

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

TUESDAY, 1 AUGUST 1911

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

TUESDAY, 1 AUGUST, 1911.

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

QUESTIONS.

POLICE ESCORTING TRANSIT OF RAW SUGAR
IN BUNDABERG DISTRICT.

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*) asked the Home Secretary—

“ 1. How many members of the Police Force were engaged during one day last week in escorting a consignment of three dray loads of raw sugar from the Qunaba Plantation to Millaquin Refinery? ”

"2. What were the respective ranks of the men engaged?"

"3. Was the escort sent at the request of the general manager of the Queensland National Bank, or the Bundaberg manager of the Millaquin and Yengarie Sugar Refining Company, or on the instruction of the local sub-inspector, or on instructions issued by the Commissioner of Police, Brisbane?"

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

"1. Seven.

"2. One sub-inspector and six constables.

"3. The manager Qunaba requisitioned for a police escort owing to the previous interference by strikers with loading along the road."

POLICE PATROL DUTY IN BRISBANE, IPSWICH, AND TOOWOOMBA.

Mr. ROBERTS (*Drayton and Toowoomba*) asked the Home Secretary—

"1. Are members of the Police Force in the cities of Brisbane, Ipswich, and Toowoomba kept to continuous patrol duty from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily?"

"2. If such report is correct, will he take such action as will provide for a reduction of such hours for continuous duty?"

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

"No."

NUMBERS OF INMATES AND ATTENDANTS AT GOODNA.

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

"1. The number of inmates at present at Goodna?"

"2. The number of attendants at present at Goodna—male and female?"

"3. The average number of inmates under the supervision of one attendant during the year 1910?"

"4. When was official intimation given attendants of their recent increases of pay?"

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

"1. Males, 790; females, 486; total, 1,276.

"2. Male attendants, 76; female attendants, 45; total, 121.

"3. On 31st December—1 male attendant for every 10.05 patients; 1 female attendant for every 10.75 patients; total, 1 attendant for every 10.31 patients.

"4. The increases were provided for by Executive Minute on the 29th June last, and payments will be made from the 1st ultimo."

EXTRA POLICE AND CANE FIRES IN AYR DISTRICT.

Mr. FERRICKS (*Bowen*) asked the Home Secretary—

"Will he lay on the table of the House—

"1. A copy of all correspondence relating to the sending of a great number of extra police into the Ayr district during the present strike of sugar-workers?"

"2. A copy of the reports made by the Ayr police in reference to the cane fires that have occurred in the Ayr district to date?"

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

"Correspondence of this nature is regarded as confidential, and therefore copies cannot be laid on the table of the House."

REGULATIONS FOR BOARDING OR ALIGHTING FROM TRAMCARS.

Mr. D. HUNTER (*Woolloongabba*) asked the Home Secretary—

"1. Is it intended to put into force the new regulation dealing with passengers who board or alight from a tramcar on the side farthest from the footpath when the car is travelling on a double track?"

"2. Is there a penalty attached to those who break the regulation?"

"3. If so, what is the penalty?"

"4. Will he see that the public are duly warned before any prosecution is instituted?"

The HOME SECRETARY replied—

"1. Yes.

"2. Yes.

"3. Not exceeding £20.

"4. Yes."

SUITABILITY OF CALLOPPE VALLEY FOR AGRICULTURE AND DAIRYING.

Mr. MCLACHLAN (*Fortitude Valley*), on behalf of Mr. Breslin (*Port Curtis*), asked the Secretary for Agriculture—

"What steps have been taken towards obtaining a report as to the suitability of the Calloppe Valley for agriculture and dairying, same having been promised by the then Secretary for Agriculture on 25th November, 1910?"

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. J. Tolmie, *Drayton and Toowoomba*) replied—

"The delayed return of the principal of the Queensland Agricultural College, and subsequent press of work through arrears, has prevented the Minister up to the present carrying out the promise made that Mr. Quodling would report on the suitability of the Calloppe Valley for agriculture and dairying, but during the latter end of August an officer will be sent to that district."

PETITION.

CAIRNS SCHOOL RESERVE.

Mr. MURPHY (*Croydon*): I desire to present a petition signed by the parents of children attending the State school at Cairns and by the residents generally, objecting to the Government taking away portion of the school reserve. The petition is respectfully worded, and concludes with the usual prayer. The hon. member for Cairns, Mr. Mann, having signed the petition, is, of course, prevented from presenting it to the House.

Petition read and received.

LICENSING DISTRICTS IN QUEENSLAND.

On the motion of Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*) is was formally resolved—

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

"1. The number of licensing districts in Queensland.

"2. The names of the respective districts.

"3. The chief centres of population in each district.

"4. The estimated adult population in each district.

"5. The number of licensed premises and licensed bars, respectively, in each district.

"6. The amount of revenue received by the Government from licensing fees from each respective district."

SUGAR WORKS BILL.

INITIATION.

On the motion of the TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Bulimba*), it was formally resolved—

“That the House will, on Wednesday next, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness of introducing a Bill to authorise the construction and establishment of sugar-works by means of moneys advanced by the State, and to provide for the repayment of such moneys and for the maintenance, management, and control of such sugar-works, and for other purposes connected therewith.”

HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. J. Stodart, Logan, in the chair.*)

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

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to amend the Health Act of 1900”—

said the Bill which it was proposed to lay on the table of the House embodied the results of a conference which was held in Sydney last year, comprising all the health officers of the various States of the Commonwealth. The Bill consisted first of definitions, and was subdivided into two parts. Subdivision 1 was the preliminary, and subdivision 2 dealt with pure foods; also with prohibition against adulteration, the sale of mixtures, sale of food in packages, advertisement articles, disinfectants and preventatives, milk, bread, short weights, olive oil, aerated water, inspection and removal, sampling, analysis, agents, subject-matter of regulations and application of Act to infectious diseases. Those sections comprised practically the whole of the resolutions arrived at by the conference, and, in addition, there were embodied in the Bill clauses relating to private hospitals, nurses, and general provisions.

Mr. MURPHY (*Croydon*) asked the Home Secretary when the Liquor Bill would be introduced? They had been told in the Press that at a caucus meeting of the Government party it was decided that the Liquor Bill was to be the very first measure introduced this session, and now it was placed at the bottom of the business-paper. Certainly, the Bill which had been mentioned by the Home Secretary was a most important one, and he (Mr. Murphy) was sure all members of the Committee would give him every assistance in passing it into law. At the same time, the Committee were entitled to know, before agreeing to the motion, when the promised Liquor Bill was to be introduced. They found that in another place they had introduced the Police Offences Bill. Now the Government were introducing other measures in the Legislative Assembly, and they were not to get the Liquor Bill at all. He might say at once he was opposed to the Police Offences Bill, and would fight every clause in it, because it was attacking the fundamental principles of British liberty. (Hear, hear!) Was the promised Liquor Bill coming on at all? Had not the Government party been able to come to any decision at all about that Bill? They had had three caucus meetings already about it, and the result was that that Bill was placed at the bottom of the page. They were going to have non-contentious legislation introduced

into that Chamber, and legislation such as the Police Offences Bill in the other Chamber, and after they had squabbled over it for months, to let it pass. They were not to get the promised Liquor Bill this session, as the Government party had not been able to agree upon that matter. (Government laughter.)

The PREMIER said the remarks of the hon. member for Croydon were slightly irrelevant, but in order to set the minds of hon. members at rest, he might say at once that immediately the Address in Reply was finished the Liquor Bill would be introduced. He apprehended that the Address in Reply would be completed to-night—that was the implied understanding.

Mr. MAY: No.

The PREMIER: When the Address in Reply was out of the way, notice would at once be given of the Liquor Bill.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MURPHY accepted the assurance of the Premier that the Liquor Bill had not been dropped. It seemed very strange, if the Government were so very anxious to introduce the Liquor Bill, that they should give notice of other measures at that particular time.

The PREMIER thought common sense would indicate that to place the Liquor Bill on the table while the Address in Reply was unfinished would only protract it.

Mr. LENNON: This is quite irregular.

The PREMIER: Quite irregular. Immediately the Standing Orders were dealt with they would proceed with the Health Act Amendment Bill. His idea of business was fair play to all, and it was highly desirable that the Liquor Bill should at least be on the table some days, so that members could become acquainted with its provisions before discussing it.

Question put and passed.

FIRST READING.

The House resumed, and the CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a resolution, which was agreed to. The Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

STATE CHILDREN BILL.

INITIATION IN COMMITTEE.

(*Mr. J. Stodart, Logan, in the chair.*)

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (Hon. K. M. Grant, *Rockhampton*), moved—

“That it is desirable that a Bill be introduced to consolidate and amend the law relating to State children.”

Mr. MURPHY said he would like the Minister to follow the courteous example of the Home Secretary and give the Committee particulars of the proposed measure. They were entitled to that courtesy from the courteous member for Rockhampton. (Laughter.)

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION said the full information would be given on the second reading. The Bill was self-explanatory, and was intended to amend and consolidate the law relating to State children.

Question put and passed.

Hon. K. M. Grant.]

FIRST READING.

The House resumed, and the CHAIRMAN reported that the Committee had come to a resolution, which was agreed to. The Bill was read a first time, and the second reading made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER (*Maranoa*): In common with other members who have addressed themselves to the Speech, I have [4 p.m.] to express my very sincere regret at the death of our late Speaker. He was a man we all admired and esteemed, and who distinguished himself, not only as a Minister of the Crown, but also in the position you, Mr. Speaker, now hold. While I congratulate you on your appointment, I hope that at the expiration of your term you will have gained for yourself the same high position in the estimation of the House that your predecessors have occupied. I have also to congratulate the Premier on having attained the distinguished position he now holds; and if I have any regret, it is that he is at the head of a Tory party which compels him to keep himself under control and steady the pace I think he otherwise might have gone. In his appointment we have had more juggling with portfolios. We have a full bench of Ministers who have come to their position by various means, resulting in a great deal of discontent on the other side of the Chamber.

Mr. MACKINTOSH: None.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: I understand that the hon. gentleman who interjected is one of the discontented ones.

Mr. MACKINTOSH: You are under a mistake.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: I think he fully expected a position in the Cabinet, and possibly he would have filled that position as well as some of the gentlemen occupying positions in the Ministry. However, this rearrangement of portfolios has taken place, and we have now before us a complete set of Ministers, except, of course, the Attorney-General; and we have once more on the Treasury bench the continuous Government, which Queensland experienced for years and years. During a short time we had a break-up of that party, through the coalition that took place between the Labour party and the Morgan party; but now we have the true Tory spirit as represented in Queensland. On the front bench opposite we have four Philpites and two ex-Philpites, and one little ewe-lamb that belonged to the Kidston party. What that little ewe-lamb may be able to do to help democracy we cannot foretell; but he is so overwhelmed by the Tory spirit around him that I do not look for much in that direction. It is no longer the harmonious concrete party its late leader declared it to be. There are rifts all through; it is broken and twisted into every shape. There are members who do not even attend the House, either because they have not been made Ministers, or because they do not approve of those who have been made Ministers. Coming to the Speech, I shall briefly refer to one or two matters dealt with by the Premier. He painted a glowing picture of the wonderful progress made by Queensland; and I believe the hon. gentleman thought he was giving us actual facts. He told us of the progress of our industries; of the great amount of land settlement through resumptions, through the

conservation of water, and through railway construction. It seemed for a moment as if the dry bones opposite were beginning to move, and that the party, which has declared itself to be a democratic party, was likely to achieve something in that direction. But it was nothing more than the Premier's gift of imagination; his constructive genius is unable to find vent for itself because of the dead weight of Toryism sitting beside him and around him. It reflected some of the things he might do were he supported by a progressive party; but I look for none of those things from the party opposite. The hon. gentleman told us there were large numbers of immigrants coming to Queensland; and it would seem from his remarks that this side had no sympathy with any class of immigration. In that respect he is wrong; and I make no apology to anybody, or to any party, for declaring myself in favour of a class of immigration that will help to build up Queensland; but I believe, on good authority, that we are not receiving anything like a fair percentage of that class. I admit that there may be a difficulty in making a proper selection at home; but unless we can get the right sort we are better without any at all. Queensland spent last year £80,000, and is going to spend something like double that amount this year on immigration. Already over £3,000,000 of the taxpayers' money has been spent on this means of attracting population; and what has Queensland gained? To-day we have very little more than the natural increase of our population; and yet we are told that this is a good thing to invest money in; and there is a power behind the Government urging them to bring out more people, because they want men who will work for lower wages. They say it is a business proposition, and from their point of view I admit that it is, because it means that by increasing the number of those seeking employment there must be a corresponding decrease in the rate of wages. It is a very difficult matter to get the class of men we want; and in discussing the matter with Mr. Dunlop, one of the Scottish Commissioners, he told me that the class of men we wanted were not to be got at home—that in Scotland they were the class of men they were looking for themselves. He said, "If you want to know where to get the sort of men that Queensland wants, I will tell you; and you will have no difficulty in getting them. It is in Canada. If the people who have gone to Canada knew the advantages Queensland has to offer they would come here in droves. I have seen no country that offers better facilities for the class of men that have gone to Canada, and have to some extent failed because of the extreme conditions." I believe there are to-day in Canada large numbers of people that have been attracted through the same system of over-advertising; and a great number of them would like to get away from Canada; and if the Queensland Government were to make known in Canada the possibilities of Queensland, instead of giving bribes to men to misrepresent Queensland in the old country, the money would be much better spent. The Premier also referred to the fact that hundreds of bags of wheat were lying in the fields of New South Wales for want of labour. I interjected that it was not harvest-time; and he said there was a seed-time as well as a harvest. I read the same thing in the *Courier*, but, whoever was the author of the

[Mr. J. M. Hunter.

statement, must think that people know nothing about wheat-growing. We know that wheat is sown by drills, and the few bags of wheat about the paddock, if there at all, would be unsewn; and that would not show any lack of men. If they were sewn up, it might prove a shortage of labour, but, being open, it would prove nothing of the kind. Then the hon. gentleman referred to the wonderful development in the clothing trade and the boot trade, and some other industries; but it is worthy of note that the wages board in connection with the clothing factories have not yet come to their findings, and the factories are not paying the same wages as the factories in New South Wales, or giving the same favourable conditions; and the result is that the Brisbane manufacturers are placing their stuff South and under-selling New South Wales. It is true that the boot factories are very busy; but it is because they have not the up-to-date machinery which the Southern people have; and the Southern people are doing more in that trade with Queensland than ever they did before. Melbourne and Sydney houses are doing more in the boot trade with Queensland than ever before. The reason is that the boards fixed lower rates of wages and the manufacturers here are competing here at a disadvantage. These two conditions with respect to boots and clothing only prove the necessity for passing the referendum which was refused by Queensland not long ago—a result which the Government worked very hard to accomplish. I am satisfied that until power is given to fix a uniform rate of wages and hours throughout the different States of the Commonwealth where these factories are established, we cannot retain our natural trade. In former times, when we were separate colonies, we were able to protect ourselves by different tariffs. But, having thrown away that barrier, we can no longer adjust the unfair conditions which prevail with respect to hours of labour and rates of pay. In the course of his speech the Premier was drawn into speaking about the loan that the Government had recently floated in London, and he stated that if it had not been for the Morocco trouble there would probably have been no difficulty in floating the whole of the loan. For some time past I have been of opinion that this underwriting business has become a sort of patent right of some people at home, and that it is their business to see that there is always some trouble, so that they may secure for themselves whatever price they like for a loan. As long as the Government employ underwriters, so long will the present condition of things with regard to our loans prevail, and the public will never have an opportunity of really showing what they think of the loans floated by Queensland. We were further told by the Premier that he proposed joining with other State Premiers to hold a conference in Melbourne with reference to the questions contained in the recent referendum—particularly the question of giving greater powers to the Federal Parliament. I ask—If it is desirable to give the Federal Parliament those powers, why were they not cheerfully given when they were asked for? Why does the State Premier turn round to-day, and propose by legislation to extend the powers of the Commonwealth Parliament, when he advised the electors of Queensland not to give the

Commonwealth Parliament those powers? Surely the opposition that was offered to the referendum savours of an attempt to take a throw out of the existing Federal Government, instead of an attempt to do what was best for Queensland and for Australia as a whole. It was held then, and it is still held, that the State Governments are not able to deal with monopolies. Neither are the Federal Government able to deal with monopolies. We have to-day a strike which has been prompted purely by one of the monopolies which exist in this country. There are other monopolies growing up in our midst, and I sincerely trust that before they grow too strong—so strong that we may have our Parliament and public life corrupted by the money power which they wield—power will be given to the Federal Government to deal with monopolies, which are a curse to all countries. (Hear, hear!) Monopolies are, perhaps, the first step to nationalisation. I have always believed that when these large combines join together for their own protection, the ultimate result will be the nationalisation of those combines for the protection of the whole community. I want here to read an extract from evidence given by Mr. Andrew Carnegie before the Tariff Commission in 1909. Mr. Carnegie said—

“The industrial world is about to undergo the most momentous change known in its history, even more far-reaching than was the change from the individual domestic manufacturer, manufacturing at home, to the factory system and the huge establishments of to-day.

“We are rapidly losing competition in articles of general consumption, upon which nations have hitherto depended to insure reasonable prices for the consumer. Some of our most important industries to-day are only nominally competitive, and in reality are monopolies so far that an understanding exists as to the prices that will prevail.

“We cannot, it seems the opinion, withstand this movement. It has to be received and tested, which means that these virtual monopolies must be controlled some way or another. The only force appears to be that of the National Government.”

When the power is given, as I believe it will be given, to the Federal Government to deal with monopolies such as I have referred to, and others which are bound to spring into existence, what will probably happen is that we shall nationalise the industries concerned. Immediately any combine becomes a danger to the general public, it is time for the national Government to take it over and nationalise it. With regard to the Speech from the Throne, there are one or two matters that I wish to refer to. We find that there is a great deal said about the potentialities of the State. We are given a large catalogue of amending Bills, which only proves once more that hasty legislation practised of late in this House leads to a crop of amending Bills session after session. But there is no reference in the Speech to any measure to promote trade and agricultural development by water conservation, and by that closer settlement which was alluded to by the Premier. We hear nothing about reduced railway freights to help the producer inland, or about State insurance, which will help to make our workmen's compensation law and even our life assurance a benefit to the community and a help to the individual. We hear nothing about the appointment of public trustees, and nothing about a Trade Disputes Bill. All

Mr. J. M. Hunter.]

these things have been left out, for reasons that the Government may give us later on; but so far we have heard no justification for the omission of these important matters from their programme. The chief object of the Government appears to have been to find profitable employment for capital. It may be a very good thing, and is a very good thing I believe, for capital to be profitably employed. We do not wish to see capital driven out of the country because it cannot find employment here; we do not wish to see it tied up and idle, but we want to see it given the opportunity of being used, but in such a way as will be for the benefit of the great mass of the people it employs. When fair wages and fair conditions are given to those who are employed in our industries, then we wish to assist capital in finding proper avenues of employment. We are told that it is a business proposition to find capital profitable employment. But it is also a business proposition to find labour profitable employment. The latter is just as important as the first, and, in my opinion, a great deal more important. Capital can never die or rust, or do anything except go away, but it is not going to leave Queensland. Such things, however, as death and sickness and trouble happen to those who are employed in our industries. They may be employed under unfavourable conditions, and it is just as much a business proposition to see that the most profitable capital we have—that is, the labour of the industrial classes of the community—is employed under fair conditions, and that the workers receive a fair share of the wealth they produce, so as to assist capital to find profitable employment; and no Government are doing their duty to the people if they disregard that responsibility. We find nothing in the Government programme about reduced railway freights, or a Trade Disputes Bill, or anything about social reform. The great masses are left to work out their own salvation as far as the Government are concerned. I know that when one talks in this way he is accused of being a socialist. Well, if being a socialist is what I understand by the word "socialist," then I cannot deny the soft impeachment. I should like to read here an extract from the writings of one of the leading literary men of Great Britain on this subject. I refer to Jack London, who says—

"The socialists were revolutionists, inasmuch as they struggled to overthrow the society of the present, and out of the material to build the society of the future. I, too, was a socialist and a revolutionist. I joined the groups of working class and intellectual revolutionists, and for the first time came into intellectual living.

"Here I found keen flashing intellects and brilliant wits; for here I met strong and alert brained, withal horny-handed, members of the working class; unfrocked preachers too wide in their Christianity for any congregation of Mammon worshippers; professors broken on the wheel of university subservience to the ruling class and flung out because they were quick with knowledge which they strove to apply to the affairs of mankind.

"Here I found warm faith in human, glowing idealism, sweetness of unselfishness, renunciation, and martyrdom—all the splendid, stinging things of the spirit. Here life was clean, noble, and alive. Here life rehabilitated itself, became wonderful and glorious; and I was glad to be alive.

"I was in touch with great souls who exalted flesh and spirit over dollars and cents, and to whom the thin wail of the starved slum child

[*Mr. J. M. Hunter.*

meant more than all the pomp and circumstance of commercial expansion and world empire.

"All about me were nobleness of purpose and heroism of effort, and my days and nights were sunshine and starshine, all fire and dew, with before my eyes, ever burning and blazing, the Holy Grail, Christ's own Grail, the warm human, long-suffering and maltreated, but to be rescued and saved at the last."

If those are the sentiments of a socialist, then I say they are the sentiments of the noblest ambition that can prompt human action. I contend that in the attempts which are being made by men of that stamp to bring about social reform and improve the conditions of the great mass of the people we have the noblest ambition and the highest aspiration that any man can cherish, and that it is an ambition that any man might be proud to cherish.

Mr. MORGAN: What are you doing in that direction?

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: I am doing a bit more than the hon. member, anyhow. When referring to the Government programme, I said there was an absence from it of any measure to promote land settlement, although the Premier referred to that as one of the great things that were being done by the Government. I hold that we are not settling the people on the land as we ought to do—that there is too much speculation going on in land. Large areas of land are alienated, or are in course of alienation, and later on this policy of alienation will cause a great deal of trouble to the Government and to the people of Queensland. We are going about land settlement in an entirely wrong manner. We have abundance of land for closer settlement, but we are not using it as we should. Our system of land settlement is entirely wrong. Let me say at once that I do not believe it possible for two Under Secretaries to do the work that is required to be done by our Lands Department, and to do it better than it is being done at the present time. I lay no blame on the Under Secretaries, but I think it is necessary to subdivide the department into sections, and an officer at the head of each section having full control over it so as to be able to look after it properly. I believe that the lands of the different districts in the State should be gone over and properly classified into lands suitable for agriculture, lands suitable for grazing and dairying, and lands suitable for [4.30 p.m.] pastoral purposes. If that were done, then the land could be cut into proper-sized blocks, and a man could make a living on them. If necessary, water, either by means of conservation, or bores, or wells, could be provided, and then, should these lands not be within a marketable distance, railways should be built to them. To my mind this should all be done before the land is offered to the public at all, and then these settlements would contain a concrete method of civilisation, and we would have our schools and institutions all properly established in the various communities. To-day we have a most expensive system of administration simply because we have the people scattered all over the place in almost every direction. On this valley you see a few people settled, and ten miles further off you see a few more people settled. That means that you have to provide schools and police, and make all these necessary provisions in different parts of the State just because the people are scattered.

