Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 24 AUGUST 1911

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

PAPER.

The following paper, laid on the table, was ordered to be printed:—Return to an Order relative to licensing districts in Queensland, made by the House, on motion of Mr. Barber, on 1st instant.

PETITION.

AMENDMENT OF LICENSING LAW.

Mr. ALLAN (*Brisbane South*) presented a petition from over 12,000 electors and residents of Queensland praying that in any amendment of the licensing law certain provisions may be incorporated.

Petition read and received.

QUESTIONS.

WAGES ON BARGES "DOLPHIN" AND "BREAM."

Mr. D. HUNTER (*Woolloongabba*) asked the Treasurer—

"1. What were the average wages, including overtime and travelling allowance, earned by the firemen of the barges "Dolphin" and "Bream" during the first six months of 1911?

"2. What were the average wages of the cooks on the same boats for the like period?"

The TREASURER (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Bulimba*) replied—

"1. "Dolphin," £2 17s. 6d. per week; "Bream," £2 17s. 9d. per week.

"2. "Dolphin," £2 8s. 7d. per week; "Bream," £2 8s. per week."

REVISED EDITION OF STATUTES.

Mr. D. HUNTER asked the Chief Secretary, without notice—

"Is it intended to supply members of Parliament with the revised statutes of Queensland?"

The PREMIER (Hon. D. F. Denham, *Oxley*) replied—

"Yes. These volumes are on the point of being issued at the present time."

PRACTICE RE MOTIONS MADE "NOT FORMAL."

The SPEAKER: I wish to call the attention of the House to a motion standing in the name of the hon. member for Clermont, Mr. Lesina. This notice was originally given for 25th July and was called "Not formal." Fresh notice was given by Mr. Lesina for to-day. The motion having been once declared "Not formal" should not, in my opinion, be called again; but I am led to believe that though it was called "Not formal," there was no objection to the furnishing of the return, which may be of great service to the House on the consideration of a Bill which is now on the paper. For these reasons, if it is the wish of the House, I will inquire whether this motion may be treated as a formal motion. If I do so, it must be distinctly understood that it is not to be made a precedent for future cases. Such a course would result in the giving of fresh notice for every motion declared "Not formal," and eventually the business-paper would be overloaded with notices of motion which would have to be called each day to ascertain whether they were "Formal" or "Not formal," and this course might be kept up from the beginning to the end of the session.

[*Hon. W. D. Armstrong.*

LIQUOR TRAFFIC STATISTICS.

On the motion of Mr. LESINA (*Clermont*), it was formally resolved—

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

"1. The amount of revenue received by the Government for the three years, 1st July to 30th June, 1908-9, 1909-10, and 1910-11 respectively, from the Commonwealth Government in respect of Customs and Excise duty on beer, stout, and spirituous liquors.

"2. The amount of such revenue in respect of all dutiable goods and commodities used in connection with the liquor trade.

"3. The amount of local government rates as paid on—(*a*) licensed premises throughout Queensland; (*b*) breweries, wine and spirit stores, and all kindred establishments.

"4. The amount of income tax, stamp duty, fees of office, and other levies paid by licensees, breweries, wine and spirit merchants, and others identifiably connected with the liquor trade.

"5. Any other details available as showing the actual extent of consolidated revenue received from this source.

"6. The percentage of persons convicted of drunkenness to the whole population of Queensland.

"7. Percentage of decline in prison population in comparison with increase of total population.

"8. Percentage of decrease in cost of police, law, and justice, consequent on No. 7, and also similar details as to charitable aid, old-age pensions, industrial schools, hospitals, hospitals for the insane, homes, refuges, etc.

"9. Percentage of patients in comparison with the total population treated at hospitals for alcoholism, their age, and length of residence in Queensland."

PROPOSED STATE SUGAR REFINERY.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE.

On the Order of the Day being read for the resumption of the debate on Mr. Fernicks's motion—

"That, in view of the announced intention of the Government to give effect to the recommendation of the Sugar Commission for the establishment of more central sugar-mills, in the opinion of this House it is incumbent upon the Government to establish a State refinery which would be capable, at its establishment, of refining the raw sugar output of the four central mills at present under the direct control of the Government and any further mills which might be erected from State advances, with provision for subsequent expansion to accommodate the raw sugar from other mills which might be prepared to do business with a State refinery, as members of this House believe that by the establishment of a State refinery only will the producers of the wealth of the sugar industry receive something approaching the full result of their industry"—

which stood adjourned at 7 o'clock p.m. on Thursday, 3rd August—

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. W. T. Paget, *Mackay*) said: When the motion was last before the House I was pointing out to hon. members that the profits of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company were not wholly made in refining sugar in Australia and New Zealand, but they were largely made in the manufacture of raw sugar in Queensland and New South Wales. I quoted £1 10s. as the average amount per ton made on the sugar manufactured in their factories last year, and estimated the total amount at £112,000. As the hon. member who introduced this motion claimed that practically the Colonial Sugar

Refining Company were making a profit of £5 1s. per ton on refined sugar—he said he would give them an advantage of 5s. per ton, which reduced the amount to £4 16s. per ton—I think it is my business to point out that some of the figures used by the hon. member are certainly not in accordance with facts which have come within my own knowledge in my experience of the manufacture of sugar, or in accordance with the figures we have before us in connection with that company's operations. The hon. member, in his argument as to how the company's capital had been made up, stated that large sums of money had been borrowed, and that the debentures were paid off from profits, and were then placed in capital. I can quite understand debentures being paid off from profits. Then the hon. member said—

"In the year 1914 debentures of this nature to the extent of about £650,000 have to be met."

If hon. members turn to the balance-sheet of the company issued on the 31st of March last, which, of course, must be a correct statement of their affairs, being made under the Companies Act, they will find on the debit side——

Mr. MANN: It does not follow that it is correct.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member must surely recognise that a limited liability company is absolutely obliged to place a true and correct statement of its affairs before the shareholders. As one who has had something to do with the operations of liability companies, I know that their statements have to be filed, so that anybody can get access to them. But what I wish to point out is that when the hon. member for Bowen made the statement that £650,000 worth of debentures were to be called in and paid off in 1914, and that practically the profits of the company were being piled up in order to pay off those debentures, he probably did not notice what the exact figures were, because if members will turn to the balance-sheet they will find that they are £61,850, not £650,000. So that I may be pardoned for questioning the reliability of some of the figures the hon. member made use of in his speech, though I frankly say that from his point of view he made out a very good case.

Mr. FERRICKS: But the principle is there all the same, irrespective of amount.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: According to the balance-sheet of the 31st of March last the debentures due in 1914 amount to £61,850, not £650,000, and that is shown as a liability on the debit side of the balance-sheet. The hon. member also used some other figures in support of his argument, saying that practically the assets shown by the balance-sheet totalled £5,000,000 sterling. That is perfectly true. The balance-sheet shows the total assets as £4,811,000, including secured debtors to the extent of £649,333. But the hon. member, when stating that this company, who are sugar manufacturers as well as sugar refiners, had total assets of £5,000,000, would lead the people of Queensland and of Australia to believe that the company had no debits against those assets. But if we turn to the balance-sheet we find that there are debits against that amount to the extent of no less than £1,083,572. That is comprised in the amount of debentures due 1914, £61,850; employees' provident fund, £154,917; employees' benefit society, £10,293; or sundry creditors, suspense account, £858,512. Well, how anybody who has any business ability can conceive for a moment that where you have an item of £858,000 due to sundry creditors, it can be called an asset, I fail to understand.

Mr. RYAN: How many shares are there in that company?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The capital is £3,000,000. I am just pointing these matters out to show that the hon. member, in making out a very excellent case from his point of view, in my opinion, overstepped himself in trying to prove too much, as I shall take the opportunity of showing that he tried to prove too much when he said that this company were making a profit of £4 6s. on every ton of sugar that they refined in the Australian Commonwealth.

Mr. FERRICKS: Hear, hear! I still say so.

Mr. RYAN: The shares are quoted at £43 on the exchange in Sydney.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member stated that the difference of cost per ton between raw sugars and refined sugars was £5 16s., and he estimated the cost of refining at £1 10s. per ton. That left him an estimated "profit of £4 6s. at least"—those were his words. It is generally known, and was acknowledged by Mr. Knox in his evidence, that the Colonial Sugar Refining Company last year turned out of refined sugar, about 190,000 tons in the Commonwealth. I am not speaking of New Zealand now. If there is a profit of £4 6s. per ton on every one of those 190,000 tons, it means the company made on their refining operations last year no less a sum than £817,000, equal to a profit on their refining operations of 27 per cent. of their total capital of £3,000,000.

Mr. FERRICKS: That is so.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Really, I was hoping that when I placed those figures from a different point of view, the hon. member would see that he had rather over-stated his case.

Mr. FERRICKS: You do not think they disclose all their profits, do you?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I have already stated—I hold the balance-sheet of the company for the last six months in my hand—I have already stated that these balance-sheets have to be signed by the chairman and secretary, and they must be audited by a proper auditor.

Mr. FERRICKS: No; they do not.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is absolutely so under the Limited Liability Companies Act, and not only that, but there is a very heavy penalty attaching to any director of a public company who issues a false balance-sheet.

Mr. LENNON: Is there no such thing as secret reserves?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: There is depreciation account, which I did not mention just now when I was referring to the balance-sheet. I could have stated that the depreciation account stands at £500,000 on the debit side of the balance-sheet, really making a debit of £1,583,572 against the assets, if you choose to take into consideration the depreciation account, but I

said, I did not wish to over-state the case, so I did not care to take in that half-million of money as against their assets. It is claimed by the hon. member, in all good faith—of course he must believe it or otherwise he would not say it—it is the faith of the party to which the hon. member belongs, throughout the whole of Australia, that this company is making these enormous profits—that they are making £4 6s. on every ton of sugar they refine in Australia. If that is so, they made during the year a sum equal to 27 per cent. of their total capital of £3,000,000 without their operations in Fiji, without their operations in New Zealand, and without their operations in Queensland and New South Wales, in the manufacture of raw sugar.

Mr. FERRICKS: I claimed 25½ per cent.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: To follow that up also in connection with what the hon. member stated, I should like to show practically what the profits were for the six months, and what the profits would be for the twelve months. Now, we will take this company's last balance-sheet—the only one we have to work on—and what do we find? Leaving out the transfers or balances that were carried forward, the net profits made from 1st October, 1910, to the 31st March, 1911, were £207,428. That is the total profit on refining sugar in Australia and the manufacture of raw sugar in Australia, and the manufacture of raw sugar in Fiji, and the refining of the whole of the sugars that are consumed in New Zealand.

Mr. MURPHY: Is that all the profits they made during the year?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No; that is for the six months. Now, I will double that, which will make the profits for the twelve months £414,856.

Mr. FERRICKS: You mean the twelve months' announced profits.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is after the maintenance is written off. The maintenance is a perfectly straightforward statement here. The depreciation fund, that is the maintenance account, is £500,000. What does this mean? That these profits—as shown in the statement to the shareholders which precedes, signed by H. E. Cater, chairman—during the six months in Australia, after providing for interest and all other charges, were £112,428 1s. 4d. That was equal to seventh-tenths of the dividend that was declared, and in Fiji and New Zealand the profits made were £95,000. This company, in their statement to their shareholders, dissever their Australian business so as to show the people how they are making their money. The profit in New Zealand and Fiji amounted to 3 per cent. of their capital for the six months. What does this mean? That this profit of £414,856 for the year on their total operations throughout Australasia and Fiji would give on their working capital of £3,000,000 a return of 13.8 per cent.

Mr. FERRICKS: Do not forget where they got that £3,000,000 from—out of profits.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: What I want to point out is that they declared a divdend of 10 per cent., which is really 5 per cent. for six months, on their £3,000,000 of capital, and according to their declared profits they make a dividend equal to 13.8 per cent., or almost 14 per cent., and the balance of this dividend or profit that they make that is not paid away to the shareholders is put away to increase their reserve fund.

Mr. LENNON: £16,000.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: No; that is debentures—money that is borrowed for the purpose of adding to the working capital. Every company should have a reserve fund. One year might not be quite so good as another, and very frequently companies have what is called an "equalisation of dividends fund"—that is, a reserve fund, so that in a good profit-making year the whole of the profit is not distributed in dividends, but part of it is put away into this fund, so that when a lean year comes along the average dividend can be paid. When a certain dividend is not earned in any year, a part of this "equalisation of dividends fund," or part of what is in other cases called a "reserve fund," is resumed into the ordinary dividend. That is absolutely good business. In the case of this company, fortunately for the shareholders, this reserve fund has evidently not been drawn upon for a great number of years to equalise their dividends, for in this balance-sheet I see that a sum of £150,000 was transferred from profit and loss account to the capital account. That was a reserve fund which had been accumulating for quite a number of years, and these are the exact figures taken out by myself from their balance-sheet and from the operations of the company, and show that they make a profit——

[4 p.m.]

Mr. FERRICKS: They show they make huge profits.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They show that they make a very good profit indeed. I am not saying that they do not, but what I desire to point out to the hon. member, as one who has some knowledge of this business, is that this company, although making a very good profit, are not making a profit of 27 per cent. from sugar refining alone in Australia, as the hon. member claims, but from the whole of their operations and all their business transactions they are making a profit of about half that.

Mr. HARDACRE: Have not the shares been watered?

Mr. LENNON: Yes, repeatedly.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: This company's shares have never been watered in the true sense of the word. A company's shares are watered by issuing stock for which no money is paid at all, but this company's shares are increased by the issue of stock paid by profits that belong to the shareholders. That is the difference.

Mr. HARDACRE: There is no difference at all.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is not worth my while arguing with such a statement as that, or trying to combat it. Surely hon. members know that when a limited liability company is purchased by a company promoter for, we will say, £1,000,000, and he floats it into a new company with a capital of £2,000,000, the stock in that new company is watered to the extent of £1,000,000, or 100 per cent. But in this case the stock is increased by the profits that belong to the shareholders, and have not been distributed.

Mr. HARDACRE: They should have been distributed, and then the shareholders would get a bigger interest on the capital invested.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member now says that those profits should have been distributed in dividends. Surely the shareholders of a company have the right to say whether they will take the whole of the profits in dividends every year and have no reserve fund, or whether they will work on true business lines and say, "We will take a part of the profits in dividends and put part to a reserve fund."

Mr. HARDACRE: That is not the point at all.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Then, if they do not want to use the reserve fund, they can say, "We can use that money more profitably in carrying on our business than by leaving it in a reserve fund."

Mr. MURPHY: What you should show is whether it will be bad business for the State.

Mr. HARDACRE: The point is that, though they do not get it in the shape of profits, they get it in another way.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member for Bowen, in making some remarks about the cost of manufacturing sugar in Australia and in Java, quoted the great Java expert, Mr. H. C. Prinsen Goerlig, as saying that the cost of making a ton of raw sugar in Java was £7 5s. 11½d., and said—

"This is, of course, exclusive of the import duty and exclusive of the excise and bounty. The Java raw sugar costs £7 5s. 11d. per ton. To this has to be added the interest on the capital invested in mills, plant, additions, maintenance, etc., amounting to 12s. 8d., which brings the amount up to £8 18s. 7½d. per ton, and that is the cost of the production of sugar in Java as against £8 17s. 2d. at Proserpine."

Mr. FERRICKS: That should have been £1 less than that. That was just a slip.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member was arguing that sugar could be manufactured cheaper at the Proserpine than it is made in Java.

Mr. FERRICKS: I hold to that now.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: If the hon. member still holds to that opinion, there is an error of £1 in what he gives as the total cost of manufacturing sugar in Java.

Mr. FERRICKS: I make up the extra charges to £1 12s. all right.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I will leave it at that. It is not worth saying any more about it. I only referred to the matter as another instance where it struck me that the hon. member was not quite correct in his figures. I would like now to give some information with respect to the operations of this company that has been so widely quoted—and which will necessarily be widely quoted, because it controls the refining of 190,000 tons of sugar in the Commonwealth and controlled last year the manufacture of 75,207 tons of raw sugar, equal to 32.5 per cent. of the total raws manufactured last season in Australia, which amounted to about 229,338 tons. Coming to the mills, the four mills which were controlled by the Government, and which are the reason for this motion before the House, turned out 15,820 tons of sugar. We are not able at the present moment to say what profit was made per ton of sugar in these mills, for the reason that we have not yet to hand the Auditor-General's report, but I will directly refer to the profits that were made by these mills during the year 1909. The central mills' profit for that year, according to the Auditor-General's report—I wish hon. members to take particular notice of this—on 88 per cent. net titre sugar, averaged £1 12s. 8d. per ton. If we were to turn out only 94 per cent. of sugar that would, of course, not be quite so large a profit, so that for the sake of comparison I cut that £1 12s. 8d. per ton down to £1 10s., in order to try and place as fair a statement as I possibly can before the House. The Colonial Sugar Refining Company last year, in their three mills in New South Wales, turned out 18,582 tons of raw sugar, and in their six mills in Queensland they turned out 56,625 tons, and the total manufactured by them was 75,207 tons of raw sugar. Now, if we estimate the profit—and I think I am under-estimating it—at £1 10s. a ton on each ton of raw sugar turned out at their mills, that profit would amount to £112,810 on the manufacture of raw sugar.

