

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**TUESDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER 1912**

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

TUESDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER, 1912.

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

## MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

ASSENT.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from His Excellency the Governor intimating his assent to this Bill.

## MARYBOROUGH ELECTION PETITION.

REPORT OF ELECTIONS TRIBUNAL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of the following letter from the Elections Judge:—

"Judges' Chambers, Supreme Court,  
Brisbane, 23rd September, 1912.

"To the Honourable the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland.

"Mr. Speaker,—The petition of Thomas Edward Thomas, Thomas John O'Brien, and Thomas O'Brien, all of Maryborough, presented the second day of July last, complaining of the undue election and return of Edward Bernard Cresset Corser as a member to serve in the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of Maryborough, and claiming that it might be determined that the said Edward Bernard Cresset Corser was not duly elected and returned, and that the election and return of the said Edward Bernard Cresset Corser was null and void, and that William Mitchell, a candidate for election at the said election, was duly elected and ought to have been returned to serve as member for the said electoral district in this present Parliament, was tried before the Elections Tribunal on the tenth, eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first days of September instant.

"The assessors chosen by the parties and sworn were William Lennon, Herbert Fremont Hardacre, Donald Gunn, Godfrey Morgan, John Payne, and Harry Frederick Walker, members of the Legislative Assembly.

"The tribunal determined that the election was void, and in accordance with that determination I declared the election void.

"The assessors present were divided on the question of costs, and I, as Elections Judge, determined that the petitioners and respondents should each pay their own costs, and that the sum of one hundred pounds paid into court with the petition should be restored to the petitioners, and I ordered and directed accordingly.

"All which I hereby certify.

"A copy of the evidence given at the trial accompanies this certificate.

"C. E. CHUBB, Elections Judge."

The PREMIER (Hon. D. F. Denham, *Oxley*): I move that the certificate of the Elections Judge declaring void the election of Edward Bernard Cresset Corser for the electoral district of Maryborough, be entered in the journals of the House, and that the Speaker issue a writ for the election of a member to serve in this House for the said electoral district.

Mr. RYAN: When is it proposed to hold the election?

Question put and passed.

The PREMIER: I move that the evidence taken in the case be printed.

Question put and passed.

## QUESTIONS.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT.

Mr. THEODORE (*Chillagoe*) asked the Treasurer, without notice—

"Can he give any idea to the House when we may expect the report of the Auditor-General for this year."

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

"This is a question which should be properly put to the Chief Secretary. I feel sure if the question is put, the Chief Secretary will be able to answer it."

Mr. THEODORE: In accordance with the suggestion, I ask the Chief Secretary the question.

The PREMIER: Anticipating such an inquiry, I wrote to the Auditor-General on Thursday last, and have a reply to the effect that it will be in a fortnight from that date.

## INCREASED COST OF LIVING.

Mr. FOLEY (*Mundingburra*) for Mr. Adamson, asked the Chief Secretary—

"1. Seeing that the report of the commission on the cost of living in New Zealand states that the Merchants' Association by the mutual agreements arranged by the members of that association, and by articles being sold under weight, have increased the cost of living in the Dominion, will he, now, institute an inquiry into the causes of the increased cost of living in Queensland, and also into the doings of the Traders' Associations in this State?

"2. Seeing that the same commission reports that rents are exorbitantly high because of the actions of land speculators and the agreements arranged by those who trade in building materials, will he, now, advise the Government to purchase suitable areas of land in or within reasonable distance from our cities and towns, with the view of providing land at moderate prices for those who wish to build houses for themselves; further, will he, now, advise the Government to establish State sawmills to counteract the powers of the timber rings in this State in raising the price of timber for house-building purposes?"

The PREMIER replied—

"I have nothing to add to the answers I gave to these questions when put in another form by the hon. member on the 20th of last month."

## STATISTICS OF LATE LOAN.

Mr. HUXHAM (*Buranda*) asked the Treasurer—

"1. What is the net amount realised on the last £2,000,000 loan raised in London?"

"2. What were the respective amounts taken up—(a) By the underwriters; (b) by the general public?"

"3. What were the conditions governing the underwriting, and do the conditions render it obligatory for the underwriters to take up the loan at the price fixed by the Government?"

"4. What are the rates of brokerage or commission, etc., charged by the underwriters?"

"5. Are there charges on the loan other than the above; if so—(a) To whom paid; (b) for what services; (c) the rate paid; (d) the amount paid?"

The TREASURER replied—

"1. Approximately £1,870,000. No account sales are yet to hand.

"2. (a) 89 per cent.; (b) 11 per cent.

"3. The underwriters guarantee the full amount of the loan at the issue price—in this instance £96 per cent., and take up the balance not applied for by the general public.

"4. Underwriting charges, £1 5s. per cent."

"5.—

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
Bank of England	For performing all the duties involved in placing the loan on the market	Per cent. 5s. 0d.	£ 5,000
Commissioners of Inland Revenue	Stamp duty ...	12s. 6d.	12,500
Brokers ... Newspapers &c.	Brokerage ... Advertising, &c. ...	5s. 0d. —	Not yet known

## MALANDA-MILLAA MILLAA RAILWAY EXTENSION.

Mr. GILLIES (*Eacham*) asked the Secretary for Railways—

"As the Cabinet have departed from their determination, and are going on with the construction of the Cloncurry-Mount Cuthbert Railway, will he urge the Cabinet to do likewise with the Malanda-Millaa Millaa extension, and thereby save some hundreds of bonâ fide settlers from utter ruination?"

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

"The hon. member is basing his question upon an assumption which is incorrect."

## LOCAL AUTHORITIES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

## INITIATION.

On the motion of the HOME SECRETARY (Hon. J. G. Appel, *Albert*), it was resolved—

"That the House will, at its next sitting, resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider of the desirableness

of introducing a Bill to amend the Local Authorities Acts, 1902-1910, the Granville and Burnett Bridges Act of 1889, and the Steam Rollers Regulation Act of 1892, and to repeal the Stage Carriages Act of 1835, certain sections of the Carriers Act of 1866, and the Carriers Act of 1866 Amendment Act."

## PAPER.

The following paper, laid on the table, was ordered to be printed:—

Additional regulation for examination of candidates for admission to the classified divisions of the public service.

## SUPPLY.

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT—DEBATE IN COMMITTEE.

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

Question—That there be granted to His Majesty, for the service of the year 1912-13, a sum not exceeding £300, to defray the salary of the aide-de-camp to His Excellency the Governor—stated.

Mr. RYAN (*Barcoo*), who was received with Opposition "Hear, hears!" said: Since the Committee last met, I have had the opportunity of going through the somewhat voluminous documents which were presented to us when the Treasurer read his Financial Statement to the Committee, and moved the motion which is now before the Committee. I regret that hon. members, in discussing the Financial Statement, had not the opportunity of first perusing the Auditor-General's report. I know there are difficulties in that respect, and I believe these difficulties are not confined to Queensland only—I believe they are experienced in other States. But certain suggestions were made in the Auditor-General's report of last year, and I think it is fitting that in addressing myself to the motion now before the Committee I should draw the attention of the Committee to the suggestions there made, which have not been carried out. The Auditor-General is an officer of Parliament. Parliament naturally looks to the Auditor-General for suggestions as to improvements that the House will see carried out. I particularly refer to the suggestion made in the Auditor-General's report last year, where he says—

"6. As the various Audit Acts are silent on the question, it is, in my opinion, a matter of financial policy for the Government to determine whether the Honourable the Treasurer should, at the close of a prosperous year—

(a) Anticipate and pass through the Treasury books such sums as have been actually paid away during June in all parts of the State, and thereby strengthen what may be an ensuing weak year's revenue; or

(b) By ignoring these outstanding liabilities be compelled to transfer a larger surplus from consolidated revenue to the public debt reduction fund—as provided for in section 2 of the Audit Act Amendment Act of 1895.

"7. I have suggested to the Government an amendment of the Audit Act so as to require the Treasury books to be finally closed on the

30th June of each year, leaving any outstanding expenditure to be charged to the appropriation for such outstanding on the next year's Estimates, but, so far, I have not seen any sign of the suggestion being adopted. It would certainly simplify the Treasury bookkeeping, and also would assist honourable members in arriving at what had actually been charged to each year's appropriation—at present a somewhat difficult matter for anyone not conversant with the existing system."

I have previously referred during the present session to this matter, and the Treasurer then said, I think, that the matter would be looked into; but, so far, I shall content myself by again drawing the attention of the Government to the suggestion contained here, in the hope that whoever follows me, or some speaker on the front Treasury bench, will deal with the matter I have now raised. A perusal of the Financial Statement shows certain facts, which I think will be clear and obvious to everyone with regard to the expenditure which the Government have made during last year, and the expenditure that they propose during the current year. Now, an examination of the figures and the tables show me that from loan fund last financial year there was spent a sum of £1,995,301. During this year the expenditure is estimated at £3,324,248, a rise of £1,328,947. I find that in expenditure from revenue there has been an increase of £650,956. Adding the two together, the total expenditure from revenue and loan this year will be £9,289,940. And the estimates for next year show a proposed expenditure from revenue of £6,262,633, and from loan of £2,835,250. No doubt there is a proposed reduction of expenditure from loan fund there, but during this year, in March last, the Government will have to make repayment of £1,000,000 borrowed from the Commonwealth Government, and there are £600,000 falling due in Treasury bills in January next, so the total amount to be paid in the current year will be £10,697,883.

Mr. FORSYTH: You have missed the half of it.

Mr. RYAN: It is obvious that there is to be a large increase in expenditure, or in money paid away by the State over the amount paid away last year.

Mr. FORSYTH: There is the loan of £1,400,000 odd to be met.

Mr. RYAN: No doubt the hon. gentleman will deliver a very scathing criticism of the statement. Judging by his interjections, they will be even more severe than my remarks. I notice that the interest on the public debt in 1911-12 was £1,724,304; for 1912-13 it is estimated that it will be £1,869,830, or a jump up in the interest bill of £145,526. These figures are very striking, and they are figures that will make, not only members of this Committee, but also the electors of Queensland, think very deeply. I do not think the Government have given that consideration to the matter of finance which they should have given to that important matter. If the Government had not received that £1,000,000 from the Commonwealth Government in March last they would have been £338,000 behind at the end of June. That £1,000,000 was really a godsend to the Government.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: They would have obtained it elsewhere.

Mr. RYAN: If they had got it elsewhere, it would have been in such a way that the whole of the public would have seen the position. But they were unable to do so, as was proved by the legislation brought down when we first met, as was proved by the Bill sent home on the 7th June. It was proved that the limit of interest would require to be raised from  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. to 4 per cent. to enable them to raise the money. Fortunately, however, Mr. Fisher stepped in and offered the Government £1,000,000 at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., and we have only to examine the Financial Statement to see what a godsend it was to the State of Queensland. But while it was a godsend then, it must not be forgotten that it has to be paid back in March next.

Mr. MURPHY: And we cannot float another loan to repay it.

Mr. RYAN: So much the worse for Queensland. This statement is particularly silent as to how this money is to be raised. There is an estimate of certain revenue, but where is the loan money to come from? I contend that the Treasurer has utterly failed to suggest how this money is to be provided. He does so with regard to the £600,000 in Treasury bills; he says the Government are going to ask the sanction of Parliament to raise the interest on them from  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. to 4 per cent., in the hope of inducing those who now hold those Treasury bills to re-invest. It may be that if the Government get that authority the present holders will take them up; but what about—

The TREASURER: You have overlooked the fact that applications are always being made.

Mr. RYAN: I am going to refer to that in another way. That only refers to the £600,000, if the Government succeed in their desire; but what about the £1,000,000 lent by the Commonwealth? What about the £2,835,250 they are proposing to spend from loan fund? And with regard to revenue, there is an estimated revenue of £6,268,302, and an estimate of expenditure from that amount of £6,262,633. If the policy of continuing the construction of lines passed by Parliament is not proceeded with, it is open to very grave doubt if the Government will be able to raise this revenue at all, particularly from railways. Last year, in his Financial Statement, the Hon. the Treasurer overestimated the revenue from railways by £15,071.

The TREASURER: It was not very much, surely.

Mr. RYAN: It was not very much; it was £15,071.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: The strike was responsible for it.

Mr. RYAN: The strike was not responsible for that. A great deal of the revenue drawn from the railways has come from the carriage of material for the construction of new lines. Take the Blackall-Windorah extension, for instance. There is the carriage of sleepers from Clermont.

The PREMIER: The Commissioner has estimated the whole of that in his revenue.

Mr. RYAN: But suppose the construction of these lines is stopped.

The PREMIER: They are not going to be stopped.

Mr. RYAN: I propose to deal with that later on, and members on that side will agree with me that the Government have broken faith in regard to their railway policy and

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deceived the electors. There are members on the other side who were returned to support the Government on account of promises to proceed with certain lines; and as soon as they got in they stopped those lines. I propose to deal more fully with that matter at a later stage, and I trust there will be some honest criticism from the other side with regard to the Government's breach of faith in regard to the matter. I regret that there is only one hour allowed for discussing an important statement of this kind, and I propose to deal as briefly as I can with some of the matters referred to by the Treasurer. I propose to take them in the order in which the hon. gentleman took them. He deals first with the Savings Banks, and he shows on page 6 of the Statement that from 1902-3 up till the present time there has been an increase in the number of depositors and in the amount deposited. He says—

“The number of depositors had increased in 1911-12 to 139,091 persons, the amounts to their credit being £7,342,811, an average of £52 15s. 9d. for each depositor, the year 1911-12 showing an increase of 74 per cent. in depositors and 95 per cent. in the amount of deposits over the year 1902-3. Truly this comparison discloses the highly satisfactory financial position of a large number of our people.”

With all due respect to the hon. gentleman I say it proves no such thing. Since the year referred to, the amount which depositors may place in the Savings Bank at interest has been increased to £500, and a large number of offices have been opened. Why?

The TREASURER: To try to block the friends with whom you are associated.

Mr. RYAN: I am glad the hon. gentleman has made that admission. If the hon. gentleman had not been moved by the action of the Commonwealth, would he have done his duty? The hon. gentleman has been candid in making the admission he just made, but if the people understand the position they will thank the Commonwealth Government for having driven him to do a duty which he ought to have done long ago.

The TREASURER: That is not correct.

Mr. RYAN: The vested interests of the other banks prevented the State Savings Bank from taking action long ago; and but for the action of the Commonwealth Government the State Savings Bank [4 p.m.] would not now be receiving deposits up to £500, and offices could not have been opened in places where they have since been opened, and, instead of there having been an encroachment by the Commonwealth Government in this matter, it has been a case of the Commonwealth Government stirring up the State Government to do their duty. I am sorry to say that the only motive that the hon. gentleman can give this afternoon for doing his plain duty to the people of Queensland—the only motive he can suggest is that he wanted to block the National Parliament of Australia.

The TREASURER: No. They wanted to kick us out and see us stranded, but we were too smart for them. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. RYAN: The hon. gentleman is beginning to feel warm, because I am bringing home some home thrusts. As my time is short I must proceed on to the next matter. The next question mentioned in the State-

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ment is that of land settlement. The Government congratulate themselves on the progress that has been made in land settlement. I have no hesitation in saying that the Government are greatly to blame for not proceeding faster with land settlement than they are doing.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: If you go through the Western parts of Queensland, from the New South Wales border to the Gulf of Carpentaria, you will find throughout the whole district that there is a keen demand for land.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: There is a keen demand for land from natives of Queensland—from sons of the soil and those who come there from the other States, and there is not sufficient land available for them. (Hear, hear!) They cannot get the land that they require.

Mr. HAMILTON: Nor one-tenth of it.

Mr. RYAN: Nor one-tenth of it, as my colleague says. There is another important question in connection with this matter. When I went through my electorate during the election I asked the electors if they did not believe in the Government land policy then they should send me back with a bigger majority, and a substantially bigger majority, than I had before, because I pointed out that if they did not do that then the Government would turn round and say, “Your own electors do not believe what you say on this land question.” The result of the election was that I got a bigger majority than ever. The people in my electorate considered that the Government was not doing its duty with regard to land settlement, and the opinion of my electors is the opinion of every electorate represented by a Western man in Queensland.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: It is not only the Western electorates that hold these opinions, but they are held by other electorates as well. We have suggested to the Government that they should survey resumptions before they fall in, so that as soon as they fall in they could be made available for selection. But instead of doing that the Government do not even survey the resumptions after they have fallen in, and there is a long delay. If you write to the Lands Department, which is presided over by the Minister for Lands, you get replies to the effect that surveyors are not available. I remember that the hon. member for Townsville, who is not in the House at present, used to say that where there was money there should be surveyors, and he said that the Government should not hesitate to spend money in order to get surveyors. The hon. member for Townsville pointed out, and other hon. members pointed out, that the Malay States were really taking the surveyors from Queensland because they offered good salaries, and if the Queensland Government offered good salaries they could get surveyors, and if they genuinely made for throwing open land for settlement there would be far more land settlement than there is at present.

Mr. WIENHOLT: How can you survey land before it is resumed?

Mr. RYAN: They know what land they are going to resume, and they can proceed

with the survey of it before it actually falls in. It would prevent the delay in land settlement that now obtains.

Mr. HAMILTON: The Act allows it to be done.

Mr. RYAN: There is an important matter I desire to refer to in this connection, and that is that in many cases that land is thrown open and a great many of those desirous of taking up land have not got the opportunity given them of doing so. An instance happened at Windorah where land was thrown open to selection. A large number intended to apply for portions, and they went out with cheques which they were told would be accepted, but which would afterwards have been refused.

Mr. MACROSSAN: That is not true.

Mr. RYAN: It is true.

Mr. MACROSSAN: I was in the case myself.

Mr. RYAN: So was I in the case.

Mr. MACROSSAN: I got the finding of the judge in my favour, at any rate.

Mr. RYAN: Let me tell hon. members here what the finding of the judge was in that matter. I refer to it here because I wish to know if the Government are going to carry out the recommendation made by the judge on that occasion. The judge of the land court was Mr. Heeney, and he presided over the cases that were heard there. He said that he would recommend that in any future proclamation it should be stated whether cheques would be accepted or not. I bring up that matter for the purpose of asking whether the Government will accept the recommendation thrown out by the judge of the Land Court. I think it is only right that it should be stated whether cash or cheques will be accepted. I can assure hon. gentlemen on the front Treasury bench that there is a strong feeling in the Western country on this matter, because cheques are sometimes accepted and sometimes they are not.

Mr. PAYNE: I never knew cheques to be refused, except on this occasion—never.

Mr. RYAN: To pass on to the mining industry, I notice that the Treasurer says here—

“The features that latterly have characterised the mining industry remain unaltered.”

That is not much of a sign of progress. Evidently the policy of the Government has not done much to stimulate the mining industry in Queensland.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: They have started it.

Mr. RYAN: I proceed with that passing remark to the pastoral industry. With regard to the pastoral industry, the Minister points out, amongst other things, that the number of cattle in this State have decreased. There is a sentence here that particularly caught my eye when I was reading through the Statement. It will be found on page 11, and I would like to quote it—

“On 1st January last the State held 618,954 horses, an increase of 4.23 per cent. over the year before; of sheep, 20,740,981, the addition equalling 2.01 per cent. only; while our cattle diminished to 5,073,201, a proportionate reduction of 1.14 per cent. Pigs, on the other hand, were added to by 14.25 per cent., the

number being 173,902; and it would seem that this profitable stock is now receiving more attention than formerly. With these figures and the opinion expressed by some that the meatworks are not able to handle the available output, the operations in that respect will be interesting.”

It is the last three lines that I desire to draw attention to—

“With these figures and the opinion expressed by some that the meatworks are not able to handle the available output, the operations in that respect will be interesting.”

What do those lines refer to? Do they refer to the fact that the American meat trust is about to start work in Queensland? The Treasurer need not laugh.

The TREASURER: I wondered what you were straining at.

Mr. RYAN: The Statement says that the opinion is expressed that the meatworks are not able to handle the available output. Are they friends of the American meat combine to express that opinion?

Mr. TROUT: A number of squatters have said so themselves.

Mr. RYAN: Does the hon. member for Enoggera favour the American meat trust?

Mr. TROUT: I am not talking about the American meat trust at all.

Mr. RYAN: The hon. member interjected, and I would like to know what his views are with regard to the American meat combine.

The TREASURER: Is there not a Meat Commission sitting just now?

Mr. RYAN: There is a Meat Commission sitting just now, and I dare say that the hon. gentleman will not take much notice of the recommendations of the commission unless they are in favour of the establishment of the meat trust. That is a question that should engage the attention of this House and the people of Australia generally, especially when we find not only in this State, but in other States, that there are motions introduced to try to prevent the American meat trust from getting a firm hold in Australia. Yet we have no reference to that matter in this Statement, although it is a proper place for us to look for such a reference in dealing with the matter of meatworks. It shows that the Government are not aware of the apprehension that exists in the minds of the people of Queensland on the matter. The Government are silent on this matter, and clearly from their silence I can only come to one conclusion, and that is, that the hon. gentlemen on the front Treasury bench plainly want the meat trust established here. The Government may have very good reasons for wishing that. Their reasons may be valid and good, and it may be a good thing for Queensland, and I will be satisfied if the people of Queensland know what attitude the Government is taking in regard to that matter. The next subject we come to is that of agriculture. In looking at the Agricultural Department we would expect to see something showing that the State was making some advance. We have had criticisms which have been made from this side of the House by the hon. member for Maranoa and others, and if those criticisms had been taken notice

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of and their suggestions carried out in the past, then the agricultural industry in Queensland would be flourishing.

The TREASURER: You are expert agriculturists over there.

Mr. RYAN: We are not all expert. I was referring to the hon. member for Maranoa, and to the hon. member for Eacham, and others. At all events, they are practical men, and it is the criticisms and suggestions of practical men that I now refer to. I say that if these suggestions had been carried out the agricultural industry in Queensland would have prospered, but instead of that, what do we find? We find that there was a reduction in the total area under cultivation in 1911 of 15,026 acres as compared with the previous year. Just fancy a falling off in the area under cultivation, and what compensating advantage does the hon. gentleman take refuge in in this Statement. He points out here that there was a falling off in the total acreage cultivated, but he points out that there has been an increase in the number of pumpkins and melons that were grown during the year. (Laughter.) He also points out that the price of potatoes has gone up, and is likely to continue to do so.

Mr. HAMILTON: Irish blight.

Mr. RYAN: Probably caused by the Irish blight.

The TREASURER: You laugh at the producer, and you laugh at the pumpkins that are produced, but I can tell you that pumpkins are a very valuable asset so far as Queensland is concerned.

Mr. RYAN: I do not desire to laugh at the pumpkins and melons at all, but I desire to point out that the total acreage under cultivation last year was 15,000 acres less than the previous year, and what compensating advantage have we for that? What remains to compensate for that? The Treasurer points out that the number of pumpkins and melons have increased, and the price of potatoes has gone up. We quite understand that the Treasurer is in a position to know that the price of potatoes has gone up, and he is also in a position to know, as a middleman, the same as some other hon. members over there, that they are likely to keep up the price of potatoes.

The TREASURER: That is not worthy of the hon. member.

Mr. RYAN: It is an interesting piece of information to get, but I refer to it more to show that the hon. gentleman has not grappled with the subject as he ought to have done.

The TREASURER: You know nothing about it.

Mr. RYAN: I know a very good deal about it. I know that that sort of information put before the people of Queensland is not going to convince them that the Government is doing anything to encourage agriculture in this State.

The TREASURER: What about the increase in the fruitgrowing?

Mr. RYAN: I am very pleased to see the increase in the fruitgrowing, but the Government should adopt a proper policy in regard to agriculture, and have an increase in agriculture as well as in the production of fruit. There is not one word of suggestion as to how the agricultural industry in Queensland is going to be improved.

