

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates  
[Hansard]

**Legislative Assembly**

**THURSDAY, 24 OCTOBER 1912**

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.**

THURSDAY, 24 OCTOBER, 1932.

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

**APPROPRIATION BILL No. 3.**

**ASSENT.**

The SPEAKER: I have to report that I, this day, presented to His Excellency the Governor Appropriation Bill No. 3 of 1932-33, for the Royal assent, and that His Excellency was pleased, in my presence, to subscribe his assent thereto in the name and on behalf of His Majesty.

*Hon. W. D. Armstrong.]*

## ASSENT TO BILLS.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of messages from the Governor, conveying His Excellency's assent, on behalf of His Majesty, to the following Bills:—

Drainage of Mines Bill.

Wynnum and Manly Gas and Lighting Company, Limited, Bill.

Appropriation Bill No. 3.

Government Savings Bank Stock, Loan, and Treasury Bills Acts Amendment Bill.

## PAPERS.

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

Report upon the working of the Queensland Government Savings Bank for the year ending 30th June, 1912.

Report of the Engineer for Harbours and Rivers for the year ended 30th June, 1912.

## SUGGESTED EXPORT TAX ON HIDES.

Mr. ADAMSON (*Rockhampton*) asked the Chief Secretary—

"1. Is he aware that owing to the fierce competition in the Brisbane hide market, consequent upon the operations of 'dealers' or 'shippers,' local tanners are unable to obtain sufficient hides for their requirements, and are further forced to pay abnormally high rates for such as they are able to secure?"

"2. Is he aware that as a result of the operations of these 'gamblers' thousands of hides are shipped from this State monthly to Antwerp, London, Liverpool, Canada, and other overseas countries, thus starving the local market requiring them for legitimate consumption?"

"3. Is he aware that this results in high prices for tanned leather, which in turn increases the cost of production of Queensland-made boots and shoes to such an extent that this important industry is thrown more and more open to overseas competition, and that as a result the local trade is in a highly depressed condition, resulting in a large amount of unemployment amongst its operatives?"

"4. If he is not aware of the position, as set forth in the foregoing questions, will he cause official inquiries to be made with a view to verifying or refuting same?"

"5. If—or when—he is aware of the facts, will he make such representation to the Federal Government, through its Queensland members, as will secure the placing of an adequate export tax upon all hides leaving Australia in a raw or only partially tanned state, or, at the least, force attention to the serious needs of two most important industries to immediate relief—viz., the tanning and boot and shoe manufacturing industries?"

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

"1. No.

"2. No.

"3. No.

"4. Yes.

"5. I will not advocate export tax on hides. The remedy lies with the Government that controls duties of Customs."

## SUPPLY.

## RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE—SEVENTH ALLOTTED DAY.

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

## HOME SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT—PRISONS.

Question—That the sum of £27,954 be granted for "Prisons"—stated.

Mr. WELSBY (*Merthyr*) noticed the sum of £600 was put down for Comptroller-General of Prisons. He had looked through the Estimates, and had not found any increase made in the salary for a good many years past. Captain Pennefather had held high positions in the State, and a gentleman with his knowledge should receive a higher salary than £600 per annum. The other evening, when discussing the amount to the Commissioner of Police, he had spoken of the amounts paid to the various Under Secretaries, and he had then in his mind the salary which Captain Pennefather was receiving. They would remember that Western Australia, some years ago, availed itself of Captain Pennefather's services in connection with a return which they asked him to make, and the great majority of the recommendations made by Captain Pennefather were carried into effect. Although it was not in order to move an increase of the amount put down in the Estimates, he thought it was their duty to acknowledge the work of a man like Captain Pennefather for so many years past, and give him a higher salary on the Supplementary Estimates. Captain Pennefather was not a young man, and he had worked faithfully and well for the State. As they had seen their way clear to give the Commissioner of Police an extra £200—whether it might be in accordance with a promise given some years ago, or on account of certain action taken this year, he did not know—he thought they were entitled to benefit Captain Pennefather for the work he had done in connection with prisons. He found that the amount which was put down for St. Helena was slightly increased. Any remarks he made on this matter was entirely with the view of saving money in connection with St. Helena. An amount of £34,729 was put down for new buildings there. He did not know whether those buildings were to be of brick or wood, but no matter what the benefit of the island might be to certain prisoners, it was the duty of the Government to save money if they possibly could, and build similar prisons on similar lines on shore; and if a saving of money might be effected by having them built on shore, it should be done. He had given this matter serious attention for several years. Several friends of his, who were contractors, had worked out the cost of buildings, of wood, cement, or brick, and the carrying of the material down to St. Helena, and they had told him that at least 75 per cent. would be saved. Why should the Government not save 75 per cent. of the £34,729, which was put down for buildings, by building them on shore? The other evening, in the discussion on the Police Estimates, the Home Secretary used a very sensible argument. He said that when the matter of the prison came up in the House in connection with his department, he would take all the necessary blame, as head of the department. He might be treading on the toes of the hon. gentleman, but he was doing it in the most friendly way. The Home Secretary spoke of the prison at St.

Helena, and he (Mr. Welsby) would like to mention what had taken place in other years on the islands. He had gone to the trouble of going through all the "Votes and Proceedings" from 1899 to 1910, and every one of these mentioned the strong anxiety which was felt about the condition of the buildings at St. Helena. The Treasurer himself, in 1906, was reported in *Hansard* to have said—

"He would also like to know whether the Government proposed to take any action in regard to the buildings at St. Helena? It would be an awful thing if, after attention had been called to the danger of the present buildings, a number of people lost their lives down there."

The danger from fire in St. Helena was far greater than one could imagine. He had made inquiries, and had seen the place for himself on many occasions, and if ever a fire took place inside the stockade there would be a serious loss of life. When the prisoners were locked up at night in the stockade—he did not know whether they were all locked up—there might be 150 persons there. There were eight warders—four on duty and four asleep. In some cells, men were locked up singly, and the keys were then taken to some person outside the building, and four warders were on duty and four were asleep. If any man, say, for the sake of argument, was inclined to become insane through imprisonment, and he obtained the chance of setting fire to his own cell, the warder who was awake would notify the matter. Someone would go to the stockade door, knock at the door, and then go 300 yards away to the man who held all the keys. Then the keys would be brought back, passed through the stockade gate, and the doors would be unlocked. Was it right that a fire should be allowed to take place in such exceedingly old buildings? In what were called "association" cells, where ten or twelve men were together, the risk from fire was not so great; but all Ministers and Under Secretaries were not altogether aware of what went on in those places. The Home Secretary learnt certain things from Mr. Ryan and Captain Pennefather, and one or two warders, but if the hon. gentleman went to officers lower down he would find out a great deal more than he knew now. It was not generally known to the public, but it was a fact, that there were at St. Helena what were known as "crook" warders, and that traffic went on in a quiet, unseen way between those men and the criminals. There was no doctor on St. Helena, and if a prisoner or a warder broke an arm or a leg, or fell sick, a warder had to telephone to Brisbane for a doctor to go down to the island. If the case was a serious one, the doctor left Brisbane by a motor-boat, or went down to Wynnum by train, and from there crossed over to St. Helena. He contended that there should be a doctor on the island, just as there was one at Dunwich. The doctor at Dunwich had control of about 1,200 old people, and also looked after the unfortunate inebriates who were sent down there, as well as the unfortunate lepers in the Lazaret. While he recognised that the doctor at Dunwich had all those duties to perform, he held that it was neither right nor proper that St. Helena should be without a doctor. A great deal had been said regarding the reform of prisoners at St. Helena. He should like to

see the men sent down there come back better men, but he was afraid that there was not much hope of reforming some of them. It was a well-known fact that criminals came from the other States, and committed crimes in Brisbane for the pleasure of going to St. Helena. (Oh! and laughter.) Members might laugh, but he had that information on exceedingly high authority, and it was a fact. Another matter in connection with St. Helena that was deserving of attention was, that the unfortunate warders down there were only allowed one week in six for a holiday ashore with their families. Most of the warders were married men, but the only women on the island were Mrs. Ryan, the superintendent's wife; Mrs. Bowden, the chief warder's wife; Mrs. Davidson, a warder's wife; and Mrs. Hennessey, the store-keeper's wife. A book by a warder was published in Brisbane some time ago, in which was told what was happening at St. Helena, and he was sorry he had not a copy with him. But he asked hon. members if it was fair that warders should be kept away from their homes and their families in the manner they were kept from them at St. Helena? He also understood that the warders were not fed in a proper manner. Certain provisions were allowed them by the department, and they had to buy other provisions, so that, by the time they had made the necessary provision for themselves at St. Helena, there was mighty little left for their respective families in Brisbane. Again, all the cooking on the island was done by prison labour, and a cook who knew his duty well could easily poison the people there, if he so desired.

Mr. COYNE: Couldn't that be done on shore?

Mr. WELSBY: Yes, it could be done on shore if the cooking was done by prison labour, the same as it was at St. Helena.

Mr. KIRWAN: Where is he going to get the poison from?

Mr. WELSBY: There would not be much difficulty in getting the poison. He had always held that the proper place for that prison was on shore. The Government had at the present time over 1,000 acres of land near the Woogaroo Asylum. There was a piece pleasantly situated on the river bank, above flood-level, and on the right side of the line below the present habitation of the doctor at Woogaroo.

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

Mr. WELSBY (continuing): If the prisoners at St. Helena, about 200 in number, were housed on some of that land, they could be put under the control of the doctor at Goodna. The great majority of the prisoners on the island did not see Moreton Bay, or enjoy the cool breezes blowing from north, south, east, or west, as they were confined altogether within the four walls of the stockade. It had been said that at St. Helena the prisoners did certain work which paid for itself, and that they grew vegetables, which were used at Dunwich and the Lazaret, as well as at St. Helena. Some years ago he asked a question, through a member on that side of the House, regarding certain charges in connection with St. Helena, but he could not get an answer to his question. He then went to Mr. Bowman, the leader of the Opposition, and he got the

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figures for him. He found that the cost of the "Otter" going down to St. Helena two or three times a week was not debited as a charge against St. Helena. The "Otter" went down to the bay on Wednesdays and Fridays, and carried stores to St. Helena and Dunwich, and on many occasions called back at St. Helena to take away empties and prisoners. Why, then, was there no charge made for the "Otter" against St. Helena? He had been twitted by the Home Secretary with having said that a prisoner could escape from St. Helena. In reply, he would say that if anyone studied the contour of Moreton Bay, and saw the depth of water between St. Helena and Peel Island, he would find that the water was exceedingly shallow at dead low water, and that the channel was very narrow. Would the Home Secretary inform him where the star-board blade of the "Otter" was broken about a month ago? If the water between the pier head at St. Helena and Fisherman Island was as deep as was alleged, why should a steamer break a blade of her propeller there? He did not like to make these things public, because in doing so he was doing a certain amount of damage to the department. But he felt bound to say that a man could easily swim across there. It was said that if a man attempted to do so, he would be in danger of being taken by a shark. Could the Home Secretary tell him of a single life which had been lost in that neighbourhood from that cause?

The HOME SECRETARY: Only a few months ago a young chap was taken by a shark at Redland Bay.

Mr. WELSBY: That young fellow was not taken by a shark. He, with some other boys, was fooling in a boat at Garden Island, and the boat capsized, and he was drowned. A shark did not take him, but a most extraordinary thing occurred. Within forty-eight hours after that an old man fishing at Dunwich caught a shark 10 or 12 feet long. The shark was opened, and in it was found the head of the boy who had been drowned. The head of the boy was recognised by certain gold filling in the teeth. That was the first occasion that he had ever known of a shark to take a dead body. If the Home Secretary was desirous of making the trial, then, old as he was, he would give the hon. gentleman a demonstration some day of how one could escape from St. Helena, if the hon. gentleman would allow him to escape from the stockade. (Laughter.) Had those men who escaped from the stockade and hid in the kitchen ceiling for two weeks known as much as he and many other boating men knew about the bay down there, they would not have attempted to take a boat out of the shed, but would have gone down to the beach, which was a glorious beach, and picked up any driftwood, broken paddle, or other thing they might have found, and, after swimming about 100 yards, they would have got into water which was so shallow that a boat drawing 2 feet 6 inches was in the mud.

The HOME SECRETARY: They won't risk it.

Mr. WELSBY: They might risk it. He was sorry to have heard that there had been so much said in the correspondence on this subject about a desire to obtain St. Helena for the use of yachting people. The desire of those who had agitated in this matter was to obtain the island for the recreation

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of the people of Brisbane, and not for yachting people alone. There were thousands of people who signed the petition in favour of taking that course, and yet that petition had been shelved. He acquainted the

[4 p.m.] city council of his action, and the whole of the council acquiesced in his action. They did not want the island for yachting purposes at all, because those engaged in yachting could go further afield. The Home Secretary told them that there were more islands besides St. Helena, and he also said that they had Peel Island further down. If the Home Secretary wanted to remain his friend for life he hoped he would not mention Peel Island to him again. (Laughter.) They had no right to contaminate Moreton Bay, as they had done by the establishment of a penal establishment on St. Helena, by the establishment of a lazaret on Peel Island, and by the establishment of an inebriates' institution further down on the same island. In a few years' time they would have the whole of the sewerage of Brisbane being discharged into Moreton Bay at Luggage Point, and what would they find then? The oversea steamers generally arrived at Pinkenba at about 11 o'clock in the morning, so that on arriving in Moreton Bay the first thing they would see early in the morning was an island on the port side. The passengers on board would ask what island it was, and they would be told it was the penal establishment for Queensland. They would also be told that the island a little further off was used for the purposes of a leper station, and a little further down the inebriates were kept in a home. Then, as the vessel got nearer to the river, they would find the whole of the sewage of Brisbane being discharged into Moreton Bay about 50 feet from Luggage Point.

Mr. COYNE: What effect would it have on the sewage if the prisons were shifted? (Laughter.)

Mr. WELSBY: It would be better to have the prison on the mainland, at any rate, instead of allowing passengers arriving to point it out as the first thing they saw in the bay. He had a very serious charge to make in connection with St. Helena, and he was careful to make it when there were no ladies in the gallery. He did not like referring to matters which were practically a public scandal, but it was the duty of a public man to make what charges he had to make in a public manner. In the prison at St. Helena they had what were known as "associated wards," and in these wards from ten to twelve men were allowed to sleep. Without saying anything further, they knew very well what men confined in that way would do. When ten or twelve men were collected together in that way every night, certain things took place.

Mr. COYNE: Is there not some protection in the numbers?

Mr. WELSBY: No, there was not, and he had knowledge that certain things took place that were not known to the Home Secretary. No matter who the Minister might be, take the Chief Secretary or any other Cabinet Minister, they could not be expected to know the whole of the various doings in their departments.

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

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: Take another five minutes.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member's full time has expired.

Mr. MURPHY: Get someone to move an amendment for you, and you can speak again.

Mr. BERTRAM (*Maree*): It was not often that he saw eye to eye with the hon. member for Merthyr, but in this instance he concurred in everything that he had said. The hon. member for Merthyr referred to a pamphlet which had been written by an ex-warder of St. Helena, and he had a copy of the pamphlet with him, and proposed to give a few extracts from it. The pamphlet was written by a man who had been a warder at St. Helena for some years.

Mr. COYNE: Was he discharged?

Mr. BERTRAM: No; the writer said that St. Helena as a penal establishment was an utter failure, and there were reasons why it should be abolished.

The HOME SECRETARY: When was that pamphlet written?

Mr. BERTRAM: About five years ago. This was what the writer of the pamphlet said—

"St. Helena, as a penal establishment, is an utter failure, and there are many reasons why it should be abolished. One of Queensland's fairest spots and most fertile soil, it is an ideal situation, and its nearness to Brisbane should render it valuable as a State asset for an experimental farm. I have heard its natural beauties expounded from a prisoner's point of view, and that is another reason for its abolishment. Long, old rambling, rotten, and continuous buildings under one roof, with no fire-extinguishing appliances beyond a few buckets of water, nothing short of a miracle can prevent a fearful loss of life should a fire occur at night, which, if discovered, could not be coped with. The Comptroller-General, in his annual report, always lays stress on this awful probable contingency, but without any good effect. Nothing can be done for want of funds. . . . Should a fire occur, no one can get in to extinguish it, and the corridors and cells would be full of smoke, and render the unlocking of the prisoners' cells an impossibility, and nothing has been done to minimise the terrible risk. I do not wish to be an alarmist, but this stern duty to expose should be the duty of everyone acquainted with the grave danger that is always present. Nothing probably will be done in the way of rebuilding St. Helena, owing to the cost of maintaining boats to serve the establishment and Dunwich, which should be removed to the mainland. A penal establishment should be formed near Brisbane, on modern lines, which would then admit of the proper classification and reformation of prisoners. It is also a hard, unnatural life to keep the prison officers at St. Helena for so long a period, and I think I may say this isolation from wife and family is not conducive to the discipline of the establishment, as they are punished by such isolation almost as much as the prisoners, and do not attach so much value to their positions as they might under happier circumstances."