Mr. MANN: Cane into raw sugar.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is the aspect I am dealing with now. What I want to point out to hon. members is this—turning again to the balance-sheet—that that practically amounts to one-half of the total profits made in Australia for the twelve months, because the profits for the six months ending 31st March last in Australia—the total profits on all their business transactions—amount to £112,428. With the advantages that such a big company as that has—the advantages of undivided control over a large number of very excellently equipped mills—I venture to say that their profits were more than £1 10s. a ton in that particular year, but I cannot give hon. members what the exact profits were, because that is their business. But I again emphasise that on this basis, which is a perfectly fair one, I am quite safe in saying that the profits were £1 10s. a ton on the raw sugar that was turned out, and that amounts to a sum of no less than £112,810. The value of 94 net titre of sugar in 1910 was 14s. 10d. less than in 1909. As to whether the Colonial Sugar Refining Company handled 190,000 tons out of the total refined sugars used in Australia last year, we may take it that that amount is practically correct, for we know that the Millaquin Refinery, the only other refinery operating, handled about 30,000 tons last year, and last year there were 220,000 tons of sugar refined in Australia. Then we also have Bingera, Fairymead, Nerang, and the Beenleigh mills, all making some of what are called market sugars—that is, they turn out and put white sugars on the market, and the liquors from which they are made are decolourised by the use of lime and sulphur. We will now come down to the subject-matter of the motion, as to whether it is advisable that the State should erect a refinery. The hon. gentleman stated in his speech that a refinery could be erected at a cost, I think it was, of £70,000.

Mr. FERRICKS: The cost of a central mill.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The cost of the very largest of the central mills, with tramways, was from £70,000 to

£80,000. The hon. member, I think, has forgotten something in connection with the matter of refining; and that is the refinery for 30,000 tons, with lands, buildings, machinery, working plant, charcoal, and other materials, certainly could not be erected under £250,000.

Mr. FERRICKS: Do you contend that?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes; I think there is no question at all about that—that the cost of such a refinery would be about £250,000.

Mr. HAMILTON: A refinery that would serve four mills?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Of course, the motion does not specifically state four mills.

Mr. HAMILTON: It says Government mills.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: And other mills that may be added.

Mr. HAMILTON: By extension.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: These mills turned out last season 15,820 tons of sugar. It would not pay to put up a refinery to handle such a small amount of sugar, so I base my calculations on 30,000 tons.

Mr. HAMILTON: The extension of the number.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I am basing my figures on 30,000 tons. You could base it on 50,000 tons, but to put up a refinery to handle 15,000 tons profitably would hardly be possible, as I hope to show hon. members before I sit down. Now, the working capital has been left out by the hon. gentleman altogether. We must have the working capital for the purchase of these 30,000 tons of raw sugar, and we must pay £9 per ton for this raw sugar.

Mr. WHITE: £9 10s.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: £9 2s. As a matter of fact, this £9 2s. is paid as an advance for these raw sugars on the weekly shipments, or weekly deliveries. In fact, some few years ago the Colonial Sugar Refining Company made their advances to the sugar manufacturers not once a week, but twice a week. They made those payments to my own knowledge, because I did many tens of thousands of pounds worth of business with them as a manufacturer, and I know that they paid us every Tuesday and Friday on our bills of lading for the sugars delivered into the wharf stores, although the sugars had not been shipped. They simply paid us as the sugars were delivered every three days, so we must find the capital for these sugar pre-payments. It is absolutely not safe to put it down at less than a floating capital of £250,000. To treat 30,000 tons of sugar you must have the capital to pay for it, and, as there is always some refined sugar being sold, we must have a working capital of £250,000 in order to carry on the business. So that, instead of a capital of between £70,000 and £80,000 to provide this refinery, as pointed out by the hon. gentleman, I say that to work it with anything like economy we must have a capital of £250,000.

Mr. FERRICKS: Mr. Eastick said it can be done for £150,000.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I know that the hon. gentleman quoted Mr. Eastick. I have not had time to refer to the whole speech of the hon. gentleman, which he had carefully prepared before he delivered it, and now I have not got the time to reply to it. That is the unfortunate part of it.

Mr. LENNON: We will give you an extension of time.

Mr. HARDACRE: Of course you know that the refinery gets credit as well as gives advances?

Mr. MURPHY: You don't get much credit till they know you can pay for it.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: This capital I put down at £500,000, and as the business of the refinery increases, and with that working capital, it can probably handle 40,000 to 50,000 tons of sugar. I took 30,000 tons as a basis, but when once the refinery is in full swing there is no doubt that you can increase your business in the refinery by about 50 per cent. I think I can probably show—perhaps not to the satisfaction of hon. members opposite—that we might reasonably expect the profits made from refining of sugars in Australasia would yield an income of 5½ per cent. on a capital such as that, because this would be a refining business pure and simple. There is no extraneous business. The raw sugar-mills that would be supplying raw sugar to the refinery would not be run by the State refinery, and all the profits from those sugar-mills would go to the shareholders, and not to the refinery.

Mr. LENNON: The refinery would be the complement.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes; the refinery would be the complement of the mills. The hon. member for Bowen, during the course of his speech, said, in quoting £4 16s. per ton as the profit made by the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, that it would be a profitable thing for the Government to start a State refinery.

The SPEAKER: Order! The time allowed to the hon. member by the Standing Orders has expired.

Mr. LENNON: I move that an extension of time be granted to the Secretary for Railways to enable him to finish his speech.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. MURPHY: I object to any extension. We should stick to the Standing Orders.

Question put and passed.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS (continuing): I thought I was to be allowed an hour and a-half in which to reply to the hon. gentleman in addition to the time I took up on the last occasion.

The SPEAKER: The hon. gentleman was to be allowed an hour.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I thought so. The hon. member for Bowen said that it cost £1 10s. per ton for refining, but he has forgotten quite a number of things. I have tried to draw out as nearly as I possibly can the cost of refining a ton of raw sugar, in a refinery run by the Government as economically as possible. Under the agreement under which these raw sugars are purchased, the bedrock price for refining sugar would be £9 7s. 6d. per ton. I have a copy of the agreement here. Last year the bonus paid at the rate of 18s. per £1 of the average gross selling price 1A sugars above the bedrock prices stated in the agree-

ment amounted to £2 0s. 1½d. per ton, and the sugar last year was worth 94 per cent. net titre, £11 7s. 7½d. per ton. That is, the company who purchased these raw sugars give to the manufacturer of the raw sugar eighteen-twentieths of the whole of the increased price above certain bedrock prices that obtain during the whole year.

Mr. FERRICKS: That 2s. in the £1 they keep represents the 10 per cent. dividend, which they have no right to.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It is hard for me to follow such argument. If 125,000 tons of sugar were purchased last year by the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, that 2s. in the £1 referred to there would not represent the 10 per cent. dividend. Then there is freight on raw sugars amounting to 15s. per ton, 13s. 8d. per centage of loss of refining 94 per cent. to 99.5 per cent. net titre. There is always a loss of from 5 to 6 per cent. in the refining of raw sugar into refined sugar. I would point out that the average of these sugars ranges from 99.5 per cent. to 99.9 per cent.—almost absolutely pure sugar, and anybody who argues that water can be added to refined sugar argue about something that they do not understand.

Mr. FERRICKS: It is added to the golden syrup.

Mr. LENNON: That is where it is added.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It cannot be added to the refined sugar, because the refined sugar must be turned out perfectly dry. If it were not turned out dry, it would deteriorate so rapidly that it could not be placed on the market.

Mr. FERRICKS: The golden syrup has its contents increased by the addition of water.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: If the hon. gentleman had waited I would have told him that from this 6 per cent. there is the resulting syrup, but golden syrup is not the result, as the hon. gentleman would have you believe, of the purging of the sugar in the centrifugals. These syrups have all to be refined again and undergo a process for killing the sugar in the syrups in order that the sugar crystals will not granulate. It has to go through a further process; and it is a process I am not conversant with, because it is a secret, and is one of great value to those who hold it.

[4.30 p.m.] The refining costs, proportion of office and distribution expenses, wharfage, and interest on raw sugar advances, come to £2 a ton. Some of those items the hon. gentleman did not think of. Then there is £4 paid by the refining companies as excise, and 2s. a ton is paid as harbour dues on the raw sugars when they leave the port of export; and there is 6s. 6d. a ton paid by the company for bags supplied free to the raw-sugar manufacturers, stencils, freight, and cartage. And then we come to an item most people forget about; but the hon. member for Moreton the other afternoon interjected "What about the discounts?" A great number of people forget that when sugars are sold by refiners very heavy discounts are allowed; and the average of these discounts on sugar worth £21 4s. 7d. last year, as far as I have been able to gather, amounted to £1 1s. 2½d. per ton.

Mr. LENNON: About 5 per cent.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes; about 5 per cent.

Mr. LENNON: That is all the other fellow gets out of it.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. member says that is all the other fellow gets out of it. I will say that sometimes grocers will sell to people like myself—perhaps the hon. gentleman has had the same experience—a bag of sugar for practically what it costs them, because they want to sell us other things.

Mr. LENNON: A kind of sweetener!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes; as a kind of sweetener. They sell us the sugar for what it costs them; but we have to pay more for other things. The fact remains that the refining companies grant these discounts, and that brings the cost of 1A sugar for the 1910-1911 season to £20 6s. a ton; and that leaves, instead of £4 16s. on every ton of sugar, a profit of 18s. 7d. a ton. If we could absolutely find out what are the actual profits on the refining of sugars in Australia, we should find it is about £1 a ton; and I have tried as far as possible to give the actual cost.

Mr. HARDACRE: In the case of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company the profit is at least 12½ per cent.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I have already pointed out that the Colonial Sugar Refining Company pay 10 per cent. on their capital, and that the whole of their profits from all their operations from the handling of refined sugars and the manufacture of raw sugars in Australia, New Zealand, and Fiji amounted to 13.8 per cent. in one year. So how it is possible for £1 a ton on 190,000 tons, which we know they refined last year—that is £190,000—how is it possible for that to be swollen into £300,000 to pay a 10 per cent. dividend on £3,000,000 of capital?

Mr. HARDACRE: Do they pay less on their refining operations than on their other operations?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I would like to go back now for a period of forty years in connection with the growing and manufacture of sugar. I desire to point out that right from the year 1870—I became connected with the industry not long after that—right up to 1910, for forty years, there has been a steady disseverance of the operations and the putting of refined sugars on the market. From 1870 to 1890 on certain sugar plantations in the North and in the South the cane was grown, the cane was crushed, and the syrup manufactured, and that syrup refined and turned into refined sugars—all that was done on the plantations. I can give instances where that was done. In Mackay district at the Foulden, Richmond, and Farleigh plantations the whole of these operations were carried out; and expensive refining plants were installed for the purpose of putting, not a counter white sugar, but a refined article, on the market the same as is turned out by the refineries. And as a matter of fact, at Farleigh, after that mill was reconstructed and built—it was a very big mill—about 1883 or 1884 there was the first cube-making plant in Australia—they went so far as to turn out cube sugars. But they found that it did not pay them to refine sugar, and they gradually dropped out from the refining of sugars and then passed to the making very largely of what we call counter sugars—market sugars. They were sugars the liquors of which were defecated and decolourised by the use of various

discolouring matters—superphosphate of lime and sulphur—and I was one who was doing that work myself. As time went on we even found that it did not pay to make yellow crystals for the market; we found that it was better to drop the making of market sugars, and to make raw sugars for the refinery.

Mr. LENNON: You had to knuckle down to the company!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The hon. gentleman has not the slightest reason for saying that we had to knuckle down to the company. I do not desire to talk about my own private business; but I may say that for a number of years the firm of which I was the working partner made yellow crystals for the Australian market until white sugars became so cheap that it did not pay us to do so. For some years the company allowed us to make a certain proportion of our crop into yellow crystals for the purpose of supplying certain markets in Queensland, because we had a certain market for them.

Mr. LENNON: What do you mean by "allowed"?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Instead of the company taking all our raw sugars, we were allowed to sell part and turn part into yellow crystals, which we sent to that part of Queensland which is represented by the hon. member for Flinders——

Mr. HAMILTON: We used to get Paget Bros.' sugar from South Australia.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That is true. In those days we had to ship our sugars to Adelaide; and they came through South Australia into the Western parts of Queensland. I wish to point out how the operations have been dissevered. As time went on it was found more profitable to dissever canegrowing even from the manufacture of raw sugars; and quite a number of us cut up our plantations and installed farmers on them for the purpose of canegrowing for the mills. Although many years ago it was thought profitable to refine the syrups, as time went on it was found that it did not pay, and that it was more profitable to make sugars to go to the refinery.

Mr. HAMILTON: Each was working on a small scale.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes; each was working on a small scale. It pays people who are working on a large scale to make small profits, but it would not pay persons who are working on a small scale. With regard to the argument that there are large profits to be obtained by sugar manufacturers and canegrowers by the erection of a central State refinery, I may mention that only last year a scheme, a well-thought-out scheme, was brought forward for the erection of a co-operative refinery for the central mills—not simply for the four mills under the Government, but for all the central mills—but the shareholders would not touch it.

Mr. HAMILTON: That was the Mackay proposal?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Yes. The scheme was put very fairly before the people, but they came to the conclusion that it was not worth the while of each mill subscribing a sum of money to push the project forward until the thing culminated in a company. If the people who are engaged in the production and manufacture of raw sugar do not see their way clear to erect a central refinery for themselves, but say it is better for them to sell the raw sugar to somebody else to refine, how is it possible for the State to make such a business pay? I really fail to see how it is possible, and as long as the people concerned do not see the advisability of taking on this matter as an economical business, I do not see why the State should step in and undertake a risk which those engaged in the manufacture of sugar will not take upon themselves. With reference to the profits made in refining, I should like to say that refining, combined with the distribution of profits which must prevail, must always be subject to trade conditions, and they are uncertain. When profits are made and are all distributed by the State refinery to the mills and to the canegrowers, what will remain for the purpose of meeting difficulties in years when the profits are small or non-existent? Hon. members know that where people are carrying on any business there must be trade losses, and that sometimes trade losses are such as to wipe out the profits of the whole year.

Mr. RYAN: You have not told us yet whether you are in favour of a State refinery.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I have stated that I am absolutely against it.

Mr. RYAN: You don't want to interfere with a monopoly?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I have already said that the business of the shareholders of that company is not my business. The only interest I have is to see the sugar industry of Queensland progress on sound lines; and, because of the business risks which this venture would involve, I do not think it would be conducive to the welfare of the manufacturers of raw sugar and canegrowers to invest money in a State refinery. It is just as well that some of the operations in connection with the manufacture of sugar should be carried on by the people who know most about it. Let the canegrower grow the cane, let the co-operative mill shareholder crush that cane and make a profit out of the raw sugar, and let the refiner, whoever he may be—but not the State—make the profit attachable to that portion of the business when he carries on his business from an economic point of view. In view of the facts I have placed before hon. members, I hope that the House will not support this proposal. I do not think it would be advisable for State money to be put into such a proposition, more especially when we have a member representing some sugar districts in the Federal House of Representatives, proposing, or suggesting, that the Federal Government should start a sugar refinery in Papua—or New Guinea as we know it—where the whole of the operations of canegrowing, canecutting, sugar manufacture, and refining would be carried on by black labour. I have to thank the House for giving me the opportunity to say what I have said on this subject.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

* Mr. SWAYNE (*Mackay*): It is needless for me to say that the motion moved by the hon. member for Bowen interests me and every canegrower in Queensland very much. In my opinion, the logical result of the central mill system is a co-operative refinery, but I think that refinery should be owned by

the producers, and managed by them in their own interest. I do not think that any concern which is under State control is likely to give such good results as a co-operative refinery will give. I could quote instances in support of my view of the matter. I might compare the figures of the central mills now under the control of the Government with those of the mills which are controlled by the producers, and I might point to the experience in connection with a State coalmine; but I do not want to take up my time with such matters. I simply say that, in my opinion, the canegrowers would be very much better served by a refinery controlled by themselves than by one which was in the hands of the State. The point is whether the time is opportune for such a project. Are the present refineries able to make the profits on their operations depicted by the hon. member for Bowen? At one time I thought very much as the hon. member does on that point, but I made it my business to inquire into the matter and obtain all the information possible. Without unduly bringing my own business into the question, I may say that if three years ago the profits were such as has been painted by the hon. member for Bowen, it would have meant a matter of £1,300 or £1,400 to me. I merely mention that fact to show that I have every reason to view favourably any project which will benefit the grower. I have an amendment to move upon the motion, but before I propose it I should like to deal briefly with the motion. In starting any new business it is just as well to look at what has gone before in the same path. The Colonial Sugar Refining Company has loomed so largely in this discussion that I should like to refer briefly to their past experience in the business of refining. I find that they were established sixty-two years ago, and that their first balance-sheet declared a loss of £2,609. Of course, it will be easily seen that at that time they were working on a very small scale. For a period of twelve years they worked with little or no profit. The capital was then increased, and for a year or two the business earned something, but from 1857 to 1861 and in 1864 the losses caused considerable depreciation in the value of their shares, and their capital was then further increased. In the year 1880 again, losses occurred for a couple of years, but in 1882 the scope of their business was increased; refining was established in New Zealand, and sugar-mills in Queensland. The capital was increased largely in the next two years, and coming back to the speech of the mover of this motion, I wish to point out that this capital was not increased out of profits, but from outside money being put into the business. I think the period that the hon. member drew attention to was in 1891, and I find that since then very large amounts of outside money were put into the business. In 1892, £150,000 worth of shares were sold; in 1899, £170,200 worth of shares were sold; in 1901, £127,000 worth of shares were sold; and in 1904, £200,000 worth of shares were sold. In 1907, £300,000 worth of shares were issued, but these were paid up to the extent of one-quarter—that is to say, this one-quarter was paid out of the profits. It was for £20 shares, and the remaining £225,000 came from the shareholders' own pockets. It was additional money put into the concern. In 1908, accumulated reserves were converted into shares, but previous to that some hundreds of thousands of pounds of additional money were put into the business by the shareholders themselves.

