensland were leaving Queensland a very short time after they arrived, not only by dozens and by scores, but I think I might say by hundreds, women and men too. The matter of dealing with them and keeping them here is a problem which I have no doubt the Government will do their utmost to solve, and I am quite sure members on both sides in both Houses will do their best to aid them in the matter. With regard to those who wish to settle on the land, there is something more to be said than has been said already. The Hon. Mr. Beirne told us he met a gentleman in the train who had a great idea of bringing people out. He wished to get land grants from the Government—if he could—I do not think he will—and then he was to make arrangements for bringing people here from England, Scotland, Ireland, and the Western States of America. They were to come here in great numbers and to settle permanently, or as nearly permanently as we can see, on the lands of the country. He might be able to do that—I do not know that he could, and I do not know that he could not—but I think it would be a risky thing to entrust such powers to one individual, or even to half a dozen individuals. The only way in which such problems have been worked out in the past, so far as I know, has been by the railway companies. In their own interests they have induced people to come to the countries where grants of land have been made to them. In their own interests they have settled people on the land at a very small cost to themselves. They have had large blocks surveyed, and in some cases, I believe, they have even built houses for them, in which they might reside from the time they went on to the country. That has been proposed here, or something of the kind, and the State declared most strongly against it, so that I think it is extremely doubtful that anything of that kind will be tried. It remains, therefore, for the Government, so

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far as I can see, to devise means by which people will be enabled to take possession of the land within a reasonable time. I think that the Scottish Agricultural Commissioners gave an idea of what was required. I was talking to one of the commissioners—I think he was the leading member of the commission—and he told me that in Canada they survey land and have it all ready for immigrants to go on to directly they land. They not only survey it, but they have the timber cleared away so that the land can be worked at once. "Here," he said, "you do nothing of that kind. You take the people up in a train; they are dropped at a certain place, and they have pointed out to them a piece of forest land or some thick scrub land in a certain direction, and they are told that is where they are to take up a selection." I do not know how far he was correct in that, but he said, "Those men do not come here as foresters; they are not accustomed to clear land for themselves. What they want to do is to go on to the land and put in a plough the moment they get there and get a crop the first year." It is very difficult to devise a scheme by which that can be done, and however the Government may seem to fail, they deserve, at any rate, every consideration and all the assistance we can give them. If any means can be devised, I am sure Ministers will receive the assistance of members of both sides of both Houses. There are some difficulties in the way of settlement. Taking grazing farms, for instance, I think the selectors of the bigger grazing farms are asked to pay too much rent. It is not sufficient answer to that to say that people are willing to pay those rents. They are willing to pay them, and a great many men give a great deal more than they ought to give. It is not in the best interests of the country that so much should be asked, because they have to pay it in bad seasons as well as in good. If a man comes here when the seasons are good and takes up a 20,000 or a 30,000 acre grazing farm, and makes his improvements and stocks it up at once, with his high rent he wants to make the most of the good seasons, and he crowds on stock to the fullest extent. He may think, from his want of knowledge of the country, that he is lightly stocking it, whereas, if he asked those who had had many years' experience of the country, he would be told that he was risking too much. Very many selections are being taken up and stocked too heavily for the reason that the selectors must meet their rent and get a profit, and, if a dry spell should come, great losses will ensue. It is no use saying that they will be able to shift their stock by rail to relief country, because the relief country is all being taken up, and some of it at a very high rental. That is the difficulty I see. If we get a dry season, there is a danger of very serious loss. In former droughts there was relief country to which stock might be sent; but in this case thousands and thousands of sheep were brought from the western districts and turned out at the Isis Junction—on that sandy country without grass—where they died in thousands. I hope we shall never have a drought like that again. Unfortunately, a great many people do not learn until they have had sufficient losses to impress on them the good sense of the men who advise them to stock more lightly. I think, therefore, that we are making a mistake in asking too much rent, seeing that

people are tempted to overstock and suffer the consequent loss. That applies more particularly to people coming from other States and from oversea, who are unacquainted with the good seasons followed by bad seasons experienced in this country. My first experience of drought was in 1858, when I was travelling cattle from Grafton to Victoria, and even on the best country in the Riverina district I saw thousands of skeletons of cattle. And at that time there were no fences to prevent cattle from going off the run as far back as they liked for such feed as they could find. Stock on the Lachlan River used to go as far as the scrubs to the north, where they got enough food to enable them to subsist, going back to the river for water. Now most of the country is fenced, and stock have not the opportunity of going to a distance to get food for themselves. This is a matter that will have to be considered, and the sooner some attention is given to it the better. Then there is another matter in connection with the pastoralists. We want to resume a great deal of country in order to settle new-comers on the land, and it is right that a certain proportion of the areas held by the pastoralists should be resumed for the purpose at different times. I have never had any personal interest in the western districts. For years the only land in which I have had any interest is the small area on which I live, and the still smaller one where I shall rest after I die. I think that if land is to be resumed, sufficient consideration should be given to the men who have improved that land to such an extent as to make it carry eight or ten times as many stock as when they first took it up. This, of course, is done by putting down bores. Before the 1833 drought I was travelling in the train with a gentleman who has left us now—I hope for a better place, for he was a minister—and he asked me if I believed in improvements. I said I did believe in improvements but that the effect of putting down those bores in a great deal of that good country would be worse during a drought than it had been in the past, because there would be so many stock on the country that the whole of the grass would be eaten off, and they could not live on water alone. "Then," he said, "you do not believe in improvements." I said, "I do; but I believe also in reasonable precautions against taking too great an advantage of those improvements." And that is just what happened a few years later, when some people had from 50,000 to 100,000 sheep there; they formerly had from 15,000 to 20,000. There was no provision for fodder; there was no relief country available; and the consequence was the loss of stock not only by thousands, but by millions. That was in the big drought of 1833. I heard of a case incidentally last week, in which some gentlemen bought country at a very low rate eighteen years ago, when it would carry very few sheep. The country was shown on the map as three contiguous blocks. They put down three bores on the upper block, and ran water by channels through the holding. On the third block they not only had channels for their own use, but made a detour in the adjacent country in order that their neighbour might take advantage of the water; and on the other side they did the same. On the central piece they put down one bore. By means of these bores they increased the value and the carrying capacity of their holding to a very large extent, and worked themselves into a very comfortable position.