The result of the people being scattered in this way means that they have no roads, no railways, and in many cases no schools and no water, and the result of it all is that we find the cost of administration unnecessarily heavy; whereas if a method were adopted such as I suggest—and I know that the Minister for Railways agrees with me—we could proceed with the building of our railways before selection, and it would be far better for the State in the long run.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We are doing it now in some directions.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Yes, I know you are, and I have asked for a return to be laid on the table of the House, and we will see from that return the extent the Government are proceeding in the direction which I propose. I am afraid that when that return comes in the Government will get just as big a shock as the general public. I know that I shall get a surprise if there is anything like any preparation being made for the successful settlement that the Government are endeavouring to make the public believe they are undertaking. I believe we are living in "a fool's paradise" in regard to land settlement. The amount of territory that is being taken up under lease and other ways admits, I believe, of a very rosy and glowing picture being made, but I do not believe that we are getting down to the class of settlement that is going to be either permanent or profitable.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: What about the priority settler?

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: The priority system is not an unmixed good. I do not know that there is any use my referring to that just now, but I can give numerous cases where it has worked out indifferently, and I do not see how the system is going to be a benefiting one at all. If the principles are adopted which I urge the Government to take up, I do not see how priority can come in. I would like to see a limitation of the areas which can now be held by different people for different classes of land. There is some land within a few miles of Brisbane where a few acres of land would be abundant for certain classes of culture, such as orchards, etc. Further afield the land would be classed in another form, and so on; and in that way there would be no need for priority at all. Each man would get the block he wanted, and no one would get any more.

Mr. MORGAN: What is a fair and reasonable amount of land to hold at Roma?

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: If the hon. gentleman went to Roma he would know. I know that the hon. gentleman would want to take up 10,000 acres, but I would be up against that every time. If he wanted a 10,000-acre block, he would know at once that he did not intend to cultivate it. The hon. gentleman is like those who get 2,500 acres of land and then buy 2,500 acres of land more, and, instead of using that land as agricultural land, as it was intended he should, he would turn it into a sheep-walk. That land might just as well have stayed in the hands of the original lessee as to be put into his hands. In fact, it is worse than if the lessee had it, because, when the lessee holds it, the Government can resume it, but if the land once gets into the hands of the hon. gentleman he holds on to it for years and years. Then probably a railway will be built to it

and finally the Government purchase it back at a big price and the hon. gentleman reaps the profit. Let me say now that the Government are not resuming as much land as they should do for closer settlement purposes. That is probably the reason why a great number of people come to Queensland and go away discontented and disappointed. Within the last twelve months the people have wanted the Blythdale Estate to be resumed. I believe the hon. member for Boonah is interested in it.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: I mean the hon. member for Fassifern. The Minister has been asked three times to resume that land, and three times the request has been refused. The farmers' associations at Hodgson, Mitchell, Wallumbilla, Pickinjinie, Bungeeworrai, and Warooby have all asked for the land to be resumed and made available for selection, but the Government say "No." I do not know whether the Government profess to know more about the requirements of the district than those farmers, but they should certainly not know more than their own Crown lands rangers. If the rangers were asked if that land should be resumed, the reply would be emphatically "Yes." A few miles further north the Government have thrown open Durham Downs in blocks of from 5,000 to 7,000 acres each. It is first-class agricultural land, and well suited for wheat-growing. Now, that land has been offered for grazing selection, and in a few years' time the people will be hungering for it for agriculture.

Mr. WIENHOLT: Is there no pear on it?

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: There is no pear to be found on it, so I am informed. I know a family who took up four blocks of 5,000 acres each, and they have now got 20,000 acres between them. It is land that should be cultivated, as it is good agricultural land. If it were classed as agricultural land and made available by putting water on it and building a railway there, every acre of that land would be put under cultivation. But we find nothing of this kind taking place. Later on I shall have something to say with regard to agriculture. The Lands Department is the leading department next to the Agricultural Department in reference to land settlement. We can have no settlement without agriculture. To my mind the most important department we have is the Agricultural Department, because after the land is parted with, still the Agricultural Department have to deal with it. But the Lands Department do not seem to make the means of settlement any easier, consequently there is no increase in the area under cultivation. We have the Government saying that they are dealing with the prickly pear, but how are they doing it? During the last session I attended with deputations asking for a commission to be appointed, or a board or something else to be appointed, so that the question of the prickly pear might be gone into. After the second or third waiting we were to get an answer. Parliament closed and we got no definite reply. During that same session I presented a petition from two or three farmers' associations in my electorate asking for free pear poison. I believe that it was a proposal that was worth while considering. I laid it before the Minister and the Under Secretary, and the first difficulty they met with was to prevent waste in its use, because it was held—and perhaps held with a good deal of truth—that things

Mr. J. M. Hunter.]

that people get for nothing they are likely to value little, and they wanted to make some provision to protect them against any waste of that sort. After some months they finally discovered some means by which it might be done, and they were going into the matter of getting authority for the expenditure by the department. It was believed that the psychological moment had arrived for giving the authority for the poison to destroy the pear, when they suddenly discovered that it would be a good thing to get a board of advice appointed, and that knocked on the head the proposal to give free pear poison. That also meant starting away back where we asked the Government to start twelve months before.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: That is like the Government in everything.

The TREASURER: Do you object to the establishment of the board?

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: The hon. gentleman knows that I asked twelve months ago that a board of advice should be appointed to deal with the question, so that there has been a twelve months of waste of time. I asked the Minister if a report had been received from that board, and if not, when might we expect one? He told us that he presumed that as soon as the board were able to give the advice, or give a report, that it would be received, and that the report would be printed.

Mr. MORGAN: That is fair.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: That is fair; but I suppose it will be the year after next that we will get the report. We will hear about it at the next election, and we will be told that the Government, on the advice of this board, are going to do something in connection with the prickly pear. It has been going on for years, and the Government have not had the courage to deal with it. There are a great many things in this connection that might be done. The entomologist writes, in a back room of the Agricultural Department, pamphlets on scientific subjects. But these things are not made public enough, so that few people see his work. Why should he not be employed on this prickly-pear question? Why has he not been asked to ascertain what other countries are doing in this respect? Last session I mentioned about the cochineal insect which was reported to be destroying the prickly pear in other countries. Has nothing been done here about it? There are other experiments to be made, not only for destroying the pear, but to see if it can be utilised, and also whether cheaper means of destruction can be found. The Government are whittling away the time, and doing absolutely nothing. I have an extract which I took from the *Courier* some months ago which I will read to the House. It deals with experiments made by the Agricultural Department in the United States in regard to this particular thing. It says—

"If the great south-west is ever reclaimed and made to produce vegetation that will be profitable, it must be done by developing the native plants instead of attempting to introduce new species and trying to acclimatise them (writes P. E. McClenahan, in the *Scientific American*). With this idea in view, the United States Department of Agriculture has been directing the experiment stations and encouraging work upon the cacti. For more than six years the experiment station at Las Cruces, New Mexico, has been experimenting with prickly pear and other cacti. This species has been planted, and it was found that by throwing it upon the

[Mr. J. M. Hunter.

ground 85 per cent. of the pieces grew, while only 91 per cent. of the parts planted in a furrow grew. The rows were planted 10 feet apart, and then left without cultivation, irrigation, or attention for three, four, and five years. By this time the rows had spread until they were from 6 to 8 feet wide, and only left a small path between them. Then began a large series of experiments. The fruit of the cactus was gathered. It is almost as large as an egg, of a dark-red colour, and filled with seeds. The colouring matter was first extracted and found to make an excellent fruit colouring for jellies and confectionery. Then sugars were examined, and six kinds were found, and after long tedious processes, each sugar was fermented and in time turned into alcohol. Then came careful weighing and mathematical calculations to determine the amount of denatured alcohol that could be produced from an acre and the minimum of cost. Final deductions gave most satisfactory results, and it was proven that 150 dollars' worth of denatured alcohol could be produced per acre after an average growth of four years from the plants."

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: At what cost per dollar?

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: The article goes on—

"At this rate a quarter section of now arid land could be made to yield a gross income of 24,000 dollars, and this would be almost a perpetual yield, as the fruit is borne annually; and the plants need no replanting, cultivating, or irrigation, and grow upon the poorest soil in the arid regions."

I do not know whether the Department of Agriculture intend to ascertain what is being done by the Department of Agriculture in the United States, but I think every source should be studied to obtain information regarding this plant, for very good reasons—because it is fast getting a hold of our best lands, and the Government, in their anxiety to get the land clear of this pest, are frequently driving good men off the land by the strict conditions that they compel to be observed by selectors. Men go on the land in ignorance, not knowing the extent of the contract they are undertaking, and say, "Oh, yes, we can do that," but when they get about half-way into the middle, they find they are unable to fulfil the conditions, and frequently the Government take this attitude: That so long as they have pear lands available for selection, they try to force men to select them, and refuse to throw open good land that men would select.

The TREASURER: They are throwing open land every day, and good land too.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: I know they are throwing open land, but, if the Treasurer will look at the bulletins issued from the department, he will find that a great percentage of those lands are pear lands, and a great many of the resumptions that are being made are pear resumptions, and the Government, instead of resuming good lands, classifying them, and making them available by railways and water, are resuming and throwing open a lot of waste land that men are forced to take up because they cannot get other land. After a little while they become dissatisfied, and ruined very often, and they go off the land, and leave the country disgusted. And there is a lot of that going to happen in Queensland. I can assure this House that I know scores of men, and the hon. member for Murilla, if he is honest, will admit that the pear conditions that the Government are enforcing upon the selectors are such that numbers of men will be driven off the land. He must know that, and any

representative who has pear country in his electorate knows perfectly well that the conditions that are being enforced are not going to bring about that clearing of the pear as the Government think. It is only going to make men do a certain amount of work, spend the bit of capital they have, and then leave the place disgusted. There must be some other method of clearing the pear if we are going to successfully deal with the pest.

Mr. MORGAN: I find the Secretary for Public Lands willing to assist any genuine cases that come before him. I hope he will always do so. I have had hundreds of cases.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: I know the hon. member has had a number of cases before the department.

The TREASURER: It shows how attentive he is to his constituents.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: I am quite satisfied that the methods that are being adopted, of sending out notice to show cause, are not the methods that will bring about a peaceable settlement of this difficulty. The hon. member who has just been returned for Dalby told the truth the other day in this connection, and if the hon. member for Murilla were to tell the truth—

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: I did not intend to infer that he did not tell the truth—but I do think he evaded the truth in his statement with regard to pear. We know, too, that in that department there are one or two very enthusiastic officers who are anxious to help the Government with regard to this pear question, and who, I am afraid, do not receive that assistance, or encouragement, that they should get. I think every source of advice should be solicited, from the heads of the department to the lowest officer in the ranks. I believe good advice could be received and given, because some of those officers have studied this pear question for years. Another thing I would like to see the Government do to assist settlement is to dam the creeks and rivers wherever possible. Large bodies of water could be conserved, not only in our river and creek beds, but also in valleys, at small expense. In that way we would improve the climatic conditions, and very likely bring about a better rainfall than we have at the present time. Wherever the Railway Department has done that sort of thing along our railways, you find splendid stretches of water. The dams are standing well, and they are not expensive, and you find settlement creeping up alongside, because they have a permanent supply of water assured in times of drought. During the year the Government, I believe, paid £170,000 odd in anticipated payments. Had they not done that they would only have had eleven months' expenditure this year. Last year, in order to bring down the balance, or to dissipate the balance, they anticipated payments, and this year, in order to keep the twelve months complete, they have anticipated payments to this amount. That may be all very well, but my impression is that if the Queensland Government find they are taking more money from the taxpayer than is actually required for the carrying on of this country, the proper thing would be to reconsider their railway freights and fares. We have in Queensland the highest railway freights in Australia.

The TREASURER: Is it not a fair thing, when an account is due, to include that account when making a balance for that particular period? It is correct finance.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: I ask the hon. gentleman, who claims to be a heaven-born financier, I suppose, and who is the grama-phon of his under secretary—I ask him if, on adjusting his finances, he had found himself £150,000 behind, would he have anticipated this month's payments?

The TREASURER: You may depend upon it he would have done the straight thing every time.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: If ever the time comes for the hon. gentleman to find himself with a deficit, he will not anticipate payments, neither he nor any other Treasurer. Neither would he have anticipated payments this year only he saw he had a surplus. I say the seasons are good, and all that sort of thing, but it is time the Government reduced the railway freights and so reduce these big surpluses. We have the highest freights in Australia. On the border line the freights are something like 50 per cent. below those on any other trunk line, and that line is paying very well. If the border line pays well with a rate of £5 per ton for 300 miles on third-class goods, why cannot the Western line and the Central and Northern lines pay at the same rates? I say it is not fair, because they are coming into competition with the New South Wales traffic, that special conditions should be given there, and the rest of the public are at their mercy, because the Government are the only public carriers, and are compelled to pay whatever they ask. It is not the way to assist the farmer or settler, or bring about that great settlement that the Premier spoke of. Cheap railway freights, that will bring men within a reasonable distance of a market, is one of the best inducements the Government could give for people who want to select, and I say that instead of paying that £170,000, or collecting it this year from the Railway Department, the Government should reduce the railway freights to that extent. During the recess, as I said before, there has been a juggling in portfolios. The late Premier has disappeared, and there has appeared in his place the late Minister for Lands. Now, when we passed the Land Act last session, and when an attack was made on the Land Court, we little dreamed that the then Premier contemplated taking a position of that sort, and I did not dream, when I strongly protested against the extra five years' service, that that would make the position more acceptable to him. Now, whether that appointment was right or wrong the Government must take the blame. It is no use saying the late Premier appointed himself, because he could not have done it without the consent of the Cabinet. The sin, if any, lies with the Government. There was no man more opposed to men of advanced years getting appointments in the Government service than the late Premier; he opposed anybody over forty-five years of age being taken into the service, and now, at the age of sixty-two, we have him accepting the position I referred to, and the Bill was amended in the Upper House to increase the retiring age from sixty-five years to seventy years, so that it would be a better position and give him a sure position of eight years. I do not know of any qualifications that that

Mr. J. M. Hunter.]

gentleman possessed for the position. I do think the gentleman appointed with him, Mr. Wilson, is in every way qualified for the position, and I believe good will result from his appointment. I do not think I can say the same of the other gentleman, nor do I think, in the late discussion which took place between him and the Minister for Lands, that he came out very well. I think he was altogether wrong. Now, I wish to say one or two words about the

[5 p.m.] Department of Agriculture. That department has been asleep ever since it was started, except for a few short years when it was controlled by the present Premier, who was the ablest Minister that ever sat in the chair at the head of that department. I only hope the present Minister will endeavour to emulate him, because if he does that, he may do some good for Queensland. We are told there are 116 experts and officers in the department; and I believe the one thing they are told to do is to go slow. There are some very capable men among them—I believe they are all capable men—and it is a great pity to see the talent for which the country is paying not being made use of. The State is not getting value for the money spent, and who is responsible? I have arrived at the conclusion that less attention should be paid to the social duties and more attention paid to the official duties of the department.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: What do you mean by "the social duties"?

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: The hon. gentleman can take it as he likes. I think it is generally known in this House how I mean it.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I think it very improper to make such a statement.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: What has been done in connection with silos and ensilage?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Everything except building them.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: I think assistance should be given, not only in the way of specifications, moulds, and supervision, but also in money. Probably that will be done when the Agricultural Bank Act is amended. I do not think sufficient information is given to the farmers. Experts are not sent out to advise them or give lectures; nor are meetings arranged between farmers and the experts.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Has any organisation in your district ever asked for an expert and been refused?

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: It will be a sorry day for Queensland if the men on the land have to ask for these things. I contend that it is the business of the department to force these things on the farmers. I never knew the child ask to be taught—the teacher has to go and teach the child. And the Department of Agriculture is there to teach the farmer.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Would it not be slow work, taking into consideration that there are hundreds of communities in Queensland?

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: No. We have 116 experts and other officers. You have your chemist—

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: How many?

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: You have one. But one man need not do the whole of the lecturing. In South Australia the Agricultural Department give the farmers' societies and

[Mr. J. M. Hunter.

guilds all sorts of encouragement to meet and discuss matters, write papers, and make experiments. They also give free railway passes, send out bulletins, and employ every means to encourage men to think about their business. Where they are a bit backward, experts go and lecture. That is what should be done here. We hear very little about following in Queensland; but I believe that if there is one State more than another where land should be followed it is Queensland.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do you think our farmers are as ignorant as you make out?

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: The hon. gentleman can judge for himself. I know how much they need assistance, and how little they receive. In the hon. gentleman's own district—on the Darling Downs—I heard this remark by a man who had been there thirty-five years. Speaking in reference to wheat, he said "We have a magnificent growth, but the heads won't fill." What has happened? Some of the elements required for the filling of the heads have been taken away during the years and years the land has been cropped, and the department ought to find out by analysis, or some other means, what is required to supply the thing that is absent from the soil.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Is that very general on the Downs?

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: I cannot tell the hon. gentleman—I do not live on the Downs. I dare say it is one of many cases.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: I can assure you it is not.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: I dare say it is the first time the hon. gentleman heard of such a thing.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes; it is—the first!

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: The other day I asked for a return to show the circulation of the "Agricultural Journal," and we are told that 3,000 copies are being sent out, besides bulletins and other publications. Here we have a journal costing something like £1,000 a year.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: £891 for the journal.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: We pay experts who write excellent articles which are published; and, because people will not send stamps to pay for the postage, they are not to have the journal. Members do not even get a copy in their boxes.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Why do they not pay the shilling for postage?

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: The Mines Department supply their journal, and members can get extra copies on application, also the "Sugar Journal"; but the "Agricultural Journal," which is well printed, and contains a lot of excellent articles, is only sent out to 3,000 persons—not necessarily farmers, but persons interested in farming. The journal, and every bulletin published, should be sent to our farmers. Why have experts and have these journals and bulletins published if not to put into the hands of the men on the land the necessary information to make their calling profitable? We have been told more than once of the wonderful increase in our butter trade; and I thought it was time to ascertain what progress we were really making. The Premier some time ago, referring to agriculture, stated that it would

all come in time—as dairying had come. Dairying got its start through the then Government sending round a travelling dairy; it did not come by chance. It was not left to itself; the Government assisted it. We know that a lot of land has been put under artificial grasses, but that does not explain the position. I will show by comparison how matters stand; and in doing so I will compare New South Wales with Queensland, because it is the sister State, and the climatic conditions are very similar, both in the interior and on the coast. Queensland produced 20,319,976 lb. butter in 1905, and 24,592,711 lb. in 1909.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Where did you get those figures?

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: From the last Commonwealth Year Book.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They are all wrong as far as Queensland is concerned.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: I would sooner take Knibbs as an authority than the hon. gentleman. New South Wales produced 52,040,250 lb. in 1905, and 64,865,603 lb. in 1909. So that while we went up 4,000,000 lb., New South Wales went up 8,000,000 lb. In 1904-5 there were 19,231 acres of potatoes in Queensland, and in 1909-10 there were 13,569 acres—a reduction of 6,000 acres. In the same years, in New South Wales, the area went up from 48,754 acres to 174,970 acres. In hay crops—wheat, oats, barley, and lucerne—Queensland produced 136,039 tons in 1903-4, and 96,854 tons in 1909-10—a decrease of 39,185 tons; while in the same period the quantity produced in New South Wales rose from 816,810 tons to 931,201 tons—an increase of 64,391 tons. In 1904-5 the area of wheat in Queensland was 150,958 acres, and in 1909-10 it was 117,160 acres—a decrease of 43,798 acres. In that same period the area in New South Wales increased from 1,775,955 acres to 1,990,180 acres—an increase of 214,225 acres. In that same period Western Australia increased her area five times over. In 1906-7 we had 44,178 acres under lucerne, and last year we had only 42,935 acres. New South Wales had 45,964 acres under lucerne crops in 1906-7, and 68,822 acres last year, showing an increase as against our decrease. During the same period the acreage under artificial grasses in Queensland was increased by 72,900 acres, while New South Wales increased 281,000. While we have an increase of about 4,000,000 lb. in our butter production, New South Wales has an increase of 8,000,000 lb.; and while we have gone back in every form of agriculture during that period, New South Wales has gone on steadily increasing in every form of agriculture. I ask, in all seriousness, how does the Secretary for Agriculture, or any other man, account for that? Is it not truly the case that agriculture is not receiving that encouragement from the department that it should receive? Not only does agriculture not receive proper encouragement from the Department of Agriculture, but it does not receive proper encouragement from the Lands Department. The class of men who go on the land for agricultural purposes are the homesteaders, and if you go to the Lands Department I undertake to say that you will hardly find more than two or three districts where homestead selections are available—for this reason, the Government are financing with their lands, and sooner than give land away at homestead prices they sell it in any quantity to persons who are willing to pay for it.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: They are jobbing it.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: They are jobbing their lands at ten "bob" an acre, and yet they will not allow a small selector to get land. They will supply any amount of land at ten "bob" an acre to anyone who comes along, but the small selector who goes on to the land to make a home for himself and produce food for the community has no chance of getting land, because the department has no sympathy with him. If the selector goes in for a bigger area, then the department is too tired to help him.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: We spent £6,000 on the Roma State Farm during the last four years.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: And the very best results obtained from any State farm has been obtained from the State farm at Roma.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The result has been nil.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: The result has been more than nil. If the hon. gentleman says that, he does not tell the truth. The department had at Roma one of the ablest and liveliest men in the service; he is one of the best farm managers the department has got, and yet the Minister for Agriculture says he has done nothing—proved nothing. I wonder if the hon. gentleman can tell me how many different varieties of wheat were grown on the Roma State Farm last year. I ask the hon. gentleman will he tell me how many varieties of wheat were tested on those lands last year?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: He can tell you what the result was.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: The hon. gentleman cannot tell me how many varieties of wheat were tested at the Roma State Farm, and yet he says the results were nil. It has been proved beyond question that by the propagation of drought-resisting, rust-resisting, and larger-yielding and better milling varieties better results follow. At the Roma State Farm they have been hybridising and striking different varieties of wheat, which will produce marvellous results in the future. Dr. Wilson, a gentleman Professor of Agriculture of the Edinburgh University, and who was connected with the Scottish Commission, told me that he had not seen finer work in all his travels than he saw on the Roma State Farm. Mr. Wilson also said that the officer who was managing the farm should be afforded every assistance, as the manager was overworked in trying to handle so many kinds of grain. That is the opinion of a man who comes from the heart of an agricultural country, and who has travelled through Canada and the United States. Yet the Minister tells me that nothing was done at that farm during four years, and that it was done at a cost of £6,000. I should like to know if the Government are doing anything to find markets for the farmers' produce. Are they doing anything to assist the producer? I believe they are going to build cold stores, but I suppose they will be for the benefit of people in Brisbane rather than for the producer. When they do build cold stores, I would suggest, because it has been suggested to me, that they should make provision for fruit. I believe there is a likelihood of a big storage of fruit taking place on account of men who can afford to hold their crops until prices are better, and who do not wish to rush them all into the market at the same time. I ask the Treasurer what has been done by his Water Board? We have been

Mr. J. M. Hunter.]

told that the regulations are to be altered. I am very pleased to hear that, because in my own electorate there have been a great number of cases in which persons wishing to provide water for their holdings have been discouraged. I know of one case in which the plant was held up for two months, because the parties concerned could not get the necessary permission to put down a bore. It is perfectly true that a survey was necessary to locate the exact position of the bore, but there need not have been such delay about the matter. The regulations under the Act were placed on the table of the House the day after we met, but they are altogether too strict and too drastic. I do not think it was ever the intention of Parliament that the regulations should be so drastic, and I was very pleased to hear that when a case was brought under the notice of the Premier he put aside both the Act and regulations and the whole red tape connected with their administration, and allowed the work to go on; but that was only after a valuable plant had been idle for two months, and the persons concerned were waiting for every mail to bring them instructions to proceed. I am afraid that the Treasurer has not yet got a grip of his department.