He did not agree with the writer, so far as  
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the suggestion about the experimental farm was concerned. He believed that, since the pamphlet was written, something had been done to cope with fire, and some improvement had been made to the buildings. Captain Pennefather, some years ago, advocated that the penal establishment should be on the mainland, and he hoped, when the Government were taking into consideration the spending of money on the penal establishment, that they would bear in mind what had been said by the hon. member for Merthyr and others. He was not a member of the league referred to by the hon. member for Merthyr, but he was one who believed that St. Helena should be reserved as a national park. He did not speak in a parochial spirit, although he was a member for a metropolitan constituency, but he thought St. Helena should be reserved at a national park.

Mr. COYNE: What benefit would the people of Camooweal and Burke get out of it?

Mr. BERTRAM: They would get a benefit out of it when they came to Brisbane. What made Sydney so popular as a holiday resort was the fact that there were so many places to go to, particularly seaside places, which could be reached at a cost of 6d. or 1s. If St. Helena were reserved at a national park, then the people could go down there at a cost of 1s. return. There were hundreds of working men who could not afford to take a week-end trip down to Moreton Bay at the present time, because it cost 2s. 6d., and if a man took his wife it would be 5s., or perhaps it would run into half a sovereign if he had two or three children, and there were not many working men who could afford that. It would be a popular week-end resort if it were made a national park, and the penal establishment was built on the mainland. With regard to what the hon. member for Merthyr said about the associated wards, he noticed from "Knibb's Year Book," that Queensland compared unfavourably with the other States. The percentage of persons in associated wards was much greater in Queensland than in the other States. That was a matter for regret, because they could not expect reformation to come out of that. It was a question which had been written about by eminent penologists. He had in his hand a work called "Penological and Preventive Principles," by William Tallack; and, dealing with the question of prison separation and classification, he said—

"The separation of prisoners, from each other only, and for duly limited periods, is a first essential of good discipline, and an indispensable condition of success in penal treatment, whether intended as a deterrent, or reformatory. It is also the best basis for classification. It is the safest and, ultimately, though not immediately, the cheapest arrangement, for adoption in criminal institutions."

The writer went on to give the opinion of other penologists, and mentioned Mr. John Howard, the eminent penologist. This is what he said—

"John Howard was awakened to the bad effects of prison association by his own personal experience of its disgusting evils, in a French gaol, to which he had

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been consigned—after his capture at sea by a privateer—during a time of war between England and France. Thenceforth he steadily advocated separation, industry, and other conditions of improved prison discipline.

"In like manner, M. Ducpetiaux, the eminent administrator of penal reform in Belgium, was aroused to the necessities of the subject by his own sufferings, as a political prisoner, prior to the Belgian revolution of 1830. Whilst in confinement, his feelings of decency and propriety were revolted by his enforced association with vile and filthy companions. He became profoundly convinced, from his own observation, that association renders imprisonment less punitive to the worst class of criminals, and more so to the less degraded. Just in proportion as a man is debased, he will enjoy the companionship of corrupt comrades. And it affords additional pleasure to the worst wretches in prison to corrupt others, who may at first be less familiar with evil than themselves."

In view of the fact that prominent penologists expressed themselves against the system of associated wards, the Government would be well advised when spending money on new buildings to bear those facts in mind. He understood that the buildings at St. Helena were unsuitable for anything of the kind, and it would be useless to expend any more money on them to make them anything like a modern prison. He hoped the Government would bear in mind the remark made by the hon. member for Merthyr that the cost of building a penal establishment at St. Helena would be 30 per cent. to 36 per cent. greater than if the prison were constructed on the mainland. He regretted that the Comptroller of Prisons, in his report, did not see fit to include a record of the number of prisoners with more than one conviction. Reference was made to the fact that one prisoner had something like 152 convictions; and he thought that was the strongest possible evidence that sentences to short terms of imprisonment were of no use in reforming a criminal. Very often a person who was sent to prison would be all the better if treated in some other way. He was strongly of opinion that criminals were not altogether responsible for the crimes they committed: he thought that, to some extent, it was a disease. Professor Lombroso, the Italian criminologist, said the criminal was not responsible for his crime, and he believed that was true to a great extent. He believed it was largely the result of heredity and environment, and that there was need for some change in our method of dealing with criminals. He thought there was a good deal to be said in favour of the indeterminate sentence, and that the whole of the present system needed reform. In the pamphlet written by the ex-warder to whom he had already referred, it was stated that, instead of reforming prisoners, the present system very often resulted in contamination instead of reformation. He instanced a bright young fellow who was sentenced to a term of imprisonment for having taken a horse and ridden it to town, and pointed out that prison contamination utterly ruined him. That was one of the evils of the associated wards.

Mr. TROUT: Is not that a good argument in favour of St. Helena?

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Mr. BERTRAM: No. It was a good argument in favour of building prisons on the mainland, and doing away with the associated wards.

Mr. TROUT: Would you be in favour of prisoners working in quarries?

Mr. BERTRAM: That might possibly be done if prisons were established on the mainland.

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

Mr. BERTRAM (continuing) said he noticed in the Comptroller's report that the average cost of the prisoners was £250 odd per annum, less what they produced at St. Helena. He hoped the Home Secretary would take notice of what had been said regarding the necessity of establishing prisons on the mainland.

Mr. BOUCHARD (*South Brisbane*) understood that some of the warders at St. Helena had recently sent a petition to the Home Secretary with the view of having certain privileges accorded to them; and he would like to know whether the Minister had given consideration to their request. He was aware that the present Home Secretary had probably done more than any other Minister in charge of the Home Department in giving consideration to the claims of the warders at St. Helena, also those of the officers at the gaol, and other officers in his department. The hon. gentleman was always sympathetic with respect to requests of the officers in his department. Last year he gave a residential allowance to officers at St. Helena who had been in the service fifteen years. But there were warders at St. Helena who had not served fifteen years, and they likewise thought they were entitled to some consideration, and had presented their request to the Minister in the form of a petition; and he would like to hear from the Minister whether that petition had been considered.

Mr. PETRIE (*Toombul*) As one who had advocated on several occasions the removal of the St. Helena Penal Establishment to the mainland, he fully endorsed what had fallen from the hon. member for Merthyr and the hon. member for Maree. In the session of 1906, as would be seen on page 1648 of *Hansard* for that year, he made use of these words—

"There was no mention in the last annual report of the Comptroller of Prisons of the advisability of shifting the penal establishment from St. Helena to some place along the railway line. In previous reports he continually referred to the matter. The buildings were very old and in a bad state, and there was great danger from fire, and that danger was increasing every year. He supposed the Premier would tell them that it was a matter of money. It was a beautiful island, and it was a pity that the inhabitants of Brisbane should not have the opportunity of making the island a pleasure resort. He was sure that if the place were offered for sale, a good price could be obtained for it."

The Hon. W. Kidston, who was Premier at the time, stated—

"That matter had been under consideration for the past ten years, and the Comptroller had always mentioned

it in his annual report. There were other reasons, besides the danger from fire, for putting up new buildings. It was desirable to have a better means of reforming prisoners in buildings where they could be treated separately. It might be desirable to build somewhere out on the Western line, where a large area of land could be secured. Good work was already done at St. Helena, but he believed, if a large area out West could be secured, excellent work in stock-raising and farming might be done."

He was aware that the Government had to consider pounds, shillings, and pence, and that the question of building a new penal establishment on the mainland would probably mean expenditure of a good sum of money; on the other hand, he believed they could be reimbursed by what they would get from the island in the bay.

Mr. TROUT: From whom?

Mr. PETRIE: It might be from a syndicate. It was a matter exercising the minds of people in Brisbane and elsewhere. There were a good many fine places in the bay, but this was particularly handy. He hoped the Government would seriously consider the matter before they definitely decided as to putting up new buildings at St. Helena. No doubt it was a fine place for the prisoners; in fact, it was said that some liked it so well that after they got out they committed further crime in order to get back.

Mr. BARBER: Don't be humorous.

Mr. PETRIE: He had no wish to be humorous on this matter; he regretted that the establishment was necessary, but he supposed it was impossible to get on without having prisons. If a prison were established on the mainland, he thought prison labour could be utilised—probably in road-making.

An OPPOSITION MEMBER: In clearing prickly pear.

Mr. PETRIE: It might even be employed in that way.

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

Mr. COYNE (*Warrego*): It appeared to him that the arguments in favour of the removal of this establishment were very weak. Any vices in the associated ward would happen just the same if they were on the mainland. He was very sorry to hear one statement by the hon. member for Merthyr, and he hoped his information was unfounded—that there [4.30 p.m.] were what were called "crook" warders who engaged in illicit traffic with the prisoners. He had never heard that before. He had been through the establishment on half a dozen occasions, and he did not think any reasonable person could find any fault with the working of St. Helena. As had been stated, it would cost a great deal of money to build a high wall on the mainland. With regard to St. Helena there was not the necessity for that expenditure, and the money could be utilised for making up-to-date cells there. They had heard about the married warders leading what might be regarded as an unnatural life—that except in every six weeks, when they got so many days off, they were prevented from going to their wives and families.

While that might be so, were there not hundreds and thousands of men in Queensland to-day—free men—who could not see their families every six weeks? Were there not members of this House who could not see their families every six weeks or six months? There were very few warders down there who had not got their wives with them, and it was not a very serious hardship on those people. They were told that another serious drawback to St. Helena was that there was no doctor on the island. He did not know that it would pay to keep a doctor there for 200 persons. They were not so liable to accident down there as free people were, because they were guarded and cared for at every turn, and, if there was any danger or injury to life and limb, they were prevented from engaging in that work, so that there was not the same danger. But if it were on the mainland, would they have a doctor at their beck and call? Take Stewart's Creek, 6 miles from Townsville. There was no doctor there, and if an accident happened, they would have to go through the business of knocking at the outer wall, and getting someone to go for somebody else who would communicate with a doctor at Townsville. There were no late trains running, and the doctor would have to find other means of going out to the patients; but communication could be made with St. Helena via Wynnum.

The HOME SECRETARY: Hear, hear!

Mr. COYNE: That was not a sufficient cause for the institution to be shifted. They were told about the beautiful spot that St. Helena was, and no one could deny that, but who beautified it? The money of the taxpayers.

Mr. WELSBY: Nature made it beautiful.

Mr. COYNE: Nature made Green Island too, but it was not a beautiful place. Part of Stradbroke Island was not a beautiful place, because public money had not been expended on it, but the Dunwich end of it, on which public money had been spent, was beautiful. The idea of calling it a national park was beside the question. Would it be a national park for even the people in Gympie, Toowoomba, and Rockhampton? Not at all; it would be a national park for yachtsmen and boating men. Then there would be so much battling for the right to certain privileges along the island that he was sure the Government would be sorry they had parted with the island. Someone would want a "pub," and somebody would want to run boats there, and the Government would never be out of trouble with the competition between the persons who wanted those privileges. The associated wards might be very bad, and what the hon. member said might be true, but they might have just as great an evil if the place was made a "national" park, caused by the persons who went there at the week-end. There might be as big a cry made about vice being carried on by those people. They were told by those who had advocated the removal of the prison to the mainland that the separation of the prisoners was a very desirable thing. That only proved that the Home Secretary was right when he asked for a sum of money to be set aside for the purpose of building an up-to-date prison on St. Helena. He was entirely in favour of the action of the Home Secretary in retaining the island for the purpose it was used for at the present time. He felt sure

*Mr. Coyne.]*

that the hon. member for Merthyr was not very serious when he said that men who had served their sentences in St. Helena actually came from the South to commit another crime so that they could go down again.

Mr. WELSBY: I am serious.

Mr. COYNE: When the hon. member made such a statement as that, he killed whatever case he had. He hoped some arrangement would be made for the married warders to have their wives and daughters on the island. The cost of doing that would have no comparison with the expenditure which would be required for the erection of a similar institution on the mainland, entailing as it would probably double the number of warders.

Mr. VOWLES (*Dalby*) thought the Comptroller of Prisons was entitled to be brought up to the same salary as was given to the same officer in other States. As they had been told, his services were requisitioned by Western Australia some few years ago, which showed what his reputation was. He had figures here showing that the officer in the same capacity in New South Wales received £900; in Victoria, £800—he was called Inspector-General there—and in another State £650, with right of private practice as a doctor. He thought it was only a fair thing that the official here should receive a higher salary. He submitted that this was the time that the matter of removing the establishment should be discussed once and for all. If they were going to spend £30,000 in improving St. Helena, they should decide whether that money should be spent on the island or in a different place. As a boating man, it always appeared a pity to him that the two most beautiful islands of the bay—Peel Island and St. Helena—were not open to public use; St. Helena in particular, which, as every boating man knew, had the natural surroundings requisite for boating and general sporting purposes in the bay. The island nearest to it was Peel Island. Mud Island, Green Island, and King Island were practically useless from a sporting point of view, and there were practically barren wastes on the bigger islands. The island of the bay was St. Helena, and that was the one which the public of Brisbane were trying to get for public purposes.

Mr. WELSBY: The public of Queensland.

Mr. VOWLES: He did not speak on behalf of the public of Brisbane. He was very fond of sport, and when he came down from Dalby for his holidays, he delighted to spend it in the bay, and the best island of the lot was St. Helena. As regarded national parks, the hon. member for Warrego asked what interest the people in the Burke or Camooweal would have in St. Helena as a national park.

Mr. COYNE: Take Gympie.

Mr. VOWLES: They had a national park in Dalby—the reserve in the Bunya Mountains—for anyone to go to. That was going to be developed in course of time by the State. If they desired, the people could go and see the beauties of the Bunya Mountains, and if they desired to have a look at the beauties of St. Helena, the same thing would apply.

Mr. MURPHY: They might get into gaol.

Mr. VOWLES: That remark was taken as a huge joke. One man had told him that he would be glad to get back to St.

[*Mr. Coyne.*

Helena, as it was the best time he had ever had in his life. He was a bit of a crank, and used to masquerade as a doctor. His particular line was forgery. He had had the pleasure of defending him.

Mr. MURPHY: That is why he is there. (Loud laughter.)

Mr. VOWLES: Unfortunately, the prisoner did not allow him to defend him; he pleaded guilty, so that he could get there. He had heard from other criminals who had been down there that it was a very nice place to be in, and he thought if prisoners were on the mainland they would not be as happy as they were down there. When he went through the establishment, it struck him that the buildings were most inadequate, out of date, and dangerous. One thing which struck him as being so was the hospital. There were people sick in the hospital, and he remarked to another member of Parliament who was with him that the place did not seem to him to be healthy. He noticed that they were immediately shifted off—probably he committed a breach of the regulations—but his impression was that the hospital, which was inside the stockade, had not sufficient room for the prisoners who were in it.

Mr. TROUT: Is that why they wanted to get back?

Mr. VOWLES: He was talking about sick people. If the hon. member for Enoggera was in a hospital he would like nice surroundings. The hospital down there, from his point of view, was not a suitable hospital for a penal establishment. He would not like to be placed in the hospital inside the stockade at St. Helena on a muggy day in summer time. With regard to the proximity of the island to the shore, the hon. member for Merthyr, who was a practical bay man, had pointed out certain things. He (Mr. Vowles), as one who had been about the bay, and who had often discussed this matter with other people, had wondered why more people did not escape from St. Helena by water. At low tide any man who could swim half a mile could get away.

Mr. COYNE: That shows how well they are watched.

Mr. VOWLES: Two men had an opportunity of getting up to the roof quite recently, and, if they had gone into the water, they could have got away. If that kind of thing was done once, it could be done twice. There were plenty of places on shore where a prison could be built. He did not suggest that the prison should be built in the neighbourhood of a lunatic asylum, but he would suggest that the Government might utilise for this purpose some of their deserted experimental farms, with their various buildings. If the Government wished to take up this matter seriously, and consider the desirability of establishing the prison somewhere else, he would recommend one of their experimental farms as a suitable place. With reference to the surroundings and remuneration of the warders, he did not know much about that subject, but he considered that their salaries should be equal to those paid in other States. The services rendered by the officer in charge, the amount of work he did, and the increased cost of the necessaries of life during the last five or six years, should be taken into consideration.

in fixing the amount of his salary, which should be increased proportionately.