Mr. BOOKER: Your party are going to reduce the area under cultivation next year.

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Mr. RYAN: The hon. gentleman is making a mistake there. How does the hon. gentleman make out that this party is going to reduce the area under cultivation next year?

Mr. BOOKER: In the sugar industry. There will be a serious reduction in the area next year.

(OPPOSITION MEMBERS dissenting.)

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: It is the black labour cry all over again.

Mr. RYAN: There is a reference in the Statement to the sugar industry, and perhaps I had better quote it—

“The position in the area devoted to sugar-cane is one of great uncertainty, and there are signs that, unless there is early alleviation, the conditions imposed upon the industry, if no satisfactory set-off is given, will so far affect the campaign of 1913 that the production of sugar in this State will be far below the requirements of Australia, and that many areas now under cane will be devoted to other products.”

What is all this trouble about? The trouble of paying 1s. an hour to those persons who work in the canefields. The hon. members for Chillagoe and Herbert have already pointed out that we favour the equalisation of the bounty and excise, and I trust that that amendment will be brought about. There are, however, certain hon. members who have introduced this matter here in order to gain some political capital, and in order to prejudice people against the Commonwealth Government. I note that there are to be increases in the salaries of certain public servants, principally in the salaries of members of the Police Force, and I may say right here that this party for years has advocated increases to the rank and file of the Police Force, and it is not going to alter that attitude now. We are very pleased to see that those increases have been granted to the rank and file. But there is one increase I would like to refer to, and that is the one in the salary of the Commissioner for Police from £800 to £1,000. And are there not some allowances?

The TREASURER: You say you know all about it.

Mr. RYAN: I can certainly see from the Estimates themselves that there is to be an increase from £800 to £1,000. This, to my mind, has a sort of political significance, and I shall have the opportunity of dealing with that when these particular Estimates are before the House. I only desire to say, in the meantime, that I do not approve of that particular increase, especially under the circumstances under which it was granted. It was granted, I suppose, as a sort of reward for services rendered against the workers of this State, particularly in the metropolitan area.

The TREASURER: Should you not say for the protection of the workers of the State?

Mr. RYAN: The hon. gentleman tries to pose as a humorist. There is a statement made here that has caught my eye, and which also caught my ear when the hon. member was reading his Financial Statement; it was that hon. members would note from the study of the Estimates that increases throughout the public service, with the exception of those for police officers, were limited to those in receipt of a

salary of less than £400 per annum. I ask if that is correct?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. RYAN: Those increases are only provided for officers who receive less than £400 per annum, with the exception of the police. That is a plain statement, and hon. members are invited to study the details of the Estimates. Hon. members reading that would take it for granted that no public servant receiving £400 per annum or over, with the exception of the police, has had his salary increased.

The TREASURER: Quite correct.

Mr. RYAN: I would like information then as to certain items. First, there is the Commissioner for Railways. I see by the schedule that the amount required for this year is £2,000, against £1,750 last year.

The PREMIER: A contract entered into many months ago.

Mr. RYAN: The only chance we have of knowing anything about these contracts is when they come up before us in connection with the Estimates. Then there is the medical superintendent at Goodna, whose salary has been increased from £800 to £1,000.

The PREMIER: A further three years with increased allowances.

Mr. RYAN: Is he not an officer receiving over £400? Let us take another case. I see the superintendent of St. Helena is increased from £450 to £500. Was that a contract entered into some months ago?

The PREMIER: It might have been.

Mr. RYAN: The Deputy Surveyor-General, I see, has been increased from £475 to £500.

The PREMIER: From about January last.

Mr. RYAN: I only mention these as examples.

The PREMIER: Capable of most complete answers—every one of them.

Mr. RYAN: Will the hon. gentleman answer this? Can hon. members, by studying the details of the Estimates, find all that out?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Mr. RYAN: Where? The Treasurer said that hon. members would note from a study of the details of the Estimates that increases, with the exception of some granted to the police, had not been given to officers receiving over £400 per annum. Will the hon. gentleman tell me where I can find particulars of all these secret arrangements entered into some months ago?

The PREMIER: You will get the information when the Estimates are on.

Mr. RYAN: I am not necessarily criticising those Estimates; but I am criticising the fact that we are told that only men under £400 are getting increases, when such is not the case. And other members of the public will also want to know why other officers of the service in receipt of over £400 per annum should not also have received increases. I shall be interested to hear the explanation the Hon. the Chief Secretary will give of this matter when he rises to deal with it. I think I have shown that the Statement is a misleading one, not only misleading to the Committee, but to the whole public service.

The PREMIER: Not at all.

Mr. RYAN: I propose now to deal with what I consider a more important matter,

and that is the question of railway construction and railway policy. On the 31st July last, the Chief Secretary made a Ministerial statement in this House on the subject of railway construction. I do not desire to read the whole of the statement, but I desire to have it incorporated in my remarks. Therefore, I would like to know if it will be taken as read?

The PREMIER: You are perfectly welcome, so far as I am concerned.

Mr. RYAN: I desire to have it taken as read.

Mr. MURPHY: You will not get it into *Hansard* if it is not read.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it the pleasure of the Committee that the statement be taken as read?

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

“MINISTERIAL STATEMENT RE RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION.

“The PREMIER: I think it desirable, with the permission of the House, that the following information should be given to the Parliament and the country respecting the situation in regard to the railway construction works now in progress:—On the last day of the last financial year nineteen different railways were in course of construction, representing a total of 524 miles, at an estimated cost of £1,968,547, of which £1,242,651 had already been expended. Since that date, one of those lines, that from Allora to Goomburra, has been completed and opened, and the first section of another, that from Malbon to Suleiman's Creek, brought so near to completion that large quantities of goods are carried by railway between Malbon and the Duchess. £725,896 will be needed to complete the eighteen lines now in course of construction. These eighteen lines, on which about 3,500 men are employed, are—

	Length.	Estimated Total Cost.	Estimated Cost per Mile.
	Miles.	£	£
Benarkin to Yarraman	15	83,098	5,815
Thallon to Dirraubandi	40	97,900	3,470
Oakey to Cooyar	38	1,7,266	4,373
Miles to Troon (first section)	44	136,590	3,131
Woodford to Kileoy	17	91,790	5,400
Keeton to Imbel	24	161,550	6,627
Gayndah to Mundubbera	23	116,032	5,018
Cordalba to Dallarnil	31	124,345	4,029
Mount Morgan to Dawson	67	241,315	3,593
<i>Great Western Railway Scheme</i>	299	1,220,848	4,083
Wallal to Tobernory	40	100,000	2,500
Blackall to Windorah	45	112,500	2,500
Malbon to Suleiman's Creek	36	105,000	3,000
	121	320,500	2,649
<i>North Coast Railway Scheme.</i>			
Rockhampton, northward	22	90,814	4,537
Mackay, southward	21	95,355	4,600
Bobawaba to Burdekin	17	61,830	3,600
Burdekin to Ayr	5	18,300	3,300
Townsville to near Cardwell	25	102,000	4,000
Babinda, southward	5	30,000	6,000
	95	497,359	4,265
Grand Total	515	1,948,685	3,784

It is proposed to concentrate our efforts

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on the lines of railways just enumerated, completing and turning them into revenue-producing concerns before we commence the construction of any of the ten lines authorised by Parliament last year. Those ten lines are—

	Length. Miles	Estimated Total Cost.	Estimated Cost per Mile.
		£	£
Logan Village to Canungra	21	89,454	4,335
Munbilla to Mt. Edwards	16	85,425	5,228
Kingaroy to Tarong	19	61,975	3,209
Dalby to Jandowale	29	79,007	2,784
Oakey to Mt. Russell	19	67,824	2,954
Roma to Orallo	29	85,759	2,935
Pialba to Urangan	5	20,600	3,990
Cloncurry to Mt. Cuthbert	42	165,947	3,933
Malanda towards Millaa Millaa	9	78,223	8,730
Tumoulin to Cedar Creek	5	37,104	8,131
	194	761,518	3,922

I have also to state that the Winton to Springvale section of the Great Western Railway has not yet been commenced. In the matter of the opening up of the Upper Burnett lands, by means of railway construction, which has been the subject of investigation during the past two years, and is a subject to which the Minister for Railways and the department's officers have given much earnest attention, the balance of evidence as to relative economy of construction and proportion of land made available is in favour of a line from Mundubbera to Dalgangal and not that projected from Wolca to Dalgangal, the Government, after long and most anxious consideration, have decided that the Upper Burnett lands shall be reached by the extension of the railway from Mundubbera. There is no possibility of tabling plans this year, but this decision will enable the Lands Department to proceed to make surveys, and generally get ready to open areas of rich agricultural land on the Upper Burnett, in anticipation of railway communication. When speaking on the Address in Reply during last session, I indicated that it was considered, in the interests of the producing and travelling public, and also to the advantage of the Railway Department, that the via recta, the connection between North and South Brisbane, and the Tinana and Drayton deviations be constructed. On the occasion of the opening of the Warwick to Maryvale line—a section of the via recta—I announced that the plans of the via recta would be tabled during the "next session"; at the same time, the Minister for Railways informed those interested that it would be necessary to have a resurvey made of a considerable portion of the route between the foot of the Range and Maryvale. A preliminary report in that direction has been made, but owing to the surveying staff being more than fully engaged upon the working surveys of lines already passed by Parliament, it has been impossible to have the necessary survey made in time for the tabling of said plans this session. Further, it is not practicable to

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table the plans of any railways this session, the surveyors and drafting staff being fully occupied in getting ready the working plans of railways now in hand. The point I most wish to emphasise is that the Commissioner, according as any of these eighteen lines now in course of construction are completed, will employ on those lines still unfinished such of his staff and men as are thus set free for other work, in order to make every one of those railways as soon as possible a going and revenue-producing concern. He will then proceed with the construction of the ten lines passed by Parliament last year. I hope that this work may be so far forward by next session as to warrant the tabling of other very desirable connections, deviations, and extensions. I think the communication is of such importance that it should be first made to Parliament rather than given, as ordinarily, through the Press."

Mr. RYAN: Well, on the 31st July the Hon. the Chief Secretary referred to the eighteen lines on which about 3,500 men were employed. The eighteen lines are set out in the form of a table. He then proceeds to say—

"It is proposed to concentrate our efforts on the lines just enumerated, completing and turning them into revenue-producing concerns before we commence the construction of any of the ten lines authorised by Parliament last year."

Then those ten lines are set out. They are from Logan Village to Canungra, from Munbilla to Mount Edwards, from Kingaroy to Tarong, from Dalby to Jandowale, from Oakey to Mount Russell, from Roma to Orallo, from Pialba to Urangan, from Cloncurry to Mount Cuthbert, from Malanda towards Millaa Millaa, and from Tumoulin to Cedar Creek. When the railway policy of the Government was introduced with regard to the construction of the North Coast Railway and the Great Western line, members of this House were assured that the carrying through of those schemes would not interfere with the passing and construction of lines into agricultural districts, and on account of that assurance certain railways were passed, including those ten. It was held out to electors at the last election that those railways were being gone on with, and, on the strength of that promise, large numbers of votes were cast for Government candidates.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: Yet, immediately we met in the House, or shortly afterwards, the Hon. the Premier said those lines were not going to be gone on with. I would like to know what hon. members for those constituencies have got to say at conduct of this sort on the part of the Government? How is the hon. member for Maryborough going to justify to the electors of Maryborough the fact that the line from Pialba to Urangan is not going to be gone on with? What about the via recta? What has the hon. member for Warwick to say with regard to the postponement of this line?

Mr. FORSYTH: Are you sure it has been stopped?

Mr. RYAN: I have only to refer you to what the Chief Secretary said with regard to the via recta.

Mr. FORSYTH: Look at the Estimates.

Mr. RYAN: I will get to the Estimates directly. There is a lot of dust thrown in the eyes of people in those Estimates. There are thousands of pounds put down for lines they have no intention of going on with, if we can believe this Ministerial statement. However, I am not going to be drawn away by any interjection, for I am speaking on what is perhaps the most important question that could be dealt with on this Financial Statement, and that is the question of the attitude of the Government with regard to railway construction. I think that if we went to the country tomorrow the Government's present policy would be sufficient to throw it out of office. I know hundreds of electors who look upon this backing down of the Government as a distinct breach of faith, and let me here refer to what the Chief Secretary said with regard to the via recta—

“On the occasion of the opening of the Warwick to Maryvale line—a section of the via recta—I announced that the plans of the via recta would be tabled during the ‘next session’; at the same time the Minister for Railways informed those interested that it would be necessary to have a resurvey made of a considerable portion of the route between the foot of the range and Maryvale. A preliminary report in that direction has been made, but owing to the surveying staff being more than fully engaged upon the working survey of lines already passed by Parliament, it has been impossible to have the necessary survey made in time for the tabling of the said plans this session.”

In other words, he calmly tells the people who are interested that he, the leader of the Government, the Chief Secretary—who ought to know his business—that the plans for that railway would have been tabled for this session, but he adds that the Minister for Railways warned you that it might not be possible to do it. Because of the action of some other Minister, qualified in some way, he is not able to table those plans. Whatever explanation he is going to give to the hon. member for Warwick to place before his constituents, I do not think he is going to satisfactorily explain to the ordinary electors of Queensland his going back on the Government's distinct promise to construct that railway. The remarks that I have made with regard to the Pialba to Urangan Railway, and with regard to the via recta, apply not only to them, but they apply also to the Dalby to Jondowaie line; they apply to the Malanda to Millaa Millaa line; to the Tamoulin to Cedar [4.30 p.m.] Creek line; to the Oakey to Mount Russell line; to the Kingaroy to Tarong line; to the Mumbilla to Mount Edwards line; and to the Logan Village to Canungra line.

The PREMIER: Have you the audacity to advocate that all those lines should be commenced at once?

Mr. RYAN: When we are sitting over there we shall prescribe. What I am refer-

ring to now is this, and every elector of Queensland will see the force of what I am saying. It proves that the Government passed those railways through Parliament, and held out promises that those railways were to be built in order to get votes, and when they got the votes they broke faith with the electors.

The PREMIER: When were those railways passed?

Mr. RYAN: Those railways were passed very recently, and that statement of the Premier's should have been made to the electors before the last election. When the Minister for Railways was advising that the extension from Malanda to Millaa Millaa should be passed, he pointed out that there were hundreds of men on the land in the Millaa Millaa district who would have to leave their holdings if the railway was not built.

Mr. GILLIES: Five hundred.

Mr. RYAN: And in face of that, the Government deliberately say that they are not going on with that railway. What sort of treatment is that of the man on the land? What sort of encouragement is that for settlement? What reliance can the electors place in a Government which goes to them with such promises, and, as soon as they get into power, they break their promises? Might I refer to the remarks made at Jondowaie by one hon. member sitting behind the Government—I refer to Mr. Vowles, the hon. member for Dalby—who put the case as strong as I can possibly put it with regard to that particular extension. That hon. member explained—

“That Jondowaie was not unique in its position of having the line hung up. There were many other lines in exactly the same position. He had asked the Premier for information, but he had been unable to get any from him. He would only give information on the floor of the House, owing to other districts being interested. He was given to understand, however, that the Railway Estimates to be tabled shortly would show the amount of money to be appropriated conditionally to some of these twelve lines, and they would then find out what their prospects were, and the order in which their line was likely to be started. He considered that the Premier's statement had been misunderstood. When the Premier made the statement that no new lines would be commenced until those already under construction were revenue producing, he meant the time when they began to earn money, not when they began to show a profit. Anyone who knew the Betterment Act knew that once the line started running, it was the benefiting public that had to find the 3 per cent. It was not a business proposition to have the whole of the loan money outlaid in partly completed lines, none of which were producing any revenue. He sympathised fully with them in their position, and he was fully aware of the statements made by the Secretary for Railways at Jondowaie and Perrinuan, telling them that the line was assured, and that they could go ahead and buy their agricultural implements, and other such remarks, but they had not been confirmed

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by the Government policy. Mr. Vowles said he was just as sore on the present position as they were."

I invite the Premier's attention particularly to the concluding remarks of the hon. member. This is the opinion of one of his candid friends—the opinion of an hon. member who had to go back and face the angry electors who were deceived and had to speak in order to satisfy them. The hon. member continued—

"He thought it would have been much better if the Government had explained the position before the last elections. He had no desire to appear before them in a false position, and would much rather have contested the last election knowing, and the public also knowing, what was meant by the Government in respect to the line. He urged them all to co-operate and persist in their demands for the line, because many of them had been promised the line when they took up their selections some years ago. It had been suggested that he should resign his seat in protest against the action of the Government. But he would ask them what had happened to a certain member of the Cabinet who had pushed his claim for a line in his district. In that case he had been asked to resign, and he was one in seven. What chance then had he of pushing for this line as one in seventy-two? The real position was that the Government had too big a majority, and were not affected by the attitude of one or two private members. It was ridiculous to talk of his resigning in these circumstances as it would not have the slightest effect."

Whether it has any effect upon the hon. member for Dalby or not, it becomes the duty of hon. members who have the interests of political morality at heart, and who have the interests of Queensland at heart, to point out to those electors that they will have a remedy at some future date for such Governments as this Government. Not only has the Government said they will not go on with those particular ten lines, but they have actually stopped the Dawson Valley line, after having stated on the 31st July that it would be proceeded with.

The PREMIER: To the 29-mile point.

Mr. RYAN: The 29-mile point! Was not the chief reason why that line was passed by this House, the fact that the Mount Morgan Gold Mining Company guaranteed to take 25,000 tons of coal per annum? What chance have they of taking any coal if you stop the railway at the 29-mile peg? The Government, no doubt, wanted to get rid of the hon. member for Fitzroy.

The PREMIER: Not true.

Mr. RYAN: The *Courier* pointed out at the time that he was taken into the Cabinet for geographical reasons. Now, as pointed out by the hon. member for Dalby at Jondowae, with the Government's big majority they consider they need not take any notice of geographical reasons at all, and consequently Central Queensland is entirely ignored, and the hon. member for Fitzroy

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is turned out. Why? Because he protested against the Government going back upon their policy of constructing that railway and breaking faith with the people of Central Queensland and with the people of Rockhampton, and going on with what railway instead? A railway they said they would not go on with is the Cloncurry-Mount Cuthbert Railway. It would be interesting to know what were the exact moving forces that caused the construction of the Cloncurry to Mount Cuthbert line, and the stoppage of the Dawson Valley Railway. I notice, as a man who casts his eye over the stock and share market, there was a sharp drop in the Mount Cuthbert shares, consequent on the pronouncement in this House on the 31st July that that railway was not to be proceeded with; and, without any other official statement being made here, the Government decided to go on with that railway, and those shares steadily crept up again. Where did that information leak out? Who were the favoured ones, who knew when to sell out and when to buy in because those shares were on the rise? These are matters that set one thinking. I am not making any direct suggestion that any Minister is guilty of improper conduct in regard to those shares, but I notice that the effect came about.

The TREASURER: You are throwing a little mud, hoping that it may stick.

Mr. RYAN: Not at all. I am stating the bald fact that there was a declaration made in this House that the line was not to be gone on with, and the shares dropped, and then, without another official statement, the line was commenced, and those shares steadily rose in price.

Mr. TROUT: They are going down now.

Mr. RYAN: They may be going down. The hon. gentleman must think we are very lacking in common sense if we do not know that such a pronouncement as that was bound to send the shares down, and also that the decision to go on with the railway would also send them up.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: I have heard no reason yet given—any official pronouncement—why it was suddenly decided that that line, as against all others, should be gone on with. There are many other matters that I desire to refer to on this Financial Statement, but as my time is very short I propose only to refer to one; and that is the question of the handing over of industrial powers to the Commonwealth. On the Address in Reply this session, I pointed out that it would be impossible for the six States of the Commonwealth to pass through exactly similar measures to hand over industrial powers to the Commonwealth; I pointed out that it could not be done, that it would be complicated by having so many Legislatures, and I pointed out that the reason why federation was brought about was to get over that very difficulty. Now, in this morning's *Courier* I find that the State of South Australia has decided that it will not join in handing over industrial powers. I will quote the exact words of the Premier of Victoria—

"Mr. Watt to-day received a communication from Mr. Peake, stating that the matter had been thoroughly threshed

out by the South Australian Cabinet, and the Ministers had decided that they could not see their way to adopt the recommendations of the Premiers' Conference. South Australia was, therefore, opposed to the surrender of the industrial powers. The next step, Mr. Watt explained, would be to communicate with the Governments of Queensland and Tasmania, whose intentions to introduce Bills for the authorisation of the proposed surrender had been announced, and to invite their views on the situation created by the opposition of the South Australian Government to the scheme. It would be quite competent for two or more States to surrender the industrial powers without regard to the action of the others, 'but such a procedure,' said the Premier, 'would, at best, be ineffective.'

It would "at best be ineffective," and let the people of Queensland beware that they do not join with some of the few States to hand over industrial powers to the Commonwealth while other States do not do it, for what would be the result? Unfair competition.

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

Mr. RYAN: I am sorry my time is up.

The PREMIER: I am willing to give you, as leader of the Opposition, an extension of time; I will not oppose it, but I will oppose it for anybody else.

Mr. COYNE: I move that the hon. member be further heard.

Question put and passed.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: I desire to thank the Committee for their courtesy in allowing me to proceed with my remarks, particularly as I was on such an important subject—the question of handing over industrial powers to the Commonwealth. I was pointing out that for some few States to hand over industrial powers while others stood out would be detrimental to the people of Queensland, and I will show why. Supposing the States of Queensland and Victoria were to hand over industrial powers to the Commonwealth dealing with certain matters, and the Commonwealth Arbitration Court fixed a certain rate of wage in a particular industry, the State of South Australia, which will be carrying on the same industry, may carry it on under more sweating conditions, paying less wages than Queensland and Victoria. The result would be that the men in those particular callings would be driven into the State of South Australia. Therefore, not only would it be ineffective for the States to hand over these powers while some States are standing out, but it would be exceedingly dangerous to the manufacturing industries of Queensland. There is only one way of effectively handing over or dealing with these industrial matters, and that is by the whole Commonwealth of Australia handing over to the Commonwealth Parliament the powers of passing the necessary legislation on industrial matters. I think that must be clear to hon. gentlemen on the front Treasury bench. I trust that that aspect of the matter is one that will be dealt with by the Chief Secretary when he

makes his remarks on this Statement, because the Commonwealth referendum will come on before the next session of Parliament, and it is most important that the people of Queensland should have some official pronouncement from the Premier as to his attitude with regard to these industrial powers, and it is my duty, and the duty of every other hon. member on this side of the House, to "take time by the forelock," and to point out to the people of Queensland what will be the effect of carrying out the policy which, at least up to the present, has been advocated by the Chief Secretary and by the other Ministers of the Cabinet, because they say that the Premiers' Conference agreed to do it, and that all the States would pass similar legislation simultaneously. We know, as this party said at the time, that the States are not going to pass similar legislation simultaneously, and, therefore, it is due to us, and to the people, that the Premier should make some statement with regard to the altered phase that has been placed upon the matter. It is the only way, too, in which trusts and combines can be effectively dealt with. It is the only way that the people of Australia and the people of Queensland can be protected against the introduction of the American meat trust. It is the only way that effective legislation can be passed with regard to such combinations as the Coal Vend, and it is the only way that effective legislation can be passed with regard to such combinations as the Brisbane Tramways Company, for instance. There is a case now pending before the Arbitration Court, and consequently I do not intend to make any remarks that could possibly be construed as having any bearing upon that particular case, but I desire to refer to some exhibits that have been put in, as far as they relate to the present Government and its attitude to unionists. They are quite a revelation to me. I said throughout the last election campaign, and hon. members on this side have been continually saying, that the Government were the cause of the strike—that the Government stood behind the Brisbane Tramways Company when opposition was made to the registration of the Employees' Association. When public money was spent, we said it was proof that the Government was opposed to industrial unionism, opposed to the men that I may class as the army to defend the rights of workmen, because that is only through unionism—through the advance guard—that the interests of all other workers can be protected.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: I am obliged to the hon. member for Maranoa for putting the suggestion to me in that form. I do not know of any more apt way of putting the position that unionists occupy. They are the advance guard—they are the army that protect the workers of Queensland. They protect those who are not in the union as well as those who are in the union.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. RYAN: We contended during the last election that the Government were opposed to that advance guard—opposed to industrial unionism, which was the only safeguard and protection of the workers generally. We were told during the election campaign and on the Address in Reply that

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that was all moonshine, that it was an argument that I and other members on this side had worked up, and that there was no foundation for it, although we had the actual evidence that the taxpayers' money was spent to oppose the registration of that union in Melbourne. But now I see from extracts from certain exhibits before the Commonwealth Arbitration Court—I understand that they were in communication with Mr. Badger, who at the time was with America—I have here some extracts from correspondence which took place between Mr. Stephens of the Tramways Company and Mr. Badger.