The TREASURER: You are getting outside the facts.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: I have all the facts. I had occasion to go to the office myself, and I ought to have a distinct knowledge of the facts. I quote that particular case because it was put into my hands. I could make it a long way worse than I have done, and blacken the Treasurer a great deal more than he has been blackened, but I do not wish to do so, as he is bad enough without my saying anything more about him. The senior member for Townsville said he had been told by many farmers that they would cultivate more land if they could get more labour. I remind the hon. gentleman that with all the shiploads of immigrants we have coming to the State we must have more labour than we had in years gone by, yet we have less land under cultivation. The hon. gentleman said those people were drifting to the city. I am sorry to have to admit that they are drifting to the city, and that is going to be the curse of Queensland, if not of Australia. We are offering inducements for people to go into the cities, and are actually penalising men if they go out into the country. In effect, we say to them, "You have to pay so much more for your food there, you have less conveniences, we are not going to give you any encouragement to go there, and if you go you do so at your own risk." As a result, the great bulk of the people are going into the cities. The Redistribution Act will intensify that evil. When that measure was going through the House I pointed out that its effect would be to drive people into the city, because it centralised the governing power here. We have within 6 miles radius of Brisbane twenty-six members. What an influence that gives the metropolitan area in the Assembly. What chance has any member outside to get a pull at the Treasury when there are twenty-six men sitting at the Treasury doormat every morning?

Mr. MAUGHAN: Sleeping on the doormat.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Well, sleeping on the doormat. I was pleased to hear the reference made by the senior member for Townsville to the Western Railway, because

[Mr. J. M. Hunter.

the hon. gentleman spoke against it when it was going through the House. I was opposed to that line, and I am more convinced than ever that the House did wrong in passing it. It will be a complete waste of money. If one quarter of the money which that railway will cost was spent in the direction I have indicated—if we adopted a system of classifying our lands and building railways to them—we should do a great deal more for Queensland than we shall do by building this line, and we should run less danger of having to bear the burden of a losing railway. The great prosperity we are experiencing in Queensland to-day is largely due to the wonderfully prosperous condition of the grazing industry, and if anything should happen to that industry, if there should be a drought—

Mr. GUNN: Is the pastoral industry spoonfed?

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: The hon. member must have been asleep, because I never said anything about the industry being spoonfed. But if the hon. member wants to know the truth about it, I will tell him that it is spoonfed in this way, that the pastoralists have held their runs at rents which should never have been fixed so low, and in that respect they have been spoonfed more than persons engaged in any other industry. If a drought happened, or if there was a fall in the price of wool and stock, the Government would be very sorry that they had built the Western Railway. When the line was going through the House I did not think there was any business in it. From the remarks made by the hon. member for Townsville I thought there was no business in it. No business in that matter is better than business, because the proposal is a big blunder. If that line is built from Tobermory they will get into a gross tangle, because with the line to make the border connection and our other line in that district we shall have a triangle surrounded by a railway. I hope that this line will not be built until another inspection of the country has been made, and a more complete report furnished to Parliament. We rushed through Parliament last session a big railway scheme involving £10,000,000, but I thought it was only done for the purpose of making a big noise. I sincerely hope, at any rate, that the railway referred to will not be built. I wish now to refer to that very painful incident which took place in this House last Thursday night, when the hon. member for Moreton spoke of the loyalty or otherwise of the Prime Minister of Australia. I tried to persuade him by interjection to discontinue his remarks on that subject, and to wait until we had some evidence on the matter, instead of accusing a man on no evidence.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: He ought to retract now.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: After having read what was actually said by the Prime Minister, I think the hon. member should make an ample apology to this Chamber, because I think it was a sort of thing that was unworthy of him and unworthy of this House.

It is the same story all over [5.30 p.m.] again—"The wish was father to the thought," and that is always the case in connection with the Labour party. I believe very often that men who strike, or who are threatening to strike, are driven to do desperate things because the police are sent up to watch them. I believe that men are driven to crime in similar ways.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Then we should dismiss all of our police force?

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: No, the police are kept for their uses and not for their abuses, and they very often abuse their positions. The desire is that they should incriminate others, and so it was the other night when we were wanted to believe that the leader of the Federal Labour party, the present Prime Minister, was guilty of a disloyal act. I am very pleased to see by the papers to-day that such is not the case. The loyalty of the Labour party is just as great as that of hon. members on the other side.

Mr. MAUGHAN: More so, as the Labour party do more to show their loyalty.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Perhaps more so. There is one thing about it, and that is that the class to whom they belong has given more of their blood to the Empire than the people who write those articles, or speak those words. We are told that the Federal land tax has given the Federal Government, the largest surplus they ever had in Australia, and we were told that that money was illegally taken from the pockets of the people. But let us remember that that money is being used for the defence of Australia, and for a long number of years, when the other party was in power, they did nothing because they had not got the money to do anything in that direction. They had not the courage to impose a land tax, and they would have gone on for years and years before they would have had that courage. The money was wanted for that purpose, and the money has been raised, and if there is any sign of loyalty wanted it is shown in that way. More has been done since the Federal Government has been in the hands of the Labour party to show real practical work than has been done in the history of the Commonwealth. We are told, because the Federal Government will only give 3 per cent. for the transferred properties, that it is robbery, but it is far more than we get from anyone else.

The TREASURER: Remember that we have not got the 3 per cent. yet.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: The hon gentleman has got nearer to it than ever before, because he never even got a promise of it before. (Opposition laughter). I have enough faith in the Treasurer of the Commonwealth to know that, since a promise has been made, the promise will be faithfully fulfilled. I hope that others will give him the same credit for honesty. I trust that the next time this House meets, instead of a promise, the thing will be actually realised and that the money will be here. I hope that the efforts of the Legislature will be for the promotion of the good of Queensland. I hope that during the session, bad as the programme is that is put before us—it is nothing but a catalogue of amendments—it will be passed through. I hope that the Government, or the Hon. the Minister who is in charge of these amending Bills, will listen to "sweet reasonableness" and accept amendments from this side of the House when they are actually for the improvement of the measure. So far as I am concerned, I am here to assist in passing legislation for the common good, and, so far as it is possible to improve a measure and assist the Minister in legislating for the good of Queensland, that will be my endeavour, and I am sure it is the endeavour of every member on this side of the

House. We may not always agree as to what is right about a measure, but I can assure hon. gentlemen opposite that it is more often they that are in the wrong when they do not accept our amendments.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. CORSER (*Maryborough*): I join with the rest of the members of this House in deploring the loss of our late Speaker. And I also have much pleasure in congratulating you, Sir, on being placed in such a high position in this House, and I little doubt that you will carry out your duties to the entire satisfaction of all present. I regret the loss of an able man who was developing into a statesman in our late leader.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: "Developing!" and laughter.

Mr. CORSER: But I think that this Chamber can very well be congratulated on being able to find such a capable leader as our present Chief Secretary to take his place. He is a man who has shown from his past experience that he has a thorough grip of all that is necessary for a statesman, and no man, I am sure, on either side of the House, will question his ability or say that he is not a hard-working man. I feel sure that before his term of office is ended he will show the country that he is a thoroughly capable administrator and quite competent to carry on the business of the country.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS interjecting.

Mr. CORSER: I like to give my opinion honestly, and when I see worth to give credit to it, and I hope that others will do the same. I was pleased to see, after the alteration in the Cabinet, that so many members of the Government considered it to be their duty to go through the length and breadth of Queensland, more particularly the Northern portion of it, to learn the requirements and the aspirations of the people there. My recollection of Queensland goes back as far as most members of this House, and I think when the members of the Ministry got to the North that they certainly bumped up against a big proposition in considering how the Northern portion of Queensland, more particularly on the coast-line, should be developed under existing conditions. I travelled through the Northern districts myself lately, and it struck me that there was only one means by which you could successfully, under present conditions, settle people in the North of Queensland, and that is by sugar-growing—I am speaking now of the low lands on the coast. Unfortunately, I am afraid that the prospects of developing that industry and settling the people upon it are not very bright, if we are to be threatened, as we have been threatened in the last two or three days, with the removal of the duties on sugar. I would like to mention that in the *Courier* of the 29th of July there appears this paragraph, which was telegraphed from Melbourne. It is part of a statement made by the Acting Prime Minister, Mr. Hughes, when referring to the sugar trouble in Queensland—

"I, for one, and I do not, I am sure, only express my own opinions, will not have the slightest hesitation in repealing the duty at the first possible occasion. The men are only asking for a living wage. It is scandalous that we have to pay £579,000 bounty and £6 duty per ton, and yet the men cannot get a wage upon which they can live. A little while

Mr. Corser.]

ago it was said that white men could not work in the canefields. It is the hardest work to which white men can be put, and yet they say an eight-hour day is insufficient. They want men to work longer hours, and they will not even pay decent wages. To repeal the duty may be a rude method of cutting the Gordian knot, but it will be effective."

Then on the following day Mr. Hughes was asked by the *Courier* reporter in Melbourne if his statement about repealing the sugar import duty had been made after consideration with his colleagues, and the Acting Prime Minister said—

"We have not had a meeting of the Cabinet, but I consulted my colleagues before making the statement. The next question was, how the question of bounty and excise would stand if the duty were repealed, as both had been fixed for a term of years by Act of Parliament. "No legislation," was the reply, "is immutable, but, of course, very serious issues are involved, and I do not at present desire to commit myself to anything more than I have said."

The Minister of Customs, who was then seen, stated—

"What Mr. Hughes said is practically what I told the growers and manufacturers when I was in Queensland. I told them that if their action was persisted in it would make the matter of retaining the duty a very difficult matter to deal with."

The Acting Prime Minister foreshadowed the probability of a further communication on the same subject at an early date, but would say nothing about its nature. It appears that this threat, though practically levelled at the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, is going to affect that company less than anyone else in Queensland in the sugar business. We know that the ramifications of that company are very great. We know that in New Zealand, where I believe the duty on sugar is nil, they actually hold a monopoly of the interests there, and, if the duty was taken off sugar in Australia to-morrow, it would not prevent their sugar from Fiji or other parts of the world coming into Australia. The necessity for the Colonial Sugar Refining Company putting up factories throughout Queensland was caused by the protective duty put on sugar. They have their own plantations in Fiji, and if the duty is removed in Australia the industry in Queensland must sink, as it is an absolute impossibility for anyone to grow cane and manufacture sugar and compete with the sugar from oversea if there is no duty to prevent it from coming in, because the sugar is produced elsewhere by the cheapest labour in the world—that is, black labour. In Java the price paid to men working in the mills and in the field averages 4d. per day.

Mr. FERRICKS: It is low-paid labour, but not cheap labour.

Mr. CORSER: Is it right that anyone should attempt to interfere with that great industry in that way? The reason I mentioned it is because of this paragraph in the Governor's Speech—

"The question of erecting additional sugar-mills in North Queensland has been the cause of much serious consideration to my advisers, who are of opinion that in our north-eastern coast lands no other field industry is likely to prove so attractive to the settler and so remunerative to the labourer as sugar-growing."

The intention was that three more sugar-mills, under the central sugar-mill system, should be constructed in the North of Queensland, and I do not think that any-

[Mr. Corser.

body had the slightest objection to it, so long as the money could be spent safely and not thrown away; but I say unreservedly, that if there is any successful attempt to take the duty off sugar, putting money into those three sugar-mills would be little short of throwing it away. Not only would it be throwing that money away, but the money already invested in our central sugar-mills in Queensland would be absolutely lost. And why should those threats be used? It has that disturbing influence that the men employed on small farms do not know to-day where they are. They do not know when the sword will fall upon them by means of which their livelihood will be swept away, and it assuredly will be swept away if the duty is removed off sugar. I challenge any member on the Opposition side to say that sugar could be produced in Queensland without a protective duty; and, instead of talking about removing the duty, if they were sincere in wishing to see the men paid a higher wage, they should agitate for a higher duty on sugar.

Mr. LENNON: We will not get a higher wage then.

Mr. CORSER: A stipulation could be made that the men should get a higher wage.

Mr. LENNON: No, no!

Mr. CORSER: At present this industry is only protected practically to the extent of £5 a ton.

Mr. FERRICKS: Which all goes to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company.

Mr. CORSER: How can it all go to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company.

Mr. FERRICKS: Because they control the whole business.

Mr. CORSER: The hon. member does not know what he is talking about, because we know perfectly well that the Colonial Sugar Refining Company does not control more than one-eighth of the whole production.

Mr. FERRICKS: The manufacturers control a quarter.

Interjections by Opposition members.

The SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. CORSER: To me it seems a very risky thing indeed, until this question is settled as to whether the Federal Prime Minister is going to tamper with the duty on sugar, to go on with the construction of more central mills. I cannot understand members representing sugar districts countenancing such a thing as we have heard of late.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: An octopus; that is what it is.

Mr. CORSER: I have always taken a lively interest in settlement in Queensland. I have seen its progress during the last forty years, and I must say, without wishing to adversely criticise the acts of the Minister for Lands—in fact, I believe we have had three excellent Ministers for Lands, and they have done all they possibly could with the knowledge in their possession. But they cannot get all the knowledge, even through the Under Secretaries, under the present system. We want more decentralisation in the Lands Office. I am very pleased indeed to see that the Secretary for Railways has granted, to a very large extent, decentralisation in the Railway Department, and I wish that the same would be granted in the Lands Department. Hon. members on the other side have said that there was no land, especi-

ally the hon. member for Maranoa—that no land has been opened for selection except prickly-pear land.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: I did not say that.

Mr. CORSER: The hon. member said that the resumptions had all been prickly-pear land.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Principally.

Mr. CORSER: Well, I stand corrected. I certainly understood that was what the hon. member stated. However, if you take Tarong and Taabinga you will find there is no prickly pear on either of those resumptions, and there are about 400,000 acres north-west of Gayndah that has also been thrown open, with very little pear on it. What I complain of is that the amount of land that has been thrown open for selection is not sufficient for requirements, and hon. members can well understand that, when I state that in the large district around Gayndah there are now only two surveyors engaged in designing land. One is followed up by two contract surveyors, and in the other case they have only one man following the designing surveyor. We want at least five or six designing surveyors in that district alone. The land is there, and it can be made available at any time so long as surveyors are provided. Whether those surveyors can be procured in Queensland or elsewhere I cannot say, but I think the Lands Office, in the interests of close settlement, should procure every surveyor possible. Then the mode of disseminating knowledge as to where those lands are to be got seems to me to be very poor. The other day the hon. member for Burnett asked a question, and very properly so, too. I had certain plans right up to date of the Burnett district showing what lands were then open for selection, and that information could not be procured at any other place except in Gayndah and in Brisbane. Now, Maryborough is the seaport and principal city of the Wide Bay and Burnett districts, and it seems very strange that people in that city, whom we are trying to induce to settle on the land—all those who believe in close settlement will hail with pleasure the taking of young people out of the towns and putting them on the land—and yet these young people can get no chance of getting on the land. I will tell you exactly what happens in that district. The designing surveyor goes through the land he is designing, and the people in the district can go into the camp and ascertain what land is being surveyed.

Mr. MAUGHAN: What district are you speaking of?

Mr. CORSER: The Burnett district around Gayndah. Take the Mundubbera district. What they do there is to go into the Lands Office in Gayndah and deposit £5 and give the number of a selection. But when that £5 is sent down to Brisbane, it is often found there is no such number, but still the £5 is retained, and when the designers have sent in their plans this man gets a prior right to that selection. Then, as was the case when I got the last plans, more than half of the lands had been applied for and acquired. I got the plans as soon as ever they were ready. I think some arrangement should be made—I am speaking in the interest of the young people of Maryborough who I am desirous of seeing settled on the land—whereby knowledge, as the hon. member for Burnett said, should not only be pro-

vided at the Lands Office in Maryborough, but in Gympie and Kingaroy as well. I was very pleased indeed to know by the Premier's policy speech that at last it was the intention to fulfil the long-felt want of a deep-sea port for Maryborough and the Wide Bay and Burnett district. I think no right-minded member of the House will question the justice of the people of Maryborough and district receiving such a concession. Every other important district has got access to sea-going vessels that the Wide Bay and Burnett districts does not now possess. The first vessel going to the port of Hervey's Bay leaves on the 30th of this month. Two other important questions have been referred to in the Address in Reply—that is, the Liquor Bill and the Police Offences Bill. Those are most contentious measures, and I think the Premier is perfectly right to bring them on as early as possible, and I only hope both measures will receive earnest consideration and will be dealt with on their merits as quickly as possible, so that we can, at any rate, straighten out any differences, and put on the statute-book measures that will be acceptable to the majority of the people. It is also gratifying to notice that more attention is to be given to the condition of State children. I think all will agree with me that the children of any country are one of its biggest assets, and any amount, within reason, should be spent to see that those children are kept healthy, because if they are healthy children the chances are they will grow up to be healthy men and women. It has for some time been felt that it was necessary to make some alteration in the Agricultural Bank, and it is pleasing to know that the Government have taken this matter into earnest consideration, and that an amendment of the Agricultural Bank Act will be introduced this session. I am sure both sides of the House will be pleased at this, because if we are to have successful settlement on the land, the facilities to help those settlers should be as great as we can afford to make them. Then, as to the question of immigration. It is pleasing to note that so many people are coming out here, and, as I have said in previous addresses, we should have very many more than we are now getting, and every care should be taken to get as many agricultural labourers as we possibly can. There is a very large number of young fellows at home who have had very little experience of agriculture, and when they come out here, if they would only take the trouble to learn—they might not get as big a wage when they start as they would like—they would soon become prosperous and contented. It is like everything else—there must be a commencement, and they must learn their trade before they can expect to get the full wage. I know of an instance of a young fellow coming from home who thought he was a dairyman, and when he was put to milk cows with several others, after his mates had turned out cow after cow, having milked them dry, this young fellow put up his head and said, "How do you know when to knock off?" And he was told by the proprietor of the farm that, as far as he was concerned, he need not trouble himself about that, as the cow was producing more milk than he could take from her. I think there are a number of young fellows who go into the back districts as farm labourers who know very little about the work.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: I thought they were all farm labourers.

Mr. Corser]

Mr. CORSER: I say it is far better to have agricultural labourers; if we are to have agricultural settlement and expand the dairying industry, as the hon. member for Maranoa seems to wish, and view with New South Wales, it is necessary to have labour to do it. We have not the labour to-day, and you cannot expect to give the same wage to men, such as I have just described, as to good practical farm labourers. Referring to the Opening Speech, I find it says—

“My advisers are, therefore, making earnest and, it is thought, successful efforts to encourage immigrants of the most suitable type to settle amongst us.”

And further on—

“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.”

In listening very attentively to the hon. member for Maranoa, I noticed that he stated there was practically no land available for settlement, and no endeavour to make land available. I will therefore speak longer than I had any intention of doing, in order to give some figures in refutation of the hon. member's statement. I obtained some information from the Lands Department which I will make known. These are particulars of land selected during the six months from 1st January to 30th June in the years 1910 and 1911 respectively—

Tenths.	1910.			1911.		
	No.	Area. Acres.	Rent. £ s. d.	No.	Area. Acres.	Rent. £ s. d.
Agricultural Farm	771	321,619	8,365 8 7	922	369,346	7,813 16 5
Agricultural Homestead	34	9,029	112 18 9	19	3,713	45 8 4
Free Homestead	2	320	6	6	940	11 1 1
Unconditional Selection	33	4,852	224 2 1	35	5,887	245 17 9
Perpetual Lease	71	660	7 8 6	7	2,287	22 9 0
Grazing Farm	137	506,609	2,024 1 4	93	1,040,787	3,241 15 0
Grazing Homestead	137	1,271,209	7,020 11 4	73	745,026	3,862 13 8
Scrub Selection	438	642,873	...	410	541,692	...
Prickly Pear Selection	1,468	2,757,271	17,764 10 7	1,561	2,608,378	15,091 19 3
Total	1,468	2,757,271	17,764 10 7	1,561	2,608,378	15,091 19 3

Now, this is more important in answer to the hon. member's remarks.

[Mr. Corser.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: What are you trying to prove now?