Mr. BARBER (*Bundaberg*): If some of those hon. members who talked about the beauties of St. Helena, and the balmy breezes blowing over the island during the daytime, and the zephyrs wafted across it in the evening, had the misfortune to be put there for seven years' "hard," it would be interesting to hear their experiences at the end of the term. There was no doubt that it was a very nice place, and he fully anticipated that the hon. member for Merthyr would raise the much-vexed question of having the prison removed from there to the mainland. He noticed that strong remarks had been made at a meeting held the other evening with reference to the Home Secretary and the Government, and that gentleman connected with the august body known as "The Moreton Bay League" practically threatened to annihilate the Government at the next election if St. Helena was not set apart as a national park.

Mr. COYNE: A nice term.

Mr. BARBER: It sounded very nice. Quite recently he made a trip by the "Koopa" to Bribie Island. Before they got within half a mile of the island he happened to look through his glasses, and saw some white specks in the distance. When the boat had tied up to the wharf, he strolled ashore and inspected those white specks, and he counted some forty-seven placards, or notices, which were posted up in every conceivable place—on humpies, logs, trees, and everywhere—intimating that persons landing, or desiring to land, had to make application for permission to the Brisbane Tug Company. Boating parties were warned that, in the event of landing or lighting a fire without such permission, they would be mulcted in pains and penalties from so many shillings up to being shot at sight. (Laughter.) If the penal establishment was removed from St. Helena, it struck him that persons who went there would be hit in the eye, as soon as they landed, by similar notices stuck up all over the place, warning them that no one was allowed to land on the island without the permission of some particular individual or association. In his opinion, the Government would do a very foolish thing if they acceded to the request of the people who were agitating in this matter. The hon. member for Merthyr somewhat overdid the business when he stated that there were only some three or four warders' wives down at St. Helena. When a man went on duty in any branch of the public service, or in the military service, he had to comply with the conditions. It was very seldom that the average soldier was allowed to take his good lady with him. A certain number were allowed to marry under special conditions, and quarters were provided for them, but the average soldier was not accompanied by his wife.

Mr. HUXHAM: What about merchant seamen?

Mr. BARBER: It was very rarely that a merchant seaman was allowed to take his wife with him, though, of course, a captain had privileges which were not enjoyed by the average shellback or the man before the mast. The hon. member's argument on this point was a very weak one indeed. With reference to the argument that it was very easy for a man to escape from St. Helena, he knew the bay pretty well, and was quite

prepared to admit that it would be a fairly easy matter for a good swimmer to swim across a certain part and get into shallow water. The hon. member said a prisoner could swim across to Fisherman Island, and then across the Boat Passage, and land at Lytton. What would the police authorities be doing while prisoners were getting ashore at Lytton? Would not Major Cahill be able to call out his forces and surround the prisoners, as he had attempted to surround the strikers during the recent strike in Brisbane? While he (Mr. Barber) would be quite prepared to take on the contract, as far as the swimming business was concerned, he thought there would be very small chance of a man escaping after his arrival at Lytton, because he would be lassoed by a constable. The hon. member had further weakened his argument by saying that, after all, the prisoners did not get the benefit of the lovely balmy breezes which blew from north, south, east, and west. Probably they got the benefit of those breezes when they blew from the half-points or quarter-points of the compass, because, as the hon. member must know, the wind did not always blow direct from north, south, east, or west. Another argument used by the hon. member was that, when the sewerage system was in operation in Brisbane, the river would not be a nice sight for passengers coming here from the South. It would not be any worse than the sight which met the gaze of passengers going to Melbourne and up the Yarra, for when they got into the lovely smelly Yarra they received the full effect of the sewerage. He had been looking through the Comptroller's report, and he must say that it was a very valuable document, evidencing great care in its preparation. The statistics given were a perfect object lesson, and the report itself contained many valuable hints and suggestions which did great credit to the Comptroller. Turning over the pages of the report, he came across some lovely pictures, from which it would appear that, instead of St. Helena being the awful place it was represented to be, it looked more like the Garden of Eden. If hon. members looked at the pictures attached to the report, they would see one illustration of a field gang at work. There were some fourteen men engaged in the game all dressed in white. It reminded him of a picture of the Australian cricket team going on to the field at Lord's, in the old country.

(Laughter.) Anyone looking at [5 p.m.] that picture could only express their pleasure that they had such splendid artists in Queensland.

He thought the hon. member for Merthyr could not have been serious when he said that he knew criminals committed crimes for the mere sake of getting sent down to St. Helena. He believed that was one of the Dooleyisms that the hon. gentleman worked off on to the unoffending public in Queen street sometimes. (Laughter.) It reminded him that some of the lads of Geelong, some years ago, said that gaol was a real good home for them in the winter. He thought that the hon. member for Merthyr had mispent a lot of his energy over the matter of getting St. Helena set aside as a national park. He (Mr. Barber) often wondered what was the real object of the hon. member in trying to get it established as a national park. It appeared to him that when the hon. member was down the bay, in the vicinity of St. Helena, at night, that the ghosts of the people at St. Helena haunted

*Mr. Barber.*

him because the hon. member was connected with a business which was responsible for a large percentage of the prisoners who were now in St. Helena. It was the ghosts of these prisoners that haunted the hon. member when he was down the bay and prevented him from enjoying himself as he would do if these prisoners were not on St. Helena at all. The Comptroller-General of Prisons (Captain Pennefather) was an old public servant, and the Government should have provided some increase in his salary. Everybody in Queensland recognised the ability of the gentleman they had at the head of their prisons, and he was held in high respect by the whole community. He read the Comptroller-General's report year after year, and he recognised that he was a man who did not exercise a vindictive spirit, but who desired to make prison life reformatory rather than punitive.

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

Mr. BARBER (continuing): They recognised that the suggestions made by Captain Pennefather, the Comptroller-General of Prisons, year after year in his report must appeal to the better side of human nature generally. That officer recognised by his long experience in the handling of criminals, and especially those who had just lapsed into wrongdoing, that it was no good endeavouring to reform a criminal by being vindictive, but it was better to treat him with as much kindness as discipline would permit. These suggestions of the Comptroller-General found a warm echo in thousands of hearts in the community. He had compared the salary of the Comptroller-General with that received by similar officers in the other States, and he thought the Government could well afford to give him an increase, seeing the large amount of work that he had to carry out. It would be noticed from the report that there was a list of the profits made by the different departments, from carpenters and blacksmiths down to tinsmiths, during the year. Anyone who had seen the finished material which was sent up from time to time must recognise that the work turned out at St. Helena was of a real high order. The total profits on the work carried out at St. Helena last year was a little over £8,000. That did not make the place absolutely self-supporting, but it eased the payments of the taxpayers of the State, who had to contribute an annual amount for the upkeep and administration of that institution. Whatever was done in the future by the Moreton Bay League, he hoped the Government would not allow themselves to be persuaded to hand over that lovely island for a national park, even to the people of Brisbane. Only a small number of people in Brisbane would benefit, as no doubt it would be a nice place for them to go to. It would be a nice place if it got into the hands of a syndicate.

Mr. WELSHY: We don't propose that at all.

Mr. BARBER: Syndicates never placed their cards on the table when playing their game. They played their own little game, and gradually managed to ensnare the wily fly, which in this case was the community generally. He would like a great deal more information about the objects of that league before he consented to handing over St. Helena to a few people in Brisbane.

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

[Mr. Barber.

Mr. BARBER (continuing): It had been said that St. Helena was a beautiful place, and could be made a very nice public park at the expenditure of public money. Somebody interjected that the Almighty had made it beautiful. The Almighty gave them the land, but He expected it to be cultivated. If they wanted to beautify any land, they must either spend their own money or someone else's, and cultivate it. They were just as likely to get a nice spot on Green Island, or any other island, provided they had sufficient money to spend on it. A large amount of money had been spent in improving the surroundings of St. Helena, and the Government would be doing a gross injustice to the taxpayers of Queensland if they acceded to the request of the Moreton Bay League. The Government would have to bear the pains and penalties that were proposed at a meeting of that august body a few weeks ago, but he hoped the Home Secretary would have sufficient courage to maintain his hold on St. Helena, even if the Moreton Bay League threatened to decapitate him at the next election.

Mr. KIRWAN (Brisbane): He did not intend to discuss the question of removing the penal establishment from St. Helena to the mainland. It was an important question, and one which required very serious consideration. Whatever opinions were held one way or the other, it would be admitted that a great deal could be said for the retention of St. Helena as a penal establishment, while much could also be said on the matter of having such an establishment on the mainland. One matter that he would like to draw attention to was that of indeterminate sentences. Recently, Judge Macnaughton called attention to this particular matter, and he also noticed a reference to it in the report of the Comptroller-General of Prisons. In view of the fact that references had been made to the matter by men well qualified to give an opinion on the question, he hoped the Government would find it their duty to consider the matter. He believed that there were in the world—not only in Queensland but everywhere else—a certain class of people who were born criminals. No matter whatever efforts were made to reform them, reformation was impossible in their case. If they went through the records in Queensland, without going to the other States at all, they would find that they had men who started out on a career of crime straight away. They generally got a light sentence for a start, and spent twelve months within the prison doors. No sooner were they out of gaol than they committed some other offence, and they made no effort to earn an honest living at all. He considered that that class of criminal should be placed under surveillance once and for all. They were a public danger and a public menace, and they generally wound up by murdering some inoffensive citizen who claimed the right to protect his property from being purloined by them. It ended in their being hanged. He believed it was Lord Lytton who said that the worst possible use they could put any man to was to hang him. He believed that these criminals should be placed away from the community right at the beginning of their crime. They should treat them the same way as they treated a lunatic. They put away the lunatic because he was not fit to be at large, and they should treat the habitual criminal the same way. He hoped

the matter would be considered by the Government. The Home Secretary was to be congratulated on the number of reforms he had introduced. It could be regarded as a distinct compliment to his administration, when they had members rising in their place and saying that they knew a number of men who committed certain crimes in order to get down to St. Helena. He thought that spoke well for St. Helena as a penal establishment, and the way in which it was managed. He did not know that there was anything further he wished to say on the vote; but the matter he had mentioned was a very important one, and he thought it should receive consideration. He might instance the sentence that was commuted the other day by the Government—the case in which the death sentence on an unfortunate individual was commuted to imprisonment for life. His contention was that the unfortunate man in that case had an inclination to commit crime of a certain character; and, if the man had been treated in the manner he suggested, that unfortunate murder would never have been committed. A man of that kind wanted as much looking after as an unfortunate inmate in a lunatic asylum.

Mr. WINSTANLEY (*Queenton*): With respect to the important question of indeterminate sentences, he certainly thought the fact that prisoners repeatedly found themselves in custody showed that short sentences had no beneficial effect. In his opinion, after the first sentence, at any rate, it would be well to impose indeterminate sentences, and let it rest with the authorities to liberate persons so sentenced when it was considered they were qualified to join society again with the probability of taking care of themselves and leading honest and industrious lives. Criminals were certainly not reformed by the sentences they received under the present system. The Comptroller-General of Prisons, in his report, stated—

“It has often been said that crime is a disease, either inherited or produced by contagion either of environment or association. The best remedy against the spread of any contagious disease is to obliterate the cause. There is nothing like commencing at the beginning. Too much consideration cannot be given to the question regarding the care and training of children of tender age when the mind is new and impressions are easily made by what they see and hear.”

He thought the whole subject practically rested on what was stated there. In all probability the cause, to a large extent, of so many convictions was due to the fact that so many people became criminals on account of care not having been exercised in their early years. In Queensland a great deal more was being done than in some other places. A great amount of money was being spent on education, and it was money well spent. In the report relating to hospitals for the insane, and the report of the Commissioner of Police, it would be found that a great many people became inmates of gaols and lockups and asylums through drunkenness, and he believed the State should do even more than it was doing for the children. A good deal might be done in the way of showing children the evil effects produced by the use of intoxicants, and thus preventing them from becoming victims, not only to drink, but to other evils which followed. It was encouraging to find that the prisoners

at St. Helena were engaged in useful and elevating occupations, and that the establishment was practically self-supporting. He had occasion previously to complain that the prisoners at Stewart's Creek had no opportunity of learning trades by which they might earn their living, and he was glad to notice from the Comptroller's report that they now had the opportunity of doing useful work. He was very glad that this important step had been taken, and he hoped that the principle would be extended. There could be no two opinions about St. Helena being an ideal place for a penal establishment. The hon. member for Merthyr made a strong indictment against the Government, and if some of the statements which he made had been made on another occasion, apart from the present controversy, he thought they would have been entitled to very serious consideration, if not to a departmental inquiry, but the whole of his arguments fell to the ground, because they were made with the express purpose of acquiring the island as a holiday resort, and not for the purpose of improving the prison system. Members talked about making the island a national park, but what was intended at most was a Brisbane park at the expense of the rest of the State. As one who did not belong to Brisbane, he considered it would not be fair or just to put the country to the expense of removing the penal establishment to some place inland. And the island would not be handed over to the citizens of Brisbane as a whole, because only a select part of the community of Brisbane would be able to take advantage of St. Helena as a pleasure resort if it were converted into a national park. The hon. member for Dalby talked about the national park near Dalby, and spoke about it being beautified, but that would have to be at the expense of the ratepayers of Dalby—perhaps with the help of a subsidy from the Government. Practically all the arguments used by the hon. member for Merthyr had been refuted. The fact that the institution had been in existence so many years, and had not been destroyed by fire—

Mr. WELSBY: There was a fire on the island some years ago.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: There might have been. It was true that the buildings were dilapidated, but the fact that so little damage had been done by fire and so few prisoners had got away refuted the argument as to what might happen under certain circumstances if the establishment were allowed to remain at St. Helena. He thought the Government would be very ill-advised to remove it to an inland town. When the arguments advanced by people were refuted, and they then said, “We will have it,” he thought it was time for other people to say, “You shall not have it,” and he hoped the Government would take that stand. When they said that if they could not get it by fair means then they would get it by foul means—

Mr. BERTRAM: No one suggested foul means.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: The attitude taken up went to show that if by any possible means they could get it they would have it. He believed that even the people of Brisbane would be opposed to the suggested change, and he was satisfied there was no better place than St. Helena for the work in connection with the penal establishment. The whole of the arguments used against

*Mr. Winstanley.]*

St. Helena could be used in respect to an establishment at any other place, and while he was of opinion that improvements ought to be made on modern lines, he thought no better place could be found than St. Helena.

Mr. ADAMSON (*Rockhampton*): He was not going to enter into the merits of St. Helena as a State prison; he simply wanted to ask a question. The other night he asked a question concerning the salaries of attendants in the prisons at Rockhampton, Brisbane, and Townsville. The matron in Rockhampton was paid a great deal less than the matron in Brisbane, and only half as much as the matron in Townsville.

The HOME SECRETARY: There are very few female prisoners in Rockhampton Gaol.

Mr. ADAMSON: As to the whole question of prisons and penology, there could be an interesting debate on the most advanced system of prisons and dealing with prisoners. He had the privilege on one or two occasions of going through the establishments at St. Helena and Boggo road. Good work was being done; and the Comptroller was aware of the best things done in other countries, and he hoped the Government would give that officer the chance of putting into practice reforms which would make our prisons truly educative places where people would be reformed instead of being degraded, and which they would be able to leave with a better chance of doing useful work in the community. He had

pleasure in saying that, from [5.30 p.m.] what he had seen in these prisons, good work was being done for the prisoners, and, if they were prepared to take advantage of the chance they had there, they might be better fitted to live an honest life when they came out than what they were when they went in.

Mr. McCORMACK (*Cairns*): He had been prepared to be convinced by supporters of the Moreton Bay League in connection with this prison reform, but it was rather remarkable that no sound argument was used by any of the speakers in favour of the removal of this prison.

Mr. WELSBY: I hadn't time.

Mr. McCORMACK: The whole tenor of the hon. member's speech was that St. Helena was such a beautiful place that it was being wasted by being kept as a prison, and, later on, one of his supporters made out that it was such a horrible place that it was necessary that the prison should be removed inland. He had spoken to many persons who had been in Stewart's Creek Gaol and also in St. Helena—men who became prisoners through actions they were sorry for ten minutes after they were committed—and these men could give an intelligent idea as to how the different prisons operated upon them. For one thing, men were kept much cleaner, both in mind and body, in St. Helena than at Stewart's Creek, because they had more open air and exercise. If only one man was reformed at St. Helena, it was worth more to the State than by making it a park.

Mr. WELSBY: Can't you reform them on shore?

Mr. McCORMACK: No; the surroundings at St. Helena were much better. The hon. member's argument was that the surroundings were so nice that they should make it a pleasure resort.

Mr. FORSYTH: Some of the prisoners want to get back again.

[Mr. Winstanley.