I am speaking of men who put down bores without help—men who took the whole of the risk, and spent thousands of pounds in getting water. When the Water Act was passed, I knew it was intended to put some check on the use, or the misuse, of water. In this case part of the run was to be resumed; and I hear from their agent that the part recommended for resumption is the part on which there are three bores; so if this resumption is made they will lose all the advantage they gained by their industry, their forethought, and their expenditure. I think that is an extremely hard case. It was not the Government that explored the depths and found this deep water; it was done by private individuals. I think the first to get sub-artesian water were the Bignells—they were the men who taught not only other individuals, but the Government also. Then the Government put down bores at Charleville, Barcardine, and a number of other places. The pastoralists were the real explorers, just as they have been in most instances connected with the settlement of the country. For a good many years they were not so heavily taxed as they are now; and I am not complaining of what they have to pay at present in the shape of rent, because I think they can afford to pay more than they paid in the past, by reason of the country having been so much improved. It may be said that they are taxed on their improvements, but I do not think that can be argued seriously. If they improve the country so much, they know

[4 p.m.] perfectly well that they will be asked to pay higher rents, and they can afford to pay them. I do think that that is an extremely hard case. I do not say that the country has yet been taken from them. I believe it has not yet been decided; but, if they have to lose three bores, from which selectors will benefit, who have not paid a single penny in connection with them, it will certainly be very hard. I suppose the selectors will have to pay a higher rental for the land, but that is not much satisfaction to the men who lose their bores. There is another aspect of this question of water and bores. These same men—Messrs. Fletcher Brothers—have a place called Elmina, about 75 miles south of Charleville, and not long ago they took up another place called Ularunda, some distance from Elmina. It is a piece of poor country, which was abandoned because it was dry. They were going to sink bores on Ularunda, expecting to meet with the same success that they met with in the case of Elmina. They had 2,000 feet of 7-inch tubing on the ground ready to go to work. Then they got a letter from Mr. Henderson, who is in charge of the Hydraulic Department, requiring them to give certain information before they proceeded with the work. One of the conditions was that they were to have a certain quantity of 10-inch tubing—I do not know what the quantity was—it was not stated—more 8-inch tubing, and more 6-inch tubing; 7-inch tubing was not mentioned at all. Now, as they had used 7-inch tubing very largely before, and had 2,000 feet of it ready to put down as soon as they got started, it would be rather hard that they should be compelled to get 10-inch and 8-inch tubing without knowing what quantity of each size would be required. In their letter they say, in effect, "We may be required to put down 10-inch tubing 1,000 feet. How are we to know? Mr. Henderson or some-

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one else is to go and inspect the work, and tell us whether there is enough of that tubing, so we must have an unknown quantity on the land, not knowing how much may be used. The same with 8-inch and the same with 6-inch." To get these other sizes not only means that they will have 2,000 feet of 7-inch tubing on their hands, for which they paid a large sum of money, but they will lose a great deal of time, and they are all ready to begin now. I have a letter here which I propose to read. I am not going to attack Mr. Henderson, though when people receive their instructions from him they may think that he is the man doing the mischief. I do not think he is. I suppose—I do not know if I am right—that Mr. Henderson was asked to draft regulations in connection with the use of bore water—it is only natural that he should be asked to do so. Whether he drafted the regulations or not, certain regulations seem to have been gazetted, and therefore Mr. Henderson must abide by them, whether he recommended them or not. It will be seen that some of those regulations were unreasonable even in country where no boring has been done before, and more unreasonable where the men who want to put down bores know exactly what they have to do from their own experience. The letter was handed to me by Mr. George Story, who is the agent of the Messrs. Fletchers. Mr. Story sent the letter to Mr. Denham at Mr. Denham's own request—he had seen Mr. Denham on the subject of the letter. I have no doubt the undertaking given by Mr. Denham was misunderstood by Mr. Henderson, but I would point out that, so far as Mr. Henderson is concerned, when regulations are gazetted he must abide by them, and it is not in his power to amend them or make concessions. He must refer everything to his Minister; and, therefore, in giving instructions with regard to certain casings he would be guided, in addition to the instructions he himself received, by the regulations.