Mr. CORSER: If you wait long enough you will ascertain—that is, if you are capable. (Laughter). Here is a list of holdings of which notice of resumption under section 146 of the Act has been given, taking effect in 1911—

Name of Holding.	District.	Date when Resumption takes effect.	Area Resumed.
		1911.	sq. m.
Keroongooloo ...	Gregory South	1 January...	124
Tenham ...	do.	do.	591½
Taabinga ...	Burnet	do.	71½
Tarong ...	do.	do.	49
Boombah ...	Maranoa	do.	17½
Mt. Ennis-killen	Mitchell	do.	109½
Beaconsfield East	do.	do.	19½
Beaconsfield West	do.	do.	50½
Weelban ...	Gregory South	do.	122½
Mt. Marlow ...	Mitchell	1 February	232
Ludgate Hill ...	do.	do.	84½
Arabella ...	Warrego	do.	24
Rockybank ...	Maranoa	do.	35½
Toompine ...	Warrego	do.	32½
Gowrie ...	do.	do.	146
South Comolgin	do.	do.	108
Cameron Downs	Mitchell	1 March	56
Caledonia ...	do.	do.	100
Mangalore ...	Warrego	do.	52
Tancred ...	Mitchell	do.	70
Danline West ...	Darling Downs	1 April	40
Cona ...	Leichhardt	do.	28½
Authoringa ...	Warrego	do.	143½
Wongalee ...	Burke	do.	40
Angellala ...	Warrego	do.	54½
Retreat ...	Mitchell	1 May	150½
Galway Downs	Gregory South	do.	89½
Tulemon No. 2	Leichhardt	1 June	56
Maryvale ...	Warrego	do.	57
Retro ...	Leichhardt	do.	11½
Bundo ...	Warrego	1 August	73
Elverston ...	do.	do.	30
Mount Morris	do.	do.	122
Clara ...	do.	do.	20½
Yarmouth ...	do.	do.	41½
Amby Downs	Maranoa	do.	17½
Merivale West	do.	1 September	43
Fernless ...	Leichhardt	do.	8½
Rockwood ...	Mitchell	do.	58
Oxford Downs	Leichhardt	1 October	74
Mexico ...	Mitchell	1 November	68½
Cawildi ...	Maranoa	do.	23½
Estmere ...	Mitchell	1 December	85½
Logan Downs	South Kennedy	do.	87½

Total area resumed, 3,027½ square miles.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Those are not agricultural lands.

Mr. CORSER: Some of them are.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Scores of miles from a railway.

Mr. CORSER: They are lands suitable for settlement. We are not dealing with agricultural settlement only. The area at present open for grazing selection is 1,848,891 acres.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Those figures do not go against my argument at all.

Mr. CORSER: The charge which the hon. gentleman practically levelled at the Lands Office was that they were not attending to what they should do in making land available for settlement—not particularly agricultural settlement.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: I was talking particularly about agricultural selection.

Mr. CORSER: Here is a list of holdings in respect of which notice of resumption under section 146 of the Act has been given, taking effect in 1912—

Name of Holding	District.	Date when Resumption takes effect.	Area Resumed.
		1912.	Sq. m.
Yarral	Leichhardt	1 January	46 $\frac{5}{16}$
Kilcumnia	South Kennedy	do. ...	332 $\frac{1}{2}$
Maryvale	Mitchell	do. ...	45 $\frac{1}{2}$
Emmet Downs	do.	do. ...	35
Bludebango	Maranoa	do. ...	17 $\frac{1}{2}$
Malvern Downs and Palagan	Leichhardt	1 February	49 $\frac{1}{2}$
Mount Spencer	do.	do. ...	70
Mexico	Mitchell	do. ...	46 $\frac{1}{2}$
Bong	South Kennedy	do. ...	30
Wambrook	Leichhardt	do. ...	84
Kieta	Maranoa	do. ...	56
Windeyer	Mitchell	do. ...	156 $\frac{1}{16}$
Binga	Maranoa	do. ...	23 $\frac{1}{2}$
Bludebango West	do.	do. ...	3 $\frac{1}{4}$
Teeswater	do.	do. ...	37 $\frac{1}{16}$
Coogoon	do.	do. ...	122
Oakley	Mitchell	do. ...	95
St. Helens	Leichhardt	do. ...	21
Ballal (whole)	Warrego	do. ...	61 $\frac{1}{2}$
Nebine do.	Maranoa	do. ...	437
Logan Downs East	South Kennedy	1 March	64 $\frac{1}{2}$
Tilbooro and Eulo	Warrego	do. ...	214
Foye View	Maranoa	do. ...	69 $\frac{1}{2}$
		Total ...	2,147 $\frac{1}{16}$

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Are you sure you have not missed any?

Mr. CORSER: You cannot afford to be funny.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: That's not funny.

Mr. CORSER: I think this will refute that portion of the hon. member's statement in which he would like the country to believe that the Lands Department were practically doing nothing towards making land available for settlement.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: For agricultural settlement.

Mr. CORSER: I have already stated that there is very much more land in the Burnett district and, I suppose, elsewhere that could be made available for agricultural settlement, and I understand from the Minister for Lands that when he knows where the railways are going, so that he can give instructions to the surveyors to survey the lands in such a way as will enable the settlers to be served by the railways, he will throw open a large lot of agricultural lands. But railways must precede settlement, where that settlement is close settlement. As a mercantile man I welcome—and I am sure my colleagues will welcome—the proposed amendment of the Health Act. In a warm country like this it is essential that every precaution should be taken to secure pure food and drugs to the people. There is also a gratifying note sounded in the Opening Speech, which I do not think it is necessary to say will meet with the approval of members on both sides of the House, and that is the statement that steps have been taken to increase the pay of lower-grade officers in the service, and give them more satisfactory remuneration.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: That is very belated.

Mr. CORSER: It is most gratifying to note that since the party at present in power assumed office they have endeavoured to increase the pay of men in the lower grades of

the service. Something has been said by previous speakers about our proceeding cautiously with our finances, because we cannot always depend upon having the good seasons we have enjoyed in the past. Anybody who has resided in Queensland as long as I have knows that such advice is good, but as long as the seasons are good, and as long as we have everything to back up our enterprise, we have no need to fear any difficulty in meeting the heavy loan repayments which will shortly become due. We must not lose sight of the fact that by reason of the good seasons we have had in the past, large sums of money have been accumulated in our financial institutions, and that fact ought to assure us that we shall not lack the money when the time comes to meet our loan obligations. There are no less than £132,000,000 at fixed deposit in the banks and Government Savings Banks of Australia, and there are also £60,000,000 in open and current account in the banks of Australia; so that there is a sum of nearly £200,000,000 in Australia. Therefore, I do not think, unless we have very bad seasons or bad legislation by the Federal Government, we need fear that our loans will not be promptly met when they become due. It is gratifying also to note that in 1910 the average amount that each depositor had in the Government Savings Bank was £49 0s. 4d., which means £9 12s. 7d. per head of the population. All the circumstances considered, I do not think there is any necessity to sound a note of warning with regard to the progressive policy of the Government, which I am happy to see our present leader is going to carry out, with the addition of railways in agricultural districts. I shall not say anything further, except that I feel sure that while we on this side are democratic, liberal, and progressive—(Hear, hear!)—we shall benefit the country by legislation and administration more than the party on the other side would by their non-progressive and non-liberal policy. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. MAY (*Flinders*): I desire to make a few remarks on the Address in Reply. First of all I wish to refer to the wreck of the "Yongala." I am sure that we all regret very much that sad accident. I had some friends from Townsville and elsewhere on board the ill-fated vessel when she was on her last voyage, and I desire to say that while, in my opinion, the Government acted wisely in the first instance in sending out a vessel to search for the wreck, they withdrew that vessel from the search too quickly. I understand that they are resuming the search, but I do not think the Government have done all they might have done to find out the scene of the wreck. I wish also to express my sorrow at the death of your predecessor in that chair, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Bell was one of the most courteous men, if not the most cultured and courteous man, in Queensland. I desire, further, to refer to the decease of Mr. Thallon, who was one of the great business men under the command of Parliament. I am sure his loss will be felt throughout the country. I believe the Government have put a good man in his place. I think Mr. Evans is the most suitable man in Queensland for the position, and I am delighted to see that the Government did not go outside Queensland to get a man to fill the office of Commissioner.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We had no intention of doing that.

[Mr. May.]

Mr. MAY: We never know what the intentions of a conservative Government are. Therefore, I wish to compliment them on their action in this matter. In the Opening Speech we are promised a list of Bills. Among them is a Police Offences Bill, which is now under discussion in the other House. I do not intend to go into the details of that measure until it is before this Chamber. Another contentious measure is the Licensing Bill. I hope that the party element will be eliminated in the discussion of those measures, and that each of them will be discussed on its merits. I know which side I am going to take on both those Bills—(laughter)—and I will tell hon. members when they come before the House. With regard to the State Education Act Amendment Bill, I think the Act should be amended. I have always been against the teaching of the Bible in State schools, and am still against it, and if an opportunity offers I will vote for a repeal of the Bill passed last session. If the present Government do not repeal that measure, I hope this side will have an opportunity of removing it from the statute-book, and I am sure that if this party introduce a repealing Bill we shall have the support of a vast number of members who are sitting on the Government side of the House at the present time. With reference to the amendment of the Factories and Shops Act, I wish to point out that it is not fair that commercial travellers with large packages of samples should go to small towns, expose them in places about the size of half this Chamber at times when the local shopkeepers are closed—expose them ostensibly for the purpose of show, but really to sell from them.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC INSTRUCTION: We are dealing with that in the amending Bill.

Mr. MAY: Well, it is time that something was done in that matter. I spoke of it last year, and am ventilating it again now, because that kind of thing is unfair to local shopkeepers in small towns. With regard to the Water Conservation Act, which was passed last year, there is not much to find fault with in the measure itself, though a few of its provisions might have been improved, in the interest of squatters and other persons living in the interior, but the regulations are altogether too drastic. How can a man tell what is the altitude of the place where he proposes to put down a bore? Yet that is one of the things he is required to state when he proposes to sink an artesian bore. He has also to tell what is the exact flow from a bore 40 or 50 miles away. How can he do that, and how the dickens can he say how deep he is going to sink until he puts down his bore? Such regulations are stupid and eccentric, and cause considerable irritation and delay. Here is a resolution passed unanimously at a full meeting of the Flinders Shire Council, held on the 15th May, 1911—

“That this council, whilst fully recognising that the Government should exercise some control over the artesian water supply to prevent unnecessary waste of such a valuable asset, considers—

“That the regulations attached to the Rights in Water and Water Conservation and Utilization Act of 1910, as at present drawn up and printed by the Hydraulic Engineer, are impracticable in many cases, and unnecessary, and also very hampering to all classes of graziers, and it suggests that a small committee

[Mr. May.

of at least three practical pastoralists and at least one practical well-borer meet the Hydraulic Engineer and draw up fresh regulations that will be sufficiently explicit for the present needs of the Water Supply Department, and at the same time be more workable for graziers.

“And it further suggests that once such regulations be agreed upon, the administration of them be placed in the hands of the Lands Department, and be worked through the commissioners and other officials, as is all other business so directly concerning the graziers of Queensland.”

I think that when new regulations are framed they should be submitted to members representing pastoral constituencies, so that they may send them to shire councils in their electorates with the view of getting suggestions from them that will meet the requirements of the people concerned. With regard to the suggestion that the administration of the regulations should be placed in the hands of the land commissioners, I would remind hon. members that a land commissioner passes one or two bores every day in the ordinary course of his rounds, and that he is likely to have a much better knowledge of these matters than the Hydraulic Engineer sitting in his office in Brisbane. Therefore, in adopting that suggestion, the department will no doubt facilitate operations under the Act, and thus do a benefit to the persons concerned and to the State as a whole. [7.30 p.m.] I am sure that before next week is over I shall have people from my district asking me to introduce them as a deputation to the Minister with reference to this matter. In fact, I shall be much disappointed if they don't. (Laughter.)

The HOME SECRETARY: He will not be disappointed. (Laughter.)

Mr. MAY: You may laugh, but it is quite reasonable and proper that at show time, when people come to Brisbane from the country, especially those who come long distances from the far away districts, they should have an opportunity of ventilating their grievances through their member before a Minister. (Hear, hear!) I am sure that they look on it in this way: That if they are given an opportunity to ventilate their grievances to the Minister it will be the means of getting over a number of difficulties.

The TREASURER: We are always glad to see them.

Mr. MAY: I am glad to hear the Minister say that he was glad to see them, but he laughed derisively when I made the suggestion just now.

The TREASURER: No, no!

Mr. MAY: The Treasurer has had a go at me, and now I will have a go at him. (Laughter.) With regard to the deputation that waited on him in connection with this big sugar strike, I may say that we talked the matter over in Parliament House, and we made up our minds to see if we could do something to bring about the termination of the strike which was then in operation, and which I may say has been in operation ever since, although it was not going so strong then as it is now. We talked the matter over in the library and in Parliament House, and a few suggestions would have been given to the Treasurer when we waited on him, but before we could get a word in the Minister charged the deputation that came there for the pur-

pose of bringing the matter to a close—he charged them with trying to foment the strike.

The **TREASURER**: One of your number previously said so.

Mr. **MAY**: I have been in two or three strikes myself, but I do not wish to be in any again; I do not like them.

The **SPEAKER**: Order!

Mr. **MAY**: I think that the sooner a man gets out of strikes the better. To pass on to the other matters, I notice that we are not to have an amendment of the Shearers and Sugar Workers' Accommodation Act. There is no mention of it in the Governor's Speech, at any rate. I have in my box downstairs two or three amendments which I wish to bring forward. I have had them for two years, and I showed them to the Under Secretary for Agriculture, but there is no chance of getting them in, as there is no amendment of the Act to be brought forward this year. There is no mention of a Trade Disputes Bill, but as my colleagues have mentioned that I will not dilate on it. With regard to the railway policy, I am as much in favour of building railways into farming districts as any member in this House. (Hear, hear!) At the same time I do not think the Government should neglect the mining districts. (Hear, hear!) We have in my own electorate at the present time a line which is being pushed forward to the northernmost part of the Gregory electorate. That was to be one of the junctions of the transcontinental railway. The line has been started, but they are proceeding so slowly. When I was in the district last May we anticipated that the line would have been started in a month, but I see by the latest paper from Cloncurry that it has just been started, and that they have got fifty men at work on it. Fancy fifty men to build 38 miles of railway! I notice that there is no district engineer appointed for that line either. I was very sorry that the Minister for Railways did not come up to my electorate as he promised, although I know it was not the Minister's fault. Not only myself but vast numbers of people in my electorate were sorry that the Minister for Railways was prevented from coming to my electorate, and that he could not fulfil the promise he made. I had just been through the electorate, and I can assure the hon. gentleman that I would have given him a good time, and I would have given him a lively time, too, if he had come up there. (Laughter.)

The **SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS**: I believe you had fourteen deputations in one day.

Mr. **MAY**: Fourteen! More like forty. (Laughter.) We had arranged everything so nicely, and everything was in a nutshell, so that the Minister's time would not be hindered in any way. We got a few fellows to work up our little grievances, and everything was so nicely arranged to present to the Minister to let him know exactly what we wanted that he would have granted them all straightaway. (Laughter.) It was therefore with great regret that I received a telegram from the Minister saying that he could not come. There are other railways that we want to see extended in our district. One is from Cloncurry to Mount Cuthbert, and then it can be extended further on to one of the Gulf ports. That is a matter I have been agitating about and speaking on for two years past. We have untold wealth of copper in Mount

Cuthbert and beyond. The line from Cloncurry would also pass close to a number of little "shows" which cannot be worked at present, but they could all be worked if the railway went by them. I am sure that the line would pay right from the jump. I have a complaint from my district with respect to the guarantee of the second section of the Cloncurry Railway—namely, that from Julia Creek to Cloncurry. The first section is from Richmond to Julia Creek, and that has been paying very well, but the second section into Cloncurry has not paid well at all, and the ratepayers are called upon to pay £6,000 odd to make up the deficiency, and they would think that that is unfair. This is a letter I received from the Cloncurry Shire Council on the subject—

"Sir,—As you are doubtless aware, there is a deficiency of £6,690 13s. 6d. in the maintenance and working expenses of section 2 of the Richmond (Julia Creek) and Cloncurry Railway for the twelve months ended 30th June, 1910, this shire, jointly with the shires of Mackinlay, Boulia, and Burke, according to the Railway Act of 1906, are jointly liable, and the Commissioner for Railways has issued an order upon the councils concerned to appoint a joint valuer and to levy and collect a special rate to meet the deficiency.

"This council had the matter under consideration at a meeting held on the 11th instant, and I was instructed to write asking your kind assistance in bringing the following points before the Minister for Railways:—1. That, in the opinion of this council, the deficiency in the returns is in great measure due to the inequality of rates on the different sections of railway, and that section 2, being at the extreme end of the line, and the traffic principally mineral and through traffic, it naturally suffers most in this respect.

"2. That section 1, the other extreme, is paying well, and that in justice the revenue of the whole line should be taken and apportioned and any deficiency thereafter be met as in manner provided in the Act.

"3. That, for the benefit of the country at large, and in the interests of justice, the Railways Act should be so amended as to provide that the construction of all main railways required to open up lands for closer settlement should be built at the expense of the State.

"I have, etc.,

"W. McINTOSH, Shire Clerk."

I have been told, and I think it is fairly correct, that, owing to the preferential rate that exists, the people at Mount Elliott, or Selwyn township, as it is called, get their goods at the same freight as is paid by the people at Maxwelton, and Maxwelton is only 334 miles from Townsville, while Selwyn is 552 miles. Under those conditions it will be seen that there is a lot of traffic that is going over the line that pays practically nothing at all. According to this letter, something should be done to grant their request.

The **SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS**: They cannot have their cake and eat it, too.

Mr. **MAY**: No, of course they cannot.

The **SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS**: And they cannot have cheap rates and no railway rate to pay.

Mr. **MAY**: The first section and second section should be taken in together, and the whole district made to guarantee the whole length of line. (Hear, hear!) Another line we want is one from Malbon to the Duchess, and they are constructing that line now. Malbon is 30 miles south of Cloncurry, and we want another line about 24 miles from Malbon to the Wee Macgregor. It will not

Mr. May.]

only open up the Wee Macgregor, but it will open up a lot of other mines in the immediate vicinity. Another railway which is wanted in my district is the one from Hughenden to Barcardine. I have spoken of this line before, and I feel positive I shall have to introduce a deputation to the Minister on the matter very shortly.

Mr. MURPHY: Will they guarantee it?

Mr. MAY: Yes, they will guarantee it. In fact, there is no need to go to Barcardine now. The Government have granted a loan to the Aramac Shire Council to build a line from Barcardine to Aramac, so that takes 42 miles off the distance, as it is right on the direct route to Hughenden. We wanted to go to Barcardine *via* Muttaborra and Aramac, and as the Aramac-Barcardine section is to be built, we have only 170 miles to finish. And in building that line you go through some of the finest pastoral land in Queensland, and there are no engineering difficulties. The Secretary for Railways promised last year, as you will see in *Hansard*, that we should have a surveyor to go over a portion of that route. We have never had a surveyor yet. Why cannot we get a surveyor? They say they cannot get surveyors, not only for railway lines, but for our lands.

Mr. LENNON: They want them all in the South.

Mr. MAY: The Malay States could get four men from Queensland, and I say that if the Government paid more money they could get surveyors. I say it would be money well spent to pay the surveyors any amount—pay them a price almost illimitable—but we must have surveyors if we want to open up our lands, and if we are to have railways. We know we must have a preliminary survey before a line is constructed. Then let us have these preliminary surveys, let them be brought before the Cabinet, and let the House consider them. But if we go in for parsimony, and do not pay surveyors properly, we cannot get them, and if the Government are in earnest and wish to get surveyors, it is their own fault that they do not get them, and they are very lackadaisical in not getting them. With regard to the Education Act, there is one little matter I forgot to mention. It is my pet subject, and is in connection with itinerant teachers. I make a point of seeing as many itinerant teachers, when going round my electorate, as I possibly can. I was fortunate enough to see two when I was last through my electorate, but unfortunate in not seeing more than two. They told me they are doing good work as far as they can, but really and truly the distances they have to travel are too great. It was a grand idea—I believe it was Mr. Story, the late member for Balonne, who first originated the idea—to have itinerant teachers. At first there was only one, and then it got to three, and now we have twelve.

The TREASURER: There are more than twelve.

Mr. MAY: I know it was to be sixteen, but I do not think the sixteen are actually appointed at the present time. However, I will not dispute the point; at the same time, I think only twelve are appointed at the present time. Even supposing we have sixteen, that is only a drop in the ocean. We want thirty at the very least. In the wet seasons they cannot get round as well as

[*Mr. May.*

they should, and you cannot get them to visit the different children too often. If we could get them once a month, then you would be giving some benefit to our young children, but when they can only go once in three months, the result is not satisfactory. It is something terrible the amount of ground these itinerant teachers have to travel over, and I can assure you that I have met very many worthy young men who are doing their duty to the utmost of their power, and I think they are to be highly commended, and I hope they will hear of what I am saying, because I am speaking from my heart. I know they are doing good work, and they are very highly appreciated by the parents of the children whom they visit. If you read their reports, you will find only a few exceptional cases where there is any disagreement or any unpleasantness, and I should like to see more of them appointed. I do not wish to detain the House for any length of time, but I wish to mention, with regard to the Machinery and Scaffolding Act, that the men in the mining districts should have a voice in choosing the inspector for the district. That has been promulgated by this side of the House before, and I wish to bring it under the notice of the Government once again. Then, with regard to the Elections Act, I think that Act wants a certain amount of amending. We should have an assimilation of the rolls—one roll should do for both the State and the Commonwealth—and I think if the Government could bring together the Federal and State authorities they could formulate a roll that would do for both. Why should we have two rolls? And again, why should we have two ways of voting? It is simple enough for hon. members of this Assembly to record their votes one way or the other, but it is not so simple to the uninitiated.

Mr. MAUGHAN: One qualification, too.

Mr. MAY: I think the Government should try and meet the Federal Government and try and bring about these benefits which would be of great benefit to the community as a whole. While I am speaking about the Elections Act, I would like to refer to the question of the pay of members. I am going to say in this Assembly the same as I have said in my electorate. I have spoken on the platform, not only in Hughenden, but in Cloncurry—I do not think I missed it once—and I say members living out in the Western districts should have a rise in salary, and I say we, who are living down here and have no other business, should go in for £500, and I am not ashamed to say it. Of course, I know there are some members on the other side of the House who disagree with me, but they are most likely moneyed men.

Mr. THORN: Not all.

Mr. MAY: They have other business by which they can accentuate their salary. In fact, the salary they get as a member of Parliament is only an accentuation of what they get out of their business. But members who devote the whole of their time to their parliamentary duties—if we, who represent certain constituencies, are not worth £500, then the electors should put somebody else in our places who is worth it.

Mr. MACKINTOSH: Make it a thousand.