The PREMIER: What is the date?

Mr. RYAN: The 23rd November, 1910. I am getting back to the foundation of this matter, and I am going to show that the Government were much more mixed up in it than they have ever admitted, even to this day. On the 23rd November Mr. Stephens wrote to Mr. Badger a letter, in which he said—

"We have consulted Mr. Thynne before cabling, but he could only advise that we continue to use our efforts to use the men who were loyal against those who were not."

"To use the men who were loyal against those who were not," in order to prevent the formation of a union—to use the loyalists against those who desired to belong to a union. That was Mr. Thynne's advice to the company. Then, on the 22nd of December, Mr. Badger wired to Mr. Stephens—

"If you cannot defeat Tramways Employees' Federation, what do you think, to advise all concerned against participation than withhold great opposition."

To that cable Mr. Stephens replied on 23rd December—

"Already worked as you suggest. Large number of men have joined Tramways Employees' Federation branch."

Later on, 27th December, Mr. Stephens cabled to Mr. Badger—

"What do you recommend if it is demanded that we must acknowledge Tramway Employees' Federation, or must compel opposition to join?"

To this Mr. Badger replied on the 29th December, 1910—

"Do not, under any circumstances, bring influence to bear upon opposition to join. Can you explain in what way acknowledgment demanded? What is the object? Consult Mr. Thynne. If you think it advisable, Mr. Kidston—Home Secretary. What do you recommend? What do they propose to do? Staff refuse to hurry."

There, you see, Mr. Badger actually cabling from America to Mr. Stephens to see Mr. Kidston, the Home Secretary; and yet we were told that there was no communication between the Government and the company, that there was no privy on the part of the Government to the action of the Tramways Company in this matter—that they were simply protecting a number of the men. But those cables let out the whole thing, show that the secretary was advised to use the loyalists against those who wished to form a union, and that they not only used the loyalists in that matter, but got the assistance of the Government. Mr. Thynne, as the company's legal adviser, was entitled to

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advise them to take what course of action he thought desirable, and I have no fault to find with him for giving such advice; but I object to Mr. Kidston, or the Home Secretary, acting in the interests of the company as they did, and the Government then telling the people of Queensland that the Government were not behind the Brisbane Tramways Company. I say that they have always been behind the Brisbane Tramways Company. These remarks are pertinent to the question of the referendum which will shortly be placed before the people of Queensland, and I desire to point out that unless the people of Queensland are prepared to hand over the necessary power to the Commonwealth, this sort of thing will continue. It is for the people of Queensland to see that it is not allowed to continue. I have now finished with the subject with which I was dealing when an extension of time was granted to me, and I shall not further encroach on the privilege accorded me.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: I was quite willing that the hon. the leader of the Opposition should have an extension of time, because I hoped that before he resumed his seat he would really deal with the question before the Committee—the Financial Statement. During the course of his remarks he dealt in a diffuse manner with several matters referred to in the Statement, but as regards the actual finances of the State he has favoured us with only one or two expressions of opinion; and before the hon. member finished his utterance he really gave a denial to the charges which he brought against the Government at the outset of his speech. The hon. member started by expressing his amazement at the increased amount of loan expenditure. The schedule shows in what way that increased amount was expended—namely, on railways. Before the hon. member resumed his seat, in spite of his criticism of the increase in the loan expenditure, he tried to stir up a feeling of dissatisfaction among hon. members sitting on the right of the Chairman by complaining that the Government are not proceeding to spend money at a more expeditious rate. The statement made by me earlier in the session was a clear, honest statement, and it is being carried out; and the policy indicated in that statement will not delay for one hour the completion of the lines which have been passed by Parliament. The hon. member drew attention to the fact that in the Northwest some preliminary steps are being made to extend the lines from Cloncurry, and from that he concludes that we are acting dishonourably with regard to other lines which are not yet commenced. But the Railway Commissioner is quite clear as to his course of action; he has set out to reach a certain point on the Malbon-Duchess line. Then he will utilise the men and the material which has been collected for commencing another line in the same neighbourhood. Would the hon. member have us transfer the men and plant and cash available to the construction of the line known as the *via recta*?

Mr. RYAN: I say you are breaking faith.

The PREMIER: I am not breaking faith one iota, and I shall prove that before I resume my seat. The course of action laid down in the statement I previously made was a perfectly honest course; we invited the attention of the country to it, and it

has received the endorsement of the country. With regard to the construction of the Malbon-Duchess extension towards Sulieman Creek, the completion of that section of the railway will enable the Commissioner to control the traffic in that neighbourhood and work it at a profit. The line is being constructed to a point at which it can be utilised at a profit. If it should come to a question of dealing with agricultural railways at the cost of the far Western lines, then I know what attitude I shall take up; but we have mapped out a course of action in which we propose to take certain lines to given points. For instance, the Commissioner, in his memorandum to me on this subject, indicated that he proposed to carry the Dawson Valley line to Dundee. I knew where he was going to perfectly well, and I knew what was in his mind with regard to the Malbon-Duchess Railway. It would be a grossly unfair thing to transfer men from the North-west to the South. I am anxious to deal fairly with all parts of the State, and with all primary industries. But apparently the leader of the Opposition thinks that members of this side of the House are foolish enough to be disturbed by his paltry parochialism.

Mr. RYAN: You are breaking faith.

The PREMIER: I repeat that I am not breaking faith. I wish just now to show the hon. member and the Committee how much money has been spent on railways in what is known as the Darling Downs district during the last four years.

Mr. GILLIES: What about the North?

The PREMIER: I am afraid I cannot deal with all these matters at one and the same time. The leader of the Opposition said, "Why do not the Government go on with the construction of these other railways?" The answer is that we cannot do everything at once. The hon. member blames us for spending too much loan money, and then says, "Why don't you spend more in the agricultural districts?"

Mr. RYAN: I did not say that. I said you had broken your promise.

The PREMIER: I have not broken my promise, and the Committee know that perfectly well. With regard to the treatment of the agricultural districts, the hon. member reminded the Committee that when the big railway construction scheme was laid down the Government said the agricultural districts would not suffer. Nor will they. (Hear, hear!) If the money market becomes tighter and tighter, less money will probably be spent in the far Western districts than on development lines in the coastal districts. How have the Darling Downs been treated during the past four years? There has been spent during that period no less than £1,145,812, or, including rolling-stock, £1,202,191. At present, there

[5 p.m.] are some lines under construction on the Darling Downs—the lines to Dirrabandi and Juandah, and the line from Oakey to Cooyar. And there are two lines passed for the Darling Downs that have not been commenced—the line to Mount Russell and the line to Jondawaie.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: To what date?

The PREMIER: To 30th June, 1912. At the earliest opportunity these lines will be proceeded with.

Mr. RYAN: Too funny!

The PREMIER: There is nothing funny about it.

Mr. RYAN: What about Mr. Vowles's remarks at Jondawaie?

The PREMIER: Mr. Vowles can speak for himself. The hon. gentleman chose to read what pleased him; if he had read the full account he would have seen that Mr. Vowles discussed the matter perfectly frankly, pointing out that people misconstrued the statement; that we should not wait until lines are profit-earning, but that as soon as some of the lines in course of construction are completed, we will transfer the men to other lines. I do not propose to follow the hon. gentleman in his discursive remarks about mining and agriculture. There is a proper time to discuss those matters; and we will discuss them at the proper time. There are important matters of finance before the Committee now, and it is right that they should be dealt with in as frank manner as possible. The hon. gentleman says the Treasurer's Statement is voluminous. It is voluminous, and full of interest. There is the amplest information disclosed in it; and let me tell the hon. gentleman that it is a perfectly candid revelation of the finances, as to both revenue and loan. As to the closing of the year's transactions, nothing new has taken place in the last two or three years. I think it is eight years since, in the month of June, the commitments of June were anticipated by payment. Suppose during one financial year we vary our procedure then our finance is not honest.

Mr. THEODORE: Do you say the Government has not been dishonest?

The PREMIER: If it is dishonest to anticipate payment, you may call it so. I think the hon. gentleman in his own private affairs—at any rate, as far as I am concerned, I would consider it a joy to be in the position of being able to anticipate payments. But the first anticipation having been made—

Mr. RYAN: By you?

The PREMIER: By the Treasurer. That having been made, it is perfectly correct year after year that the same thing should be done; else a false condition would be set up.

Mr. HUNTER: Can you tell us when you will stop?

The PREMIER: I cannot answer conundrums.

Mr. RYAN: You do not accept the suggestion of the Auditor-General?

The PREMIER: According to the Audit Act, accounts are closed on the 30th June.

Mr. RYAN: He suggested an amendment of the Audit Act; you will not accept that suggestion.

The PREMIER: I do not think there is anything in it. The Hon. the Treasurer is doing what any commercial house does.

Mr. FORSTH: It is the right thing to do in any case.

The PREMIER: Absolutely so. What puzzles me is that the thing went on so many years, and suddenly the Auditor-General woke up. What called his attention to it was the £70,000 special item in relation to the University. The hon. gentleman referred to the loan question, and seemed

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perturbed as to the commitments for the ensuing year. He referred to the £600,000 Treasury bills falling due on the 31st December; but, as was remarked by the hon. member for Murrumba, he made no reference to the £1,500,000 of loan money falling due about the same time.

Mr. FORSYTH: He missed it altogether.

The PREMIER: Yes; but we did not miss it; we know what we are going to do. With regard to the £600,000, we have every hope that present holders, or their friends, will be only too glad to take up our scrip for that amount.

Mr. RYAN: Why raise the interest if they are already applying?

The PREMIER: I will deal with the question of interest, and how money has appreciated during the last twelve months. You can only deal with money as with any other commodity; it has its price, and so you must pay for it. If banks of issue are giving  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on two years' loans, it is probable that persons who have money to invest, instead of taking up our Treasury bills at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., would take advantage of the increased rate and loan to the banks; whereas, if we offer 4 per cent., they will probably prefer a Government security. But in Australia we have been used to low-price money for a long time; and the question is how soon we are to realise that the money market has appreciated. Take the period of our last loan, on the 12th July. The Stock Exchange quotations on 10th July were, for British consols,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.,  $75\frac{1}{2}$ ; India,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.,  $91\frac{1}{4}$ ; Canada,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.,  $94\frac{1}{4}$ ; New South Wales,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.,  $94$ ; Queensland,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.,  $93\frac{1}{2}$ . But, when we turn to foreign stocks, we find that the stock of such a place as the Argentine has very much appreciated in recent years, because of the stability and security which have entered into their arrangements of government. They are paying 5 per cent. for their money; and their securities at 5 per cent. are worth 104. Chili is paying 5 per cent; Japan, 4 per cent.; Russia, 5 per cent.; and it remains to be seen how soon we in Australia will have to face a higher money market.

Mr. HUNTER: What did the last loan cost?

The PREMIER: The last loan,  $3\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. stock, which will be retired in 1940-60, was issued at 96, less 11s. 6d. accrued interest from the 1st July to dates of instalments; so that the net price to the public was £95 8s. 6d.; and it will yield to the investor £3 8s. 7d. per cent. The cost to the Government—interest and redemption, say 1960—will be £3 19s. 5d. per cent. per annum.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: What did we actually net from the last loan?

The PREMIER: After paying all charges I think, speaking from memory, it was somewhere in the neighbourhood of £93 10s. Our railway policy, and every other policy, must be controlled and governed by the loan market. Unfortunately, the market continues to harden, and, so far as one can see, there is no indication of it weakening. One has not to look very far to see why it is appreciating. The great Powers of the world are spending large sums of money in

the construction of warships, and thus diverting money from industrial purposes into the construction of engines of destruction. Industrial enterprises and activities are particularly acute just now, and men are finding investments in other than those directions which used formerly to be looked on as a secure kind of stock, such as consols and foreign investments. Then the activity in production the world over has called for the building of ships, and vast sums of money are now being spent in laying down more keels to carry the merchandise of the world. Then the higher price of the raw material and the higher prices charged for labour all involve the use of large sums of money. The awakening of China is another factor. She wants £10,000,000, and the money-lenders are squabbling amongst themselves as to who shall have a share in it at 5 per cent. We have also got South America and South Africa on the loan market, and Japan is there, too. Canada, which is a place that is often spoken of as not being a borrower, is also on the loan market. It is said that Canada is not a borrower, merely because the bulk of her development work, such as railway construction, is being done by private enterprise; yet Canada has been an enormously larger user of the world's money than has the whole of Australasia, which, of course, includes New Zealand. From the "Round Table" for March we learn that the British money invested in Australia in 1896 was £323,000,000, and the amount invested in 1910 was £395,000,000. The amount of British money invested in Canada in 1896 was £140,000,000, and the amount invested in 1910 was £365,000,000. Thus, the amount invested in Australia increased in the fourteen years by £72,000,000, while the amount invested in Canada increased during the same period by £225,000,000. Now, we are often led to think that Canada does not go on the money market at all, yet we see that she has borrowed more than Australia within that period. The difference between Australia and Canada is this: that whereas in Australia, so far as public borrowing is concerned, the loans are for the benefit of the community, while in Canada, so far as the borrowings are concerned, they are largely for the interests of the individual. Our railways and harbours constitute the biggest amount of our loan money, and they are State properties, and for the benefit of the whole State. Hon. gentlemen opposite refer to an era of trusts in Australia, but that era will never dawn in Australia so long as the State has the control of the railways. There is another cause for the appreciation of money. There are a large number of people in the old land who are accustomed to get their livelihood from investments in consols and foreign stocks, which includes, as they term it, colonial stocks. At the present time, these people are compelled to look for other sources of investment in order to get a larger interest return owing more particularly to the heavy taxation of recent years brought about by succeeding Chancellors of the Exchequer of the old land. Consequently, people who formerly were content with their investments in Governmental stocks now find the returns insufficient for their requirements, and they are looking to industrialism and other sources of investment. The question is: Will Australia and the other British Dominions be satisfied to use large amounts of loan money at the increased rate? Can we afford to use it?—that is the question. Can we afford to pay a higher price for the

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money? We have got used to cheap money, and we do not like to have to pay a dearer price for our money. But depend upon it if the market continues as stringent as it is now we will either have to meet the altered conditions or else curtail our expenditure on public affairs. There is another thing which influences the market materially. Reference was made to it by the hon. member for Murrumba in his speech some weeks ago, when he stated that the balance of trade had an influence on it. That is a very important question. This Committee should get a purview of the money market in determining how fast or how slow we should go with our public works. (Hear, hear!) I am just trying to point out the influences which are at work in influencing the money markets, and I have a quotation here from the Melbourne *Argus*, which I will give to show how they do work—

“The gross trade of Australia for the twelve months ended 30th June, 1912, may be estimated, subject to later revision, at £72,800,000 imports, and £31,000,000 exports, including on both sides gold and specie as well as merchandise.”

Then there is a schedule, which I will not weary the House with, and it goes on—

“The difference between the two sides of the account has shrunk considerably during the past two seasons. A substantial excess of exports over imports is required in order to provide for interest and profits on British capital invested in Australia for the remittance of capital in course of withdrawal, and for expenditure by Australian visitors to Europe, and, after making these provisions, it is evident that an excess of gross exports amounting to only about £3,250,000 for the season just ended does not leave the account in a satisfactory position.”

I pass over a great deal of it, and then it goes on—

“But this amount does not represent the full extent of the reaction in Australian production, as the figures include wheat and flour shipped during the second half of last year from the harvest reaped at the beginning of 1911. Against the decrease of £1,750,000 in exports of merchandise there has been a further increase of £8,500,000 in imports of merchandise, which are now larger than four seasons ago by over £20,000,000, an increase of more than 40 per cent.”

So there are influences at work which apparently go to show that the money market is likely to be tight for some time to come. I do not suppose that the operations of Queensland on the money market has any influence, or at any rate very little. Our operations are so trivial compared with the enormous amounts that pass through the money market in the old world. We have merely to pay the world's market price. There is no doubt, however, that we can get whatever loan moneys we require at the market rate. In this balance of trade question, to which reference has already been made, Queensland happily shows out to advantage, and it is well recognised here in Australia as well as on the other side that the prospects for development and investment are more attractive in Queensland than in many of the other States. Our railway

system, for instance, compares much more favourably with those of Victoria or South Australia.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Thanks very much to our natural advantages.

The PREMIER: To some degree that is true, but in that we have no greater advantage than New South Wales, and the trade of New South Wales all gravitates to the one centre. It is the same in Victoria and South Australia. Happily Queensland has taken advantage of her geographical situation and has a number of railway systems terminating at the coast. Queensland is to-day what she is largely because of her railway system and largely because of her ports. Apart from the element of rain—and nobody can discount that factor—the greatest factor in our prosperity is our railways. If it be considered desirable to slow down, then we can do so, but we are working to a plan. My object in making that statement some weeks ago to the House was to call attention to this: Instead of going on to a new line, we thought it best to put as many men as possible on to those lines in course of completion so that they could be brought into profit more quickly. To construct eighteen lines we should have required the services of 7,000 men. We have only 3,500, and, therefore, if we can bring the number of our lines down to nine we can be working at a higher degree of economy. With regard to the kind admonition of the leader of the Opposition that the coast should not suffer because of the West, I would like to satisfy his inquiring mind that in the agricultural districts the needs of the settlers for railway facilities will not be sacrificed.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Will you sacrifice Mr. Kidston's Great Western scheme?

The PREMIER: It may be necessary that that should be discussed at fuller length than I can give it this afternoon. (Opposition laughter.) There are many things in relation to that scheme which will have to be considered before it is consummated. At any rate, we should be satisfied to go westward before we commence that north-west section, linking up the whole. (Opposition laughter.) At that time it was evident the Government thought the money market was going to be so easy as to justify exceptional expenditure. It is all a question whether we should pay the higher price. If the money is too high in price, it may be politic for us to slow down, but if there be slowing down in railway construction it will not be at the cost of agricultural lines. Agricultural lines are not as profitable as the Western lines or the Great Northern line—there is no question about that. It is interesting to turn to the pages of the Financial Statement in which we see that the earnings of the Northern far exceed those of the Southern. The earnings of the Northern is £6 9s. per cent. on the capital invested; for the Central it is £4 18s. 4d., and for the Southern £3 15s. 6d.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: And yet you are spending more on the Southern than on the Northern lines.

The PREMIER: The leader of the Opposition was crying out because we are not spending more on the Southern lines.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: A Queen-street Ministry.  
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The PREMIER: If there was ever a Ministry that deserved less to be classified as such it is the present one. We are looking at the country outside, and comparatively little is being spent in the metropolis. It is interesting to note from the tables that our railways in 1910-11 gave a profit to the State of not less than £75,000. Last year—that is 1911-12—they were a charge to the revenue of £55,000. That is a big change. It is easily understood. The Commissioner is building eighteen lines, none of which at the time is earning, but he is charged with the loan money, and, therefore, the general results suffer. You will notice two statements. One says the return on the capital invested in our railways is £3 9s. 11d. per cent., and the Commissioner says it is £4 0s. 5d. per cent. Both are correct, although the sums are different. The one tells us the earnings upon the lines opened to traffic, and the other the earnings upon the money which the Commissioner has had from the Treasurer. We do not get £1,000,000 when we borrow £1,000,000, but the Commissioner had to pay on the full amount.

Mr. RYAN: Did you not get the full amount from the Commonwealth?

The PREMIER: Yes; and they will get it all back, and they have been indebted to us for a long time to the extent of £1,500,000. Our railways are a magnificent asset, and they are worth to-day many more millions than they cost. There is no shadow of doubt about that. And it is interesting to look—when hon. members are talking about the loan money—and see just exactly how our loans are invested and how they are turning out. I will merely content myself by calling attention to Table K on page 38 of the tables relating to the Treasurer's Financial Statement. You are there told that the only charge upon the revenue with respect to our loans invested in 1911-12 was £350,676, and I would like to draw attention to the fact that the actual charge on our revenue on account of loan money is less than 6 per cent. That is exceedingly satisfactory; and I trust, as the years go on, that it will become even less than that.

Mr. HUNTER: Table L will tell you something else.

The PREMIER: Under the loan vote we have just kept under the amount appropriated for 1911-12. For that year there was appropriated £3,327,787, and of that we expended £3,324,248, which is not much of a margin. That is the situation with regard to our loan money; but I would like to direct the attention to the House to a few items in relation to our revenue as well. The Treasurer tells us that the amount we actually received from the Commonwealth last year was £757,087, and that next year he anticipates receiving £790,452. This sum is absorbed, and more than absorbed, by two items of payment—viz., schools and charities. It is well that the country should realise that the amount which we now receive from the Commonwealth is not sufficient to cover what we are spending on education and on our hospitals and charities. The items for the Department of Public Instruction total £493,768; then there is £7,500 for grammar schools, £10,000 for the University, £40,000 for school buildings, and £12,000 for technical college building, or a total on public instruction of £563,268. Hospitals and charities, no less a sum than

£156,731, and this does not include the vote for the hospital for insane, which is no less a sum than £79,000. On State children there is an expenditure for the [5.30 p.m.] current year of £52,653; in relief of aboriginals, £18,349; Dunwich, £27,261; or a total, for what we may call hospitals and charities, not including the hospital for insane, of £255,044. The two amounts put together total £818,312; so that on public instruction and charities we spend £28,000 more than we get back from the Commonwealth as our portion of the Excise and Customs revenue. It is well worthy of note, too, that the Commonwealth derived last year from Queensland, in respect of land taxation, a revenue of £60,000, and, as far as I can make out, a revenue of about £160,400, being the excess of the excise which they received over the bounty they paid.

Mr. LENNON: How much did they lose through the Post Office?

The PREMIER: I have not looked up those figures. I would be very, very glad indeed to have the Post Office back, and our revenue, and pay all the charges, and we would then be in a mighty good position. The demands on the Treasury are increasing in respect of education and charity, and we have responded as well as we possibly can to both these regards, but there is a limit, and for this financial year, at any rate, that limit has assuredly been reached. I hope, as each recurring year comes, and with increasing demands for charities and schools, our population may increase, so that in some ratio our return from the Commonwealth will enable us to meet those increasing demands. The revenue from the Commonwealth is fixed. The Treasurer can very accurately estimate that.

Mr. HUNTER: He was not so successful with some of the other sources of revenue.

The PREMIER: In what regard?

Mr. HUNTER: In connection with the railways, for instance.

The PREMIER: He was pretty close last year in regard to the railways.

Mr. THEODORE: He faked his accounts.

The PREMIER: The hon. member has made use of an expression which he does not mean in its fulness.

Mr. THEODORE: He certainly faked June and July accounts.

The PREMIER: No.

Mr. THEODORE: Well, he paid in June accounts which should not be paid until July.