Mr. McCORMACK: The people whom the State wanted to reform were the people who did not want to go back again; men who wanted to get back again no prison would reform. He believed there was some reform effected at St. Helena. He had met a clerk who had embezzled money, and who was today a good citizen, and had told him that St. Helena was a splendid place, and that if there was any hope of reforming a prisoner it was there. This man compared it more than favourably with the gaol at Stewart's Creek, where he spent a small portion of his sentence. St. Helena Penal Establishment was of much greater importance as a reformatory than it would be as a pleasure park. He had not heard one member show the disabilities attached to an inland prison. There were disabilities attached to inland prisons which did not affect St. Helena, and that was one of the reasons why the island should be retained as a prison. There was another matter he wished to bring forward with respect to ministers of religion visiting prisons. A case was brought under his notice where a minister visited Boggo Road Gaol, and in the course of his sermon told the prisoners to beware of socialism and agitators. He held that this should not be allowed. Ministers of religion should be allowed to go there to give spiritual comfort to the prisoners, if necessary, but they should not be allowed to preach against any particular doctrine. This matter had been brought under his notice by a prisoner who had been in Boggo Road Gaol, and he could give the Home Secretary the name of the minister who preached this sermon. The instance he referred to showed that ministers required a little watching as well as any other person in the community.

Mr. HUXHAM (*Buranda*) could speak from personal experience, and what he had heard from other people who had come into contact with the staff, of Captain Pennefather and the officers of the department with the greatest commendation. The Comptroller brought into his methods that spirit of human kindness which was essential in the government of these places. He sympathised with the Home Secretary in his efforts to make the conditions of these men brighter. The Home Secretary desired to give them a better chance by allowing them to read good literature, and make their imprisonment of a reformatory character rather than the punitive character that it was some years back. He thought we had blundered in this question from the start. They made criminals in the community because they allowed so many people to go about unemployed with the opportunity to fall into vicious habits. He thought, when they allowed people to be unemployed, the first drift they made was into habits which were likely to put them into gaol. They should make it part of their activities to see that there were no unemployed about the place, either of deserving unemployed or those who were from time to time discharged from our gaols, and that would go far to reduce the criminal population. What did prisoners find the position to be when they came out of gaol? They could get no references, they had the prison brand about them, their lives seemed to be overshadowed with the one black spot that they had committed a crime, and nobody would employ them. It was their duty to see that these people were taken in hand for a probationary term by the Government, until it was recognised by the community

that they were worth saving, and someone provided them with work. Many a bright life had been sacrificed in the community from the fact that they had committed one crime, and as soon as they sought for employment nobody would touch them. There was another matter that he wished to refer to—that was the consideration which ought to be shown to the female warders in our gaols. He saw they were not down for any increase. These women did good work, their hours were long, and they had to watch through the hours of the night when it was almost terrifying to some. Some means should be adopted whereby men could take on the night duties, so that these women might not suffer the horrors of being cooped up in the place at night. He again commended the suggestion he had made to the Home Secretary with reference to giving these unfortunate prisoners, as they were discharged, an opportunity of recovering their lost reputation. It was the one slip that often made a man a criminal, but if these men were taken properly in hand they might become highly-respected members of the community.

Mr. HUNTER (*Maranoa*): There was a good deal in what the hon. member for Buranda said in regard to our prisoners—that on leaving the prison they should be placed in the hands of people who would give them a chance. It often happened that men who had by mere accident fallen foul of the law, and suffered their punishment, had the finger of scorn pointed at them, and were often compelled by necessity to commit crime again. He had been waited upon in connection with a man whom he employed, and was asked if he knew the character of that man, and he was urged to get rid of him. On asking the man about it, he told him that he had been actually driven from one billet to another, because he had no sooner got settled in one position than his employer was told about him, and he was driven away. They ought to show more sympathy to this class of people, from the fact that crime, after all, was very largely a matter of accident, although in some cases it was habitual and even inherent. He would read the remarks of Mr. William Allan Pinkerton, a detective in the United States of America, on this question of crime. Mr. Pinkerton stated that "criminals are made, not born." Relating his experiences to a London interviewer recently, he said—

"There is no criminal class. Criminals are just like other people. Humanity, I believe, after having had fifty years' experience in dealing with crime, is not divided into criminals and non-criminals. There are only two classes—those who have committed crimes and those who have not yet committed crimes. I have seen this so often proved that, when I hear of men and women in high social circles suddenly doing something that brings them within the scope of the law, I am not surprised. Hundreds of criminals would reform if they had the chance; hundreds of others would become criminals if their price were offered. Prisons are not peopled with habitual criminals. There are men and women there who simply committed their crimes because the opportunity occurred. I would hesitate to say that anyone is proof against temptation. No man sets out, except under very exceptional cir-

cumstances, to commit murder; it is done in a moment—hurriedly. I know hundreds of cases where criminals have reformed and become useful citizens."

That was the opinion of a man after fifty years' experience in connection with criminals, and he (Mr. Hunter) held that, having punished an offence, sufficient had been done as far as the State was concerned, and that, while it was a good thing that the police should keep their eyes on criminals to prevent them committing further crimes, it was not desirable that a man should be in any way prejudiced in the eyes of the employing public or anybody else, or anything done to destroy his self-respect.

Mr. PAYNE (*Mitchell*): If there was one thing which would make him support St. Helena being used as a penal establishment, it was the argument of the hon. member for Merthyr that it was a very beautiful spot. We should not put prisoners in unhealthy places. The causes of crime were largely want, drink, and temptation. He did not look upon every man in gaol as an abject creature. He believed they would find many good-hearted men in gaol. In the old days, a man who was pressed for a horse and took one, and rode it for 50 miles, was put in gaol for five years, which was a severe penalty for such an offence. He had never heard of the police hunting men after they had come out of gaol, and if that kind of thing was done he thought it was most improper; but he had noticed that when a man was charged with an offence, the police, and even the Crown Prosecutor, would rake up his record for the previous twenty years, and tell the court how often he had been in gaol for other offences. He thought that was wrong, as in nine cases out of ten it must prejudice the man sitting on the bench. When a man served a sentence in gaol he was punished for the offence he had committed, and such a practice should be done away with and each case should be dealt with on the evidence adduced to prove the particular offence with which the man was charged. While he would not like to deprive the citizens of Brisbane of a beauty spot, he was satisfied that St. Helena was naturally adapted for a penal settlement, and that it was an ideal place for such a purpose. Enclosing men or women in places surrounded by a fence or a stone wall did not afford much chance for reforming them. The idea that by clubbing and persecuting a man they could make him humble had been exploded years ago. While there must be a certain amount of firmness shown in dealing with criminals, there should also be a great deal of kindness, if the object was reformation. A man who could be subdued by being shut up and fed on bread and water might just as well be off the face of the earth, as he had no backbone and was no good. He hoped the Home Secretary would not accede to the wishes of those who were agitating for the removal of St. Helena to the mainland.

Mr. STEVENS (*Rosewood*) thought it was generally recognised nowadays that imprisonment should be of a reformatory nature. With other members of the Committee, he thought the Home Secretary was to be congratulated upon the reform he had brought about in connection with our prison system. If imprisonment was to be of a reformatory nature, then a place like St.

*Mr. Stevens.]*

Helena presented very much greater advantages in that respect than places on the mainland, where a man was constantly confined within stone walls. Those who argued that this island should be resumed for recreation purposes stated that it was an eye-sore to have our prison settlement at the mouth of the river. Personally, he did not see anything objectionable in connection with the situation of the penal establishment, or in the building which at present existed, and which could be seen by visitors as they approached the port of Brisbane. Therefore, he thought the Minister was wise in considering the question very carefully before taking any action which would result in the removal of the penal establishment from that island. Many diverse opinions had been expressed that evening with regard to criminals. The hon. member for Brisbane gave it as his opinion that some criminals were born. The hon. member for Maranoa cited what he said was an eminent authority to prove that criminals were made, not born. He (Mr. Stevens) thought with the hon. member for Brisbane, that there were born criminals, and that there were men who ought certainly to be kept under restraint. Reference had been made to the case of the criminal whose death sentence was recently commuted to one of imprisonment for life. That was a matter on which he had intended to speak, but was reserving his remarks until they came to the vote for the Justice Department. But as it had been mentioned already in the course of this discussion, he might as well state now that he was of opinion that such a man should not be allowed at large, but that, as he had been allowed at large, and had committed a dastardly crime, the sentence passed upon him should be carried out, unless we abolish capital punishment entirely. It was a cruel thing that the parents of that poor child should be taxed for the maintenance of the man who murdered her. If capital punishment was going to be abolished, then let it be abolished in a proper manner; but if we professed to inflict capital punishment as a deterrent to criminals, certainly the sentence should be carried out in a case like the one referred to.

**THE SECRETARY FOR RAILWAYS:** Is it not the duty of the Executive to take all the circumstances of such cases into consideration?

**Mr. STEVENS:** No doubt it was.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The hon. member is not in order in discussing that matter.

**Mr. STEVENS:** He thought that perhaps he would not be in order in discussing it on this vote, and had only done so because it had already been mentioned. However, he would reserve his remarks on the matter until a subsequent occasion, and would conclude by saying that St. Helena was an ideal place for a penal establishment, and that the Government were quite right in retaining it for that purpose.

**The HOME SECRETARY:** A duty rested upon the State in connection with the reformation of criminals, and it was a duty which should be discharged as fully and as completely as possible, even if it was done at the risk of offending or coming into conflict with any section of the community, or with the pleasures of any section of the community. All modern penologists, and all those who took an interest in the history of

crime and prison life, were unanimous that, where it was possible to reform a criminal, it was the duty of the State to undertake that reform; and that if a member of the community had fallen, the State should do everything possible to uplift that man again and restore to him the self-respect which he had lost. In order that the State should be able to carry out its duty in this respect, it was essential that the location of the penitentiary or reformatory should be such as would assist to restore self-respect to the man who was undergoing punishment. If we adopted the old-time system, and treated offenders as if they were absolutely unworthy of consideration, we should never accomplish their reform. It must be admitted that if we could only succeed in reforming 5 per cent.—

**An HONOURABLE MEMBER:** 1 per cent.

**The HOME SECRETARY:** If we could only succeed in reforming 1 per cent. of our criminals, we should do a work which would commend itself to every member of the community. He did not propose to go particularly into the question raised by the Moreton Bay League, who, represent-

[7 p.m.] ing a section of the community, desired to obtain St. Helena on the ground that it was one of Nature's beauty spots. In St. Helena they had an island that offered all the opportunities for the prison authorities to undertake certain reforms which undoubtedly would have the effect—owing to the surroundings and the freedom which could be afforded to the prisoners—of giving them every opportunity of carrying out those reforms. As the administrative head of the Prisons Department for three years—and the same thing happened before his time—he knew of not one or two, but of many prisoners who had passed through that prison who had recovered their self-respect, having learnt a trade there, commenced life once more with the possession of a trade, and became reputable members of the community.

**Mr. BERTRAM:** Doesn't that apply to other gaols as well?

**The HOME SECRETARY:** Not to the same extent as St. Helena.

**Mr. COYNE:** You have not got the accommodation there.

**The HOME SECRETARY:** No; that was the trouble. St. Helena was a prison where the long-sentence men were confined. In a prison where the short-sentence men were confined there was not the same necessity for freedom. In all British-speaking countries it was always recognised that in those gaols where the long-sentence prisoners were confined there should be greater scope and greater freedom allowed than in the case of a gaol where the prisoners were serving short sentences. They were sending as many prisoners to St. Helena as they could provide accommodation for. At St. Helena, with its surroundings of water—despite all that had been said by the hon. member for Merthyr—since its establishment in 1866 there had only been two escapes of prisoners, and they were recaptured. The hon. member for Merthyr spoke of his ability and the ability of others to swim from Fisherman's Island across the different channels to Lytton.

**Mr. COYNE:** Are you going to test him?

**The HOME SECRETARY:** On one occasion when the tide was fairly low he did

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suggest to the hon. member for Merthyr to give them an exhibition of what he could do, but the hon. member was not prepared to do so at that particular time. (Laughter.) He did not think there were many prisoners at St. Helena who would make the attempt, if it was only for the reason that the hon. member for Merthyr gave—that a number of the prisoners who were down there committed crimes in order to be confined at St. Helena. (Laughter.)

Mr. HUXHAM: What escapes have you had from other gaols?

The HOME SECRETARY: Comparatively few. In other gaols they had perforce to employ a larger number of warders who had the prisoners under observation, and they were confined within a small area with high walls around them, and escape was not possible. They must realise that if they were going to carry out their policy of reformation, St. Helena was the most suitable place for it. He had seen many letters in the paper which he presumed emanated from the Moreton Bay League, and he noticed they alluded to the prisoners as "Burglar Bill," or "Burglar So and So"—as persons who were beneath consideration. He had no doubt that those gentlemen who were desirous of attaining possession of the island for the purpose of gratifying their own pleasure considered the prisoner was unworthy of their consideration at all.

Mr. MURPHY: They want to do a bit of burglary on their own account. (Laughter.)

The HOME SECRETARY: He would not go so far as that, but when they remembered that the league said that if they did not get the island they were going to overthrow the Government and make the whole State pay for the island without proposing to raise one penny piece themselves for the upkeep and maintenance of the island, then he agreed with the hon. member for Burke that it was a burglary on a very big scale indeed. (Laughter.) There was very little likelihood of escape by means of swimming to the mainland, because the channels swarmed with sharks, the waters were muddy, there was something like a mile of water through which a man would have to swim, and there were other dangers such as currents which the prisoner would have to take into consideration if he desired to escape. Did their prisoners deserve that amount of consideration—that some attempt should be made by the State to reform them? If they admitted that, then they admitted that there was no more suitable place than St. Helena for that particular purpose. That was not alone the view taken by their own permanent heads in Queensland, but it was the view taken by a number of other persons who visited the prison and who were experts in prison reform. Furthermore, the Comptroller-General of Prisons in New South Wales expressed the following wish in connection with St. Helena—

"I wish we had in New South Wales an island like St. Helena for prison purposes."

The Hon. J. D. Connelly, Colonial Secretary of Western Australia, who visited Queensland recently, mentioned that the administration of prisons came within his administration, and he expressed the desire to visit St. Helena. He gave him the opportunity, and later on Mr. Connelly said that he was

particularly pleased to notice that dairying, agriculture, and allied trades were taught at St. Helena, and in a letter he said—

"I think it is an excellent idea to teach the prisoners trades which would enable them to leave the city and go out on the land and earn an honest living."

To himself Mr. Connolly expressed the opinion that there was no more suitable place than St. Helena for a prison, with the object that the State had in view—namely, to reform those who were expiating their offences. In connection with one of the matters that Mr. Connolly mentioned, he would point out that in 1895, at the suggestion of the Comptroller-General, a small herd of Ayrshire cattle were purchased for £240. Since then they had sold the progeny of that little herd stocked to the value of £6,000 or £7,000, and that has assisted materially in keeping down the cost of the maintenance of that prison. Under the conditions which existed at St. Helena, the prisoners were practically on a farm. Hon. members who had visited the island noticed that there were cowsheds and yards, and piggeries, and the prisoners whose work it was to attend to those particular duties were as free as could be, save that they were prisoners, and that they could not escape from the island. It must be admitted that environment had some effect on the character of mankind, and, taking the methods adopted there in connection with discipline, and the environment of the place, there could be not the slightest doubt that it had a great effect upon the prisoners there. And he knew, as the administrative head of some experience, that it had a considerable effect in the reformation of those who were confined there.

Mr. COYNE: It has a salutary effect.

The HOME SECRETARY: He had a letter which was written by the Rev. William Asher, an evangelist from the United States, who visited Queensland, and who wrote under date 17th July, 1909, as follows:—

"NIPPON YUSEN KAISHA.

"s.s. 'Nikko Maru.' En route to Manila,  
"17th July, 1909.

"Captain C. Pennefather,

"Comptroller-General of Prisons,  
"Brisbane, Australia.

"My dear Captain,—It was my intention to write concerning my visit to St. Helena Prison before leaving Brisbane, but I failed to do so for the reason my time was fully occupied with packing, etc.

"My visit to St. Helena was a delightful surprise. Before going I was given to understand that I might not find things in very good shape. Why, I do not know. I have never found a better condition of affairs anywhere. I was given every opportunity to go where I wished. Governor Ryan instructed Chief Officer Bowden to show me everything. I found the cellrooms absolutely clean, and well ventilated. It is true that the cells are rather small, but when one remembers they are used almost only for sleeping purposes, it works no hardship on the prisoner.

"Going through the workshops, I found they were neat, tidy, and clean.

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The ceilings are a good height, allowing plenty of good fresh air to circulate through the room. With plenty of sunlight coming into the different work-rooms, it occurred to me it was a healthful place in which to work.