Mr. RYAN: They were paying 10 per cent. all that time.

Mr. SWAYNE: After that money came to them, if they liked to put it back into the business instead of spending it in other directions, they were at perfect liberty to do so. The point is this: It was not profits over and above the 10 per cent., because the argument used by Opposition members was that these shares were paid for out of profits over and above 10 per cent. It will be seen, no matter where the money came from, it was not profits over 10 per cent. In 1909 money that was standing to the credit of a certain account in their balance-sheet was converted into shares, but the amount so converted was very small as compared with the amount of outside money that the shareholders or other people put into the business. Other people besides these may have bought shares for all we know. Coming to this question of debentures, it has been said that they were paid for out of profits. Now, I find that was not the case. Here is the history of the operations of the company that was published first in the *Sydney Telegraph*. It was copied into another paper, the *Daily Mercury*, in August, 1910, from the *Sydney Telegraph*. It goes back to the money that was received from the sale of shares in the eighties, still bearing out my statement that a considerable amount of outside money had been put into the business as increased capital. The *Telegraph* says—

"In consequence there were a number of new issues of shares, including 5,000 early in 1888; 10,000 (one-half paid for out of profits) in October, 1888; while in 1899 debenture-holders representing £400,000 were given the option of paying up shares in full with debentures, and they extensively availed themselves of the permission. That was not a bad operation for the company, for in those days the debentures carried 5 per cent. interest."

Those debentures were not paid for out of profits. The holders of those debentures received value for them in the shape of shares. That is not the same as if the company used some of their profits to redeem those debentures. They issued further shares and gave value in that way. That is quite different to paying off debentures out of profits.

Mr. LENNON: It is a distinction without a difference.

Mr. SWAYNE: If a man owes you £100, and instead of paying you in cash you give him a share of your business, extending it at the same time proportionately, it is quite a different thing altogether. They increased the capital of their company to this extent by issuing additional shares, and the new shareholders have been receiving interest on those shares.

Mr. LENNON: It is infinitely worse, because those are £20 shares and now they are worth £45.

Mr. SWAYNE: It is obvious that in converting debentures into shares those debentures were not paid for out of profits, and the interest is paid on the original par value of £20, not on present share values. I think it only right that every phase of the question should be ventilated. I have no interest in the matter at all—I have no

interest except to get at the truth of the matter, and if it can be shown that the establishment of a central sugar refinery will in any way help the producer, I shall be only too happy to join; at the same time, I do not think a State refinery will have the desired result.

Mr. RYAN: They paid 5½ per cent. in bonuses in addition to that 10 per cent.

Mr. SWAYNE: In regard to that, I notice that a few years ago, in order to maintain their dividend of 10 per cent., they had to entrench on the reserve funds. At the time they were carrying forward something like £80,000 or £90,000. The previous half-year they carried forward £87,000. The balance-sheet at the time I am speaking of shows that they only carried forward £84,000, so evidently they had to use part of the balance of the previous year to maintain that rate of dividend. That half-year the business did not return a rate of 10 per cent. I notice the hon. member, in moving this resolution, spoke of scrapping and covering up profits—that very large profits were not disclosed, and that they were covered up in every possible manner. He said they were scrapping their machinery before it was really due for such treatment. I know that amongst engineers it is very frequently said that the Colonial Sugar Refining Company do not scrap enough of their machinery; that the machinery in some of their mills is out of date, and it would be better for them if they scrapped more. Again, it was stated, in order to conceal their profits, they held large stocks of oil. What sense would there be in purchasing oil and keeping it for the sake of storing it? I just mention the matter to show what little details were brought up. I think the case has been unduly strained. In comparing the cost of refining with the manufacture of raw sugar the hon. member for Bowen said that the cost of the former operation bore no comparison to the cost of the latter. At one time I held very much the same opinion as the hon. member, but after having gone through a refinery and seen the process of refining, I could appreciate that there was a great deal more in the work of refining than the outsider realised. I notice that in describing the process of manufacturing raw sugar, the hon. member spoke of twenty or thirty processes through which the sugar went. Now, I do not think anyone acquainted with the working of a sugar-mill would say that twenty or thirty processes were involved. This is merely by the way, but I think you might group all the operations into five or six processes. I have no time to go into all the details, but it will be found that that is the case. Again, the hon. member stated that the makers of raw sugar have to refund the harbour dues to the refiner. It is only a small matter, but it is discrepancies in these small matters that make or mar an argument. As a matter of fact, the refiner pays the harbour dues, and, even when the harbour dues of a particular port happen to be less than the amount allowed by the refiner, they allow the makers of raws the balance. It is only a small sum—amounting, in the case of the port I have in view, to 1s. 3d. a ton. Still, it again shows that the arguments on the other side have been very much strained, and that the statements themselves are not quite accurate. One of the principal points at issue is, What is really the cost of refining sugar? Until I read the speech of the hon. member for Bowen I had really no Queensland data to go upon regarding the cost of refining in Queensland. The hon. member made a quotation from the *Queenslander* of 23rd March, 1901, under the heading, "One of the effects of Polynesian Labour," giving the views of Mr. Eastick, who was at that time the manager of Millaquin and Yengarie. Without reading the whole extract, I may say that some figures are given concerning the amount of capital involved in the operations of the company managed by Mr. Eastick. He gave the cost of raw sugar, coal, and so on, the total of the various items being £548,900, which represented the yearly payments made by the two refineries. The particular point that interests me in the matter is that through these figures we are able to get to a very considerable extent at the cost of refining in Queensland. From the total expenditure of £548,900 has to be deducted the cost of raw sugars in order to arrive at the cost of refining. Another item that should be excluded is the cost of syrup tins, cases, and boxes, as that has nothing to do with the cost of refining. I find that the expenditure on refining operations amounted to £89,000, and, as the output was 52,000 tons, it will be seen that the cost was considerably more than £1 per ton, according to the hon. member's own figures. Those figures are ten years old, let me say, and do not provide for interest and redemption on plant, but there is the result.

[5 p.m.]

Mr. COLLINS: There must be some progress in the art of refining.

Mr. SWAYNE: On the same subject I have been at some pains to gather what information I could. I did not quite catch the figures given by my colleague, the Secretary for Railways, and probably some of the details may vary somewhat, but I think his results are very much the same as those I have arrived at. As the motion has been moved ostensibly in the interests of the producer, the first question that arises is whether the producer gets all for his cane that he should from the manufacturer of raw sugar. The next question is whether the refiner could give the maker of raw sugar more at present prices of refined. There are some mills—one of which I have a knowledge—where the grower gets the whole of the money that is received from the manufacturer of raw sugar, less the interest and redemption charges to the Government and the cost of manufacture. It is obvious that in that case the grower could not possibly get more for his cane unless the mill got more for its sugar. Some mills may not be so happily situated. But the balance-sheet of the mill to which I am alluding enables them to make a very fair comparison and guess as to their treatment.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: And they are not putting any money into a reserve fund.

Mr. MANN: There are six mills which are making a profit among them of £120,000.

Mr. SWAYNE: It is obvious that in that case I refer to the grower cannot get more for his raw material unless the mill that turns it into raw sugar gets more for the raw sugar from the refiner. To ascertain whether the mill is justly entitled to more from the refiner, we have to find out the margin between what is paid to the mill for the raw sugar and what the refiner

subsequently gets for the finished article. Now, over a period of five years I find that the price paid by the refiners for raw sugar was £11 3s. 5d. per ton, and the price of 1A, which is the standard sugar, was about £21 per ton. From that quotation of £21 there is a certain discount. The Secretary for Railways gave it as about £1 a ton. I do not give it quite as high as that—and I am inclined to think that I am too low—I only allow a discount of 12s. a ton; but, if I am in error, it is a mistake that tells against my own argument, so I will take it that the discount is 12s. a ton, or about 3 per cent. That leaves a margin between the two prices of £9 16s. 7d. per ton to be accounted for. First of all, £4, the excise tax paid to the Federal Government, has to come out of the balance. Then we have the cost of refining. The mover of the resolution quoted statements of those engaged in the industry in the United States in years gone by. From the same paper that he quotes from I have obtained that later information. I find here a speech was quoted which was made by Senator McEnery, one of the Louisiana senators, in the Senate of the United States when they were revising their tariff for the year 1909. That gentleman laid it down authoritatively that the cost of refining was ½ per cent. per lb. raw sugar. That was the cost of refining sugar at 96 purity. I am not sure whether by "purity" is meant, as with us, net titre, or whether it is by polariscope, but if so he was not right in estimating that 96 per cent. by polariscope as only equal to 92 net titre, because I happened to see the work of one of our own Government chemists the other day, and he, in ascertaining the difference between the polariscope and net titre, found that in the case of 94 net titre there was only 2 per cent. difference by polariscope.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: That was on the amount of raw sugar.

Mr. SWAYNE: Yes, it was only two points instead of four points. Again, a slight error is made in the figures. We have nothing to show us that the purity of sugar given is not exactly on the same basis as we use here, on the net titre, and assuming that it is, it makes their raw sugar a little more valuable, and so much easier to refine, and would make the cost of refining it correspondingly less as compared with the cost of our refineries here. I am simply mentioning my doubt as to whether the 96 per cent. refers to the polariscope or net titre, as I wish to be fair in this question.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It really meant the 13 or 14 Dutch standard.

Mr. SWAYNE: I do not think so; it is not often used. At any rate, the speakers quoted by hon. members did not state whether interest and redemption were provided for in the cost of refining sugar. To arrive in these matters at any true estimate, you want to know exactly what is referred to in the cost, what is provided for, and my authority includes in his cost of ½ per cent. the operations of refining, packing, and shipping. Transposing the American coin into our money, it will be roughly seen that it comes out something like £2 6s. 8d. I think on that basis we can put our cost of refining here as £2 10s., and some of the figures which the hon. member for Bowen quoted were practically the same, but that by the sale of the by-product syrup, he brought the cost down by nearly half; I am not at all clear, and I do not think that he is, on that point. What was referred to as syrup at the meeting, from the report of which he gave his figures—at any rate, it is ten years old—and we have here the authoritative statement made in the Senate of the United States, and I should prefer to use those figures. What I would like to point out is that he was clearly under a mistake in connection with his estimate of the value of syrup in connection with the cost of refining. I think he quoted £21 per ton, but that is when it is put up in tins and cases, but we should estimate it on the bulk value, and if he inquires he will find that the bulk value is only £14, roughly speaking, only two-thirds of the value of the finished article; therefore, if the bulk syrup and the refined sugar together equal that of the raw sugar it will be seen that there was still a loss. Another mistake that he made was in estimating that half of this syrup consisted of water. On inquiring from the chemist—he is nothing to do with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, a chemist employed by our own Government—I find that only 20 per cent. is water.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: That is a very big item.

Mr. SWAYNE: But it is not one-half of what the hon. member for Bowen gave. I am pointing out that all these little discrepancies go in a great measure to break down his arguments.

Mr. LESINA: Is this a speech for the Colonial Sugar Refining Company?

Mr. SWAYNE: However, we have to remember that here in Australia refineries have many charges which are not defrayed by the refineries in America. They take their sugar off a ship at the wharf. Here in Australia the refineries supply the mills which make the raw sugar with sacks. I think a fair estimate for these sacks is 3s. Then they pay harbour dues of 4s., and they have to pay 15s. for freight and other items. Then there is interest—that is the interest on the sum involved in paying cash for the raw sugar, and perhaps waiting for six months, which I think is a fair estimate, on the average, before they turn that purchase money again into cash. I am allowing 5 per cent. on that, and it will be seen that 5 per cent. on the purchase money of raw sugar, taking raw sugar at £11 per ton, works out at 5s. 6d. I am allowing that some may realise in a month, and others in twelve months, so I have struck an average of six months. I think I am underrating their expenses, and I think all through my figures will be found to be rather in favour of the hon. member for Bowen than the refineries. At any rate, I am allowing six months' interest—some people tell me that I should allow more. That reduces the margin of £9 16s. 7d. between what they pay for the raw sugar and what they sell the refined sugar at—by the sum of £7 17s. 6d., leaving a margin still to be accounted for of £1 19s. 1d. But then, as my friend, the hon. member for Maryborough, interjected, there are insurances, selling charges, and so on, and allowing for all these I think you will find that on the figures I have given, the sum of 18s. is very near the thing. I have worked out the figures from information gathered by myself, altogether apart from any contained in the House, and it will be seen when the

speeches are read that the results are very much the same. As a grower I have tried to check this by other means. Of course, the point in my mind has always been that we get a fair price for our raw material. I have gathered information from other countries; I have got the prices from the United States and in Germany for the raw material, on the sugar content of the raw material purchased, and I have also taken into consideration the tariff protection which the manufacturer receives—it has all to be taken into account in estimating what is a fair price or otherwise. At any rate, the result is this: I am quoting from the last growing agreement I had with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. I have nothing whatever to do with them now, but this is the last agreement I signed with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, and I think I am safe in saying that the prices paid for the cane are exactly the same now as they were then. I find that under what they call their Scheme A they pay 11s. 9d. for 12 per cent. cane. Of course, to that we have to add the 7s. bonus, making it 18s. 9d. per ton. Now, in the State of Michigan, United States, they are getting 19s. per ton for beet of the same richness as this cane, or 3d. more. But you have to remember that in America they have a protective duty of £9 per ton as compared to our nominal £6, but actual duty of £5, per ton. In comparison with the United States it shows that we are getting a fair price for our cane. Under Scheme C of the growers' agreement with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company we get 19s. plus the rebate of 7s., making the price £1 6s. per ton. For the raw material in Germany which has a corresponding richness to our raw material they are only paying £1 1s. per ton. So that here our prices compare favourably with Germany. I should have liked to have some cane prices to compare ours with, but as I could not get their sugar content, only the prices, the comparisons would then have been valueless. But in the two instances I have quoted the percentages of content are given. I had some difficulty in finding out what was the import duty in Germany. I had to send to Sydney for it, and I learned that it was £9 odd per ton, and that is not set off by excise as it formerly was. Then again, there is the third method which I have used for estimating what are the profits of refining. I have the last two balance-sheets of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. I do not think it is any use bothering with any balance-sheets before that, because the Fijian, New Zealand, and Australasian operations were mixed together then, and it was impossible to separate the profits for Fiji and New Zealand from Australasia. But in the last two balance-sheets they discriminate between the two, and separate Australasia and the others, and they show that the Australasian profits for the last two half years were £112,000 and £114,000 respectively, making a total of £226,000. Now, in Australia, that company owns nine sugar-mills and one distillery. There is no doubt that the profits from the distillery have been large, and the profits from the nine mills have also represented a considerable sum, so that the profits from the refinery alone would not be so much by a considerable sum. They refined 170,000 or 180,000 tons of sugar, and taking the profits of the mills and distillery into consideration, it is a very fair estimate to arrive at to say that the profits of refining came to less than £1 per ton. Of course, the company buys and sells, and there are also profits from that as well.

Mr. MANN: You differ from Mr. Cribb, as he says in the *Sugar Journal* that there is a loss of 9d. per ton.

Mr. SWAYNE: Before anyone launches out into this sugar-refining business it is well to consider what changes may take place in the manufacture of sugar. At the present time we know that no mill is compelled to sell its raw sugar to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. They can go to the open market if they want to, as they have done in the past. The Government mill at Nerang is doing that. Of course, what they would turn out would not be refined sugar, but the mills can do it if they wish, and make a good counter article.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: They would soon get wiped out if they did.

The SPEAKER: I would remind the hon. member for Mackay that he has occupied the full time allowed him under the Standing Orders.

Mr. SWAYNE: I would just like to finish what I have got to say.

Mr. LENNON (*Herbert*) rose to continue the debate.

Mr. FORSYTH: I move that the hon. member for Mackay be granted an extension of time.

Mr. CORSER: I second that.

Mr. LENNON: I object to any extension.

The SPEAKER: Under Standing Order 107 the hon. member for Mackay, Mr. Swayne, has occupied the time allowed him under that Standing Order. It has been moved and seconded that he be granted an extension of time.

Question—That the extension of time be granted to the hon. member for Mackay—put; and the House divided:—

AYES, 15.

Mr. Booker	Mr. Philp
,, Brennan	,, Somerset
,, Corser	,, Swayne
,, Forsyth	,, Vowles
,, Hardacre	,, Walker
,, Hodge	,, White
,, Mann	,, Wienholt
,, Paget	

Tellers: Mr. Mann and Mr. Wienholt.