The PREMIER: If we did not pursue the course which was followed last year and the year before, we would have been acting dishonestly. That is quite clear.

Mr. THEODORE: When did you introduce it?

The PREMIER: I should say about eight years ago, when the era of surpluses set in, but I am taking the responsibility of the two years I have been here.

Mr. HUNTER: It was started four years ago.

The PREMIER: It was started, at any rate, before 1910-11, and if, in 1911-12 we had dropped that one month, then we might have been charged with dishonourable transactions, because we should have saved

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one month expenditure, but we merely pursued the same course that had been followed in previous years. That is correct. I was remarking, that in respect of the amount received from the Commonwealth, the Treasurer can estimate accurately, but in respect of income tax and stamps he has greater difficulty. Hon. members will notice that he anticipates a lesser sum from income tax this year than last year, and in that, I think, he is accurately advised, because the droughty conditions made it impossible for such large profits to be earned in the country as in former years, but the probabilities are the estimate will be realised.

Mr. HUXHAM: Would it not be wise to reduce expenditure?

The PREMIER: That is most difficult of accomplishment. I notice that a leading newspaper constantly reasserts that the Treasurer has about £300,000 up his sleeve. I can assure you that I know nothing of it, and I can assure you that the Treasurer has no knowledge of it either. I wish he had. All I know is that there are several things that I should like to have done during this year; several advantages, in the way of endowments, to the different parts of the State which I should like to have included in the Estimates this year, but it was because the revenue did not allow of their being undertaken that we have not done so, and they have been postponed. If there was £300,000 anywhere lurking in the Treasury, I would have taken advantage of that amount to have brought about those improvements in the condition of our State. As I have said, it is very difficult to forecast stamps. The estimated revenue from railways is larger than last year's estimate, but the Commissioner, who submitted the amount, is still confident that his figures are right, and I may say that in the Treasurer's estimate he has not included as large a sum as the Commissioner submitted to him. Our Estimates have been prepared with the greatest care, and owing to the Industrial Peace Bill being on, more time was available for a close scrutiny and revision, and I can say that, as far as it is humanely possible to know, the Estimates laid before the House will be faithfully carried out. I hope that this year at least, if any items are exceeded, it will be absolutely unforeseen. All the departments have clear and definite instructions that they are to live within their vote if, by any means, it is at all possible. A most gratifying thing is the increase in land revenue. The leader of the Opposition dealt with land settlement. We will deal with that question at the proper time and place, as time does not permit this afternoon, but it is perfectly clear that land settlement must be progressing, because we are getting a bigger revenue than was received in former years.

Mr. RYAN: It is not increasing fast enough.

The PREMIER: That is the story we have heard year after year, for the last ten years to my knowledge, and I suppose, if we remain here for the next ten years, we will still hear the same story.

Mr. RYAN: Oh, no; only until we get over there.

The PREMIER: And then somebody else will make the same statement. It is a wonderfully easy statement to make, but when we ask hon. members to specialise or to

mention any particular run or holding that is being held up, there has always been a full and complete answer in relation thereto.

Mr. RYAN: You are not serious.

The PREMIER: I am serious.

Mr. RYAN: It is patent out West.

The PREMIER: Of course, it is patent out West. Some people are happy enough and lucky enough to have large sheep properties, and others want to share in their prosperity, but the present holders are there, and they have a right to be there, and they cannot be dispossessed.

Mr. HUNTER: You are not exercising all the rights of the Crown.

The PREMIER: I think my colleague, the Secretary for Public Lands, is exercising all his rights. If the hon. member will let me know where we are slow we will try to get speed up. I think it is probable, considering the way in which the land revenue has been increasing for the last few years, that at no very remote period we shall be happy to see our figures reach £1,000,000. The rents are improving. Pastoral rents particularly are improving, and earnings in respect of forestry are also improving. I have called attention to the fact that our taxation consists mainly of income tax and stamps. Land revenue is not taxation. We have, I might say, a considerable land tax already in connection with our municipalities.

Mr. HAMILTON: That is payment for services rendered.

The PREMIER: There is also the Commonwealth land tax, which was £60,000 for Queensland last year. But we have to bear in mind that the burden of taxation is carried on by a comparatively small number of our population, and in the framing of the Estimates Ministers have had a very anxious time. Some desirable things had to be turned down in order to avoid resorting to additional taxation. The hon. gentleman referred just now to the statement made by the Treasurer that only those under £400 had had increases with the exception of the police, and referred to certain individual cases.

Mr. RYAN: Illustrations.

The PREMIER: When that far distant day comes of which he is dreaming, and often speaks, when he is on this bench, he will understand that during the currency of the year certain things occur. For instance, take Dr. Ellerton, the superintendent of the hospital for the insane. He came to us under a three years' agreement, which matured in March, and in making a new agreement with him a higher sum was provided; but the Treasurer's Statement is perfectly correct that in relation to officers in the service on 30th June—I think my memory will carry me back as far as March, I do not think any alterations were made in those months; but, speaking broadly, all the officers in the service on 30th June earning over £400 do not get increases—not because they do not deserve it; there are some officers with salaries greater than that who might worthily receive increases.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Why was an increase given to the Director of Forests?

The PREMIER: When that gentleman came to us he came under contract. Speaking from memory, I think there were two

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progressive advances—£50 in two successive years. In him we have an officer of the highest qualifications, and one whom I appreciate at the salary he is now getting. I am not going to take up my time with individual items. It will really do hon. members more good if, instead of discussing the items referred to by the Treasurer, they will examine the report of the Public Service Board and the financial tables, and they will see much of deep interest to them there. The members of the public service in Queensland have been very well served during recent years.

Mr. HAMILTON: Some of them.

The PREMIER: I should very much like to individualise, but I will ask hon. members to turn to page 16 of the report of the Public Service Board for 1911, Appendix B, and just note the increases referred to there. They are simply incredible to one who has no intimate knowledge of the board. I therefore ask hon. members to study appendices C and D and then say whether or not the officers of the public service in Queensland have been well served.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: That only proves how low their salaries were previous to those increases.

The PREMIER: I will just quote but one—the officers who were in the service on 1st January, 1904, and whose salary was £70. The same men eight years later averaged £184, or an increased percentage of 162 per cent., and running through the whole scale they are all relatively good. In the next schedule, up to £200, there is an increase of 64 per cent.; in the next, up to £300, an increase of 63 per cent.; in the next, up to £400, an increase of 26 per cent.; in the next, up to £500, an increase of 22 per cent.; and in the next, £500 to £800, an increase of 13 per cent.; and over £600, an increase of 8 per cent. If hon. members will take appendices C and D, and follow out the same line of thought, it will show that at least the officers of the public service during the past few years have been particularly well cared for.

The TREASURER: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: Special consideration was given to some of the State school teachers last year, and further consideration is given to many of them this year—special consideration, apart from the automatic increases—and even now the teachers of Queensland are not as handsomely paid as the Government would like to see them paid; but during the past two or three years very marked improvements have been made, and we can only hope that conditions will admit of still further improvement in their condition.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: Queensland can rejoice in a very fine public service, for the most part efficient, and I am happy to say for the most part thoroughly satisfied, too, and their remuneration as compared with other States, except New South Wales perhaps—their remuneration as compared with the Commonwealth, and certainly as compared with the mercantile service, is highly satisfactory, and we hope to make it still further attractive by during this session introducing

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a superannuation scheme which will be made effective as from the 1st July next of the financial year 1913-14.

Mr. HAMILTON: I think we will soon have to have one for members, unless we get a rise in our salary.

The PREMIER: I am sure it would be a very popular movement. (Laughter.) That is my impression, at any rate. It is interesting to notice the large increase made in immigration last year; it is the biggest increase for twenty-five years—some 13,639 souls. The amount we have on the Estimates this year is very much less than last year's total expenditure. It is the same as provided for last year from revenue, but there was an amount of £70,000 from trust account which was availed of, and then we overdraw in addition. This year we have only put down £30,000; we have no longer the trust account from which to draw, and, so far as the £30,000 is concerned, it is about sufficient to carry out our contracts with the shipping companies, and the immigrants this year are paying more than they did last year. Under agreement with the other States the rate was increased; therefore, the vote will cover more persons in relation to the sum expended than it did last year; and if the revenue is elastic, as the year goes on we can encourage immigration still more; but as employment now is, and as our revenue estimate is framed, I think we are perfectly justified in, for the present, limiting expenditure to our contracts. If, however, there be developments, and the revenue becomes in any wise elastic, we can very readily let ourselves go a little later in the year. I am glad to say that information is to hand that large numbers of people are now paying their own way to come out to Queensland. They find the conditions of employment and our liberal land policy are such as to attract them, and I am happy to say that quite a large number, rather than be delayed as nominated or assisted immigrants, are paying their own fare in coming here. I had hoped the leader of the Opposition would have congratulated the Government upon the amount put down for mining. It is not as much as I had hoped, but it is as big as we can provide out of revenue.

Mr. HAMILTON: You said we should have congratulated you.

The PREMIER: I quite anticipated that his fairness would have led him to that extent. However, there are certain fields that want some attention—the Palmer, for instance. My impression is that it is a good thing to spend a few thousand pounds in seeing what is in the Palmer, and if there is nothing there the railway line may as well be taken up. My impression is that there are good things awaiting us in the Palmer.

Mr. THEODORE: It seems to me that you are spending all the money in the electorates of hon. members on that side.

The PREMIER: It so happens that the mining industry has returned members on this side. (Hear, hear!) We have the hon. member for Charters Towers on this side, and the hon. member for Gympie, and in both those places we propose to use some of the money. The miners have realised that this Government are better to them than other Governments have been. Anyhow,

that is the situation, and I am extremely glad to note the great revival in copper. The development of Mount Cuthbert is a big factor in our railway earnings—a big auxiliary to the Northern line, and it has helped to swell the earnings of that section. I would like to have a few minutes on the meat question. The hon. gentleman appeared to fear that I might shy off the meat question; I can assure him that I have no idea of shying off the meat question. A few months ago there was a commission instituted here, at the instance of several gentlemen interested in the export of meat. They affirmed that there were not enough meatworks here to handle the products. The commission was instituted for the purpose of seeing how accurate that statement was, and also investigating many other phases of the meat industry. There has come to establish itself on the Brisbane River a company which is stated to be from America, with American money. In my estimation the establishment of meatworks down there will add enormously to the profits of the stockraiser. The stockraiser will have a bigger market for his stock than he has ever enjoyed, and the company can never control or get a grip of the industry in Queensland. The grip they have obtained of the industry in America is only held by reason of the control of railways which companies possess in that country, and no company can get that grip in Queensland, because the railways are owned and controlled by the State. If ever the day comes when anything of that kind is attempted, the persons who attempt it will be dealt with promptly and effectively. But they cannot get their grip upon the neck of the industry here. What is this company here for? They are here to provide for the great demands of the United States, which has an insufficient supply of meat just now. There is a shortage in the supply of meat in the United States, and when the Panama Canal is opened, which will be within three or four years, the American market will be within twenty-one days' sail of Australia, and chilled meat can be taken there to meet the American demand. These people are evidently after a big American business in this matter, and the result of their business here must be to appreciate the value of our stock many hundreds of thousands of pounds in the aggregate.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: What about the poor settler?

THE PREMIER: The poor settler will get thousands of pounds more for his stock than he would do under other circumstances. I wish I had half an hour to discuss this matter, but my time has nearly expired, and I shall have to wait for another opportunity. I may, however, add that the more companies there are here to deal with our stock the more prosperous will be the stockraiser, as the value of stock must necessarily appreciate. The meat companies which are here have merely operated for four or five months in the year. This company, with a capital expenditure of £350,000, must keep their works going all the year round, and what will happen? We shall have farmers in the inside district fattening the stock, and the men who fatten the stock will get fat on the business. There is, I am certain, going to be a marked appreciation in the value of our stock, and by this company coming here that appreciation of stock will

probably continue for many years to come. I contend, and I am not afraid of saying it, that it is our business to interest the capitalists in the development of our resources. We have to bring capital here, and labour, too. We are bringing to the country under our immigration laws men who are physically strong, and I hope that we shall be able to bring more than has been provided for. All sections of the community are concerned in a healthy and natural development of the resources of the State.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Isn't your time nearly expired?

THE PREMIER: Perhaps it will be convenient to hon. members if I occupy the time till 6 o'clock.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

THE PREMIER: I say it is our business to encourage investment, and to induce capitalists to come to the country. The men engaged on our railways, the men in the service of the State, the wharf labourers, the carters, and all other workers are interested in seeing our industrial pursuits carried on with vigour. Canada has been largely made the country that it is to-day by the large influx of money that has gone into that country to develop its resources; and the United States largely owes its present position in the world to the vast amount of liquid funds it has at its command. We have very great natural advantages, which must be implemented by the inflow of large amounts of capital, so that our natural advantages may be made the highest possible use of. I hope the day is not far distant when we shall be not merely primary producers, but also secondary producers, and have industrial pursuits which will be carried on more vigorously than they are now. In a sense, this is what the meat company which is to be established down the river will be doing, because not only will they prepare frozen meat for export, but they will prepare tinned meat, and deal in wool and other products, and become a great industrial concern. For what purpose do we send our railways into the West? To enable settlers to use the land more fully. We lend money to settlers, and for what purpose? To expedite their successful occupation of the land. We lend certain moneys to miners and mining companies, and for what purpose? To encourage further prospecting. We advance moneys to workmen, and we do this for the purpose of enabling them to get healthier homes and to make their lives happier. You cannot improve one section of the community without other sections experiencing a reflex benefit. As it is with the human body so it is with the body politic; if one part suffers the rest suffers; if the parts be healthy then the whole will be healthy. No craven-hearted man ever discovered a new continent, and no lover of ease ever tackled a scrub or penetrated into the Western plains; and no Government is worthy of its name which shrinks from developing the resources of the country.

MR. RYAN: Or break its pledges to the electors.

THE PREMIER: This Government have not broken their pledges to the electors, but are honestly carrying out their pledges, and in the coming days it will be recognised by the people that we have carried out our pledges in a way which is for their interest and benefit. Our finances are perfectly sound in every possible way. It must be gratifying

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to the Committee and to the community to know that the leader of the Opposition has in no way impugned our finances. The hon. member has spoken on behalf of his party, and he has no fault to find with the finances of the State. The finances are sound, the country is prosperous, and the people are contented, and I am certain that in the future Queensland will rival in these respects any part of the King's dominions.

Mr. THEODORE (*Chillagoe*): During the hon. gentleman's very excited remarks regarding the proposed operation of the American meat trust in Queensland, he entirely overlooked the interest of the consumer. The hon. gentleman seemed to be highly delighted that a meat trust is coming here, evidently to exploit someone.

The PREMIER: I did not say so. I said they would be a benefit to the producer.

Mr. THEODORE: There could be only one inference drawn from the hon. gentleman's remarks, and that is that he was delighted that an outside company should have the opportunity of exploiting the country, and that he had no regard for the consumer in the matter. The export meat trade operations of the trust in America has been this company, but what benefit will the local consumer derive from their operations? This will lead to putting up the price to the gentleman.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The local consumer benefits if the general community benefits.

Mr. THEODORE: Does the local consumer benefit by the operations of an exploiting meat trust? I am surprised that

[7 p.m.] the hon. gentleman did not show some anxiety in connection with the commencement of operations in Queensland of that beef trust. The result of the operations of the trust in America has been to raise the retailed price to 13d. per lb. and upwards, and I consider that we should not welcome the introduction of anything that will lead to putting up the price to the consumer in Queensland.

The PREMIER: Hear, hear!

Mr. THEODORE: That, however, is by the way. In connection with the financial policy of the Government, I must express my surprise that they have not shown some desire to meet the recommendation of the Auditor-General regarding the practice that was recently introduced in connection with our public finances of paying July accounts in June.

The TREASURER: We have never done that.

Mr. THEODORE: What happens is that the commitments for the previous year which otherwise would be paid in July are gathered in and paid in June.

The TREASURER: The true business principle is to pay what has accrued for the particular month.

Mr. THEODORE: It is a principle that has only recently been recognised by the Government, as is clearly shown by the Auditor-General on page 2 of his last report. According to a table he gives in his report this innovation was introduced in 1910 for the first time.

The TREASURER: Was he not referring to the amount of £70,000, which was earmarked for the University?

Mr. THEODORE: He was referring in a general way to the question of paying bills usually presented for payment in July, and

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gathering them in and paying them in June, evidently for the purpose of avoiding the necessity of paying a large amount, which would in that case be surplus revenue, into the public debt reduction fund. He makes this statement—

“The following shows the expenditure for the month of July in each of the past four years, illustrating the effect of the anticipatory expenditure during 1909-10 and 1910-11:—

July.	Account Old Year.			Account New Year.			Total.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1908..	171,661	11	4	84,061	16	5	255,723	7	9
1909..	187,407	19	6	81,051	0	3	268,458	19	9
1910..	77,517	4	9	150,763	10	4	228,280	15	1
1911..	89,710	7	4	135,662	19	7	225,373	6	11

The amount of the account for each month in each of these cases is within £20,000 or £30,000 of each other; but, because of the juggling with the finances during 1910-11, it is made to appear that the amount for July account old year is £77,517, and in the account new year £150,000. The only reason that can be given for adopting the practice is not the reason given by interjection by the Treasurer, that it is the ordinary business way, but it is an attempt to escape the obligation of the Government regarding the public debt reduction fund. They are using these surpluses as ordinary revenue, and introducing a practice in order that later on when faced with a lean year they may pay only eleven months accounts, and present to the public a wrong financial position. Because the Auditor-General sees some evil in this, he has recommended that a departure should be made from the practice; and I want to know why the Government has not seen fit to carry out his recommendation. I maintain that any Government in power should carry out faithfully the recommendations made by that officer. The newspapers have commented on the position that this evidently is a desire to fool the public. When the first small surplus of a few thousand pounds was presented, the Government could have presented a surplus of over £200,000, but the amount would have gone towards the reduction of the public debt. By the practice introduced by the Government, however, they escaped the obligation. Next year, if they are faced with a declining revenue, and find that their estimate is not likely to be fulfilled, they can pay the accounts for eleven months, and defer payment of the twelfth month, and present another faked balance-sheet.

Mr. FORSYTH: I do not think they will do it.

Mr. THEODORE: Do you mean that you do not think there will be any necessity?

Mr. FORSYTH: I do not mean that.

Mr. THEODORE: Why do you think they will not do it?

Mr. FORSYTH: It would be most unjust and unfair.

Mr. THEODORE: Why do you think they introduced the recent practice?

Mr. FORSYTH: I think the previous practice was wrong.

Mr. THEODORE: Other States do it.

Mr. FORSYTH: I do not agree with other States.

The TREASURER: It is the proper business practice.

Mr. THEODORE: I cannot accept that statement. Members of Parliament must rely on the authority of the Auditor-General regarding these things. The Auditor-General has referred to this matter on more than one occasion; on the last occasion he referred to it in rather strong terms, and recommended the abandonment of the practice. The Auditor-General was perturbed over the matter, and after considerable trouble he found there was nothing to which he could take exception as being illegal, but he recommended that the practice to which I have referred should be no longer continued. The hon. member for Murrumba's assertion that an alteration is unnecessary cannot be accepted, and it is evident that the hon. gentleman is endeavouring to apologise for the Government in this matter.

The TREASURER: A business man who makes up a balance-sheet in the way you suggest would be doing a highly improper thing.

Mr. THEODORE: Is not the Auditor-General a business man?

The TREASURER: I do not say anything about that.

Mr. THEODORE: That is what the Treasurer means. He does not give a hang for the recommendations of the Auditor-General. It is just the same as men who are careless of their duties to their masters, and they do not give a hang for auditors. They would rather not have auditors at all.

Mr. FORSYTH: You suggest that, if there is a lean year, the payments for June will be held back next year.

Mr. THEODORE: That is what will be done by this Government.

Mr. FORSYTH: They cannot do that.

Mr. THEODORE: Instead of paying a large amount into the public debt reduction fund, all this revenue had been expended, and when a lean year comes along they will balance their books by discharging to the next year certain obligations which should be met this year.

The TREASURER: If you had any knowledge of business you would not talk on those lines at all.

Mr. THEODORE: Our knowledge of business on these matters must be guided by the Auditor-General. He is the highest authority on our public accounts. He is an officer of Parliament, and he is the one man who has full access to all the public accounts, and he has full authority to investigate them.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: So long as they do not leave out any payments, we have no reason to complain.

Mr. THEODORE: I should have no reason for complaint at all if the Government followed the practice which they have been following for years. It was only started when the Government were met with the necessity of paying towards the reduction of the public debt a large sum of money. If hon. gentlemen opposite were not satisfied that the practice adopted in Queensland for so many years was the correct one, they could have easily met that difficulty by introducing a new Audit Act, and by making special arrangements for the introduction of a new practice regarding these things. Neither the Premier nor the Treasurer, in the Financial Statement, made any important reference to the question of meet-

ing our present public debt by providing for an adequate sinking fund to pay for our loans.

Mr. FORSYTH: There is a sinking fund provided.

Mr. THEODORE: I know there is a sinking fund provided for the £9,900,000 loan passed in 1910, but there is a sinking fund of 10s. per cent. only in connection with that loan, and I think that that is ridiculously inadequate. I consider that any sinking fund on loans for works that are not permanent to be adequate should be of such a nature as to secure the retirement of the loan in fifty years.

The TREASURER: What are our loan moneys spent on?

Mr. THEODORE: Mostly on railways, but railways are not always permanent works. (Government laughter.) They knew in connection with the Cairns Railway that portion of it fell into the Barron River last year, and it cost the State £60,000 to put it in order again.

The PREMIER: That line was reconstructed out of revenue.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: It cost £80,000.

Mr. THEODORE: The Secretary for Railways admits that it cost even more than I said to put that line in order. Our present system of railways appears to be permanent just now, but we can never tell when there will be an introduction of some invention which will make scrapiron of all our railways. The introduction of the mono-rail may be the means of relegating all our present railways to the scrapheap. The Minister for Railways may laugh, but many things have happened that appeared to be just as impossible as that.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I was not laughing at all.

Mr. THEODORE: We have spent £26,000,000 on our railways, and if an invention comes along, and they are turned into scrapiron, we will find ourselves in the position that we have made no preparation to reduce the debt which was incurred in connection with the building of those railways.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We have a redemption provided for our last loan.

Mr. THEODORE: Yes, a sinking fund of 10s. per cent., but it is not sufficient, and there is no sinking fund provided for any previous loans.

Mr. FORSYTH: Do you want a sinking fund in connection with previous loans?

Mr. THEODORE: Yes.

Mr. FORSYTH: Where will you get the money?

Mr. THEODORE: That is the same old thing, "Where will you get the money?" We could build our railways out of revenue if our taxes were properly adjusted. (Ministerial laughter.) Hon. gentlemen laugh. That is the same guffaw which has met similar proposals in other Parliaments. If our taxation was adjusted a little better we would be able to raise sufficient revenue to carry on the necessary public works out of revenue at the present time. We could build over 200 miles of railway in a year at a cost of a little over £1,000,000. The Premier will admit that 200 miles of railway would be a fair amount to build each year.

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The PREMIER: We could build 250 miles for £1,000,000. I admit 250 miles would be a fair proposition for each year.

Mr. THEODORE: It would suit all our requirements for some time to come. Well, I consider that £1,000,000 could easily be raised by a slight adjustment of taxation.

Mr. FORSYTH: How would the slight adjustment of taxation come in?

Mr. THEODORE: There are plenty of avenues of taxation. We could have a fairer adjustment of the income tax, and we could have something in the nature of a land tax.

Mr. FORSYTH: You think that would give you sufficient money?

Mr. THEODORE: We have had a number of surpluses, and hon. members will remember that one year we had a surplus of nearly £500,000. There are plenty of ways by which the Premier could alter his policy and increase his surplus each year.