Mr. MAY: I do not wish to be unreasonable. I would take as much as you like, but

I do not wish to be unreasonable when I ask for what I think a fair deal. I have had private conversations with members on the other side who agree with me, but there are one or two who are opposed to any increase, but we hope to flatten them out. Of course, there are members on the other side, if they could only get it, would be only too glad to take it. (Hear, hear!) I think it was a wise thing for the Government to appoint a commission on the mining industry. I have been reading through the report of that commission—I have not gone through it carefully, I have taken a piece here and a piece there—and, from what I have read, I can see they have done their duty in a thoroughly praiseworthy manner, and I think the report will be of very great benefit to all the mining members of this House and to the community at large if the Government will act on the recommendations contained therein. Before closing I wish to make one remark—it is very seldom I speak of any member individually, either of this or the Federal Parliament—but I say I was highly gratified when I read in the paper the Right Honourable Fisher's repudiation of Mr. Stead's article with regard to loyalty. I maintain that we, as a Labour party, are just as loyal and as true as those hon. members sitting on the opposite benches.

Mr. LENNON: Only we do not prate quite so much about it.

Mr. MAY: We may not go to such inatuation about it as some of them, but at the same time I maintain there is just as much true loyalty to the British flag on this side of the House as on the other. No doubt in course of time, in ages which we cannot foresee, this country will be independent, but it will not be in my time nor in your time, Mr. Speaker, and I should be very sorry to see it; but in the course of events, we can only look to see the same thing as has happened in other countries—the same as happened in America—when the reins of government will be held entirely in their own figurehead, no matter what that figurehead may be—whether it is a president or a king, they will have their own head in this country at some future period which is beyond my ken. I was very glad to see the repudiation by Mr. Fisher as soon as he reached Colombo. It was said all over the world: "Why has he not sent a reply?" How could he send a reply? I do not suppose he got that message by wireless telegraphy. At all events, he did not have a chance to repudiate the statement until he got to Colombo, and his repudiation, I think, ought to satisfy everyone in this House, and more particularly—I am sorry the hon. member for Moreton is not here—it ought to satisfy that hon. member as well as the rest of the members of the House. I have spoken to several business men in town, and I can assure you the general tenor was that they were highly delighted at the repudiation made by Mr. Fisher. I thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members of the House for the courtesy accorded me during my few remarks.

Mr. THORN (*Aubigny*): I do not wish to detain the House at any great length. I, like other hon. members who have already spoken, regret very much the death of the late Speaker, Mr. Bell. He being one of my old colleagues, and having known him for many years, I think it right that I should mention my regret at his death. I also regret the death of another old friend, Mr. Thallon, the late Commissioner for Railways.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate you on your appointment to your present high position. I look upon your appointment as a high honour, as you have been placed there by a majority of this House. I have heard a lot of talk from both sides of the House about party questions. We have had the Governor's Speech, and there is a number of Bills laid down in that Speech. One Bill in particular is called "The Liquor Bill." I remember a number of Licensing Bills being submitted to this House, and they have always been submitted to the House as a party question.

Mr. RYAN: So should this Bill be a party question.

Mr. THORN: There are members on both sides of the House who say it should be a party question. I, for one, say it should be a party question.

Mr. RYAN: I say the Government should make it a party question, but they are not game.

Mr. THORN: The Government are game to do anything.

Mr. LENNON: They are not game to do that, at any rate.

Mr. THORN: Members opposite talk about gameness. They are very game. They knocked one poor man out and left another in over a little thing. They say they are loyal, but they are not loyal to their own men. Were they loyal to the member for Fitzroy? Why, he was loyal. He was a man who spoke his mind. He gave his word and stuck to it, not like a lot of other members on the other side of the House. However, I do not wish to be drawn off the track by interjections. There are other matters on the programme with which I am in thorough accord. I have come to the conclusion that we have had too much legislation during the last few years, and I say this, without fear of contradiction, that we are bringing in laws that are actually not giving British fair play.

Mr. MURPHY: Hear, hear! I quite agree with you.

Mr. THORN: I give the Minister for Railways credit for having done a lot of good for Queensland. He has raised the pay of the lower-grade servants of the Railway Department; he is also going to pay the casual hands 6d. a day more than the others; but I think the permanent hands, working by the sweat of their brow, should get as much as the casual hands. And when he raises the pay of the men working on our railways, what about the farmer and the freight on his produce? Why not make a reduction in fares and freights now there is a big surplus? And I would like to make a suggestion to the Minister for Lands. Why not give the young men and women of Queensland the chance of getting homesteads? Those who took up homesteads in the past have been the backbone of the country; and I hold that every farmer's son should get a fair piece of land at a fair price. I think we should revert to the homestead principle—2s. 6d. an acre—as soon as possible.

AN OPPOSITION MEMBER: They won't give homesteads.

Mr. THORN: I don't see why they should not give homesteads. They are giving prickly-pear holdings, and they are making them too large; and in a few years a good many of those holdings will revert to the Crown. I

Mr. Thorn.]

am not going to be a prophet like the hon. member for Flinders, who prophesied that we were going to be independent in a few years.

Mr. MAY: I did not say "a few years."

Mr. THORN: I think every consideration should be given to the *bonâ fide* selector. For the last six years I have been in a district where there is prickly pear. We have had a commission appointed lately.

Mr. MANN: They should have put you on the Commission.

Mr. THORN: It would have been better to put the hon. member on, because he knows a lot about the pricks. (Laughter.) Whatever the commission may do, prickly pear can only be destroyed by fire or water, or poison, or by burying it. Now, I would like to throw out a few suggestions to the Minister for Agriculture.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. THORN: I have a volume of letters written by different people in the State. Our butter export last year amounted to over £1,000,000, and we have been fighting hard to put the industry on a good footing. I am not blaming the present Minister for Agriculture; but the *Courier* says the department is always asleep. I believe the hon. gentleman is going to right it, and I will throw out a few good suggestions from the farmer's point of view. The first regulation in connection with the butter industry I have been fighting for eight or nine years—the one dealing with cream under the 35 per cent. test. If it is under 35 per cent., a man is brought to the court and fined a large sum in some instances.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: A good job, too.

Mr. THORN: No manager of a co-operative company will say it is a good job. I can send cream to Ipswich, and if it is only 25 per cent. get as good a price as the man whose cream is 40 per cent. If they want to put the butter industry on a good footing, let them grade all cream and pay a man for what he sends. Do not allow a man to send cream with a 42 per cent. test, and oozing out of the cans. I know in my electorate where cream is leaving the Cooyar district and going to the Lowood district to be made into butter, and it is oozing out of the cans. How can it be made into first-class butter? I think the Agricultural Department should condemn it before it is made into butter.

Mr. ALLEN: They condemn it at the factories.

Mr. THORN: They are not condemning it. Now I am speaking my mind. (Laughter.)

Mr. LENNON: A candid critic!

Mr. THORN: The last letter I read was from the expert who examined the butter at the last show of the Royal Society in New South Wales. He said it was actually worse than last year—more fishy; that some of it was very good, but the majority was bad.

Mr. ALLEN: Was that Queensland butter?

Mr. THORN: Some of it was Queensland—some New South Wales butter. I say also that it should be compulsory for people to send their cream to the creameries in their own district. Let us see how they do in Denmark. They all have their own

[*Mr. Thorn.*]

creameries; they do not send the cream miles to have it manufactured. They make real good butter and get top price.

Mr. MURPHY: You believe in competition.

Mr. THORN: Competition is the life of trade. I believe in competition; but I maintain that cream should be sent to the local factory so long as the local factory gives a man a fair deal. If the Minister and his inspectors find that the local factories are not giving men a fair deal, let a man go where he likes. I have not spoken to the Premier on the subject; but I know that he has been spoken to. He has been a butter manufacturer himself, and he knows all about it. A deputation waited on the Minister a few months ago about a tick inspector to be placed on the Range to keep ticks off the Downs. I believe that if there were 100 tick inspectors, or even 200 tick inspectors, they would not stop ticks from going over the Range; but if he or his inspector found a man travelling cattle with ticks on them he should be fined. Where I live, at the head of the Brisbane River, who brought the first ticks? It was the large cattle-men; and the small men have to suffer—the small farmer with twenty or thirty head—the man who has been trying his best to get a nice little herd together. The sooner a fine is put on people found driving cattle with ticks the better it will be. This is a serious question to the whole of the Darling Downs. They have the ticks below the Range and about Brisbane, and the dairymen have suffered great loss; and if the Minister would introduce a measure to give effect to my suggestion he would get support. The majority of these tick inspectors are riding about not looking for ticks, but for something else. (Laughter.) Coming back to the Railway Department, there is a matter I forgot to mention. Though the pay of the casual hands has been raised, the pay of station-masters below a certain amount has not been raised.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Nor the clerks.

Mr. THORN: There is a ticket clerk at Toowoomba who gets more than the station-master at Goombungee or Meringandan or Crow's Nest. What inducement is there for a man to qualify himself to rise in the department? These station-masters are in responsible positions. Not only are they on duty forty-eight hours a week, they are there for good, from daylight till dark; and they are responsible for a certain amount of cash. I think it was an oversight on the part of the Minister not to increase the salaries of these men. I again say that I do not care who has been working in the Railway Department—I think he has as much right to consideration as those under him. My hon. friend the member for Flinders said he would like to see the salaries of members increased. As far as I am concerned, I should like to see them increased or done away with altogether, as I do not think £300 is a fit salary for a member of this House. I know very well that there are members on this side of the House who do not require the £300, and who can afford to give it away, and I can assure hon. members that ever since I have been in the House my £300 goes pretty well before I know I have it. (Laughter.) However, I do not propose to detain the House longer. I have only to add that when the Bills

come before us I shall give them every consideration. One Bill in particular I intend to oppose as hard as I can.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: The Police Offences Bill?

Mr. FOLEY (*Townsville*): Like other members who have preceded me, I should like to express my regret at the death of the late Speaker, and of the late Mr. Thallon, Commissioner for Railways, and to voice my sympathy with their bereaved families in their sad loss. I am sorry that the hon. member for Moreton is not in his place at the present moment, as I desire to refer to some remarks he made the other night concerning the hysterical paragraphs which have appeared in the Brisbane newspapers, and, I suppose, the newspapers throughout Australia, with reference to the alleged statement made by the Prime Minister to Mr. Stead in London prior to his leaving England. We all know that the gentleman who published that statement is one of the most sensational journalists the world has ever known. The wonder to me is that any man who considers himself a sensible man should be led away by such statements as Mr. Stead is capable of publishing. We know that not so long ago Mr. Stead had practically the whole of Europe in arms over the statement that he made with regard to the Czar of Russia, and more recently over statements he made with regard to the navy of Germany. It does not matter what Mr. Stead takes in hand in order to raise a sensation, he generally succeeds in doing it. My surprise is that a gentleman like the hon. member for Moreton should go out of his way to emphasise the statement that Mr. Stead alleges was made by Mr. Fisher, and endeavour to make political capital out of it. There is no doubt in my mind that the statement referred to was published with no other object than that of endeavouring to rouse public opinion against the Labour party in Australia—to cause dissension among the people and set them against the Labour party as a whole. But I am satisfied that the people have more sense than to credit Mr. Stead's statements or the paragraphs which have appeared in the various newspapers during the past week or more. The hon. member for Moreton went out of his way to emphasise the statement attributed to Mr. Fisher, as if it had actually been made by that gentleman. While he was speaking some members on this side interjected, and suggested that he should delay his judgment in the matter until he had an opportunity of ascertaining whether Mr. Fisher actually made the statement attributed to him, but the hon. member would not accept that advice. It was well known by every member in this House that Mr. Fisher was on the sea at the time the sensational statement was published, and that he had had no opportunity of contradicting it. Neither could his colleagues contradict it, because they were not present at the alleged interview between Mr. Fisher and Mr. Stead; but Mr. Hughes went so far as to say that he would guarantee that the statement as published was never uttered by the Prime Minister. The hon. member for Moreton said—

“The Governor in his Speech starts by discussing the question of the great loyalty that

has been manifested throughout the British Empire in connection with the crowning of the King and Queen. He states—

“It was highly gratifying to note the admirable spirit with which the people of Queensland joined in the thanksgiving and rejoicing that attended the coronation of our beloved King and Queen, and in the demonstrations of enthusiastic loyalty and devotion to their Majesties which on that great occasion took place in every portion of the Empire.”

“Now, it is somewhat sad to think that, after all this rejoicing in connection with the coronation of the King, something should be said by the Prime Minister of Australia, which I think is no credit to himself, and certainly is no credit to Australia.”

There is a direct statement that the Prime Minister of Australia had made a certain statement which was no credit to himself or to Australia. The hon. member went on to say—

“Mr. Fisher is alleged to have said, in an interview with the editor of the ‘Review of Reviews’—”

I shall not read all the statement, but the concluding part is—

“We don't expect an attack or contemplate independence, because, except as the riddance of the risk of being attacked by England's foes, we gain nothing if we are as independent as any other sovereign State, and might lose much.”

“That is a statement which was made by Mr. Fisher in London just a few days before he left.”

The hon. member for Moreton, it will be observed, lays it down that the statements attributed to Mr. Fisher were actually uttered. Further on the hon. member said—

“I cannot understand a statement like that coming from Mr. Fisher after receiving most magnificent hospitality at the hands of the people of Great Britain. Here is a gentleman who has been giving out Imperial sentiments ever since he went home, and, in spite of that, he winds up with giving utterance to sentiments absolutely opposed to the sentiments held by the people of Australia.

“Mr. LENNON: You would have been wise to wait and hear his explanation.”

But the hon. member did not think fit to wait. He simply repeated the statement, because it is well known to gentlemen of that character, and to journalists in particular, that it takes a long time to catch a lie published in a newspaper, and that the chances are that two-thirds of the people who read the first statement would not see the contradiction, with the result that later on fruit is reaped from the untrue statement. The hon. member for Moreton continued—

“A cable appeared in to-day's Press stating that the report sent out on Monday is absolutely correct.”

Those statements I wish to contradict on behalf of Mr. Fisher, and on behalf of the whole Australian Labour party, because it is assumed in the remarks of the hon. member that the Labour party are not loyal to the powers that be. I claim that we are just as loyal as any other party in Australia, and I dissent from those remarks, and resent the accusation that the Labour party are wanting in loyalty to the powers that be. In yesterday's *Courier* we had a cable from Mr. Fisher himself, sent as soon as he

Mr. Foley.]

was able to contradict the statement made by Mr. Stead. A message from Colombo says—

“Colombo, Saturday.
 “The Right Hon. A. Fisher, Prime Minister of Australia, who arrived here this morning from England, showed considerable agitation on learning the sensation that had been caused by the report published in the ‘Review of Reviews’ of his interview with Mr. W. T. Stead, which he described as a grotesque misrepresentation. He immediately cabled for a fuller report of the interview, and later cabled to Mr. Stead, stating that the report of the interview was grossly misleading. Mr. Fisher stated: “Mr. Stead and I had a brief and hurried interview one morning, and, in answer to questions, I repeated to him what I have stated hundreds of times in public speeches in Australia, and recently in the United Kingdom—namely, our objective is peace among the nations of the world, and a policy of effective defence and unity among the British nations. This can best be attained and maintained by trusting His Majesty’s Governments in the United Kingdom and the Dominions as responsible Ministers of the family of nations. The interview is not mine, and is misleading in material points. The expression, “Haul down the flag,” has never entered my mind. “Keep the flag flying” is my ambition, with all its best traditions. Nor have I harboured any idea that Australia should break away from the Empire; nor do I wish to escape the duty of defending its honour. No one who knows me will believe that I used these words, nor anything like them: I spent much time in advocating a wider organisation of the nations who desire peace and industrial progress for the welfare of their people, and no nation and no flag stand higher for this idea than our own. I had given Mr. Stead an interview of seven minutes, at the most, and have never seen a proof of the report, nor has my secretary. Such expressions would not be disloyalty, but insanity. They would be brutal and monstrous.” Mr. Fisher stated that he had received a cable message reporting Mr. Hughes’s statement on the interview, and he approved of it.”

A Melbourne telegram says—

“In making Mr. Fisher’s message public, Mr. Hughes said: “This cable sets forth in language that no one can pretend to misunderstand what every sensible man anticipated must be Mr. Fisher’s explanation of Mr. Stead’s so-called interview. I venture to say that it is characterised by a moderation of language which the brevity enforced by the cable companies’ tariffs alone explains and even justifies. When Mr. Fisher calls Mr. Stead’s reported interview grotesque, he cramps into one word every epithet of ridicule, denunciation, and contempt that every fair-minded man must feel towards one who has so indecently vilified him. I shall add nothing to what Mr. Fisher has said, save to express on behalf of my colleagues and party what very great pleasure it gives us to know that this attack but serves to heighten Mr. Fisher’s reputation, and amply warrants our emphatic belief in the absurdity of attributing such statements to him.”

That statement should be enough to make the hon. member for Moreton hide his head for the rest of the time he is in Parliament, or at least to bring from him an apology to the Prime Minister for the statement he made in this Chamber last Thursday night. I find that our Premier also went out of his way to emphasise this matter, for in the same newspaper appears the following paragraph:—

HAUL DOWN THE FLAG.

PREMIER AND MR. FISHER’S INTERVIEW.

“The Hon. D. F. Denham made reference on Saturday at Hatton Vale to the reported statements of Mr. Fisher, published by Mr. Stead. He said he doubted very much whether Mr. Fisher uttered the words attributed to him. He

[Mr. Foley.

preferred to wait until he could see the original, and see whether any colour had been imparted to the utterance, before expressing any opinion. But, if Mr. Fisher did say any such things, there was not a man or woman in Australia who would not deem it their duty to hurl him from his place of power.”

While the Premier would have been perfectly justified in making that statement, if he found that Mr. Fisher had used the words attributed to him, I say he should have waited to find out the truth or otherwise of the statement before publicly dealing with it in that way. It was simply giving a back-handed hit at a man behind his back, and not giving him a chance to defend himself. The hon. gentleman got in this thrust, practically telling the people that if it was not true it was not his fault. Actions of this kind, like chickens, come home to roost. I believe that the publication of those statements, and the hysterical howlings and wailings of the Press, will rebound on those who used them at the next election, and that as a result the Labour party will come out stronger than ever it was before. At least I hope so, and I believe that it will be so. Dealing with the

[8.30 p.m.] Address in Reply, I just want to call attention to several Bills that have been put forward by the Government, and hope that some of them will be passed into law this session. I notice that His Excellency in his Speech calls attention to the lamentable loss of the “Yongala,” which took place in March last off the Northern coast of Queensland. He says here—

“No event of late years has excited a sorrow more sincere or more widely felt than the loss, in a terrific hurricane, of the fine steamer “Yongala,” with all her passengers, officers, and crew.”

I am in a position to verify every word of that statement, because I was living in the midst of that great sorrow and grief, and it wanted to be witnessed to be believed—the sorrow and grief that was spread right throughout the whole of Townsville over the loss of this vessel in such a severe hurricane. Knowing these people as I did for many years, in the habit of seeing them every day, and to find them cast away at a moment’s notice without any chance of saving themselves cast such a gloom over Townsville that will not be forgotten for many years to come. Amongst the number were Mr. and Mrs. Rooney, very old inhabitants of Townsville, and their daughter, and their loss was bemoaned and bewailed by almost every person in the community. Then the two nurses from the General Hospital were amongst those who were lost. They were known to practically every man and woman in the place, and they were spoken of in the highest terms by many men and women who had been in the hospital while they were there. Their death was regretted exceedingly by the whole community. I was sorry to read a statement by the Premier, the Hon. Mr. Denham, in the papers shortly after the wreck, when speaking on the referenda proposals. He endeavoured to make some capital out of the accident, by saying, by innuendo, that the Federal Government were to blame for the loss of the “Yongala,” by the fact that they did not light the coast, forgetting at the time that they had not taken over the lighting of the coast, although they had full power to do so. The Federal Government really had nothing to do with the lighting of the coast at that time, and the Premier

knew that very well. He was reported by the papers to have insinuated that the accident was caused through the Federal Government not lighting the coast. That statement differed very much from the speech he made in this House the other day on the Address in Reply, when he was dealing with this very question. He said here—

"I am quite sure that if all the lights of Australia had been concentrated on the coast on that night they could not have been of any avail."

That is a very different statement, but a most truthful statement, as if all the lights in Australia had been concentrated on that night on the coast between Whitsunday Passage and Townsville they could not have saved the ill-fated "Yongala" from the doom she met. I certainly objected to the Premier, or any supporters of his, using that as an argument to secure votes at the referenda on the 26th April last. There is another thing that perhaps our own Government might be called upon to rectify against similar accidents taking place in future, because we never know the time when such an accident may happen again. We have lived so long in the North without having such an accident that we had begun to think that it was not possible for such a disaster to take place so near the coast; but, anyhow, it did take place, and the "Yongala" was wrecked. Now, when the "Yongala" was overdue, it was found that the harbour-master in Townsville did not have a vessel sufficiently stable to go out to look for the "Yongala." He was quite willing to go, and he might have been the means of saving some life or seen some signs of the vessel, if he had been able to go out. The "Yongala" was due in Townsville on Friday morning, and nothing was done to look for her till Saturday afternoon, when two of the Adelaide Company's vessels went out to make inquiries. They thought she might be sheltering behind some islands, or perhaps have a broken propeller-shaft and want some assistance. They could not believe it possible that the vessel went down with all hands. It was not till Monday that they began to believe that the vessel went down with all hands. On Monday the Premier took it upon himself to order every facility to be given to endeavour to find out the wreck, and, if possible, save any lives that might be on the islands or in the vicinity. The harbour board's tug-boat "Alert" was sent out with her crew to search the islands and reefs. As a matter of fact, several lifebuoys were picked up, and no one knows whether those lifebuoys left the steamer with anyone in them or not. But if the harbour-master in Townsville had a boat big enough to go out, the chances are that he would have been able to save somebody who was floating around in those lifebuoys. We know it is possible for a man in a lifebuoy to live in a sea for a long time, but when he gets exhausted he has to let go. I am not saying that there was anyone in the lifebuoys, but it points in that direction, and the lifebuoys had no one in them when they were picked up two or three days after the loss of the vessel was reported. The Premier promised when he was in Townsville to buy a new tug-boat for the port, and I believe that one has been purchased, and it will replace the small boat that is there now.

The TREASURER: The "Champion" is going there.

1911—z

Mr. FOLEY: Captain Mackay, the Port-master, told me that the "Champion" was going there instead of the "Woy Woy," as he said the "Champion" would be more suitable for Townsville.