NOES, 34.

Mr. Adamson	Mr. Hunter, D.
,, Allan	,, Hunter, J. M.
,, Allen	,, Land
,, Appel	,, Lennon
,, Barnes, G. P.	,, Macartney
,, Barnes, W. H.	,, May
,, Breslin	,, Mulcahy
,, Collins	,, Mullan
,, Cottell	,, Murphy
,, Coyne	,, O'Sullivan
,, Denham	,, Payne
,, Ferricks	,, Petrie
,, Foley	,, Ryan
,, Fox	,, Ryland
,, Grant	,, Theodore
,, Gunn	,, Tolmie
,, Hamilton	,, Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. Breslin and Mr. Theodore.

Resolved in the negative.

Mr. LENNON: The motion moved by the hon. member for Bowen some few weeks ago reflects the very highest credit on him, not only for the industry and research [5.30 p.m.] he has displayed in regard to facts and figures, but also in regard to his method of dealing with the subject, and the very complete case he made for the establishment of a sugar refinery or refineries as a natural corollary of the central mill system. I do not intend to go into any detail or any technical discussion of the matter—we have already been overwhelmed with technicalities. Such a maze of figures were given to us by the Secretary for Railways in his reply to the hon. member for Bowen that it would appear almost as if the mantle of the hon. member for Moreton had fallen upon him; and he succeeded pretty well in mystifying perhaps himself as well as other people.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I happen to know the subject.

Mr. LENNON: He referred to the time many years ago when many of the mills at Mackay and other places not only manufactured crude sugar, as they do now, but also refined sugar and put it on the market. It was as long as sixteen or eighteen years ago when those canegrowers at Mackay and elsewhere put sugar on the market themselves. After they had carried on in that way for a number of years, the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, approximately about eighteen years ago, sent circulars round to all those growers of sugar who were so putting sugar on the market, informing them of their intention to establish a sugar refinery in Queensland, and inviting them to throw in their lot with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, and cease putting any sugar on the market themselves. At that particular time it fell to my lot to take an interest in this very matter. Occupying, as I did, a position in the employment of a large Northern firm, I felt it to be my duty to send out circulars to all those growers who were putting sugar on the market, urging them not to throw themselves entirely in the lap of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, but to continue as far as possible refining sugar and putting it on the market; and even if they did not continue to do so in the way they had done for years past, to join together and form a pool and put their sugar on the market in that way, and not allow the whole thing to be under the control of a company like the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. Those warnings, however, were disregarded. The growers thought it would be better to accept the invitation of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company: and with the exception of some few, chiefly in the Bundaberg district, I think nearly all the growers fell into the lap, as it were—I was going to say "trap," but perhaps that would be too strong a word to use—of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. I remember some years after that—possibly I was one of the first in Queensland to publicly advocate a State refinery. As far back as 1899, in an election campaign, at every one of my meetings I strongly advocated the desirableness of establishing State refineries; and from that time till now I have been of opinion that the natural corollary of the central mill system is to put on the coping stone in the shape of a State refinery. The question has been debated in the Press and by public men; and I think the Sydney *Bulletin*, which is one of the best critics on such matters in Australia—by "such matters" I mean monopolies—has strongly advocated the establishment of State refineries for many years past.

Mr. WHITE: The *Bulletin* does just what it is paid for.

Mr. LENNON: If the hon. gentleman does what he is paid for, he will give more satisfaction to his constituents. I am not going into the question of bounties, duties, and so on—that has been discussed sufficiently; but I would like to deal briefly with what has fallen from the Minister who has replied to the hon. member for Bowen. He speaks about controlling 190,000 tons of sugar! And the Government cannot undertake the establishment of a refinery because it would involve a capital of £250,000!

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: £500,000.

Mr. LENNON: And a further £250,000 for the purchase of sugar and incidental articles! Here is a poor helpless Government that enjoys a revenue of £5,000,000, and last year expended £8,000,000; and that Government comes along and tells us it cannot do as well as the Colonial Sugar Refining Company—cannot afford to invest £500,000 in making a crowning success of a splendid industry like the sugar industry, though it can raise money at 3⅜ per cent.

Mr. MURPHY: But we are going to build them mills and hand them over as soon as they are paid for.

Mr. LENNON: The fact that those mills are to be erected is a strong argument in favour of the motion moved by the hon. member for Bowen, because when the State possesses three more mills, which will be for the most part larger concerns, more up-to-date, and capable of turning out more sugar, it is a strong argument in favour of the desirableness of establishing a State refinery. The capital belonging to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company has been discussed very freely. They have a capital of £3,000,000 in 150,000 shares, I take it, of £20 each. They have also a reserve fund of £577,613. Those shares are nominally paid up to £20—because £560,000 of that £3,000,000 is watered stock—and if the company pay 10 per cent. on their capital of £3,000,000, which will amount to £300,000, that is practically 11 or 12 per cent. on the actual capital invested in the business. Those shares of £20 each are now quoted at £45 and £45 10s., and if the business pays 10 per cent on £2,400,000—that is making a deduction for watered stock—that means that the investor to-day gets something like 5 or 5½ per cent. on his investment. Those shares are eagerly sought after, there are buyers for them in Melbourne, Sydney, and the old country, and they are regarded as gilt-edged securities.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They return 4 per cent.

Mr. LENNON: They return more—they return about 5½ per cent., and they are a first-class investment. Yet we are told by the Government that it is not a safe thing for them to go in for this proposed State refinery.

The PREMIER: Will you discuss the cost and earnings of refining?

Mr. LENNON: That aspect of the matter has been discussed so well that I need not go

into any details. The Minister for Railways went into it very fully; he was followed by his colleague, the junior member for Mackay, who also discussed it very fully, and the hon. member for Bowen spent a considerable time, possibly half an hour, discussing the details; so that it is not necessary for me to go into particulars. I admit at once that a very large proportion of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company's profits is derived from the manufacture of crude sugar, but a certain proportion is made from the refining of sugar. They make a very fair profit out of refining. If they had not been making a fair profit out of the business, they would not have been so anxious a few years ago to absorb or swallow up Pullman Brothers, of Melbourne, who were the only competitors they had in Australia, except the Millaquin Mill. With that exception, they were practically the only opponents the Colonial Sugar Refining Company had. The junior member for Mackay referred to the Nerang Mill, and compared its work and profits with those of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. But in comparison with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, the Nerang Mill is a coffee-pot concern, turning out only a few tons of sugar annually, and it is the least successful of any one of the central mills at present owned by the Government; consequently that was a very poor illustration to give. As I have already said, I do not propose to go into the details of this matter. I know that the Colonial Sugar Refining Company is not regarded as a company which affords very liberal profits to the people who handle the sugar. I think the outside allowance they make to the distributor of sugar, that is to the merchants who take the sugar straight from the refinery and supply it to the retailers, is about 5 per cent., and out of that the wholesale merchants have to make an allowance to the retailer. There is very little profit indeed made out of the refined sugar put on the market in Australia, except what is made by the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. Sugar is an article of daily, almost hourly, consumption in Australia—I think we are the largest consumers of sugar per head of any country in the world, and it is a proper thing that we should be, because it is a very wholesome article, and it is produced in our midst—but it cannot be gainsaid that there is no profit on refined sugar for anybody, bar the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. All the people who handle sugar do so at the barest possible profit. The Minister for Railways knows that, and many other members know that there is very little profit for the wholesale merchant or the retailer. Consequently, whatever profit there is goes to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. Yet here we have a Government carrying on the business of the State of Queensland, with an income of £5,000,000—and they actually spent £8,000,000 last year—and they say in effect that they cannot enter upon a business in competition with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, because it will involve in the first instance an expenditure of £500,000, which they can raise at 3¾ per cent.

The PREMIER: That is not the main reason.

Mr. LENNON: No; the main reason is that the Colonial Sugar Refining Company controls and bosses the Government.

The PREMIER: Not in the least degree.

Mr. LENNON: The Government profess to be the friends of the grower of cane. Other people who pretend to be friends of the grower say that the only thing to do is wipe out the bounty and excise, leave out the Customs duty, and deal with this monopoly, and the country will be happy. I doubt it. If you take away the restrictions imposed by the Commonwealth, the Colonial Sugar Refining Company will boss the whole show. That is a state of things that I hope even hon. members opposite are not desirous of seeing brought about. I know that it is a state of things that members on this side are very apprehensive of.

The PREMIER: We have no interest whatever in the Colonial Sugar Refining Company.

Mr. LENNON: We do not wish to see the Colonial Sugar Refining Company exercising any more control over the sugar industry than it, unfortunately, does at present. Some people seem to think that the Colonial Sugar Refining Company has been a very benign company. The company has, I admit, been very well managed; it is one of the most successful companies in Australia; and it is perfectly within its rights, working within the law, to make all the profits it can. It is out for profit; its creed is profit, and it is not concerned about the wage-earners. Hon. members on this side of the House are more concerned about the wages earned by the labourer and the canegrower in producing this article than they are about whether the Colonial Sugar Refining Company is making very large profits or not. The junior member for Mackay showed the vicissitudes through which the company had passed, how in certain years they lost money, how they got further capital put into the business, and all that. We all know that every new industry—and this was a new industry in Australia at that time—has to undergo those varying fortunes. But will anyone try to prove at the present time that the Colonial Sugar Refining Company is not a success? Why, it is a most pronounced success in the whole of Australia.

The PREMIER: To what do you attribute that? Is that by chance?

Mr. LENNON: I am not arguing that it is by chance. I at once admit that the company is most capably managed. It has very clever men running it, but it is now a monopoly, and every one of the Governments we have had in Queensland for the past ten years seems to lay itself out for the purpose of ministering to that company and permit it to carry on its business at its own sweet will. That is the sort of thing we want to put an end to, and we think a most opportune time has arisen when the Sugar Works Bill is under discussion, and therefore the hon. member for Bowen has moved this motion. I think it only right to explain this point, if I may: It was owing to the expressed intention of the junior member for Mackay to move an amendment on this motion, which would certainly have burked discussion on this very important matter, that impelled me to oppose the proposition that he be granted further time. I think it only right that I should make that explanation. I think I have shown a fair spirit in the matter by my action in moving that the Minister for Railways be further heard, and my other action is justified by my statement. What I want to say is that this side is apprehensive that this monopoly will grow, as it

has grown in the past. If it grows in the next ten years as fast as it has grown in the past, it will become almost as powerful, and perhaps just as dangerous, as some of the monopolies that have grown up in America. I will pass over the figures, as we have had so many of them, but I would like to refer to the danger of a monopoly of that character. We all have heard about the Standard Oil Company and the other monopolies in America. I think every man on this side of the House is desirous of trying to curb the power of this Colonial Sugar Refining Company, and to prevent it growing to the same extent as those monopolies have done in America. The Standard Oil Company in recent years has been fined to the extent of something like £5,000,000 because it has not been acting in accordance with the laws of the United States of America, and yet it is enabled to defeat the law by changing the locality wherein it has its registered office. It is no use taking up the time of the House with these matters; these illustrations are sufficient to make hon. members on this side apprehensive that the Colonial Sugar Refining Company will become a menace to the whole of Queensland, as it certainly is in the Northern part of Queensland. My very first utterance in this House went to show that the Colonial Sugar Refining Company was practically ruling the district I represent. That district does not know this Government. It looks to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company, and some of the people in the district were ready to bow down and worship that company the same as some members of this House seem to be willing to do. Among other things, the Standard Oil Company got control of a number of businesses of a somewhat similar character. It got control of the railways, control of the shipping combines, and worked rebates and systems of that sort just in the same way as we have our shipping combine and other combines in Queensland. It will be alleged probably by some people, in reply to what I say, that we have not got these combines. They will probably tell us that we have not a timber combine. I have heard it said over and over again by hon. members who sit on the opposite side of the House that there is no such thing as a timber combine in Queensland. Every man outside feels that there is a combine. He cannot prove it in black and white, or by facts or figures, but he actually feels it. If he is connected in any way with building, he feels it in the most sensitive part of his anatomy—that is, his pocket. That is where members opposite feel it, but they do not choose to allow that there is such a thing as a timber combine. Now, had the referendum been carried——

Mr. FORSYTH: A very good thing it was not carried.

Mr. LENNON: It is a very great pity it was not carried. Then there would have been no necessity for this motion. The Commonwealth Government would probably have been able to do something in the refining of sugar, and relieved the State Government of the necessity. But the duty now devolves on the State Government. The Commonwealth Government really has no right to come in here. It controls certain parts of the industry, as we know. It controls the labour, because of the white Australia principle, but the remarkable feature of it is this: That whilst the Commonwealth Government can say to a man who has a farm that if he does not raise his crop by white labour he will be denied the bounty, and by degrees—in fact, in a very brief space of time—the sugar in Queensland is almost wholly raised now by white labour. But after the cane is taken off the land and goes a few miles to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company's mills, it is there received by Japanese and other coloured people, and the Commonwealth Government has no power to follow it there. It has no power whatever to go into that mill and tell the Colonial Sugar Refining Company what kind of labour it must employ about its boilers or centrifugals, or about its firing or what not. The State Government has that power, and therefore the State Government should do everything it can to foster and help this industry, as I hope it will do by the establishment of various mills, and by the establishment of a refinery, and control that part of it, and by the manufacture of sugar, and put the Colonial Sugar Refining Company and others upon the same footing, as regards a white Australia policy, as the growers.

Mr. FORSYTH: Would it be a good business proposition? That is the point.

Mr. LENNON: A State refinery?

Mr. FORSYTH: Yes.

Mr. LENNON: I certainly think it would.

Mr. FORSYTH: Can you prove it?

Mr. LENNON: I do not know what the other side has proved. The hon. member for Bowen quoted their own figures; he quoted from our opponents to prove that the cost of refining sugar is——

Mr. FORSYTH: His speech was a very excellent one, but he failed in connection with showing the profit.

Mr. LENNON: Those who have replied—their whole time has been taken up in trying to prove that the hon. member for Bowen was wrong in one or two figures. They have not shown at all that a State refinery would not be a good thing—that it would not be, as stated in the motion, "a desirable thing to have," and that it would not complete the scheme of central mills. They only show where he made a few mistakes in his figures. I think the hon. member might over-estimate the profits of the company, but not to a very great extent, because I have seen good authorities writing to the *Sugar Journal* and other papers, and they differ just as much as the Minister for Railways and the hon. member for Bowen. You cannot get people to agree on this matter, just as in the case of that very vexed question of bounty and excise. So it is with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. If you discussed it a whole month, you would not come to any agreement as to the profits, and the company are cute enough not to disclose their business. They take good care they have secret reserves, and at present they have over £500,000 standing to their reserve funds, which, no doubt, in time will be transferred to capital and dealt out to shareholders, which will involve the payment of 10 per cent. on that amount in addition. The capital has already risen to £3,000,000, and if it happens to rise to £5,000,000 or £6,000,000 you may be sure they will still pay 10 per cent. That is where the people suffer because they have to provide that 10 per cent. on the capital of the company. The workers suffer all the time. Perhaps the growers suffer too, because but

for the large profits of this company he might get 1s. or 2s. a ton more for his cane. That is what we would like to see—we should like to see the grower get a better price so that he could pay the poor worker a better price. I am sorry I am so hoarse that I shall have to resume my seat.

At 7 o'clock, the House, in accordance with Sessional Order, proceeded with Government business.

HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE.

On clause 59, as follows:—

"After section one hundred and eighteen of the principal Act, the following section is inserted:—

"[118A.] (1.) The site, size, and plans of every hospital or temporary place of reception provided by a local authority under this part, and any extension or building forming part of an existing hospital to which patients are or may hereafter be admitted by arrangement with or on behalf of a local authority under this part, shall be subject to the approval of the Commissioner.

"(2.) The reasonable expense of maintaining and treating in a hospital or place of reception, under this part, any patient who is not a pauper shall be deemed to be a debt due from the patient to the local authority or governing body by which the hospital is maintained, and shall be recovered accordingly."

Mr. RYLAND (*Gympie*) thought it would be as well to omit the whole of subclause (2), but failing that he moved the insertion at the commencement of the subclause of the following words:—"Any costs in excess of." If a person was removed to a hospital or place of reception when suffering from an infectious disease, he was practically a victim who was taken away from his home, lost his wages, and was confined there in the same way as an inmate in a lazarette in the interests of the community at large. It was, therefore, only fair that he should not have to bear the expense of his maintenance while in the hospital or place of reception, although he might be called upon to bear any extra expense, such as the cost of a special ward or a special nurse, if he wanted such special attention. They now looked after infants and young children, and after aged people, and they also cared for the sick in a general way, so that they should only call upon those who were isolated in the interests of the public to pay for extra attention which they required for themselves.

Mr. BOUCHARD (*Brisbane South*) did not agree with the amendment or with the subclause. One who was suffering from an infectious disease and was compelled to be segregated was being punished enough without being called upon to bear the burden of his misfortune in the way proposed, especially as he was there in the interests of the general public. Viewing the clause as he did, and thinking it would be better to eliminate it from the Bill, he had mentioned the matter to the Home Secretary, and, before dealing with the clause at length, he would like to ask the hon. gentleman whether he was prepared to omit the clause.