Hon. W. V. BROWN: Do the regulations provide for 10-inch tubing?

Hon. A. NORTON: I will read the letter. I may say that the Premier is already acquainted with the matter. I shall first read the covering letter sent by Mr. George Story to the Premier—

"According to promise, I have the honour to hand you Mr. Fletcher's reply to my wire, authorising him, in your name, to start the deep bore. I send it unofficially, as I have no desire to be a party to a complaint against Mr. Henderson, but it may call your attention to the fact that what appears a mere detail to the official may be the cause of much delay and expense to the man on the land.

"The Fletcher Bros. bought Elmina many years ago—dry, unimproved, and dangerous country. I send you a rough plan of it, as they have fenced and improved to date, the red lines being bore drains. Some few years ago they took Ularunda, which was dry abandoned country, and they are now using the revenue from Elmina to develop Ularunda before they can stock it. I most respectfully submit that it is not a wise policy to put obstacles in the way of such men as these, who are most valuable tenants of the State."

Here is their letter to Mr. Story—

"I have to apologise for not noticing sooner your letters and telegrams re our application for a license to put down a deep artesian bore on Ularunda.

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"I got your telegram of the 17th instant, as follows:—

"Start your deep bore when you please. Premier takes all responsibility; license in due course.

"This telegram I got when I was in Morven on my way to Sydney. At the same time I received the following telegrams from the Hydraulic Department:—

"Under the circumstances no exception will be taken to your proceeding with the new bore (artesian) Ularunda forthwith, but application must be completed to the best of your ability and furnished as soon as possible, together with plan showing site and specification to minimise risk water reaching surface outside casing. License may require bore be lined from surface with 10-inch, 8-inch, and 6-inch casings—two former to such depth respectively as Hydraulic Engineer may deem necessary, latter to bottom or water-bearing bed.

"If you will read this telegram carefully, you will see that it very effectually turns to stone the bread the Premier was offering me.

"In boring you must begin with the largest casing first. I only had one length (18 feet) of 10-inch casing and four lengths (about 70 feet) of 8-inch casing. Even if I had had the requisite length of 10-inch casing (and this was an unspecified quantity anyhow), I had not the tools to handle casing of that size to any depth. I would have had to order both tools and casing from Brisbane. I know from sad experience what that means. I have been kept waiting for weeks for tools. Then there was the unknown quantity, or rather there were two unknown quantities in the offer—what length of 10-inch casing was I to order, and what length of 8-inch casing? This would probably depend upon the state of Mr. Henderson's liver—"

I dare say he felt very sore when he wrote that—

"I submit, with all deference, that Mr. Henderson, or any other man, can decide such a question quite as well with his liver as with his head—"

We must make allowances for a little head—"

"Short of inspiration, how could Mr. Henderson decide? You cannot start with 6-inch casing and subsequently put in 10-inch or 8-inch.

"I would have had to commence with 10-inch and go on with it to such depth as Mr. Henderson chose, and then put 8-inch inside the 10-inch, and go on with the 8-inch until Mr. Henderson chose to say I could reduce to 6-inch—"

You see there is nothing to show how he was to begin or what expense he would be called upon to incur—

"Upon what data would Mr. Henderson decide these questions, and how was I to tell what he would decide? I have had one interview with Mr. Henderson, and I have once or twice sought information from him on hydraulic questions. I would require to be very sure of any man before I allowed him to start me on a 10-inch hole to such depth as he may choose. Suppose he chose 1,000 feet for 10 inch and 1,500 feet for 8 inch—this would make the hole frightfully expensive—and all this to guard against the very doubtful contingency of the water reaching the surface outside the casing. I have done a lot of boring here (and on Elmina, where the pressure is far greater), and I have never known the water to reach the surface outside the casing (except any temporarily, and never after the casing was lowered and the hole completed), and no such expensive precautions have been taken. In any case, in all this country you go through rock to about 6 feet or 10 feet from the surface, and £1 worth of cement would very effectually prevent any water reaching the surface outside the casing if it should happen to show up. Anyhow, does not all this amount to repudiation of the terms of our lease? Whatever right the Government might

have to interfere in such matters after the expiration of the lease, there is certainly no right now. When we took the lease it was specified that we should pay rent and enclose with netting within three years. Ularunda was high, dry country, and for that reason had been abandoned by previous tenants, and thrown back on the Government's hands. The water supply was the main controlling consideration in the whole affair. If the terms of our lease had specified that Mr. Henderson's judgment (and not ours) should be the controlling factor in the most important consideration—water—we would have let Mr. Henderson control also the balance, and have refused the terms.

"And, finally, to make a further burlesque of it, we had only 7-inch casing on the ground, and not 6-inch casing, as specified by Mr. Henderson. We had purchased 2,000 feet of 7-inch casing over two years ago, and what was to be done with it? Was it to be put on one side to meet Mr. Henderson's views?"