The TREASURER: The "Woy Woy" was not purchased for Townsville.

Mr. FOLEY: At any rate, I am glad that we are to have a bigger boat than the harbour-master had before. I know that at times it was ridiculous to send out the harbour-master and crew to the neighbouring lighthouses, as far as Cape Bowling Green, to supply food to them every month. They practically carried their lives in their hands, but, as they said, they were instructed to go, and they had to go. Another paragraph of the Speech reads—

"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."

We know there have been a good many immigrants coming into Queensland. The present Government, like the past Government, are spending an enormous amount of money in bringing immigrants to this country, but our population is not increasing in that ratio, or to that extent, that we should expect it. I was reading the speech of an hon. member in another place, and he said it was a well-known fact that not only dozens or scores, but hundreds of the immigrants brought out to Queensland were shifting on to New South Wales and Victoria, and the result of that is that we are spending a lot of money to increase the population of New South Wales and Victoria. As an Australian I do not object to that, but as a Queensland, who has got to pay his share of the taxation of Queensland, I object to our money being spent to bring out immigrants to go to New South Wales and Victoria. I suggest that the immigrants should be put on to the land, where they would have something to occupy their minds instead of knocking around the towns looking for work, as they are more likely to shift away to another State to get a job if they do that. We are undergoing a very severe strike in the sugar industry in Queensland at present; the sugar-planters are bringing men up from the South to fill the vacancies caused by the men on strike, and nearly every ship that comes up from the South has men on board to take the place of the strikers. We have been reading in the Press, not only in Queensland, but in New South Wales, that there is a shortage of labour in the States, and a commission was appointed in New South Wales to find out where the shortage took place. Employers of labour gave evidence before that commission, and stated that they were hard pressed for men to carry on their industries. I had an opportunity of waiting on two boat-loads of people that came up from the South to go on to the northern sugar fields to work, and on meeting the men on the "Bingera" last Thursday night I pointed out to them the foolishness of taking the place of men who were fighting for better conditions. The men said to me, "What would you do if you had been idle for months and months, and if you knew that hundreds and thousands of men in New South Wales and Victoria are now looking for work and cannot get it? What would you do if you were one of them, and work was offering in Queensland? Would you not accept it?" If that is the state of affairs, if there are hundreds and thousands of men in

Mr. Foley.]

Victoria and New South Wales, as those men told me, who cannot get work, and who are starving for the want of work, then why—

Mr. D. HUNTER: Is that the state of affairs in New South Wales?

Mr. FOLEY: That is the statement of men who came from New South Wales and Victoria.

Mr. D. HUNTER: And a Labour Government in power!

Mr. FOLEY: Yes, a Labour Government in power. There are hundreds and thousands of men in Victoria and New South Wales who are literally starving for the want of work, and they are being driven to blackleg and scab on men in Queensland. If that is the state of affairs, where is the necessity of the Government to spend thousands of pounds to bring men out here? That is a statement I would like some members on the front Treasury bench to reply to. Now, I went on board the "Grantala" yesterday, and there were about fifty men on board going up to Townsville and Mackay, who had been engaged by the Colonial Sugar Refining Company in Melbourne to go to North Queensland to work in the sugar-fields. I interviewed one of those men, and he told me precisely the same story—that there were hundreds and thousands of men in Victoria and New South Wales who were literally starving for the want of work. I do not know whether that is the excuse they have for the dirty action they are taking in going to North Queensland to take the places of men who are fighting for better conditions, but he distinctly stated there are thousands of men who cannot get work, and consequently they are forced to come up here. That is one of the best arguments why the Government should at once discontinue its immigration policy and find work for those men who are here, and then, if they are really short of labour, that will be the time to bring people from the old country. Some of those young fellows whom I met yesterday told me that they had not been in New South Wales for more than four months, and during that time they had been unable to get work.

Mr. D. HUNTER: Who brought them out?

Mr. FOLEY: The Queensland Government, I suppose. They bring them to Queensland, and, as they cannot find work here, they are driven to New South Wales. As the Hon. Mr. Norton said in another place last week, it is well known that there are scores and hundreds of immigrants brought out by the Queensland Government who afterwards drift down to New South Wales and Victoria. I am not saying anything against the fact that they are coming to Australia. What I do say is that I object to Queensland paying for New South Wales and Victoria immigrants.

Mr. D. HUNTER: You just told us that they come back.

Mr. FOLEY: There is another way of increasing our population which our Government do not seem to take any interest in at all. There is what we call natural increase of population. This is becoming a burning question not only in England, but in many parts of Europe, and they are not allowing bachelors in some countries, or at least they are going to put a tax on them. For the edification of some hon. members who seem to be smiling, I will just read a statement by the Rev. Father Vaughan in the old country on this question. He said—

"During the past thirty years England has slid down the birth-rate decline more rapidly

[Mr. Foley:

than any other European nation. On the signposts along the "broad way that leadeth to destruction" he read the warning:—1876: England's birth rate per 1,000, 36; that of France, 26. 1911: English birth rate, 23; French, 18. But for the tolling classes the shrinkage would be far worse."

We have other information which goes to show that this question is taking hold of the people, not only in England, but in other parts of the world. Here is a manifesto issued by the National Council on Public Morals. It deals with the decline in the birth rate, and reads as follows:—

"Many causes, old and new, are conducing to the evasion of the great obligations of parenthood, and the degradation of the marriage tie; evidence of this being found to some extent in the decline of the birth rate."

This decline in the birth rate was always attributed to the socialist and the Labour party, but here we have evidence which shows it is not only the Labour party who are responsible for the decline in the birth rate. The manifesto also says—

"The circulation of pernicious literature.—Our youth of both sexes is in danger of being corrupted by the circulation of pernicious literature for which no defence can be offered—a circulation which has to-day reached an extent and developed a subtle suggestiveness without parallel in the past. This is an evil that can be controlled, and so long as we knowingly permit it to continue the serious consequences lie at our door."

I recommend that statement to members of the Government, and ask them to seriously consider the matter and see if they can do anything to prevent the falling birth rate by acting on the statements contained therein. A suggestion was thrown out by the municipality of Lyons, in France, to tax bachelors. This is of recent date, and is as follows:—

"The municipality of Lyons has imposed a tax of ten francs a head on marriageable bachelors, with a 5 per cent. tax on their rents when over £10 a month, to help a fund for assisting large families."

That is a statement that might be taken notice of by our own Government, because I say men who come to Queensland and have large families should have some recognition by the Government to enable them to live in the country when they do come here. I would suggest that they give them a grant of land and assist them to form a settlement, so that it would encourage men with families to come along to Queensland. I read in a letter some time ago where a man in Queensland wrote home advising his friends to stop where they were and not to sell their farms and come to Queensland, because the conditions in Queensland were such that if they took up a farm here they could not grow enough grass on it to feed a bandicoot.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He was a pessimist.

Mr. FOLEY: Here is another statement on the same question—

"Captain Maire, president of the Large Families League, and himself the father of eleven, outlines (says the Paris correspondent of the "Daily Mail") the demands of the league in the "Matin." He quotes figures showing that 1,804,710 French homes have no children, that 2,966,171 have only one child, and that 2,661,978 have only two children. "Without the 3,800,000 families with three or more children," he says "France would be

a skeleton. These families are both the principal force and the creditors of the country." The league urges that taxation be remitted on the birth of a fourth child; that all State "favours" and patronage be reserved for the members of large families; that the number of a State employee's children shall count towards his promotion; that scholarships be reserved for children of numerous families; and that the Government legislate immediately to help the members of the league. "Where is the money to come from?" asks Captain Maire, and answers, "Single persons of the bearded sex come forth! You are the drones of the hive, from selfish motives and of set purpose. You are the barren trees. France is dying for lack of births. Pay up!"

That is the suggestion of Captain Maire, who is a Frenchman. However, I read this to show how the question of the empty cradle is taking hold of the people in the old country as it has done lately in Australia, and something should be done by the Governments in Australia to help this thing along. We have here another quotation, and then I am done with that subject. It says here—

"The endowment of motherhood and the taxation of bachelors are the chief provisions of a Bill introduced in the Illinois (U.S.A.) Senate by Senator Beall, popularly known as "the Stork Mayor of Alton." The Bill provides that every bachelor over thirty-five years of age who cannot show good and sufficient reasons unfitting him for matrimony shall pay a yearly tax of £2. For the encouragement of motherhood, the Bill provides the payment by the State of £20 to the mother of each child born within two years after marriage, and for each additional child born every two years afterwards. For twins a State premium of £40, and for triplets £60 will be furnished."

These quotations are only to show that the decline in birth rate in the old country is causing some agitation. We now come to the statement in the Speech about the question of erecting additional sugar-mills in North Queensland. I wish to say, in confirmation, that there is a great demand in North Queensland for extra sugar-mills. As a matter of fact, in the Johnstone River there has been an agitation for many years for a sugar-mill. I know some nine years ago, when I was a candidate for the Herbert seat in opposition to Sir Alfred Cowley, the people in Johnstone River were very anxious to get a central mill erected at Darradgee. They had been promised a mill for many years, and it had been held out as a sort of bunch of carrots for the Government at every election—if the Government candidate was returned they would get the advance.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Was the advance on account of the bunch of carrots?

Mr. FOLEY: From what I learned of the people there, they were prepared to put up all the land in their possession—sufficient to cover the cost of the mill twice or three times over—but they never got a mill, and the general opinion there was that it was on account of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company holding a monopoly of the crushing business in that district. That was

[9 p.m.] one of the conditions on which I was accepted as a candidate—that I would do all in my power to get the Government to advance the money to erect the mill; and so serious were the people in this matter that they supported me—a stranger in the district—against Sir Alfred Cowley, and when the election came off I

got a majority in Geraldton—a thing that never happened before to anyone opposing Sir Alfred Cowley. That mill is not erected yet, though there is abundance of sugar land in the locality to keep a mill going the whole season. I notice that the Sugar Commission recommended the erection of a mill at Darradgee; and I hope the Government will see their way to carry out the suggestion—either that or build one mill between the Mulgrave and the Darradgee, which was suggested as an alternative by the senior member for Townsville.

Mr. LENNON: Better stick to the proposals as they are.

Mr. FOLEY: Yes; the mill at Darradgee would be better. One of the oldest residents in Geraldton asked me if I was going to give them the central mill. He said, "I will never believe it until I see it on the tender coming up the Johnstone River—we have been promised it so often." In the next paragraph of the Speech, His Excellency says—

"It is the intention of my advisers to introduce at an early date two measures which would have been presented last session had time permitted—a Liquor Bill and a Police Offences Bill."

I do not intend to deal with the Police Offences Bill at present, but I intend to say a word or two in connection with the Licensing Bill; and I would like to quote from a synopsis of the Bill I have in my possession to find out if the Government intend to bring in such a Bill as they have foreshadowed in this synopsis. I may say that the synopsis came into my possession three or four months ago; and I was at a loss to understand how some people could get information not supplied to others.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Did you get that through the secret intelligence department?

Mr. FOLEY: I was under the impression that Bills to be presented to Parliament would be circulated to members first, or as soon as they were read a first time. This is the synopsis presented to a certain body to get their opinion and see if it would suit them before the Bill was introduced by the Government—

"It is understood the synopsis of this Bill discussed at a recent caucus meeting of the Government members contained the following provisions, viz. :—

- "1. Local option on State electoral roll.
- "2. Polls triennial on following questions: Continuance, reduction, and increase of licenses.
- "3. Polls to be taken on a day other than day of State parliamentary election.
- "4. If reduction is carried, 25 per cent. to be closed three years after poll.
- "5. Compensation to be paid with respect to houses closed, from a fund to be provided by owners of hotels and licensees, on the Victorian basis.
- "6. Heavy penalties for Sunday trading and trading during prohibited hours.
- "7. Increased license fees on rental basis, from £15 to £100 per annum.
- "8. Houses to be closed at 10 p.m.
- "9. Barmaids to cease work at 9 p.m.
- "10. Only police magistrate on licensing bench.
- "11. No license to be granted to grocers.
- "12. Clubs to be closed same hours as hotels.
- "13. Bill to be a non-party one."

I do not intend to discuss that synopsis just

Mr. Foley.]

now; but if we get such a Bill as is there foreshadowed I think it will meet with the approval of a large number of hon. members. I see further down in the Speech that the Government are going to introduce Bills for the construction of more railways. Last session we passed railways that will cost within a fraction of £10,000,000; but up to the present very few of those railways have been started; and I would point out to the Minister—as I pointed out to him on his visit to Townsville two or three months ago—that there are a large number of men waiting for the starting of the Northern line—men with plants for small contracts.

Mr. THORN: Do you believe in contracts?

Mr. FOLEY: No, but the Government do; and these men are waiting with their plants in the hope that the Ingham-Townsville Railway will be started in the near future. When the hon. gentleman was in Townsville I asked him when it would be started, and at first he would not tell me, but at the finish he said he thought it would be in two months' time. I know the survey of 35 miles has been finished more than four months, and that would be sufficient to make a start from the Townsville end. In fact, a start could have been made three months ago. We had a prolonged wet season, and I was holding that as a reason for the delay; but we have now had three months of fine weather, and no reasonable excuse for not commencing the line. The Government has authority to borrow £10,000,000 for railway construction, and £2,000,000 of that amount has been borrowed. Then why has the work not been started?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: For the same reason that other sections have not been started—because we are not ready. When we are ready we will start.

Mr. FOLEY: But when are you going to be ready? The Minister may flippantly say, "We are not ready."

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Not any more flippant than you, and with a great deal more knowledge of the subject.

Mr. FOLEY: I would like the public to get more information as to why these railways have not been started. While I am at one with those who are in favour of plenty of railway construction, I object to money being voted and surveys made and then the work being delayed while there are hundreds of men waiting for the work to start. If the Minister can show good reason for the delay we shall have to accept it, but I have heard no valid reason. I would like to see the railways already passed proceeded with before we pass any more. I do not think I will delay the House any longer. I understand that all the promised Bills will come up in due course, unless they are amongst the slaughtered innocents at the end of the session. Last year we had a pretty good programme, but half of the most important measures promised were relegated to the waste-paper basket, and I think something similar will happen to some of the Bills on the programme this year. We have here some very good and democratic measures, if they are only brought forward and placed on the statute-book. We have, for instance, the State Education Act Amendment Bill, the Sugar Works Bill, the Factories and Shops Act Amendment Bill, the Wages Boards Act Amendment Bill, and the Health Act Amend-

[Mr. Foley.

ment Bill. All those measures require discussion and amendment, and I think they could be made very good Bills if we only get a chance to discuss them and make suggestions to the Government for their improvement. But if they are to be relegated to the dust-heap at the end of the session, then it is only so much "pap" presenting them in this programme. With regard to the Inspection of Machinery Bill, I wish to point out that permits have been granted to men in the North to take charge of machinery, that they have held those permits for years, and have never bothered about going up for examination to get a certificate. As a matter of fact many of the men who hold such permits could not pass an examination. I hold that the inspector should be instructed to see that no man's permit lasts longer than the day that he has an opportunity of presenting himself for examination—that is, until the date when the board sits in his particular district; and I hope there will be an amendment of the Act in that direction. With reference to the Bill to amend the Workers' Dwellings Act, I trust that it will be brought forward this session. There are many people in the North who are now beginning to take an interest in that measure. It was not very much understood in Townsville until I took up a copy of the Act and explained it to some people who were inquiring about it, but now a good number of people want to know all the particulars of the Act and its operation. I trust that the proposed Bill will benefit a large number of workers by assisting persons who cannot by means of their own get a home for themselves. If that is done, and we put a number of the promised measures on the statute-book in an amended form, we shall do good work for the State. In conclusion, I am grateful to the House for listening to me so patiently, and I hope that the work done this session will redound to the credit of all the members of the House. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. RYAN (*Barcoo*): In common with other members who have addressed themselves to this motion, I desire to express my regret at the loss which this House has suffered through the death of the late Speaker, and at the same time to congratulate you, Sir, upon the manner in which you have discharged the duties of Speaker since you have been appointed to that high and honourable position. Since we last met many changes have taken place. The thought that occurs to me is that the scene has changed. There has passed away from us Mr. Kidston, the late Premier, who has been elevated—if I may use that term—to the position of a judge of the Land Court, and we have three new Ministers in the Cabinet. And with this change there has come about a change in the policy of the Government. The hon. member for Enoggera stated that it was the same policy with a different Government. I say it is a different Government, and it has a different policy. After those changes in the Ministry took place we had two by-elections—one at Rockhampton and another at Enoggera, and since then we have had a by-election at Dalby. One would naturally expect when Mr. Kidston retired that the electors of Rockhampton would say whether or not they believed that the policy of the present Government was the same as the policy of the Government which he led, and, as we also naturally would expect, the con-

stituents in his old electorate said it was not the same by the fact that they returned Mr. Adamson to this House to represent the constituency formerly represented by Mr. Kidston. The voting in the electorate of Enoggera also underwent a great change; there was a far bigger vote against the Ministerial candidate in Enoggera than there was when Mr. Hawthorn was elected. Later still we found that in the electorate of Dalby the Labour party made a great advance in the number of supporters they had in that electorate. All this is an indication that the people of Queensland, particularly the people of the electorate which was formerly represented by Mr. Kidston, are decidedly of opinion that the policy of the Government has undergone a change.

Mr. PETRIE: No, I don't think they say so.

Mr. RYAN: Since those elections we have had the Governor's Speech in opening this Parliament, and in that Speech we have an absolute admission that the policy of the Government is changed, particularly with regard to the Trade Disputes Bill, and there is an absence of any promise that legislation will be introduced with regard to bringing about State insurance.

Mr. PETRIE: We want no political union in the Trade Disputes Bill.

Mr. RYAN: All that I am contending now is that the policy which was placed before the people of Queensland by the late Premier is not the policy which is being placed before the people of Queensland by the present Government. I maintain that the present Government have become more conservative, that they have retrogressed, and that those people—and there are a considerable number in Queensland—who supported Mr. Kidston and his policy have now no alternative but to withdraw their support from this Government and transfer it to the Labour party. As a matter of fact, I know that many people have transferred their support from that side of the House to the Labour party.

Mr. PETRIE: Do you think you are Labour?

Mr. RYAN: Yes, I am Labour, or I should not be speaking from the position which I now occupy. I think that statement can be accepted by members on both sides of the House. It has been accepted by the electors who placed me here, and I think it will continue to be accepted by them. At all events I am prepared to allow my constituents to judge whether I am Labour or not. The Secretary for Public Instruction made a similar interjection the other night, and I gave him a similar reply. It seems to me that some members opposite are somewhat uncomfortable at my believing in Labour, and would rather have me on that side of the House, believing in the principles advocated by the present Government. Now, passing to the programme placed before the House, I understand that according to present parliamentary institutions we have party government, and that party Governments usually bring down a party programme. What party measure is there in the present proposals of the Government? I can see none. The Licensing Bill has been spoken of, but that has not been brought down as a party measure. If any legislation is to be introduced to amend the Licensing Act, that legislation should be introduced as a party measure, and we should not have the Bill thrown on the table of the House for members to pull hither and thither,

and do as they please with. I am sure that many people outside connected with the temperance organisations, and others connected with the liquor trade, think that the Government ought to have brought in that measure as a party measure. The fact that they have not done so is an evidence of weakness on the part of the Government. They are not strong enough to pass such a measure through the House as a party measure, and consequently their programme is to introduce measures as non-party measures, so that they may continue to hold office. Their programme is a programme of shreds and patches, and they say to the House, "Now, do as you like with this measure; it does not matter whether you brush it out or amend it; you can do as you like with it, but we are going to hold on to office."

The PREMIER: In the last remark you are wholly right; in the former remark you are entirely wrong.

Mr. RYAN: I do not hear the hon. gentleman's remark.

The PREMIER: *Hansard* has got it.

Mr. RYAN: I am very pleased to see that the hon. gentleman has walked out because I am telling him some home truths. But I think he might have had the courtesy to repeat his interjection, even if *Hansard* has got it. I have heard the hon. gentleman complimented on the courtesy with which he carries on the business of the House, but I think he is wanting in backbone. No matter what opinion we may have of the late Premier's method of carrying on the business of the House, I think everybody will admit that he had backbone. The present Premier is absolutely without backbone, and his programme shows that the Government are without backbone. It is a proper thing that there should be a reference in the Speech to the loss of the ill-fated "Yongala." There is no doubt that every man, woman, and child in Queensland who knows the facts of that wreck laments the said affair. I think the leader of the Opposition acted rightly in quoting what the Premier said at Townsville about that unfortunate occurrence when he wished to make political capital out of the event against the Labour Government in the Federal Parliament. Though the leader of the Opposition quoted what the hon. member said on that occasion, I think it is worth while quoting it again. The hon. gentleman is reported in the *Townsville Bulletin* to have said—

"During the course of his remarks, Mr. Denham said that whilst he had no desire to make political capital out of such a grave disaster as that which happened to the "Yongala," still he could not but feel that the Commonwealth Government were far from being entirely exonerated. The Constitution specifically set out that they (the Commonwealth Government) had power to control all lighthouses, lightships, beacons, buoys, etc. During the years that had elapsed since federation, there had been a steady and rapid growth in our shipping, both in regard to the importance and number of ships trading along that coast. Yet the Commonwealth Government had done absolutely nothing to improve the coast lighting."

Is that not an attempt to make political capital out of a misstatement? The Commonwealth Government had not taken over the control of the lighting. There is a provision in the Commonwealth Constitution Act to the effect that the control of the lighting is only to be taken over from a certain date, and I shall quote that provision for the benefit

Mr. Ryan.]

of the Premier. I have no doubt that *Hansard* will get it, and the hon. gentleman can read it in *Hansard* if he is too busy to remain in the House while I am referring to it. Section 69 of the Constitution Act says—

“On a date or dates to be proclaimed by the Governor-General after the establishment of the Commonwealth, the following departments of the public service in each State shall become transferred to the Commonwealth:—

- “Posts, telegraphs, and telephones;
- “Naval and military defence;
- “Lighthouses, lightships, beacons, and buoys;
- “Quarantine.”

Now, there has been no proclamation that these things have been taken over by the Commonwealth.

They have not been taken over, and the Premier should have known that when he made the remarks he did. I think it is due to him to explain what he meant by making such remarks as those. A similar line of conduct was used in the Dalby electorate. Political capital was endeavoured to be made out of what the late Speaker would have desired if he had remained alive, and in the most unscrupulous fashion. I know, from having been out there myself, that the late Speaker was greatly used in order to get support for the Ministerial candidate for Dalby, and used in a way that I do not think anyone else would have done.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You made some extraordinary statements when you were there.