The HOME SECRETARY was prepared to let the omission of the subclause go on the voices, because practically, if the amendment of the hon. member for Gympie were accepted, the subclause would be absolutely useless. He was not particularly interested in its retention, so that he was quite prepared to take up that attitude

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYLAND asked leave to withdraw his amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. BOUCHARD moved the omission of subclause (2).

Mr. MURPHY wished to know whether the Home Secretary was so willing to let the subclause go in order that he might deal with the matter by regulation. He did not think that would be a fair thing.

The HOME SECRETARY: I have nothing behind it.

Mr. RYLAND asked whether it was necessary to retain the clause at all if they omitted subclause (2).

The HOME SECRETARY: The first part of the clause is necessary.

Amendment (*Mr. Bouchard's*) agreed to; and clause, as amended, put and passed.

On clause 60—"Amendment of section 123"—

Mr. RYLAND: He thought subclause (2) might also be omitted, namely:—

"and may cause any articles brought for disinfection to be disinfected free of charge."

The principal Act provided that on anyone bringing clothes to be disinfected in case of infectious diseases no charge was made. He saw no necessity for a charge being made, and it might prevent people bringing these things for disinfection. It was better to let them bring them to be disinfected than not to have them disinfected, and he thought it would encourage people to bring them if they omitted this provision. He moved that the subclause be deleted.

The HOME SECRETARY: This was a permissory power which gave the local authority power to charge for disinfecting articles, and it was only fair that people who could afford it should pay. There was no justification for casting the whole onus of this upon local authorities. As a matter of fact, it was because this permissory power was not given to them that the disinfection of articles had not been carried out. It was not mandatory that they must charge, but it gave them permission to charge for the disinfecting of articles, and the placing on those people who could pay the obligation of paying for these services, because it would be necessary for the local authorities to find the disinfectants for the purpose of carrying out the work. That being so, and being satisfied that no hardship would be inflicted upon any person who would be unable to pay for it, he must decline to accept the amendment of the hon. member.

Mr. LENNON was sorry that the Minister had made up his mind to retain this clause because he said it was permissory. He thought that giving the right to do a certain thing free of charge was practically to make it compulsory to make a charge. If the clause was left there they might do it free of charge, but it did not prohibit them from making a charge if they thought it necessary.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN asked whether second-hand dealers would be compelled under the regulations to have second-hand clothing disinfected before they offered it for sale?

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes; there is a special provision made for that.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN thought that those who made a business of buying or selling second-hand clothes should be charged for having them disinfected, but in the interests of the health of the community it would be far better to have it free of charge in other cases.

Mr. MURPHY: I think all second-hand clothing could be pretty well destroyed.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: That might be, but under the barbarous system under which we were living we would have to do these things. It would be better to let every person go to any local authority and get their clothes disinfected free of charge, otherwise a lot of disease might be smothered up. He supported the amendment.

The HOME SECRETARY desired to draw the attention of hon. members to subsection (3), section 123, of the principal Act, which read as follows:—

"The local authority may provide a proper place, with all necessary apparatus and attendance, for the disinfection of bedding, clothing, or other articles which have become infected."

and then followed the words which it was proposed to omit in this amending Bill—

"and may cause any articles brought for disinfection to be disinfected free of charge."

They simply omitted "and may." It did not then make the subsection mandatory. The local authorities had declined to carry out this particular subsection for the reason that, as they said, if they did they would then be compelled practically to disinfect the articles brought by any person whether they were able to pay or not—they would have to disinfect them free of charge—but this left the discretion in their hands where they saw that a person could pay for the disinfectant. There was nothing in the amendment, because if the subclause was wiped out the local authority would not provide a disinfectant chamber.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: It was not only a question of disinfecting clothing, but a question of disinfecting premises in a good many cases. There were some instances in which it would be taken for granted that people could pay, but there were instances in which the local authority were under the impression that people could pay and practically forced them to pay, when it would be a great hardship on those people. As a general rule, the local authorities were responsible for doing this, but in a great many instances it was passed on to the Ambulance Brigade, and he was not sure that it would not be a good thing to place it altogether in the hands of the Ambulance Brigade. In a previous clause they had, for the good of the community, removed the charges which could be made on a patient, but they were going to make a charge in this instance for the disinfection of their clothing. He thought the clause should remain as it was, as it was for the good of the community that this disinfection should take place. When they remembered that it was not only clothes, but also premises, which required disinfection, it would be a mistake to repeal the subsection in the principal Act.

Mr. MANN gathered from the remarks of the Home Secretary that the local authority could recoup itself for any outlay incurred in regard to disinfecting bedding, wearing apparel, or anything else of the person whose place they had disinfected. In some cases the person might be well able to afford the expense of having the things disinfected; but supposing an epidemic broke out in a poor portion of a town, the inhabitants would not be able to pay the charge imposed by the local authorities for disinfecting. In every town of any importance the Government ought to establish isolation hospitals to send all cases of plague and contacts to in order to prevent the spread of the disease, and wherever the owner of the house was unable to stand the expense, it should be borne by the local authority and Government in equal proportions. The Government and local authority were chiefly responsible for preserving the health of the people, and it was hardly fair to compel a man to pay who could not afford it, especially when it might happen that the disinfection was not needed at all. He believed that every member of the House could give instances where people were suspected of having the plague, but when examined by some person in a sane frame of mind they were found not to be suffering from plague at all. There was a supposed case of plague at Cairns, that of a girl who was sent out to the plague hospital. The people of Cairns believed that the girl did not suffer from plague at all, and she died from sheer fright and shock on finding out where she was taken. She got up in the morning and offered to help the woman in charge to clean up the place, and when she saw where she was, in a few minutes she collapsed and died. He believed that the girl would not have died if she had not been sent out there. He was in Cairns when the plague scare was on some years ago, and he remembered that a wharf lumper who had been working extraordinarily long hours collapsed through sheer exhaustion, and he was immediately bundled off as a case of plague. If anybody had a little swelling in the groin, it was said to be a case of plague, and a lot of disinfecting was carried out that was not required. He believed with the Home Secretary in preserving the health of the people, but he did not believe in plague scares or in disinfecting before it was required. If it was shown that the owner of the house could not afford to pay for the disinfecting, then the local authority and Government should each pay half the cost.

The HOME SECRETARY: There is no doubt they will do that.

Mr. RYAN failed to follow the argument of the Home Secretary. The principal Act said that the local authority "may" cause any articles brought for disinfection to be disinfected free of charge. They had that power now, and he was curious to know why those words were being omitted. Why should not the local authorities have power to disinfect free of charge? The Home Secretary said that the local authorities would still have that power if the clause were passed, but the amending Act omitted those words.

Mr. Ryan.]

In interpreting the amending Act the court would look to see what was omitted from the principal Act, and it would see that the power of the local authority to disinfect free of charge was taken away by the amendment.

The HOME SECRETARY: Read subclause (*b*) on the next page of the Bill.

Mr. RYAN: Subclause (*b*) gave power to recover, which was quite different to giving power to charge. That subclause empowered the local authority to recover from the owner the cost of disinfecting. That was a mere process of law, and had nothing to do with the charging. The amendment was a reasonable one, and he would support it.

Mr. RYLAND believed that even if the amendment were carried the local authority would still be able to make a charge for disinfecting.

The HOME SECRETARY failed to follow the argument of the hon. member for Barcoo. Did the hon. member contend that the elimination of the words would mean that the local authority would be compelled to make a charge upon anyone who desired to have their clothes disinfected?

Mr. RYAN: Yes, I do.

The HOME SECRETARY: He could not agree with the hon. gentleman. It did not compel the local authorities to make a charge, but it would enable the council to erect the necessary disinfecting chambers for that particular purpose, which they were not willing to do at the present time. The desire of the Government was to safeguard the health of the whole community, and in doing that it was necessary to charge some persons for doing certain things. But he found that when any particular persons or any particular trade was affected, hon. members immediately jumped up and wanted to safeguard them. They had to consider the health of the community, and not of any little section of it, and that was the object that should appeal to hon. members.

Mr. RYAN: As the Home Secretary was unable to follow his argument, he would put it briefly again. In the principal Act there were certain words which said—

"The local authority may cause any articles brought for disinfection to be disinfected free of charge."

If they took those words out of the principal Act, what was the effect of it? It was that they "may" not do it free of charge.

Mr. BOUCHARD: They can still do it free of charge.

Mr. RYAN: No. The clause as printed took away the words in the principal Act which said that the local authority "may" do it free of charge, and it went on to provide that they could recover from the owner the reasonable cost of disinfecting any bedding, clothing, or other articles. The clause would take away the power of doing it free, and give the local authority power to recover any reasonable cost. He did not care whether the Home Secretary stuck to his amendment of the Act or not; this was a matter that might have to be decided in court, and they would then have an opportunity of seeing who was right.

[7.30 p.m.]

[*Mr. Ryan.*

Question—That the words proposed to be omitted (*Mr. Ryland's amendment*) stand part of the clause—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 31.

Mr.	Allan	Mr.	Gunn
,,	Appel	,,	Hodge
,,	Barnes, G. P.	,,	Hunter, D.
,,	Barnes, W. H.	,,	Keogh
,,	Bouchard	,,	Macartney
,,	Brennan	,,	Mackintosh
,,	Bridges	,,	Paget
,,	Corser	,,	Philp
,,	Cottell	,,	Roberts
,,	Cribb	,,	Somerset
,,	Denham	,,	Swayne
,,	Forrest	,,	Tolmie
,,	Forsyth	,,	Trout
,,	Fox	,,	Walker
,,	Grant	,,	Wienholt
,,	Grayson		

Tellers: Mr. Grayson and Mr. Forsyth.

NOES, 27.

Mr.	Adamson	Mr.	Mann
,,	Allen	,,	Maughan
,,	Barber	,,	May
,,	Breslin	,,	Mulcahy
,,	Collins	,,	Mullan
,,	Coyne	,,	Murphy
,,	Crawford	,,	Nevitt
,,	Ferricks	,,	O'Sullivan
,,	Foley	,,	Payne
,,	Hamilton	,,	Ryan
,,	Hardacre	,,	Ryland
,,	Hunter, J. M.	,,	Theodore
,,	Land	,,	Winstanley
,,	Lennon		

Tellers: Mr. Coyne and Mr. J. M. Hunter.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Rankin and Mr. Booker.
Noes—Mr. Blair and Mr. Lesina.

Resolved in the affirmative.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 61 put and passed.

On clause 62—"Power to declare rats, etc., to be noxious, and direct measures to be taken"—

The CHAIRMAN put the question—That the clause as read stand part of the Bill—and declared that the "Ayes" had it.

Mr. RYLAND rose to draw attention to subclause (6).

Several HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Too late! Too late!

Mr. BOUCHARD rose to a point of order. He understood the Chairman to declare the clause carried.

Mr. LAND: No. He did not do anything of the sort.

The CHAIRMAN said he did declare the clause carried, but, as there was evidently a misunderstanding, he would put the clause again. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. RYLAND again rose to refer to subclause (6).

Several HONOURABLE MEMBERS conversing in loud tones,

The CHAIRMAN requested members to keep order.

Mr. BOUCHARD asked what was the question before the Committee.

Mr. RYLAND again rose to speak.

Mr. GRAYSON rose to a point of order. What was the question before the Committee?

The CHAIRMAN: Clause 62.

Mr. GRAYSON said he understood that was passed.

Mr. RYLAND said these interruptions were putting him off the even tenor of his way. He wished to point out that the clause dealt with rats and other vermin, and insect life; so he assumed that the Commissioner would have power to deal with mosquitoes, also rats and other things in connection with the prevention of disease. Subclause (6) provided that all expenses incurred by the Commissioner should be recovered from the actual occupier as a debt. Why should the occupier pay those expenses? Under the local government laws all rates and taxes respecting property were a debt against the owner, and not against the tenant. A receipt for rates was made a legal tender for rent. This subclause was a distinct departure from that principle, which had been in operation for many years, and he failed to see any reason for the departure. In a great many cases where premises were rat infested, it was not the fault of the tenant, but was due to some structural defect in the building, either in the foundations or in the roof or ceiling, and as the landlord was responsible for those things, he should pay the expenses which such defects entailed. They might amend the clause by inserting words to the effect that where the cause of rat infection was attributable to structural defects in a building, the landlord should pay all expenses incurred; but if they did that, it was probable that the courts would have difficulty in deciding what were structural defects. He hoped that the Home Secretary, if he was the democrat he told the House he was, would stick to the old principle of making the property liable, and not let that principle go by the board.

The HOME SECRETARY confessed that he could not see what connection there was between the remarks of the hon. member for Gympie and the subject-matter of the clause, or the principle of local government which the hon. member said had been accepted. Did the hon. member contend that the owner should pay for matters which were not immediately connected with the property? What connection was there between the subject-matter of this clause and the liability of a freehold for rates? What had the destruction of vermin to do with the freehold of the land? Was the cost of preserving the health of the community to be cast upon one section only? The hon. member knew very well that that was not a principle of democracy. If the hon. member knew anything about democracy at all, he knew that in a matter which affected the health of the community everyone must bear his share of the cost.

Mr. MURPHY: But you want to make the tenant bear more than his share.

The HOME SECRETARY: The clause provided that power should be given to declare rats, mice, or other vermin, or any specified form of insect life, to be noxious; and to direct the owners and occupiers of all or any premises to adopt such measures as were prescribed in the order for the purpose of destroying such vermin or insect life, preventing their breeding, preventing their access to such premises, and destroying, removing, and preventing the accumulation of any articles, matters, or things which provided or were likely to provide harbourage or food for the same upon such premises. How could anyone say that the landlord alone should be responsible for the whole of those matters? How could it be said that he should be responsible for the filth which had been accumulated on the property by the tenant? The owner of the property had no possible opportunity of preventing the neglect which led to the accumulation of filth that was dangerous to health.

Mr. MURPHY: What about subclause (6)?

The HOME SECRETARY: Subclause (6) simply made it possible for the owner to go on to the premises and do certain work, which he would have no right or authority to do without such a provision. The Commissioner simply said, "A nuisance exists here through allowing rubbish to accumulate which is food for rats," or "You are allowing stagnant water to remain here which will breed mosquitoes." Then he said he did not care who it was who had to remedy the nuisance—whether it was the occupier or the owner. This clause simply gave the owner the right to enter into those premises if the tenant or occupier failed to carry out the work, and he could charge the cost of that work to the man who was primarily responsible for having created a nuisance which was a menace to public health. It was a question as to whether one section of the community, who happened to own the freehold of a piece of land, was to be liable for everything. That was not democracy, and everyone, so far as the health of the community was concerned, was responsible. He could not accept the amendment.

Mr. LESINA: There was a very important matter to be settled in the first part of the clause dealing with noxious life which the Commissioner might declare a menace to public health. The primary objects of the Bill were, not to conserve the interests of property-owners or tenants or anyone else, but to secure the public health. He was entirely in accord with the position taken up by the Home Secretary in regard to the matter mentioned by the hon. member for Gympie. He should like to see an amendment adopted so that the Commissioner would have power to declare rats, mice, sparrows, and, if necessary, pigeons, but sparrows particularly, or other vermin, to be noxious to public health.

The HOME SECRETARY: Sparrows would be included under "other vermin."

Mr. LESINA: Sparrows were not vermin in any sense of the term. The evil done by the sparrow was not thoroughly appreciated in this State. Take a case in New South Wales, which proved the position he took up to be a correct one. The case he referred to was an outbreak of diphtheria in a certain centre. The Health Department sent an officer up to make inquiries, and he looked about the place and wrote a report stating that he had found everything in perfect order, and he could not account for the outbreak. It was well known that the keeping of fowls or ducks in narrow backyards led to the pollution of the water supply. The sparrows were constantly dropping into the yard picking up scraps of food and getting on the ridge-capping and there depositing their dirt, which the next shower washed into the tanks, and the people drank from those tanks, which led to the production of diphtheria and other diseases. Then a consumptive man, while walking in a narrow bit of sunshine in his yard, hawked and spat about the yard, and the sparrows

dropped down and picked up the sputum before it was dry, and before long it was hanging over half a dozen clothes-lines or in the spouting, and it was subsequently washed into the tanks, with the result that consumption was spread. It was a splendid thing to learn that during the last two years no rats containing traces of bubonic plague had been discovered. They had been also fighting the bubonic flea, and they had been fighting sundry other vicious and common pests, but so far the sparrow seemed to have been neglected. It had been estimated that thousands and thousands of pounds worth of crops were destroyed in New South Wales every year by the sparrows, and it was as bad a pest as the rabbits were considered to be at one time.

Mr. HAMILTON: How would you remedy it?

Mr. LESINA: They should pay the school children so much per head for sparrows.

Mr. HAMILTON: That is no remedy.

Mr. LESINA: In some of the States they were offering the children so much per pill-box full of flies, and they got rid of millions and millions in that manner. One of the chief objects of the Bill was to provide pure food and pure water for the people. What about the people in the country? In country districts the only water supply in most cases was the water in the galvanised tanks that came off the roofs. In some cases they had underground tanks. What those underground tanks contained no one knew. For all that the people cared they might contain dead men's bones. The sparrows collected in thousands on the roofs of the school-houses, and there they were all day hopping about.

The HOME SECRETARY: What about the pigeons?