"I wish to thank you for all the trouble you took over this affair, and also to thank the Premier for the consideration shown. Your efforts were rendered useless to me, however, by reason of the appearance again of Mr. Henderson, who took it in hand to specify the various sizes of casing I should use, while leaving unspecified the various depths to which the 10-inch and 8-inch casings should be used. I could hardly buy such an expensive pig in a bag. The only casing I had was 7-inch, and I cannot afford to put on one side 2,000 feet of 7-inch casing, as it was expensive stuff. I could not afford to wait and waste time and money. I held to my purpose, as stated in my letter of the 9th ultimo, and went on with a sub-artesian hole. Fortunately, Mr. Henderson has as yet no authority to obstruct people in their efforts to obtain sub-artesian water, and one can still use common sense in that direction."

I think we can understand a man writing with some asperity when he has been blocked in that way. On the face of it, Mr. Henderson has not had any experience in stock matters, and I think the case is a very hard one indeed. Instead of going on with the deep artesian boring, they content themselves with sub-artesian, and at much less cost to themselves. I am not attempting to condemn the Government in the matter; I am sure they could not realise what would be the effect of giving the power in these regulations to Mr. Henderson, who seems to control everything in connection with the matter. It seems to be not in the best interests of the country, and not in the best interests of men who have been good tenants in the past, and would have been better tenants in the future if they had been allowed to go in their own way in what they proposed to do. I brought this matter forward in order that people may know something about the conditions and regulations, because it is a matter that should be generally known. These men are making the country habitable, and surely they deserve consideration. I do not want to crack up the pastoralists and say they deserve a great deal more consideration because they have been so long in the country. I do not want to say they should be given a bonus of £50 because they came to the country in a particular year. In my opinion they should be contented with what they have made here; and if they have not succeeded they should be prepared to put up with the consequences. Neither do I want to make any mischief out of this letter, which speaks for itself. Before I leave the subject, however, I would like to refer to another matter connected with land. I cannot understand why we have not had reserves made of most beautiful pieces of country which, when

taken up by selectors, necessarily have their beauties destroyed, because they have to be turned to profit. We know there are reserves in New South Wales to which thousands of people resort. We had not even a "Cave" reserve until Chillagoe was placed in the hands of the local shire council, and that was only after part of the cave had been destroyed. I am told that there are caves even more beautiful than Chillagoe. I was told of one by a responsible officer of the Government, and I have had his report confirmed by a son of the Hon. R. Philp. Surely that cave should be reserved and thus prevented from being taken up like the one near Rockhampton. I ask the representative of the Government to put the matter before his colleagues, and ask if they cannot see their way to reserve portions of country which in the future will be regarded as a valuable asset on account of their natural beauty. On the Mulgrave, in the Cairns district, there are some of the most lovely spots I have seen. I have photographs of some of them, and everybody who sees them admires their exceptional beauty. I think sufficient consideration should be given to this matter to make suitable reserves. I do not say they should be very large; they might be reserves of moderate size, which could be used for picnics and public resorts. I am not going to talk about the Liquor Bill; I heard a great deal about the liquor question some years ago when the Royal Commission inquired into the matter, and I got sick of it. I never heard such contradictory statements as I heard in connection with that inquiry. I must say, however, that I think there would be much less objection raised to the conditions under which hotels are licensed if a little more care were given to the selection of men to whom licenses are granted. There are some men who could not keep a small cottage decent—not even their own houses. How can you expect such men to properly manage a hotel, where people expect at least cleanliness and a fair amount of comfort? I do not say there are many, but there are some, who should not receive a license. At the time the commission inquired into the subject, I had a look round many of the back premises, which in most cases were absolutely disgraceful—you could find them out by your nose 100 yards away in many instances. I think as a rule the police are charged with the inspection of these premises, and I think whoever is responsible for seeing that they are kept in order should be severely reprimanded.

Hon. B. FAHEY: The police have always done it, and done it faithfully; but they were not supported.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The police have to report on the premises when application is made for a renewal of the license.

Hon. A. NORTON: I think there should be a general supervisor to see that the work is done. However, I am not going to talk more on that now. We are promised an amendment of the Wages Boards Act; and I think some amendment is required. I do not say that Wages Boards will be effective in suppressing strikes, because those who are satisfied with a verdict will accept it, while those who are not satisfied with it will not accept it. With regard to the Workers' Dwellings Act, I think when that measure was brought in, the Government of the day were not acting very fairly. There are a

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number of building societies in the country, and they have worked on the whole very fairly. They are not owned by men of large means—there are no shareholders that I would call large shareholders. What we have to remember is that the money advanced by the Government at low interest to enable workers to put up dwellings for themselves is taken, I presume, from the Consolidated Revenue, to which all the shareholders in building societies contribute in some form or other, and it is very hard on them that the money so raised should be taken to enable work to be carried on by the Government in opposition to the building societies. In fact, if carried on to a very large extent by the Government, it will have the effect of bursting up the building societies. It is not that the Government take greater risks—though they do take greater risks—but they dispense with the payment of fees.

Hon. F. McDONNELL: They do not need the fees. It is a good Act.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: There are no mortgage fees.