"I took particular note of the fact that but two men were in the hospital. These two men with ailments contracted before coming to St. Helena. No doubt the reason for the hospital being practically empty is because of the good healthful condition of the prisoners. This speaks well for the present management.

"I know of no prison where there is a better sanitary arrangement. I could not detect a bad smell anywhere. Not even in the big sewer tank. Your night cans are the most sanitary I have seen anywhere. As far as I can remember, we have nothing as good in America.

"Governor Ryan impressed me as one who understood his work thoroughly. Both he and Mrs. Ryan were courteous and hospitable. I shall always think of this visit with much pleasure.

"Thanking you for all courtesies extended, and wishing you many happy years to carry on your great work.

"I am, etc.,

"WILLIAM ASHER."

He thought this, coming from a gentleman who had made it part of his life's work to interest himself in the prisons of different countries, went to show the value of that particular location as a reformatory. Then there was a letter from Mr. Frank Nicholas, visiting justice of Fremantle and Rottnest Prisons, Western Australia—

"I believe there is an agitation to remove the prison from St. Helena to the mainland, and make the island available for recreation purposes. I certainly think the island is a suitable place for a prison, and the suitability of the site from the point of view of the reformation of the prisoners, and risks of escape, more than compensates for any little inconvenience entailed on the administrative officers whose duty it is to pay periodical visits to the establishment. I very much favour an island prison as against one on the mainland, particularly when you consider that in modern times the reformation of the prisoners is the first consideration, and their punishment only a secondary one. On St. Helena there are facilities for broadening the scope for reformatory work that would not exist on the mainland. An amount of freedom may be allowed to the prisoners that could not be granted elsewhere, and then there is a great deal to be said in favour of pleasant natural surroundings. Nice scenery, such as is to be found at St. Helena, exercises a refining influence on the minds of the prisoners, and their moral character has far more chance of regeneration there than if their daily tasks were carried out amidst everlasting walls and white-washed cells. . . . If you want to deal with confinees simply as criminals requiring punishment, well, dungeons anywhere would serve the purpose; but, if the desire for reforming these men is uppermost—and I have seen that it is, here—then the more open and free and

useful you can make the lives of the prisoners the better the results that will be obtained."

Those were the opinions of a gentleman who had an intimate knowledge of the subject, a gentleman who specially dealt with the particular matters which were brought forward as a reason why this prison should be removed; and those very reasons were the reasons which he asserted were the ones which enabled reformation to be carried out most effectively. Then there was a letter from Mr. R. W. H. Bligh, general secretary, Australasian White Cross League—

"St. Helena is the best prison in Australasia. The rich island lends itself to the agricultural work being done by the men. The Ayrshire herd is equal to anything of its kind. As I watched the men handling the cattle for the Exhibition, it gave me the impression one would receive on any stud farm. Those in charge are sympathetic men who understand human nature, and act accordingly. I spoke to all the men, and they received my message in an intelligent manner. Many of them came forward after the address to express their thanks. The only man who referred to the discipline of the place said he is a better man than before he was sent there. I sincerely hope that nothing will be done to disturb the work going on at St. Helena. It would be impossible to get a more suitable site, and it stands as a model to guide prison authorities in other parts of the world."

In addition to the writers of those letters, the Comptroller of Prisons in New South Wales, and a great number of other persons who were competent to judge, had expressed similar opinions. Would the Government, in view of their own experience and the opinions expressed by people with full knowledge of the subject—would they be justified in casting on one side that prison reform which they desired to carry out, in conceding to a small section of the community this particular location which was so suitable for the purpose? Then, with regard to the expenditure which would be necessary to establish a new prison, one could never carry out the work so effectively as at St. Helena, no matter what expenditure might be involved in establishing a prison on the mainland. The hon. member for Merthyr said the erection of the new dormitory cells at St. Helena would cost something like 35 per cent. more than if built on the mainland. The erection of a gaol on the mainland might be close to a railway, but it would have to be some distance from the population. The material would have to be carried in railway trucks; from the railway trucks it would have to be carted to the site of the gaol. In the case of St. Helena, the material was put on the Government steamer; from the steamer it was loaded on the trucks at St. Helena; and by prison labour it was carried to its destination. It would be seen, therefore, that the cost of conveying material must be very much less in the case of St. Helena than in the other case. Then an hon. member spoke of the inconvenience to the warders, who were unable to have their wives with them. At one time the wives of the warders were permitted to live on the island; but, owing to certain scandals, it was decided that only one or two officers should be allowed to have their wives with

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them. At present the system was for a warder to be six weeks on duty, and then have one week's furlough. Those inconveniences must be suffered; but, as against them, there were the increased facilities of dealing with prisoners from a reformatory standpoint. It seemed strange that gentlemen should have cast their eyes on St. Helena as if it was the only place in Moreton Bay from Southport to Caloundra, a distance of 110 miles, with its innumerable resorts and islands.

Mr. WIENHOLT: The grass always grows green on the other side of the fence.

The HOME SECRETARY: It was the old story of Naboth's vineyard. When the proprietor of a freehold in the vicinity of Dunwich offered that land to the State, and suggested that it might be used as a lazaret for the female lepers, what an outcry there was from boating men. It was said to be the only spot, the only shelter, the gem of the bay. Look at it to-day! They never raised a penny to effect any improvement; and it was covered with noogoora burr, lantana, broken bottles, and empty tins. Then there was the case of King Island, which was wanted by yachtsmen. It used to be a beautiful place, covered with scrub, and it was reserved for them; but they never raised a penny to improve it, and to-day it was covered with lantana, prickly pear, broken bottles, and empty tins—a regular wilderness. What was being asked not only involved the loss of this island as a reformatory, but the expenditure of a large sum of money by the Government in establishing a prison on the mainland. He ventured to say that the establishment of a new gaol, with 10 acres of land and a suitable wall surrounding it—which would never provide the same accommodation or advantage as St. Helena, with its wall of water round it—he ventured to say that the cost would not be a penny less than £150,000. Was the State justified, in order to gratify the pleasure of a small section of the community, in going to that expenditure, when there were so many railways and other things which should be carried out for the benefit of the country? Then, take the annual cost of maintenance on the island. The Brisbane Botanic Gardens, which only comprised a few acres of ground, cost almost £4,000 per annum for maintenance. It was suggested that the island should be laid out as a tropical garden, which, in the first instance, would cost an immense amount of money. Were they justified in going to that very heavy expenditure, and by which they would deprive the prison authorities of the place which was enabling them to carry out their work? The question of associated cells at St. Helena had been mentioned. The reason the Treasurer had put money on the Estimates was to enable the department to have the modern dormitories which were necessary to have the reformatory work carried out still more effectively. Undoubtedly associated cells were opposed to all ideas of prison reform. He recognised that when he became head of the department, and in Rockhampton they were already converting the associated cells into single cells, and making provision for the establishment of trades and industries. In Townsville they had a very fine gaol, but, as it was on the mainland, they had high walls surrounding it; and, as one hon. member had said, the reformatory effect was nothing like so good

as it was at St. Helena. There would be a considerable saving in regard to the improvements at St. Helena, not only in connection with the conveyance of material there, but because the prison labour would be able to dig the foundations, and also do the concrete work.

Mr. COYNE: All the labouring work.

The HOME SECRETARY: All the labouring work. Instead of the buildings being constructed at an increase of 35 per cent., they would be constructed rather at a decreased cost of 35 per cent.

Mr. HUXHAM: Will the building be of brick down there?

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes; brick and cement. It was proposed that the building should be placed on the south-eastern side of the island, on a fine little plateau, where it would have the benefit of all the breezes. They would be able to do much better work there in the future than they had in the past. The members of the Cabinet felt it was their duty to do all they could to assist in this work of reform. Having learnt a trade, they would supply a man with the necessary tools to carry out that trade. He might give the case of a man who was convicted of having in his possession some Treasury notes which had been stolen. He was arrested in Toowoomba, convicted, and sentenced to a term of imprisonment. He sent for him (Mr. Appel) before he had been transferred to St. Helena, and told him that he would disclose the location of a bundle of some 100 of these notes, and would ask him to take into consideration the question of giving him some remission of sentence. The notes were recovered. The man had been a sailor previously to coming into Sydney, where he had worked as a wharf lumpers. In St. Helena, he showed an aptitude for joinery and cabinet making. He became an excellent tradesman, and would thereby be enabled to earn at least 15s. a day, so he (Mr. Appel) remitted the balance of his sentence, supplied him with a kit of tools at a cost of £22, and gave him a pass to where he wanted to go.

HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The HOME SECRETARY: There was another case in which they made arrangements to bring out a prisoner's wife and his one child, so that they would be here about the time he was released. He had learnt a trade, and he said, "If I could only have my wife and child here when I am released, with the trade I have got, I will guarantee I will never commit a crime again." (Hear, hear!) That was the class of reform they were striving to carry out, and a place like St. Helena assisted them in that direction. The prisoners at South Brisbane Gaol were confined within four walls, and the opportunities were not so good, but there they were extending their operations in different trades. The workshops were being doubled in extent, and they were teaching trades to the prisoners. The amount of gratuity which they received was proportionate to the amount of work which they did. This was in accordance with modern prison reform. They had caused the gaol to be lighted with electricity. Prisoners had a right to the light up to a certain hour at night, and they were allowed to read. They were fitting the cells with a table and chair and other conveniences and little comforts, which

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they had to earn by their good conduct. During his three years' experience, he had found the effect was wonderful, and this was undoubtedly of the greatest assistance in helping the prisoner to regain his self-respect. They were simply carrying into effect what had been recognised in all British communities as the best methods of restoring the self-respect of those who had committed a crime, and enabling them to go forth into the world and earn an honest livelihood. He was much interested in what fell from the hon. member for Maranoa; the quotation he read was no doubt absolutely correct. He himself had given letters to discharged prisoners who had shown that they were worthy of it by their conduct, which had enabled them to gain positions in the State. They did all they could to assist them in that respect. In some cases, prisoners had had to report themselves, but where it would prove a difficulty to the prisoner to have to go to the police station, they allowed him to simply drop a postcard, so that it might not be known that he was a released prisoner. While they were striving to carry out these reforms, it was very selfish indeed that a wealthy section of the community should endeavour to injure their efforts by trying to obtain that one little spot amongst so many spots—to take it away from them when they were doing such good work.

Mr. HUXHAM: Couldn't you transfer part of those at Boggo road down to St. Helena?

The HOME SECRETARY: Every prisoner receiving a sentence of over twelve months went to St. Helena, but short-sentenced prisoners were confined in Boggo Road Gaol.

Mr. HUXHAM: There is a school close to the gaol where capital punishment is carried out.

The HOME SECRETARY: It was impossible to see that, because the platform and the gallows were in the interior of one of the buildings.

Mr. HUXHAM: The association of hanging with the place is quite enough.

The HOME SECRETARY: Of course that was unfortunate, but it could not be avoided. The hon. member for Merthyr had asked him if he could tell him where the propeller of the "Otter" was broken. It was broken either at the wharf in William street, which had silted up, or at the wharf at St. Helena, where a similar silting up had taken place.

Mr. COYNE: Would not a log do it?

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes, a log buried in the silt would cause the accident. The supposition was, that owing to the cutting in the Brisbane River the silt was now driven out, and formed patches at that point of the island. The jetty, and most of the buildings at St. Helena, were constructed by prison labour. The head of the jetty cost a fairly large amount of money, and the cost of repairing and maintaining the jetty was considerable. The dredging which was being done, and which would probably be a recurring matter, ran into a matter of £300; but, of course, the members of the Moreton Bay League, who did not propose to subscribe one penny towards the cost of the upkeep, did not take that into consideration. In effect they said, "Let the general taxpayer pay it for our particular pleasure." All he could say was, that while he was the administrative head of the Prisons Department, interested as he was in the reformatory work which was being carried out, he did not intend to assent to that proposition. The

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hon. member for South Brisbane asked him if any petition had been received from the warders. He understood that a petition had been received in connection with an extension of the principle of rent allowance. A previous petition which he had received had been granted, and warders of fifteen years' standing were granted a rent allowance. The whole matter was now under consideration, and he had no doubt that if the funds were available everything possible would be done to improve the position of those servants of the State, who were carrying out their duties effectively. The hon. member for Merthyr spoke about "crook" warders. That statement was a surprise to him. He was personally acquainted with the warders who were in charge at the different prisons, and he ventured to say that the hon. member was under a misapprehension.

Mr. WELSBY: Not at all.

The HOME SECRETARY: It was a very serious charge to make, but he desired to state that he, as the administrative head of the department, had absolute faith in the honesty and integrity of the men who were employed as prison warders. The hon. member for Buranda spoke about female warders. They were granted an increase on last year's Estimates, and brought up to the same standard as those occupying similar positions elsewhere. Since then they had made new arrangements, and dealt with certain little matters which improved their conditions. With regard to male warders being in charge at night, he might say that was a very difficult matter to deal with, and he was not prepared at that moment to express an opinion upon it. However, it would receive consideration, and he would go into the matter with the Comptroller, because he recognised that it was very lonely for a female to have to keep watch and guard during the hours of night. The hon. member for Cairns referred to prison chaplains and the subject-matter of their discourses. That also was a difficult matter to deal with, because if the head of the department laid down a regulation that clergymen must submit the subject-matter of their discourses to the Minister before preaching them, he did not know what they would come to. A friend of his, who was a clergyman, preached socialism, and preached it very eloquently, but it was not for him to object to that. The clergyman was the judge of what he should preach, and whether he preached socialism or anti-socialism it would be very hard for him to intervene. As a matter of fact, they had to leave this matter to the good sense of the chaplains themselves.

Mr. BARBER: This was preached specially to one prisoner.

The HOME SECRETARY: If the hon. member went to church, and he thought that a sermon was preached to him specially, he could not get up and say, "Well, I object." The hon. member would therefore realise the difficulty of limiting the chaplain to preach on a certain subject. In both the Old and New Testaments they could find texts on which they could preach a sermon for socialism or against socialism. In the Comptroller they had a humane, efficient, and zealous officer, and—what was more—a good business man. He had been able to carry out the business of the prisons, which hon. members would see was assuming very large proportions, so effectively that the upkeep per head at St. Helena had been reduced to £6 15s. 10d. per annum, while the gross

cost was £53 5s. 6d. That was an eminently satisfactory position, and it was one more argument against the handing over of that island to the Moreton Bay League. It reflected the greatest credit on the Comptroller, and also on the superintendent, Mr. Ryan, who was an experienced officer and a man who had proved his ability. Reference was made to the fact that there was no increase on the Estimates for the Comptroller. It had been stated already that no increases, with the exception of the increase to the Commissioner of Police, had been given to officers who were receiving £400 a year and upwards. That was the reason the Comptroller had not received an increase, and it was not because the Government did not realise the value of his services. He would like to point out that in New South Wales the net average cost of prisoners per head was £48 10s. 8d., while in Queensland, owing to the industries which were being carried on in the different prisons, particularly in St. Helena, the average net cost of prisoners per head was £25 9s. 10d.

Mr. MURPHY: Perhaps you do not treat them as well as they are treated in New South Wales.

The HOME SECRETARY: He ventured to say that that was not so. And if the hon. member for Merthyr was correct in saying that persons came from New South Wales and committed crime in Queensland in order to get into St. Helena, there could be no more conclusive proof that the accommodation and the fare must be of a very much better quality. In connection with St. Helena, which was the principal gaol, they had such a big return, which so reduced the cost of upkeep in that gaol, that it naturally affected the total. The hon. member for Rockhampton referred to the superintendent of the Rockhampton Gaol. It was rather invidious to single out a particular officer. The superintendent at Boggo Road Gaol was an excellent officer, and he was increasing the number of industries being carried out in that gaol, and which, when the improvements were effected in the work-rooms, would assist very materially in reducing the cost of that prison. In Mr. Macdonald, of Rockhampton, they had one of the finest officers in the service, and the reason he had not received an increase this year was that he received promotion just about three years ago. He was chief warder at Boggo Road Gaol, and was promoted to be superintendent at Rockhampton, and last year he received an increase, bringing his salary up to £300, and that increase was made to cover his duties as superintendent of the reception-house. The reason that the matron received a smaller amount was that there were very few women, on an average, incarcerated in the Rockhampton Gaol, and the matron in that particular case was the daughter of the superintendent. An hon. member referred to the reprieve of a certain prisoner. He (Mr. Appel) was not in a position to give the concrete reasons in that case, but there were certain lines laid down in connection with those matters. If a prisoner who was condemned to death had suffered from insanity prior to the crime, and if, after conviction, he was found to be again suffering from insanity, the capital punishment was never carried into effect. Speaking personally, he should like to have seen that sentence carried out, but the rule he had given was never departed from.