Mr. LESINA: Pigeons were not so bad, and they could be regulated more easily. He thought sparrows ought to be included in the clause as a verminous pest, and they should certainly be destroyed by every means which the Health Department could conceive as practicable of adoption, and he should like to see the word "birds" inserted after the word "mice." After that was finished with they could come to the other matter which the hon. member for Gympie had brought up.

Mr. HAMILTON quite understood the argument of the Home Secretary, and he was with the hon. gentleman so far as he believed that it should be incumbent upon tenants to keep their premises clean, and re-

[8 p.m.] move any refuse which provided food for rats and other vermin. A few weeks ago, however, a meeting had been held to consider the advisability of taking steps to eradicate mosquitoes, and it was suggested that both the inlet and the outlet to every tank should be covered with fine wire gauze. It was possible that the Commissioner might take it into his head to deal with the mosquito pest, and tenants might be called upon to pay to have such coverings put on their tanks. He held that it was the duty of the owner of the premises to pay for doing that. Why should the tenant be called upon to pay 15s. or £1 for doing it? There were many old rookeries about the city that were not fit for human habitation, and that were nothing but a harbour for rats. There were several places near Victoria Bridge which belonged to the Church of England that were nothing else than a harbour for rats, and it might be necessary to take up the floors to destroy vermin, and the occupier might be called upon to pay for that.

Mr. BOUCHARD: That was done during the last plague scare.

Mr. HAMILTON: The owner should have to incur the expense of anything like that, and the tenant should only be held responsible for keeping the premises clean. If structural alterations were necessary, undoubtedly the owner should bear the cost.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN hoped the Home Secretary would accept the amendment suggested by the hon. member for Gympie. Members on the Opposition side believed in tenants keeping their premises clean, but when it came to correcting defects in drainage or in outhouses, that should be a charge on the owner.

The HOME SECRETARY was doubtful whether the owner could recover from the occupier money expended in connection with the rectifying of drainage or in connection with structural defects. The intention was not to put any such obligation upon the occupier, but, in case there should be any ambiguity in the clause, he moved the insertion after the word "him," in line 49, of the words "not being in respect of drainage works or structural defects." The clause was only intended to deal with that which the tenant should be obliged to do for his own sake, and for the health of the community in general.

Mr. RYLAND wished to move an amendment before that, and the hon. member for Clermont also had an earlier amendment to propose.

The HOME SECRETARY: Well, mine is in. If the hon. member does not want mine, I will withdraw it and let the clause go to the vote. I am trying to meet hon. members.

Mr. LESINA said that he had suggested an amendment. He did not know whether the Home Secretary was prepared to accept it or not, or whether the Commissioner said that the clause covered sparrows, or that he did not consider them a medium for the conveyance of disease. If the clause covered sparrows, he would not move an amendment, but he could not see anything about birds that spread disease. In the Warwick district the property-owners had organised for the destruction of emus because they spread the prickly-pear pest, and about 400 were destroyed, and he had quoted a case in which it was proved that sparrows carried disease.

The HOME SECRETARY: The clause only proposed to deal with vermin which had been discovered to act as disease-carriers.

Mr. LESINA: Does not the sparrow do so?

The HOME SECRETARY: No.

Mr. LESINA: Who says so?

The HOME SECRETARY: The health authorities said that birds were not disease-carriers.

Mr. LAND: But they can create disease.

The HOME SECRETARY: No; they could not create disease. They must have the microbe of the disease, and apparently birds did not get those particular microbes. He was not expressing his own opinion, but the opinion of the health authorities. Hon. members might know more on the subject

than the health authorities, but he confessed that he did not, and he was prepared to take the dictum of the health authorities. He simply rose for the purpose of giving to the hon. member for Clermont the information which had been offered to him by the Commissioner of Public Health.

Mr. RYLAND said that this did not fully meet the case. What was a structural defect?

The HOME SECRETARY: A structural defect will be the lack of a concrete floor where it is required. That is an instance.

Mr. RYLAND: Would it be a structural defect in connection with any other floor?

The HOME SECRETARY: Of course it is. If a concrete floor under the house is a structural defect, a floor in the house will be one.

Mr. RYLAND: One of the things in connection with this clause would be water tanks. Would a deficiency in the water tanks be a structural defect?

The HOME SECRETARY: If they are defective; they are part of the building.

Mr. RYLAND: One firm had recently patented water tanks into which no frogs or mosquitoes could get.

Mr. LAND: Or out of them, either. (Laughter.)

Mr. RYLAND: Suppose a landlord had not got these water-proof and mosquito-proof tanks?

The HOME SECRETARY: The Commissioner may order the tanks to be done away with altogether if the water is laid on.

Mr. RYLAND: Here is the pamphlet dealing with these particular tanks.

The HOME SECRETARY: I will be glad if the hon. member will give me that. Is it Exhibit No. 2? (Laughter.)

Mr. RYLAND said he would let the hon. gentleman have it. Would the Commissioner accept that method of preventing mosquitoes or frogs from getting into the tanks, or would the tenant have to pay for the removal of them from the tank? These were all questions which would crop up in connection with structural defects, and where should they draw the line? They knew that mosquitoes could be destroyed, but the tenant might only be there for a week, and it was the duty of the landlord to do it. He wanted the Home Secretary to allow him to move that the following words at the end of the clause be omitted:—

"and all expenses incurred by him shall be recoverable from the actual occupier as a debt."

It would practically leave local authorities as regarded the tenant in the same position as they had always been in. They were now going to make the occupier for a day practically responsible for all this cleansing in connection with the administration of the Bill.

The HOME SECRETARY: The former part of this subclause makes provision by which, if a tenant neglects to keep his place clean, the landlord has the power to come in and make the place clean.

Mr. RYLAND: They not only did that, but said that all the expenses in connection with it must be paid by the tenant.

The HOME SECRETARY: No; in connection with structural defects or drainage the landlord has to pay it.

Mr. RYLAND: It had to be paid by the present occupier, who might only have been in a few days.

Mr. HARDACRE did not go all the way with the hon. member for Gympie, but thought there was something in what he said.

The HOME SECRETARY: If there is a lot of filth on the premises, he wants the landlord to remove it.

Mr. HARDACRE wanted the Minister to give an explanation of this matter. Was the liability cast upon the occupier in cases where the defect was one of a structural character?

The HOME SECRETARY: No; where it is the removal of rubbish or the destroying of vermin, the occupier has to pay for it; but where it is a structural defect, such as putting a new floor in, the landlord is liable.

Mr. HARDACRE: Where the occupier was involved in expense for the remedy of what was a structural defect, there was no proviso enabling him to recover from the owner. The owner could recover from the occupier for cleansing, but the occupier, if he paid first, could not recover from the owner for a structural alteration.

The HOME SECRETARY: He simply does not do it.

Mr. HARDACRE: Provided in the first instance, if the occupier did not do it, then the owner was called upon to do it. If the owner did not comply with the order, then both the owner and occupier were responsible.

The HOME SECRETARY: If the occupier carries out drainage work, or work of a structural nature, then he is not liable, and he can recover from the owner.

Mr. HARDACRE: It did not say that in the clause.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is a matter of law. He is not liable for it, and it removes any liability on his part.

Mr. HARDACRE: There was nothing in the clause to make it so. The clause provided that the occupier should be responsible in the first instance, then the owner, and then both the owner and the occupier together were equally liable. Then it went on to provide that if it were not a structural matter, the owner could call upon the occupier to pay for it, but there was nothing to enable the occupier to call upon the owner.

The HOME SECRETARY: I cannot follow the hon. gentleman. He would puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer.

Mr. HARDACRE: If it were a matter of cleansing, it was the duty of the occupier and not the owner to attend to it, but if it were a structural matter, then the owner should be liable.

The HOME SECRETARY: So the owner is liable for it.

Mr. HARDACRE: No. The clause showed that both the owner and occupier were liable.

The HOME SECRETARY: No. If the occupier acts under compulsion from the Commissioner, he can recover from the owner.

Mr. HARDACRE: Where did it say that in the clause?

The HOME SECRETARY: That is a matter of law. You do not want to put everything in the clause; if you did you would have your enactments loaded with superfluous matter.

Mr. HARDACRE: The clause protected the owner, and it should protect the occupier as well. He would like the Minister to show where the occupier could recover from the owner.

The HOME SECRETARY: If the amendment were carried, it exempted the occupier from any liability in connection with drainage works or any work which came within the definition of "structural defect." If the occupier carried out any such work under compulsion from the Commissioner, he could recover from the owner. That was a matter of law, and did not need inserting in the clause.

Mr. RYAN: The clause as it stood before the amendment was proposed was very bad indeed.

The HOME SECRETARY: It was ambiguous, I admit.

Mr. RYAN: It was not ambiguous. It was perfectly clear that as the clause stood originally the occupier was responsible for the total expense incurred. The amendment of the Home Secretary removed the difficulty a little, but it did not go far enough. Take, for example, a vermin-infested premises—a rat-infested house—a tenant might go into that house to-day, and to-morrow he might be ordered by the Commissioner to cleanse the house. The occupier was responsible for getting rid of those rats at his own expense, and that was not fair. He suggested to the Home Secretary to add to his amendment the words "or any cause for which the actual occupier is not responsible." Would the Home Secretary accept that amendment?

The HOME SECRETARY: No; I am not prepared to accept it.

Mr. RYAN: As the Home Secretary was not prepared to do what he considered fair and even justice, he moved that after the word "defects" in the Home Secretary's amendment the following words be added—namely, "or any cause for which the actual occupier is not responsible." It was an injustice to compel any occupier who might only be in the house one day to bear the whole of the expense of cleansing. It was throwing too much expense on the occupier.

The HOME SECRETARY: You want to throw the whole of the expense upon the owner.

Mr. RYAN: No. He only wanted to cast on to the owner what the owner was responsible for. The Home Secretary's amendment wanted to throw it all on to the occupier, and there was nothing democratic in that.

The HOME SECRETARY: I do not think you are a judge of democracy. (Laughter.)

Mr. RYAN: He was prepared to be judged by the wording of his amendment and let the Minister be judged by the wording of his amendment. Let the people judge, eliminating our personal opinion of each other.

The HOME SECRETARY: I am prepared to do that.

Mr. RYAN: The Home Secretary said that as a matter of law the occupier could compel the owner to be responsible, but as a matter of law he could not do any such thing.

The HOME SECRETARY: I say he can.

[*Mr. Hardacre.*

Mr. RYAN: He could not. If he could, why was it necessary to include in the clause that the owner should be able to recover from the occupier as a debt if it was not also necessary to put in that the occupier should be able to recover from [8.30 p.m.] the owner? The only thing that enabled the owner to recover as a matter of law from the occupier was the part of the clause creating a debt; and strangely enough it was silent as to the converse proposition—that the occupier should be able to recover expenses from the owner. If the occupier did not comply with the order, the owner then had to step in and do the work, and he would have to do it at his own expense as far as structural defects and drainage were concerned; but the unfortunate occupier would be liable to a penalty of £50, so perhaps it would pay him better to make the improvements at his own expense.

Mr. LESINA said that a clause in a Bill should be just as clear as a paragraph in a newspaper; but very often by the time the lawyers get through with a clause no layman could understand it. He thought it would be better not to amend the clause at all, because it was quite clear as it stood. It simply meant that the Commissioner had power to stop people from committing nuisances on their own premises. He could send an officer where there was an accumulation of rubbish, and call upon the occupier to shift the rubbish. The tenant might say he had only been there a week, and the rubbish was there before he occupied the premises, and he would not shift the rubbish. Then a similar order might be sent to the owner, who might shift the rubbish and ask the tenant to share the cost. Take another illustration. A person was looking for a house; he was glad to find one because the family were waiting to get a house to go into; and after he was there a week he found that it was full of bugs. He let a room, and the occupier of that room reported to the Commissioner that it was infested by numerous specimens of an insect described as cimex—something else; and the Commissioner made an order——

The HOME SECRETARY: No; there is another condition precedent to that. The Commissioner must be satisfied that an epidemic may be caused.

Mr. LESINA: If the Commissioner was satisfied that some disease might result, the occupier would be called upon to clean the house out. He might decline; then a notice would be served on the owner. Then the owner would go to some person who cleaned houses; and that person would introduce cyanide fumes and thus kill the pests if he did not kill the tenants. The bill of costs would be sent to the occupier, who might decline to pay. Then what would the owner do—because the tenant might have nothing, and there would be no chance of the owner recovering the cost. The clause was perfectly clear, and did not need amendment. It protected the interests of the occupier as well as the interests of the owner. Action would not be taken until an order had been published in the *Gazette*, and only in view of a possible epidemic. The presence of such a clause in the Bill would lead to both landlords and tenants keeping houses more clean. The moral effect would be good; and if he had not paired he would vote against any amendment.

Mr. RYLAND would like the Minister to accept the amendment of the hon. member for Barcoo. According to the Home Secretary's amendment, an incoming tenant would be liable to make clean premises that were allowed to get into a dirty condition by a former tenant. According to the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Barcoo, the tenant would only be liable for the dirt that he allowed to accumulate on the premises while he was the occupier, and that was a very reasonable proposition. Surely hon. members did not want to make a tenant responsible for the cost of removing filth that had been accumulated by a previous occupier of the premises!

Mr. O'SULLIVAN hoped the Home Secretary would accept the amendment, otherwise the clause would contain no provision protecting a tenant who was not responsible for the accumulation of filth on the premises he occupied.

The HOME SECRETARY: This measure is for the protection of the public, and not the owner or occupier.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: But where a tenant was not responsible for the accumulation of rubbish on the premises he occupied, he ought not to have to pay the cost of removing that rubbish. Rents were high now, and were going up out of all proportion to the value of properties, owing to the fact that there were not enough houses available to meet the demand, and it would be unfair to charge a tenant with the cost of removing rubbish for which someone else was responsible, because if told that he must either remove the rubbish or leave, he could not go away, as he might not be able to get another house. While he agreed that the public health should be protected, he did not approve of placing unnecessary burdens and expense on tenants struggling under high rents.

Mr. PETRIE: The hon. member who had just resumed his seat was so clever, and had said so much in a few minutes, that members present might do exactly as he told them, and pass the Bill right away, and get on with other business. The hon. member for Kennedy had wasted time, and as he (Mr. Petrie) did not want to waste time he should merely add that he hoped the Committee would pass the clause, and get on with the Bill.

Question—That the words proposed to be added (*Mr. Ryan's amendment*) to the amendment (*Mr. Appel's*) be so added—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 25.

Mr. Adamson	Mr. Maughan
,, Allen	,, May
,, Barber	,, Mulcahy
,, Breslin	,, Mullan
,, Collins	,, Murphy
,, Coyne	,, Nevitt
,, Ferricks	,, O'Sullivan
,, Foley	,, Payne
,, Hamilton	,, Ryan
,, Hardacre	,, Ryland
,, Land	,, Theodore
,, Lennon	,, Winstanley
,, Mann	

Tellers: Mr. Breslin and Mr. O'Sullivan.

NOES, 31.

Mr. Allan	Mr. Hodge
,, Appel	,, Hunter, D.
,, Barnes, G. P.	,, Macartney
,, Barnes, W. H.	,, Mackintosh
,, Bouchard	,, Paget
,, Brennan	,, Petrie
,, Bridges	,, Philp
,, Corser	,, Roberts
,, Cribb	,, Somerset
,, Denham	,, Swayne
,, Forrest	,, Tolmie
,, Forsyth	,, Trout
,, Fox	,, Walker
,, Grant	,, White
,, Grayson	,, Wienholt
,, Gunn	

Tellers: Mr. Gunn and Mr. Wienholt.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Blair and Mr. Lesina.
Noes—Mr. Rankin and Mr. Booker.

Resolved in the negative.

Amendment (*Mr. Appel's*) put and passed.

Mr. HARDACRE would like to insert a further amendment dealing with the difficulty which had become quite clear to many members of the Committee. The amendment just passed gave the owner power to recover from the occupier in certain cases where the expenditure was not on account of structural defects or drainage works, but it failed to provide for cases where the occupier incurred an expense in connection with structural defects or drainage works. It was a most unfair thing that the Commissioner could come along and call upon the occupier in the first instance to incur an expense on account of structural defects or drainage, and he could not recover the amount from the owner. Seeing that they had gone to the trouble of making it clear under the Bill that the owner had the right to recover from the occupier in certain instances, they ought also to make it clear that the occupier had the right to recover from the owner where it was the fault of the owner. In that clause it was provided that where the owner and occupier both failed, then the Commissioner had the power to have the work done, and the owner and occupier were equally responsible. He therefore moved that the following paragraph be inserted at the end of the clause:—

"Provided further that in complying with the order, all expenses incurred by the occupier in regard to drainage works or structural defects, or due to neglect of the owner, shall be recoverable by the occupier from the owner as a debt."

There were too kinds of duties under the Bill. It provided that where there was expenditure involved in carrying out the order of the Commissioner on the character of cleansing, that that probably was a duty devolving upon the occupier, but where there was an expenditure in regard to structural defects, it should be at the expense of the owner. In addition to the injustice of the thing, it would mean delay in carrying out the order of the Commissioner if the amendment were not accepted. If there were some defects in regard to drainage, and the Commissioner called upon the occupier to attend to the matter, the occupier would say, "Why should I improve the property?" and he would probably not do it unless he was forced. He hoped the Hon. the Minister would make some provision to meet the difficulty.