The PREMIER: I wish to goodness I knew how.

Mr. THEODORE: The Premier is too afraid of his political friends.

The PREMIER: I do not want to increase taxation.

Mr. THEODORE: You do not want to increase taxation on your own political friends.

The PREMIER: They are the only ones who are paying it just now.

Mr. THEODORE: Everyone in the community is paying because it is being passed on. The consumers are really paying the tax: it is passed on to them.

The PREMIER: And you want to add to their burdens.

Mr. THEODORE: I want to see taxation so adjusted that the State can get some of the unearned increments of land values, and use it as revenue for the State.

Mr. GUNN: You want your political opponents to pay it.

Mr. THEODORE: Nothing of the kind. Many of our political friends will have to pay it. If the Premier adopted the policy which I have indicated he would be able to build 250 miles of railway each year.

The PREMIER: I am dying to know how to do it.

Mr. THEODORE: We have increased our revenue by £1,000,000 within the last few years, and it would not be hard to increase it another £1,000,000. The Minister for Railways knows that by building railways he enhances the value of private property, and if he got that unearned increment it would help him to pay for the building of the railways.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The people have to take up the responsibility to the extent of 3 per cent.

Mr. THEODORE: That is a responsibility which they never sought to shirk. It seems to me that here is an avenue for great reform regarding our finances. The hon. gentleman never looked at it in that light before. Hon. gentlemen opposite cannot get away from the old borrowing policy. They always want to go to some other people and some other land to borrow money for the construction of works in our country.

The PREMIER: Can you tell me any place where your scheme is put into operation?

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Mr. THEODORE: There are a great many good schemes that are not at present in operation.

The PREMIER: I am just thirsting for information on the matter.

The TREASURER: Tell us where your Labour friends have put it into operation.

Mr. THEODORE: The Commonwealth Government has put it into operation. They use revenue for many things that were previously provided for out of loan money. I know that hon. members opposite would emulate the policy of the Federal Government in that matter were it not for their own political friends.

The PREMIER: We do not want to follow the Commonwealth.

Mr. THEODORE: The hon. gentleman would have been in an awkward predicament a few months ago had it not been for the Commonwealth coming to his assistance.

Mr. BOOKER: We have heard that before.

Mr. THEODORE: That is no reason why you should not hear it again. We find that we have been confirmed in the opinion that we then expressed, that the Government were then in an awkward financial position, and that they were in the condition of possibly having to close down all their public works.

The PREMIER: Not at all.

Mr. THEODORE: In addition to that, the hon. member had the effrontery to appear before the electors of Queensland and say that they were not in a difficult position. He said he could get millions at 3 per cent.

The PREMIER: Who said 3 per cent.?

Mr. THEODORE: His political friends.

The PREMIER: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. THEODORE: The official organ of the Government—the *Courier*—was using the same argument during the election campaign. The Hon. the Premier came to North Queensland, and at the little village of Port Douglas, where he thought nobody would notice what he said, he used the argument again.

The PREMIER: I never spoke of 3 per cent.

Mr. THEODORE: You said you would have no difficulty in getting money at that rate. Here is what the *Courier* of 19th April says, and it was using the argument as it was used at the time by the Government and its supporters—

“Taking their cue from the leaders, many of the socialistic candidates are talking about the loan moneys presently due, and asking how they are to be met, inferring that the Government will be unable to meet its obligations.

“So far as the leaders are concerned, this statement may have been made through ignorance, the only alternative being that it is a wilful attempt to mislead the electors. . . . So far from it being something to be dreaded, the falling due of some of the Queensland loans would be welcomed at the present moment, for the amounts would be immediately taken up at a less rate of interest than that now being paid. For instance, on the figures mentioned by the socialist candidates—£14,000,000—4 per

cent. interest works out at £560,000 per annum. The loans referred to could easily be issued at 3 per cent.

(Opposition laughter.)

"It is a well-known fact that financiers do not care about lending to countries governed by the socialist element, owing to the danger of repudiation . . . and if any money is lent a high rate of interest is charged on account of the greater risk, whereas with a stable Government in power, and one which abides by the laws of the country, and sees that they are justly carried out, without fear or favour to anyone, there is always eagerness to invest or lend money, resulting in keener competition and a low rate of interest."

The PREMIER: Where is the socialistic State?

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Where is your low rate of interest now?

Mr. THEODORE: The hon. gentleman practised in this manner the policy of deception before the electors of Queensland. He knew the Government was in financial difficulties, but he deceived the people by leading them to believe there was no such difficulty.

The PREMIER: The people were well aware of the facts.

Mr. THEODORE: They were when the members of this party placed the facts before them. It is rather remarkable that the hon. member in his speech this afternoon made no reference to the position of the Government Savings Bank, seeing the great importance of the subject; and the Treasurer very casually dismissed the matter in his Financial Statement.

The TREASURER: The Treasurer seems to be doing much for your discomfort. You have been trying to ruin Queensland, and I am trying to save it. (Opposition laughter.)

Mr. THEODORE: The difficulty with the hon. gentleman is that he cannot conceive of a difference between himself and the country, or between his Government and the State. Because this party is trying to find out the defects in the policy of his Government, he thinks they are trying to find out defects in the country, which, it is unnecessary to say, is an entirely different thing. He says—

"When it is remembered that Savings Bank funds made available by the purchase of Government security are wholly expended in and for the benefit of the State, and are used for railway construction, for the purchase of the estates, for closer settlement, for loans to settlers by the Agricultural Bank, and to aid in the erection of homes under the Workers' Dwellings Act, the people of Queensland should co-operate with the Government to assist them to retain this business, and to resist the encroachment of the Commonwealth Government."

Is that not an attempt to deceive the Committee and the country? What does he think the Commonwealth Government is going to do with the money placed at its disposal? Is it going to expend it, as the hon. member for Murrumba has suggested, in a foreign country? Is it going to lend

it to Italy to finance them in their war against the Turks? I do not think that is a reasonable suggestion for any member on the Government side to make. The Commonwealth Government could make good use of this money.

Mr. FORSYTH: We want it spent in Queensland.

Mr. THEODORE: The Commonwealth Government made a fair proposition to the combined States, and those States would have done well if they had accepted it.

Mr. FORSYTH: It is a cruel thing to try and take this money away from us.

Mr. THEODORE: There is no suggestion on the part of the Commonwealth of doing that at all. With the Commonwealth's proposal there would probably have been more money available for Queensland than there will be otherwise. The Commonwealth offered to take the States in as shareholders, and to let the States participate in the management of the banks, and the Commonwealth was willing to make loans to the State Government of 75 per cent. of the deposits. It made that proposal.

The PREMIER: And we made the same.

Mr. THEODORE: It was ridiculous for the hon. member to make such a proposal to the Commonwealth Government. The Commonwealth offered the State 75 per cent. of the deposits, and that was right enough; but I do not see why they should have taken in the State Governments into the management. Why should six different Governments interfere in the business? As I have already said, the Commonwealth would have allowed the States to retain 75 per cent. for their own purposes, and there is no doubt 20 out of the other 25 per cent. would have also been spent in the States. In fact, the possibilities are that in States like Queensland, where there is more room for development, there would have been more than 25 per cent. spent. Anyhow, when it comes to the question, let me ask the hon. member for Murrumba what right have the States to consult and wrangle with the Commonwealth regarding the Savings Bank? Does he not think they should consult the depositors? Are not the depositors to be considered? And if this Government had the best interests of the depositors at heart, they would allow the managers of the bank to buy the very best security.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: The depositors will answer that question themselves.

Mr. THEODORE: It would be much better from the depositors' point of view if the managers were permitted to purchase the best available security. They could get more than 3 per cent., and that would be a perfectly reasonable proposition from the depositors' point of view. In all this business there has been no regard whatever to the depositor. There had merely been a desire to get cheap money.

The PREMIER: There has been no other desire on the part of the Commonwealth.

Mr. THEODORE: The suggestion that the Commonwealth is going to spend the money in foreign countries is puerile, and had it not been for the political antagonism of the State to the Commonwealth Government, the latter would most probably have

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entered into the agreement suggested by Mr. Fisher, whereby they would have retained 75 per cent., and the Commonwealth would have had the other 25 per cent.

The PREMIER: What we offered was just as reasonable.

Mr. THEODORE: The hon. gentleman knew that before he made that offer the Commonwealth Government had decided to enter into the banking business, and this is an essential branch of the banking business. They could not carry out a proper banking business and allow the States to run one portion of the business, and the

[7.30 p.m.] Commonwealth another portion of the business, on the understanding merely that they got 25 per cent. of the funds. It would have been very much better for Queensland, and I venture to say there would have been more money available—there would have been more depositors—if there had been an amicable arrangement between Queensland and the Federal Government in this matter. At the present time there is going to be a war carried out between the two Governments in this sphere of action.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Who declared the war?

Mr. THEODORE: The State Government.

GOVERNMENT MEMBERS: No, no!

The PREMIER: You have a very perverted view of the case.

Mr. THEODORE: Because the hon. gentleman did not accept the reasonable offer made to him, he now calls any reasonable view of the matter a perverted view. The hon. gentleman cannot view any Commonwealth activity with any degree of equanimity.

The PREMIER: Quite.

Mr. THEODORE: I suppose the hon. gentleman admits that the Commonwealth Government is going to get a great deal of this Savings Bank business.

The PREMIER: I hope not.

Mr. THEODORE: It is no good hoping, when the hon. gentleman must know that they are going to get a good part of this business, and the State Savings Bank will suffer to a certain extent: perhaps not to the whole extent of the business that the Commonwealth will get, but they will suffer a loss of more than 25 per cent. of the present business. That is a reasonable assumption, so that the State after all will come out to the bad so far as that arrangement is concerned, and how will they explain their attitude?

The TREASURER: Can you justify the action of the Commonwealth Government in saying, "You have established your Savings Bank, and now we are going to take it from you, and repay you less a discount of 25 per cent.?"

Mr. THEODORE: If the different States had done their duty in regard to this question of the banking business, the Commonwealth Government would not have interfered. It is a legitimate sphere of action for the Commonwealth Government.

The HOME SECRETARY: It was never conceived originally that they would interfere in that sphere.

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Mr. THEODORE: It was always conceived, and as soon as the Commonwealth Government saw that there was likely to be opposition to the scheme on the part of the States, they made a reasonable offer to the States.

The TREASURER: You are trying to keep up your reputation in this House of attempting to belittle the States as against the Commonwealth.

Mr. THEODORE: Under the proposals of the Commonwealth Government, the States would have benefited, because there would have been more money available. More branches would have been opened, and there would have been a bigger business generally, and more encouragement to depositors; and, further than that, they would probably have offered a better rate of interest than can be offered by the States. I think, after all, the depositors in this matter should be considered.

The TREASURER: Yes, and we are considering them, and they recognise that too.

Mr. THEODORE: I am afraid that the hon. gentleman is wrong. I am afraid he has some fear in regard to this matter, and I think the depositors are recognising who are their friends in that respect.

The HOME SECRETARY: They are.

Mr. THEODORE: I now want to refer briefly to the railway policy. This is a matter touched upon by the Premier. It is very evident that this Government, during last year and right up to the election, made an attempt to curry favour with the electors regarding their railway policy, and now they find, having gulled the electors sufficiently for the time being, they have to put the true position before the electors, and have declared that they cannot go on with their railways. The remarkable thing is that the electors were so easily gulled in this matter. They could not see that an increasing loan expenditure year after year could not go on for ever, and the railway policy, which was introduced last year, and the railway Bills which were passed through this House, were merely attempts to offer a sop to certain electorates in the Southern districts in order to get their support, and there has been no reasonable attempt or desire on the part of the Government to carry out their proposals.

Mr. MACROSSAN: Were you not in a position to point that out?

Mr. THEODORE: That position was pointed out vigorously in the session before last, when the wild-cat railways were introduced.

Mr. MACROSSAN: Could not you have pointed out the position to the electors?

Mr. THEODORE: The Government candidates were unscrupulous—(Government laughter)—and they also had the power of the Press placed at their disposal, which is such a good machine by which the electors can be deceived.

Mr. RYAN: The speech of Mr. Vowles, the member for Dalby, is a complete answer to them.

Mr. THEODORE: The attitude recently taken up by members of that side bears out how unscrupulous members on that side were when they went before the electors, regarding the railway policy of the Government;

promising railways in every district which they must have known could not be constructed, and some of the candidates themselves were deceived, as witness the attitude taken up by the hon. member for Dalby. That hon. member was deceived, and the member for Warwick and the member for Cunningham were also deceived.

Mr. MACROSSAN: Do you say the Government are spending too much or too little on railways?

Mr. THEODORE: It has been stated here time and again, and I say it again, that because of the financial policy of the Government, they are landing themselves in a financial morass. They have been spending increased amounts of loan money year after year, which they could not keep up, and which they knew they could not keep up, and now they have practically closed down all railway construction. The hon. gentleman talked about the intention of the Government to go on constructing agricultural lines. That is another attempt to deceive the Committee. After giving a definite promise in one case—to my certain knowledge a definite promise was given by the Minister for Railways for the construction of one agricultural railway—

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Where was that?

Mr. THEODORE: From Tumoulin to Cedar Creek. That railway is not to be proceeded with.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The line was passed last year.

Mr. THEODORE: The line was passed last year, and now it is closed down, and the Government have told the people so, quite callously, because there are hundreds of settlers there who spent their all in preparing their selections in anticipation of a line being built, and who will be entirely ruined if the line is not constructed. The statement of the Premier regarding one of the other railways—the Mount Cuthbert Railway—was that they could not shift the plant; because the plant was there they must go on with that railway. In connection with the Tumoulin to Cedar Creek Railway, the plant was there.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: The plant was not there.

Mr. THEODORE: The plant was there when the promise was made. The hon. gentleman knows that more than two years ago I introduced a deputation representative of the Northern people, asking for the construction of this railway. I do not wish to appear parochial—it is not because it is in the district I previously represented that I am speaking on this matter. It is because it is an agricultural railway, which should be built, but which is now being abandoned by the Government because they see the necessity of offering a political sop to some of the Southern portions of the State, and they do not care about the North.

Mr. FORSYTH: There is £10,000 on the Estimates for it now.

Mr. THEODORE: I want also to call attention to the enormous increase in loan expenditure. There has been practically no reference made to this by the two hon. gentlemen on the Ministerial benches who

have spoken on the Financial Statement—the very dangerous increase of loan expenditure in the last year or two. In 1903-4 it was £603,805.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: It was a shame to the country it was not more.

Mr. THEODORE: In 1904-5 it was £225,466, in 1905-6 it was £297,624, in 1906-7 it was £333,570, in 1907-8 it was £1,033,676, in 1908-9 it was £1,247,821, in 1909-10 it was £1,486,216, and in 1910-11 it was £1,995,301. In 1911-12—last year—it was £3,324,248. Do Ministers expect that the people believed that that rate of loan expenditure could be continued? I know that the hon. member for Murrumba did not believe that, because he warned them that the rate of loan expenditure was too high, but he must have known that that rate of loan expenditure was carried on last year in order to make political capital for his party. This year we see a decline—it is £2,000,000 odd on the Estimates.

Mr. FORSYTH: It was before the elections.

Mr. THEODORE: The hon. member knows that the elections were looming. I am not blaming him, I am blaming his want of perspicacity that he did not realise that the Government was introducing this policy merely for political purposes. This year they propose to expend £2,835,250. That also is an inordinately high rate of expenditure, and it is a rate that this country cannot keep up.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Why not? It is for railway building.

Mr. THEODORE: The hon. member knows that it cannot be continued. He knows that his Treasurer is pretty emphatic upon that point, and when they tried to get loan money for works they could not get it, until they arranged for works which would involve the expenditure of £3,000,000 in a year, which is not only an insane policy but one which they cannot carry out, because they cannot get money at a reasonable rate of interest to do so. Sooner or later the country will be faced with a serious position regarding the condition of the different industries.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: You would not go back to the year 1902 or 1904, would you?

Mr. THEODORE: When this party is on that side they will adopt a policy which will not involve an expenditure of £3,000,000 per annum, and I think there will be no necessity then to complain about the public works policy.

The TREASURER: You will follow the examples of your Brothers in New South Wales.

Mr. THEODORE: We certainly will not follow the policy of the Government in introducing wild-cat railways in the Western country, some of which will not pay for axle-grease.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Your party supported the Kidston Government when there were no public works at all.

Mr. MURPHY: The country was stiff then. (Laughter.)

Mr. THEODORE: I would like to call the Treasurer's attention to what appears to be a disparity in his table on page 3 of the Financial Statement, and a somewhat similar table in the Estimates. The appropriation in the Chief Secretary's Department for 1911-12 is given as £133,496, which is £2,927

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less than that which is stated under a similar item in the table to the Estimates. Of course I know that a similar amount appears as an excess under the item of Treasurer. The item is exactly that amount less, and appears on the same table in the Estimates. There may be some difference between the Chief Secretary's and the Treasurer's Departments, but it is remarkable that the disparity does not occur in the tables given in the Estimates. Instead of the excess being £62,000 the excess is really £65,021.

The TREASURER: That is just a book entry.

Mr. THEODORE: This seems a remarkable excess when the appropriation is only £153,000. What is the excess due to?

The TREASURER: Probably for immigration.

Mr. THEODORE: Probably for the payment of passage money for immigrants. It seems to me that before such a great excess of expenditure is incurred Parliament should be consulted. Full particulars are not given as to what the excess is due to, but we shall probably get it in the Auditor-General's report. I think Parliament should be consulted before £65,000 is paid for immigration in one year, over and above what has been passed by Parliament, and upon which Parliament has never been consulted. There was a great amount of money spent last year on immigration. This year there is going to be a small amount. It seems from the utterances of the Premier that only £33,000 provided for in the Chief Secretary's Estimates will be spent on immigration. Last year there was a considerable sum in addition to that provided by Parliament—£70,000 loan money and £30,000 out of the Chief Secretary's Department—and then there is this excess of £65,000. That seems a huge sum to pay in one year on immigration, and a large portion of it without consulting Parliament. Even the hon. member for Murrumba will not assert that Parliament had an opportunity of discussing that item.

Mr. FORSYTH: You have the opportunity of discussing how it is spent.

Mr. THEODORE: There is no information in the Financial Statement as to what that excess is spent for. I do not think the Government can justify the policy of spending over £100,000 on immigration in one year, and spending only £33,000 this year; or spending any sum on immigration without first consulting Parliament.

Mr. FORSYTH: It is £28,000 more than was appropriated, that is all.

Mr. THEODORE: I asked the Treasurer how that excess of £62,000 was spent and he says it was spent on immigration.

Mr. FORSYTH: Not in immigration.

The TREASURER: I said probably on immigration.

Mr. THEODORE: The hon. member for Murrumba, who probably is the real Treasurer, says it was spent on immigration. £65,000 should not be spent on immigration without consulting Parliament. No doubt when the hon. member is speaking he will tell us exactly what has been spent on immigration. The Premier has at last found the correct policy regarding immigration—the necessity of making conditions attractive and satisfactory enough for workers in this State, so as to attract immigrants without the necessity of paying for their passage. He

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admits that large numbers of people from the old country are being attracted to Queensland, no doubt because of the prosperity that Queensland is enjoying in many of her industries. And that is the policy which this party entirely concurs in. If we can make the conditions in Queensland good for the worker, there will be no necessity to pay scalp money to get immigrants to come to Queensland.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Do you think the workers in England are in a position to pay their passages?

Mr. THEODORE: Perhaps they are not, but large numbers are coming here. There is no doubt that the payment of scalp money to get immigrants for this State will not get us the best class of immigrants—the class who will remain in Queensland. The Premier made a passing reference to the mining industry, and told us that he believes that money can be spent on the Palmer Goldfields with good results. It is only lately that he has discovered that. The expenditure of money for deep sinking and prospecting on the Malbon gold and mineral fields has been advocated by members on this side of the House every time the Estimates have come up for consideration, and it is only lately that the Premier has decided that he will spend money on that field. I gather from speeches made on the Address in Reply, and from remarks of members which have been published in the newspapers, that the Government have undertaken to spend in Charters Towers and Gympie large sums of money for deep sinking.

The TREASURER: Hear, hear!

Mr. THEODORE: It seems to me that the determination to spend money in those places has resulted from a desire to give a political sop to constituencies which return supporters of the Government. Last year only £8,000 was voted for this purpose, the previous year the amount voted was only £8,000, and since 1908 the amount has not been greater than £8,000.

Mr. FORSYTH: It was £10,000 last year.

Mr. THEODORE: I stand corrected. This year a sum of £20,000 is put down on the Estimates for the purpose of encouraging deep sinking in constituencies returning members who support the Government.

The TREASURER: You know that is not correct.

Mr. THEODORE: I know it is correct, because before the Estimates were submitted to Parliament the money was allocated to particular districts. I have made applications for grants in aid of deep sinking and prospecting on certain mining fields in Northern Queensland, and I have always been told that until the amount was voted by Parliament no money would be available for that purpose. This year, before the Estimates were introduced, it was stated by certain responsible members that this money will be made available for the purpose of assisting mining in Charters Towers and Gympie. I am not saying anything against assisting those fields. Gympie is certainly entitled to grants for the purpose of testing deep ground, and so also are Charters Towers and other districts. In this matter of developing the deeper grounds in our goldfields we could profitably expend £20,000 each year, but such money should not be given as a political sop to those districts which support the Government.

Mr. FORSYTH: In 1908 the expenditure was between £8,000 and £9,000.

Mr. THEODORE: That may be so, but it does not affect my present contention. I hope that mining members will not overlook the necessity for having money made available for prospecting purposes. The money which is voted in aid of prospecting is not merely for equipping prospecting parties, but is intended to be used for the development of shallow ground—for exploratory work in shallow ground—and it is found very useful for that purpose. It also gives a great deal of encouragement to miners. But recently the amount voted for this purpose has been only the small sum of £2,000. This year also the amount asked for is £2,000. If the Government recognise that there is a necessity for assisting the mining industry, why do they not make £10,000 available for that purpose? Applications for grants from this vote have been received and approved by the department before the money is made available by Parliament. The result of this will be that during the remainder of the year there will be coming in from different parts of the country applications which cannot be satisfied. The expenditure of money on deep sinking and prospecting assists the mining industry directly, and it is an advantage to the whole State. We could profitably spend £20,000 a year in assisting deep sinking and prospecting. With regard to the question of increases to public servants, the leader of the Opposition rightly pointed out that the Treasurer made an inaccurate statement when he definitely stated that, apart from the members of the Police Force, no other public servant in the receipt of over £400 a year was given an increase.

The TREASURER: I repeat that.

Mr. THEODORE: The hon. gentleman himself pointed out that health officers in receipt of a higher salary than £400 have been granted increases.

The TREASURER: That was done before the Estimates were framed.

Mr. THEODORE: These Estimates are framed for this year, and have to be passed by Parliament. If the hon. gentleman thought there was an obligation on the part of the Government to give increases to certain officers outside those mentioned, could he not have stated that apart from the necessary obligations incurred by the Government no increases were given to officers who were in receipt of over £400 per annum? The increase to the superintendent at Goodna may be an obligation of that kind.

The TREASURER: You have already had that explained.

Mr. THEODORE: Of course we have had it explained, but the hon. gentleman still persists in denying that increases have been given to officers receiving over £400 per annum. There are numbers of public servants in receipt of £300 a year who are receiving increases. This year there are ninety-seven such officers, and last year there was a great many more. I do not begrudge an increase to the ninety-seven officers who are getting £300 a year or more, because the increased cost of living has affected public servants just as it has affected other persons in the community, and, no doubt, they deserve their increases. So long as increases are given each year on the principle of granting increases to all who deserve increases in their salaries, no matter whether they occupy high or low positions in the service, that policy cannot be cavilled at. The policy which this

party objects to is that of giving increases to the higher-paid servants and neglecting the low-paid servants.