Mr. FORSYTH (Murrumba) would like the Home Secretary, next year, in getting up the statement of expenditure in connection with prisons, more especially St. Helena, to have the figures separated. For instance, there was £5,952 down for salaries in connection with St. Helena, and then, at the end, the total amount of the general expenses of the prisons in Queensland, including Townsville and Rockhampton Gaols, was given. It was therefore impossible to know exactly how things stood in regard to St. Helena. The report of the Comptroller was a very good one indeed, and the condition of the prisons generally was particularly satisfactory. He thoroughly approved of the Comptroller's remarks on page 3 of his report, where he stated—

"In endeavouring to reform a criminal, it is absolutely essential that he be taught to appreciate the value of industry. Labour is not by any means a punishment. The severest punishment is deprivation of labour. Habits of industry keep people out of prison."

A great many of those who went to St. Helena had no special trade, and while they were there they were taught

[8 p.m.] a trade, which was of incalculable benefit to them when they came out. The very fact of having work to do kept them from thinking of things they had done, and of things they intended to do which they should not do. He agreed with what the Comptroller said on page 2 of the report—

"Too much consideration cannot be given to the question regarding the care and training of children of tender age, when the mind is new and impressions are easily made by what they see and hear."

His own impression was that the cause of many people being sent to gaol was that their early training was defective. Fathers and mothers did not give that attention to their children which they should give. They allowed them to run about just as they liked, more especially if the parents were addicted to intemperance. One particularly pleasing feature was the splendid work which was being done by the prisoners. The estimated value of the work performed at St. Helena was over £12,000—a result which should be satisfactory to everyone. He understood that prisoners could obtain a big remission of their sentences as a result of work and good conduct combined. He understood that a prisoner with a sentence of twelve months could obtain a remission of one-fourth of that sentence by honest industry and good conduct. If a man were serving a second sentence, he got a remission of only two months in the year; for a third conviction the remission was still further reduced. Taking it all round, he thought the Comptroller of Prisons was entitled to commendation for the excellent way in which he carried out his work.

The HOME SECRETARY: A prisoner may get a further remission of sentence for doing what we call "super" work.

Mr. FORSYTH: He noticed a sum of £500 on the Estimates for gratuities to discharged prisoners; and that was a very good idea. If a man had done work while in prison, he was entitled to a gratuity when he was released. If he came out of prison with nothing at all in his pocket, and was

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not able to obtain work for some time, he might be led to commit some offence and get back into prison again. If he had a few pounds in his pocket to keep him until he found something to do, that was not so likely to happen. It was very satisfactory to know that the cost per head was only £25 9s. 10d. He believed there was really less crime in Queensland now than there was very many years ago, and that was a very satisfactory sign. In 1904, when the population was much smaller than it was now, the average number of prisoners was 566, while in 1911 it was only 493. That spoke highly for the good conduct of the people of the State. No doubt, things had been better during the last few years, and people might not have been forced into committing offences for which they were sent to prison, but, none the less, the result was very satisfactory. The Comptroller and the officials in all the prisons were doing very good work. They seemed to be imbued with the idea that imprisonment should be rather a means for improving the prisoners than a punishment—that prisoners should be induced to reform, and to become good citizens when they regained their liberty. Any person who was acquainted with the state of affairs which existed in the prisons in the old country, and in other places 100 years ago, must be aware that prisoners were then very cruelly treated, and that they frequently came out of prison with a feeling that they had been badly treated, and with a desire to be revenged upon society, instead of with a desire to become better men and women. Things were very different now. We were living in a democratic age, and people were sent to prison, not so much with a view to punishing them, as for the purpose of making them better men and women; and if we could do that in Queensland, we should be doing a most excellent work.

Mr. MORGAN (*Murilla*) congratulated the Home Secretary on the firm stand he had taken in connection with the attempt to remove the penal establishment from St. Helena. When he read the report of the recent interview with the Home Secretary he sympathised with the hon. gentleman for the manner in which those who waited upon him conducted themselves in his office. In his opinion, they went there with the idea of bluffing the hon. gentleman into doing something that he had stated on many occasions he was not willing to do. He thought hon. members were almost unanimously in favour of retaining the prison at St. Helena. The hon. gentleman would have practically the whole of the country members behind him in the matter. They intended to back him up in every way; and if any move in that direction was contemplated by the Cabinet, and the Home Secretary was not strong enough to prevent the removal of the prison, he hoped that the matter would be referred to Parliament before anything was done. Members of Parliament would then be able to give their views, and, if possible, prevent anything from being done in the matter of turning St. Helena into a national park and pleasure resort for the benefit of a few people in and around Brisbane. They were fortunate in having such a place as St. Helena for their penal establishment. He had the pleasure of visiting the island, and he thought it was an ideal place for a prison. It would be a mistake if they removed the prison anywhere in-

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land, and it would be much more costly. The Home Secretary showed, by the statements which he had read, that St. Helena was the natural place for the confinement of criminals, as it enabled them to carry out prison reforms there. He congratulated and complimented the Home Secretary on the very firm stand he had taken, notwithstanding the very influential people who formed themselves into a body to try to force his hands, and the hands of the Government, to have St. Helena made into a pleasure resort, and the prison establishment removed inland.

Mr. WINSTANLEY noticed that there were twenty-nine warders of the St. Helena establishment put down for £3,810, while last year there were twenty-eight warders who received salaries amounting to £3,850. He would like the Home Secretary to explain why there was an increase of one warder and yet a reduction of £40 in the amount of the salaries of the warders. It looked as if there was a reduction in the salaries.

The HOME SECRETARY: Owing to promotions and resignations—especially resignations—the incoming warders received a lesser rate of pay than those who left, who received a larger amount because of their length of service. When he introduced the vote he said that when vacancies occurred they were filled by the lower-paid men, and new men put on the lower grades.

Question put and passed.

#### REGISTRAR-GENERAL.

The HOME SECRETARY moved that £7,160 be granted for "Registrar-General." There was an increase of £480 above the appropriation asked for last year. There was an increase of £20 each for the chief and second compilers and an increase of £10 each for the third and fourth compilers. One clerk had resigned, and he was replaced by another clerk at a reduction of £50. Another clerk received an increase of £10. A cadet clerk was appointed at a salary of £50. The district registrar at Charters Towers received an increase of £10, the district registrar at Toowoomba an increase of £10, the district registrar at Maryborough £20, and the district registrar at Rockhampton an increase of £20. There was a reduction of £50 for postages, telegrams, and incidentals, and an increase of £250 for railway fares, freights, printing and stationery, making a total increase on the vote of £480.

Mr. HUNTER noticed that the messenger was down for £50, the same as last year. He would like to know who filled that position.

The HOME SECRETARY: He was advised that the messenger was a lad about fifteen years of age.

Mr. HUNTER: Seeing that they increased some of the higher salaries he thought they might have given an increase to the messenger. It was not a big salary for the lad, and perhaps an increase might be put on the Supplementary Estimates.

Mr. LARCOMBE (*Kippel*) drew attention to the suggestion made by the hon. member for Rockhampton, when speaking on the Financial Statement, as to the advisability of the Queensland Statistician compiling an up-to-date "Year Book of Queensland." Such a publication was issued annually in the other

States, and they should also have one in Queensland. He knew they got a wealth of information from the Commonwealth Statistician's "Year Book," and also from the "A B C Statistics of Queensland," but that was not sufficient for the purposes for which they required it in Queensland. The hon. member for Rockhampton had asked, on several occasions, about the wealth production and the revenue and expenditure of the Central division, but was unable to obtain it. They should get all that information about the three divisions of Queensland—North, Centre, and South—because within the near future it would be necessary to subdivide a State like Queensland, because it could not be successfully governed from a corner like Brisbane as it was at present. He hoped the Home Secretary would take the matter into consideration.

Question put and passed.

#### STEAMER "OTTER."

The HOME SECRETARY moved that £3,084 be granted for the steamer "Otter." There was an increase in the vote of £5, that being the amount of increase granted to the night watchman.

Mr. KIRWAN: The question was mentioned the other day about the "Otter" doing the work of the pilot steamer "Llewellyn," and he would like to know if the Home Secretary had any information to give the Committee on that matter.

The HOME SECRETARY: In reply to the hon. member, he might say that during the recent gale the steamer "Llewellyn" was reported to have had a rather severe handling, and it was informally suggested that an exchange should be made with the "Otter," but the harbour authorities found that the "Otter" would not be suitable.

Question put and passed.

#### STATE CHILDREN.

The HOME SECRETARY moved that £52,653 be granted for "State Children." The amount asked for was an increase of £886 on last year's appropriation. There was an increase of £60 for the Director, Mr. Ferguson. Since the passage of the Infant Life Protection Act additional duties had been cast on Mr. Ferguson, who proved a most zealous officer, and carried out his duties with entire satisfaction. There was an increase of £20 for the chief clerk and accountant, £20 for the chief inspector, £30 for one inspector, and £20 for another inspector; increases of £10 each to two clerks. In connection with a new appointment, there was an increase of £50, an increase of £10 to another officer, and a decrease of £70 in connection with the position held by the late Mr. Hill. There were two other increases of £10 each. In contingencies there was a decrease of £150 in the vote for the Home of the Good Shepherd, and an increase of £25 for the medical officer, Brisbane. At the Diamantina Receiving Depot there was an increase of £10 for the sub-matron, and £10 for the gardman. The accommodation at the receiving depot had recently been increased, and the institution was proving most effective. Children of tender age were taken, and the best that could be done was being done for them. There was an increase of £20 for victualling. For the Rockhampton

Receiving Depot there was an increase of £23 in salaries and £29 in contingencies. For the Townsville Orphanage there was an increase of £65. At the Westbrook Reformatory for boys, provision was made for a warden gardener at £156. When it was decided by the Agricultural Department to abandon operations at the Westbrook State Farm, the superintendent of the reformatory was anxious to obtain an increased area. This was done, and a warden gardener was appointed to attend to that particular part of what was now the reformatory. There was an increase of £12 to the senior warden, and provision was made for an extra warden at £184. In connection with industrial schools there was an increase of £80 for the institution at Riverview, £40 for Woolloowin, and £30 for Yeronga. All those institutions were paid so much per head for the number of inmates.

Mr. HUNTER: He was glad to see the good work being done by this branch of the service. During the year he noticed that there were 3,359 children under supervision. It was very gratifying to find that portion of the Westbrook State Farm was now being used in connection with the reformatory, where boys could be taught farming and horticulture. It was to be regretted that so few boys and girls were sent away from the cities, where it was so easy for them to acquire evil habits. Where it was possible to draft, not only boys and girls, but men and women, into districts where they would not have the associations of the cities, so much the better it would be. The report proceeded—

"At the close of the year we had 141 children (seventy-two boys and sixty-nine girls) at service with 117 employers. Visits of inspection were made as often as possible. Many are at places not easily accessible, but these are the places where it is hard for employers to get labour of any kind, and it is a question if they are not really the persons whose wants should be the more readily supplied by State children."

He knew that was a fact. While he recognised that it would not be a wise thing for children to be sent out into parts where inspectors could not go out to see how they were being treated, at the same [8.30 p.m.] time, wherever it was possible to do that, it should be done. He understood the department got over the difficulty by asking school teachers in the neighbourhood to visit these orphan children once a month, or fortnightly, and to report.

The HOME SECRETARY: That is so.

Mr. HUNTER: Where that was done, he thought there was no danger. He thought that, on the whole, the people in the country would treat the children just as well as they were treated in cities, and the healthy physical conditions, as well as the moral conditions, which prevailed in the country, would have a good effect. These boys would be brought up with a knowledge of country life, and they would have a desire to share in that work which they were all anxious to promote in this State. Another very wise statement was made in the report—

"Personally, I am not in favour of sending our girls to the outlying districts."

Though he seemed to favour the idea of  
*Mr. Hunter.]*

sending boys. Notwithstanding that, they found that all the reports which were received came from the teaching staffs in and around Brisbane, with few exceptions. There was an urgent need for boys in agricultural districts, and it would be a very good thing if room could not be found for them in the Westbrook Reformatory, to endeavour, as far as possible, to place them elsewhere in agricultural districts. It was a good thing for boys to learn trades, where they showed a disposition in that direction; but where that was not so, an attempt should be made to find employment for them in the country. He thought the report was very satisfactory, and that the money was well spent in seeing that these boys and girls, who were unfortunately left without parents, were trained so that they might worthily take their places among the men and women of this State. He asked the Minister if the same attention was given to State children, with regard to dentistry and the inspection of their eyes and general physical condition, as was given to the State school children?

Mr. BEBBINGTON (*Drayton*) bore testimony to the very good work the department was doing for State children by putting them out with country people. He had had something to do with them for eight or ten years, and he knew the department were very particular where they sent the boys and girls, especially the girls, which was quite right. In most of the families they went to, they lived just the same as the members of the family they were with. Some of them turned out very well. They could not expect them all to turn out well, because they had an inclination to the life they were taken from, and some of them seemed to cling to their old habits almost right through life. Wickedness seemed to be bred in some boys; it did not matter how much you did for them, you did not seem to be able to make much of them. Others turned out splendidly. He knew one orphan who went out in the country, and to-day he was one of the leading well-borers in the West; another boy who was sent out was now one of the leading butchers on the Downs. Another good thing was, that the Government made advances for children, where the husband had had some misfortune, instead of placing them in an orphanage, so that their mother could keep them together. Not long ago, in his electorate, a man was deprived of his means of livelihood; he had seven children, and an allowance was made to the mother for each child, which enabled her to keep the family together. They were close to a school, and could get proper education.

Mr. WINSTANLEY was sorry to find that the inspector had not reported this year to the same extent as he did last year. He said that the condition of the children boarded out with their own mothers was still unsatisfactory. Considerable discussion took place on this aspect of the case last year, and from what was said then, it was quite clear that many of these natural mothers, who were stated to be inferior to the foster-mothers, belonged to the Southern part of the State, where they could be well looked after. The attendance at school of children who were with their natural mothers was very much lower than it was with those who were foster-mothers. Foster-mothers had no option—they must send the children to school, or else they would have them taken from

them—but some natural mothers had to keep their children at home to look after the smaller children while they went out to work. Children should be made to go to school, unless there was a sound reason for keeping them at home. Whilst a natural mother, in many instances, was placed at a disadvantage to the foster-mother, still, the percentage with regard to school attendance of children who were with their natural mothers had been far too low. This applied to cities to a larger extent than it did to other places. The hon. member for Maranoa talked about those who were hired out being sent out from the town, and no doubt it was a good thing, but there was such a thing as hiring them out too far away, where practically the inspector never saw them.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The department will not do it.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: The department has done it.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: It must be a very exceptional case.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: There ought not to be these exceptional cases. He believed that the country was a much better place for these children than the city, as in the country they would be away from temptation, and would probably learn something which would be very useful to them. In this report it was mentioned that two were hired out at Christmas Creek Station. The department were supposed to know the character of those people and the nature of the place, and he thought that, if they had made the necessary inquiries previous to hiring out those boys, they would not have hired them out to those people at Christmas Creek. There was no inspector near the place. This might be an exceptional case, but he thought it was one in which sufficient care had not been exercised by the department. He was glad to notice that the department secured better remuneration for the boys and girls hired out than they used to receive a few years ago, when they worked for very low wages. He was glad to note that there was an increased vote for the industrial school at Riverview. Personally, he was of opinion that these institutions should be controlled by the State, but the department evidently took a different view of the matter. It was a well-known fact that this institution had made certain improvements which were required by the department, and that a promise had been given by the Minister that a larger number of children would be sent to the institution.

The HOME SECRETARY: It could not be kept.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: He thought the promise could have been kept. He had been all over the place, and he believed it was an exceptionally good institution to which to send boys. They could learn a trade there, and they were well fed; the whole of the surroundings of the place were healthy, and the man in charge was a very fine type of man, so that in him the boys would have a very good example. He thought the department were doing good work in looking after children who, in some instances, were bereft of their parents, and, in other instances, had parents who were not fond enough of them to look after them properly. The money expended in feeding, clothing, and caring for those children was money exceptionally well spent.