The HOME SECRETARY said he could not accept the amendment for the simple reason that it was not necessary to effect the

purposes that the hon. member apparently was driving at. It was only making the measure more cumbersome than it should be. He could only conclude from what had fallen from the hon. member that he had a most wonderful imagination. The [9 p.m.] reason those provisions were in the Bill was to give the Commissioner power to act in a case of emergency. In the event of the owner or occupier making default in complying with any of the provisions of an Order in Council, the Commissioner might give such owner or occupier notice in writing of such default, and requiring compliance within a certain specified time. The matter was entirely in the discretion of the Commissioner, who was an independent public officer, and undoubtdly in making an order for the removal of an accumulaton of filth, if that accumulation was not due to the occupier, there was not the slightest doubt that the order would be directed to the owner, and the occupier would not be concerned. The Commissioner did not care who had to do the work. It would probably be a case of dealing effectively and at once with the matter. Hon. members opposite were fighting a shadow. They were merely following out the principle they held that the landlord must do everything.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: No, no!

The HOME SECRETARY: He had already conceded that it was the duty of the owner to pay for any work which affected the property itself.

Mr. HARDACRE: No, you have not.

The HOME SECRETARY: He said he had. The hon. member imagined all kinds of things. He confessed that he could not follow him, and he often came to the conclusion that the hon. member could not follow himself.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: That shows your density.

Mr. HARDACRE: It shows your density this time, any way.

The HOME SECRETARY: They did not want to cumber the measure with useless verbiage. It was his opinion that the amendment would have no value, and it was also the opinion of the Parliamentary Draftsman, whose opinion he preferred to take in the matter before his own opinion or before the opinion of any legal member present in the Chamber. The idea was that they must make the landlord do everything. He had conceded all that was necessary, and he did not propose to cumber the measure with a lot of useless matter.

Mr. LESINA: Very likely they would not have so much discussion about that simple clause if the Home Secretary were less combative. He (Mr. Lesina) wanted to "throw oil on the troubled waters." Let them discuss the question in a rational way. If an epidemic should threaten the city, the Commissioner would take certain action to stay the epidemic, and the interests of tenants or landlords would sink into insignificance in comparison with the great need of conserving the public health.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: We don't object to that.

Mr. LESINA: They were all agreed so far. An officer of the Department of Public Health might see a cartload of decaying matter scattered about the back yard of Tom Brown, wharf labourer, occupying a tenement in South Brisbane, and the Commissioner then sent out a notice calling upon Tom Brown to shift that filth. "Perish the thought!" said Tom. He was shifting sugar on the wharf and hadn't got time. His wife was washing all day long, and she hadn't time to shift it either. Even if the health of the whole city of Brisbane were to be scattered to the four winds of heaven, he wouldn't move that cartload of muck. He shifted the responsibility to someone else, and either the Commissioner must shift it himself or call upon the owner of the cottage to do it. He called upon the owner of the cottage to do it. The owner of the cottage said, "I did not know that the filth was there. I call at the front door for my rent, and never see the back yard. But if you say I must shift it, I suppose I must." So he went away and got another man out of employment to come along with a wheelbarrow, and they shifted it. Then the owner charged Tom Brown with the cost of one man's labour for two hours with a wheelbarrow. And what was going to happen? The hon. member for Leichhardt, backed up by the hon. member for Gympie, said that the Constitution was imperilled thereby. Personal liberty and Tom Brown's property were at stake. Probably all Tom Brown's belongings would not fill a handbarrow; but if all the furniture that would go into all the handbarrows in Brisbane were in peril, was that anything compared with the public health? What was the object of the Bill if the public health was not everything? That was the view he took of the matter. Was it possible that someone was going to lose the value of a roomful of furniture because of the piling up of filth in a backyard? He did not see where this Bill was going to imperil anything of that kind. The hon. member for Leichhardt and the hon. member for Gympie, backed up by the legal knowledge which the hon. member for Barcoo had shed upon the clause, might look upon the matter differently to what he did. He was a small tenant himself, paying 12s. 6d. a week at the present time, and was, therefore, responsible under the operation of this Bill for shifting filth from the quarter in which he lived. Very possibly after those hon. members had enlightened his obtuseness on this subject he might come to see that his interest as a tenant was being threatened, but at present he could not see it.

Mr. RYLAND: If your place is dirty, why should you clean it out for the other man?

Mr. LESINA: It had been pointed out by the junior member for Rockhampton that it would not be fair to expect a tenant who had just shifted into a house to clear away the dirt left by a former tenant. Generally a careful landlord went round and looked after the place, and in many instances the dirt was swept up and taken away. The ordinarily careful landlord did that, and when this was placed on the statute-book, landlords would do it more than they had done it in the past. But if a tenant who was filthy himself took a dirty house and did not shift the rubbish, was that any reason why he should not be held amenable under this Bill, in view of an approaching epidemic? This was what appealed to him without any prejudice in the matter; if he had any prejudice at all it was in favour of the person who was a tenant. The rights of both parties were concerned, and any rights which they had became non-existent in the face of the greater right of the public health. That was why they had given the Commissioner

of Public Health such enormous powers. They had constituted him a kind of benevolent despot, which it was said was the best form of government to have.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: As long as the tenant bears the brunt.

Mr. LESINA: He had never known the tenant to bear the brunt yet, except in legal theory; but there was a great difference between legal theory and actual practice. Here was a case in point: A tenant was going to suffer, and would suffer in the face of an epidemic, because he would not sweep his backyard. He was not going to stand up for a filthy tenant who would not sweep his backyard, or for filthy landlords either; both should be punished if by their actions they imperilled the public health. He thought the Home Secretary, although he was inclined to be combative in meeting this proposition, was not prejudiced one way or the other, but was anxious to get a good Bill, adequately empowering the Commissioner, in whom he had every confidence, to act in the interests of the public health.

Mr. HARDACRE: The Minister should not "tear a passion to tatters" as he had done. (Laughter.) He was going to put a concrete case to him. Suppose an epidemic occurred through defective drainage on a property, and the Commissioner said it must be remedied on pain of a penalty of £10. Subclause (6) gave the Commissioner power to order the occupier, in the first instance, to bear an expense of £10 to improve the drain. If he failed to do it, then the Commissioner went to the landlord and told him to do it, but in the meantime there had been a delay which was unwise in the interests of the public health.

Mr. LESINA: People are dying while the delay occurs.

Mr. HARDACRE: That would be so because of the clause as it stood now.

The HOME SECRETARY: Nonsense!

Mr. HARDACRE: The Commissioner was bound to come upon the occupier in the first instance. The clause read—

"Provided that in the case of occupied premises whereof the owner is not also the actual occupier it shall be the duty of the actual occupier."

The HOME SECRETARY: I quoted subclause (4) where the Commissioner decides in the first instance whether it is to be the owner or occupier.

Mr. HARDACRE: In this subclause (6) there was a proviso which overrode all previous provisions.

Mr. RYAN: Hear, hear!

Mr. HARDACRE: That in such cases as he was speaking of now, the occupier must be called upon in the first instance to incur the expense of £10 for drainage which was going to improve the property of the owner. Then it went on to provide that if the occupier did not do that in the first instance, the Commissioner could call upon the owner, and if the owner failed to carry it out, the Commissioner could do the work, in which case the occupier and owner were liable for the expense incurred by the Commissioner in improving a drain which was going to solely improve the owner's property. He would ask the hon. member for Clermont if that was a fair thing?

Mr. LESINA: How do you suppose it will improve his property?

Mr. HARDACRE: It said that the occupier had to comply with the order, which might be an order to improve a drain.

Mr. LESINA: Leave it out—let all tenants do that without any order, in their own interests.

Mr. HARDACRE: Why should the tenant have to improve a drain? What he had had in his mind just now was the case of a drain going out into the water-table to the street—that was a bad system of drainage which might be found injurious to public health. He did not think the subclause was fair at all. The Minister had gone so far as to specially favour the landlord.

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

Mr. WIENHOLT (*Fassifern*) said he had followed the debate very closely, and he really could not see where the difference of opinion came in on either side of the House. He thought hon. members opposite were rather inconsistent in the way they had been arguing; they had always said that anything of this sort was calmly put on the landlord, but it went back on the tenant all the same. They were all of the same idea that the owner should pay for anything that benefited him, and that the tenant should pay for any nuisance that was caused by him. He could not support the amendment of the hon. member for Barcoo because it left an opening for a legal quibble. They were all trying to do the fair thing, and he thought that the Minister's amendment would cover anything in the way of a structural defect or drainage defect. It was a fair compromise.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: The Minister spoke about the urgency of doing what the Commissioner ordered. Every member of the Labour party recognised the urgency of it, but there was no urgency in recovering the cost. They all wanted to give the Commissioner plenary powers to order anything, but it was the aftermath they were looking at, and there was no particular time about the recovery of the cost. They should do as was done in the United States of America in connection with the flies and the mosquitoes. There the landlord had to provide fly-proof doors and sashes for each window to keep out the flies and mosquitoes. A tenant always expected that before he took a house in America. The Commissioner might find it necessary to have that sort of thing done in Queensland. Who would bear the expense of that?

The HOME SECRETARY: The landlord.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: That was what they wanted to provide for. The Minister provided machinery for the owner to recover from the occupier, and he should also provide machinery for the occupier to recover from the owner for anything which he did that belonged to the owner. That was the whole reason of their opposition to the clause. Those members sitting in Opposition valued health above everything. They valued health just as much as the Minister, but whereas those in opposition wanted to see the tenant protected in a legitimate way, the Minister wanted to protect vested interests first and health afterwards. He was going to fight the clause all through. The hon. member for Leichhardt, in his amendment, wanted to give the tenant equal rights with the landlord. The Minister wanted to protect the landlord along with his duty in

protecting the public health. He (Mr. O'Sullivan) wanted to see justice done to both sections, both landlord and tenant. He was surprised at hon. members sitting behind the Government supporting the Minister in this. When they were seeking the suffrages of the tenants in Brisbane they would say that they had been watching their interests, but really they were compelling the tenants to foot the bill all the time.

Mr. RYLAND: The Minister said that the landlord would be liable for anything he was responsible for, but the clause said that both the landlord and the tenant were equally liable. At the present time, if the rates on a property were not paid, the goods of the tenants could be sold, but the same Act also provided that if the tenant paid the rates he could bring the rate receipt and it would be reckoned to be a legal receipt for rent. He could deduct it from his rent. If under the Bill before the Committee a tenant spent £10 in constructing a drain and pipes, there was no machinery by which he could recover from the owner. He believed that the cleansing of the town should fall on the ratepayers, who should pay for it by striking a special rate. The hon. member for Leichhardt wanted to put the landlord and tenant on the same footing, so that they could both recover what they had expended by process of law. The Home Secretary said that what was required by the supporters of the amend-
[9.30 p.m.] ment could be done under the Local Authorities Act; but that was not so, because it was not a matter of rates, and there was no provision anywhere making receipts for expenses incurred under this clause legal tender for rent. The only protection to the tenant would be to accept the amendment of the hon. member for Leichhardt.

Question—That the words proposed to be added (*Mr. Hardacre's amendment*) be so added—put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 25.

Mr.	Adamson	Mr.	Maughan
,,	Allen	,,	May
,,	Barber	,,	Mulcahy
,,	Collins	,,	Mullan
,,	Coyne	,,	Murphy
,,	Ferricks	,,	Nevitt
,,	Foley	,,	O'Sullivan
,,	Hamilton	,,	Payne
,,	Hardacre	,,	Ryan
,,	Hunter, J. M.	,,	Ryland
,,	Land	,,	Theodore
,,	Lennon	,,	Winstanley
,,	Mann		

Tellers: Mr. Land and Mr. Payne.

NOES, 30.

Mr.	Allan	Mr.	Hodge
,,	Appel	,,	Hunter, D.
,,	Barnes, G. P.	,,	Macartney
,,	Barnes, W. H.	,,	Paget
,,	Bouchard	,,	Petrie
,,	Bridges	,,	Philp
,,	Corser	,,	Roberts
,,	Cribb	,,	Somerset
,,	Denham	,,	Swayne
,,	Forrest	,,	Thorn
,,	Forsyth	,,	Tolmie
,,	Fox	,,	Trout
,,	Grant	,,	Vowles
,,	Grayson	,,	White
,,	Gunn	,,	Wienholt

Tellers: Mr. Corser and Mr. Vowles.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Blair and Mr. Lesina.
Noes—Mr. Rankin and Mr. Booker.

Resolved in the negative.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

On clause 63—"Regulations"—

Mr. LESINA: The Home Secretary, in his speech on the second reading of the Bill, pointed out that power was given to make regulations; amongst other things, for the disinfection of second-hand wearing apparel. It was rather a sad commentary on the prosperity when there was any need for people to buy second-hand clothes here.

The HOME SECRETARY: They do.

Mr. LESINA: He knew they did; and he thought that the sale of second-hand clothes should be prohibited. Second-hand clothes were sent over from France to England, and bales of them were sent from England to Australia. A few years ago there was a good deal of discussion in Melbourne as to what should be done in regard to the second-hand clothing sent out there for sale. No doubt a certain proportion found its way to New South Wales, and some bundles might come to Brisbane. It was a very serious thing to have this germ-laden, disease-infested clothing coming out here from what port God only knew, and sold to people receiving small wages. It might be the cause of mysterious epidemics of typhoid, or skin diseases of a peculiar sort, increasing the expenses of our hospitals and other institutions. Some of that second-hand clothing might have swathed the limbs of a leper. If a person having an abrasion of the skin wore infected clothing, he might contract and disseminate leprosy or any other contagious disease. He did not know whether the Commissioner had power to order the destruction of the clothing of a person who had died from an infectious disease, but he ought to have such power, so as to prevent people giving away or selling such clothing. The sale of second-hand clothing should be stopped absolutely. Every pawnshop and every second-hand shop that opened its doors was a bad advertisement for the country. There should be no need for people to wear second-hand clothing in Queensland, and the sale of such clothing ought, in the interest of public health, to be prohibited. Some of the stuff that was hung up in those shops one could smell from the outside, and the odour of dead men and dead women that hung about those places was enough to horrify any ordinary individual. In some parts of Sydney there were whole streets devoted to the sale of second-hand clothing, dozens of shops carrying on the business of dealing in that sort of thing. Where the clothing came from or where it went to, he did not know, and one never knew when one met a person whether he was wearing any of that kind of clothing. (Laughter.) He hoped that some attempt would be made to stop the sale of second-hand clothing in this State.

Clause put and passed.

On clause 64—"Notifications of infectious disease," "Typhoid carriers," etc.—

Mr. NEVITT wished to know how the provision relating to typhoid carriers would be administered? In some cases a person carried the bacillus of typhoid about with him for twelve months, and as far as he could see there was no provision made for the maintenance of the family of a married man who was so affected while he was isolated. The Commissioner of Public Health stated in his report that numerous outbreaks of typhoid fever were recorded as

having been caused by persons who had never had the disease, and went on to say—

"A notable one is that of "Typhoid Mary," a cook, who during six years infected twenty-six persons living in six families residing in five localities in the United States."

It would have been much better for the community if that individual had been isolated the whole time, and he should like to know how the Government were going to deal with cases of that kind.

The HOME SECRETARY: A person might not be sick; he might be perfectly healthy, and yet desseminate the disease of typhoid, and such person was what was called a "typhoid carrier." Every arrangement was made in the Bill for the isolation of such persons under reasonable conditions.

Mr. NEVITT asked if the Minister would point out where that provision was found in the Bill ?

Mr. O'SULLIVAN : He had looked carefully through the Bill, but there was no provision, as far as he could see, to the effect that a man who was isolated should be recompensed. When a man was isolated under such conditions, it should be at the expense of the public, as his isolation was for the benefit of the public, and if he was a married man, his family or dependants should be maintained at the public expense during the time he was isolated. This was a matter which should be definitely dealt with in the Bill, and should not be left to regulations. Far too many things were left to regulations, and their experience was that very often measures were not administered in the spirit in which they should be. Therefore, he hoped the Minister would satisfy the Committee that what he said was contained in the Bill.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER could not discover anything in the Bill dealing with such cases as those which had been mentioned, but he had noticed that immediately a man was discovered to be a "typhoid carrier" he had to be registered. If he failed to register himself, he would suffer a penalty of £50, and would be immediately branded as an unclean person not safe to go among his fellows.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is true.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER was not saying that it was not the right thing to do, but when they branded a man unclean and that he was not fit to go among his fellows and not allowed to earn a living for himself or his family, it was time the State stepped in and made provision for his dependants. (Hear, hear!)

The HOME SECRETARY: Subclause (4) read—

"Moreover, the Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Commissioner, may from time to time order that any person found to be a typhoid carrier to the satisfaction of the Commissioner shall be isolated and detained under such conditions, in such place, and for such time as shall be named in such order."