Hon. A. NORTON: Why should the building societies have to pay fees, when the Government dispense with fees? I hope the Government will give further consideration to this matter, because the injustice, I think, must strike everybody. Now I think I have detained the Council long enough. There are other matters to which I might refer, but I will restrain myself. I would like to refer to the Prickly Pear Bill. In Tasmania and in New South Wales there are places where the sweetbriar becomes as great a nuisance as the pear. I know places in New England where some of the wealthy men were employing horses and bullocks to drag the briar up by the roots. They put a rope round it, hitched the horse on to this rope, and dragged it up by the [4.30 p.m.] roots. But in some places—in the beds of creeks, for instance—it was so bad that even by that means they could not get rid of it. It is just the same in Tasmania. A friend of mine met an old chap from Tasmania the other day, and in the course of a conversation about it this old chap said, "I don't mind the sweetbriar. You are going the wrong way to work. You are trying to pull it up." My friend said, "What do you do?" "Well," said the old chap, "I cut it down to the ground, and I burn off the tops, and when the young growth comes up, the stock eat it as fast as ever it grows." I know that. Stock love the young shoots of the sweetbriar. That is a simple way of dealing with it. You do not destroy it, but you are able to make use of it and keep it under control. We might succeed with similar treatment in connection with the prickly pear. I was through lots of this prickly pear country many years before it had spread so much in Queensland, and in some places in the South where teamsters had to travel over long stretches of prickly pear country, when they turned out their teams in the evening and made their camp-fires they cut some of the prickly pear and threw it on to the fires for a few moments and burned the prickles off, and then dragged it off the fire again and gave it to the stock, and it was all that the stock had by way of food and drink through those long dry stretches. If anyone could invent some travelling gas arrangement by which you could burn off the prickles, we might

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not only utilise the prickly pear, but the stock would thrive on it. I mention this, because it may turn the attention of inventors in this direction.

Hon. M. JENSEN: My remarks will be brief. I wish to refer, not so much to what appears in this list of measures as to what does not appear there. The first omission—and a material one—is the absence of any reference to a Trade Disputes Bill. That Bill appeared in the Rockhampton platform. The Kidston and Philp parties announced it as a part of their programme, and, if I am not mistaken, it appeared twice in the list of measures to be submitted to Parliament. Such a Bill was passed in England as far back as 21st December, 1906, and all the calamities that were predicted as the result of passing it have not occurred—not one of them. The result, practically, of the English measure was to make the law what for years everybody had believed it to be. We have been told that the Imperial Parliament passed it against their better judgment, and that they merely deferred to public opinion. That surely goes to show how strong was the feeling in favour of the measure outside Parliament. I am using that as an argument why the Bill should be passed here, to argue that, if they who did not believe in it passed it, it might well be passed in Queensland. Hon. members will see that a measure which has twice appeared on the list of measures to be submitted to Parliament could not then have been unpalatable to the Government, and, if not unpalatable then, it should not be any more unpalatable now. It may savour of presumption on my part, and no doubt it is easy to give advice to others, but it seems to me that any Government should pass a measure which is demanded by the public, whether that Government believes in it or not. At any rate we know that it was passed in England, where such has been the practice. I think I could quote even the famous Edmund Burke to that effect. We may be told that it is only Labour voters who want this Bill, but I think I am correct in saying that practically all trade unionists are unanimous in their demand for the Bill; and all trade unionists are not by any means Labour voters. Whatever may be their differences in politics, I understand that on this question they are practically united. The Bill is bound to come eventually, and it might as well come as an act of grace instead of something extorted from the Government of the day, in the same way as old-age pensions and many other humane measures we have passed. Another matter to which I would like to refer—and it is the only other matter to which I shall refer—is the need for legislation to protect the children of dairy farmers. Many of those children are over-worked to such an extent that they fall asleep when they go to school. Most of their time out of school is spent in attending to cows. Hon. members will remember that some years ago this evil was referred to in one of the Education Department reports. In Sydney conferences of school teachers have frequently denounced the evil, and, if I am not mistaken, the Governor-General recently referred to it in a speech in New South Wales. But I can quote much better testimony on this point, because it is the opinion—not of one man but of a body of men, and written, I suppose, with a

certain sense of responsibility. The Scottish Commissioners, speaking of the dairy farmer, said—

“He must not work them (that is his children) like slaves, by making them milk ten or a dozen cows every morning before going to school, nor grudge them their hours of amusement when they come back.”

Further on they said—

“One of the most sorrowful sights to be seen in the Commonwealth to-day is eight or ten-year-old children of a dairyman milking cows morning and night, and spending all their spare hours slaving about the farm.”

It may be asked what is the remedy. Well, I take it there should be no difficulty in meeting this abuse by legislation. For instance, an Act might be passed providing that no child under a certain specified age should be employed at any work about a farm, and a further section might provide that, if in the opinion of the bench a child is being over-worked, they should have power to impose a fine or imprisonment. The mere existence of such an Act would be, to a great extent, a deterrent, and, if that was not sufficient, then a fine or imprisonment would meet the case. I hope hon. members will not say that I am making an attack on dairy farmers, because there is no doubt that the majority of dairy farmers are prepared to make any sacrifices for their children, and the idea of over-working them would be as abhorrent to them as it is to us. But there is a small minority who are guilty of this wrong to their children, and I contend that legislation is needed and should be passed this session to grapple with an evil which is so pronounced that it even meets the view of visitors.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: The Speech, first of all, touches upon the rejoicing that attended the Coronation of our beloved King and Queen, and I think that everyone must have been very gratified with the patriotism that was shown by the people of Queensland generally. The next item in the Speech is the loss of the “Yongala.” I am sure we all deplore that as the biggest disaster we have ever had in Queensland waters. I notice that the Government have offered a reward of £1,000 for the discovery of the location of the wreck. That reward has not yet been claimed, and I do not think it is likely to be claimed, and I would therefore suggest that the reward should be withdrawn and the amount supplemented with another £2,000 or £3,000 and given to relieve the relatives of those who suffered by the disaster.