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**The HOME SECRETARY:** With regard to the inquiry as to what rates were paid to these institutions, he might state that the rate paid to Clayfield was 7s. per week per head, Nudgee 7s. per week, and Riverview 8s. per week. The promise referred to by the hon. member was made, and the last-mentioned institution got 1s. per head extra owing to the fact that the department could not send them beyond a certain number of children, and the cost per head was so much more with the smaller number. Wooloowin was paid 7s. per week per head, and Yeronga 8s. per week per head. For the information of the hon. member for Maranoa, he might state that there was only one boy employed in Brisbane, and he was with a friend of his learning a trade. The boy had an aptitude for the saddlery trade, and it was therefore arranged to put him with that friend. The case the hon. member had quoted from page 13 of the report was connected with the children in the Rockhampton district. The reports referred to were the reports of head teachers, who were good enough to submit to the department reports on children who were in charge of foster-mothers. They were not reports in connection with children who were hired out, although head teachers did furnish reports with regard to children who were hired out in different parts of the State somewhat beyond the scope of the inspector. The object of the department in not letting the children go too far away was that the inspectors should have an opportunity of visiting them, and seeing that they were treated properly. The department desired to have the children placed out in the country as far as possible, because it was thought better that they should be hired out in the country than in the town. When the Industrial Peace Bill was passed they would have an opportunity of apprenticing some of the children to a trade, and that would be a very good thing in some cases, because, while dairying and country life generally were very good for the children, still, there was no question but that a boy who had a good trade would, on the average, probably do better for himself than he would do by engaging in the dairying industry. That was really the reason they did not allow those girls or boys to be employed at a distance, as they could not be kept under the eye of an inspector.

**Mr. HUNTER:** You might tell us whether you are equalising the pay of natural and foster mothers?

**Mr. KIRWAN:** They all recognised that that was a very important department of the State, and also that the officials connected with it were entrusted with a very responsible work. First of all, he would like to congratulate the Director on his very able report, which contained a fund of valuable information of a very interesting character. The point was raised by the hon. member for Queenton that the report stated that foster-mothers' treatment of children was much better than that of natural mothers. That seemed an extraordinary statement to make. He had no desire to question it, as he felt quite certain that the officials would not have made that statement unless it was an absolute fact. He would like, however, in future reports, the Director to give some suggestions or some reasons for that extraordinary state of affairs.

**The HOME SECRETARY:** The reason is, that the foster-mother has to provide certain

accommodation, certain bedding, and certain clothes, which have to be exhibited to the inspector when he goes on his visit.

**Mr. KIRWAN:** If the position was such that it had been found necessary to call attention to it in more than one report, it called for some special regulations. If those unfortunate children were not taken care of, and were not receiving the necessary education and training to fit them for the struggle of life—if the State were unfortunate enough to possess parents who were not alive to their responsibilities to those who were nearest and dearest to them, the department would be justified in stepping in and making regulations to compel those mothers to do their duty by their own children. With regard to giving an opportunity to learn a particular trade to boys who had an aptitude or desire for such trade, that was a good innovation. While they all recognised that country life was desirable, they were also compelled to recognise that there were some youths who had an aptitude for mechanical or artisan work, and it would be a pity if those boys were not given the chance of qualifying for that particular calling in life. As one who had had some little dealing with this department, he might say that the officials were actuated with one desire, and that was to do the best possible for the children entrusted to their care. Of course, some people complained that the Director, and those connected with him, were pretty strict. Those gentlemen recognised that there were times when it was necessary to be very strict with some people, and therefore they were perfectly justified in the attitude they took up; and, generally speaking, the administration of the department reflected credit, not only on the Home Secretary, but on the officials connected with it.

**Mr. HUXHAM:** The Home Secretary had given some very valuable information with reference to the amount of money allowed to industrial homes for children—namely, 7s. and 8s. per week. That was a very fair price to pay, and it would be equally fair if that sum of money was paid to foster-mothers for the care of children. If those children were sent out in numbers, and it was necessary to pay 7s. or 8s. per week for them, surely in a family where there might be only two or three children, the same amount should be paid both to foster-mothers and natural mothers for the care of children. According to the report of the London County Council for the year 1905, the officers of the council medically examined, including their general physique, the teeth of the children, and their general health was also cared for, and it was shown that prior to the year 1892, when poverty was very pronounced, that the mortality amongst infants was very great, and the physique was very low. But in the year 1892, when a general improvement took place, they found that the physique had improved, and the mortality was very much less. That pointed to the fact that if a sufficient amount was received by a mother to properly care for her children, the mortality would be lower, and the children would improve physically. The Home Secretary, when he got an opportunity of increasing the allowance to foster-mothers and to the natural mothers, might very well do it for the benefit of the community, because those children did not belong so much to the parent as they did to the State. The general complaint of people against professed socialists

*Mr. Huxham.]*

was that they were the people who wanted to take children from their mothers and put them in big institutions.

The HOME SECRETARY: The department discourages that, and that is why we are doing away with orphanages, and putting the children out to foster-mothers.

Mr. HUXHAM: The Government were taking them from the mothers and giving them to foster-mothers, instead of which the Government should encourage the mothers, as they were the natural guardians of the children, and they should be paid equally as much as foster-mothers were paid.

The HOME SECRETARY: We have given that matter consideration, but, as the hon. member for Brisbane has said, it is a question of requiring the mothers themselves to give the same attention to the children as the foster-mothers give.

Mr. HUXHAM: If those few shillings were given to natural mothers, they could remain at home and look after the children better.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: With reference to epileptics and children of feeble mind, he would like to know if the Home Secretary had done anything in connection with those children? While those children were practically incurable, the Diamantina Hospital was not exactly the proper place for them, although it was a better place than Goodna, for the simple reason that they were by no means lunatic. He had seen young girls, twelve or thirteen years of age, who, under ordinary circumstances, were all right, and it was only when they were suffering from periodical fits that they needed any attention, and neither Dunwich nor the Diamantina Hospital nor Goodna seemed to be exactly the kind of place for those patients.

The HOME SECRETARY: It is very difficult to arrive at the best plan for dealing with such cases.

Mr. WINSTANLEY: In some instances people were prepared to pay for the charge of children suffering from epilepsy, and in some cases parents looked after [9 p.m.] their children themselves. A mother, for instance, might look

after a boy until he was about fourteen years old; but he then became too big and strong for her to look after when he had a fit, and the result was that many people had to send their children to one of the existing institutions. Perhaps Goodna was the best place for taking care of such cases, and there was a possibility, if not a probability, of recovery in some cases. The Diamantina Hospital was in some respects the best place for treating such persons, but certainly Dunwich was not a place where they should be sent. Steps should be taken either to establish a special institution, or there should be a branch of some existing institution where such cases could be treated. In Goodna, all the epileptics were in one ward, and no doubt they were well looked after; but there were degrees of epilepsy, and he did not think that there was the same chance of recovery in mild cases when they were treated in the same ward as incurables. He hoped that better provision would be made than had been made hitherto.

Mr. KIRWAN emphasised the remarks of the hon. member for Buranda with regard to the differentiation between foster-mothers and natural mothers. He trusted the Home Secretary would give the matter the most

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careful consideration, and that he would at least make the same allowance to natural mothers that was made to foster-mothers. If necessary, a regulation could be framed compelling the natural mothers to spend the money properly on the children, and providing for the children receiving the same attention as the children under the care of foster-mothers.

Mr. LARCOMBE wished to direct the attention of the Home Secretary to the following extract from the report of the Director regarding the Rockhampton Receiving Depot:—

"The buildings are in a disgraceful condition. The old dormitories cannot be occupied as such. The only building that is safe enough to sleep in is that which was used as the hospital when the institution was a residential orphanage. There the boys suffer greatly owing to the want of room, and in wet weather great inconvenience is caused through having to pass from one building to another."

He would like to ask the hon. gentleman when it was intended to erect the new buildings?

The HOME SECRETARY: The Estimates for the Works Department contained the necessary appropriation for new orphanage buildings at Rockhampton; and, speaking from memory, a contract was let some fortnight ago; but the carrying out of the work was a matter for the Works Department, and he had not the information as to when the contract would be completed.

Mr. HUNTER asked whether there was any addition to the number of State children in consequence of the provisions of the State Children Act which was passed last year? Previously children had come to the department because their parents were dead, or because they were neglected by their parents; but power was given in the State Children Act for the Government to exercise certain control over parents with respect to the care of their children.

The HOME SECRETARY: There have been about a dozen cases since the Act came into force.

Mr. HUNTER: He noticed that during the year 1911 the average death rate among State children was higher than during the three preceding years. Could any reason be given for the increased mortality? He also noticed that the death rate at the Townsville Orphanage was continuously higher than in any of the other orphanages.

The HOME SECRETARY: Unfortunately, there has been a considerable amount of gastric enteritis during the past year, which caused a considerable mortality.

Mr. HUNTER: In view of the action taken by the Commissioner of Public Health, he should have thought the death rate would have fallen.

The HOME SECRETARY: The children we receive are not always in the best condition when we receive them. That is the misfortune.

Mr. HUNTER: The increased amount given to foster-mothers in comparison with natural mothers had been referred to in previous years. The Director seemed disposed to favour foster-mothers—so much so that the payments given to foster-mothers were larger than the payments to natural

mothers; and, under the circumstances, it was not fair to institute comparisons with regard to the attendance of the children at day school and at Sunday school, or with regard to their general health and conduct. He strongly emphasised his disbelief that a foster-mother was superior to a natural mother or was kinder to a child. He would admit that, owing to her financial position, a natural mother might not be able to exercise the same care, but the department alone was responsible for that; and while the State discriminated as it was doing, he failed to see how it was justified in making a comparison between the two classes of mothers. The Minister should certainly pay the same rate to the natural mother as was paid to the foster-mother, and then he could judge the results by that experiment. It was only right that the same provision should be laid down in each case. If the foster-mother had to spend a certain amount of money in clothing the child, then the same provision should be made to apply to the natural mother. If that were done, they would not have the slur cast upon the natural mothers of Queensland that was constantly being done by the Director in his report. It was no credit to the State to talk in that way of the natural mothers of Queensland. It was an unwarranted statement, and they should not desire to perpetuate it.

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

Question put and passed.

#### MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES (SUBDIVISION).

The HOME SECRETARY moved that £14,850 be granted for "Miscellaneous Services (Subdivision)." There was a decrease of £4,350 in the vote. There was a decrease by £5,000 in connection with the appropriation for the destruction of prickly pear, but, as he had explained before, he had made the necessary provision that the local authorities undertaking the destruction of prickly pear could get whatever money they required for the purpose. The amount would not be restricted to the £5,000 mentioned in the vote. He believed that a large number of local authorities would take advantage of the amendment in the Local Authorities Act, and enter into an agreement to get the subsidy for the destruction of prickly pear. In the vote they simply made provision for the amounts provided for in the agreements already entered upon. There was an amount of £650 put down for compiling and printing of the rent list. Previously the compiling of the rent list had been carried out by the Lands Department, who subsequently dropped it. At the universal request of the local authorities of Queensland they promised to have that work carried out, and it was being printed now. A certain fee would be charged for a copy of the work, and no doubt many copies would be immediately purchased by local authorities.

Mr. HUNTER asked what rent lists were to be compiled for the £650?

The HOME SECRETARY: Selections and leases. A list of all the rents paid to the Lands Department.

Mr. HUNTER: He presumed that it was for rating purposes.

The HOME SECRETARY: Yes; and for information.

Mr. HUNTER: The list was prepared for the local authorities for rating purposes, but it was not a fair basis on which to fix the rates. The rate would fall much heavier on the small selectors than on the large lessees.

The HOME SECRETARY: It enables the local authorities to see what leases are forfeited.

Mr. HUNTER was glad that the amounts voted for the destruction of prickly pear would not be restricted to £5,000. Why, one shire council would want £5,000 to its own cheek. The amount that would be wanted would be nearer £50,000. In some cases the money would be well spent, but in other instances it would be only a waste of money to spend it. They had dealt with the prickly-pear question in the Bill the other day, and they would have other opportunities of dealing with it.

Mr. GRAYSON (*Cunningham*) was pleased to hear that the amount to subsidise shire councils for the destruction of prickly pear would not be restricted to £5,000. He knew one shire council on the Downs that spent over £5,000 in the destruction of prickly pear, and put on a special rate of 4d. in the £1 to raise the money. He knew three shire councils that were spending large sums of money in eradicating prickly pear from the roads. He thought that they would want fully £50,000. Every encouragement should be given to shire councils to pass a special rate with the view of clearing the roads and reserves from prickly pear. No State money could be spent to a better purpose.

Question put and passed.

#### DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS.

##### DEPARTMENT.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. W. H. Barnes, *Bulimba*) moved that £21,386 be granted for salaries for the Department of Public Works. This was an increase over the vote of last year of £2,250. A new quantity surveyor had been appointed at a salary of £260, and an extra typist had been provided at a salary of £60. There were seventy-eight officers in the department, as against sixty-nine last year. Increases were granted all round in connection with salaries under £400, the increases ranging from £10 up to £30, and in one case there was an increase of £35.

Question put and passed.

##### BUILDINGS.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS moved that £142,325 be granted for "Buildings." This was an increase of £2,675 compared with the amount voted last year. For water rates, public buildings, there was an increase of £200; for gas, public buildings, a decrease of £200; for electric current and telephone rentals a decrease of £200; for school buildings, and additions, improvements, furniture, repairs, and painting, an increase of £5,000; for hospital buildings, of which the Government provided two-thirds the cost, an increase of £1,500. There was a new item of £1,400 for the South Brisbane Diamantina Hospital for Chronic Diseases; a sum of £5,000 for explosives magazine, buildings, and railway siding at Bajool; £1,400 for infants' quarters at the Townsville Orphanage, which it has been found necessary to enlarge. The amount put down last year for equipment for the University of Queensland was £12,500; this year the amount put down was £8,000. Hon. members would readily understand that some

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of these items could scarcely be compared from year to year, by reason of varying conditions.

Mr. HUNTER: There are three sums put down for the University.

**THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS:** The hon. member was quite right. Besides the amount put down for equipment, there was £1,500 for common rooms for students, and £2,000 for a building for the biology department. The University being in its infancy, would from time to time demand additional expenditure. The amount of £5,000 for the Central Technical College was a re-vote; and he thought it was expenditure which would meet with the approval of the Committee.

Mr. GRANT (*Fitzroy*): In glancing through the Estimate, he thought the Government had made a mistake in regard to school buildings. When he left the office there was about £50,000 worth of urgent work which should have been gone on with, but which was deferred because there were no funds. In addition, there would be a big amount of extra work in repairs; and at least £100,000 should have been put down for school buildings. Altogether, there was only £65,000 from revenue and loan; and the whole amount would be taken up in practically paying for work passed last year, and there would be no money provided for coming works. A number of people hesitated to go out into the country unless provision could be made for the education of their children, and this was a vote that should not be cut down. He hoped the Government would see their way to put enough money on the Supplementary Estimates so that the vote every year would pay for that year's work. He need not tell the Committee how necessary it was to provide school buildings. In regard to the University, he felt doubtful as to how the Treasurer was going to meet the amount for equipment, because he knew that orders had been placed for nearly double the £8,000 put down. The University, in the opinion of some people, was costing far more than it should cost; but to establish a University on such a footing that they need not be ashamed of it the cost was sure to be heavy. In the opinion of experts, the laboratory was one of the best equipped, furnished, and set-out to be found anywhere; and in Professor Steele Queensland had one of the best chemists in the world. The engineering department required to be up to date; and Professor Gibson was sent home specially to select machinery. He got great concessions from the manufacturers; and the cost of sending him home was a mere bagatelle compared to the reductions he obtained. There was another matter which he wished to refer to. He noticed they were building a new magazine at Bajool, and not before it was wanted.

He would like to ask the Minister [9.30 p.m.] whether it was advisable to follow the course which had been adopted on the North Coast line? It was rather a serious menace to the public that the magazine on the North Coast line was so close to the railway. These magazines should be some considerable distance from the line. A spark from the engine might cause an explosion, and consequent danger to life and property. The magazine at Bajool should not be so close to the line as that at Dakabin, on the North Coast

line. The most serious complaint he had to make was in connection with the meagre amount allowed for school buildings.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The amount down for school buildings was very small indeed.

**THE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS:** £65,000 altogether.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: When he applied to the department some months ago, they told him they were £50,000 behind on last year for school buildings, and that they wanted £50,000 again this year, which would make £100,000. He did not know how they fared in the town, but they were close to the department, and as a rule got the money without difficulty. He knew that in the country districts, when it got to the middle of the year, there was no money for schools, as it had all been spent so quickly. There were thirty-two schools in his electorate, and they wanted the schools in the country brought up to something like the standard of those in the city. There was a University in the city, but they could not take advantage of it in the country. A University education was not essential for anyone who was going farming, but a high school education was necessary. They had every right to be proud of the hon. member for Fitzroy, who had occupied the position of Secretary for Public Instruction, for bringing in the high schools, and distributing the teachers amongst the people. That would absorb a lot of money, and the amount on the Estimates was not a bit more than would be wanted on the Darling Downs. He hoped there would be a Supplementary Estimate brought down. There was another thing in connection with hospital buildings. The Home Secretary had promised on next year's Estimates to provide his own hospital for prisoners, and for people suffering from delirium tremens. (Laughter.) If a person was injured, he didn't like to be alongside a prisoner with a policeman guarding him. Another thing, they got people who were taking too much, and did not seem to be able to control themselves.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. BEBBINGTON: He hoped the hon. gentleman would remember to put the amount on the Estimates next year.