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

After a pause,

Mr. HAMILTON (*Gregory*): Seeing that members on the other side do not seem inclined to speak, I wish to say a few words before the Statement goes through. The Premier told us the Statement was voluminous, candid, and far-reaching. I say it is far-reaching, because the Treas-

[8 p.m.] surer, in order to draw comparisons between the revenue for this year and other years, went back as far as 1902. I say that is a most unfair comparison, because the year 1902 was the worst year Queensland ever saw, while last year was one of the best. I am glad to say that the Premier has been drawn into giving us some information as to the railway policy of the Government. With regard to the Great Western scheme, he gave us to understand that the Government are going to abandon that particular line.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: He never made that statement.

Mr. HAMILTON: It is to be taken from the speech of the hon. gentleman that he is not going to continue the far Western line for some time to come. I say this Government got into power on false pretences. It is no use saying they did not go before the electors and make promises of railways far and wide. They promised railways that would take over ten years to complete. I think one member on the other side interjected that at the time those promises of railways were made the elections were not looming. I say they were looming at the time; and Ministers went about promising railways in all directions; and the Government got in under false pretences.

Mr. BOOKER: Quote a few.

Mr. HAMILTON: Jondowai was one, and it is hung up now. The people in that district were told by the Minister it was to go on. The farmers said they were afraid to go on with their cultivation because they did not know they would get the railway. They said they would not purchase farming implements unless they knew the railway was going to be made.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: I tabled the plans in the House the next day.

Mr. HAMILTON: They purchased their farming implements; but where is the railway to-day?

Mr. FORSYTH: There is a sum of £10,000 on the Estimates.

Mr. HAMILTON: What is the use of that to the people who purchased their implements? It is only on paper yet. They may have to wait two or three years for the railway.

Mr. WIENHOLT: Does not that apply to everyone alike?

Mr. HAMILTON: The same thing applies to other cases. They made promises which they must have known they would not be able to carry out. As far as the Western Railway is concerned, the Government have broken the terms of the Act.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: They would break anything.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: Break the Opposition.

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Mr. HAMILTON: The Great Western Railway Act includes the Western extension.

Mr. FORSYTH: To Camooweal.

Mr. HAMILTON: From Tobermory to Camooweal, and all other Western extensions—they all come under the heading of the Great Western scheme. The Act distinctly states—

“The Commissioner is hereby authorised to prepare the plans and thereupon forthwith proceed with the construction of the said railway.”

In section 6, it distinctly states—

“The construction of the Great Western Railway shall be commenced as nearly as may be simultaneously at Wallal, Blackall, Winton, and Malbon, and shall be continued from those places without interruption until the said railway is completed.”

Can the Government say they are carrying that out?

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You know the reason why the extension from Winton has not been started.

Mr. HAMILTON: I know it has not been started from Winton. I know the plant and men have been taken from Sulieman Creek to Mount Cuthbert for the construction of that line, though it would be only a few miles to complete the extension out to the Sulieman. The traffic over the line would justify its construction. Anyone who knows the country knows that it is the gate to the Northern Territory, and if that line is constructed there will be a very big traffic in cattle alone. I have nothing whatever to say against the construction of the Mount Cuthbert line, which is a line that, in my opinion, will pay, and ought to be built as it goes toward a gulf port and is in a very good mineral district; but I say that men should not be taken from the Sulieman line until that line is completed. At the last election my opponent pointed out that if the Government continued in office these lines would be carried out and completed. He also pointed out that I voted against some of those lines, which I did. I voted against the line which the Minister has intimated he has no intention for some time of going on with. I was in favour of the extension of the Western extensions, and I think it would be the best policy for the Government to continue the extension of our Western lines into the interior. Looking at the earnings of our railways, we see that the lines westward from the coast are our best paying lines.

Mr. BOOKER: The further they go the better they pay.

Mr. HAMILTON: If it was not for those lines the Railway Commissioner would not be able to show such a large amount of revenue as he has shown for the last few years.

Mr. MACROSSAN: Your deputy leader said it was a wild-cat scheme.

Mr. HAMILTON: He said that the way the railway went from Tobermory to Camooweal was a wild-cat scheme, and I say the same. It travels through my electorate for a good distance, and I know that country as well as any man in Queensland, and I say it will be a wild-cat scheme for many years to come.

Mr. BOOKER: Mr. Fisher will make the connection.

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Mr. HAMILTON: If we got a guarantee from the Commonwealth Government that they would make the connection from Pine Creek to Camooweal, then I would be prepared to take another view of the matter altogether.

Mr. BOOKER: Common sense would dictate that.

Mr. HAMILTON: Certainly common sense would dictate it, but that railway was rushed through the House without any guarantee from the Commonwealth Government that that would be done.

Mr. BOOKER: Mr. Fisher is anxious to make that connection.

Mr. HAMILTON: If Mr. Fisher, or any other Prime Minister who may happen to be in power, comes forward with a proposal of that sort, then I am prepared to reconsider what I said about that scheme, but as it is at present it is a wild-cat scheme. What I want to point out is that I do believe in the railway extensions to the far West, as by doing that we will conserve the trade of our interior for our own Queensland ports, but if we build this railway from Tobermory, we will not be conserving the trade for our own ports.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We are running West with the lines as fast as we can.

Mr. HAMILTON: But you are not going fast enough. At the rate you are going at the present time, some of those railways will not reach their terminal points in another decade. I think myself that before the second section of the line from Winton is gone on with, some notice should be taken of the petition sent in by the residents of that district, and that the line should be carried further north than it is at the present time.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: To Boulia?

Mr. HAMILTON: I do not say that it should go to Boulia, because I do not think that any Government can take into consideration any small town, but I think myself it should go close to Boulia, if not to Boulia, because it would traverse very good sheep country there. Then the Sulieman extension should be carried further north. A large petition has been sent down asking for the line to be deviated from Springvale to Boulia, and that should be complied with as near as possible. So far as the Statement itself is concerned, I think the Government can congratulate itself on the good seasons they have had, and on being able to show a surplus for the year. We know very well that a few months ago things were looking pretty black in the interior—and it is to the interior that we have got to look for our progress—and if those rains had not come just when they did, the finances of Queensland would have been in a precarious condition, and instead of a surplus there would have been a possible deficit. There are some things in the Statement which call for passing notice—and serious passing notice. There are some items here under the heading of “Agriculture” that I might refer to. According to your statistics we had an increase of our population last year through immigration to the extent of 13,000 or 14,000, at a cost of £162,000. We are told that the Government are bringing people out to settle the waste places of the State. We are told that they are bringing people out to become producers by settling on the land.

We see in the daily Press, almost every time that immigrants arrive here, that they are bringing large sums of money with them. We see different accounts of how much money these immigrants possess. We will be told that one man has £200 cash, seven or eight years' experience as a farmer, and that he intends to take up land. Well, under the heading of "Agriculture" in the Treasurer's Statement, we learn that last year there were 15,026 acres less under cultivation than there was in the previous year. There has also been a large demand for land, for we see by the Statement that no less than 6,730,464 acres of land were selected last year.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: There was a large increase in artificial grasses last year.

Mr. HAMILTON: It is quite evident that a lot of land must be going out of agriculture—it is not being tilled at all, and it must be put to some other use. Whether it is going into artificial grasses or not, I do not know; but it is not profitable for the State that this sort of thing should continue. We know that at the present time many railways which have been built into some of the richest farming districts of Queensland are not paying axle-grease. Some of them are in the Warwick district. Take the Killarney line, for instance. Just look at the figures there.

Mr. G. P. BARNES: Look at what we went through.

Mr. HAMILTON: Look at the Crow's Nest line, and other lines in that district. Some of them have not paid one-half per cent., yet we are told that farming is the backbone of the country. I think it would be a very good thing to insist that a certain amount of land should be put under cultivation. When the amending Land Act was going through the House, the hon. member for Maranoa suggested that there should be a condition attached to every application that was granted, that a certain amount of land should be put under cultivation. It would have been a very good thing if that had been adopted. We impose residential and improvement conditions, and I do not see why we should not make a condition that a certain area of land should be put under cultivation. That is only a fair thing, especially when we pass large sums of money every year to build railways into those districts, because without cultivation railways into farming districts are never going to pay. The railways will not pay if they have only got a few cans of milk to carry on them.

Mr. GILLIES: They are guaranteed lines.

Mr. HAMILTON: Yes, but we do not know how long that guarantee is going to last. Mark my word, you will find that in a few years' time the member who will not pledge himself to advocate the abolition of the guarantee principle on the railways will get short shrift from his electors.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They are paying the guarantee now.

Mr. HAMILTON: Yes, I know they are paying it now; but every time they are called upon to make up the deficiency, they make a noise about it.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: They have to pay it all the same.

Mr. B. H. CORSER: Didn't you support the guarantee system?

Mr. HAMILTON: Yes, I believe in it. I believe the guarantee system is a good thing.

Mr. B. H. CORSER: You are not a farmer.

Mr. HAMILTON: I do not think that you are one either. (Laughter.) Last year they spent £171,000 on agricultural stock, and we are going back every year from the point of view of agriculture. I do not think that the farming community appreciate the money Parliament is voting to assist them and benefit them. We have establishments for their benefit all over the State. We have Gatton College and State farms at other places all for the purpose of instructing the farmers in the most up-to-date and economical methods, yet in spite of all that money being spent we are not making any progress at all in agriculture. I think that a good deal of that money is being thrown away, and it is not being appreciated. The Statement shows that the value of all crops for the year was £3,135,792. Of this sugar alone amounted to a little over one-third of the total, so that it shows that, so far as cereals and other kinds of agricultural products are concerned, the area of land cultivated in the State is very small indeed in comparison with the area of the State and the area held under selection. As far as land settlement is concerned, the leader of this side of the House spoke of the great demand existing in all our Western countries for grazing farms, and I can thoroughly endorse what he has said, notwithstanding that the Government say they are making land available as fast as they can. For my part, I say that they could make double the quantity available, and that it would be taken up readily.

The TREASURER: Have we not established a record?

Mr. HAMILTON: You may have, but still I think you could easily double that record. I know men who have been trying for three or four years to draw selections, and have been unable to do so, and all the time their funds are becoming depleted. In this Statement it says that the gross land revenue is £843,402, and I want to ask the Minister how much of it is real revenue? It says £316,772 were obtained from pastoral rents, and we know that that is real revenue. But the rest is part of the purchasing price of land that has been and is being alienated. I do not call that revenue at all. It is a decreasing factor every year, and the only *bonâ fide* revenue is the money obtained from pastoral leases or grazing farms. If you put land up for selection at so much an acre, and the selector pays so much a year, with the privilege of becoming the owner of the land at the end of, say, twenty years, then what he pays you each year is not revenue, but purchasing price. The Chief Secretary was congratulating the Committee on the increase in the revenue from pastoral occupation, and I can endorse that. There should be a very big increase, because we know that the second period of reappraisal comes on this or next year, and it is only to be inferred that we shall get a larger revenue, because I know there are parts of the country where a much larger rate could be paid without doing anyone any injury whatever, while there are parts where a lesser rate than is now collected could be fairly paid. It seems,

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however, that notwithstanding the late resurreptions that have been made, and are being made from time to time, the revenue is still being increased. That shows a lot of land that was formerly idle is now coming under occupation, and I know of land that has been taken up these last couple of years that formerly for twenty or thirty years the Government secured no revenue from at all. People are now paying rent for land that they would not have looked at as a gift three or four years back. Not only that, but we know that from land that has been resumed, and which is being taken up as grazing farms, we are receiving an increase in revenue. And I say that when resumption is due at any time, that resumption should be made. The Chief Secretary said that is being done, and he challenged me to give specific instances of where it is not being done.

The PREMIER: Hear, hear!

Mr. HAMILTON: I do not want to mention specific cases on the floor of the House, but I could give him a good many specific instances.

The PREMIER: Hear, hear! We can deal with them.

Mr. HAMILTON: I have put in myself application that certain resurreptions should be made. We have been told that certain resurreptions were not made on account of there not being sufficient surveyors. I was told, in answer to a question I put in the House last year, that there were not sufficient, but later on we were told there is a surplussage of surveyors. We know, however, very well that there are large resurreptions that are due, and which are not being made.

The PREMIER: In what district?

Mr. HAMILTON: I can speak for my own district.

The PREMIER: Sheep or cattle?

Mr. HAMILTON: Both sheep and cattle. But I do not advocate resuming cattle country. We do not want resumed country if it is not fit to put sheep on it, because we know that people do not take up small areas on which to put cattle. I know of country that I have asked to have resumed, but unfortunately it has not been done. I would here like to make a comparison between the benefits to the State of its different industries, and I would first like to say that when the question of railways is brought up we find that when railways are asked for the Western country the application is treated in a disparaging manner. We are told the railways are wanted more down near the coast.

The PREMIER: Your leader advocated that.

Mr. HAMILTON: My leader has never said a word against the Western extension.

Mr. RYAN: He criticised the Government for breaking its promises.

Mr. HAMILTON: Over 80 per cent. of the value of our exports is made up from our pastoral products, and that shows the pressing necessity of opening up the Western country.

The PREMIER: Hear, hear!

Mr. HAMILTON: And it shows that we should resume all the country we can. I know of a large run that was resumed. One—

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half was taken up in selections, and the other half remained with the lessees. That latter half is now carrying as much stock as the whole run formerly did, which simply shows the improvement that had been effected by the increased settlement.

The PREMIER: Were they overstocking?

Mr. HAMILTON: No. The hon. member challenged me to give some specific instances of runs that might have been resumed and had not been. I could do so, and as a matter of fact I have done so to the department on several occasions. Moreover, I have given them the information that there were a lot of people waiting for such resurreptions.

Mr. HARDAGRE: I gave a list last year that are not opened yet.

Mr. HAMILTON: It is said in the Financial Statement that—

“In 1910 there were thirteen establishments, employing 1,923 persons, engaged in the slaughter of stock for preservation as food, and there were so treated 167,064 cattle of all ages and 1,119,660 sheep, but though the cattle slaughtered last year numbered 200,256—an increase of 33,192—there was a drop in the sheep treated to 303,932, a reduction of 815,728. Whatever may be the reason for this fall, it cannot be said that the dry season will account for the whole of it.”

This is news to me. I can quite understand that there is a decrease in the number of cattle, because there are a number of very large stations that were cattle

[8.30 p.m.] stations a couple of years ago, but the cattle have been sold and sheep are taking their place. I know that there is a reduction in my own district in the number of cattle holdings, and I dare say that will apply to many other districts, and will apply to many more as we extend our railways. I cannot understand the reason of such a drop in the number of sheep that is available for home consumption. We know very well that the price of mutton to the consumer in Brisbane recently has been almost prohibitive, and why that should be so I cannot say.

The PREMIER: It is not because of the American meat trust.

Mr. HAMILTON: I have never heard of any great loss having occurred through the short stretch of drought out there a few months ago. I do not think there were sufficient losses in stock to cause such a large shrinkage in the numbers as mentioned in this Statement. I say that there is something radically wrong. I do not know whether the beef trust has got a hold here yet. Whether the meat trust is responsible for the large increase in price to the consumer I cannot say, but I hope that they are not going to get a footing in Queensland. There has been some very valuable information brought out by the Meat Commission, and, so far as they have gone, it appears that the grower does not get all he should for his stock, and the consumer pays far too much. The inference to be drawn is the middleman must be reaping a very nice harvest.

Mr. BOOKER: Have you heard that the meat companies are stirring up strife on account of the trust?

Mr. HAMILTON: I know the hon. member and his friends have been trying to get

additional works, and he tried to get State works, and if he stuck to that he would have had the help of this side

Mr. BOOKER: Don't you know I am still on it?

Mr. HAMILTON: We understood that since the American trust commenced operations here the hon. member and his friends have stopped the agitation for the State to step in and build cold stores.

Mr. BOOKER: I will give you some information later on.

Mr. HAMILTON: I hope the hon. member will, but I have been given to understand that that is the case.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: What about the experience of Western Australia?

Mr. HAMILTON: In that case the stock had to be brought from the North-West, and there was a shipping ring, and the Government stepped in, purchased their steamers, and started to carry the meat down the coast.

The PREMIER: They forgot to purchase the cattle.

Mr. HAMILTON: Then they started to open butchers' shops.

A GOVERNMENT MEMBER: They are shut down now.

Mr. HAMILTON: Perhaps the ring has done that. The Government have taken a lot of credit for appointing medical and dental inspectors of schools. They cannot say that they have done that voluntarily. They know very well that public opinion has forced them to do it. They would not take any steps until a request was sent from the Western districts some years ago. Deputation after deputation waited on them and got them to start it. The Government did not start the use of gauze netting for the schools out West until some of the shire councils started and shamed the Government into taking action.

The TREASURER: Are you objecting to the Government appointing these inspectors?

Mr. HAMILTON: No. I want to know whether they are going to treat the children. We know very well that a recommendation was sent down and the Government was asked to take action. They sent Dr. Taylor out, and Dr. Taylor recommended that a sanatorium should be established on the coast for those chronically affected with ophthalmia, but I have heard of no sanatorium being established on the coast for such cases. What is the use of a dental inspector having a look at a child's teeth, and sending a message home to his mother that he has a rotten tooth on top or a couple in the lower jaw?

The TREASURER: No; they are treating them.

Mr. HAMILTON: I wish to know if that is the case? They should treat the children. As regards placing money on the Estimates for an increase in the salaries of teachers, I think it is only a proper thing to do. We know very well the salaries given to male teachers is inadequate to live on, and many good teachers have been leaving the service. Just imagine a man in the far Western country with a wife and two or three children having to live on £110 a year! That is not an adequate salary at all. There is no class in the public service so badly paid as the lower-paid officers of the Education Department.

The TREASURER: Don't forget they received increases last year.

Mr. HAMILTON: I know they received increases, but they received very low salaries, and when we come to think that some men receiving £300 have been raised to £1,000, and others receiving £700 have been increased by £100, it is a fair thing that teachers only receiving £100 or £110, should also receive increases. Then, as regards the salary of some of the women in the little schools, I say the salaries are a disgrace, and it is no credit to the Government if they are giving the teachers, especially those in the lower grades, a slight increase. We know very well that a man, in order to become a head teacher, must be educated. It will probably have cost the parents a lot of money for that education, and cost the teacher a lot of study, because a school teacher must study for years and years, even after he enters the service, and it is pretty hard if, after years and years in the public service, and with the education they must necessarily have, they can only command a labourer's wage. That is all it means in some instances. The salary does not compensate men for brains at all. A man could get far better wages in many other callings, and teachers are leaving the department every day to take up other work. The department have great difficulty in getting male teachers to go out into the country districts to take charge of schools, simply because the salary is so small. I do not blame the department for this, because I believe the officers of the department and the Minister who was in charge of the department was sympathetic, and made the position much better. I believe the Under Secretary and everyone else would like to be in a position to give larger increases than they are able to give, but the Government do not supply them with the necessary money.

The PREMIER: The recommendation of the Public Instruction Department is adhered to in the present Estimates.

Mr. HAMILTON: What I object to is raising the salaries of men already getting £600, £700, and £800 a year, and passing over public servants like this. The Chief Secretary made the statement that there was no one—excepting the police—in receipt of over £400 a year who was getting an increase this year. There was a lot of instances read out by the deputy leader of this party, who are receiving over £400, and yet they want to shield themselves behind the excuse that a contract was made some time previously. How many more such contracts have been made?

The PREMIER: Every case that is cited there.

At 8.41 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN: Under Standing Order No. 11, I call upon the hon. member for Leichhardt to relieve me in the chair.

Mr. HARDACRE thereupon took the chair.

Mr. HAMILTON: Some of the increases which have been made this year, and more especially the increase of £200 a year, with a motor car and chaffeur thrown in, to the Commissioner of Police, is one that I shall have a little to say on when we get to the Police Estimates, because I do not think it is one that can be justified even by this Government. It is just the methods of Dublin Castle coming in.

The PREMIER: What is that for?

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Mr. HAMILTON: Repayment for services rendered. I shall have a little to say on this when we get to the Police Estimates. It is not a right thing to give these big increases to men who are already getting £400 or £500 a year, when other men, who have been twenty or thirty years in the service, are only getting £200 a year, and have wives and children to support. As far as the Statement is concerned, it would not matter what Government was in power; if they had the seasons this Government had they would have been able to show surpluses just as well. I believe that if another Government was in power, they would be able to show a surplus.

The PREMIER: The best revenue producer is the rain.

Mr. HAMILTON: If the rain had not come at the time it did, I think the Government, with the reckless expenditure they were going on with at the time, would have come to grief.

The PREMIER: When?

Mr. HAMILTON: The hon. gentleman said that these increases were entered into some time ago.

The PREMIER: Where is the reckless expenditure?

Mr. HAMILTON: The rain saved the position. There was a lot of reckless expenditure going on.

The TREASURER: I think you advised us to go on with the Western extension, because it was quite right.

Mr. HAMILTON: When you speak of the Western extension, I am not in favour of the trans-state scheme. I do not believe you should go on with that portion of the Western extension. When you went to the country before the election, and you promised the people that, if you were returned to power, you could borrow money cheaply; that notwithstanding you had to meet £13,000,000 or £14,000,000 falling due within the next three or four years, you had not the slightest doubt you could do it, and that you would welcome some of the loans falling due—the hon. gentleman must have known that he was not correct when he made that statement. I say that he went to the country under false pretences, and some of the members behind the Government were returned under false pretences. I do not say that was their fault; they had the promise of the Premier that these railways would be built in these districts. They have been returned, and what do they find now? They are told that the Government cannot go on with them. They are afraid to object to that, because they know they will be shunted like the hon. member for Fitzroy was shunted. We know very well that the hon. member for Fitzroy is not the only opossum in the tree that they would like to shoot. We know very well there is a gentleman in another place with a political gun loaded, which he is prepared to level at one or two more opossums in the tree. They are not game to open their mouths, although they know very well that they were returned on the promise that these railways would be built. I think that is not a fair thing at all. When a Government goes before the country they should give a truthful and accurate statement as to the state of the finances.

The PREMIER: We did, too.

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Mr. HAMILTON: They never told the people when they were before the country what the state of the finances was, because, before the House met, they had to go and get assistance from the Federal Government. That was not till after the election.

The PREMIER: Long before the election.

Mr. HAMILTON: They had to post the Bill home after the election, to ratify it.

The PREMIER: Everybody knew that the money was in our hands long before the election.

Mr. HAMILTON: The hon. gentleman gave the country to understand that he would have no difficulty in raising as much money as he wanted for railways.

The PREMIER: About the 20th or 23rd January that money was available—before the strike.

Mr. HAMILTON: I am quite sure that if they went to the country to-morrow, some of them would not come back to occupy the places they occupy to-day.

The PREMIER: There would be more of us.

Mr. HUXHAM (*Buranda*): I am going to speak briefly on the Statement, especially in regard to the matters that have been touched upon, because I recognise that members have spoken from their experiences in previous Parliaments, and even before that. But there is one aspect of the matter I want to dwell upon—that is the question of the expenditure during the coming year, which I fear most acutely the Government will fall in over.

The PREMIER: Which expenditure do you refer to—loan or revenue?

Mr. HUXHAM: Not from loan—from the general revenue.

The PREMIER: What department?

Mr. HUXHAM: I speak of it generally. The indications that we have at the present time show that we have undoubtedly bad times coming upon us. Nobody can shut their eyes to the fact that, during the last month, things have been very acute in Brisbane. That is not my experience only, but the experience of other hon. members in this House, and, if this is continued for any length of time, I am satisfied that the revenue which the Government is anticipating during the financial year will not be realised by a very large sum.