HON. M. JENSEN: Hear, hear!

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: It seems to me that by taking such a step the Government would be acting in a very graceful and humanitarian way, and I am sure that their action would meet with the acquiescence of a very large body of the electors of Queensland. The next matter referred to in the Speech is the death of Mr. Speaker Bell. As one who for some time was a colleague of the deceased gentleman in the Ministry, and as one who subsequently sat beneath him in the Assembly when he was filling the Speaker's chair, I consider he filled that chair with very great ability. He had an intimate knowledge of the Standing Orders and of the Constitution of the House, and with that knowledge and the practice that he had had, he was able to carry out the duties of the office quite in accordance with

the best traditions, and he also brought to it a dignity which showed that he fully appreciated the importance of the position. I regret exceedingly his death, and feel sure that, had he lived, he was destined to fill a still higher place in the community. We come next to the question of immigration. The Speech says—

“Though the census recently taken shows that our population greatly increased during the past decade, yet it is not increasing at a rate commensurate with the requirements of our thriving and rapidly expanding industries. My advisers are, therefore, making earnest and, it is thought, successful efforts to encourage immigrants of the most suitable type to settle amongst us.”

In that connection I listened with attention to the speech of the Hon. Dr. Taylor in which he spoke of the necessity for greater supervision over the female passengers who come out by the immigrant boats. I quite agree with what the hon. member said. Indeed, I go further, and say that an inquiry is necessary into the system in vogue at home right from the time application is made by intending immigrants, because there have been many instances where I am sure both men and women have been wrongly passed by the medical examiners, and have arrived in Queensland in such a state of physical decay that they have become a burden on the State almost from the date of their arrival here. That is a thing that should be guarded against, and I therefore think that a full inquiry should be made regarding the system of supervision and inspection in vogue in England. As to the necessity of immigration, there is no doubt that we want a very large immigration to assist us in developing this State, and although there are many who consider that added labour will practically mean competition which will result in lowering wages, I think that is a great mistake, because there is no doubt that increased population means an increased circulation of money, and thereby wages must go up. We need only take America as an example of that. Thousands of people go to the United States weekly. I saw on one occasion where it was reported that 21,000 landed in America in one day, and 50,000 in the same week, and there was no lowering of wages there. America, I consider, is the richest country on earth, and the rate of wages there is higher than in any other part of the world, so that effectually refutes the idea that increased immigration will mean competition and lower wages. I hope the Government will go ahead and will bring out a large body of immigrants. We have an immense country and immense resources, and the sooner we can get a bigger population and open up the country the greater is likely to be our progress from a material point of view. In addition to that we must recollect that the census shows that during the last ten years the population of Queensland has increased by only 21 per cent., which is an increase of a little over 2 per cent. per annum. That seems to be a ridiculous rate of increase, and we must take strong steps to increase it. We must also remember that every additional male immigrant is a factor in connection with the defence of the country, and in that particular we require a very large addition to our population. You must remember that if the soil is to yield its harvest, if mines are to be developed, if factories are to be worked, if our industries are to progress, we must

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have population; therefore, anybody who objects to immigrants coming here has not the best interests of the country at heart. Next comes the clause which says:—

“With the view of giving greater opportunities to our own people, and to newcomers who are willing to assist us in our work of nation-building, my advisers are proceeding with railways which were passed in the last session of Parliament, and the completion of which will make Crown lands available for close settlement on a scale not hitherto possible in Queensland.”

I think if the Government can achieve the position of being able to offer to immigrants land on which they can settle they will have done a great deal. We have not sufficient land open from time to time to absorb the people who come here. When I was in Sydney lately I went to the Tourist Bureau and asked for the latest book showing the land open for selection in Queensland, and I found no particulars of land open of a later date than February. It was in July that I was there; and I think that publication should be issued quarterly at least, if not every month. To show that we are not doing what we should in connection with land settlement, I will draw attention to some remarks made by Mr. Knibbs in his latest issue of the Commonwealth Year Book. On page 362 he shows that all the other States are competing actively with us for population, and are doing a great deal more than we are in the way of settling people on the land for agricultural development. In nine years New South Wales increased the area under crop by 734,000 acres; Victoria by 540,000 acres; Western Australia by 520,000 acres; South Australia by 160,000 acres; and Queensland brings up the rear with 149,000 acres increased area. I say we should not lag behind in this way, because we must look to the soil for our wealth. Every farmer is worth six or seven men engaged in industrial work in a city, because the farmer produces the food necessary for the workers, and any surplus goes to increase the material wealth of the State. On the question of additional sugar mills in North Queensland, we are told that, in the measure to be submitted, provision will be made for the erection of additional mills in the order recommended in the report of the Royal Commission. I hope when that is done the Government will see that they have a better system of taking security. The system in the past has not been a success, and the deeds of mortgagors had to be handed back, and the position has been unsatisfactory from that point of view. I would also like to sound a note of warning, because I think this thing can be overdone. The margin between the supply and the consumption of sugar in Australia is not very large; and if a large additional number of mills are erected, the supply will be likely to more than overtake the consumption, which would not be desirable, because then we would have to compete with outside black-grown sugar, and we could not do it by reason of the prices at which labour can be obtained in other parts of the world. Next comes the question of introducing a Liquor Bill; and the Government say this measure embodies “reforms urgently demanded by public opinion and of vital importance to the community.” I was sorry to see by last Saturday’s *Telegraph* that the Government decided not to make this a party measure. I think it is of sufficient importance to have been