That contained the necessary provision for compensation and was all that was required.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER did not think the Committee would be wise in passing the clause without stating how that compensation was to be provided. While speaking on that matter he would like to refer to another class of sufferer for whom no provision was made at all, and that was the consumptive. There was just as much danger to the community in allowing consumptives to be abroad and reside at hotels, boarding-houses, or private houses, and no provision was made for fumigation or isolation. They had, of course, the sanatorium, but instead of the department making provision for the accommodation of people who were found to be suffering from that disease, they had the greatest difficulty in finding room for them in a sanatorium at the present time.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is why we are enlarging it.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: That was only for really bad cases.

The HOME SECRETARY: No, no!

Mr. J. M. HUNTER wished to draw attention to the necessity of those consumptives receiving proper care, and in every case they should provide that where a medical man was called upon to attend a person suffering from consumption, he should report to the health officer just the same as in the case of typhoid.

The HOME SECRETARY: Does the hon. member mean that notification should be made of the fact that the person is suffering from phthisis?

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Yes.

The HOME SECRETARY: If the hon. member would look at page 25, subclause (4), he would find that it was there provided—

"In subsection five, the words "first three subsections hereof" are repealed and the words "this section" are inserted in lieu thereof."

If the hon. member looked at the principal Act he would find that the section would then read—

"For the purpose of this section, the disease known as phthisis shall be deemed to be an infectious disease."

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: The sooner the Government made provision for the reception of a large number of people who were suffering from that disease the better, as he was afraid they would not be able to accommodate half the people they would be called upon to provide accommodation for.

The HOME SECRETARY: We will have to do it. We are making provision for it.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER: Even accommodation could not be found for the few people now found to be suffering from consumption.

Mr. MULLAN thought subsection (4) was not satisfactory. It read—

"Moreover, the Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Commissioner, may from time to time order that any person found to be a typhoid carrier to the satisfaction of the Commissioner shall be isolated and detained under such conditions, in such place, and for such time as shall be named in such order."

Of course the Government might intend to do something for the family, but there should be some clear understanding. If a man, in the interests of the community, was detained as a typhoid carrier, they should be certain that the man's family was not to be content with an indigent allowance or a ration. They wanted some guarantee that the man's family would be kept in the same standard of comfort as if the man were allowed to continue his work.

The HOME SECRETARY: We have that power. There is no compensation. We do

not compensate a leper when we isolate him because he is a menace to the community. We might, under certain conditions, make arrangements for the maintenance of the family, and we do.

Mr. MULLAN did not care so much about the individual as about the family. As the clause stood there was nothing to prevent the Government merely guaranteeing a ration or an indigent allowance. If a man was in receipt of £3 a week, there should be some guarantee that the family would receive an amount equivalent to what he had been receiving.

Mr. MURPHY: If they do not segregate those people, dozens of other people earning £3 a week may get typhoid.

Mr. COLLINS noticed that the Commissioner's report made special mention of the typhoid carrier, and pointed out that the State, in 1910-11, lost about £8,000 from that disease. He would like to know from the Home Secretary how many typhoid carriers had been found in Queensland. If the State was losing £8,000 a year from that particular disease, then it could well afford to provide compensation in the case of men that might be isolated for the benefit of the community.

The HOME SECRETARY: The Commissioner of Public Health had informed him that so far four or five typhoid carriers had been discovered in the State. It was quite possible, however, with the power which would be vested in the Commissioner, that a larger number might be discovered.

Mr. MURPHY: You might catch some member of Parliament.

The HOME SECRETARY: It was just possible, but it was not probable. The powers to be vested in the Commissioner were sufficient to enable the necessary provision to be made, and the [10 p.m.] Commissioner pointed out to him that such isolation would only be necessary where a person was of filthy habits and would not comply with the requirements which were necessary to deal with the matter. In every case where a person would carry out the necessary instructions he would simply register his name and address, and come up at stated periods for examination.

Mr. LESINA: If a man does not give his wife typhoid, why take him away from her?

The HOME SECRETARY: He was not going to enter into a discussion on the marital relationship. The Commissioner would have full power under the clause as it was drafted to make the necessary provision for any dependants, and he could only give the Committee his assurance that that would be done, and that that was the intention of subclause (4).

Mr. COYNE: If it was the intention of the subclause to make provision for dependants of persons who were isolated, what objection was there to inserting a few words making it clear? Why not put in something to this effect—

"But if such person has a family dependent upon him (or her), the members of such family who are under the age of fourteen years shall each receive from the Health Department the sum of not less than (so much) a week."

The HOME SECRETARY: We could not put in an amendment like that, because the circumstances would vary in each case. You have my assurance that power is given, and that that power will be carried out.

Mr. RYLAND: Will you deal with it in the regulations?

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes; it can be done in the regulations.

Mr. COYNE: All the promises made by the Home Secretary would not avail, because next year they might have another Home Secretary. They had been told by one Treasurer in connection with a certain matter, "I did not promise you that, but the previous Treasurer," although it was the same Government that was in office, and the next Home Secretary might make a different arrangement altogether.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is not a question of what Home Secretary is in office, because there is the power given to the Commissioner.

Mr. COYNE: The Committee could not see where the power was given.

The HOME SECRETARY: In subclause (4) in the words—

"shall be isolated and detained under such conditions, in such place, and for such time as may be named in such order."

I have the assurance of the draftsman that that gives the necessary power.

Mr. COYNE: There was no reference to a man's dependants in the clause. Unless something was inserted in the clause, the Health Department might object to give relief to a man's family; but if the Committee made provision for it in the clause, then the course of the Health Department would be clear, and, if there was litigation, the magistrate would be able to decide the matter.

Mr. J. M. HUNTER was quite satisfied that the necessary provision was not made in the clause, and he therefore moved the addition of the following words to the clause:—

"In case of such isolation or detention proper provision shall be made for the maintenance of his dependants."

Mr. NEVITT thought there was sufficient provision in the clause, and, after the assurance which had been given by the Home Secretary, he could not see that any Government would ever be game to be a party to isolating a person for the protection of the public and then allow his family to starve.

The HOME SECRETARY: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN had much pleasure in supporting the amendment of the hon. member for Maranoa, because, to say the least, the clause was ambiguous. He could hardly understand the explanation of the Minister—that this was put in for the purpose of making provision for dependants. The clause said—

"Moreover, the Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the Commissioner, may from time to time order that any person found to be a typhoid carrier to the satisfaction of the Commissioner shall be isolated and detained under such conditions."

"Conditions" there referred to the place where he might be detained, quite independent of the provision that would be made for the maintenance of dependants, and, furthermore, the question of the maintenance of dependants was one more for the Governor in Council than the Commissioner of Public Health. The actual manner of the detention might be for him, and also the question

whether he should be detained. He thought the hon. member was well advised in moving that the words should be added, because, although it was said that no Government would be likely to cause a detention of this kind without at the same time making provision for the maintenance of the persons dependent on the person detained—nothwithstanding that, it was the duty of the House to see that there should be no doubt with regard to that matter.

Mr. COYNE: And that there should be no discrimination.

Mr. RYAN: And further, that there should be no discrimination. As he understood the hon. member for Carpentaria, he was not against the amendment.

Mr. MURPHY: A weak point in the amendment is that it says "proper provision." "Proper provision" means that the Government will give what provision they think fit.

Mr. RYAN: "Proper provision" they understood to be provision that would be sufficient to maintain the dependants of the person who was isolated in this manner.

Question—That the words proposed to be added (*Mr. J. M. Hunter's amendment*) be so added— put; and the Committee divided:—

AYES, 22.

Mr.	Adamson	Mr.	Land
,,	Allen	,,	Lennon
,,	Barber	,,	Maughan
,,	Breslin	,,	Mulcahy
,,	Collins	,,	Mullan
,,	Coyne	,,	Murphy
,,	Ferricks	,,	O'Sullivan
,,	Foley	,,	Payne
,,	Hamilton	,,	Ryan
,,	Hardacre	,,	Ryland
,,	Hunter, J. M.	,,	Winstanley

Tellers: Mr. Adamson and Mr. O'Sullivan.

NOES, 30.

Mr.	Allan	Mr.	Hunter, D.
,,	Appel	,,	Macartney
,,	Barnes, G. P.	,,	Mackintosh
,,	Barnes, W. H.	,,	Paget
,,	Bouchard	,,	Petrie
,,	Bridges	,,	Philp
,,	Corser	,,	Roberts
,,	Cribb	,,	Somerset
,,	Denham	,,	Swayne
,,	Forrest	,,	Thorn
,,	Fox	,,	Tolmie
,,	Grant	,,	Trout
,,	Grayson	,,	Vowles
,,	Gunn	,,	White
,,	Hodge	,,	Wienholt

Tellers: Mr. Allan and Mr. Swayne.

PAIRS.

Ayes—Mr. Lesina and Mr. Blair.
Noes—Mr. Booker and Mr. Rankin.

Amendment negatived.

Clause 64, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 65 to 70, inclusive, put and passed.

On clause 71—"Report on application"—

Mr. LESINA: The hon. member for Cairns had intended to move an addition to this clause, but in his absence, he (Mr. Lesina) proposed to move it and leave it in the hands of the Committee. He did not know whether the Home Secretary would agree to accept it, but, as far as he could judge, the reason for it were fairly obvious.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes; I will accept it.

Mr. LESINA moved the addition, on page 31, line 24, after "applicant," the addition of—

"Provided that if such medical officer is himself interested in the application, the Commissioner shall call upon some other medical practitioner to furnish the prescribed report."

The HOME SECRETARY: The hon. member for Cairns had submitted the intended amendment to him, pointing out, which was perfectly true, that in many cases in country towns the medical officer and the local authority was also the owner of a private hospital. To meet such cases it was necessary that the amendment should be made.

Amendment (*Mr. Lesina's*) agreed to; and clause, as amended, put and passed.

On clause 72—"Fees"—

Mr. WINSTANLEY noticed that a fee of £5 per annum was charged for a general private hospital, and £2 per annum for a lying-in hospital. He would like to know the reason for the differentiation, because in some instances the lying-in hospitals were larger than the private hospitals.

The HOME SECRETARY: The private hospital was a business concern.

Mr. LENNON: A money-making machine.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes, a money-making machine. It had to be inspected annually, and the local authority had to pay the medical practitioner making the inspection a fee for doing so. The reason for the differentiation was that the lying-in hospital was generally a small affair; a midwife might only have two or three cases in the year, and it was thought a smaller fee would cover it.

Mr. NEVITT noticed that clause 77 provided that proof that any house was used to accommodate any female during her lying-in or confinement was primâ facie evidence that it was kept as a lying-in hospital. It would be a hardship on a midwife who generally went outside to places to do her nursing if she had one case in her house and it was reckoned to be a lying-in hospital.

Mr. LESINA pointed out that in Sydney, where such an Act was in force, it was found to be urgently necessary in order to put down baby farming and abortion homes, and it was in such places as these lying-in hospitals where these things were likely to occur. In a properly regulated lying-in hospital, run by qualified nurses who called in the aid of a doctor when necessary, they were all right, and they might have fifty patients in a year. He hoped the Act would be the means of bringing all these places under supervision, as they had been allowed to go as you please in the past. Anyone could get a house now, or even a room in a house, and call it a lying-in hospital, and in some cases it was used for the purpose of procuring abortion. Although there might be individual cases of hardship, still it would be for the general good to bring them all under proper supervision. There were many institutions in Brisbane which were carried out on right lines, and the persons engaged in looking after them would be able to qualify under the Act. If they could not qualify, then the sooner they got rid of them the better. He hoped that the Health Commissioner would carry out the Act stringently, although there was not the same need for it

in Queensland as there was in Sydney. Even to-day the Commissioner of Public Health in Sydney had some difficulty in making persons comply with the Act. Only a week ago a nurse was fined for allowing a birth to take place on her premises. She pleaded not guilty and said that the woman arrived at her house at a critical stage, but that was not regarded as an excuse, and the usual penalty was inflicted. If they could do it in New South Wales, they could also do it in Queensland.

Mr. MURPHY: The hon. member for Clermont spoke from a city and big town point of view, but there were many sparsely populated centres of Queensland where a woman had to travel many miles to a neighbour for her confinement. Clause 77 read—

"Proof that any house, apartment, or premises was or were let, hired, engaged, or used by any person for the accommodation of a female during her lying-in or confinement shall be primâ facie evidence that such house, apartment, or premises is or are kept as a lying-in hospital, and it shall not be necessary in any case to prove the letting, hiring, or engagement, or use on more than one occasion."

They should deal with the Bill from a Queensland standpoint, and not from a city standpoint. They certainly ought to protect the women who from pure neighbourly and kindly feeling undertook to take women into their places for their confinement.

The HOME SECRETARY: They want to be paid for their kindness, as a rule.

Mr. MURPHY: He had lived in the Northern part of Queensland for many years, and he knew there were many cases where women requiring accommodation were taken in purely from a neighbourly feeling; but under clause 77 any police-
[10.30 p.m.] man who happened to have anything against anyone who took in a woman under those circumstances might take proceedings against her. He was sure that the Hon. the Minister and the Commissioner wanted to protect the health of the community, without inflicting hardship on people living in the outside districts. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. J. M. HUNTER hoped the Minister would accept the suggestion made with respect to places where relatives and friends were accommodated instead of going to lying-in hospitals. He would like to see the annual fee reduced above a given number, and no charge at all under that number. There were districts where women of experience took cases of this kind occasionally; and he did not think their houses should be classed as lying-in hospitals. They were public benefactors, and there should be no penalty attaching to them.

Mr. LENNON thought the case might be met when they came to clause 77 by providing that a place should not be regarded as a lying-in hospital unless so used on more than three occasions. That would meet such cases as those referred to by the hon. member for Croydon, where people were merely performing kindly acts.

Mr. PAYNE: While he thought that it was wise to provide that the Commissioner should have power to examine any place of the character of a lying-in hospital, if the clause was carried in its present form it would cause hardship in country districts. He supposed the population of Longreach, for instance, was 3,000 or 4,000; and he did not think there was a private hospital there, bar the doctor's, that could be called an up-to-date lying-in hospital. Young women generally came in to their mothers' places so as to be near the doctor until they got over their trouble.

The HOME SECRETARY said he would be willing to add words in clause 77 making the provision not apply to places not used for gain.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. WINSTANLEY thought the Minister might accept an amendment inserting the words "not exceeding," so that the annual fee would not exceed £2. Where there was only one case during the year, it was not a hospital in any shape or form.

Mr. RYLAND thought £2 was too much.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: No, no!

The HOME SECRETARY said this was an annual fee. What they wanted was to see that these places were kept in a proper condition.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 73 and 74 put and passed.

On clause 75—"Applicant to reside, etc."—

The HOME SECRETARY moved the omission of "continuously reside on the premises and," lines 50 and 51, with the view of inserting after line 52—

"Such registered person, if a registered nurse, shall continuously reside on the premises; and, if a medical practitioner, shall either personally continuously so reside, or some registered nurse or medical practitioner appointed by him in that behalf, and whose name is notified to the local authority, shall continuously so reside."

It had been pointed out that they would inflict hardship upon doctors who were proprietors of large hospitals if they were compelled to reside personally on the premises, and that it would be sufficient protection if either a registered nurse or a medical man was appointed by the proprietor to reside on the premises.

Amendment agreed to; and clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 76—"Inspection"—put and passed.

On clause 77—"Evidence"—

The HOME SECRETARY moved that after the word "used" on line 41 there be inserted the words "for gain." That would limit the application of the section to premises which were used as a lying-in hospital for the purpose of gain, and would exclude the premises of a person who was merely assisting a neighbour or a friend.

Mr. LENNON: Although no doubt the amendment was proposed with very good intentions, it hardly met the case which had been cited by the hon. member for Croydon and the hon. member for Maranoa—namely, the case in which a woman in a neighbourly spirit placed a room at the disposal of a woman who required assistance. Such cases were very common in remote parts of the State, and it would be a great hardship if a person was charged £2 for doing a friendly or motherly act of that kind.

The HOME SECRETARY: The fee will only be paid in cases where the houses are so used for the purpose of gain.

Mr. LENNON: In any case he thought the suggestion which had been made by the hon. member for Charters Towers was preferable.

Mr. LESINA: The clause as it stood was a very good provision, but, as had been pointed out, it would operate unjustly in certain cases. There were plenty of districts where nurses were as few and far between as facts in a financial statement, and it would be impossible to carry out the provisions of the Bill in districts remote from railways or large centres, where men and women were engaged in pioneering work, and where children were born just the same as in cities. After this Bill was passed a woman who gave assistance to a friend in her hour of trouble would be amenable to the provisions of the measure.

The HOME SECRETARY: No; she will not, because she does not use her house for the purpose of gain.

Mr. LESINA: Did the hon. gentleman think the insertion of the words "for gain" would meet the difficulty?

The HOME SECRETARY: I submitted the amendment to the Parliamentary Draftsman, and he thinks it meets the case.

Mr. MULLAN said in Queensland to-day there were scores of nurses who would be disqualified under that Bill from taking women into their homes for confinement. There were scores of places in Queensland where there were no certificated nurses, and he thought existing rights should be maintained. If that were done, the difficulty would be overcome.

The HOME SECRETARY: I am quite willing to meet that difficulty.

Mr. MULLAN: If that were done there would be no difficulty in connection with lying-in hospitals.

The House resumed. The CHAIRMAN reported progress; and the Committee obtained leave to sit again on Tuesday next.

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