Mr. RYAN: The hon. gentleman might remind me what they are, and perhaps have an opportunity of speaking. I would like to draw him to his feet in this debate, if possible, because I do not think I made any statements in the Dalby electorate that I am not prepared to make here, and to justify.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You will have your attention called to it later on.

Mr. RYAN: I shall be pleased to have my attention called to it later on, and to reply to anything which the hon. gentleman has to say. There is also a reference to the referendum, and, like the rest of the programme, it shows the signs of want of backbone. It sets out—

“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. In consequence of this rejection, it has been suggested by the Government of New South Wales that a conference of State Premiers be held in order to discuss whether it might not be desirable to surrender to the Commonwealth certain legislative rights, which, it is contended, the States cannot exercise as effectively as the Commonwealth. My advisers have no objection to the holding of such a conference, and will welcome the fullest discussion of the subject referred to.”

They will simply welcome discussion of it, but they do not say what they want themselves. When the Premier was speaking I was interjecting to him to ask him if he believed in handing over powers. Eventually he said that he was agreeable to handing over certain powers, and in doing that he practically admits that the demands made by the referendum proposals were desirable.

Mr. CORSER: Only part.

[*Mr. Ryan.*]

Mr. RYAN: That some of these powers should be handed over, and yet he says that the result of the poll shows that the people do not desire an amendment of the Constitution. What is the new proposal that he makes? He first says—as stated in his speech the other night—

“My opinion is that the wages boards can do all that was sought to be done by the alteration of the Constitution.”

I join issue with him on that statement—not in the sense that he would use the words “join issue.” By joining issue I mean that I contradict it, that I disagree with it; he would probably mean that he agreed with it, and for this reason, experience has shown that the wages boards cannot do what would be done by a tribunal having jurisdiction over all the States. Take the instance of the boot trade. In the boot trade of New South Wales, Judge Heydon had an arbitration there, and he came to the conclusion that the wages should be raised, but he said, “I cannot give you an award raising those wages, because if I do I will drive the boot trade into other States where the wages are lower.” What did the employees in the boot trade do then? They said, “We will apply to the Federal Arbitration Court,” and they did, with the result that after a long arbitration, costing a great deal of money, an award was made which applied to all the States, and which the learned judge who gave the award and the parties to it thought would equalise the conditions over all the States; but those who were not represented at the hearing refused to fall into line and to pay the wages which were awarded; in other words, there was no common rule made to apply to all. Consequently, the learned judge, thinking that he had power to make a common rule, thought it desirable to refer the matter to the High Court, to see whether he could or not, and the High Court decided that he could not, and the award was useless. There we have the failure, first of the New South Wales local arbitration court, and then we have the failure of the Federal Arbitration Court, on account of the Commonwealth not having these extended powers; and yet the Premier has the effrontery, or the ignorance—I don't know which it is; it may be a combination of both—to stand up and say that in his opinion the wages boards can do all that was sought to be done by the alteration of the Constitution. Just fancy from the Premier of Queensland a statement of that kind! Surely he has not studied the question at all, or does he think that the people can be gulled by the mere fact that he states that as his opinion, when it has been proved to be demonstrably wrong, not only by the arbitration court in New South Wales but in the case of the Federal Arbitration Court itself, a fact which was admitted by some of the ablest speakers in the Federal Parliament who are opposed to the Labour Government—they were prepared to admit that the wages boards could not do these things, yet the Premier says that, in his opinion, it can be done. It only proves the value of the opinion of the Premier of Queensland on such matters. He also makes this remarkable statement, which shows clearly that he did not know what he was talking about. He says—

“I will not dwell on the big question of monopolies at the present time other than to say that I do not conceive that new protection was introduced for the aggrandisement of the manufacturers.”

Who on earth said it was? No Labour man

says that new protection was introduced with the object of aggrandising manufacturers. I do not suppose that a single politician in the Federal or State Parliaments ever made such a statement, and yet the Premier sets up that bogey in order to knock it down himself. He does not understand what new protection is to make such a statement as that. The old protection would lead to the aggrandisement of manufacturers, if we have not got new protection; the old protection sets up a barrier against the outside world, of which the manufacturer takes advantage, and, because he will not pass on part of that advantage to his employees, we have to get a new protection, which works in with the old protection, and in that way new protection can only be introduced with the object of preventing the manufacturer getting all the advantage of the old protection. But what we complain of is that we cannot bring about new protection with the present powers the Commonwealth has.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: That has been decided in the Harvester case, under which it was decided that the Commonwealth Government cannot stipulate that a manufacturer shall pay any particular rate of wages, and therefore it is in order to give the power of preventing the aggrandisement of the manufacturer that we are asking to have the power of new protection.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: It protects the consumer as well.

Mr. RYAN: And it also protects the consumer, as I am reminded. Of course, the Commonwealth referendum was defeated, and as far as I am concerned, and I believe as far as every other hon. member on this side is concerned, we believe in bringing about an alteration of that vote by proving to the people that we are right and that the other side is wrong. Therefore it becomes necessary in a debate of this kind, particularly in dealing with statements made by the Premier, which naturally will have some weight outside, that these statements should be traversed and it should be shown wherein they are wrong. Some remarkable statements have been made by members on the other side, including the Premier himself, about the availability of land for settlement. I think it was during the speech of the leader of the Opposition that the Premier interjected—

"So far it has been quite the reverse. I have never found any difficulty in finding land for the landless man yet."

That is a remarkable statement, and it is one that the people of Queensland ought to consider—that the Premier has never found any difficulty in finding land for the landless man yet. That proves that the Premier is unacquainted with the position obtaining in Queensland. Every mail I have letters from different parts of my constituency crying out to have land made available. I have had a letter from Tambo asking that land near Tambo should be thrown open. I have had a letter from the Jundah Progress Association, wanting land thrown open near Jundah, and I had a letter from Stonehenge crying out for land to be thrown open, and asking me to stir up the Lands Department and have the old resumption of Vergemont thrown open. I have had letters from dif-

ferent other places stating that the people cannot get land, and yet the Premier says that he has no difficulty in obtaining land for the landless man. I do not think that the new Minister is any improvement in the Lands Department. It is hardly likely that he should be.

Mr. MACKINTOSH: He has not had a chance yet.

Mr. RYAN: Well, I am quite prepared to give him a chance. But he is a Queen-street lawyer, and he will naturally be inclined to use a good deal of red tape, and he does not understand much about the conditions appertaining to land in Queensland. That is not the sort of Minister I expected to see placed in charge of the Lands Department. It will be very unfortunate if his leader, the hon. member for Oxley, puts into his head the idea that there is any amount of land in Queensland for the landless man, because, if he does, then he starts out on a wrong basis. The present Minister for Lands will have to grasp this position, and grasp it quickly, that people all over Queensland are crying out for land to be made available, and it is not being made available, and their excuse is that there are not sufficient surveyors. As the hon. member for Flinders said in this House to-night, surveyors could be got if the Government would pay for them properly. If the Government are in earnest they can get surveyors, and they ought to get them. A question which closely touches land settlement is the question of the administration of the Water Conservation and Utilization Act. There is no doubt that the Government are very slow in seeing that these regulations are altered. I asked a question in the early part of the session—about a fortnight ago—whether the Government intended to take action, as requested by the Flinders, Barcardine, Kargoolah, Tambo, and other shire councils, and the reply I got was that the matter was under consideration. This is a copy of the resolution which was passed by these shire councils—

"That this Council, whilst fully recognising that the Government should exercise some control over the artesian water supply to prevent unnecessary waste of such a valuable asset, considers—

"That the regulations attached to the Rights in Water and Water Conservation and Utilization Act of 1910, as at present drawn up and printed by the Hydraulic Engineer, are impracticable in many cases, and unnecessary, and also very hampering to all classes of graziers; and it suggests that a small committee of at least three practical pastoralists and at least one practical wellborer meet the Hydraulic Engineer and draw up fresh regulations that will be sufficiently explicit for the present needs of the Water Supply Department and at the same time be more workable for graziers.

"And it further suggests that once such regulations be agreed upon, the administration of them be placed in the hands of the Lands Department and be worked through the commissioners and other officials, as is all other business so directly concerning the graziers of Queensland."

That is a sensible suggestion in regard to these regulations, and they should be placed in the hands of the Lands Department, which is more or less concerned with land matters and putting down bores. The regulations at present existing are distinctly

Mr. Ryan.]

hampering to the man on the land. (Hear, hear!) I received a letter this afternoon, when I came down to the House, and it is only one of many that I have received from my own constituency, and I have no doubt that many other members receive similar letters from their electorates. The letter I received to-day is from Yalleroi, and is dated 26th July. It reads as follows:—

“Do you know if any of the provisions of the Water Act have been altered yet? Some time ago we applied for permission to sink an artesian well, and this week we received it after about two months of writing and wiring for it. The whole thing is nothing short of ruination for us Western people. I have had the plant on the site two months, and I have 10,000 sheep starving for water; and ruination is staring us in the face.”

Just fancy a man waiting there for two months with his plant all ready and he has to wait for permission to put down his bore, and he sees his sheep starving for want of water at the same time!

Mr. WIENHOLT: Then this is not a squatter Government after all?

Mr. RYAN: The man who writes this letter has 10,000 sheep, and he is not a squatter. He is the sort of man we want to encourage in the West. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. ALLEN: And he is the sort of man this Government wants to knock out.

Mr. RYAN: I do not say that this is a squatter Government, but it is an incompetent Government. Then the letter concludes—

“Now we have the license we find we have to order new tools from Brisbane, and our plant will have to be altered to use them; in fact, the expense of the thing is more than the country is worth. We have to use 6, 8, and 10 inch casing; that means three sets of clamps, each costing about £6 each, also two new bits, 10 and 8 inch, costing about £7 10s. each; two new sinkers, costing £25 each; together with swivels, thimbles, and many other things out of reach of the poor man. Any bore is quite safe with a short string of casing as an outside liner without—there being two liners. I hope, if the matter is before the House again, you will do what you can in the matter, as you are aware it is a very serious matter.”

Is not that a scandalous state of affairs? His plant has been hung up for two months, as the regulations prevent him from getting on with his work, and, when he does get permission, he has to send to Brisbane for tools. Yet the Government sit down and do nothing—say that the matter is under consideration. If there was a competent Government there, and a competent Minister there, he would take the matter in his own hands and would score out all the regulations and say, “I will not permit this.” The mere fact that this resolution was passed by these shire councils should be sufficient. Yet the Premier, when he was speaking, said that there was no such thing happening at all. He said that he had no difficulty in finding land for the landless man, and these regulations were not hampering the man on the land at all. It is the people on the land who have to judge, and no doubt they will find an opportunity of saying what they think about the Premier and his administration and his Government when the time arrives. The interjection of the hon. member for Fassifern that this was not a squatter's Government leads

[Mr. Ryan.

me to that point: That there is a strong squatter influence behind the Government, and particularly behind the Lands Department. The Lands Department were requested by practically everybody at Barcaldine—the local bodies, Chamber of Commerce, Workers' Political Organisation, and every representative body there—not to make available for selection any portion of the town reserve, because this is a main stock route, but notwithstanding that they had decided to throw it open for selection, and they would not resume Barcaldine Downs. Barcaldine Downs, I believe, is for sale. It is land the people about there would like to take up, and they are prepared to pay the price required, but the Government say the people could not afford to pay 5d. an acre, although the people say they are prepared to pay it.

Mr. LENNON: Some are paying more for it.

Mr. RYAN: But they are prepared to throw open the town common at 4d. an acre—land without any water on it, and comparing the value of the two, by the report on the matter by the chairman of the shire council, Mr. Ferguson, the land on Barcaldine Downs is worth 1s. 2d. per acre if this common is worth 4d. an acre. Yet the Government won't take action to resume that land, because they say they have plenty of land for the landless man. I have a letter here from the Chamber of Commerce, Barcaldine, on the subject, in which they solicit my services in the matter of the Lands Department *re* purchase of pastoral holding in the vicinity of this town. They say—

“It is now understood that Barcaldine Downs Station is being offered for sale, and, with this in view, this Chamber asks you to approach the Minister with the Hon. A. H. Parnell.”

etc. I have similar requests from Tambo and from all parts of the electorate, and it seems inconceivable to me that men sitting on the front Treasury bench, in the face of all this evidence, can get up and say the people are not clamouring for land, and that there is plenty of land available. It is a most extraordinary thing. There are some local matters that I desire to refer to. With regard to railway construction, I support the remarks of the hon. member for Flinders, that a railway should be built from Aramac to Hughenden—there should be a continuation of that tramline, and I hope the Government will give due consideration to that matter. There is no doubt the Government say they are prepared to support lines into agricultural districts, and almost every member who has got up has had one line or another to suggest—some have had five or six lines—and apparently the Government are prepared to promise lines in the districts of their own supporters. It looks to me like a placating of supporters. The hon. member for Maryborough needed a good deal of placating. He required a deviation and also a deepwater port. I do not single him out particularly.

Mr. CORSER: It has been advocated for years.

Mr. RYAN: I think he is to be congratulated on his success in getting these concessions from the Ministry, and it is quite evident that the Government are promising these little agricultural railways with the object of keeping the support of members who are sitting behind them.

Mr. MULLAN: It is what they have been doing all the time.

Mr. RYAN: Exactly.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Was the Great Western Railway introduced to keep the support of members?

Mr. RYAN: The Great Western Railway is not proposed in this Speech. The Great Western Railway was passed by the late Premier, who had some sort of a policy, but, as I said before, this programme is nothing but shreds and patches.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Ah, ah!

Mr. RYAN: The hon. gentleman can say "Ah!" but that does not make it any the less a thing of shreds and patches. I know the hon. gentleman does not like me to say these things. I state them, not from any animus, but from a sense of duty to the people I represent, and a sense of my duty as a member of Parliament, and, of course, the truer they are the more stinging they are. There is also another local matter to which I wish to refer, and that is the matter of having a police magistrate at Tambo. There was a police magistrate there some time ago, and apparently he had plenty to do, and the people there are desirous that they should have a police magistrate again. Personally, I do not care about bringing in local matters in an Address of this kind, but it becomes necessary when you find men sitting behind the Government talking about nothing else but the parish pump and so on, and it is necessary therefore for us, on occasions of this kind, to point out local requirements which we desire. Certain administration was attacked by the leader of the Opposition and was replied to by the Home Secretary, in what I suppose he will consider an eloquent speech. He defended the administration of that department. But I think the criticism that was offered by the leader of the Opposition was very trenchant. He gave his authority for his criticism. It appeared in the public Press, and he commented on what appeared in the Press. I think the Home Secretary did not make a very effective reply. He set out an array of facts. If his defence is as true as the statement with regard to the lazaret, then I do not think much of it. The lazaret has been for some time without a nurse, and I know the Home Secretary on several occasions has promised to me that he would pay any salary to have some fit and proper person to go to the lazaret in order to care for the patients there, but he never advertised a proper salary. Between £70 and £80 was all I ever saw advertised, and if the Government wanted to get someone to go to the institution they should advertise a good salary. Does the Home Secretary expect me or any other member of the House to go about to individuals and say, "Will you take this position and I can get you a good salary to do it?" I have it on the best authority that a most lamentable state of affairs exists at the lazaret, due to the fact that there is no proper person to look after the patients. I believe, on occasions, the patients there have to wash their own clothes, and when they are spread out they are simply streams of blood from top to bottom.

Mr. MACKINTOSH: In the old days we had to wash our own clothes and make our own damper too.

Mr. RYAN: There are many who are suffering from that dreadful disease who

are not capable of washing their own clothes, that they bleed when they turn the handle of this washing machine, and it is evidenced by the streams of blood from the top of the clothes to the bottom. This is a state of affairs that should not be tolerated. I do not suppose there is a gentleman on the front Treasury bench who has a bigger heart than the Home Secretary, and I do think the Government should advertise the salary they are prepared to pay for a nurse for the lazaret, and if they do that they will have no difficulty in getting one. The administration has been defective in many ways, and not least in regard to the prosecutions that were instituted in regard to the keeping of betting shops. The law in regard to that matter has been a dead letter for years. I do not propose to justify betting shops. I think it very desirable that these street betting shops should be put down, because they encourage betting amongst youths, but the law should not have been allowed to remain a dead letter so long.

Mr. ALLEN: And they should have raided all the shops.

Mr. RYAN: They should have raided all the shops. They should not wait till the public become accustomed to [10 p.m.] think these things would be allowed to go on, and then take action as they did; they should have taken action by prosecuting the keepers of the shops, and not the members of the public who were found there. That opinion, I believe, is shared by a good many people, both inside and outside Parliament. The answer given to me the other day as to why the thing had been allowed to remain a dead letter so long was that there was no desire to resort to objectionable methods of detection. What does that mean? Is it that some member of the Police Force would have to buy a ticket on a previous day to prove the case? Did not the police in these recent cases send a man to do this very thing? I suppose nobody in those shops thought he was liable to prosecution; yet the Government come down and prosecute without any warning whatever.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: Cannot the Government do anything right?

Mr. RYAN: Yes; but I am pointing out things in which they have done wrong, in the hope that in future they may do right. The hon. gentleman was not in the Chamber when I was referring to his department, and offering some criticism of himself. No doubt the hon. gentleman has plenty of capacity and application, and in time he will be a competent Minister for Lands; but at present he is only a novice in land administration.

Mr. MULLAN: A good Attorney-General lost!

Mr. RYAN: Exactly. He would make a good Minister for Justice. He has been very silent this session, but he was not so on the University vote of last year when he pointed out, as I also pointed out, that the Government were wrong, and that there should be a Bill to indemnify the Government against their illegal action. Perhaps he will be courteous enough to tell me if he is still of the same opinion.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC LANDS: You cannot draw me.

Mr. RYAN: I presume he is still of the same opinion. If so, I would like to know

Mr. Ryan.]

how it is the Government are not introducing an Indemnity Bill to cover their mistake of last year. The highest, I put it, was that it was a mistake, but the hon. gentleman put it higher, because he said that if a person did that sort of thing in the Supreme Court he would be struck off the roll. The Supreme Court does not strike anyone off for a mistake, but for something done deliberately. Evidently the hon. gentleman thought it was deliberate shuffling; but now he is a member of the Government, and the Government take no action.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: He is backing them up.

Mr. RYAN: He is backing them up; but I trust he may yet get them to rectify the mistake they made, because the Premier seems to blow hot and cold—he is a bit weak in the back. I hope the hon. gentleman, who I expect will yet be Premier, and who would by a great many be preferred as Premier—I hope he may yet have his way, and get the Government to bring in a measure indemnifying the illegal action of the late Treasurer. I have been searching through this programme to find out where is the party measure, but so far I have been unable to find any party measures. The Premier has not mentioned any, and I would like him to name one now.

The SPEAKER: I hope the hon. member will not invite interjections.

Mr. RYAN: I think the experience of the Premier in interjecting recently has led him to be more discreet and keep silent. However, I think I have dealt sufficiently for the time being with the programme before us. No doubt there will be other opportunities of speaking; and I shall be pleased to hear what the Secretary for Lands has to say, particularly in regard to the statement I made at Dalby.

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*): I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

The PREMIER: Oh! Go on now.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: He will take an hour. Do you want us to go on till after 11 o'clock?

Mr. LENNON: Better go on.

The SPEAKER: The question is "That this debate be now adjourned." Is the motion seconded?