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made a party measure; and I think the Government should do their best to pass it in the form in which it will best serve the interests of the State. We need only look at two points to show the necessity for an alteration. First, there is the question of packing benches when the granting of licenses is considered. I think it has been shown time after time that licenses have been granted to undesirable persons who would not have obtained licenses if benches had been properly constituted; and I hope that in any amendment of the law the police magistrate will be the bench, and the packing of benches will be impossible.

HON. A. H. BARLOW: You cannot have packed benches now, because you have licensing magistrates.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: It is done.

HON. A. H. BARLOW: You appointed the licensing magistrates yourself.

HON. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: It has been done, and can be done, and this would prevent anything of the kind from being done again. Perhaps it is not now so much a question of packing, but even some licensing justices are biased in favour of some particular person; and that could not arise in the case of a police magistrate being on the bench, because he is a Government official acting in the interests of the community, and as a rule he is not biased. Then there is the fact that Sunday after Sunday, year in, year out, we see policemen standing before public-houses to prevent breaches of the law. That should not be necessary; and I think it should be remedied in the new Bill, which I hope will be passed in such a form as to be of great benefit to the community, though I do not know whether it will pass in such a state as to please the great majority of the people. I notice that the leading features of the Bill to amend the Health Act will be provisions to ensure the purity of foods and the protection of consumers. In New South Wales they are very energetic in the prosecution of offenders against the Food and Drugs Act. In Sydney I noticed they were particularly keen in prosecuting people who adulterated food, also in compelling restaurant-keepers to keep their kitchens in proper order, also in prosecuting hotel-keepers for putting into bottles with standard brands liquors which they had no right to put into those bottles. While on the question of food, I would like to say a word in favour of the Lady Chelmsford Milk Institute, which was founded for a good purpose. Though its best friends cannot say it has been a financial success, it has done a large amount of good. I understand that it is to be put on a proper basis and run on better lines, with the result that babies supplied with the milk from the institute will have a better opportunity of attaining to childhood and manhood than at present. I hope the Government will continue their subsidy to this deserving object. The Speech further on says—

“It is a matter for rejoicing that at the recent referendum the Commonwealth Government’s proposals, which, if adopted, would have made a serious inroad into the self-governing powers of the States, were rejected by an overwhelming majority.”

Then it goes on to state that—

“In consequence of this rejection it has been suggested by the Government of New South Wales that a conference of State Premiers be held.”

I hope our State will not be represented; I

hope our Government will see that such a thing is not desirable, because it seems to me that a conference in that direction would presuppose something to confer about, and that we are likely to give away some of the powers that we have at the present time. I think, in view of the decisive vote given on the 26th April last, we should give up nothing that we have at the present time, more particularly when we see that the suggestion emanates from a leading member of the party so badly beaten at the polls.

Hon. M. JENSEN: Don't you believe in an amendment of the Arbitration Act?

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: I do not believe in the State giving up any of the powers we possess at the present time. I consider that those powers are capable of being better exercised by the Governments of States than by the Federal Government.

Hon. A. HINCHCLIFFE: They don't exercise them.

Hon. A. G. C. HAWTHORN: Later on the Speech contains the intimation that—

"My advisers have been successful in floating a loan of £2,000,000 in London on very favourable terms."

I must say I cannot agree with them there, because I consider that a loan of which only 9 per cent. is subscribed by the British public, while 91 per cent. is held by the brokers, cannot be called an absolute success. I was in hopes that the suggestion to send Mr. Kidston home in connection with the loan would have been carried out; and I feel sure that his intimate knowledge of the affairs of the State, together with his knowledge of the brokers and the financial authorities in England, would have enabled him, as in the past, to assist materially in present and future loans. I spoke the other day when the Appropriation Bill was going through about the amount asked for from the Consolidated Revenue. I thought then that it was a large amount, and I still think so. I was under the impression that the Government during June, as last year, spent money in anticipation of the coming year's requirements, but I find that was not so. I notice that in the month of June last there was £250,000 more spent on June services than in a normal year like 1909. Last year the Government, I think pardonably, increased the June payments by anticipating July payments, for this reason: It was foreshadowed that we would drop nearly £400,000 in Commonwealth receipts during last year, and in order to ease the position down and forestal some of the payments coming due, a large amount was paid in June last year that should have been paid in the following July. This was pardonable then, but I do not think the same necessity arose during last June, when the Government paid £250,000 more than in a normal year like 1909. This year there will not be the same tension. We have become used to the smaller payments from the Commonwealth Government, and at the rate of £1 5s. a head of our population we shall get £70,000 more during next year than last year from Commonwealth returns. I do not know, therefore, that there was any great necessity for them to spend that money,