Mr. McCORMACK: He was glad to hear the hon. member for Fitzroy voice the question of schools, which was a very important one to outlying districts. In North Queensland the question of primary education was of the greatest importance. He believed in a boy having the chance to go to the University, but the first duty was to train our children to read and write. He would have liked to have seen £100,000 on the Estimates for State schools.

Mr. GRANT: £20,000 could be spent in Brisbane alone on schools that are urgently wanted.

Mr. McCORMACK: Extensions were also wanted in most of the coastal towns. He thought some other expenditure might be curtailed and the money devoted to State schools. He had a grievance to bring under the notice of the Minister in connection with the courthouse at Cairns. This question had been brought up on previous occasions when the Estimates came before the House. The building that was used in Cairns was a disgrace to the Government, so

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much so that they would probably have a strike of jurors during the approaching summer. Everybody knew how hot the place was in summer. The Hon. the Minister himself was in Cairns, and no doubt knew all about the matter. He might mention that the Works Department had removed an old police building, and re-erected it in the most prominent position in Cairns as a Government Savings Bank. If it had been erected by a private individual, the building would be condemned under the by-laws and regulations of the Cairns Town Council. He had complained to the department about this, but the answer given was that the manager of the bank had visited Cairns, and recommended this course to be taken. In Mount Morgan there was a splendid building for Savings Bank purposes, and he held that Cairns was as important as Mount Morgan, and should have had a respectable building. Everyone had complained about it, and it was a matter which would operate against the State Bank as compared with the Commonwealth Bank. Another matter which he wished to refer to was the architecture of some of the Government buildings. The work put into the buildings was good, and yet the buildings were an eyesore to anyone who had any eye for architecture. He thought the Minister would be wise if he suggested to the Government Architect that a building pleasing to the eye would be just as useful and provide as good accommodation as some of the buildings which were now erected. He noted with pleasure that a sum of £1,400 was set down for the Townsville Orphanage. The quarters there were not nearly adequate for the number of children sent to the institution, and he was pleased to see that the Government had made this provision on the Estimates.

Mr. PETRIE (*Toombul*): The amount set down for school buildings, improvements, furniture, repairs, and painting was £40,000, but he understood that on the Loan Estimates there was an additional £25,000 for the same purposes. The Government had done good work in connection with the erection of State schools and improvements thereto, and he congratulated them upon what they had been able to accomplish in this direction. He would not say anything on the subject of buildings until they came to the Loan Estimates, as he believed that was the proper place to discuss the matter. He should, however, like to say that, if he had his way, he would have finished the Treasury Building before starting the new Lands Office or Executive Building. There were two sections built, but the third section had not been completed, and he should like to see that done. He was glad to note that the Government had done everything in their power to promote the interests of the people of Brisbane as far as schools and other institutions were concerned.

Mr. COYNE: It might not be so very difficult for schools in the metropolitan area to get their wants attended to, but it was a very difficult matter for people in the back country to get their wants supplied. There were many places which were seldom visited by an inspector of the Works Department, and he thought that, when a school teacher in such a place recommended—in the absence of a school inspector—that certain improvements or repairs should be effected, that recommendation should be quite sufficient for the department to take action. At

Windorah, which was an out-of-the-way place, he discovered, when he was there recently, that there had been a cyclone or something of the sort, and that it had blown down the buildings, so that children of both sexes had to use the one closet.

Mr. GRANT: That has been fixed up.

Mr. COYNE: It had not been fixed up. When he applied to have it fixed up he was told that there was no money available to effect the necessary repairs. The building was going to ruin for want of a coat or two of paint, and there were some other little improvements required. A sum of £30 was now going to be spent on the building, but that would not be sufficient to patch it up. The building was in an open plain, exposed to a blazing sun and all sorts of weather, and it should be remembered that in such a locality a building would not last the length of time it would in a more temperate climate. The Government should place a little more money at the disposal of the Education Department for the purpose of building and repairing schools. Certainly, it was very unwise to allow a school building to get into a hopeless state of disrepair for want of a couple of coats of paint, and he hoped that the suggestions he had made would receive favourable consideration.

Mr. MORGAN: Looking at the figures in connection with school buildings, he found that altogether the Government had set aside £10,000 more this year than last year. The amount set down for school buildings in the Estimates for the Department of Public Works last year was £35,000, and this year it was £40,000, an increase of £5,000. If they looked at the amount expended from the loan fund for new school buildings last year they would find that £20,000 was set aside, and this year £25,000 was put down, so that for school buildings the Government had placed on the Estimates altogether £10,000 more this year than they did last year. The late Secretary for Public Instruction explained that it would take something like £100,000 to do all the work necessary to bring the buildings right up to date. Last year it was decided that people who desired schools would not have to contribute one-fifth towards the cost of the buildings, and at the time he (Mr. Morgan) had stated that, if the people were not to get the schools they desired, it would be far better for the one-fifth contribution to remain, and he was drawn over the coals by hon. members opposite for making that statement. In many of the country districts at present, the people were being asked to find practically half the cost of school buildings. Under the one-fifth contribution, the people could practically demand a school, provided there were eighteen children to attend, but at the present time they were being asked to erect a suitable room for school purposes, and the Government, in many instances, contributed £25 or £30 towards the cost of the building. As a country representative, he knew perfectly well what those who went out into the bush had to suffer from an educational point of view, and if it was necessary to curtail expenditure in any direction, it should not be at the expense of the small schools in the country districts. If it was necessary to cut down expenditure in connection with the Education vote, it should be at the expense of the high schools and University. It was the first duty of the State to see that every child was taught to read

*Mr. Morgan.]*

and write, and then, if they could afford to go further and provide secondary schools, it was the duty of the State to do so. The wives and children of many of the settlers were forced to reside in towns while the husbands were living in the back blocks, simply because there were no facilities in the bush for educating the children. If settlement was to be a success, it was necessary for both husband and wife to live on the land. If the children were compelled to go to the towns, settlement would not be the success it otherwise would be. The time had arrived when a change of policy should take place, and more money should be spent on country schools. There might be some need for improved accommodation in the cities, but it was better to give some accommodation in the country than to give improved accommodation in the cities, if there was not sufficient money to do both.

Mr. KIRWAN: On looking up the Auditor-General's report, he found that the department exceeded the vote last year by something like £16,000, and, in view of that fact, and in view of the statements of the hon. member for Fitzroy, it would be seen at a glance that the amount on the Estimates this year was not sufficient. However, that might possibly be rectified when the Supplementary Estimates came before them. There was one matter he would like to bring under the notice of the Minister, and that was the amount set down for cleaning our public buildings. He was given to understand that the women who did the necessary cleaning at our public offices only received £1 5s. a week. While it might be very desirable to increase the salaries of men getting £340 to £360 a year, surely the women who only received £1 5s. a week were entitled to some consideration. He would like the Minister to see if he could not see his way to increase the amount by 5s. a week. That work was very often performed by widows, and, after paying tram fare to and from the city, there was not much left to keep themselves and children. They were

[10 p.m.] entitled to some consideration, particularly in view of the fact that the cost of living had considerably increased of late years. The widow seemed to be always trotted out by the Government whenever any reform legislation was spoken of, and he hoped that she would receive more attention in this matter.

Mr. HUNTER: Like other country members, it was with sincere regret that he noticed the vote for school buildings was so small. It was true that it was £10,000 more than the sum put down last year, but, the amount actually spent last year was within £2,160 of the amount now appearing on the Estimates. Considering that the local contribution of one-fifth had been done away with, a considerable increase in the vote was necessary to meet the requirements of the State. While he did not advocate the re-introduction of the one-fifth contribution, and did not think it was necessary, at the same time its abolition imposed an additional burden upon the vote for school buildings, and the Government should be prepared to give the people the necessary school buildings. In his own district there was quite a number of places in which schools were required; in other places playsheds were needed; and in others there were old buildings, erected thirty or forty years ago, which no longer met the requirements of the department.

[Mr. Morgan.]

Mr. GRANT: That is what is making the demands upon the vote so heavy. There are so many buildings which have outlived their usefulness.

Mr. HUNTER: The eye doctors, who were now visiting the schools, found that in many cases the lighting of the schools was largely responsible for the eye troubles from which the children suffered, and the buildings needed to be remodelled. Other buildings were out of repair, or were too small, and all required the expenditure of money. He regretted exceedingly that, in the face of what had been said by the late Secretary for Public Instruction, the Government had not seen their way to put a sum of money on the Estimates sufficient to meet the requirements for primary education. It had been truly said that, while they were desirous of establishing universities and high schools, their first duty was to provide primary education for all the children of the State. Without primary education, their high schools and University were not of much use. If the department was not able to provide primary schools, it was going to interfere very seriously with the land settlement programme of the Government, because people were not prepared to submit to the privations incidental to life in the bush, and, in addition, have their children grow up in ignorance. The difficulty in the past had been to get teachers, and he believed that difficulty still existed, but, if they were going to increase the trouble by not finding enough money for school buildings, there could be only one result. There was another matter upon which he wished to touch. He noticed that the department undertook work for the Commonwealth, for which he believed the Commonwealth paid. He would like to see the department—which was well equipped for undertaking architectural work—provide plans for butter and cheese factories free of cost. Under the regulations of the Meat and Dairy Board, the board insisted upon butter and cheese factories having certain machinery installed.

Mr. BEBBINGTON: The Meat and Dairy Board has been closed.

Mr. HUNTER: They advanced money to such companies, and they insisted upon the money being spent on certain machinery. If a company employed an outside architect who knew nothing about that class of machinery, a part of the building might have to be cut away to meet the requirements of the machinery. A model plan might be prepared by the Works Department, and supplied to companies without charge. He suggested that the Minister might discuss the matter with the Under Secretary, because, while it might interfere to some extent with local architects, it was not more than the Government might be expected to do. He also noticed there was a sum of £1,200 on the Estimates for the Jubilee Sanatorium at Dalby. While he regarded that as a very fine institution, and as one which was doing very good work, he did not regard Dalby as the best possible place for the purpose for which the sanatorium was intended. He believed better results could be obtained by having a sanatorium further West. A sum of money was down on the Estimates for somewhat the same purpose outside Rockhampton. They should select a place further West in a dry area, where there was a good elevation, as the place to send their patients to.

Mr. GUNN: Stanthorpe.

Mr. GRANT: Consuelo.

Mr. HUNTER: Well, Consuelo was not in his electorate, and there would be no better place in Australia for a sanatorium than Consuelo. It had an elevation equal to the Toowoomba Range, and as it had a nice dry atmosphere it would be equal to all requirements. It would be a pleasant resort for people in summer time, as he believed it was very cool there. He hoped that before any money was spent in increasing the present accommodation at Dalby, that as soon as all the accommodation was taken up that the department would erect a new building in some other place further West.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Where would you suggest?

Mr. HUNTER: He could suggest a number of places. It would be better to leave the Commissioner for Public Health to select a site for a sanatorium. He knew that Dr. Stewart had done good work at Dalby, and that a number of cures had taken place, and that was a good thing for Queensland. In conclusion, he hoped that the Government would increase the amount for school buildings as was suggested by the late Secretary for Public Instruction, as there was a growing demand for school buildings everywhere where settlement was taking place.

LIEUT.-COLONEL RANKIN (*Burrum*) drew attention more particularly to the sites that were chosen for the erection of public buildings, as there was not a great amount of wisdom displayed in regard to many of the sites selected. At Cordalba the lockup and sergeant's residence were built in a swamp, and in wet weather it was a regular quagmire, while even in dry weather it was difficult to get there. The site had an injurious effect on the health of the lockup-keeper and his family, and as it was such a serious menace to that officer's comfort, he suggested that the department should take the opportunity of transferring the buildings to some more suitable place. Then the courthouse in Childers was put right in the centre of the town, in the main street, and when the business of the court was on it was interrupted by the noise and the din coming from the street. It was also some distance away from the lockup and police barracks, and that meant that the prisoners who were to come before the court were marched up the main street every day to the courthouse. It was a most unseemly and humiliating thing to do to march men up the main street in that way when they might be found innocent of the charge brought against them. There was a suitable site alongside the lockup, and that could be chosen for the erection of a new courthouse. It would be handy for the removal of prisoners from the lockup and be away from the noise and din of the main street. As they had been promised a high school for Childers, they could use the present courthouse building for that purpose. Closely allied to the question of sites was the character of the buildings put up. The public buildings in the metropolis compared favourably with the other States, but it was not so in the country, where there was a dull sameness which characterised the whole of the Government buildings, particularly the schools. The same class of buildings were put up without any regard to the greatest amount of light or greatest amount of ventilation.

Mr. GRANT: There is some alteration in the later ones.

LIEUT.-COLONEL RANKIN: That alteration had not reached his electorate. They would admit that the surroundings of a school had some effect upon the mind, and affected the health of the children. The hon. member for Brisbane referred to the salaries of the higher-paid officials of the department, but he (Lieut.-Colonel Rankin) did not think they were at all overpaid. In proof of his contention, it was a notorious fact that in this department, as soon as men began to get into the higher branches, they nearly always left the service, because the emoluments were not sufficient. There was an instance of that in the case of the man chosen by the Federal Government as the architect for the Commonwealth buildings at home. While he had no desire to see the lower salaries kept down, he thought the Government should make the emoluments of the higher-paid officers sufficiently attractive to induce men to remain in the service. He hoped the Minister would make a note of the matters to which he had referred.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: During the discussion the hon. member for Fitzroy referred to the amount of £8,000 for equipment for the University; but he thought the hon. member overlooked the fact that last year there was a vote on account of £12,500, of which only £1,946 was spent, and consequently there was a large amount available for the purchase to which the hon. member referred.

Mr. GRANT: What is the cost of the equipment ordered?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: What Professor Gibson ordered came to something like £17,000. Probably some of it would not come forward this year; but assuming that it would all come forward this year, the vote would be about equal to requirements. A good deal had been said—and properly so—on school buildings. He yielded to no one in his desire to help the school life of the State; but the increase in expenditure showed that they were doing their utmost. The hon. member for Murilla said he thought it was the duty of the Government to bring education to the home of every child. He agreed that it was highly important that everything possible should be done; and he thought Queensland was exceptional in making special efforts in that direction. At present motor-cars were provided to enable itinerant teachers to get about as quickly as possible.

Mr. COYNE: The hon. member for Murilla was referring to school buildings.

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: The position in regard to school buildings was exceedingly difficult. During the session the majority of hon. members had said the Government should go slow; and it was generally admitted that money was not so easily obtainable at it was some time ago. There had been a distinct increase in the cost of education, both in loan account and in revenue account; and he could assure hon. members that in the matter of schools the fact of places being outside Brisbane did not weigh one moment in dealing with the claims. And any Minister who would discriminate in this matter would not be worthy of the position. They could only do their best with the means at their disposal; and he could assure hon. members that each case was looked into most closely. The statements made by hon. members would receive

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the fullest consideration; and no one would be better pleased than himself if it was found that they could stretch the vote in connection with education. The hon. member for Brisbane referred to the women employed in the Executive and Treasury buildings. There had been two rises given to them during the last few years. In the Executive Building the hours were from twenty-three to twenty-six a week, and in the Treasury Building from sixteen to thirty a week. The pay was from £48 to £70 a year.

Mr. COYNE: Do they work in the day, or at night?

The SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC WORKS: Sometimes in the daytime; sometimes at night.

At 10.30 p.m.,

The CHAIRMAN said: Under Standing Order No. 306, I must now leave the chair, and make my report to the House.

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

#### METROPOLITAN WATER AND SEWER-AGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

RETURNED FROM COUNCIL.

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

#### COMMONWEALTH DEPOSIT BILL.

RETURNED FROM COUNCIL.

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

#### FRUIT CASES BILL.

MESSAGE FROM COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning this Bill with amendments, in which they invited the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly.

The consideration in Committee of the Legislative Council's amendments was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

#### INDUSTRIAL PEACE BILL.

MESSAGE FROM COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning this Bill with amendments, in which they invited the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly.

The consideration in Committee of the Legislative Council's amendments was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

#### RESTORATION OF STATE PATENTS BILL.

FIRST READING.

On the motion of the TREASURER, this Bill, received by message from the Legislative Council, was read a first time, and the second reading was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

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

[Hon. W. H. Barnes.]