Mr. BARBER: I understood that after the hon. member for Barcoo had finished his address the debate would be adjourned. Like that hon. member, I have looked in vain for any progressive measure in the Governor's Speech; but, with the exception of a considerable amount of padding, there is not very much in the Speech. During the past few years, under the administration of the Chief Secretary's predecessor, we had a considerable number of strong party measures mentioned in the Speech; but on this occasion they are conspicuous by their absence. To me it looks something like a resurrection hash—a term that anyone accustomed to residing in a boarding-house will understand—that is, the food prepared for Sunday turns up in another form on Monday, in a different form on Tuesday, and so on right through the week. I notice that in the Speech there are the same old promises that have been made in previous Speeches submitted to Parliament. But there are one or two things

[*Mr. Ryan.*

that I wish to refer to specially. The other night the hon. member for Moreton referred to a statement alleged to have been made by the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth in the course of an interview with the editor of the "Review of Reviews"—a statement which was considered to be disloyal to the King and disloyal to the Empire. The word "Empire" was used several times in connection with the matter. I think the very least the hon. member for Moreton should have done before making the remarks he did was to have ascertained from the Prime Minister whether he really made the statement in question. I contend that the conduct of the hon. member the other night was contemptible, because he charged the Prime Minister with making disloyal statements. Since the Prime Minister has been informed on the matter we have discovered that the statements made by Mr. Stead regarding what took place at that interview are altogether incorrect. I remember Mr. Stead when I was living in that small village called London in 1885 and 1886, and at that time he was considered an eccentric and sensational journalist, though it was recognised that he was a man of considerable ability. Ever since he wrote up the "Spook" Julia he has not been taken seriously by the British public, and I think "Julia" must have been responsible for the report cabled to Australia in connection with this particular matter. The least the hon. member for Moreton can do now is to apologise, not only to the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth but also to the House and the country generally, for condemning Mr. Fisher without giving him an opportunity to make an explanation. The other night a number of gentlemen down South, before the cablegram had really been published in the leading newspapers of Australia, called a meeting of the British Empire League—I think it is called—and that meeting passed a very strong resolution, which they cabled home, repudiating Mr. Fisher's statement, and stating that the men and women of Australia were absolutely loyal. I am not going to contradict or challenge that statement. But I say that the object of the hon. member for Moreton, and the object of his friends in the other State, was not so much to condemn Mr. Fisher for anything he might have said to Mr. Stead at that interview, but to get in a cunning way their knives into the back of the Labour party, and to lead the people of the Commonwealth to believe that the Labour party were really disloyal to the Throne and the Empire. I contend that the people of the Commonwealth who support the Labour party are just as loyal to the Throne as the people who support the hon. member for Moreton and gentlemen on the other side of the House. Reference is made in the Governor's Speech to the sad loss of that fine steamer the "Yongala." I wish to express my very deep regret at the loss of that fine ship, and my sorrow for the relatives of those who were drowned in the wreck. The evidence which was adduced at the inquiry that was held in Brisbane some time ago completely exonerates the officials connected with the Harbours and Rivers Department from all blame in connection with the administration of the lighthouses along our coast. These very sad things happen, and it is a very difficult matter indeed for us to explain or account for them or even conceive how they happen. I

remember a wreck occurring some twenty or thirty years ago through a ship striking a rock in the Red Sea, a place where it might be thought impossible that a vessel could be wrecked. With reference to the great prosperity mentioned in the Governor's Speech, though the statement may be correct in some respects, I hold that that prosperity is shared by only a few people in Queensland. We have been referred on different occasions to the Savings Bank deposits as evidence that the working classes are in a prosperous condition, but I think that if those deposits were analysed it would be found that a considerable number of them are deposits of fairly large sums, say, from £100 to £200, or perhaps more, and that the poorer classes of the community who have to fight for the right to live, who have to struggle for an existence for themselves, their wives, and their families, have very few accounts in the Government Savings Bank. I have not yet seen any detailed statement or analysis of these accounts. I came across a statement in a Southern paper the other week in which the Savings Bank returns of Victoria were analysed, and I think that, if our Queensland figures could be analysed in the same way, they would show practically the same results as the Victorian figures. For the year ended 30th June, 1910, the number of depositors in the Victorian Savings Bank with amounts of £1 and under standing to their credit was 249,123. Depositors with over £1 and under £5 numbered 84,047; depositors with over £5 and not exceeding £10 numbered 38,555; while depositors with over £10 and not exceeding £20 numbered 49,834. I repeat that if our Savings Bank returns could be analysed in the same way it would be found that the average amounts standing to the credit of depositors would be very small indeed. That analytical statement shows that the average amount to the credit of 249,123 depositors with less than £1 to their credit was only 4s. 1d., while the average for those whose deposits exceeded £10 was £12 11s. 7d. Hon. members talk about the wonderful prosperity of Queensland, but I do not think that the average toiler shares to any extent in that prosperity. For instance, I saw by a return published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* the other day that the value of the wool clip of Australia last year was something over £36,000,000, but I have yet to learn that the men who did most of the hard and unpleasant work in connection with that industry were in receipt of any more wages than they received during the previous year. During the past two or three years the question of the construction of a railway from Wolca to Dalgangal has been brought very prominently before this House, and I may say that the failure of the Government to table the plans of the railway last session has excited considerable indignation in the Bundaberg district and in the two neighbouring electorates. Since last session the District Railway League has called into existence a much wider and more far-reaching organisation than they ever had before, and within the next few days there will be presented to the Secretary for Railways a petition signed by over 5,000 electors of Bundaberg and district, requesting the Government to table the plans of that railway during the present session. In addition to the large number of electors whose names are attached to that petition, a petition has also been signed by

quite 90 per cent. of the ratepayers of the Bundaberg electorate, asking the Government to carry out their proposal for the construction of the line. We take up the position that the people of Bundaberg and the adjoining electorates have been treated in a very unjust manner in not having that line built. As most hon. members are aware, some two or three years ago the then Secretary for Lands—the present Premier—and the present Secretary for Railways went over that country, and on their return to Mount Perry they expressed themselves in very favourable terms not only of the country over which they had travelled, but also of the prospects of the line paying if passed by this House. Last session I quoted in this Chamber some of the statements made by those two hon. gentlemen at Mount Perry, and I do not desire to weary the House by quoting the same statements again to-night; but during the recess the Home Secretary visited Mount Perry in connection with the Mines Department and other matters, and also delivered an address against the referenda proposals of the Commonwealth Government. He stated that he was in favour of the trade of the back country—or the hinterland, as he called it—going to the nearest port. I said just now that the people of Bundaberg consider that we have been labouring under a serious injustice at the hands of the Government through their failure to table the plans of that railway last session. Since the commencement of railway construction in Queensland up to the end of June last, according to the report of the Commissioner for Railways, there has been expended on railway construction no less a sum than £25,677,800. In the area that we consider this railway would benefit—that is taking 30 miles north and south of Bundaberg and going straight west—

Mr. CORSER: That would take you very nearly down to Gayndah.

Mr. BARBER: I am not going down to Gayndah. I know the hon. member for Maryborough has a very soft spot in his heart for Gayndah, and I do not blame him for it. But within that area about one-twentieth part of the total population of this great State are living, and [10.30 p.m.] we contend, therefore, that one-twentieth part of the money expended in the State on railway construction should have been spent in that district. The only lines of railway that have been constructed within the area mentioned is that to Mount Perry, about 67 miles, and taking 30 miles north and south of the railway to Bundaberg—which we consider is a very fair distance for district railways—we find that the amount spent for railway construction in the whole of that district only amounts to £722,779.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Does that include the cost of the 60 miles of the North Coast Railway?

Mr. BARBER: I said 30 miles north and south of Bundaberg.

Mr. CORSER: And also the Mount Perry line?

Mr. BARBER: Yes. According to the Commissioner's report for the year ending June last, the Mount Perry railway up to that time was debited with £263,722, while taking the 30 miles on each side of Bundaberg the cost was £359,057. That total will

Mr. Barber.]

amount to £722,779, or a difference between the twentieth part of the total cost of railway construction in Queensland of £561,121. In addition to that cost up to the end of June, 1910, Parliament last year gave authority for the borrowing of another £9,000,000 for railway construction, and we contend that if the taxpayers for that area are prepared to pay their quota of taxation and interest on these lines, that district should have a fair share of the money expended in it.

Mr. WIENHOLT: Does the Mount Perry line pay?

Mr. BARBER: No, it did not pay last year; the year before it paid £2 odd, and the year before £3 16s. odd. Like a good many more of these branch lines, they fluctuate considerably.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: They are not credited with the traffic to Mungarr either.

Mr. BARBER: That is so; I thank the hon. member for the interjection. In reading the report of the Railway Commissioner, I find that the Degilbo line, branching off from Mungarr, was credited with about 10 miles of the main line earnings, while the Mount Perry line is only credited with the actual earnings direct from Bundaberg to Mount Perry. It gets no credit for anything from the main line at all, and I have always contended that it is not getting a fair deal. The one-twentieth part of the £9,000,000 loan passed by the House last session is about £425,000, which would more than cover the cost of the proposed line from Wolca to Dalgangal, and I hope that the Minister for Railways will table that railway this session. There have been various surveys made from Wolca to Dalgangal, and Mr. North estimated that the cost would be at the rate of £5,000 per mile. Then we had a survey made in 1904 by Mr. George Phillips, who estimated the average cost at about £3,500 per mile.

THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: He did not make a survey—that was his estimate after being over the country.

Mr. BARBER: When the commission went over last year on that flying trip, in which I contend it was absolutely impossible for anyone—

Mr. CORSER: What about Mr. Amos.

Mr. BARBER: I will come to that directly. Mr. Amos was biased from the first, before he went to make a survey of that district. It was an easy matter for Mr. Amos to give his statement as to what he considered were his objections to the construction of the line. I know when the commission returned and their report was submitted to the House, it was estimated that the construction of the line would cost somewhere about £8,000 per mile, which was considered to be a very exorbitant rate. There are two or three lines at present under consideration, which will cost pretty well £8,000 per mile. If I remember correctly, one line passed last session will cost about £8,100 per mile, according to the report which was submitted to this House. There have been other objections raised to the construction of that line, especially by the hon. member from Maryborough, who pointed out that the land between Wolca and Dalgangal was unfit for cultivation purposes.

Mr. CORSER: Thirty miles absolutely unfit.

Mr. BARBER: I wish to give that a most emphatic denial.

Mr. CORSER: You do not know it.

[Mr. Barber.

Mr. BARBER: I have been over it three or four times.

Mr. CORSER: I was over it before you came to the district.

Mr. BARBER: The hon. member went over it so very long ago that he has forgotten all about it, and finds it convenient to condemn it.

Mr. CORSER: Expert opinion condemns it.

Mr. BARBER: Expert opinion does not condemn it. In a report in 1904 it is quite the reverse.

Mr. CORSER: There are later experts than that.

Mr. BARBER: During the last few weeks there has been an inspection made of the country for the first 15 or 20 miles, by a gentleman who up to recently was connected with the Lands Department, and I think if the hon. member were to read his report—

Mr. CORSER: I have read it, and it condemns the line.

Mr. BARBER: Quite naturally the hon. member will contend that everything bad must be connected with the route from Wolca to Dalgangal, and that everything that is good is connected with the route from Gaydah to Dalgangal. A report was submitted by Mr. Franklin the other week, after spending some eight or nine days going over the country. He had been over the country some scores of times before, during his tenure of office as Crown lands ranger for that district, and he wished to refresh his memory on two or three sections of the district. Instead of that report condemning the line, I contend that his report is strongly in favour of it being built. I do not wish to read the whole report, but I will just read the summary of it from Roslyn to Dalgangal, which is part of the district that the hon. member for Maryborough contends is unfit for agriculture.

Mr. CORSER: That is where you misrepresent me. I speak of the first 30 miles, not the last 10 miles.

Mr. BARBER: It was not the 30 miles that I went over. This is what Mr. Franklin says in his report—

"From Roslyn to Dalgangal, and within a radius of 10 miles of the proposed line on either side, there are some twenty-one grazing farms, the aggregate area being approximately 105,500 acres, most of which are first-class cattle country, and all admirably adapted for dairy farming, if brought within reasonable distance of railway communication. This country is, for the most part, used for fattening cattle; and I think I am correct in saying that the highest rental received by the Crown is 1½d. an acre per annum. A very considerable part of these selections is good agricultural land, and I feel sure that I am well within the mark when I estimate that fully 5,000 acres between Old Cannindah, Dalgangal, and the junction of Mountain Creek with the Burnett River is first-class agricultural land, consisting of rich apple-tree and gum flats, and brigalow scrubs.

"All these selections are well adapted for closer settlement, and would be within easy reach of the proposed Wolca-Dalgangal extension, and I have no doubt, if railway facilities are provided, that the Government will see the necessity of resuming them, when they would be eagerly selected under agricultural farm conditions at purchasing prices of from £1 to £2 per acre."

There have been some areas of land thrown

open practically in the immediate vicinity of Mount Perry during the past twelve or eighteen months, and anyone who has seen the reports from Mount Perry must have recognised that these selections have been eagerly sought for and taken up by residents of that district. Their complaint has been that insufficient land has been thrown open to meet the demands of the people of that district. Mr. Franklin goes on to say—

“At the present time there are five agricultural farms in course of alienation, with purchasing prices fixed at £1 per acre, in the vicinity of Dalgangal, so that it is reasonable to expect that the fact of a railway within a few miles would immediately double these values.”

Mr. CORSER: That can be reached by another line.

Mr. BARBER: The other line has not been constructed yet. Mr. Franklin goes on to say—

“Almost all the country just referred to is splendidly watered by the Burnett River, Splinter and Eastern Creeks, and contains a considerable quantity of useful spotted gum on the ranges, which form the watershed, as well as good blue gum standing upon the flats.

“Apart from all the country referred to, there is the Roslyn lease of 45 square miles, held at an annual rental of £1 10s. per square mile; this is also under 3d. per acre. It is from 5 to 8 miles from the line on the northern side, and is principally good ironbark ridges, mostly fairly well grassed and permanently watered. It is not ringbarked, but stock do fairly well on it, and I presume that the likelihood is that this country also would have to be considered in any question of resumption that the Government would take in view in connection with the extension of the Wolca-Dalgangal Railway. The capital value of the country, with a railway within reasonable distance, would, I consider, be in the proximity of 10s. an acre.

“To sum up, I estimate that the amount of revenue the Crown could receive from the country adjacent and contiguous to the proposed Wolca-Dalgangal extension is as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
From 48,000,000 sup. feet of hardwood, royalty, at 10d. per 100 sup. feet ..	20,000	0	0
Freight at 8s. 7d. per ton ..	57,222	0	0
Freehold value of grazing land—			
Nour Nour, 21,930 acres, at 7s. 6d. per acre ..	8,223	15	0
Bania, 17,310 acres, at 6s. per acre (allowing 4s. per acre for eradication, zamia) ..	5,193	0	0
Mungy lease, 22,400 acres, at 17s. 6d. per acre ..	19,600	0	0
Reid's Creek selections, 21,000 acres ..	10,500	0	0
Value of grazing farms for agricultural farm selection, 105,503 acres, at £1 per acre ..	105,503	0	0
Roslyn lease (possibly), 28,800, at 10s. per acre..	14,400	0	0
Total ..	£240,641	15	0

I may say that this report of Mr. Franklin simply confirms the reports that were made by another Crown lands ranger, Mr. Winterford, some two or three years ago. That gentleman reported to the department upon the agricultural possibilities of that district. I have his reports here, but they are too long to read to the House. Mr. Franklin's report confirms Mr. Winterford's report; it confirms the statements of the present Chief Secretary, then Minister for Lands; it confirms the present

Secretary for Railways, and the Home Secretary, when at Mount Perry, said that the district was deserving of a railway being built. One of the timber experts in Bundaberg, Mr. Skyring, has been over that country, and in moving a resolution some few months ago in Bundaberg for the formation of a branch association for this railway, he pointed out that the timber wealth would yield to the State in the first 21 miles of the Wolca railway extension, at a royalty of 1s. per 100 feet, a sum of not less than £315,000.

Mr. CORSER: How would he get that timber to the railway line. With a mountainous scrub like that it would be impossible.

Mr. BARBER: The hon. gentleman does not know what he is talking about. The same means would be availed of to get this timber to the railway line as would be availed of by timber-getters in other portions of the State. There would be no more difficulty in getting it to the railway than obtains in other parts of the State.

Mr. CORSER: You do not know the country.

Mr. BARBER: There are districts where timber has been secured which I know are of a very difficult nature, and the country is more or less mountainous in its configuration, but I contend that whatever difficulties there might be in some places along that route these difficulties would be got over by the men whose business it is to secure the timber.

Mr. CORSER: At what cost?

Mr. BARBER: In addition to the reports I have referred to, Mr. Audley Smith, who up till about twelve months ago was general manager of the Mount Perry Copper Company, has made a report on the mining possibilities of that district. I have the report of that gentleman, but I do not intend to read it as there are several folios of it, but he points out, as was pointed out by him to the present Secretary for Railways and the present Chief Secretary, after their trip over that country, when it was urged upon them the necessity of opening up that district by railway communication so as to enable the smaller mining shows which it is well known the Mount Perry district abounds in, so that the miners and prospectors would be able to get their ore to Mount Perry. The report that he has submitted is a most valuable one, and I hope that it will have the necessary effect on the Government in hastening the construction of that line. Since last session Mr. George Phillips has been over that district again, but I understand from the Minister for Railways, his report has not come to hand. I cannot say what it contains, but it is a well-known fact that he has discovered an easier means of getting out from Mount Perry, and has also been able to reduce the distance by something like 2 or 3 miles. Most of those difficulties were imaginary, caused more or less by the short time at the disposal of the surveyors, and they had not time to look around for an easier means of getting out from Wolca. I repeat that the people of Bundaberg consider they are labouring under a very serious injustice if that line is not constructed, and contend, seeing the people of that district have to pay their quota of taxation for the vast sum that has already been spent on the construction of railways in Queensland, and have also to

Mr. Barber.]

pay their full share of the interest on that £9,000,000 loan that was passed last year, we should have an equitable amount of that money spent in that district on railway construction. I notice in the Governor's Speech reference is made to the introduction of a Liquor Bill. I do not intend to comment upon that measure at the present juncture. I think hon. members are well acquainted with my views on the liquor question generally, and I hope, when the Bill is introduced, I shall have an opportunity of discussing the question fully. At the latter part of last session a large deputation waited upon the Home Secretary urging upon him the necessity of nationalising the hospitals of this State, and his reply led the deputation to believe that an effort would be made by him to introduce legislation during the present session for the purpose of nationalising the hospitals of Queensland. Yet I find there is no provision made in the Governor's Speech for the introduction of a Bill for that purpose. That is a matter that has been discussed at considerable length in this House from time to time, and it has been discussed during the past three or four years at the different conferences of medical associations and by the Labour conventions that have sat at various times in different parts of the Commonwealth. I contend that the sanest method of running our hospitals would be carried out if those institutions were brought wholly and solely under the control of the Government. There are various reasons why this should be done. Not only in the interests of the State generally, but also in the interests of the employees of those institutions. During the past few weeks, not only in Queensland, but in Sydney also, and more especially in Melbourne, the attention of the public has been called to the terrible sweating that takes place amongst nurses of these institutions. It is contended that they worked ten and a-half to eleven, and in some cases, twelve hours a day, and that the remuneration received by the nurses is anything but commensurate to the amount of strenuous work carried out by them. I brought the matter up last year at the deputation to which I have referred, and I urged upon the Home Secretary the necessity, not only from a humanitarian point of view, but I urged that it was the duty of the State to provide homes of rest at the seaside for the worn-out nurses. I contend that we should have at least three or four homes of rest for the nurses connected with our public hospitals and other institutions at which these worn-out ladies working in the cause of suffering humanity—

Mr. CORSER: They would not thank you for calling them worn-out ladies.

Mr. BARBER: That is the hon. member's opinion. I have discussed this matter with a good number of them, and I know what their opinions are on this matter. Any man who has the power of observation must have recognised, in going about and visiting the different hospitals, that a large number of those nurses are overworked in the highest degree.

Mr. CORSER: There may be some.

Mr. BARBER: I know these sentiments do not appeal to the hon. member. The hon. member has been brought up in that capitalistic atmosphere—

Mr. CORSER: Where he did more good than you.

[Mr. Barber.

Mr. BARBER: In that environment where they only look for profits and dividends, soulless to all humanitarian feeling, either to a navy or to a poor worn-out hospital nurse, they have only one object and one idea to maintain—that is, that the worker should be treated as ordinary machinery, and when they are worked out thrown out on the human scrapheap, just the same as an ordinary manufacturer would pass out a piece of obsolete machinery when he considered it was of no further use to earn profits. I repeat, these matters would not appeal to the hon. member for Maryborough.

Mr. CORSER: He knows they are inaccurate.

Mr. BARBER: The Home Secretary the other night stated that the Government were introducing certain legislation this session dealing with State children, and that a home had been established in one of the suburbs of the city of Brisbane to which any child could be sent. I think

[11 p.m.] the time has arrived in Queensland when the Government should establish a foundling hospital, so that any girl—any woman—who was not in a position to take care of her child should be able to leave it at the hospital. Great efforts are being made by the more civilised Governments of the world to look after the health and care of the children, but there are still a considerable number of young lives destroyed each year. Recently I came across a return published in the Sydney *Bulletin* pointing out the number of deaths of legitimate infants under one year, also the number of deaths of illegitimate infants under one year, per 1,000. I find that taking the whole of the Commonwealth for the year 1900 there were no less than 89.37 per 1,000 deaths of legitimately-born children, and 287.52 per 1,000 deaths of those illegitimately born; and coming down to the year 1909 I find that the deaths of those legitimately born were 67 per 1,000, while the number of deaths amongst those illegitimately born amounted to 177.8 per 1,000. Therefore, while the Government may introduce legislation dealing with State children, I think there is room to make provision for the erection of a foundling hospital. I know that society looks upon these unfortunates with contempt, but I do not; I think every care should be taken of these children, and also of the mothers. Reference has been made to an amendment of the Wages Boards Act; and I hope it will be amended in such a way as to meet requirements. There is no doubt that wages boards are a palliative, more or less. I think that we could reach better results by other means; but though I do not pin my faith very strongly to wages boards, I believe the best use should be made of them while they are in operation. I do not believe in war; but if war should break out I would not say we should not make use of the ambulance wagons. We know there is a considerable amount of sweating going on in connection with the sub-letting of contracts, and I hope the Government will make some effort to cope with that evil. An individual goes to various shops and contracts for work at a certain price, and immediately sublets that work to others, and always gets the best part of the deal. Another thing: although precautions are taken in the case of children where an attack

of measles or fever breaks out—while they are forbidden to attend our schools—yet there is nothing to prevent clothing being made up in the homes where disease may exist, and I think action should be taken by the Government to prevent that being done. I remember when I was living in London an epidemic of fever broke out in a fashionable quarter, and it was traced to the home of people who made up clothing. It was in a slum where they had to live and sleep and work in the same room, owing to the force of circumstances. The germs—or microbes, as we would say nowadays—got into the garments that were made up; and the result was that a considerable number of people died. I hope that the Government will pass regulations prohibiting the making of clothing in any house where any disease exists. Passing over several matters on which I had intended to speak, I should like to say a few words about immigration. I should like to know from the Minister how many of the men who came out by the “Waipara” some few weeks ago, and who were brought out at a cost of £15 per head, have left the State. Possibly the Minister cannot answer that question straight off, but I believe that a considerable number of those men have left the State, and that is a loss to Queensland. During the past few months there have been a good many reports in the Press with regard to the shortage of labour, and there has been a continual howl and whine for more immigrants. This House well knows the attitude which the Labour party take up on the question of immigration. We contend that if the conditions of work and living here are made sufficiently attractive to the people in other parts of the world, instead of our having to pay their passages they will flock here of their own accord. As to the particular system of immigration that is now going on, I hope that the Government will take such action as will prevent the introduction of immigrants of the class referred to by Dr. Taylor when speaking on the Address in Reply in another place. Some few weeks ago the Home Secretary paid a visit to the Northern parts of Queensland, and inquired into matters connected with the aborigines. I should like to congratulate the hon. gentleman upon his endeavour to make the lot of the aborigines in the North more pleasant than it has been, according to the reports that I have seen in the Press concerning the aboriginal settlement at Yarrabah. The hon. gentleman did well in giving the people who have had the management of that settlement to understand that unless things were carried out more satisfactorily than they have been for some time past, the Government would take over the whole concern. As a matter of fact, I think that, despite the promises which have been made by the people who have charge of the settlement, the Government should even now take over the control of the settlement. The aborigines are fast disappearing from our midst, and it is only right that we should make the few years of life that remain to some of them more pleasant than their life has been hitherto. I was very pleased to notice that the hon. gentleman had brought down a number of aborigines from the Bundaberg district to a settlement in the Burnett district. but with regard to two of those aborigines I think he acted indiscreetly. The aboriginals I refer to were born and brought up in the Bundaberg district with a large number of youngsters

in the place; they are hard-working, well dressed, sober, and well respected by all the community, and I think the hon. gentleman overstepped the mark in taking them away and putting them in a settlement when they were earning their own living outside. However, as the hour is getting late, I shall bring my remarks to a close. There are certain matters mentioned in the Governor's Speech which the Government propose to introduce, and which may prove useful measures. But I agree with the hon. member for Barcoo that there is nothing of a party nature about the measures enumerated, and that the Government are simply going to fling them on the table of the House, and say to members, “You can pass them if you like, but we take no responsibility as to whether they are carried or not.” I do not think that is the way to deal with important measures.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN (*Kennedy*): I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Question put and passed; and resumption of the debate made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

The House adjourned at twenty minutes past 11 o'clock.