[5 p.m.] and it would have been better if they had made the surplus larger than was shown in the last financial report

of the Treasury. There are one or two small matters which I think should be remedied. One of them is the stamp duties. A deputation of Brisbane merchants waited on the Premier not long ago on this matter, and asked him to make some alteration in the direction of relieving them of some of the duties that they have to pay at present. I do not know that it is desirable to remove all stamp duties, or even to remit a large portion of them, but I think a concession might be made, and that 6d. might be made the maximum amount of stamp duty payable in respect of receipts. There is another matter of which it may be somewhat unusual to speak, and that is the question of imposing an export duty on live merino sheep. I noticed when I was in Sydney lately, at the time the sales of stud sheep were on, that a very large number of our best merino sheep are being purchased by South African buyers and are being taken away from Australia. Now, we have the reputation in Australia of having the best wool in the world. We in Queensland are particularly concerned in this. I notice that last year 232,000 bales of wool were disposed of here, and, if South Africa is allowed to take away our best sheep, the result will be that in a few years we shall have nursed a very strong competitor against ourselves. The danger is greater than in the case of Argentina or any other competitor, and we shall feel the effect disastrously. They have a splendid climate in South Africa—a climate quite equal to our own, I understand, for the production of merino wool—and they have an additional advantage in being able to work their places very cheaply by means of Kaffir labour—which we cannot do. I think, therefore, that it would be judicious if the Government of Queensland were to endeavour to get the Governments of the other States to join with them in asking the Federal Government if they will put an export duty on live merino sheep to prevent them going away in such numbers as they are at the present time. There is a little local matter that I should like to speak of, and that is the question of phylloxera having been discovered in some of the vineyards in the metropolitan districts lately. Certain regulations have been brought in which are likely to bear heavily on the growers, if they are carried out in their entirety. For instance, I understand that the growers have to bring their grapes in to a fumigating room in the Department of Agriculture in Brisbane. Now it would cost very little, I am told, to put up small fumigating rooms in the districts where the grapes are grown. If they could be fumigated there, the fruit could be brought into the market the same day, and thus obviate the risk of losing the market and losing large quantities of grapes. I hope the Minister will draw the attention of the Department of Agriculture to the suggestion. Another matter that should be attended to is the electrification of our suburban railways. The question has been before the Government on many occasions, but I understand that the late Commissioner for Railways, Mr. Thallon, was always against it. I advocated it some years ago myself, and I notice that the Acting Premier of Victoria has stated that he intends immediately to go in for electrifying all the suburban railways in the vicinity of Melbourne. I think our suburban railways, at any rate, might be worked by electric

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power. We adjourned over last week because it was understood that we would not have any work here. Now I do not think that we should have that reproach levelled against the Council, and I would suggest to the Attorney-General, who is a member of this Chamber, that he should bring in some amending Bills of a legal nature—Bills the necessity of which have become apparent to him in the course of his practice. He might bring in such a Bill, for example, as a Partition of Land Bill, and a Bill to bring the Settled Land Act up to date. Then he might also introduce an amendment of the Companies Act to bring it into line with the English Act. Then the Realty Property Act is defective in many respects. The Acts at present in force were passed in 1861 and 1877, so that there has been no amendment of the law for twenty-four years. If these measures were introduced, they would help to fill in the blank space we have, and we would not be open to the reproach that we can do nothing until the other place sends us something to do. I make the suggestion, and the Attorney-General would do a great deal of good—at any rate to the legal profession—if he would make the Acts of which I have spoken up to date, and he would thereby be assisting the people at large. I do not know that there is anything else I wish to speak about. I thank hon. members for the attentive hearing they have given me.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. A. HINCHCLIFFE: I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed.

HON. A. H. BARLOW: I beg to move that the resumption of the debate be made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

Question put and passed.

#### JOINT COMMITTEES.

##### MESSAGES FROM LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

The PRESIDENT announced the receipt of a message from the Assembly, intimating that they had appointed Mr. Speaker and Messrs. Cottell and May to be members of the Joint Library Committee; Mr. Speaker and Messrs. Roberts and Ryland to be members of the joint committee for the management of the Parliamentary Refreshment-rooms; and Mr. Speaker and Messrs. D. Hunter and Payne to be members of the joint committee for the management and superintendence of the Parliamentary Buildings.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

HON. A. H. BARLOW: I beg to move that the Council do now adjourn. To-morrow we shall go on with the Address in Reply. I do not think there will be much to complain of in the Bill that I laid on the table to-day, which covers a vast number of subjects of all sorts; and which, I think, will give us plenty of work.

Question put and passed.

The Council adjourned at nine minutes past 5 o'clock.

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