The PREMIER: Which of the sources will be affected?

Mr. HUXHAM: I think the general revenue—I am not detailing them at all. The Premier, when speaking just now, indicated that we should be lacking in income tax.

Mr. FORSYTH: It will be £20,000 less this year.

Mr. HUXHAM: Yes, £20,000 this year. The hon. gentleman, in my opinion, was very optimistic even in that, because I am satisfied, when we realise at the end of this year, with the bad times in front of us—I do not want to see them, I have suffered enough even this year, and want to see them better, but I do not shut my eyes to the fact that we are in for a bad time during this twelve months.

Mr. BOOKER: The aftermath of the trade disorganisation in the early part of the year.

Mr. HUXHAM: Nothing of the kind. Not only shall we in Queensland feel it, but it will be felt throughout the whole of Australia.

The PREMIER: Is that the result of the dry spell of weather?

Mr. HUXHAM: The dry spell of weather and the uncertain seasons that we may expect.

The TREASURER: Does not the agitator come in anywhere?

Mr. HUXHAM: The agitator does not come in anywhere. I think the agitator is often a blessing in disguise, as he shakes up the Government and awakens them to a sense of their duty.

The PREMIER: Assuming that our revenue expectations are not fulfilled, where do you propose to cut down expenditure?

Mr. HUXHAM: I am like my leader in that matter, and say, as he did, that when it becomes a question of adjusting ways and means we shall be over on that side of the House, and will look after the matter.

Mr. FORSYTH: When you get there.

Mr. HUXHAM: Our getting there is only a question of a short time. When the Government have raised the £15,000,000 which they are to obtain from the London market, then it will be time for us to step over there and see if we cannot do something that will be satisfactory to the country. When the Premier was speaking this afternoon and saying, "And then, and then," I interjected, "The millenium." I believe that then there will be a millenium, not only for the worker, but for the business man as well.

The PREMIER: "That will be joyful, joyful."

Mr. HUXHAM: It will be. I have casually dealt with the question of expenditure.

The PREMIER: No; you have dealt with the revenue.

Mr. HUXHAM: I am dealing with expenditure more than with revenue. We have had an increase in our revenue, but the expenditure has increased on almost parallel lines. According to the Estimates, the Government are increasing their expenditure by something like 9 per cent. That is an unwise procedure. I am glad that the expenditure is increased in some directions.

The PREMIER: Would you have us reduce the expenditure?

Mr. HUXHAM: I will point out where there is a large increase in expenditure which is, in my opinion, justifiable, and that is in the amount set down for our charitable and educational institutions.

The PREMIER: Over £800,000 in those two items.

Mr. HUXHAM: I do not begrudge that expenditure. If I had any ambition at any time to occupy a position in a Cabinet, no office would afford me greater delight than that which would place me in charge of our charitable institutions.

Mr. FORSYTH: I hope you will get it.

Mr. HUXHAM: I hope the time will come when I may, so that I may endeavour to do something to make the sick, the afflicted, and the poor more comfortable.

The PREMIER: Where would you get the money?

Mr. HUXHAM: The money would be raised somehow. I am with the Government in the increases which they propose to give to our charitable and educational institutions, but there must be some directions in which they might reduce expenditure. If the drought which the Premier anticipated in his speech this afternoon should come upon us, we shall not be able to stand the strain of this large expenditure, because our pastoral industry and other industries depending upon the seasons for their success will be knocked kite high.

The PREMIER: You have told us where we might increase expenditure, but you have not told us where we should decrease it.

Mr. HUXHAM: I have not told the hon. gentleman that, because it will be time enough to indicate where the expenditure should be reduced when this party go over to that side of the chamber. We do not begrudge the hon. gentleman and his colleagues occupying the Treasury bench for the next three years to come. After that we shall do something which, I hope, will be satisfactory to the people of Queensland.

The PREMIER: Would you support a considerable reduction in the expenditure?

Mr. HUXHAM: I am not going to give my idea of what should be done. It is for the Premier and the Ministry to do the right thing.

The PREMIER: I do not know where to reduce the expenditure; I tell you that honestly.

Mr. HUXHAM: Apparently the hon. gentleman does not know where to reduce expenditure. As I have already said, we on this side do not begrudge an increase in the expenditure on our charitable and educational institutions.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: You don't begrudge the increase to the railway men, do you?

Mr. HUXHAM: No, I cannot say that I do; the men who have been underpaid ought to receive increases.

The PREMIER: Would you reduce expenditure on public buildings?

Mr. HUXHAM: Look here, I am going on with what I have to say, and will say it in my own way. Reference has been made to the proposed increase to the Commissioner of Police, and I could not help noting an interjection by the hon. member for Croydon who said that Jack Story, the Under Secretary for Education, was worth a dozen Commissioners of Police. I am very much of the same opinion. The Under Secretary for Education has the administration of one of the most important departments of the State and he is drawing £700 a year without any "perks." That officer controls an expenditure of £493,768 per annum, whereas the Commissioner of Police, who has had his salary increased by 25 per cent., only controls the expenditure of £277,000 per annum. The Under Secretary for Education should receive an increase, and I hold that it is a grave injustice to overlook his claims when such a substantial increase is given to the

*Mr. Huxham.*]

Commissioner of Police, who has been made the pet of the Government, because, I suppose, of the signal service he rendered during the late upheaval. The Government ought to recognise the merit of the Under Secretary for Education in a more generous way than they have recognised it hitherto.

The TREASURER: I thought you were urging economy.

Mr. HUXHAM: Not a bit of it; I spoke just now approvingly of an increase in the education vote, and said I did not begrudge that increase or an increase for charitable institutions; but I contend that where a man is picked out for special treatment in the way the Commissioner has been selected, for an increase of salary, the matter is one which should be severely criticised. I hope that the Government will recognise the discontent that there will be throughout the whole public service when officers, who have served longer than the Commissioner, and have rendered as good service as he has, find they are kept at their previous salaries while the Commissioner is granted this large increase. During the last election there was a great deal of talk about converting our loans. The hon. member for Kurilpa was very keen on reconvert-

[9 p.m.] ing our loans with advantage to the State; and one of the strongest candidates on the Government side, who was not returned for Maree, was most emphatic on the subject. I suppose he got his information from public sources; and in advocating the conversion of our 4 per cent. loans to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., he hoped to reassure the public. I do not blame the Government for not being able to get loan money cheap. I believe we shall have to borrow money to keep our public works going on. I am just as keen as the hon. member for Chillagoe against the reckless borrowing of money by the Government; and I think loan money should only be spent on such works as will produce sufficient revenue to justify the outlay. The Minister for Railways would not put his own money into a venture that would show all expense and no profit.

The TREASURER: If you study table K relating to the Financial Statement, you will find that after crediting the revenue received from railways, and the interest on loans to local authorities, there is only £350,000 charged on the taxpayers.

Mr. HUXHAM: What about the bad times that are coming?

The TREASURER: Don't be a Jeremiah!

Mr. HUXHAM: I don't want to be a Jeremiah, but it is of no use to anticipate that good seasons are going to be continuous. There is one thing in the Treasurer's Statement at which I was rather surprised, though I do not blame him for it.

The TREASURER: He accepts full responsibility.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: I must ask hon. members not to interject.

Mr. HUXHAM: I want hon. gentlemen to give some information about the Seaforth Estate; I want to know why the interest charge on that estate was dropped in 1910. When the previous Government bought the Seaforth Estate for £226,000—

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: £22,000.

[Mr. Huxham.]

Mr. HUXHAM: The estate was bought for £22,000, and there has been an accumulation of interest of nearly £10,000; but that interest charge was dropped in 1910. I say that a suspense account should be opened, and interest charged against the estate. If the Government does not consider the estate is worth £22,000, it is just as well to cut it down to its real value, just the same as would be done in a business concern.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: On that principle we can put up the value of our railways.

Mr. HUXHAM: I would not object to that if the Government can show that the railways are worth more than appears on the Estimates. If a man buys a city property for £10,000, and the following year he knows it is worth £12,000, he gives its value as £12,000; but if it falls in value subsequently, he brings down the amount below £10,000 if necessary. It is always wise to re-assess our estates and bring down the amounts if they fall in value or increase the amounts if they rise in value. The old Indocroopilly bridge that was carried away by flood in 1893 is still put down as an asset.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: We have to pay interest on the cost.

Mr. HUXHAM: That does not matter. You have not the bridge. I maintain that if that bridge is at the bottom of the river covered with silt, or taken away, it is not an asset.

The TREASURER: With regard to repurchased estates, you will find that, generally speaking, the transactions have been so highly satisfactory that Seaforth can be put on one side altogether.

Mr. HUXHAM: I am not dealing with that aspect of the question. I say that the Government bought an estate some years ago for £22,000, and interest was charged against the estate up to the year 1910, when it had accumulated. In that year the interest had accumulated to over £9,000; and then it was dropped. I want to know the reason why. If that estate is not worth anything, it ought to be wiped out as an asset. If the land is not worth £22,000, and is only worth a £5 note, then bring it down to the £5 note. I want to know if the Treasurer will give me the information why they ceased piling up the interest on the Seaforth Estate in 1910?

The TREASURER: I was not there in 1910.

Mr. HUXHAM: I thought probably the Treasurer could give me the information. Another thing I would like some information about is in connection with the return which I asked for to-day. I do not want the Treasurer to imagine that there was any sting in my asking the question. However, I was not granted the return, as "Not formal" was called to it. My reason for asking the question was that I wanted to know whether we anticipated a profit on our Savings Bank transactions or whether we would have to use the money without any profit at all.

The TREASURER: Usually the Savings Bank has not made very much direct profit, taking into account the working expenses.

Mr. HUXHAM: That means that we shall have a loss.

The TREASURER: No.

Mr. HUXHAM: With a lack of depositors' fees coming in and the charges going on there must be a loss.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: There will be millions of depositors coming in.

Mr. HUXHAM: I would like to say here that I sympathise with the Government over the loss of that money from the Savings Bank.

The TREASURER: I would like to make an explanation if I may.

Mr. HUNTER: Who is making the speech?

The TREASURER: It costs less to run the Savings Bank now than it did prior to the Commonwealth starting them.

The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN: I must once again draw the attention of hon. members to the fact that there are too many interjections. Reasonable interjections are not objectionable, but when there are too many interjections it takes off from the time allowed to a member for speaking.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. HUNTER: The Treasurer is making the speech himself.

Mr. HUXHAM: I admit that provision is made in the Estimates for taking over grammar schools. The people where grammar schools exist have suffered, compared with the other towns, because high schools are established there. I do not object to high schools whether there are grammar schools or not, but seeing the advantage that the children have got who go to high schools it is time that the Government made a move on the lines of taking over the grammar schools, so that the children could have free entry into the grammar schools from the primary schools. We know the advantage the children have who go to high schools, because they can study and prepare the way for entering the University without having to go through the hardship and drudgery of winning a scholarship or bursary. If our grammar schools were taken over our children could go straight into them from the primary schools.

Mr. HAMILTON: They could qualify for that—not competition.

Mr. HUXHAM: No; simply by qualifying for it. In the case of the high school the fifth standard will qualify, but if children want to go to a grammar school they have to have special lessons and special study, and they have so much to do in connection with the competitive examination that they frequently break down. The children should have the chance of entering a grammar school as they have now of entering a high school. There is another point, so far as education is concerned, and that is the hardship which our teachers have to suffer. The hon. member for Gregory has dealt with that, but there is one case which is well worth considering, as it will show the treatment that the imported teachers receive over those that are here. Imported teachers come out here under a great advantage. They are given Class II. qualification, and they receive their steamer fares and a month's salary in advance, and they are looked after generally when they come here. Now, I have an instance of a teacher who was reappointed to a school in Queensland. I did not get this from the man himself, so I do not want him to be blacklisted. I got it from one of his friends. He applied for readmission to the

service, and he had to pay his own steamer fare down, and had no advantage given to him at all. Everything was made hard for him, while everything was made easy for the imported teachers. The general treatment afforded to our teachers is not what it should be. The imported teachers are given £162 a year and the Class II. qualification, but what a different footing our own teachers are placed on, as we have teachers in the service with fourteen years' experience getting £140 a year.

Mr. MACROSSAN: Haven't they got to pass an examination at home?

Mr. HUXHAM: They have not got to pass a local examination.

Mr. MACROSSAN: But have they not got to pass a qualifying examination at home?

Mr. HUXHAM: That may be so, but I maintain that the standard here is just as high as that in the old country. Why should not the teachers here have the same advantages as the imported ones? I sincerely hope that we shall not import any more teachers. It does not give much chance to ambitious boys who have a trait for teaching if they feel that whilst they are undergoing the drudgery imported teachers will be brought out to take the best schools.

Mr. HUNTER: If they do not pay a better screw, they will have to import a lot of teachers.

Mr. HUXHAM: I understand that when they advertised for teachers for Queensland over 400 applications were received to fill the positions that were offering. Now, with regard to the surplus. I take the Treasurer's word for it that the finances were not altered at the end of the twelve months in order to reduce the surplus.

The TREASURER: I explained in my Statement that the school buildings were paid for out of revenue instead of loan.

Mr. HUXHAM: If we bracket the expenditure for June and July in 1911, and also for the same months in 1912, we will find that the average expenditure for those two months in 1911 was £411,126, and in 1912 £431,940. If you look at the month of June for the last two years you will see that there is an excess of expenditure over and above the ordinary expenditure. There seems to be some method of working it which I cannot understand. For instance, the figures for four months in 1911 were—April, £297,906; May, £291,531; June, £596,878; July, £225,373. For 1912, the expenditure for those months was as follows:—April, £360,057; May, £360,522; June, £618,972; July, £644,918. So that it will be seen that the average for the month of June and July bracketed together is nearly double the expenditure of April and May in each year; and that, it seems to me, has been used by the Government. In 1912 we had the same interesting figures. For April it was £360,057. In May, £365,522. In June, £618,972; and in July, £244,918. So I think that there is some explanation needed why there should be an abnormal expenditure for those two latter months over the ordinary months of the year.

Mr. HUNTER: You do not suspect the Treasurer?

Mr. HUXHAM: I see some good in everything, though it is hard to get good

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out of some people. (Laughter.) I think I shall conclude my remarks by asking the Hon. the Treasurer to kindly explain later on how he accounts for this extraordinary discrepancy in the June and July returns as compared with the other months.

**THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS:** The State paying up its debts.

**MR. HUXHAM:** It seems to me there is an extraordinary sum of money being brought into one month that might well have gone to the reduction fund. At least, it will be admitted the expenditure seems abnormal.

**THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS:** There may have been an extra fortnight's railway pay.

**MR. HUXHAM:** Making all allowances for that, it seems that in the one year there is a sum of £240,000 that might have gone to the reduction fund instead of being used by the Government, and that in 1912 there was a somewhat similar position. If I get this information I shall be very well satisfied. In the meantime, I think there is a good deal in the Estimates that needs discussion, and I sincerely hope that on going through them the criticisms we may bring to bear will be noted by the Government, and that they will be able to adjust their figures on far better lines in their next Financial Statement.

**MR. GUNN (Carmarvon):** It seems to me that there is some reluctance on the part of members on this side of the House to speak on the Statement. (Opposition laughter.)

**AN HONOURABLE MEMBER:** You are ready.

**MR. GUNN:** Many of us are not ready, and although I am in that position also, I wish to say a few words before the Financial Statement goes through. The Hon. the Treasurer has brought forward a Financial Statement that he may very well be proud of. Some members think we are in a very prosperous condition, but it must be remembered that we have just passed through, comparatively speaking, a very severe drought, and under the circumstances I think the Financial Statement is much better than we might have expected. Personally, I am pleased with the finances of the State at the present time. There has been a great deal said about our railways, and I know, a few years ago, we passed very extensive railway schemes. Considering the drought we have passed through, and the demand for money all over the world, it is not surprising that we have been asked to cool down a bit on our railway construction. Because it is said that this or that railway is not to be immediately gone on with, I do not think that it should be said that a promise has been broken, for we all know that during all our lives we make promises, some of which we are not able to fulfil. One of us might make a promise to see another to-morrow morning at 9 o'clock, but during the interval a hurricane might come along and blow you into the Botanic Gardens—(laughter)—with the result that you would not be able to keep your appointment. A lot has been said about the Western Railways, and the hon. the deputy leader of the Opposition made reference to a lot of wild-cat railways. He had nothing good to say about the Western systems, but no sooner had he sat down than the member for Gregory got up to say that they were the only railways

that paid. He claimed that they paid to such an extent that they allowed the Government to build other railways. So it would appear that the hon. members on the other side are not all in accord as to what railways should be built—whether Western or agricultural lines. I think myself both systems should go on at the same time.

**THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS:** It is the other fellow's railway that is no good.

**MR. GUNN:** I have no interest in the Western Railway at all, nor in any other railways for that matter. I have a railway passing my own door, but in the interests of the State I would like to see railways right across the continent, in accordance with Mr. Kidston's scheme. I believe in that system, although I do not forget what has been said about the need for more agricultural lines. Still, I do not see how we can build more agricultural lines than we are constructing at the present time. It will be remembered that the Western railways pay well; the border line to Goondiwindi returns £5 16s. per cent., and the railway from Gowrie Junction to Cunnamulla £5 14s. per cent. If you come to the Killarney Railway, which goes through the cream of the Darling Downs, you find that it pays only 7s. 9d. per cent., and as for the Maryvale line, it pays nothing at all. Of course, it is under the guarantee system. If we are to build these agricultural lines it will be necessary for us to build at the same time Western wild-cat railways to pay for them, for if we do not we will not be able to afford the agricultural lines. Of course, there is a reason why the latter do not pay. Agricultural products, such as hay and corn, will not stand a high railway tariff. You have to charge low rates of freight for them, otherwise they would not be able to compete on the world's markets, and if you are going in for the raising of agricultural products at all you must carry them over the railways at low rates of freight. On the other hand, wool—which is the chief freight on the Western lines—stands a little bit of loading in the matter of freight, and the lines to the Western districts are thus able to materially assist in the building of the agricultural lines in the agricultural districts. The two systems must therefore go on together simultaneously. While speaking on the subject, I may point out that there is another line that might be very well continued, although I have no interest in it whatever. That is the border railway, which, I understand, is complete to Dirranbandi. I think it ought to be completed to right opposite to Bourke. It will carry wool all the way, and it is wool and other products from the grazing industry that are the mainstays of the State at the present time. About 80 per cent. of our exports are grazing products, and that industry has materially assisted in keeping the industries and factories on the coast going in the past. I have heard it said, "Why don't the Government induce people to go in for agriculture?" And when they sell them an agricultural farm, "Why don't they compel them to cultivate a certain portion of the land?" People do not cultivate land just for the fun of it. People cultivate land to make money out of it, and if you take a man by the scruff of the neck and hold him down on the ground and make him scratch, what advantage is that to the man unless he gets some

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money for his scratching? (Laughter.) The only thing to do is to allow a man to manage his farm in such a way that he can make money. The wages which have to be paid in Queensland—perhaps they may not be too much, but they are higher than what is paid in other lands where wheat and other produce is grown, and we must not expect to go in for agriculture until we have more people here to use the produce, or else we must pay lower wages. In the meantime, we have to go in for those industries which can afford to pay a higher wage. I have some agriculturists or horticulturists in my electorate who are making a good living out of the land, and the number is increasing very rapidly. The reason of that is that fruit culture is an industry which does not require the employment of any labour. The settlers are able to do all the labour themselves, and consequently they are able to make a very good living out of it. Then again, we have heard a great deal about the danger of the meat trust. There are meat trusts all over America, and I do not know that they have made meat any dearer to the American consumer. I do not think they have.

Mr. FOLEY: You do not know anything about it.

Mr. GUNN: I have heard a great many things that I do not think are true. The trouble with America is that there are too many consumers for the meat. There is not enough meat to go round, but here we have more meat than we require, and we will have to export some to America. Then, again, I have heard it stated that we should think more of the consumer of meat than of the man who grows the meat. That is to say, we should put an export duty on meat—that is the only way you can make meat cheaper to the consumer; the law of supply and demand fixed the price of meat to the consumer, and if you begin to artificially interfere with that law you will come to grief. For instance, if you put a tax on meat which goes away from Australia, what will it mean? There is a great portion of the interior of Queensland at the present time which is unoccupied, and it would be far better to have that occupied with cattle or some sort of stock; but if you make it unprofitable to grow cattle, instead of increasing our flocks and herds, we will decrease them. Then there is another thing: Members of the Opposition accuse the present Government of being a Queen street Government—that they govern everything for Brisbane—and in the same breath they advocate building abattoirs in Brisbane by the Government; and, again, they ask the Government to nationalise the trams and run them. Do not the trams belong to Queen street? And is not these abattoirs a Brisbane affair? Why should Brisbane have all these things? If you are going to have Government abattoirs, why not have them in Toowoomba, in Goondiwindi, and everywhere else? It is a municipal affair, and has nothing whatever to do with the Government.

Mr. FOLEY: We want them all over the State, not only in Brisbane.

Mr. GUNN: A nice sort of picnic you would have. Every station in Queensland has a butcher's shop, and every little camp has a butcher's shop. Are they all to be

run by the Government? Look at the red tape you would have. It would cost twice as much as at the present time. I imagine I can see the reason of this advocacy for abattoirs in Brisbane. I know it would be easier to inspect abattoirs, but at the same time it would be easier to organise the men working in the abattoirs than it is at present, as they are scattered all over the suburbs. When Opposition members wanted to strike, all they would have to do would be to go to the public abattoirs and say, "Down tools," and everybody would be brought to their knees for the want of meat. The Labour party would have a far better hold over the meat supply of Brisbane if public abattoirs were established than they have at the present time. Then there is another thing that has been referred to to-night, and that is the Savings Bank. I do not see why we should have two Savings Banks in every town in Queensland. I think it is a big mistake, and the people have to pay for these banks. The State was first in the field. We had our banks established in the different centres, and why should anybody else come along and set up in opposition? The people of Queensland deposit their money in those local Savings Banks, and we should use that money for the benefit of Queensland. As it is, the Federal Government—of course, they will use some of it on State matters, but what about the steam laundries in the Northern Territory and all sorts of things of that sort? Would not the money be better used in making advances through the Agricultural Bank or under the Workers' Dwellings Act? I have noticed that for years we have been paying a large sum of money towards humanitarian objects. It is a growing thing, and every year we give more and more towards hospitals, asylums, orphans, and so on.

Mr. FOLEY: Do you object to it?

Mr. GUNN: I do not object to humanitarian legislation at all, but I do not know but that we are making a mistake. We may be neglecting the strong and favouring the weak too much. It is all very well to be humane, and take care of our weaklings. I quite agree with that principle, but at the same time we should not neglect the strong. There are a great many weaklings in this State and in every other State, and it would be just as well if they were not allowed to perpetuate their species.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Would you pole-axe them?

Mr. GUNN: I would be as humane as the hon. member who interjects. For instance, there is the criminal lunatic. We have to keep him, but the criminal lunatic should not be allowed to perpetuate his species. He is not a valuable asset. This applies not only to Australia, but to the whole world. Look at France! The birth rate is falling off there, as it is all over the world. A great deal of the humanitarian legislation is accountable for that sort of thing. For instance, many years ago children used to work in the factories in England, and the birth rate was very high.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: So was the death rate.

Mr. GUNN: Then humanitarian legislation was brought about, and these children were taken care of, and not allowed to work

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in factories. Ever since, the birth-rate has gone down—as a matter of fact, it did not pay to have children—and that is what is happening all over the world, and the only way to obviate that is to make it pay to have children. This humanitarian legislation is not compensating the parent at all. For instance, in the rural industries, one of the demands is that no child shall work for its parents until it is fifteen years of age. That is all very well, but it is an inducement to do away with this child. There is no doubt that our humanitarian legislation is not working out in the way we expect. It is very important that we should take care of our good, strong children that are growing up; we take too much notice of the weaklings. No person is more humanitarian in their idea than I am, but I cannot help saying that we are taking too much notice of the criminal lunatics, the imbeciles, and all that kind of people, and neglect the strong. The strong want looking after just as well as the weak—in fact, more so. If you have a herd of sheep, do you save all the weaklings and neglect the strong? No. You look after the strong, and you do something very different with the weaklings. I suppose I should not talk this way—I do not suppose it will give me any votes—(laughter)—but I think it is a question which will have to be faced before very long in more countries than Australia. There is another thing: Everybody chaffs me about opossums. I notice we are going to have a “Zoo” here in Brisbane. (Laughter.) I think a zoological gardens is a very cruel thing. I have been to zoological gardens in other places, and I have seen a poor unfortunate lion caged up in a box a few feet square, with a smelling sort of snake alongside him. (Laughter.) What sort of a life is that for the lion or the snake? (Laughter.) I think it is a very cruel thing. Would it not be far better if the lion were killed and stuffed and put into the Museum—it would just as well teach the children?

Mr. HAMILTON: What sort of a lion would that be? (Laughter.)

Mr. GUNN: It would be better than the living death that they have at the present time. If we are going to have zoological gardens for Brisbane, why not have them in all the other principal towns of Queensland? (Hear, hear!) My idea is, if we have money to spend in such things as that, we should take care of our indigenous animals. We should reserve somewhere in Queensland—I do not care where it is—a place where the kangaroo, wallabies, bear, platypus, scrub turkeys, the emu, and a great number of the wonderful birds we have in Australia, could be protected in a national park—and not be cooped up in cages—where they would be as free as they are in their natural state. It would be more instructive to go and look at those animals than to see a lion or a snake caged up in a zoological gardens. A great deal has been said about land settlement. No one would like to see more people settled on the land than I would, but I am doubtful whether, with the great quantity of land which has been cut up in certain districts for agricultural settlement, we are not going a little bit too fast with this agricultural settlement. People take it up as agricultural farms, and do not go in for agriculture. What do they intend to do with that land? I think they intend to serve their five years and sell it out to their neigh-

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bour, and it will get into a bigger estate than it is at the present time. I think it will be better to go in more for grazing farms than we do at present. I would like to say a word with reference to the suggested amendments to the Elections Act. I have been sitting on the Elections Tribunal, and there is no doubt in my mind that we will have to amend the Elections Act before very long. Another thing I might mention, and that is the remuneration of the returning officer. It is a very important position. I held such a position once myself; I only held it for twelve months, and I was very glad to resign. There is a lot of work to do, for which you get about £10, which is not enough; the people are not at the present time receiving sufficient salary for the duties they perform. I have heard it suggested, more than once that members of Parliament are not getting sufficient for their services.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Mr. GUNN: I do not know. I do not value my services at a bit more than I get for them. If you are going to alter the law with reference to payment of members, why should you not do it by referendum to the people? Let the people decide whether members of Parliament are to get any more or not. I myself do not believe in payment of members at all. I think a man only spoils his life by coming in here. If that is what he looks forward to for a living all his life—to be a member of Parliament—there is nothing in it. I think myself it would be far better if we managed our own affairs so that we had enough to live upon before we came into Parliament; but if the electors of Queensland think otherwise, they ought to be allowed to decide the matter by referendum, and not by us sitting here in the House. I am afraid I have not thrown much light on the subject, but it is not my province to criticise the Statement. I think there is nothing to criticise myself. The Financial Statement is a very creditable one to Queensland, and I am quite convinced that if the Opposition were in power it would be no better. As for borrowing money, and doing all the things that they say they would do, I only just look to the other States. They are on the Treasury benches in New South Wales, and are not financing the country a bit better, nor as well, and I think that the electors of Queensland ought to be proud of their present Treasurer and their present Government. (Hear, hear!)

Question put.

Mr. WINSTANLEY (Queenton): It is rather early to let the question go through. I certainly did not desire to take up the running at this hour, but, at the same time, there are a few casual remarks I want to make before the Statement goes through. If the Government are in the splendid position they have led the people to believe, and everything is going right, one would have thought there would have been some defence, or, at any rate, for each speaker on this side there would have been one from the other side, but such is not the case. In the first place, I wish to call attention to the statement made in the very first paragraph of the Financial Statement, where the Treasurer expresses “the satisfaction which he feels at being able to inform the Committee that the favourable anticipations of last year were amply realised.” I have

read the Statement, and it seems to me that it can hardly be said that the anticipations of last year have been realised. As a matter of fact, throughout the Financial Statement the reverse is the case. If we touched high-water mark in our revenue last year, we have come back to normal conditions this year. For instance, there is a deficiency in the returns from our railways amounting to £15,071. I am aware that there is a handy scapegoat to account for that—the general strike; but though that strike may be responsible for some things, it cannot be said that it accounts for the falling off in railway revenue. There is also a deficiency of £3,681 in the amount received from mines. There is a small decrease in the number of cattle, and a small increase of about 500,000 in the number of sheep, though we generally expect an increase of from 1,000,000 to 2,000,000; so that instead of the favourable anticipations of last year being realised, the very reverse is really the case. There are ample grounds for the statement made by members on this side of the House, not only on this occasion, but also on previous occasions, that the Government are going at too great a rate—a rate which they will not be able to keep up for any length of time. The revenue per head of the population is certainly a bit higher than it was last year. This year it is £8 8s. 2d., while last year it was only £7 14s. 7d; but in 1909-10 it was £10 14s. 11d., and in 1908-9 it was £10 5s. 3d. All these figures go to show that there was a decrease last year.

The SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS: Didn't the Commonwealth pay more per head than than they do now?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Yes, they paid more per head from revenue, but they paid less in other directions. The Treasurer himself has stated that he got £90,000 from the Commonwealth this year, and that he did not get that sum in previous years.

Mr. FORSYTH: We won't get it this year.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Interest on public buildings, and the amount has certainly come in very handy this year. The Government may be entitled to it, and certainly they find the money very useful.

Mr. FORSYTH: We won't get it this year.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: No, we won't get it this year, but we will get some of it. There is nothing in the dry weather we have experienced to account for the decreases I have mentioned with regard to cattle and receipts from railways and mines. The Treasurer pointed out that a sum of £44,606 was transferred from loan to revenue account, and I think that transfer is a very good thing. I hope that many of the buildings which are being erected by the Government will be built of some material more substantial than wood, because long before those buildings have been paid for, the buildings themselves, if of wood, will be valueless. I should just like to say in this connection that the school teachers who occupy those buildings are entitled to some consideration. I know that they receive some consideration in the Estimates which have been submitted to the Committee, but that is only consideration in a broad, general way. Those who are located in the Northern part of the State are suffering an injustice which

they should not suffer. It has been the practice for some years that when a State school teacher is sent into a wayback place, where the cost of living is increased, he shall receive a greater allowance than is made to teachers in the Southern part of Queensland. This allowance during recent years has been totally inadequate to meet the increased cost of living, and I do not see that there is any change in that respect in these Estimates. There ought to be. There are many cases in which a head teacher is sent to a school in the far North or West, and receives an allowance for himself, but gets no allowance for, perhaps, half a dozen who may be dependent upon him for support, and whose support is more costly than formerly on account of the increased cost of living. I do not wish to discuss this matter now, as the Estimates are the proper place to discuss such matters, and I hope to have something to say on this particular subject when the vote for the Education Department is before the Committee, if it is not guillotined through.

The PREMIER: There are seventeen days allowed for Supply.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Yes, but a great part of that time may be taken up in discussing one or two departments.

The PREMIER: Only two days are allowed in the Commonwealth Parliament.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Seventeen days are not too much for the discussion of the Estimates, and if a discussion is allowed to continue on a few departments to the exclusion of others, that is objectionable. Something has been said in connection with mines. We are told in the Financial Statement that—

“Mining, as in the case of the previous year, discloses a further shrinkage, but I think hon. members will agree with me that there are indications of a revival in mining, and it is decidedly pleasing to note the spirit of hopefulness which prevails in many mining centres among those who are engaged in the calling, and who thus should be the best able to forecast the future of this industry.”

The mining community in Queensland, and I suppose in a great many other countries besides, are among the most optimistic people in the State, and were it not for the hopefulness of those people, a great many mines would have been closed long ago. But in spite of the difficulties and disappointments they have had to contend with, those people have persevered and plodded on, and they have not had that encouragement from the Government which they ought to have. In past years amounts have been placed on the Estimates—£10,000 [10 p.m.] last year and £10,000 the year before—and it has been found at the end of the year that the money has not all been expended; yet there have been cases where parties deserving of assistance from this vote have not been able to get it.

Mr. FORSYTH: It was nearly all used last year.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: It was not all used even last year.

Mr. FORSYTH: £9,200 was used.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: That leaves £800.

*Mr. Winstanley.]*

Mr. FORSYTH: How much is likely to come back?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Perhaps not very much directly; but there are cases in which money comes back indirectly, if not directly. Practically promises were made previous to the last election that if the mining fields returned members to support the Government they would receive attention.

Mr. FORSYTH: There is £20,000 on the Estimates this year.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: In one case the sum of £50,000 was mentioned as being required.

The PREMIER: Even £100,000.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: While £50,000 would be a very large amount for one field, I do not think it would be too much to put on the Estimates for the whole of Queensland. Previous to last year practically nothing could be got for assistance in prospecting; assistance was confined almost solely to deep sinking.

Mr. FORSYTH: How much have we got back from prospecting?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: I think more than from deep sinking.

Mr. FORSYTH: How much?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: I have not got the actual figures; but I believe money is better spent at the present time on Charters Towers and other fields in not merely prospecting on the surface, but, in helping shallow shows, than in deep sinking. It seems to me that in some places the mines are deep enough already; and it is well known that the deeper they are the more expensive they are to work and ventilate, and the worse it is for the health of the miners; and instead of the gold being better and more plentiful the deeper one goes, it is generally the reverse. As far as Charters Towers is concerned, the money given to assist shallow shows, from 300 feet to 400 feet, promises better results than the money given to assist deep sinking. Our gold output is decreasing at a fairly rapid rate; and if the Government are indifferent, it will not be long before there is a scatter in some places in North Queensland. When we remember the money gained and put into circulation in those places, I think they are entitled to much better treatment than they have received; and I do not think the £20,000 on the Estimates is anything like a fair or reasonable amount to prospect the whole of the fields of Queensland.

Mr. FORSYTH: They have to spend £1 for £1.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: They are willing to do that.

Mr. FORSYTH: They did not exhaust the vote last year.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: They did not get the chance. I know one case in particular where ground was not worked at all, but if the company could have got assistance they could have reconstructed and got to work again. Not only last year, but in previous years, when we have gone to the Mines Department with a good case, in some instances backed up by the report of the Inspector of Mines, we have been told that the money was appropriated and all gone.

Mr. FORSYTH: It was not all gone.

[Mr. Winstanley.]

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Does the hon. member know better than the Minister for Mines?

Mr. FORSYTH: I am going by an official document.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: Has it not been said that you cannot go by these things, which are placed before the Committee to mislead rather than to enlighten? It has been repeatedly stated that appropriations have been made to various companies; yet, for some reason best known to the Minister, at the end of the year these moneys have not been made use of. I think there was £10,000 on the Estimates for a deviation at Charters Towers; but it has not been made, and probably never will be made. An amount was set aside for the construction of a railway from Normanton to Cloncurry, and it is still there. Is not that misleading? Things appear in these documents that are misleading instead of giving us correct information; and I think that the Treasurer, instead of reading out a Statement to the Committee, should have enlightened the Committee as to the real facts bearing on the position of the State from a financial point of view. In reference to the Commonwealth and States, we have heard a great deal about reiteration and about statements being repeated over and over again. So far as the Commonwealth and States are concerned, there is a statement appearing here which has appeared in the Financial Statement for the last four years—ever since I have been here—and perhaps it appeared for a good many years before that. It is in reference to the amount received from the Commonwealth and in regard to trust funds. It says here, on page 6—

“I have already referred to the fact that the question of interest on transferred properties has been dealt with by the Commonwealth Government, and that payments of interest at the rate of 3½ per cent. per annum since 1910 are to be made, leaving still open the question of amounts which I claim are due to Queensland for interest prior to 1st July, 1910.”

This is what I want to draw specific attention to—

“It is true that the Commonwealth Government paid a sum of £6,059,000 in excess of the three-fourths of the Customs and Excise revenue due to the States under the Braddon clause, which was, no doubt, a gain to the States participating therein, but, unfortunately, Queensland was not a sharer in such distribution, as the bookkeeping clauses of the Constitution prevented its distribution on a per capita basis. Thus we occupy the invidious position of being the only State in the Commonwealth that received less than three-fourths of its net Customs and Excise revenue, the shortage during the bookkeeping period being no less a sum than £94,726, while the other States received large amounts in excess of the three-fourths of the net Customs and Excise revenue.”

That has ceased to mislead this Committee, but it certainly does mislead people outside this House, and they are at a loss to understand how it is that Queensland has been treated in such a way as this. We who are here know perfectly well that under the bookkeeping clauses of the Commonwealth it

was provided that the services in Queensland that were not paying their way had to be paid for out of the amount coming to Queensland from the three-fourths of Customs and Excise, and the question arises would it have been a fair thing to ask the other States to make up Queensland's deficiency, and then to have an equal division afterwards. It is nothing but misleading to say that Queensland was not honestly and fairly treated by the Commonwealth in this connection. If our services had all been paying like those of the other States, we would have got our larger share like the other States, but it is neither fair nor just to make it appear that the State has been treated by the Commonwealth in a different manner to the other States. Queensland has got every cent she is entitled to under the agreement entered into when federation came about. It seems to me to be like the boy who exchanged his marbles for chocolates, and then, when he has eaten the chocolates, cried, because he had got neither marbles nor chocolates. The Queensland Government knew when they entered the federation that these services were not paying, and that the deficiency would have to be paid for out of the three-fourths share coming to us from Customs and Excise dues. It is about time that this argument was dropped altogether. I would like to say a word or two about the savings banks. I am sorry, as a Queensland, that some sort of understanding was not arrived at between the States and the Commonwealth as to the running of the savings banks, because it must be plain to anyone—even to a casual observer—that there is not room for these two banks, either in Queensland or probably in any of the other States. It must be plain to everyone that it is going to be a great deal more expensive for the State to run the Savings Bank under existing conditions than it was in days gone by. There can be no get away from it, that had it not been for the Commonwealth establishing a bank and expressing their intention of establishing a branch of the Savings Bank as well, things would have remained in Queensland much as they have been for years past. (Hear, hear!) Members have already pointed out the disabilities and disadvantages which people in the Northern parts of the State have laboured under in comparison with the people in Brisbane. That has not been removed yet, but immediately the Commonwealth entered into the business there was a stir amongst the dry bones. Provision was made for accepting deposits up to £500, and the 1s. charge for keeping the accounts was abolished, new offices were opened, and other facilities provided which would not have been provided had the monopoly remained in the hands of the State. For that reason I do not think that the State is entitled to all the sympathy. The people have got so used to going to the Post Office in connection with the Savings Bank that I am sure that the Commonwealth will scoop a good deal of the new business. The State have established branches of the Bank in the court houses, but that will only lose business for them, as that is about the last place that people wish to go to. With the exception of the lockup, it is really the last place the people would wish to go to when they have got money to invest. I am sorry that an amicable understanding was not come to between the Commonwealth and the States so far as the transactions of the

Savings Bank were concerned. We know from past experience how the Savings Banks were run. There was no margin at all, and they did not leave anything after the expenses were paid, and unless there is a change in that direction the Savings Banks are going to be run at a loss by the State under existing conditions. It is all very well for people to say that Queenslanders will put their money into the State banks because the money will be spent in Queensland. As a rule, capital looks for the greatest rate of interest. I know that hon. members opposite would not hesitate about investing their money in New South Wales if they thought they would get 2 or 3 per cent. more than they get in Queensland. Capital knows no creed or country. At one time people spoke about the Commonwealth as if it were a foreign country, but people are getting to know it better, and know it is no different to the States. I think the whole thing might have been obviated, and an understanding come to whereby one bank would have remained, and there would have been neither the friction nor the increased expenditure there will be under existing conditions, and if it comes to a question of real competition, I am inclined to think the Commonwealth would have much the better of it. Just a word or two in reference to land settlement. Something has already been said about land settlement, and there is one point I wish to make in connection therewith, and that is with regard to the revenue received at the present time from Crown timber. The Treasurer, in his Statement, says—

“Another feature in the operations of the Lands Department which indicates the present general prosperity, and particularly the activity in the building trade, is the greatly increased demand for Crown timbers. The revenue from this source has increased sixfold in a period of seven years, and for the past year reached the unprecedented total of £62,239.”

We often hear members opposite talking about “killing the goose that lays the golden egg,” and if this is not “killing the goose that lays the golden egg,” I do not know what is. There has not been the slightest attempt made at reafforestation, while in other countries they practically grow their timber as quick as they cut it. Here they clear the timber wholesale, and, unfortunately, a great deal is going out of the State. And more important still, some of the people do not get anything like a fair price for the timber they are selling. This revenue is being taken in a great many instances from localities where some of the revenue ought to be disbursed. Previous to the meeting of Parliament I spent nearly a fortnight in the Atherton district, and I have no hesitation in saying that some of the money being taken from that district in the shape of royalty on timber ought to be spent in the district in making roads. In that district the Government have established a State farm and some very useful experiments have been made. They are showing the people what can be produced and how to produce it, but what is the good of showing the farmers what can be produced when it is impossible to get the produce to market after it is produced? The roads in that district, after rain, are nothing more or less than quagmires. In this particular instance I met one individual who had made a road for his own private use. The road was over

*Mr. Winstanley.]*

a creek, and as soon as he got the road clear and put up a bridge the Government sold the timber which was on a reserve in the neighbourhood, and they made use of this man's bit of road, and before a week was over they broke down the bridge over the creek. There are scores of men in that district who have been struggling for the past three or four years, and it is quite evident they will not continue the struggle unless some attempt is made to enable them to get their produce to market. I believe that the Government have even claimed some of the timber on the roads and have sold it to the highest bidder, which is not helping these men who had put up with so many inconveniences. If land settlement is going to be bonâ fide, better conditions will have to be provided for these people. The returns show that land settlement is taking place in a great many instances, not for the purpose of producing something from the land, but for speculative purposes. What has taken place in other districts will certainly take place in the Atherton district if the settlers do not receive some more consideration than they have received up to the present time. The pioneers in this district, and probably in a great many other districts, are not getting either a fair or reasonable deal from the Government, and they ought to be given a better chance, when they have produced something, of getting it to market than they have at the present time. There are one or two things in connection with the dairying industry to which I wish to draw attention. There are one or two things which, to me, appear bits of problems, but probably the hon. member for Aubigny will enlighten us. It seems to me the dairying industry, like other industries, is going backward instead of forward. The Treasurer states—

"Probably our interstate trade is equal in value to the oversea, but in the absence of statistics, figures cannot be ventured upon. The position of the industry last year will be made plainer from the knowledge that the return of dairy cows, dry and in milk, was less by 8,349 than the number for 1910, the figures respectively being 357,095 and 365,444, and this is to be accounted for by the number of dairymen who had to cease operations owing to the want of feed."

It is difficult for one to understand what has become of the dairy cattle. One can understand the men giving up dairying, but what has become of the cattle?

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: They are being used on stations for breeding purposes.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: These were dairy cattle, and the probabilities are, they had not gone to stations. These cattle have practically disappeared, and, in addition, the number of cattle in the State has also decreased. We hear a lot about the potentialities of this State, and the wonderful things being done in the State, but figures like these certainly put another construction on the matter, and put it in another light altogether.

Mr. WIENHOLT: We had a very bad season.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: I do not know that the season has been so terribly bad. It may have been bad, but the cattle have not died.

[Mr. Winstanley.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Hundreds of them have died.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: As a matter of fact, as far as the rest of the cattle are concerned, the loss during the dry time does not count at all, as the returns are for 1911, although it may as far as dairy cattle are concerned.

Mr. WIENHOLT: It does affect the other cattle. We could not brand the calves.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: That may be so, but it appears to me to be a very lame excuse.

The PREMIER: What object would there be to misrepresent the matter?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: We have pointed out quite a number of things which it is difficult to understand. Why are they put here in the form in which they are? When one seeks information on them the thing is wiped on one side by a [10.30 p.m.] wave of the hand, which is no answer at all. If, during the dry time we had last year, a large number of cattle were lost, particularly in the dairying districts, which are in the most favoured portions of the State, then the prospects of the future are not too bright, because we cannot expect to get the seasons that we have had in years gone by.

The PREMIER: It is very rarely we have such a dry summer as we had last year.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: The probabilities are that we shall have a drought again.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Because things are bad in Charters Towers?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: I have been less in my home in Charters Towers than anywhere else.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: Because mining is bad in Charters Towers, it does not mean that mining is going to the dogs.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: There is no doubt that as far as goldmining is concerned, year by year it is going down, and the Government has done nothing to help it, and if they do anything this year, they will be making a new departure. When we contrast the statements that are made and the figures which are given now with the statements made three years ago, when we were passing the £10,000,000 loan, and passing 2,000 miles of railway in one session—we heard all about the wonderful potentialities of the State—we see a great difference. Now we find that there are about 600 miles of these railways practically at a standstill, and some of the railways are stopping at places where they will earn no revenue, and it is quite evident that money is not going to be borrowed at the rate it has been obtained in the past. As pointed out this afternoon, the question is, whether we are going to be able to borrow money at the rate of interest demanded, so as to go on with our public works policy as we have done in the past. We paid quite enough for our money in the past—quite enough for us to be enabled to earn the interest on it. If we are not going to be able to get money at 3, 3½, or 4 per cent., then unless we can make better investments than we have done with our money in the past, even in connection with our railways, it is time some consideration was

given to the railway policy. The railways passed last session were passed not with the expressed intention of constructing them straight away, but for other purposes entirely. The Rosewood to Marburg Railway went through three or four years ago, and I asked the Minister at that time what was going to make the railway revenue-producing. The country was settled. I made the statement then that unless there was something more than a few cans of cream it was not going to be revenue-producing.

Mr. HAMILTON: It is not revenue-producing.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: It pays 18s., or less than 1 per cent., now, and that is probably as much as it will pay for a long time to come. Other railways are in the same position—they are not paying for axle-grease. When we remember the statements which were made about this wonderful railway policy, the things which were said on this side have been proved up to the hilt. Members on this side said then that the trans-state railway would be a white elephant, and it is quite evident the Government are coming round to the same idea. While they were advocates of the system of extending the railway to the setting sun, no one objected to that.

The SECRETARY FOR AGRICULTURE: You object to the Southern agricultural lines?

Mr. WINSTANLEY: I object to the Southern agricultural lines that are not required. The point was that agricultural lines could be made in some parts of the State within 10 miles of each other, while in connection with lines like the Malanda to Millaa Millaa, where men have been induced to take up land, and are trying to cultivate it, they have to wait for a railway till heaven knows when; and this is only a sample of other places where railways have been promised. There has been good ground for the statements made, not only from this side, but by some of the Government's own friends, as to the necessity for the Government taking into consideration more seriously than they have done as to where the money is to come from to build these railways, and to do some of the things they proposed at that time. There are one or two other matters that I intended to deal with, but they can probably be dealt with just as effectively on the Estimates, and I will reserve anything I have to say for that time.

Mr. CRAWFORD: I move the adjournment of the debate.

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

## DISTRICT COURTS BILL.

### MESSAGE FROM COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Council forwarding this Bill for the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly.

The consideration of the Council's message was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

The House adjourned at twenty-two minutes to 11 o'clock.